

Housing is Built with Ballots: Key 2018 Ballot Measures Across the Country



Updated: November 7, 2018

The U.S. has a shortage of 7.2 million rental homes affordable and available to extremely low income renters, whose income is at or below the poverty guideline or 30% of their area median income. Only 35 affordable and available rental homes exist for every 100 extremely low income renter households. And in only 22 counties, out of over 3,000 counties nationwide, can a full-time worker earning minimum wage afford a one-bedroom rental home at fair market rent. Federal investments in proven solutions are necessary to end the crisis, but to date the political will to fund solutions at the scale necessary has been lacking. Meanwhile, states and localities grapple with the affordable housing crisis and seek local policy changes aimed at improving housing affordability, from removing barriers to building affordable housing, or addressing bans on multifamily housing units, to new incentives for building or subsidizing affordable housing. Other localities seek to advance tenant protections, such as adopting rent controls, just-cause evictions and right to counsel for tenants facing eviction court.



This year there were ballot measures all across the country designed to promote and protect affordable housing in their states and communities. The key ballot measures that were in front of voters on November 6, 2018 are listed below. NLIHC's Our Homes, Our Votes project will analyze the results and provide a comprehensive overview of what happened—and what that might mean for trends in affordable housing ballot initiatives. One thing is crystal clear: the more low-income residents and allies vote for affordable housing, the more we move the needle. Win or lose, these ballot initiatives represent real movement towards increasing the visibility of affordable housing.

EXPANDING FUNDING & RESOURCES

The following ballot initiatives seek to increasing affordable housing availability and accessibility by various means to provide safe and stable housing for those in need:

STATE	TITLE	SUMMARY	RESULTS
Flagstaff, AZ	Prop 422	Prop 422 will allow the Flagstaff City Council to issue and sell general obligation bonds in the amount of \$25 million to increase the number of affordable housing units and issue grants/loans to residents to afford those units. Will allow for construction, rehabilitation, redevelopment and acquisition of land.	Failed, 47-52%
California— Statewide	Prop 2: No Place Like Home	Prop 2 is an authorization of \$2 billion in previously appropriated funding that is dedicated to the construction of affordable housing for those that are experiencing chronic homelessness, people with disabilities, and people living with mental illness.	Passed, 61-39%

STATE	TITLE	SUMMARY	RESULTS
California— Statewide	Prop 1: Veterans and Affordable Housing Act	The \$4 billion general obligation bond is a result of the bipartisan passage of Senate Bill 3 (Beall) and will allow the state to reinvest in California communities by creating supportive housing and homeowner assistance programs, including \$1.5 billion dedicated to Multifamily Housing Program. Dedicating funding to help military veterans have a safe place to call home. Provides stable housing for struggling families, people experiencing homelessness and individuals with disabilities.	Pending/ Leaning Passed (54-46%)
East Palo Alto, CA	East Palo Alto Measure HH	A parcel tax on commercial office space over 25,000 square feet. It would raise an estimated \$1.675 million dedicated to job training opportunities specific to STEM and for the construction of new affordable housing.	Passed, 76-23%
San Francisco, CA	San Francisco City and County Measure C	Gross receipts tax on businesses with income above \$50 million. The measure will raise an estimated \$300 million annually in dedicated funds for affordable housing, wrap around services for the chronically homeless, and legal assistance programs.	Passed, 60-40%
Oakland, CA	Oakland Measure W Oakland Measure X	W: A vacancy tax, which would raise an estimated \$10 million annually in dedicated funds some of which may be used for housing and homeless programs. X: A real estate transfer tax, would raise an estimated \$8 million annual revenue, some of which may be used for housing and homeless programs.	W: Passed, 68-31% X: Passed, 66-33%
Santa Cruz, CA	Santa Cruz County Measure H	\$140 million general obligation bond that will provide affordable housing for local workers, including teachers, healthcare workers, service workers, and farmworkers, as well as vulnerable populations, including people experiencing homelessness, veterans, seniors, people with disabilities, and those suffering from mental or addiction illnesses.	Failed 2/3 majority, 52-47%
Berkeley, CA	Berkeley Measure O Berkeley Measure P	O: \$135 million general obligation bond that will create more affordable housing options and opportunities for low income families and residents and for Berkeley's most vulnerable populations, including veterans, seniors, local artists, the disabled, current or former foster youth, abuse victims, homeless people, and people suffering from mental health or substance abuse P: A real estate transfer tax which would raise an estimated \$6 million annual revenue, some of which may be used for homeless services and programs.	O: Passed, 75-24% P: Passed, 70-29%
San Jose, CA	San José Measure V	\$450 million general obligation bond that will create more affordable housing for working families, veterans, teachers, nurses, seniors, people with disabilities. The measure seeks to help chronically homeless residents get back on their feet and access to a safe and stable home.	Failed 2/3 majority, 61-39%

STATE	TITLE	SUMMARY	RESULTS
Napa County, CA	Napa County TOT measure	Hotel tax that will raise nearly \$5 million annually in dedicated funds for affordable housing and homelessness programs. This measure will appear as Measure I in unincorporated areas of the County, as Measure F in Napa, Measure H in American Canyon, Measure D in Calistoga, Measure E in St. Helena, and Measure S in Yountville.	Passed, 66-33%
Santa Rosa, CA	Santa Rosa Measure N	\$124 million general obligation bond that will create more affordable housing for local workers, including teachers, healthcare workers, and farmworkers, as well as vulnerable populations, including people experiencing homelessness, veterans, seniors, people with disabilities. The measure also includes programs to help displaced families rebuild after last year's devastating fires.	Passed, 58-41%
Mountain View, CA	Mountain View Measure P	A business license tax or "head tax" that would impose a tax in the range of \$8 and \$149 per employee on average, with larger companies paying greater amounts. The tax, if approved, would generate an approximate \$6 million annually to the city general fund, some of which may go to housing.	Passed, 69-30%
Richmond, CA	Richmond Measure T	A special parcel tax on vacant properties that would raise an estimated \$5.4 million annually for 20 years to fund homelessness services and housing, blight and dumping elimination, and other specified programs.	Failed 2/3 majority, 58-41%
Santa Clara, CA	Santa Clara County Measure	A sales tax renewal that would raise an estimated \$50 million annually for the general fund, some of which may be used for housing and homeless programs.	Passed, 72-27%
West Marin, CA	West Marin Measure W	A hotel tax that would raise an estimated \$1.3 million annual revenue dedicated to fire and emergency services and long-term community housing.	Passed, 73-26%
Telluride, CO	Ballot Issue 2A Ballot Issue 2B Ballot Issue 2C	2A: Increase levy on property taxes to fund and finance affordable housing. 2B: Increase sales and use tax to fund and finance the construction of affordable housing units. 2C: Increase town debt to fund affordable housing and use revenue from levied property tax to pay debt.	2A: Passed, 51-48% 2B: Failed, 49-50% 2C: Passed, 52-47%
Charlotte, NC	Housing Bond Referendum	Increase the city's affordable housing trust fund from \$15 million to \$50 million.	Passed, 68-31%
Portland, OR	Metro Affordable Housing Bonds: Measure 26-199	The measure, proposed by Oregon's Metro Council regional agency, could fund the construction, acquisition and renovation of affordable housing for approximately 7,500 to 12,000 people in the greater Portland region. The measures defines affordable housing as land and improvements for residential units occupied by low-income households making 80 percent or less of area median income, which in 2018 for a family of four was \$65,120. \$652.8 million funding allocation amount	Passed, 59-41%
Oregon--Statewide	Measure 102	Measure 102 would amend the state constitution to allow counties, cities, and towns to—with voter approval and certain restrictions—use bond revenue to fund the construction of affordable housing without necessarily retaining complete ownership of the constructed housing.	Passed, 56-44%

STATE	TITLE	SUMMARY	RESULTS
Austin, TX	Austin City Council Proposition A	The money would go toward affordable rental housing, homeownership programs, home repairs and acquiring land for future use. \$200-300 million funding allocation amount	Passed, 73-27%
Bellingham, WA	Prop 2018-5: Low Income Housing Levy	Would fund production and preservation of homes, rental assistance programs, support services, and down payment assistance programs for low income households.	Passed, 66-33%
San Juan County, WA	Proposition 1: Additional Real Estate Excise Tax for Affordable Housing	The County would collect 0.5% of the selling price for county owned real estate. Funds would be allocated to different organizations to develop and preserve affordable rental and homeownership programs.	Passed, 54-45%

ADVANCING TENANT PROTECTIONS

The following ballot initiatives seek to increase tenant protections by implementing rent control policies:

STATE	TITLE	SUMMARY	RESULTS
CA	Prop 10: Affordable Housing Act	Gives local communities the ability to adopt rent control. The Affordable Housing Act, would allow local jurisdictions to adopt local rent control measures by repealing the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act. This measure would give renters protections against large and unexpected rent increases, while ensuring that landlords receive a fair rate of return with reasonable yearly increases.	Failed, 62-38%
Berkeley, CA	Berkeley Measure Q	Would account for potential repeal of the Costa Hawkins Rental Housing Act by preserving existing vacancy rent adjustments and updating the construction exemption on new construction from rent stabilization to a 20-year rolling period.	Passed, 69-30%
National City, CA	San Diego County Measure W	Establish a program of Residential Rent Control, including just cause of eviction regulations, rent stabilization provisions, and the creation of a five member Rent Board to manage the program.	Pending/ Leaning Failed (57-42%)
Santa Cruz, CA	Santa Cruz Measure M	A rent control measure that would require relocation assistance for tenants evicted without just cause and limit rent increases in apartments built before 1995.	Passed, 65-34%
Chicago, IL	Chicago Referendum in the 35 th , 46 th and 49 th Wards	An Advisory referendum on repealing the state rental control preemption law	Passed, 71-28% Passed, 70-29% Passed, 66-34%

OUR HOMES, OUR VOTES c/o NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION

1000 Vermont Avenue, NW | Suite 500 | Washington, DC 20005

202-662-1530 | www.ourhomes-ourvotes.org