



ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2024



City & County of San Francisco
Ethics Commission

Message from the Executive Director

Thank you for taking the time to review the Ethics Commission’s Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2024. This year saw many exciting milestones for our agency. In March, voters resoundingly approved the Commission’s Proposition D, with 89% voting in favor. This makes Proposition D the most popular San Francisco ballot measure in a generation. The measure modernizes many of the City’s most fundamental ethics rules, and the overwhelming support shown by voters confirms that San Franciscans care deeply about the integrity of their City government. This is as true now as it was when the voters first created the Ethics Commission by ballot measure in 1993.

With one election done in March and another coming up in November, FY24 has seen a flurry of campaign finance work at the Ethics Commission. Staff have been busy improving public access to information, digitizing the last remaining paper filing processes, and administering the City’s public financing program in the first recent election to feature both mayoral and supervisorial contests. All of this work aims to provide San Franciscans with the clearest and most timely picture of how funds are spent on City elections and to empower candidates to run meaningful, competitive campaigns.

The Commission also deepened its advice and guidance work in the past year, launching new online support portals, offering new trainings, and devoting more staff to providing advice. As a compliance agency, we are committed to ensuring helpful and timely answers to anyone who has questions about ethics rules.

This fiscal year also saw the full elimination of the remaining campaign audit backlog. Though much work remains to be done to fully revitalize and modernize the Commission’s audits program, the elimination of the backlog and the approval of much needed budget support will make that work possible in FY25.

Lastly, June 8, 2024 marked the 30th anniversary of the Ethics Commission’s first public meeting. In the years since then, the Commission has grown from a small office with limited duties to one of the leading government accountability agencies in the country. In the coming year, we look forward to continuing this progress and delivering San Franciscans the meaningful transparency and accountability that they first asked for 30 years ago.

Sincerely,
Patrick Ford
Executive Director

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Major FY24 Projects

Each fiscal year, the Commission undertakes projects that will advance its mission and better achieve its mandates. This section highlights a number of projects that were undertaken or completed in FY24.

Proposition D

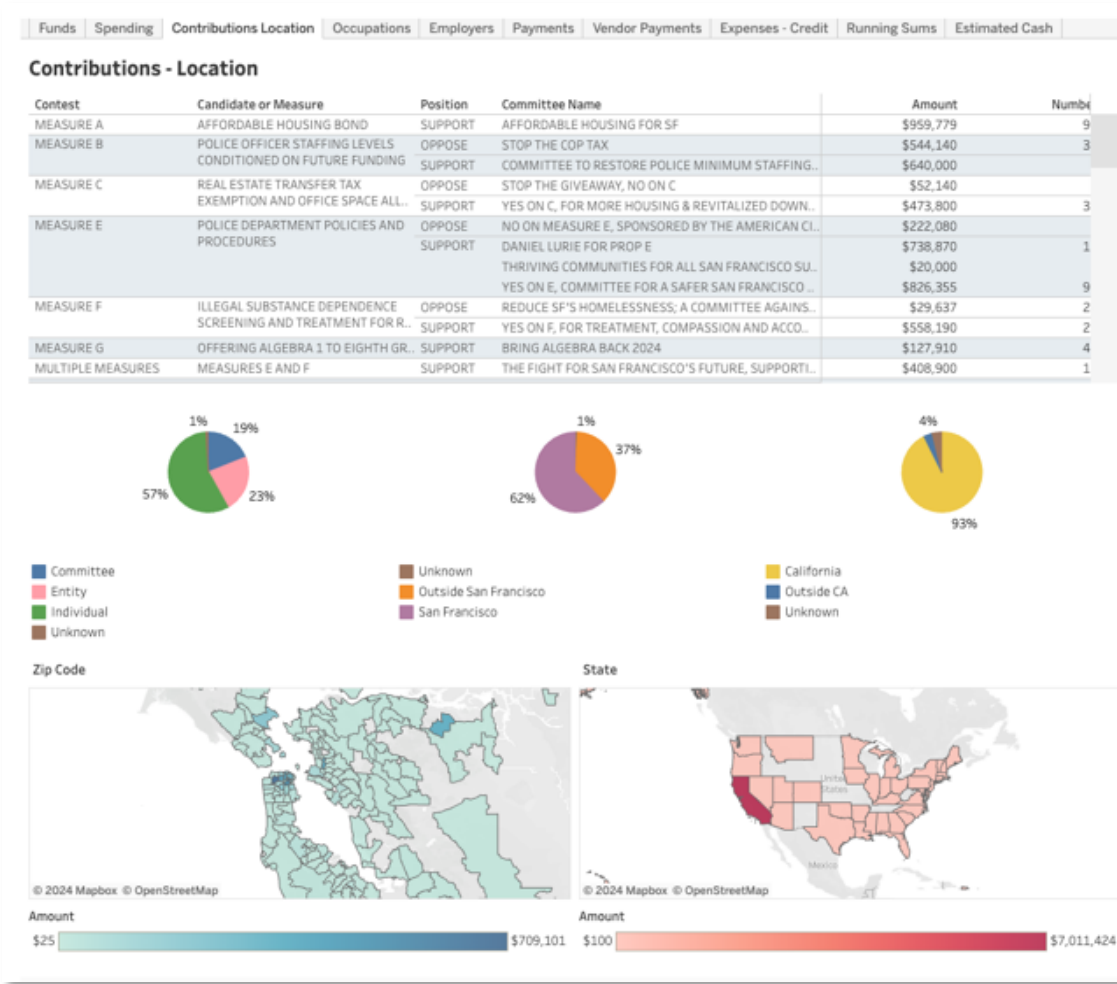
On March 5th, voters overwhelmingly approved [Proposition D](#), which was placed on the ballot by the Ethics Commission in August of 2023. The approval of Proposition D was a major milestone in a project that has been the Commission’s top policy priority since 2020. The changes to City ethics rules brought by Proposition D will become operative on October 12, 2024.

Prop D Policy Development and Voter Approval

In 2020, following the announcement of criminal corruption charges against multiple City officers, employees, and contractors, the Ethics Commission began a review of the City’s conflict-of-interest rules as its top policy priority. This launched the Commission’s Government Ethics and Conflict of Interest Review project, which produced four staff reports published in 2020 and 2021. The recommendations from the last three of these reports were packaged as a ballot measure, which would become Proposition D.

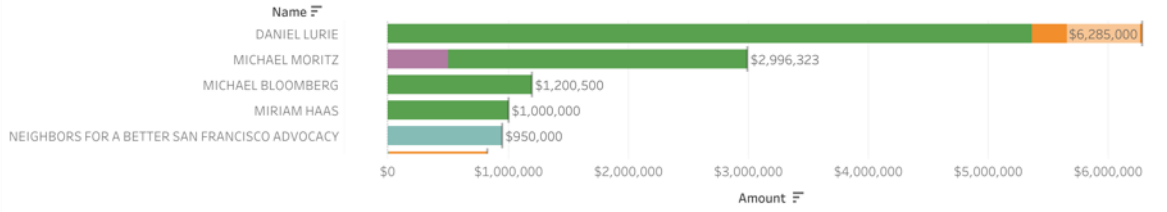
The Ethics Commission had sought to place these reforms on the ballot in 2022, but were unable to do so, due to a then-ongoing meet and confer process with the Municipal Executives’ Association (MEA). Following 21 months of engagement with MEA, which was supported by the Department of Human Resources and the City Attorney’s office, the City successfully completed the meet and confer process. With this process concluded, the Commission was able to vote at its August 2023 meeting to place the reform measure before voters and approve associated regulations.

In the months between the Commission’s vote to place Proposition D on the ballot and the March election, the Commission communicated factual information about Proposition D to the public to help inform their decision on the measure. This included supporting the work of the City’s Ballot Simplification Committee, which developed a [digest about Proposition D](#). The Commission also submitted both a [proponent argument](#) for Proposition D and a [rebuttal](#) to the opponent argument that appeared in the Voter Information Pamphlet. Staff also published information about Proposition D on the Commission’s website and engaged with members of the public, journalists, and representatives from other City departments to answer questions about the measure. Proposition D was endorsed by numerous organizations and media outlets.



Itemized Contributors

Contributors are listed as reported by committees. This may lead to individual contributors listed under different name variations (eg "Josh Norton" and "Joshua Norton".) Financial disclosures for contributors that are committees may be available. Refer to the "Local General Purpose and State Committees Dashboards" page of the sfethics website, linked below



At the 2024 conference of the Council on Government Ethics Law in December, Staff will present the enhanced dashboards as part of a panel discussion showcasing innovative campaign finance data tools.

Public Financing Program

In every election in which there is a contest for Mayor or Supervisor, the Commission administers the City's public campaign financing program. This program provides limited public financing to candidates who qualify by receiving a minimum number of contributions from San Francisco residents. The public financing program empowers candidates to run a competitive campaign