

Pursuant to Elections Code section 9203, the City Attorney provides the following ballot title and summary for the “Redwood City Fair and Affordable Housing Initiative” that was submitted to the City Clerk on December 11, 2023:

**Title:** An initiative to impose additional rent control and just cause eviction limits in Redwood City

**Summary:**

**Rent Control:** State law caps annual rent increases to between 5-10%, depending on the change in the local Consumer Price Index, on rental units 15 years old or older. State law allows cities to impose additional rent control laws on units built prior to February 1, 1995.

This initiative would impose stricter rent control laws on covered units by capping the base rate to the amount paid on December 11, 2023 for units occupied on that date or the initial rent rate for units occupied after that date. The base rate could only be increased annually at a rate equal to 60% of the percentage increase in the local Consumer Price Index but in no event could the increase be more than 5%. The City would determine the annual allowable rent increase, and both landlords and tenants could petition the City for an increase or decrease in rent under certain circumstances. These provisions would apply to units built before February 1, 1995, while State law would apply to units built after that date.

**Eviction Protections and Relocation Assistance:** Under state law, landlords can only evict tenants for specific “just cause” reasons. There are two kinds of just cause evictions: “at fault”, where the tenant is allegedly “at fault” (such as failing to pay rent or breaching a material term of the lease); and “no-fault”, where the landlord evicts the tenant through “no fault” of the tenant (such as an owner move-in or withdrawing the unit from the rental market). State law requires notice of the reason for eviction and specifies requirements that must be met for certain types of evictions. For “no fault” evictions, landlords must provide tenants either relocation assistance or waive the rent payment for the tenant’s final month.

This initiative would impose stricter requirements on just cause evictions by, among other things, increasing the requirements for certain evictions, adding exceptions for evictions, and requiring longer notice periods. For no-fault evictions, the initiative would require landlords to provide tenants relocation assistance equal to four (4) times the monthly fair market rent or \$8,000, whichever is greater. Tenants 62 years of age or older would receive an additional \$4,000. The initiative’s eviction provisions would apply to covered units regardless of when they were built.

**Other Provisions:** The initiative contains additional provisions, such as requiring landlords to submit to the City for approval tenant safety plans before performing any repairs or renovations; prohibiting landlords from taking specific actions in bad faith; and establishing remedies for violations of the initiative, including monetary damages.

**The City's Role:** The initiative would impose additional duties on the City, such as setting the annual allowable rent increase; conducting hearings on rent petitions; reviewing tenant safety plans; issuing regulations; and educating the community about the initiative. The City would charge an annual fee on landlords to pay for the costs of administering the initiative.