

**CITY OF SAN JOSE**  
**2020-2021 ADOPTED OPERATING BUDGET**

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**STATE AND LOCAL LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS**

Following is a list of significant State and local voter-approved initiatives.

**2020s Initiatives**

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**Measure E**, Real Property Transfer Tax, was placed on the ballot by the City Council. It amended the San José Municipal Code to enact a tax on the transfer of any real property valued over \$2 million, subject to a CPI adjustment every five years. While the revenue is deposited into the General Fund and may be used for any City purpose, City Council Policy 1-18 allocates this funding for affordable housing and homelessness prevention. Measure E was approved by the voters in March 2020.

**2010s Initiatives**

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**Measure S**, Construction Contract Procurement Modernization, was placed on the ballot by the City Council. It allowed the City to amend the City Charter to modify construction contract procurement and the bidding process. Measure S was approved by the voters in November 2018.

**Measure T**, Disaster Preparedness, Public Safety, and Infrastructure Bond, was placed on the ballot by the City Council. It authorized the issuance of up to \$650 million in general obligation bonds to upgrade 9-1-1 communications, police, fire, and paramedics facilities to improve emergency disaster response; repair deteriorating bridges vulnerable to earthquakes; repave streets and potholes in the worst condition; prevent flooding and water quality contamination; and repair critical infrastructure. Measure T was approved by the voters in November 2018.

**Measure U** was placed on the ballot by the City Council. It allowed the City Charter to be amended to remove the City Council from voting on their own salaries, require the Salary Setting Commission to adjust the base salaries

for the Mayor and City Council once every five years, and limit base salary increases after each five-year adjustment to annual adjustments for inflation based on the Consumer Price Index. Additionally, Measure U amended the City Charter to align with State Law, allowing Council to submit an alternative measure to a citizen initiative. Measure U was approved by the voters in November 2018.

**Measure C**, an Act to Limit Urban Sprawl and the Fiscal and Environmental Effects of Specified Development in Outlying Areas, was placed on the ballot by the City Council. This measure restricts the development of non-employment uses on designated lands in outlying areas near San Jose's Urban Growth Boundary, including Almaden Valley, Coyote Valley, and Evergreen Foothills, unless City Council determines such development will not adversely affect the City financially, will satisfy increased affordable housing requirements, and will mitigate environmental impacts, and pay appropriate fees for road improvements to address traffic impacts. Measure C was approved by the voters in June 2018.

**Proposition 64** legalized recreational marijuana for persons aged 21 years or older under state law. Effective January 1, 2018, Proposition 64 allowed for the sale and taxation of recreational marijuana. Proposition 64 was approved by California voters in November 2016.

**Measure E**, Opportunity to Work, a citizen initiative measure, amended the San José Municipal Code to require employers to offer additional work hours to existing qualified part-time employees before hiring new employees, including sub-contractors and use of temporary staffing services. The requirement to offer additional work hours does not apply where the existing qualified part-time employees would be paid overtime or other premium rate under any law or collective bargaining agreement. Measure E was approved by the voters in November 2016.

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**Measure F**, Alternative Pension Reform Act, was placed on the ballot by the City Council. It amended the San José City Charter to change employee retirement contributions and benefits and retiree healthcare benefits. This measure superseded the Measure B modifications approved by the voters in 2012 and included the following components: retirement benefits for Tier 2 members were improved to levels similar to other Bay Area agencies and the costs of the benefit will be shared 50/50 between the City and employees; the defined benefit retiree healthcare plan was closed to new members; Tier 1 employees who return after leaving the City will be Tier 1 employees; the pre-Measure B definition of disability was reinstated; an independent medical panel will be created to determine eligibility for disability retirements; the elimination of the Supplemental Retiree Benefit Reserve will continue and it will be replaced with a Guaranteed Purchasing Power benefit to protect retirees against inflation; both the City and employees will be required to make the full annual required plan contributions calculated by the applicable retirement board; voter approval is required for any future enhancements to defined retirement benefits; and retroactive benefit enhancements are prohibited. Measure F was passed by the voters in November 2016.

**Measure G**, Business Tax Modernization, was placed on the ballot by the City Council. It enacted an ordinance to revise San José's 1986 Business Tax. Effective July 1, 2017, the revised ordinance 1) increases the minimum base tax; 2) requires payment of the minimum base tax by all businesses; 3) sets graduated rates for businesses with more employees paying higher rates and residential and commercial landlords paying more per unit, lot, and square feet of leased space; 4) requires water companies to pay an amount per San José meter connection; and 5) raises the annual caps on the maximum amount of tax payable. Where a business owes the tax based on both its number of employees and leased number of units, lots, or square feet, the

business is required to pay the higher of the two calculations. The revised ordinance also provides for an annual adjustment for inflation based on a consumer price index beginning on July 1, 2018, subject to specified limits. Measure G was approved by the voters in November 2016.

**Measure B**, Local Sales Tax, enacted a ¼ percent sales tax in San José beginning October 1, 2016 for 15 years to fund essential City services, such as: improving public safety (e.g., additional police officers to improve emergency response times, reduce violent and non-violent crimes, increase neighborhood patrols, and increase fire resources to improve fire and emergency medical response times); maintaining and repairing major streets (e.g., increase pavement maintenance funding for major streets to significantly slow the incidence of pothole formation and general pavement deterioration); and increasing neighborhood services (e.g., additional resources for reducing homelessness, increasing youth and senior services, and other high priority neighborhood services, such as blight eradication and gang prevention). Measure B was passed by the voters in June 2016.

**Measure B**, Library Parcel Tax, authorized the collection of a parcel tax to enhance the City's library services and facilities. The tax is collected twice per year on each parcel of real property and deposited into the Library Parcel Tax Fund. All proceeds, including interest, must be expended for Library purposes. Measure B was approved by voters in 2014 and will sunset in 2039. This measure follows two prior voter approved measures to support library services. In November 1994, voters approved Measure E (sunset in 2005), and in November 2004 voters approved Measure S (sunset in 2015).

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**Measure D** requires the payment of minimum wages in San José at \$10 per hour with an annual increase, if any, based on the Consumer Price Index beginning January 1, 2014; City enforcement through fines, penalties, civil actions, or revocation or suspension of permits or licenses; voter approval of substantive changes to the ordinance; and allows private enforcement through civil actions. Measure D was passed by the voters in 2012.

**Measure B** allowed the City Charter to be amended to modify retirement benefits of City employees and retirees by increasing employees' contributions, establishing a voluntary reduced pension plan for current employees, establishing pension cost and benefit limitations for new employees, modifying disability retirement procedures, temporarily suspending retiree Cost of Living Adjustments during emergencies, and requiring voter approval for increases in future pension benefits. This Measure was superseded by Measure F in November 2016. Measure B was passed by the voters in 2012.

**Measure K** increased the Cardroom Tax rate on gross revenues from 13% to 15%, allowed each cardroom to seek City approval to increase the number of tables from 40 to 49, removed the limit on the number of permissible card games to allow any card game permissible under State law consistent with City regulations, and increased the betting limit from \$200 to that allowed under State law. Measure K was passed by the voters in 2010.

**Measure U** allowed the City Council to impose a business tax on marijuana businesses in San José at a rate of up to 10% of gross receipts. The revenues from the marijuana business tax are subject to an annual audit. Measure U was passed by the voters in 2010.

**Measure V** changed the mandatory arbitration process regarding the selection of the Chair of the Board and required all hearings and documents submitted in arbitration to be accessible to the public. Further, it requires that the Arbitration Board consider the City's financial condition and ability to pay; provide consideration to the rate of increase or decrease of compensation approved by the City Council for other bargaining units; be precluded from rendering a decision or issuing an award that increases the projected cost of compensation at a rate that exceeds the rate of increase in certain revenues, retroactively increases or decreases compensation, creates a new or additional unfunded liability, or interferes with the discretion of the Police or Fire Department to make managerial, operational, or staffing decisions. Measure V was passed by the voters in 2010.

**Measure W** allowed the City Council to adopt an ordinance to exclude future City officers and employees from any existing retirement plans or benefits and establish retirement plans for future employees that do not provide for the current minimum requirements set forth in the San José City Charter. Measure W was passed by the voters in 2010.

**Proposition 22** reduces or eliminates the State's authority to delay or redirect the distribution of tax revenues for transportation, redevelopment, or local government projects and services, even during periods of severe fiscal hardship. The proposition requires the State Controller to reimburse local governments or accounts if a court rules that the State violated a provision of Proposition 22. Proposition 22 was passed by the voters in 2010.

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**STATE AND LOCAL LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS**

**Proposition 26** requires that certain State fees be approved by a two-thirds vote of the State legislature and certain local fees be approved by two-thirds of voters. The proposition broadened the definition of a State or local tax to include some fees and charges that governments previously could impose with a majority vote. Proposition 26 was passed by the voters in 2010.

**2000s Initiatives**

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**Measure J** replaced the Emergency Communication System Support Fee of \$1.75 per telephone line per month with a tax of \$1.57 per telephone line per month. The City ceased collecting the fee and began collecting the tax on April 1, 2009. The tax is collected from telephone users on their phone bills. Exemptions to the tax include low-income seniors and disabled persons who receive lifeline telephone service. Measure J was passed by the voters in 2008.

**Measure K** reduced the telephone utility rate from 5.0% to 4.5% (10% reduction) in San José. This measure broadened the base for the utility tax and the definition of technologies covered by the tax. The utility company collects the tax from consumers on a monthly basis and is required to remit the tax to the City by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the following month. The tax is not applicable to State, County, or City agencies. Measure K was passed by the voters in 2008.

**Proposition 1A** prohibits the State from reducing local governments' property tax revenue. The provisions may be suspended only if the governor declares a fiscal necessity and two-thirds of the State legislature approves the suspension. Suspended funds must be repaid within three years. Proposition 1A also requires local sales tax revenues to remain with local governments and for the State to fund legislative mandates. Proposition 1A was passed by the voters in 2004 and became effective in 2006.

**Measure A**, the Airport Security and Traffic Relief Act, authorized the City to implement infrastructure improvements at the Airport to meet federally mandated security requirements, improve passenger facilities, and add nine new gates once the Airport street system is within three years of completion and funding has been identified for the implementation of the Airport People Mover transit connection. Measure A was passed by the voters in 2003.

**Measure O** authorized the issuance of a \$159 million general obligation bond (Neighborhood Security Act Bond Measure) to improve San José's fire, police, and paramedic response times by adding and improving fire stations, police stations, and training facilities and creating state-of-the-art 9-1-1 communications facilities. Measure O was passed by the voters in 2002.

**Measure K** approved an update to San José's General Plan to modify greenline/urban boundaries. Measure K was passed by the voters in 2000.

**Measure O** authorized the issuance of \$212 million in bonds over 10 years for the establishment of six new and 14 expanded branch libraries in San José. Measure O was passed by the voters in 2000.

**Measure P** authorized the issuance of \$228 million in general obligation bonds for the establishment of new and improved existing public parks and facilities in San José. Measure P was passed by the voters in 2000.

**1990s Initiatives**

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**Measure I** authorized the construction of a new City Hall, located in downtown San José. Measure I was passed by the voters in 1996.

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**STATE AND LOCAL LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS**

**Proposition 218** extended the two-thirds majority vote requirement for any new user fees or new taxes to be levied at the local level. Assessments, fees, and charges must be submitted to property owners for approval or rejection after notice and public hearing. Proposition 218 was passed by the voters in 1996.

**Proposition 172** enacted a half-cent sales tax increase. Monies derived from this tax must be utilized solely for public safety services. Revenue is distributed to cities and counties for purposes such as police, sheriffs, fire, district attorneys, and corrections. Proposition 172 was passed by the voters in 1993.

**Measure I** established term limits for the City. City Council members and the mayor can only serve for two successive four-year terms in office. Measure I was passed by the voters in 1990.

**Proposition 8** allowed a property owner to file an assessment appeal when the market value of the property is less than the current assessed value. If the appeal is successful, the assessed valuation is lowered to reflect current market conditions. Proposition 8 also provided that the value of reassessed properties may be increased to previous levels when market values increase. Proposition 8 was passed by the voters in 1990.

**Proposition 111** enacted a state-wide traffic congestion relief program and changed the procedures for calculating the Gann Limit by updating the spending limit on state and local government to better reflect the needs of a growing California population. It provided new revenues to reduce traffic congestion by building state highways, local streets and roads, and public mass transit facilities. Proposition 111 was passed by the voters in 1990.

**1980s Initiatives**

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**Measure C** authorized the City to use public funds to build low-rent housing. Measure C was passed by the voters in 1988.

**Measure H** authorized the City to build a sports arena, currently known as the SAP Center at San José. Measure H was passed by the voters in 1988.

**1970s Initiatives**

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**Proposition 4**, otherwise known as the “Gann Limit,” stipulated that the City must compute an annual appropriations limit, which places a ceiling on the total amount of tax revenues the City can appropriate annually. The limit is adjusted each year using the following criteria: (1) the percentage change in California Per Capita Income or the change in the City’s Assessed Valuation due to new non-residential construction, whichever is greater and (2) the percentage change in the city-wide population, whichever is greater. Proposition 4 was passed by the voters in 1979.

**Proposition 13** placed a substantial limitation on the ability of local governments to collect sufficient property taxes commensurate with the historical role this revenue source has played in funding both municipal operations and new public facilities. Proposition 13 specified that an assessed value may increase at the rate of the Consumer Price Index, not to exceed two percent per year based on the 1979 value, unless the property is improved or sold aligning the newly assessed value to the market value. Proposition 13 was passed by the voters in 1979.

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**1890 – 1970 Initiatives**

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**1965** – Passed by the voters in 1965, the City Charter reaffirms the Council-Manager form of government in San José. The City consists of 10 council members elected by district and a mayor elected at large.

**1897** – The City Charter was adopted in 1897. The Charter generally establishes the organization and structure of City government. The Charter also empowers the City Council to make and enforce all ordinances and regulations with respect to municipal affairs, subject only to the limitations specified in the Charter.