

CITY PURCHASING VOTING MACHINES

900 Will Cost \$1,552,000—

To Speed November Vote

The city began yesterday to buy 900 voting machines at \$1,725 each to provide faster voting next November in the city's more populous election districts.

The purchase, when completed, will also comply with legislation passed by the 1966 Legislature requiring the use of two voting machines in any election district that has more than 800 registered voters.

The Legislature made it permissive to use a second machine in any district with more than 750 voters, but required a second machine in any district with more than 800 registrants.

The Legislature acted after widespread complaints following the 1965 mayoralty election that voters had to wait too long in some of the heavier populated districts where there was only one machine.

There were also reports that some voters, discouraged by abnormally long waits in some areas, left the lines and went home without voting.

The move to purchase the 900 new machines was initiated yesterday by the City Planning Commission. It set Sept. 7 for a hearing on an amendment to the capital budget to provide \$2,074,500 for the purchase. Of this amount, \$1,552,500 would pay the cost of the machines. The remainder would cover warehousing, handling and other incidental expenses.

The capital budget amend-

ment will require approval also by the City Council and the Board of Estimate.

Together with 415 machines which the Board of Estimate voted last Thursday to purchase for \$661,925, the new acquisitions will give the city 5,815 voting machines.

The 415 bought by the Board of Estimate have been used by the city for the past two years

under rental. A Board of Elections spokesman said yesterday the \$661,925 cost—\$1,595 a machine — reflected a credit to the city for the rentals paid to date.

The 900 new machines are to be purchased from the Shoup Voting Machine Company at private purchase, without public bidding. Several years ago the city selected the Shoup unit as its exclusive voting machine.