



CITY  
**Charter**  
V O T E R G U I D E

*Be in the know!*

For more information, please visit [www.victoriatx.gov/Charter](http://www.victoriatx.gov/Charter).



## **Proposition A: Removing redundant information**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria to provide clarity by deleting and amending those provisions which are redundant of state law, duplicative of other sections of the Charter or otherwise unnecessary for placement in the Charter.

### ***What it means:***

Some parts of the current charter repeat information that is already included in state law or in other parts of the charter. This amendment would remove these repetitive sections of the charter.

## **Proposition B: Consistency with state law**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria for compliance with state law.

### ***What it means:***

Some parts of the current charter conflict with state law. When state laws and local laws are opposed to each other, state law takes priority. This means that the parts of the charter that conflict with state law cannot be enforced.

This amendment would remove and/or edit those parts of the charter to make the charter consistent with state law.

## **Proposition C: Term limits**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria to provide that all elected officials are ineligible to serve in the same office for a period of one year after serving four (4) consecutive elected terms in that office.

### ***What it means:***

The current charter does not include term limits for mayors or City Council members. This amendment would create term limits by preventing any elected official from serving for more than four consecutive three-year terms in the same seat.

## **Proposition D: Allowing the City Council to fill vacancies by appointment**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria to provide that the City Council may, upon a vacancy occurring on Council with less than 180 days remaining on the term, leave a position vacant, appoint a new Council Member to fill such vacancy for the remaining 180 days, or call a special election to fill the vacancy.

### ***What it means:***

Under the current charter, the City Council is not allowed to appoint new council members to fill a vacancy. This means that if a City Council seat comes open before a term is finished (for example, because of a death or resignation), the City must call a special election to fill the vacancy. (The council can also choose to leave the position vacant, but only if the unexpired term is less than 120 days.)

This amendment would allow the council to temporarily appoint someone to fill the position rather than paying for a special election, but only if the unexpired term would last for less than 180 days. Like any City Council member, the person appointed would need to be a resident of the district he or she would represent.

## **Proposition E: Allowing long-term leasing of parkland**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria to authorize leases or conveyances of parkland be conducted consistent with the requirements of state law.

### ***What it means:***

Under the current charter, the City cannot lease space in public parks for more than 20 years at a time. This means that businesses and other private entities that want to operate within City parks cannot be guaranteed a lease of more than 20 years. This amendment would allow park spaces to be leased for more than 20 years at a time. It would also remove some redundant restrictions on the sale and leasing of parkland, since these restrictions already appear in state law.



## **Proposition F: What to do if the mayor and mayor pro-tem are both absent**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria to provide that if the Mayor and Mayor Pro-Tem are absent, sick, or unable to perform the duties of office, the most senior member of City Council shall perform the duties of Mayor.

### ***What it means:***

The current charter does not specify who should fulfill the duties of mayor if both the mayor and the mayor pro-tem are absent. This amendment would allow the longest-serving member of the City Council to assume the duties of mayor in the absence of the mayor and the mayor pro-tem.

## **Proposition G: Deciding when to elect a new mayor pro-tem**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria to provide that a Mayor Pro-Tem shall be elected by the City Council at the first regular City Council meeting following each regular City election.

### ***What it means:***

Under the current charter, a City Council member who is chosen as mayor pro-tem will continue to serve as mayor pro-tem for the remainder of his or her current term as a council member. This amendment would require the council to choose a mayor pro-tem after each regular election.

- If it passes: The council will choose a mayor pro-tem after every regular election.
- If it doesn't pass: The council will only choose a mayor pro-tem whenever the current mayor pro-tem's current term on the City Council expires.

## **Proposition H: Digital access to codes and ordinances**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria to provide that all adopted ordinances and the City's code shall published electronically and on the City's website.

### ***What it means:***

The current charter does not require City ordinances or codes to be accessible online. This amendment would require City ordinances to be published online at [www.victoriatx.gov](http://www.victoriatx.gov) and would require City codes to be accessible online as well.

- If it passes: The City must publish ordinances online at [www.victoriatx.gov](http://www.victoriatx.gov) and must provide online access to the City's code.
- If it doesn't pass: The City will not be required to provide online access to ordinances or codes.

## **Proposition I: Appointing and removing City Attorney's Office staff**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria to provide that all assistant city attorneys are to be appointed and removed by the City Attorney.

### ***What it means:***

The current charter states that assistant city attorneys hired by the city attorney must be approved by the City Council, and it does not state whether the City Council must approve the removal of assistants. This amendment would allow the city attorney to appoint or remove assistants without approval from the City Council.

The amendment would not allow the city attorney to create new staff positions; it only affects hiring or removing personnel for existing assistant city attorney positions.

- If it passes: The city attorney may appoint or remove assistants without approval from the City Council.
- If it doesn't pass: The city attorney can only appoint assistants with approval from the City Council.



## **Proposition J: Duties of the City Attorney's Office**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria to clarify the powers and duties of the City Attorney.

### ***What it means:***

The current charter requires the city attorney to represent the City in all legal matters. It also includes a list of the city attorney's duties. This amendment would allow the City to hire outside legal counsel if doing so is necessary or appropriate (for example, if the city attorney has a conflict of interest). It would also remove the list of duties and instead summarize it by saying that the City Attorney's Office will be the legal advisor for the City and must review all proposed ordinances.

## **Proposition K: Authorizing checks in a paperless system**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria to require the City Council to adopt an ordinance which provides appropriate signatory authority for checks, vouchers, or warrants for the withdrawal of money from a City Depository.

### ***What it means:***

Under the current charter, checks must be signed by the director of finance and countersigned by the city manager, even though current technology does not require paper checks. This amendment would allow the City Council to adopt an ordinance that allows checks and other financial documents to be authorized using current technology and accounting standards.

## **Proposition L: Qualified voter vs. registered voter**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending Article VIII Initiative, Referendum and Recall of the Charter of the City of Victoria changing the term "qualified voter" to "registered voter".

### ***What it means:***

Article VIII uses the term "qualified voter" to describe someone who is registered to vote. The term creates a possibility for confusion because it could be wrongly interpreted to mean someone who meets the requirements to be able to vote regardless of whether he or she is registered. This amendment would change the term "qualified voter" to "registered voter" throughout Article VIII. This is only a change in vocabulary. It does not affect the meaning of the law.

## **Proposition M: Defining a conflict of interest**

### ***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria to require city officials to comply with state law regarding conflicts of interest.

### ***What it means:***

Under the current charter, the City is prohibited from contracting with a company or other entity if an elected official has a financial stake in it (that is, a conflict of interest).

This amendment would make it so that the City wouldn't necessarily be prohibited from working with that company. Instead, the official who has the conflict of interest must publicly disclose the conflict and must not participate in discussions or voting on contracts with that company.

The proposed change would make the City's rules match state law on conflicts of interest.

- If it passes: If a City official has a conflict of interest, he or she must disclose it and must not participate in discussions or voting that involve the company that is the subject of the conflict.
- If it doesn't pass: If a City official has a conflict of interest, the City cannot contract with the company that is the subject of the conflict.



**Proposition N: Ensuring that the City Council can fill multiple vacancies caused by deaths, injuries, etc.**

***How it appears on the ballot:***

Amending the Charter of the City of Victoria to provide a process for reconstituting the City Council when a quorum of City Council may not be established due to multiple deaths, injuries, incapacitations, or recall elections.

***What it means:***

The City Council can only conduct official business, such as scheduling an election, if a quorum (four or more members) are present. The current charter does not include any guidance on how to establish a quorum if the council has multiple vacancies (for example, because of deaths or resignations). Therefore, if the council had too many vacancies to establish a quorum, the City would be unable to schedule an election to fill those vacancies.

This amendment would allow the mayor—or, if the mayor position is one of the vacancies, the Victoria County Commissioners Court—to appoint temporary City Council members who would then schedule an election as soon as possible to fill the vacancies. If one or more of the vacancies is temporary (for example, because a council member has a serious illness or injury), then the temporary member(s) would continue to serve until the original council member(s) can resume their duties.

This amendment does not apply to regular absences. It only applies to permanent or long-term vacancies caused by deaths, injuries, incapacitations, or recall elections.

- If it passes: The mayor or the Victoria County Commissioners Court will be able to appoint temporary City Council members if there are not enough members to schedule an election. The temporary members will only serve until the vacancies can be filled by an election.
- If it doesn't pass: The City Council will not be able to schedule an election if there are too many vacancies for a quorum to be established.