

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

0220-04980-0000

Date: September 17, 2014

To: Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

From: Miguel A. Santana, City Administrative Officer

Sharon M. Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst

Subject: **REPORT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS
REFORM COMMISSION (C.F. NO. 13-1364)****BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY**

On October 22, 2013, the City Council adopted a Resolution (Wesson-Krekorian, C.F. 13-1364), which formed the City of Los Angeles Municipal Elections Reform Commission (Commission). The Commission was created to provide a comprehensive review of the City's Charter, Election Code, and electoral process, with particular focus on enhancing voter participation and civic engagement.

The Commission consisted of nine members: four members were appointed by the President of the City Council; four members were appointed by the Mayor; and one member, who acted as chair of the Commission, was jointly appointed by the Council President and the Mayor. Members of the Commission have backgrounds in various election-related fields which include, but are not limited to: elections, marketing, outreach, neighborhood council leadership, polling places, and event coordination.

The Commission held its first meeting on February 27, 2014, and held several subsequent meetings both at Los Angeles City Hall, and public/community input meetings in various areas of the City. At each meeting, the Commission heard presentations and engaged with various subject matter experts/stakeholders, the County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (County Registrar), other Los Angeles County cities, various non-profit organizations, and other related organizations.

On June 5, 2014, the Commission submitted its report with recommendations to the City Council for enhancing voter participation and civic engagement in the City of Los Angeles. The recommendations include proposed changes in the following areas:

- election dates;
- voter registration and voter list maintenance efforts;
- early voting, polling place, and ease of voting;
- outreach to voters, public information and education, and civic engagement; and
- absentee voting and Vote-By-Mail.

At the meeting of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee on June 20, 2014, your Committee instructed the City Administrative Officer and the Chief Legislative Analyst to report on the recommendations of the Commission. We have provided summaries, discussion of key issues, and fiscal impact analyses on each of the Commission's recommendations in this report.

A quick guide of the Commission's recommendations, current practices, and key issues is included as **Attachment A** of this report. Additionally, a summary of the Commission's recommendations are as follows:

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Change the City's municipal elections dates to June/November of even years;
2. Change the City's municipal elections dates to June/November of odd years;
3. Extend the time period between the primary and general elections and extend the official canvass period to 28 days;
4. Place voter registration forms on all of the City's public counters;
5. Target voter registration efforts in neighborhoods with lower voter registration rates;
6. Engage Neighborhood Councils (NCs) in voter registration activities;
7. Partner with civic and service organizations to register and educate voters in public locations;
8. Request the County Registrar to issue an "Address Correction Requested – Do Not Forward" mailer to voters;
9. Request the County Registrar to be more proactive in identifying inactive voters;
10. Create a citywide network of early voting locations;
11. Explore the expansion of non-traditional polling locations such as shopping centers, malls, etc.;
12. Transition to a greater use of public locations as polling places;
13. Utilize the same facilities as the County Registrar to the greatest extent possible;
14. Replace the City's precinct-based election model with a voting center based model;
15. Simplify all voter materials and messages;
16. Enhance efforts to fully comply with all state and federal requirements to provide language assistance to under-represented voters, and provide assistance to language minority voters not covered under such requirements;
17. Relax parking ticketing near polling places on Election Day;
18. Remain cognizant of under-represented populations when designing programs to increase voter registration and voter participation;
19. Fund programs that enhance voter awareness of elections and promote a culture of voting;
20. Involve the City's workforce and Neighborhood Councils in promoting Election Day awareness and voter participation;

21. Implement and fund the 10 recommendations included in the City Clerk's Alternative Voting Methods report;
22. Develop voter outreach programs that include personalized messages and trusted messengers;
23. Expand use of video communications, in addition to Public Service Announcements (PSAs);
24. Continue exploration of the use of technology, apps, and social media as a component of voter outreach and engagement efforts ;
25. Expand use of technology to promote voter engagement as described in the Commission's Report;
26. Address and dispel voting myths regarding negative consequences of registering and voting. Disseminate the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) of voting to help voters learn and understand the basics of the election process;
27. Request that LAUSD restore civics education as a separate course at the 11th or 12th grade level;
28. Look for collaboration opportunities with LAUSD in conducting high school civic outreach activities;
29. Consider efforts to contact permanent absentee voters whose ballots are disallowed because of mismatched signatures or other irregularities;
30. Promote Vote-By-Mail and enrollment as permanent Vote-By-Mail voter;
31. Support State legislation to allow acceptance of Vote-By-Mail ballots postmarked no later than Election Day and received within three days of Election Day;
32. Consider and study costs of providing pre-paid postage on Vote-By-Mail ballot envelopes; and
33. Clarify and simplify vote-by-mail instructions.

CAO/CLA SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to adopt many of the Commission's recommendations, it will be necessary to identify all the potential changes to the provisions of the City Charter and the City's Administrative, Municipal, and Election Codes (City codes). Further, the City Attorney will need to submit ballot language for any potential Charter changes and prepare amendments to the relevant City codes by Ordinance. Council should be aware that there are legal deadlines for placing the necessary measures on the ballot. Our Offices recommend that the Council adopt the following supplemental recommendations:

34. Request the City Attorney to identify all potential changes to the City Charter and relevant City Codes associated with each adopted recommendation, and to subsequently report said findings to the Council (for Recommendations 1-33); and
35. Request the City Attorney to prepare and present the ballot measure language or Ordinances necessary to amend the City Charter, in order to implement the adopted Recommendation 1, 2, or 3 of this report.

DISCUSSION

The recommendations of the Commission have been modified in a manner which would not alter the intent of the Commission's recommendations, for the purpose of providing an adoptable form of recommendations for the City Council and Mayor's consideration. This section includes an analysis of the Commission recommendations, including a background and summary, fiscal impact, and related issues for consideration.

The recommendations included in this section represent a modified form of the Commission recommendations. There are three individual, mutually exclusive recommendations regarding Election Dates. Only one of these three recommendations may be adopted. The recommendations in the remaining sections (Recommendations 4-33) may be adopted in part or in full. The recommendations are as follows:

ELECTION DATES

Primary Recommendation

1. Change the dates for the City of Los Angeles' regular primary and general municipal elections from the existing March/May of odd numbered years schedule, to a new schedule of June/November of even numbered years, subject to the following conditions:

- a. The City's municipal elections are consolidated with the County of Los Angeles' administered State primary and general elections, with the County of Los Angeles serving as the lead administering agency for said elections;**
- b. The County has successfully implemented a new voting system which can accommodate the consolidation of the City's municipal election and which has been successfully demonstrated and operated prior to the consolidation;**
- c. A cost comparison study of the potential financial impacts of consolidation be performed; and**
- d. The City invest additional resources in, and subsequently administer, a robust outreach program for the elections, in coordination with the County.**

Background and Summary: The Commission's report indicates that moving the City's municipal elections to a June/November even numbered year (even year) election is the structural change which will result in a significant increase in voter turnout. The Commission indicated that higher turnout may be attributed to greater interest in higher profile Presidential and Gubernatorial races held on June/November of even years. This recommendation is further subject to the following conditions:

The Commission's recommendation is, in part, contingent upon the consolidation of the City's municipal elections with those of the Los Angeles County (County). In the absence of consolidated elections, the City would be required to hold concurrent elections which would pose significant administrative challenges for the City Clerk and have a potential negative impact on the voting experience;

The Commission's recommendation cannot be fully implemented until the County's new voting system is operational. The County Registrar cannot accommodate the City's municipal elections during even years in addition to the Federal, State, County, special district, and other city offices that are currently included in the June/November even year ballot;

The Commission also requires that a cost comparison study be completed prior to approving a change in election dates. Our Offices requested the approximate cost for the administration of a consolidated election in 2020, using the County's new voting system. However, at this time, the County is unable to provide a cost estimate for election administration because development of the new voting system is ongoing; and

The Commission further recommends that any changes in the City's electoral process be accompanied with outreach funding to ensure that the voters are made aware of and educated on these changes.

Analysis: Changing the election cycle from the current March/May of odd years to June/November of even years provides some benefits and challenges. The following is a summary of issues that should be considered prior to moving to the June/November even year election.

Impact on Turnout - The Commission report indicated that municipal elections in other jurisdictions held on the same day as a Presidential or Gubernatorial election resulted in an increase in voter turnout ranging from 21 to 36 percent among all registered voters. In comparison to the City's voter turnout in the March/May 2013 municipal elections, LA County voter turnout for the previous June/November 2010 and 2012 elections reflects a significantly higher voter turnout in the general but not the primary election.

	Jun/Nov 2010 Governor	Jun/Nov 2012 President	Mar/May 2013 Municipal
	LA County Turnout		City Turnout
Primary Election	25.70%	21.80%	20.80%
General Election	52.50%	69.20%	23.30%

In a County consolidated June/November even year election, the ballot will list City candidates after all the Federal, State, and County candidates. During Commission hearings, concerns were raised that voter fatigue may cause voters to "drop-off" from voting before reaching the City races. However, based on information provided to the Commission by Common Cause, city council races in cities, such as Alhambra, Downey, Pomona, and Santa Monica that held elections in November of even years showed voter turnout rates of 31 to 50 percent in 2008 and 49 to 54 percent in 2012. Despite drop-off rates which ranged from 12 to 55 percent, the local races still experienced significantly higher turnout rates compared to other cities which held elections on other dates.

Impacts on Governance and Terms of Office - In this scenario, the beginning and expiration of the terms of office for the City's elected officials would shift, along with the election dates. Instead of terms with an effective date of July 1 and expiration date of June 30, the terms of

office could begin in December, as is the case with the State, or at another specified date. If the City were to adopt December as the new start date for terms of office, the City would need to address the gap between the current term cycle, for those members whose terms expire on June of an odd year, and the incoming elected officials, whose terms would begin in December of an even year. The resulting one and a half year gap between the June end date and December begin date can be addressed by either a Charter change to adjust the dates of term and allow a temporary, one-time five and a half year term, or a special election, to fill the time frame.

If the City adopts a June/November even year election schedule effective in 2022, the City can adopt changes to the City Charter and City codes, and may place the ballot measure for Charter changes prior to the May 2017 general municipal election, to avoid issues of adding a measure on a ballot which would impact the existing terms of current officeholders. The term of office would revert to the four year term for those elected for the June/November 2022 and 2024 elections. Below is a table which illustrates the affected election cycles and extension of terms.

June/November Even Year Election Cycle Beginning 2022						
Potential Ballot Measure Dates for Charter Changes	Election Code Changes	Offices	Election Dates	Term* (temp 5.5 yr term)	Election Dates	New Term (resume 4 yr term)
City Mar/May 2015, 2017 County June/Nov 2016	Prior to Dec 2021	Mayor, City Attorney Controller, Odd CDs, Odd LAUSD, LACCD	Mar/May 2017	7/1/2017 - 11/30/22	Jun/Nov 2022	12/1/2022 - 11/30/26
		Even CDs, Odd LAUSD, LACCD	Mar/May 2019	7/1/2019 - 11/30/24	Jun/Nov 2024	12/1/2024 - 11/30/28

*Instead of a temporary 1.5 yr extension, the Charter amendment may include provisions for a Special Election to fill the resulting one and a half year gap between the June end date of the current term and December start date of the new term.

In order to implement a June/November election cycle by 2020, it may be necessary to include provisions in the ballot language, to hold a special election for the one and a half year term to align the terms of the outgoing elected officials with the June odd year end date to that of the incoming elected officials whose terms would begin in December. As an example, for a June/November even year election beginning in 2020, the Council could add a ballot measure for the March primary, or the May general election in 2015 to implement this timeline. In this scenario, the Council could place language on the ballot which would implement a one-time extension, resulting in a five and a half year term, as this action would not affect the existing terms of incumbents. However, since the City does not have a guarantee as to when the County's new election system will be implemented, it may be more practical to have a special election for the one and a half year term, as shown in the table below. While the June/November even year election beginning on 2022 is the most practical of the two options as it would allow more time for the County to test and implement its new voting system, alternatively, the City could transition to an even year June/November election cycle in 2020. A June/November even year election cycle prior to 2020 is not recommended by the City Clerk because it would not provide the County with sufficient opportunity to test and implement the new voting system in a large scale election prior to any consolidation with the City's municipal election. Below is a table which illustrates the affected election cycles and extension of terms.

June/November Even Year Election Cycle Beginning 2020							
Potential Ballot Measure Dates for Charter Changes	Election Code Changes	Offices	Election Dates	Term (4 yr term)	Special Election* (1.5 yr term)	Election Dates	New Term (resume 4 yr term)
City Mar/May 2015, 2017 County June/Nov 2016, 2018	Prior to	Even CDs, Odd LAUSD, LACCD	Mar/May 2015	7/1/2015 - 6/30/19	7/1/2019-11/30/20	Jun/Nov 2020	12/1/2020 - 11/30/24
	Dec 2019	Mayor, City Attorney Controller, Odd CDs, Odd LAUSD, LACCD	Mar/May 2017	7/1/2017 - 6/30/21	7/1/2021-11/30/22	Jun/Nov 2022	12/1/2022 - 11/30/26

*Instead of a special election, the Charter amendment may include provisions for a temporary 1.5 year term extension to fill the resulting one and a half year gap between the June end date of the current term and December start date of the new term.

Impact on Commission Appointment Timelines – The Charter currently requires that the terms of office for City Commission appointments begin on July 1. This date coincides with the commencement of terms for the Mayor and Council. If this recommendation is adopted, the Mayor would assume office in December, but the term requirements for Commission appointments would remain unchanged. Council should also consider changing the date by which Commission appointments must begin to coincide with the December start of the new terms of the elected officers. Such action, as well as action to change election dates and appointment dates, would require a Charter amendment by a vote of the electorate.

Impact on LAUSD – A change to a June/November of even years election system would impact the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) similarly, regarding the start and expiration dates of the terms of office for the Board of Education. Therefore, if the City were to adopt this recommendation with a June/November election cycle by 2022, candidates running for the LAUSD Board in 2017 and 2019, would also be subject to a temporary term extension of one year and five months as the City aligns its term system.

Budget Cycle Implications – Currently the Charter requires the following budget deadlines:

- January 1 - departments to submit their budget proposals to the Mayor
- March 1 - Controller to submit their revenue projection
- April 20 - Mayor to submit budget to Council
- June 1 - Council to approve or modify the Mayor's proposed budget

Under this new model, elected officials could assume office in December. The Mayor would need to immediately begin reviewing departmental budget proposals. Therefore, a December start date would greatly reduce the time the Mayor and Controller would have to review/prepare their charter-mandated budget documents.

Election Administration - The City Clerk currently administers two cycles of municipal elections. One cycle includes the Offices of the Mayor, eight odd-numbered Council Districts, Controller, City Attorney, three Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Board member seats, and three Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Board member seats. The other cycle includes seven even-numbered Council District offices, four LAUSD Board member seats, and four LACCD Board member seats.

If the City were to allow the County to conduct the municipal elections, the County would have no obligation to offer non-Federally mandated languages. Currently, the City offers additional language services in Armenian, Farsi, and Russian for City elections, in accordance with

adopted Council policy (CF 12-0604). There is currently no Federal requirement to offer these additional language services. The County offers language assistance in all of the languages which are offered by the City, with the exception of Farsi. Therefore, there is no guarantee that language assistance in Farsi would continue, if the County were to administer the City's elections.

It is also important to note that if the County were to administer the primary and general municipal elections, the County would not be required to adhere to either the City Charter or City Election Code. Instead, any City elections administered by the County would be governed by the State Election Code, and thus, the City would lose the ability to exercise local authority over the administration of its elections. The City would also lose decision-making capabilities over a variety of other issues including costs, the number and location of polling places/early voting sites, polling place consolidations, staffing, and poll worker compensation. In addition, City Clerk Election Division staff would still be responsible for candidate filing, petition processing, and the voter information pamphlets. Further, the City Clerk would continue to administer small in-house elections for other City departments. Therefore, the City Clerk would still need to maintain a permanent election staff to fulfill the City's obligations.

Consolidation of City elections with the County in June/November of even years is contingent upon the successful implementation of the County's new voting system. The County Board of Supervisors has a standing policy to disapprove the consolidation of municipal elections on its even year ballot. The County's even year ballot has an average of 145 different election contests with approximately 700 candidates and 45 measures, which occupies 75 percent or more of the available ballot space. Without the new voting system, the County cannot accommodate the consolidation of the City's municipal elections.

The Commission does not recommend a concurrent election. Concurrent City and County elections would require the City Clerk to compete with the County Registrar in the recruitment of polling places, poll workers, and temporary election staff. To the greatest extent possible, the City Clerk uses the same polling places as the County to maintain a consistent voting experience. However, concurrent elections would require the City to use different polling places if the County designated polling place cannot accommodate both the City's and County's staff. The City Clerk further advises that there would be insufficient voting equipment available to ensure compliance with the Federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 requirements. The City and County also recruits from the same pool of temporary elections staff. Currently the County rate of compensation for Election Assistants begins at the hourly rate of \$14.98 as compared to the City's rate of \$13.00. Since the County pays a higher rate to its temporary elections staff, the County can be expected to successfully recruit a higher percentage of the more experienced staff. Thus, the voting experience will most likely be negatively impacted by the need to vote on two different ballots within the same polling place or two separate polling places, and administration of the election by less experienced poll workers and temporary elections staff.

The Commission's report did not address the process for the administration of special elections. In the event that this recommendation is adopted, it will be necessary to develop a process to address special elections.

Required Changes to City Laws - Significant changes to the City Charter and City codes will be required if this recommendation is adopted. In addition, consideration should also be made regarding changes to other city processes that may be impacted by the change in the terms of elected officers. Changes to the Charter will require voter approval from both City residents and LAUSD voters. Charter changes can be placed on the City's March or May municipal elections or consolidated with the County's June or November elections. Administrative Code and Election Code amendments require an Ordinance which can be enacted by Council action. Changes to the Election Code take effect six months after adoption by the Council.

Fiscal Impact: At this time, an estimate is not available from the County regarding the costs of conducting the City's primary and general elections based on the County's new voting system. The County currently projects that the new system will be operational by 2018. The County Registrar is still in the process of developing the new voting system, and therefore, is unable to provide estimates for a consolidated June/November even year elections. However, the County Registrar acknowledges that cost savings can be realized in a June/November even year compared to an odd year scenario because of the substantial jurisdictional overlap between the Federal, State, and County races with that of the City races.

Alternate Recommendation

2. If Recommendation #1 is not adopted, the Commission recommends the following: approve a change of dates for the City of Los Angeles' regular primary and general municipal elections from the existing March/May of odd numbered years schedule, to a new schedule of June/November of odd numbered years and extend the official canvass period from 21 days to 28 days.

Background and Summary: According to the Commission report, moving the municipal elections from the current March/May of odd numbered years model, to June/November of odd numbered years, was discussed frequently as an alternative to the even numbered years (even years) proposal during Commission meetings, and thus was offered as the alternate recommendation to the even years proposal. Since voters are accustomed to voting in November, this transition could provide more familiarity to voters, which could possibly increase turnout countywide, if most, or all local governments in the County were to move their elections to November, per the report. However, the Commission also stated that simply moving the City's elections to June/November of odd years would not necessarily result in a significant increase in turnout. The County Registrar currently conducts Uniform District Election Law (UDEL) elections in November of odd years. As these are plurality elections, wherein the candidate with the highest number of votes wins the election, there are no primary elections. Changing to a June/November odd numbered years model would require that the primary election be held by either the City or the County Registrar. The general election may be consolidated with the County.

The Commission recommends that if the City does not implement a transition to the June/November of even numbered years model as contained in Recommendation 1 of this report, then the City should consider this alternate recommendation to move to a June/November of odd numbered years model.

Analysis: The scenario of changing the current elections cycle from the current March/May of odd numbered years model, to June/November of odd years, could provide some benefits and challenges for the City. The City Clerk and the County Registrar both agree that there could be some increase in turnout if most, or all, of the 88 cities in the County were to move to the June/November odd years model. The County projects some cost savings could be realized for each jurisdiction in the above mentioned scenario. Additionally, the familiarity of a November election has been shown to resonate with voters, and could provide consistency between even and odd years, as November would be widely known in the County as the time in which residents can vote. However, there are many issues to be considered prior to deciding whether the City should move to the June/November odd years model, a summary of which are provided below:

Impact on Turnout – Based on the Commission’s research and interviews with subject matter experts, the Commission did not find sufficient evidence which would suggest that simply changing to a June/November odd years election cycle would significantly increase turnout for City elections. During the Commission hearings, the City Clerk reported that in a study conducted by Common Cause, which compared local municipalities that conduct their elections in November of odd numbered years, their turnout rates were between 13-32 percent, compared to the 20-23 percent turnout in the City’s 2013 municipal elections;

Impacts on Governance and Terms of Office – In order to implement this recommendation, the start and expiration dates of offices for elected officials would be required to shift. The existing March/May election cycle provides for elected officials’ terms to begin on July 1 and expire on June 30. If shifted from March/May to June/November, the dates for the start and expiration of terms would also need to be shifted. Subsequent to the November general election, elected officials could assume office in December. The start of term could be changed to another month, after the November general election, such as January. Functionally, it would be easiest for elected officials, especially the Mayor, to assume office in December, to better coincide with legal budgetary deadlines. This would also mirror the State’s start of term timeline. In order to accommodate this shift, the City would need to transition elected officials for the new start of office date by temporarily extending terms of office by five months, as is consistent, per the City Clerk’s office, with other cities which have made similar changes in election dates.

If Council were to adopt this recommendation, our Offices would suggest that the new election cycle should be effective no earlier than 2019, to allow the County proper time to test and implement its new voting system and to avoid issues of adding a measure on a ballot which would impact the existing terms of current officeholders. The 2019 implementation date, which would impact those elected in 2015, would allow City and LAUSD offices on the 2015 ballot to be elected for a four and a half year term, expiring in December 2019. Below is a table which illustrates the temporary extension of terms

June/November Odd Year Election Cycle - Beginning 2019						
Election Year	Offices Eligible for Election	Current Terms of Office Schedule		Temp. Ext. of Term	New Terms of Office Schedule	
		Begins	Ends		Begins	Ends
2019	Even CDs, Odd LAUSD, LACCD	7/1/2015	6/30/2019	July 1, 2019 to November 2019 (5 mos)	12/2019	11/2023
2021	Mayor, City Attorney, Controller, Odd CDs, Even LAUSD, LACCD	7/1/2017	6/30/2021	July 1, 2021 to November 2021 (5 mos)	12/2021	11/2025

In addition, Charter provisions regarding Commission appointment start dates should be changed to coincide with the start of the elected officials' new terms, as further discussed in Recommendation 1.

Impact on LAUSD – A change to a June/November of odd years election system would impact the LAUSD similarly, regarding the assumption and expiration dates of the terms of office for the Board of Education. Therefore, if the City were to adopt this recommendation and implement the June/November election effective 2019, candidates running for the LAUSD Board in 2015 and 2017, would also be subject to a term extension of five months as the City aligns its term system.

Budget Cycle Implications – The new terms of office will give elected officials less time to meet budget related deadlines, as further discussed in Recommendation 1.

Election Administration – If the City were to adopt the June/November odd year model, several determinations would need to be made by the Council regarding which entity would administer the municipal elections and special elections. The City or the County could administer both the June primary and/or the November general elections.

If the County were to conduct the City's municipal elections, the following issues, which were previously discussed in the analysis of Recommendation 1, will still need to be considered:

- Provision of language services in Farsi language may be discontinued;
- County is not required to adhere to the City Charter or City's Election Code;
- City would lose administrative control over the conduct of the municipal elections; and
- City Clerk permanent staff will still be needed to conduct candidate filing, petition processing, voter information pamphlets, and administration of in-house elections.

If the City were to conduct the November general municipal election in the odd years, a concurrent County general election would be held. However, it is anticipated that the challenges discussed in the administration of a concurrent June/November even year election will not be applicable because the County's November odd year election is smaller in scale.

Required Changes to City Laws – Changing the date of municipal elections will require changes and/or additions to the City Charter and City codes. All Charter amendments will require voter approval, from both the City and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) voters. Additionally, if the County were to administer the City's primary and/or general elections, then more changes to the Charter and the Election Code would be required. If the

Council wishes to place a measure on the ballot for the 2015 municipal elections, the Council has until October 29, 2014 for the March primary, or until January 14, 2015 for the May general election, to request the City Attorney to prepare the necessary resolutions.

Cost Considerations – The City Clerk and the County Registrar indicate that the change to a June/November odd years cycle may generate cost savings to the City if a majority of the 88 cities in the County conducted elections at that time in order to share costs. However, if the City were to be one of few municipalities to move to this cycle, the costs would likely be substantially higher than existing costs for a number of reasons, including higher costs due to the relatively few jurisdictions conducting elections at that time; and a greater number of County election employees and higher overhead charges in comparison to those of the City.

Fiscal Impact: At this time, we do not have an estimate from the County regarding the costs of running the City's primary and general elections, based on the County's new voting system, which is estimated to be operational in 2018. For illustrative purposes, estimates are provided for the three potential scenarios for administering a June/November 2015 election. The estimates provided below are based on the County's existing voting system. The City will not have an accurate projection of costs for these scenarios until we receive more information from the County regarding the new voting system and its associated costs to the City. The table below summarizes the estimated cost for the three potential scenarios for conducting the 2015 municipal elections.

	Scenario 1			Scenario 2			Scenario 3
	County	City	Total	County	City	Total	City
	(in millions)			(in millions)			(in millions)
2015 Primary	\$21.80	\$1.90	\$23.70		\$10.40	\$10.40	\$10.40
2015 Consolidated General	\$16.80	\$1.20	\$18.00	\$16.80	\$1.20	\$18.00	
2015 Concurrent General							\$5.60
Total	\$38.60	\$3.10		\$16.80	\$11.60		\$16.00
Grand Total	\$41.70			\$28.40			\$16.00

Scenario 1: In a County administered primary election and County consolidated general election, the City would spend an estimated total of \$41.7 million, which includes County costs of \$38.6 million and City costs of \$3.1 million. The County provided an estimate of \$38.6 million for the administration of the City's municipal elections for June/November 2015, using its current voting system. This election would include seven even-numbered council district offices, five measures, four LAUSD Board member seats, and four LACCD Board member seats. In addition, the City has to maintain responsibility for candidate filing, petition processing, and voter information pamphlet production, which is estimated to cost \$3.1 million for both the primary and general elections.

Scenario 2: In a City administered primary election and County consolidated general election, the City would spend an estimated total of \$28.4 million, which includes County costs of \$16.8 million and City costs of \$11.6 million. The City estimates \$10.4 million for administering the primary election. The County provided an estimate of \$16.8 million for a County consolidated general election. In addition, the City estimates \$1.2 million in general election costs for candidate filing, petition processing, and voter information pamphlet production. The City

would spend an estimated total of \$18.0 million for the general election, which includes County costs of \$16.8 million and City costs of \$1.2 million.

Scenario 3: In a City administered primary and general June/November 2015 election, the City estimates a total cost of \$16 million.

Second Alternate Recommendation

3. If Recommendations 1 and 2 are not adopted, the Commission recommends the following: extend the time period between the City's primary and general elections and also extend the official canvass period from 21 days to 28 days.

Background and Summary: The Commission report currently indicates that, there are 10 weeks between the primary and the general elections. The City Clerk has 21 days, per the City Election Code, to process and count all the ballots, conduct audits where required, and certify the results. In the past, according to the Commission, this has caused issues on those occasions when the City Clerk has required the full three weeks to certify the results, as candidates then only have seven weeks to campaign and raise funds. Additionally, if the result were close enough to require a recount, the time available for campaigning would be further reduced. Therefore, the Commission recommends that the time between the City's primary and general elections be extended, with a corresponding increase in the time allowed to certify results, from 21 days to 28 days.

Analysis: Extending the period between the primary and general elections would allow more time for the City Clerk's Office and for candidates to prepare for runoff elections, in the event of a recount. One scenario specifically discussed by the Commission was maintaining a primary election in March, and changing the general election to June.

SB 29 (Correa) would amend the State Election Code to allow for the processing of any ballot which is received no later than three days after Election Day if postmarked no later than Election Day. As a result of this legislation, effective January 1, 2015, if the bill is signed by the Governor, the City Clerk will need additional time to process and certify the results. In an effort to be consistent with State law, the recommendation was made to also extend the official canvass period to 28 days. It should be noted that SB 29 also includes a provision which changes the election results certification period from 28 days to 30 days. If the City were to be consistent with State law, then the Council may wish to consider changing the official canvass period from 21 days to 30 days if SB 29 is signed into law, although the City is not required to do so.

Impact on Turnout – It is unclear how an extension of time between the primary and general elections, and an extension of the official canvass period will impact turnout.

Required Changes to City Laws – A change in election dates will require changes to the City Charter and the City Election Code. All Charter amendments will require voter approval. If the Council wishes to place a measure on the ballot for the 2015 municipal elections, the Council has until October 29, 2014 for the March primary, or until January 14, 2015 for the May general election, to request the City Attorney to prepare the related resolutions.

Fiscal Impact: While exact figures are dependent upon the exact change of election dates and whether the City would extend the official canvass period from 21 to 28, or 30 days, there could be a potential reduction in overtime costs due to the longer period to conduct the canvass. However, costs may also increase due to an increase in Vote-By-Mail ballots to be processed received after Election Day.

VOTER REGISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE OF VOTER FILES

4. Instruct all departments to place voter registration forms on all public counters where City employees interact with the public.

Background and Summary: The City employs over 40,000 employees, many of whom interact with the public on a daily basis. The Commission's recommendation provides a cost neutral expansion of voter registration efforts by using the City's public counters as an opportunity to remind the public to register to vote.

Analysis: Voter registration forms are available without cost from either the Los Angeles County Registrar or the California Secretary of State. If this recommendation is adopted, the anticipated administrative impact related to ensuring that the forms remain in stock, requesting additional forms from the Los Angeles County Registrar, and answering questions on the forms is minimal.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

5. Request that the Los Angeles County Registrar, in collaboration with the City Clerk, assess and target voter registration efforts towards neighborhoods with lower rates of voter registration.

Background and Summary: The Commission's recommendation included an increased voter registration effort in areas with a large number of potential eligible voters, but low registration rates. However, the City Clerk does not have information on areas with high concentrations of eligible, yet unregistered voters. The Commission further recommended that registration efforts should be expanded citywide during election years and as the registration deadline nears.

The City Clerk does not conduct registration drives. Instead, it holds outreach or educational presentations which may include encouraging voter registration, attending community events, raising awareness of upcoming elections, answering questions from residents, or educating constituents about the electoral process.

Analysis: The Los Angeles County Registrar has sole responsibility for processing voter registration forms. Therefore registration efforts would be more appropriately led by the County Registrar, with the City Clerk in a supportive role. The City Clerk's limited staffing will not allow for an increase of events focused on voter registration alone, but City Clerk staff includes voter registration along with raising Election Day awareness and voter participation within its outreach program. Further, the City Clerk, in collaboration with Los Angeles Votes Committee

(LAVC) members, plans to increase outreach at low voter turnout areas in preparation for the 2015 municipal elections.

An increase in voter registration may not result in an increase in voter turnout. There is no guarantee that a person who registers will vote in the next election. This underscores the Commission's point of implementing a holistic approach on increasing voter turnout that includes not only voter registration efforts, but also an educational component on the electoral process and the importance of civic engagement.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation. In partnership with LAVC members, City Clerk can increase outreach towards areas with lower rates of voter turnout. However, a requirement to significantly increase the number of registration drives in addition to the current number of outreach events will require additional resources.

6. Instruct the City Clerk, in collaboration with the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE), to explore engaging Neighborhood Councils in voter registration activities.

Background and Summary: Neighborhood Councils (NCs) were created to make government more responsive to local needs through the network of NCs that would represent the various communities of the City of Los Angeles. There are a total of 95 NCs to date that represent the majority of the City.

Analysis: The NCs serve as subsets of Los Angeles communities and may be more aware of the needs of its community members. This knowledge may help inform the City Clerk's outreach activities towards the NC's community members. In collaboration with DONE, the City Clerk can invite NC board members to participate in the Los Angeles Votes Committee to collaboratively develop programs or methods wherein NCs can participate in voter registration efforts, promote Election Day awareness, and encourage voter participation efforts in their communities.

In addition, DONE holds NC board member elections every two years. The City Clerk may also explore incorporating outreach efforts relative to voter registration and election information for the City's municipal elections into DONE's outreach efforts for the NC board member elections.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation. However, if DONE were to provide municipal election voter registration activities, DONE may require additional staff and funding resources.

7. Instruct the City Clerk to expand its partnership with civic and service organizations that can register and educate voters in public places, including but not limited to malls, high schools and college campuses, prior to each election.

Background and Summary: The City Clerk formed the Los Angeles Votes Committee (LAVC), a partnership with various civic and service organizations, focused on making the electoral

process accessible to all voters. LAVC is committed to non-partisan voter registration and get-out-the-vote activities.

Analysis: The LAVC is composed of various advocacy groups and includes organizations that service the communities that speak the mandated languages into which the City Clerk is required to translate all election materials. Quarterly meetings are held to foster an on-going relationship and to provide a forum where the Committee can inform and support each other on election related activities. While the City Clerk does not have the authority to direct the LAVC members' activities, it can propose and request committee members to increase voter registration and educational efforts at various public places.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

8. Request the County Registrar of Voters to issue an "Address Correction Requested – Do Not Forward" mailer to registered voters who have not voted in eight or more consecutive elections, to determine which of those non-participating voters have moved away and can potentially be removed from the registration rolls, in compliance with all applicable laws.

Mailing notices to inactive voters is part of the voter list maintenance process which is discussed under Recommendation no. 9 of this report.

9. Request the County Registrar of Voters to be more proactive in accurately identifying inactive voters, within all applicable rules.

Background and Summary: Based on information provided by Political Data, Inc. to the Commission, the City's active voter registration roll includes 8.4 percent of individuals who are verifiably deceased or have relocated to other jurisdictions. Political Data, Inc. used the same method as the County Registrar for identifying voters who have relocated, but not for the deceased voters. This discrepancy is problematic with regard to determining accurate voter turnout percentages. However, only the County Registrar has the authority to register and maintain the registration roll.

Analysis: The California Election Code requires the County Registrar to conduct a residency confirmation procedure at least 90 days prior to each Federal election. The procedure requires that the Registrar send notices to voters who meet specific criteria. Voters who fail to respond to an address confirmation request may be classified as an inactive voter, and eventually removed from the voter registration roll if the voter does not participate in the next two Federal elections. According to the Commission report, almost 20.9 percent of the active voters registered in the City have not voted in two Federal elections and four municipal elections. The process of maintaining the list of active voters is a necessary component to ensuring the accuracy of the voter turnout percentage. The continued inclusion of voters who have moved, or died, in the voter registration roll deceptively lowers the voter turnout percentage. However, the City Clerk cannot register voters or maintain the active voter registration roll. Therefore, it is appropriate for the City to request that the County Registrar be more proactive in performing voter list maintenance as prescribed by applicable laws.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

EARLY VOTING, POLLING PLACES, AND EASE OF VOTING

10. Instruct the City Clerk to report on the feasibility and resources required for the creation of a citywide network of early voting locations, including a timeframe by which an early voting process could be implemented.

Background and Summary: During various meetings of the Commission, ease of voting and early voting were discussed as methods to attract more voters by allowing them a more flexible schedule to vote and to provide a third voting option. Currently, the City Clerk offers early voting at the City Clerk's Election Division front counter starting twenty nine days prior to the election.

Analysis: According to the Commission's report, an early voting system could provide more convenience for voters and could reduce the workload on poll workers on Election Day, allowing them more time to assist voters. Since the City's Election Code provides provisions which allow for early voting, this option could be feasible for the City Clerk's Office legally and administratively, if the financial resources are available to support the program. However, implementation of such a program at present would be premature, given the County's new voting system will not be operational until 2018. The City Attorney anticipates that no changes to the City Charter or Election Code are required to implement this recommendation. However, the Election Code provisions should be evaluated, to determine if additions are warranted to coincide with any significant expansion of early voting.

In 2003 and 2007, the City Clerk launched an early voting program at 16 locations in each Council District, except in the 2007 general election, in which five locations were used (most of which were in the areas which coincided with the associated runoff elections). Voting was held 10-11 calendar days before Election Day. Overall turnout for early voting in the 2003 municipal elections averaged 1.6 percent and turnout for early voting in the 2007 municipal elections averaged 0.67 percent. The citywide early voting program was discontinued as a result of the Secretary of State's decertification of the touchscreen voting equipment used for the program.

Further, it should be noted that the Commission's report cites various sources which indicate that expanding early voting does not necessarily produce increased voter turnout. According to the Commission's report, various subject matter experts and researchers suggest that while higher propensity voters would likely find this more convenient, it would not necessarily yield more registered voters to participate in elections. In other words, early voting would not necessarily increase turnout, but it would give the same people who already vote a different time to cast their ballots.

Fiscal Impact: There are no immediate General Fund costs for the City Clerk to provide a follow-up report. Please note that until such time that the City is able to receive details of the County's new voting system, it is not practical for the City Clerk or our Offices, to project costs of providing an expanded early voting system.

11. Instruct the City Clerk to study non-traditional polling venues such as shopping centers, malls, supermarkets, and other public locations which fulfill all legal mandates and would provide more accessibility for voters.

Background and Summary: This Commission recommendation stems from the results of a U.S. Census survey of registered non-voters, as to the reason why they do not vote. Among some of the responses were "too busy, conflicting schedule," "inconvenient polling places," and "transportation problems." The proposed recommendation seeks to address these issues by exploring potential non-traditional polling sites which would provide more convenient locations, and coincide with places which people frequently visit.

Analysis: The Commission report indicates that an evaluation of non-traditional polling places such as shopping malls and supermarkets should include locations which adhere to State and Federal laws such as Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. The Commission also recognizes that implementation of non-traditional polling places may not be fully realized until after the County's launch of a new voting system. Therefore, the Commission states that the City Clerk can implement a pilot program until such time as the County launches its new voting system.

Currently, the majority of polling places are within one mile of each precinct, except in some cases in which polling places are collocated. Additionally, the City Clerk indicates that some non-traditional polling places were used in the 2013 municipal elections, which included colleges, hotels, mobile parks, restaurants, small businesses, theaters/performing centers, and a mall. If the Council were to adopt this recommendation, the City Clerk would need to look at a number of issues including, but not limited to, security of polling place equipment and voter ballot inventory, potential impacts on candidates and enforcement of electioneering restrictions, voter privacy in open spaces, etc. It should be noted that using non-traditional polling venues would cause inconsistency between City and County voting sites, which could create confusion among voters in certain precincts. As the Commission has indicated, the use of additional non-traditional polling places is contingent upon the County's new voting system, which the County projects will be operational by 2018. It is unclear to what extent such action will increase voter turnout.

The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or Election Code. However, certain legal components must be considered when determining establishing voting sites, in addition to ADA requirements, such as ensuring that voting sites are not located in a business or facility owned or controlled by a candidate or a candidate's family, per City and State law.

Fiscal Impact: There are no immediate costs for the City Clerk to study the issues associated with using non-traditional polling places. The cost to utilize non-traditional polling places will vary depending on each location. Election related costs will likely increase if the number of traditional polling places remained the same, while non-traditional polling places are added.

12. Instruct the City Clerk to study the feasibility of expanding the use of publicly-owned facilities as polling places.

Background and Summary: In the Commission's report, it is stated that there are over one thousand polling places located throughout the City, and many polling places are located in non-publicly owned spaces such as private residences and churches. The Commission stated that residences are often hard to locate, have parking restrictions, and may not be equipped to handle advanced technology and communications needed for modern voting systems. Due to those reasons, the Commission recommends maximizing the use of publicly-owned facilities as polling places.

Analysis: The City Clerk's office states that every effort is made to maximize the use of publicly-owned facilities as polling places. However, some public sites in various precincts are not always the most suitable in terms of satisfying all of the regulations and other necessities required of a polling place. Additionally, it should be noted that approximately 100 out of the City's 1,200 polling locations are private residences. It is unclear to what extent such action will increase voter turnout. Additionally, the adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact related to this recommendation.

13. Instruct the City Clerk to work with the County Registrar to continue to utilize, to the greatest extent possible, the same facilities contained within their mutual boundaries for both County and City Elections.

Background and Summary: According to the Commission report, maintaining consistency amongst polling location facilities contained within their mutual boundaries should eliminate confusion that keeps some voters away from the polls each election.

Analysis: The City Clerk's Office advises that the Clerk makes every effort to maintain consistency with the County's polling places, and will continue to do so in the future. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact related to this recommendation.

14. Request the City Attorney, and instruct the City Clerk, to review the legality, feasibility, and needs associated with transitioning from the current precinct-based election to a separate system that enables voters to visit any voting center in the City on Election Day, provided that the County's voting system is fully implemented in conjunction with a statewide voter database, and the City continues to administer its own elections.

Background and Summary: This Commission recommendation stems from the results of a U.S. Census survey which questioned registered non-voters as to the reason why they do not vote. Among some of the responses, were "too busy, conflicting schedule," "inconvenient polling places," and "transportation problems." Additionally, the current precinct model, per the Commission, is restrictive. The aforementioned recommendation seeks to address these issues by looking at transitioning from a precinct-based election where voters are required to vote at their designated polling place, to a system in which any voter can vote at any voting

center in the City on Election Day. Essentially, a voting center model would allow an individual who lives, for example, in Westwood, but works in Downtown Los Angeles, to vote in Downtown or any other area which the individual finds most convenient.

Analysis: It is important to consider that a transition to a "voting center" model may or may not increase turnout, and there would be much work required to implement such a system. If the Council were to transition to a voting center model, the City Clerk would need to conduct a needs assessment to determine how many voting centers would be required, and potential costs to implement such a system, prior to approving any changes to City laws. Another issue to consider would be the difficulty in determining necessary staffing levels at each voting center, as there would be little indication of whether one voting center might be more or less busy than others.

Additionally, the City Attorney anticipates that City Charter and City code amendments would need to be approved in order to implement a voting center system. Therefore, the implementation of this system will require ballot measure(s).

The Council should also be advised that although the City's voting system would change in this scenario, the County would likely still operate on a precinct-based system. This could cause confusion amongst voters as to where to vote for City elections versus elections administered by the County. Our Offices would suggest that a full analysis be prepared to determine whether this would actually increase turnout, due to the confusion that different voting systems for different elections might cause. Our Offices would agree that action with regard to this matter should only be taken if the statewide voter database (2017), and the County's new voting system (2018), are implemented, and that the results of a needs assessment study and fiscal impact analysis are considered.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact related to this recommendation.

15. Instruct the City Clerk to simplify all voter materials and messages using plain language.

Background and Summary: The Commission report states that election officials could do a better job clarifying and simplifying instructions provided with Vote-By-Mail (VBM) materials in order to clarify the deadline for returning VBM ballots, and to reduce the number of invalid or incomplete ballots returned by voters. The Commission further indicates that in the May 2013 election, 5,263 VBM ballots were not included in the final tally because they were returned late, lacked a signature, or had other issues, which may be mitigated with clearer language.

Analysis: The City Clerk states that several efforts are made to clarify and simplify language on all voting materials that the City is allowed to modify. Additionally, the City Clerk meets with non-profit and civic organizations which develop guiding principles for designing outreach materials. Language such as instructions on VBM ballots, initiative language, summaries, and argument(s) for or against an initiative, is not within the purview of the City Clerk. The Clerk will continue to work with interested stakeholders to simplify language on materials for which the Clerk maintains authority. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or any City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with this recommendation.

16. Instruct the City Clerk to report on efforts to enhance language assistance to minority voters both required, and not required, by State and Federal requirements, and to provide any additional recommendations to further enhance those efforts.

Background and Summary: The City of Los Angeles is home to nearly four million residents, making it the second largest City in the Nation, and one of the most diverse as well. During Commission hearings, the Commission expressed the importance of reaching out to as many constituents within the City as possible, and further indicated that offering language assistance above State and Federal requirements is an important step in maximizing voter turnout.

Analysis: The U.S. Census Bureau identifies political subdivisions that are required to provide oral and written language assistance to citizens who have been historically excluded from participation in the political process, based on a specified set of criteria. In accordance with Federal law, the City is required to provide translated election materials and language assistance in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Hindi, and Thai. In August 2012, the Council directed the City Clerk to include language assistance for three non-Federally mandated languages for the 2015 municipal election: Armenian; Russian; and Farsi (CF 12-0604). Currently, the City offers language assistance in 11 different languages. If the City were to offer additional language services for future elections, the City Clerk estimates an approximate cost of \$200,000 for each language. However, costs will vary depending on when the language services are added and how many languages are added.

It should be noted that the County of Los Angeles is separately required to provide language assistance in Chinese, Hindi Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, Vietnamese, and provides limited language assistance voluntarily in Armenian and Russian. If the City were to consolidate elections with the County, or if the County were to administer City elections, the County would not be obligated to offer language assistance in Farsi.

It is unclear to what extent such action will increase voter turnout. Additionally, the adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation. As noted, if the Council wishes to offer more than the three non-Federally mandated languages which are already provided, then the City Clerk should also be directed to include the additional cost for such languages in their budget proposal for the 2017 municipal elections.

17. Request the Department of Transportation to provide a temporary stay for issuing parking citations in areas surrounding polling locations.

Background and Summary: The Commission recommends that the Department of Transportation temporarily suspend the issuance of parking citations in areas surrounding polling locations on Election Day.

Analysis: Currently, the City Clerk works with the Department of Transportation to relax the issuance of parking citations within two blocks of each polling location on Election Day. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation, with the exception of the loss of parking citation revenues.

VOTER OUTREACH, PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

18. Instruct the City Clerk to remain cognizant of the needs of the under-represented populations within the City when designing programs to increase voter registration and voter participation.

Background and Summary: As a result of the efforts of the City Clerk Elections Division Multilingual Voter Outreach Unit (MVOU), and the collaboration with Los Angeles Votes Committee (LAVC) members, the City Clerk is cognizant of the under-represented population when designing programs to increase voter registration and voter participation. MVOU and LAVC are committed to an equitable and language accessible experience for non-English proficient voters and voters with disabilities.

Analysis: The MVOU provides election information and assistance in Armenian, English, Chinese, Farsi, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, Thai, and Vietnamese. In addition, the MVOU recruits bilingual poll workers, produces multilingual voter materials, and works with non-English print, radio, and television media.

The LAVC partners with the City Clerk by previewing and reviewing elections materials and supplies used in conducting outreach, conducts poll worker recruitment and poll worker training, forms cross-organizational partnerships that foster increased election awareness, develops strategies to increase bilingual poll worker participation rates, and provides feedback on various services provided by the City Clerk. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

19. Instruct the City Clerk to propose an expanded outreach program which includes activities designed to enhance voter awareness of elections and promote a culture of voting, and request funds in the Department's Fiscal Year 2015-16 Proposed Budget.

Background and Summary: The City Clerk does not have sufficient staff or funding resources to increase outreach or marketing activities without decreasing services in other areas. Additional funding is required for new or expanded activities and requests should be considered during the annual budget process.

Analysis: Requests for funding for new and expanded voter outreach and educational opportunities, along with a detailed description of the specific services proposed for the amount of staff and funding resources requested, can be submitted in the Department's 2015-16 Proposed Budget and can be reviewed through the annual budgetary process. Funding of additional services beyond what is legally mandated is a policy decision of the City Council. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

20. Instruct the City Clerk to explore involving the City's workforce and the Neighborhood Councils (NCs), with assistance from the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE), in promoting Election Day awareness and voter participation.

Background and Summary: The Commission included a similar recommendation regarding the incorporation of NCs in election related activities. Please see Recommendation No. 6 for further discussion. The following analysis explores the potential involvement of the City's workforce in promoting Election Day awareness and voter participation.

Analysis: The City Clerk created the City Employee Poll worker (CEP) Program, to address the lack of sufficient accountable and knowledgeable poll workers, to staff the City's 1,200 polling places during a regular municipal election. City employees who participate in the CEP Program receives training prior to the election and reports to a designated polling place instead of their regular workplace on Election Day. The employing department would continue to pay the employee's normal work hours, but the City Clerk would pay the employee for any overtime incurred.

Training provided in the CEP Program is currently focused on equipping the city employee on how to set up, run, and break down the polling place. Training can be expanded to include how to raise awareness and voter participation among coworkers, neighbors, and friends. The City Clerk could explore other ways to engage the NCs and public employees to promote Election Day awareness and voter participation. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

21. Instruct the City Clerk to implement the following Ten Point Plan outlined in the City Clerk's "Increasing Voter Turnout through Alternative Voting Methods" report (CF 13-1394):

- a) Target outreach events to areas of the City that experience the lowest turnout;

The Commission included a similar recommendation regarding voter registration efforts. Please see Recommendation No. 5 for further discussion.

b) Implement a new inmate voting program;

Background and Summary: A common voting misconception is that individuals who are incarcerated cannot vote. However, individuals who are incarcerated, but have not yet been convicted, serving time for a traffic or misdemeanor offense, or are serving time in jail as a condition of probation, are eligible to vote.

Analysis: The City Clerk has begun the process of developing the program. Meetings have been held with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the County Registrar, who also has an existing inmate voting program. It is anticipated that the new program will be implemented in time for the 2017 City municipal elections. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

c) Simplify and use plain language for all election materials;

The Commission included an identical recommendation regarding election material simplification. Please see Recommendation No. 15 for further discussion.

d) Partner with local voter advocacy groups to develop creative messaging;

The Commission included a similar recommendation regarding partnership with local advocacy groups. Please see Recommendation No. 7 for further discussion.

e) Expand the use of social media, partnerships with local businesses and other City departments;

Background and Summary: The City Clerk's advertising budget is not sufficient to purchase a significant amount of media advertisements for its outreach activities as compared to its County Registrar counterpart. The City Clerk spent approximately \$37,000 for media advertisements to support its outreach and poll worker recruitment activities.

Analysis: The City Clerk can leverage existing resources to enhance outreach efforts without requiring additional resources through expansion of the use of social media; creation of partnerships with local businesses to provide free advertisements; and utilization of other City department resources such as high traffic websites. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

f) Submit a budget package for Mayor and Council consideration to increase traditional media presence;

Background and Summary: The Commission's recommendation was to implement and fund the Ten Point Plan included in the City Clerk's "Increasing Voter Turnout through Alternative Voting Methods" report. However, additional General Fund budget requests should be considered and evaluated in the context of the annual budget process.

Analysis: According to the City Clerk's "Increasing Voter Turnout through Alternative Voting Methods" report, the City Clerk's current media budget is expended for advertisements seeking poll workers and providing voting reminders. According to the US Census Bureau survey of Reasons for Not Voting in 2012 November election, cited in the City Clerk report, only four percent "forgot to vote." The top reasons provided of "too busy or conflicting schedule" (19 percent); "not interested" (16 percent); "illness or disability" (14 percent); and "did not like candidates or campaign issues" (13 percent), would not have been addressed by an increase in media presence. However, the Commission report indicates that research shows that nonpartisan public service announcements can mildly boost voter turnout. For this specific recommendation, we would suggest that the City Clerk submit a funding request, and Council evaluate this request in the context of the annual budget process. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

g) Increase focus on voter education and expand the civic component of the education curriculum;

Background and Summary: The City Clerk's "Increasing Voter Turnout through Alternative Voting Methods" report indicated that voter turnout may also be caused by the lack of information on the role and importance of local government. The City Clerk conducts numerous outreach activities to increase awareness regarding elections. Only a handful of educational presentations are made regarding how, when, and where to vote, and the voting process itself.

Analysis: Increasing the number of educational presentations is intended to increase the voter's confidence and familiarity with the voting process. Including a civic component to the presentation to underscore the importance of voting is anticipated to increase the likelihood of a person voting. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

h) Partner with the City's Department on Disability (DOD) to perform a thorough review of election processes to support accessible elections;

Background and Summary: The City Clerk is committed to administering an accessible electoral process to voters with disabilities. The DOD was tasked with improving the quality of life for people with disabilities.

Analysis: The City Clerk has included the DOD in the Los Angeles Votes Committee (LAVC) which allows the DOD to be engaged in the process of reviewing the City's electoral process in making it more accessible to persons with disabilities. To date, DOD has contributed to the work, and remained a part, of the LAVC. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

i) Increase registration activities; and

The Commission included various recommendations regarding methods of expanding registration activities. Please see Recommendation Nos. 4, 5, 6, and 7 for further discussion.

j) Seek to implement same-day registration for City elections, once permitted in California;

Background and Summary: The Commission report indicates that voter turnout is positively affected by the voter's ability to register on election date.

Analysis: The California Legislature has enacted same day registration with the passage of AB 1436 (Feuer). Implementation is contingent upon the California Secretary of State's development of a statewide voter registration database that complies with the requirements of the Federal Help America Vote Act of 2002. However, legislation only provides the County, and not City election officials, with the authority to provide same day registration. Once the database is operational, the City Clerk can then work with the County Registrar to determine how the City can partner to implement same-day registration for municipal elections.

The implementation of voter registration on Election Day increases the responsibilities and training required for Election Day poll workers. The City Clerk may have to propose an increase in the poll worker stipend if the additional responsibility of voter registration negatively affects the recruitment of poll workers. Further, increasing the minimum number of poll workers in each precinct may become necessary should the registration process result in extended wait time at polling places.

Fiscal Impact: There is no immediate General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation. A fiscal impact statement should be provided once the State's voter registration database has been established, and the County and City have determined how to implement the same-day registration process.

22. Instruct the City Clerk to develop a voter outreach program that utilizes personalized messages and trusted messengers, which should include text messaging, media partners (including ethnic media), use of public opinion and community leaders as spokespersons

Background and Summary: According to the Commission report, personalized and repeated messages are the most effective outreach methods. The City Clerk is not funded or staffed to personally contact all the registered voters in the City. The Commission report further indicates

that text messages have a mild positive impact on voter participation, and successful outreach campaigns include a familiar or trusted spokesperson, such as a celebrity or community leader, to deliver the message.

Analysis: The City Clerk's current voter outreach program includes partnering with LAVC to help disseminate election information to their respective communities of interest, seeking free advertisement, organizing press events and public service announcements, attending community events to raise Election Day awareness, and using paid advertisement and social media to promote voting. The City Clerk has worked with ethnic media partners to develop outreach programs that are relevant to its target community, which may include the use of a trusted messenger. The City Clerk does not currently incorporate text messaging in its outreach efforts. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation. However, the incorporation of text messaging into the outreach program may require additional resources if current staff does not have the required expertise.

23. Instruct the City Clerk to expand use of video communications, in addition to Public Service Announcements (PSAs).

Background and Summary: The Commission recommended that the City Clerk expand the use of video communications to provide process guides and other marketing materials.

Analysis: The City Clerk YouTube Channel includes an instructional how to vote video that is translated into ten languages, shows various Election Division activities, and provides video clips showcased in ethnic news media. The use of videos as process guides will allow interested members of the public or poll workers who missed training, to receive instruction at a time and place that is convenient for them. Many of the City Clerk's PSAs were aired on non-primetime television and not viewed by many viewers. The City Clerk does not have sufficient staff to continuously develop and produce new and engaging content nor funding to air video communications on prime time. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: The fiscal impact will be commensurate with the number of video communications the City Clerk will have to produce in response to the Council instruction.

24. Instruct the City Clerk to continually explore the use of evolving technology, apps, and social media as a component of voter outreach and engagement efforts.

The Commission included a similar recommendation regarding the expansion of the use of technology as a component of outreach. Please see Recommendation No. 25 for further discussion.

25. Instruct the City Clerk to expand the use of technology to promote voter engagement as described in the Report of the Commission.

Background and Summary: The Commission's report included suggestions for the City Clerk to expand the use of technology by ensuring that the City Clerk's election website is user-friendly and translated to the 11 languages required for City municipal elections, maintaining a presence on social media, developing an application that can help engage voters and drive voter participation, creating relevant LISTSERVS, and using City websites with high traffic to promote elections.

Analysis: The City Clerk's election website already provides translated instruction of voter related information ranging from how to find your polling place, register, and voting procedures. It is currently translated to 11 languages. The website also allows voters to sign up for automatic updates on election related information. In addition, the City Clerk has its own Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube Channel.

During the Commission hearings, the City of Long Beach City Clerk discussed its recently launched election application which provides a countdown to the election date, location and directions to a voter's polling place, sample ballot, the ability to request and track a Vote-By-Mail ballot, and the election results.

The City Clerk currently employs many of the suggested uses of technology included in this recommendation. However, Council may wish to first review the performance outcomes, such as impact on voter turnout or prevalence of use by voters, at the municipalities who have previously adopted the technological suggestions recommended in the report, prior to investing additional City resources. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no immediate General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation. The creation of additional applications, blogs, engaging content on the City Clerk's Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube Channel could require additional staff and/or funding costs.

26. Instruct the City Clerk to be proactive in dispelling myths by revising the existing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to include common misconceptions and myths about voting.

Background and Summary: The Commission recommended that the City Clerk include in their existing FAQs document, information that dispels voting myths on the links between voter registration and jury duty, lack of language support, ex-felon's inability to vote, inability to vote from abroad, and that law enforcers would use polling places to await and arrest voters with unpaid parking tickets and outstanding warrants.

Analysis: According to the Commission report, some voting myths were perpetuated to discourage certain ethnic voters in the past. Dispelling voting myths by including appropriate information in the FAQs document is a cost neutral solution to educate voters. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

27. Request that the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Board of Education (Board) consider restoration of a civics education requirement, especially at the 11th and 12th grade level.

Background and Summary: The Commission recommends developing a culture of civic participation through the LAUSD curriculum, as part of a holistic approach to promoting voter turnout.

Analysis: Juniors and seniors in high school, approximately 16-18 years old, represent a large population of upcoming potential eligible voters. Providing civics education that discusses the importance of voting, and being involved and educated of the electoral process may help foster a deeper sense of civic engagement that recognizes the importance of voting. The LAUSD Board has the authority to make changes to its curriculum. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation.

28. Instruct the City Clerk to work collaboratively with LAUSD in conducting high school civic outreach activities as a way of promoting the importance of voting.

Background and Summary: The City Clerk administers the STAR Student Poll worker Program (STAR) which employs approximately 1,600 students from local high schools to participate as student poll workers. STAR provides students with the opportunity to engage in the electoral process first hand while earning a stipend. Students may potentially earn additional school credit, as separately agreed upon between the students and their individual teachers.

Analysis: The STAR Program, if provided with sufficient funding, could be expanded to mirror Orange County Registrar's MyBallot Program for high school, which includes in-class presentation on the history of voting, creating ballots, and vote tabulation; field trip where students can design and build their own ballots for their mock, ASB or homecoming election; and conduct a mock, ASB or homecoming election, using the Orange County Registrar's mobile outreach booths and teams. Not all LAUSD high schools participate in the City Clerk's STAR Program. Participation in the STAR Program is incumbent upon the high school principal or the government education teacher to approve and coordinate between the City Clerk and the school participants. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation if the City Clerk continues the current level of STAR Program activities. An expansion of the STAR Program to all LAUSD schools will require additional staff and funding resources.

ABSENTEE VOTING/VOTE-BY-MAIL

29. Instruct the City Clerk to report on contacting permanent absentee voters whose ballots are disallowed due to mismatched signatures, to determine if the voter's signature needs to be updated, or if there may be other irregularities.

Background and Summary: Approximately 100-200 ballots in the 2013 municipal elections were disallowed due to mismatched signatures. The Commission indicates that work could be done upon receipt of those ballots to rectify the mismatched signature issue by contacting those voters to determine if their signature requires an update, or if there are other issues. By following up on these issues, there would potentially be an increase in future ballots cast which are allowed, which could positively influence turnout.

Analysis: Currently, the City Clerk contacts voters for ballots received without a signature or with missing information, to allow those individuals to re-file the ballot with a proper signature, if time permits. However, no follow-up is currently done for mismatched signatures. While the City Clerk makes an effort to contact those voters which utilize Vote-By-Mail (VBM) ballots when received early enough to provide an opportunity to correct the issue, the City Clerk is not required by law to follow up with voters before or after Election Day to notify voters that there were issues with their signature, and therefore, those ballots are not counted.

While taking action to contact absentee voters regarding signature verification problems may not be feasible if the ballot is received within four days or less of Election Day, it may increase the number of ballots counted for the next election if the City Clerk was instructed to contact those voters subsequent to the certification of the results, to let voters know what they can do to rectify the issue for the next election. However, such action will not increase the number of people who vote during an election, but will potentially increase the number of ballots counted. The City Clerk should be instructed to report on additional factors to consider for contacting absentee voters with signature issues.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation. If the Clerk were instructed to provide follow up services for voters who submitted ballots with signature problems, there could potentially be an increase in staff costs to provide the follow up.

30. Instruct the City Clerk to promote voting by mail and enrollment as Vote-By-Mail voters.

Background and Summary: During Commission hearings, the Commission recognized that it is important to maintain locations at which voters are able to show up and cast their vote on Election Day. However, Vote-By-Mail (VBM) ballots provide an added layer of convenience for voters who do not have the time or transportation to make it to the polls on Election Day. Therefore, the Commission recommends that VBM ballots be further promoted in an effort to increase civic engagement and voter participation.

Analysis: The City Clerk states that various efforts are made each election cycle to promote election participation through VBM ballots. The City Clerk creates Public Service

Announcements (PSAs), issues press releases, and partners with other organizations to provide advertisements to promote the VBM program. Further, the Clerk indicates that overall permanent VBM turnout is poor compared to those who register to VBM for a specific election. It is unclear to what extent such action will increase voter turnout. The adoption of this recommendation would not require any changes to the City Charter or City codes.

Our Offices would suggest that the City Clerk be instructed to report on all options to expand the promotion of VBM and the promotion of voting in general, including no/low cost advertisements, for subsequent consideration.

Fiscal Impact: There is no General Fund impact associated with the adoption of this recommendation, as the City Clerk currently promotes the VBM program. However, if the Council were interested in expanding efforts to promote additional advertisements, there could be additional costs to air PSAs and market advertisements in various locations.

31. Instruct the Chief Legislative Analyst to prepare a Resolution to support any state legislation that would allow the acceptance of Vote-By-Mail ballots that are postmarked no later than Election Day and received within three days of Election Day.

Background and Summary: SB 29 (Correa), was introduced in the California State Senate on December 3, 2012, which would amend existing law by stipulating that any ballot, if it is received by the voter's election official no later than three days after Election Day, and either the ballot is postmarked on or before Election Day, is timely cast, and should therefore be added to the official election results. This Bill would allow for the processing of additional ballots which are received after the deadline, and would thereby increase the number of ballots counted for any given election. Such legislative action is supported by the Commission, as it would potentially add to the number of ballots counted toward any given election, if received three days after Election Day.

Analysis: SB 29 was introduced on December 3, 2012 in the California State Legislature. SB 29 seeks to amend the State Election Code to allow for the processing of any ballot which is received no later than three days after Election Day if postmarked no later than Election Day. Additionally, the bill provides that election officials will have 30 days to submit the certified statement of the results of the election to the governing body, instead of the current 28 days stipulated in the State Election Code.

The bill has been passed by both houses of the California State legislature, and was enrolled for the Governor's consideration. As of this writing, the Governor has not yet signed or vetoed the bill. The Governor has until September 30, 2014 to approve or disapprove the bill. If the bill is signed into law, then the provisions shall become effective as of January 1, 2015. In the event that the bill is not signed into law, the Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst will, if directed by the adoption of this recommendation, prepare a Resolution to support or sponsor legislation for the 2015-2016 State legislative session which would amend the State Election Code to allow for the processing of any ballot which is received no later than three days after Election Day, if postmarked no later than Election Day. The adoption of this recommendation would require changes to the City Election Code.