

# Ballot Box Navigator

**A Practical and  
Tactical Guide to  
Land Use Initiatives  
and Referenda  
in California**

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## **Preface**

The use of the ballot box to regulate land use is a subject that has been central to policy making in California since the state adopted its second constitution in 1879. That document provided for a city to adopt its own charter, thereby gaining autonomy over matters of strictly local concern.

While the text often refers only to “a city,” unless otherwise stated it is also meant to refer to “a county.” Likewise, relevant Elections Code sections are given for city, county, and special district elections. Citations to sections shall refer to the California Elections Code, unless otherwise indicated. Additionally, whenever the procedures or requirements differ between cities and counties, the difference is noted and explained. Finally, where the word “measure” is used, it is meant to refer to an the initiative itself or the measure subject to a referendum, depending upon the context.

This book follows the earlier Solano Press title, *Land Use Initiatives and Referenda in California* (Durkee, Jacobson, Wood, Zischke, 1990), whose copyright is held by Bingham, McCutchen, LLP. We wish to express our appreciation to the Bingham, McCutchen firm—and especially to partners Sandy Skaggs and Dan Curtin—for their gracious permission to use parts of that earlier work in this new book. Likewise, we mention, honor, and are truly appreciative of the work of Tom Wood, Mike Durkee, Tom Jacobson, and Mike Zischke, all of whom were formerly attorneys at the Bingham, McCutchen firm and are authors of that earlier work.

Finally, we wish to express our special appreciation to friend and mentor, Daniel J. Curtin, Jr. Dan is the reason why this book exists. Through his writings, speeches, and overall mentoring, he is also the reason why so many of us have made land use our chosen career path.



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