1) Why is Burbank proposing changes to the City Charter regarding elections?

The purpose of California Senate Bill 415, the “California Voter Participation Rights Act” (or SB 415) is to increase voter participation. It requires cities to change their elections from odd-numbered years to even-numbered years and combined them with statewide election dates no later than November 8, 2022, if there has been a significant decrease in voter turnout in City elections.

“Significant decrease in voter turnout” means the voter turnout for a regularly scheduled election in Burbank is at least 25 percent less than the average voter turnout in Burbank for the previous four statewide general elections. Below are Burbank’s historical voter turnout numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burbank’s Historical Voter Turnout (2011 – present)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Voter Turnout for the last four Burbank Statewide General Elections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Voter Turnout for Burbank Stand-Alone All-Mail Ballot Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burbank Average Percentage Decrease of Voter Turnout (Statewide vs. Stand-Alone Election)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Decrease in Voter Turnout SB415 Definition: Exceeds 25% Decrease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Burbank’s decrease between participation in statewide general elections and stand-alone elections meets the “significant” decrease definition, and therefore, based on a recent California Attorney General Opinion is required to comply with SB415, and consolidate with the Statewide Elections occurring in even-numbered years.

Under the current City Charter, Council Members, City Clerk and City Treasurer (collectively referred to as elected City officials) are elected during odd-numbered years. As such, to change to even-numbered year elections necessitates an amendment to the City Charter, which may only be amended by Burbank voters.

City Council placed this City Charter amendment on the ballot to change the City’s odd-numbered year general elections to November of even-numbered years (amending Charter Section 800). This change follows the requirements of California Voter Participation Rights Act and aligns City elections to coincide with the state and federal elections.
Since statistically Burbank’s highest voter turnout is during November of even-numbered year, statewide elections, this should increase voter participation in Burbank.

2) **What is the effect of a no or yes vote?**

A “no” vote will continue the current practice of odd-year, stand-alone elections and may subject the City to a lawsuit under SB415, the California Voter Participation Rights Act, to force a change to even-numbered year elections.

A “yes” vote will approve the consolidated election process by changing Burbank elections to November of even-numbered years, timed with statewide elections, predictably increasing voter participation.

3) **What are the benefits of implementing SB415 and changing the City Charter?**

If the City Charter changes the general election to November of even-numbered years, voter participation is predicted to increase, as historically more Burbank voters participate in the November, even-numbered, statewide elections. This creates an environment where more people voice their opinion regarding local policies as it relates to electing our City officials and other various measures affecting the City.

4) **What if Burbank does not change its City Charter?**

If Burbank does not change its City Charter, then elections for elected City officials will not change and Burbank will continue with odd-numbered year elections. The primary election would be held in February and general-runoff elections would occur in April of odd-numbered years. Under California Voter Participation Rights Act, a local voter may sue the City to change to even-numbered year, statewide elections on the basis of the decrease in voter participation.

5) **How would Burbank’s elections change?**

If approved by voters, the City of Burbank will align its municipal elections with state and federal elections. Elected City officials will be elected in November of even-numbered years starting in 2020. This change will also eliminate the election runoff method currently used by the City during primary and general elections of elected City officials. The new method known as plurality voting will elect candidates who receive the highest number of votes for that office, even if they do not receive a majority vote.

6) **What is happening to Burbank’s primary election?**

The Proposed City Charter amendment, Section 800, beginning in 2019 eliminates the election runoff method of primary and general elections of elected City officials. Instead, starting in 2020, elected City officials will be elected in November of even-numbered years during statewide elections, which becomes the City’s general election date. The new method of electing an Elected Official is called plurality voting. This means a candidate receiving the highest number of votes for that office is elected, even if they do not receive a majority vote.
The state primary election date starting in 2020 is March rather than June. Therefore, if the current practice of primary and general elections was retained, the City election cycle would be approximately 10 months long beginning in January of even-numbered years, with a primary election in March and a general election in November.

7) **Why would we change our election method?**

There are multiple reasons for aligning our elections with state and federal elections and eliminating the primary election in favor of a single general election in November of even-numbered years:

- Reducing the “Lame Duck” period of time that an unsuccessful incumbent candidate would remain in office. If a candidate was defeated in a primary election in March they would remain in office until December.
- Decreasing possible voter fatigue and voter apathy. The 10-month election season may cause a lack of caring among voters and voters may become disengaged.
- It would save money by eliminating the primary election and reducing the duration of a campaign to maintain voter support and participation.

8) **How do other cities conduct their elections?**

California General Law cities may only conduct plurality voting for election of City officials. Meaning that the candidate receiving the highest number of votes is elected. Out of the 122 Charter Cities, 106 use plurality voting while 16 use a run off method as Burbank currently has. The proposed Charter amendment would align Burbank with 96% of California cities - all using plurality voting.

9) **How would Burbank elections change with the implementation of consolidated elections?**

The election of City Officials would be conducted by Los Angeles County and combined with statewide elections. Voters may still vote by mail if registered with the County to vote by mail, but the elections will no longer be stand-alone, all-mail ballot elections conducted by the City of Burbank.

10) **How does this affect those currently in office?**

To transition from odd-numbered year elections to November of even-numbered year elections starting in 2020, the current elected City officials would have a one-time increase in their term in office by one year and eight months. Beginning with the 2020 election and with each subsequent election, the term of office would adjust to the standard four years (Proposed Charter Section 805).

11) **What is the cost/cost savings to the City?**

On average, stand-alone all mail ballot elections conducted by an election vendor and the City Clerk’s Office have cost the City approximately $430,300 for each election. With or without
passage of this ballot measure, Burbank would be contracting with Los Angeles County to provide election services due to the fact of the future unavailability of the City’s election vendor. Los Angeles County estimated $1,722,000 as the cost to hold a stand-alone primary and general election in odd-numbered years for Burbank, $861,000 for each election. The County could not give an estimated cost for a November 2020 City election because it is more than two years away and the County is initiating a new election procedure; however, the County’s estimated cost for the consolidated June, 2018 election with three measures on the ballot is $154,000.

12) Does this affect the Burbank Unified School District Elections?

SB415, the California Voter Participation Rights Act, applies to school districts including Burbank Unified School District. At the December 21, 2017, School Board meeting the Board adopted resolutions: 1.) consolidating future Board of Education Elections with the November of even-numbered years, Statewide General Election beginning in 2020; 2.) will consolidate elections with Los Angeles County, who will conduct their elections and 3.) approved the extension of the terms for existing board members. By taking such actions, the School District Board member elections will be the same as Burbank is proposing for elected City officials through this Measure.

13) What are the other Charter amendments relating to election?

Some Sections are being amended to remove the reference to the primary and general elections. In addition with a November general election, City Council’s reorganization meeting must be changed. The new date will be set by City Council through an ordinance (Section 400). Section 800 also simplifies the election process by allowing procedural details to be governed by ordinance or state election law.

14) What does my vote mean?

A “no” vote will continue the current practice of odd-year, stand-alone elections and may subject the City to a lawsuit under SB415, the California Voter Participation Rights Act, to force a change to even-numbered year elections.

A “yes” vote will approve the consolidated election process by changing Burbank elections to November of even-numbered years, predictably increasing voter participation.