



City of Vernon

Deborah Harrington
Interim City Clerk

Official Sample Ballot

City of Vernon
General Municipal Election
April 8, 2025

***EVERY REGISTERED VOTER WILL
RECEIVE A VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT***

**Make a plan to vote early by
returning your Vote by Mail ballot**

BALLOT MUST BE POSTMARKED BY ELECTION DAY

www.cityofvernon.org



Election Information and Resources

Contests on the ballot

The April 8, 2025, City of Vernon General Municipal Election is being held to elect one City Council Member for a full term of five years, and vote on two ballot measures to amend the City of Vernon Charter.

MAKE A PLAN TO VOTE IN THE UPCOMING ELECTION

We have all the resources and tools you need to make your plan to vote by mail.

- Register to Vote by March 24, 2025
- Check Your Registration Status
- Contact Vernon City Hall to confirm your voted ballot was received

Do you need assistance marking your ballot?

If a voter declares under oath that they are unable to mark a ballot, that voter may receive assistance marking their ballot by two (2) persons of their selection. (E.C. § 14282)



Request your ballot in a different language

- We offer ballots in Spanish or Korean.
- Fill out and return the Language Request Form on the back cover of this book (no postage required).
- Call our office to request your multilingual ballot at **(323) 583-8811 ext. 546**.



Voting by mail

Every registered voter in the City of Vernon is mailed a Vote by Mail ballot no later than March 10, 2025.

**Want to confirm if your voted ballot was received by the City?
Call us at (323) 583-8811 ext. 546.**

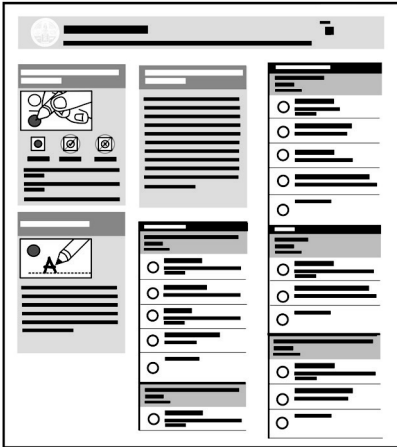
Visit www.cityofvernon.org for more information.



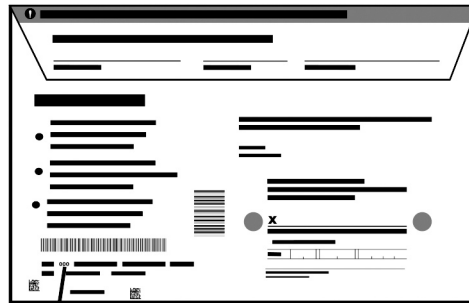
Check Your Material

Your Vote by Mail package will contain:

1. Official Ballot Card



2. Ballot Return Envelope



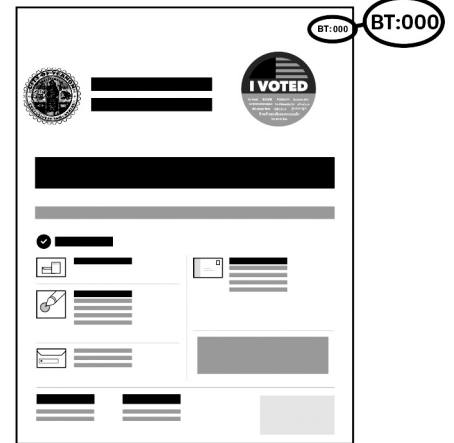
000

Ballot group number

Example: 000

Ballot Group

3. Vote by Mail Ballot Wrap



Ballot group numbers on materials **must** match.

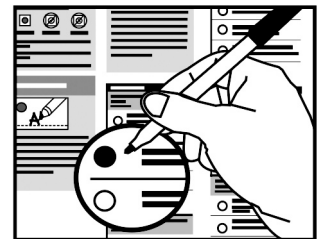
If ballot group numbers do not match, please call **(323) 583-8811 ext. 546**.



Marking Your Ballot

Marking and returning instructions

- Use only **black** or **blue** ink pen to mark your choice on your ballot.
- Fill the entire oval matching your vote choice.
- **Do not** vote for more choices than indicated.
- **Do not** punch a hole through the ballot card.
- **Do not** use permanent or felt tip markers.



Misplaced or damaged your ballot?

- Mark your choice on the Official Sample Ballot page. Insert into Ballot Return Envelope and return.
- Bring your damaged ballot and complete an application for a replacement ballot at the City Clerk counter at City Hall, 4305 S. Santa Fe Avenue, Vernon.
- For information, call (323) 583-8811 ext. 546 or email CityClerk@cityofvernonca.gov on or before Election Day.



Vote by Mail Return Options

Before you return your Vote by Mail ballot make sure:

- Your ballot is securely placed inside the Vote-by-Mail Return Envelope.
- You **must** sign and complete the voter signature box on the back of the Return Envelope.
- Remember no postage is necessary.



Signature verification

Voters must sign the eligibility oath and date the Vote by Mail Return Envelope before submitting their ballot. Every signature is verified before the ballot is cleared for counting.

If a signature is missing or if the signature does not match the one on file, the City Clerk will notify the impacted voter to allow the voter an opportunity to provide a valid signature.

Recommended options for returning your Vote by Mail ballot



Return by mail

Must be postmarked by Election Day. No postage required.



Return In Person On Election Day

7:00 AM to 8:00 PM

- **Vernon Village Park Apartments**
4611 E. 52nd Drive
Vernon CA 90058
- **Vernon City Hall - City Clerk Department**
4305 S. Santa Fe Avenue
Vernon, CA 90058



Return In Person Before Election Day

Monday through Thursday
7:00 AM to 5:30 PM

- **Vernon City Hall - City Clerk Department**
4305 S. Santa Fe Avenue
Vernon, CA 90058



Next Time You Move

Update Your Voter Registration!

1. Online at: **LAVOTE.GOV**
2. Post Offices
3. City Clerk Offices
4. Department of Motor Vehicles Offices
5. Libraries
6. Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

Please go to **LAVOTE.GOV** or call toll free 1-800-815-2666, option 2 to find your current registration status and how to obtain a voter registration card.



Electioneering Prohibited!

VIOLATIONS CAN LEAD TO FINES AND/OR IMPRISONMENT.

WHERE:

- Within the immediate vicinity of a person in line to cast their ballot or within 100 feet of the entrance of a polling place, curbside voting or drop box the following activities are prohibited

WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE PROHIBITED:

- *DO NOT* ask a person to vote for or against any candidate or ballot measure.
- *DO NOT* display a candidate's name, image, or logo.
- *DO NOT* block access to or loiter near any ballot drop boxes.
- *DO NOT* provide any material or audible information for or against any candidate or ballot measure near any polling place, vote center, or ballot drop box.
- *DO NOT* circulate any petitions, including for initiatives, referenda, recall, or candidate nominations.
- *DO NOT* distribute, display, or wear any clothing (hats, shirts, signs, buttons, stickers) that include a candidate's name, image, logo, and/or support or oppose any candidate or ballot measure.
- *DO NOT* display information or speak to a voter about the voter's eligibility to vote.

The electioneering prohibitions summarized above are set forth in Article 7 of Chapter 4 of Division 18 of the California Elections Code.



Corrupting the Voting Process is Prohibited!

VIOLATIONS SUBJECT TO FINE AND/OR IMPRISONMENT.

WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE PROHIBITED:

- *DO NOT* commit or attempt to commit election fraud.
- *DO NOT* provide any sort of compensation or bribery to, in any fashion or by any means induce or attempt to induce, a person to vote or refrain from voting.
- *DO NOT* illegally vote.
- *DO NOT* attempt to vote or aid another to vote when not entitled to vote.
- *DO NOT* engage in electioneering; photograph or record a voter entering or exiting a polling place; or obstruct ingress, egress, or parking.
- *DO NOT* challenge a person's right to vote or prevent voters from voting; delay the process of voting; or fraudulently advise any person that he or she is not eligible to vote or is not registered to vote.
- *DO NOT* attempt to ascertain how a voter voted their ballot.
- *DO NOT* possess or arrange for someone to possess a firearm in the immediate vicinity of a polling place, with some exceptions.
- *DO NOT* appear or arrange for someone to appear in the uniform of a peace officer, guard, or security personnel in the immediate vicinity of a polling place, with some exceptions.
- *DO NOT* tamper or interfere with any component of a voting system.
- *DO NOT* forge, counterfeit, or tamper with the returns of an election.
- *DO NOT* alter the returns of an election.
- *DO NOT* tamper with, destroy, or alter any polling list, official ballot, or ballot container.
- *DO NOT* display any unofficial ballot collection container that may deceive a voter into believing it is an official collection box.
- *DO NOT* tamper or interfere with copy of the results of votes cast.
- *DO NOT* coerce or deceive a person who cannot read or an elder into voting for or against a candidate or measure contrary to their intent.
- *DO NOT* act as an election officer when you are not one.

EMPLOYERS cannot require or ask their employee to bring their vote by mail ballot to work or ask their employee to vote their ballot at work. At the time of payment of salary or wages, employers cannot enclose materials that attempt to influence the political opinions or actions of their employee.

PRECINCT BOARD MEMBERS cannot attempt to determine how a voter voted their ballot or, if that information is discovered, disclose how a voter voted their ballot.

The prohibitions on activity related to corruption of the voting process summarized above are set forth in Chapter 6 of Division 18 of the California Elections Code.






Voter Bill of Rights

YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING RIGHTS:

- 1** **The right to vote if you are a registered voter.** You are eligible to vote if you are:
 - a U.S. citizen living in California
 - at least 18 years old
 - registered where you currently live
 - not currently serving a state or federal prison term for the conviction of a felony
 - not currently found mentally incompetent to vote by a court
- 2** **The right to vote if you are a registered voter even if your name is not on the list.** You will vote using a provisional ballot. Your vote will be counted if elections officials determine that you are eligible to vote.
- 3** **The right to vote if you are still in line when the polls close.**
- 4** **The right to cast a secret ballot** without anyone bothering you or telling you how to vote.
- 5** **The right to get a new ballot if you have made a mistake,** if you have not already cast your ballot. You can:
 - Ask an elections official at Vernon City Hall** for a new ballot,
 - Exchange your vote-by-mail ballot** for a new one at Vernon City Hall.
- 6** **The right to get help casting your ballot** from anyone you choose, except from your employer or union representative.
- 7** **The right to drop off your completed vote-by-mail ballot at** Vernon City Hall.
- 8** **The right to get election materials in a language other than English** if enough people in your voting precinct speak that language.
- 9** **The right to ask questions to elections officials about election procedures** and watch the election process. If the person you ask cannot answer your questions, they must send you to the right person for an answer. If you are disruptive, they can stop answering you.
- 10** **The right to report any illegal or fraudulent election activity to an elections official or the Secretary of State's office.**

If you believe you have been denied any of these rights, call the Secretary of State's confidential toll-free Voter Hotline at **(800) 345-VOTE (8683)**.

 -  On the web at www.cityofvernon.org
 -  By phone at **(323) 583-8811 ext. 546**
 -  By email at CityClerk@cityofvernonca.gov

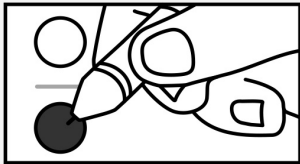
IF YOU BELIEVE YOU HAVE BEEN DENIED ANY OF THESE RIGHTS, CALL THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S CONFIDENTIAL TOLL-FREE VOTER HOTLINE AT (800) 345-VOTE (8683).



Sample Ballot

City of Vernon General Municipal Election
April 8, 2025

Instructions to voters: Marking your ballot



Do this



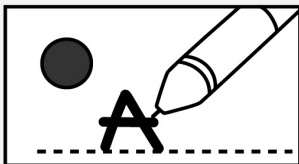
Not this



Not this

- Use only black or blue ink pen to mark your choice on your ballot.
- Fill in the circle to the left of your choice.
- Don't vote for more choices than indicated.

Write-In Candidates



- A voter is entitled to cast a vote for a qualified write-in candidate for any party-nominated, voter-nominated or nonpartisan office by writing, on the write-in portion of the ballot, the name of the qualified candidate.
- To add a candidate, fill in the circle to the left of "Write-In Candidate" and write the name on the dotted line.
- A list of qualified write-in candidates is available eleven days before the election at cityofvernon.org/elections
- Do not write-in a candidate whose name already appears on the ballot.

CITY/LOCAL

CITY OF VERNON GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION Member of the City Council

Vote For **ONE**

- DIANA GONZALES**

- JUDITH MERLO**
Incumbent

- Write-In Candidate

Y CITY OF VERNON GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION MEASURE Y

Vote **YES** or **NO**

Shall the measure amending Chapters 3.5 and 3.6 of the Vernon City Charter to state that during City Council installation following a regular municipal election, the position of Mayor shall be filled by the Council Member entering their fifth (last) year of their Council seat's term, and the position of Mayor Pro Tempore shall be filled by the Council Member entering their fourth year of their Council seat's term, and so on in descending order if necessary, be adopted?

- YES on Measure Y**

- NO on Measure Y**

Z CITY OF VERNON GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION MEASURE Z

Vote **YES** or **NO**

Shall the measure amending Chapter 3.4 of the Vernon City Charter to require that election returns be canvassed beginning on the first Tuesday following a City Council election and continued in the time, form, and manner required by the City Charter, Vernon Municipal Code, and the general laws of the State governing municipal elections, and that Council Member terms shall begin at the hour election results are certified by the City Council, be adopted?

- YES on Measure Z**

- NO on Measure Z**

! End of Ballot



Sample Ballot

City of Vernon General Municipal Election
April 8, 2025

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Candidate Statements & Measures

The following pages may contain Candidate Statements, and/or Ballot Measure Analyses, Arguments or Rebuttals.

Candidates for local offices have the option of including a statement, for which they pay a fee, unless the governing body pays the fee.

In compliance with the law, only English and Spanish language Candidate Statements are included in this booklet. Each candidate that submitted a Spanish language Candidate Statement has paid an additional fee.

Candidate Statements, Arguments or Rebuttals In Favor, or/and Against Ballot Measures are not edited or verified for accuracy by any elections officials.

Arguments and/or Rebuttals are the opinions of the authors.



Candidate Statements & Measures

STATEMENT OF JUDITH MERLO CANDIDATE FOR MEMBER OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF VERNON GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION

My name is Judith Merlo and I am running for re-election to the Vernon City Council. I was first elected in 2021 and am currently Mayor. Since 2021, I have worked with our residents, businesses and the Council to plan for Vernon's future.

Vernon has faced many challenges but we continue to move forward with new ideas and ethical practices in pursuit of economic growth and prosperity. We are on a mission to grow our residential population, attract clean businesses, and make positive changes for our community.

I am proud to represent Vernon where I have raised my family. Our support for youth and families through our scholarship program, literacy programs, and community outreach is special. I am committed to continuing to support our youth and to improving the quality of life for Vernon's families.

In my professional life, I am an account manager for a leading gaming company, have experience in real estate, and have worked in the administrative side of a law firm. As a Council Member, I enjoy serving the public and am committed to leading with transparency and good governance.

I would be honored to serve and represent you, and have your vote on April 8th.

CITY ATTORNEY'S IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS OF MEASURE Y

Measure Y was submitted to the voters by the City Council of the City of Vernon. This measure, if approved, will amend Chapters 3.5 and 3.6 of Article III of the Vernon City Charter to change the automatic rotation process for selecting the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore from one by which the positions are rotated based on year of election, to one where positions are rotated so that the position of Mayor shall be filled by the Council Member entering their fifth (last) year of their Council seat's term, and the position of Mayor Pro Tempore shall be filled by the Council Member entering their fourth year of their Council seat's term.

Chapters 3.5 and 3.6 of the Vernon City Charter provide direction for the installation of Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore following a regular municipal election, and at any time there is a vacancy in either office. The current rotation process is based on the order of election of Council Members and was established to ensure each Council Member has an opportunity to serve as Mayor. The proposed ballot measure modifies the rotation process to one based on the year of a Council seat's term, specifying that the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore positions are to be filled by the Council Members serving in the fifth and fourth year of their respective Council seat terms.

The intent behind the proposed change in rotation is to recognize the service of Council Members serving the final year of their term by allowing them to "term out" as Mayor. The amendment provides for the ability of any Councilmember whose turn it is to be Mayor or Mayor Pro Tempore to decline the position for whatever reason and for the position to fall to the Council Member entering their fourth (Mayor) or third year (Mayor Pro Tem) of their Council seat's term, and so on in descending order if necessary.

The text of the proposed revised Charter language is available here: <https://www.CityofVernon.org/Measure>

It is intended and estimated that there will be no financial impact to the City.

ZAYNAH N. MOUSSA
City Attorney
City of Vernon

The above statement is an impartial analysis of Measure Y. If you desire a copy of the Measure, please contact the City Clerk at (323) 583-8811, ext. 546, or via email at cityclerk@cityofvernonca.gov, and a copy will be provided at no cost to you. The Resolution placing the Measure on the ballot is also available from the City Clerk's office at the same address and email address, at no cost.



Candidate Statements & Measures

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE Y

The Mayor is the presiding officer of the City Council and serves as the official head of the City for all ceremonial purposes. The Mayor Pro Tempore performs the duties of Mayor during the Mayor's absence.

Chapters 3.5 and 3.6 of the Vernon City Charter establish the process for the installation of a Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem from the City Council.

Currently, both positions are designated according to a rotation process based on the order of Council Member elections. For example, the position of Mayor is filled by the Council Member whose election immediately followed the election of the prior Mayor. With the current process, the rotation order for Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem may be impacted by individual Council Member elections including Special Elections as may occur due to unexpected City Council vacancies such as resignations or recalls.

Measure Y modifies the rotation process to one based on the year of a Council seat's term and would specify that the seat of Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem be filled by the Council Members serving in the fifth and fourth year of their respective Council seat terms. This allows for consistency of order based on Council Member seats instead of individual election dates. The rotation process proposed by Measure Y would not be impacted by unexpected City Council vacancies or elections.

Measure Y maintains an automatic rotation process for the selection of Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem.

Measure Y recognizes the service of Council Members serving the final year of their term by allowing them to "term out" as Mayor.

A YES VOTE ON MEASURE Y IS A VOTE FOR A FAIR, CONSISTENT AND ORDERLY PROCESS FOR THE SELECTION OF A MAYOR AND MAYOR PRO TEMPORE.

Vote Yes on Measure Y!

JUDITH MERLO
Mayor

NO ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE Y WAS SUBMITTED

CITY ATTORNEY'S IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS OF MEASURE Z

Measure Z was submitted to the voters by the City Council of the City of Vernon. This measure, if approved, will amend Chapter 3.4 of the Vernon City Charter to align City election canvassing procedures and timeframes with applicable State election law.

State law sets forth specific canvass procedures and timeframes. The last paragraph of Chapter 3.4 of the Vernon City Charter establishes City election canvassing procedures. The proposed ballot measure would amend Chapter 3.4 of the Vernon City Charter to ensure compliance with applicable state election law relating to election canvassing procedures. The proposed changes would remove language directing the canvass of the returns of an election within fifteen (15) days of the election as that conflicts with current State law. Additionally, the proposed ballot measure would amend the Charter to indicate that Council Member terms shall begin at the hour election results are certified by the City Council and not upon the completion of the canvass as stated currently.

The text of the proposed revised Charter language is available here: <https://www.CityofVernon.org/Measure>

It is intended and estimated that there will be no financial impact to the City.

ZAYNAH N. MOUSSA
City Attorney
City of Vernon

The above statement is an impartial analysis of Measure Z. If you desire a copy of the Measure, please contact the City Clerk at (323) 583-8811, ext. 546, or via email at cityclerk@cityofvernonca.gov, and a copy will be provided at no cost to you. The Resolution placing the Measure on the ballot is also available from the City Clerk's office at the same address and email address, at no cost.



Candidate Statements & Measures

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE

Z

Chapter 3.4 of the Vernon City Charter establishes the procedures for the election of City Council Members including terms and canvassing procedures. State law also sets forth specific canvass procedures and timeframes to ensure that all votes cast by eligible voters are processed and counted.

Currently, Chapter 3.4 indicates the canvass of the returns of an election shall occur within fifteen (15) days of the election. Chapter 3.4 also dictates that Council Member terms begin at the hour of the completion of the canvass of the election returns. These current City provisions conflict with State elections laws.

Measure Z proposes to amend Chapter 3.4 of the Vernon City Charter to ensure compliance with applicable state election laws relating to canvassing procedures.

Measure Z would also update language in Charter Chapter 3.4 to indicate Council Member terms begin once election results are certified by the City Council.

Measure Z ensures that City procedures for Council Member terms and canvassing elections results are clear and aligned with applicable State laws.

Vote YES on Measure Z!

JUDITH MERLO
Mayor

**NO ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE Z WAS
SUBMITTED**



Online Sample Ballot

View your Sample Ballot online!



Visit LAVOTE.GOV/Vernon

Follow us online
www.cityofvernon.org



City of Vernon

Detach



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES



BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO 31128 LOS ANGELES CA

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

VOTE BY MAIL
REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK
PO BOX 30450
LOS ANGELES CA 90030-9908



Detach

001

County of Los Angeles
Registrar Recorder County Clerk
P.O. Box 30450
Los Angeles, CA 90030-0450

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
COUNTY OF LOS
ANGELES REGISTRAR
RECORDER COUNTY
CLERK

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



Detach

To receive election materials in a language other than English, mark your preference below and drop this card in the mail.

Please send me a ballot in the language I have checked below:

Spanish (Español)

Korean (한국어)

Detach

Call (323) 583-8811 ext. 546 or email cityclerk@cityofvernonca.gov