

Charter Reform Commission Outreach and Engagement Strategy

Project Purpose & Background

The Los Angeles City Charter is the city’s foundational legal document defining the organization, powers, functions, and essential procedures of the government. In September 2023, then-Council President Paul Krekorian as well as Councilmembers Marqueece Harris-Dawson and Tim McOsker introduced council motion 23-1027 calling for the establishment of a charter reform commission. The motion cited challenges in delivering city services, homelessness, housing unaffordability, climate change, and recent unethical conduct of some city leaders as necessitating both minor and major changes to the charter.

In 2024, the adoption of Ordinance No. 188303 established a new charter commission. This ordinance tasks the commission with the authority to review the entire city charter and specific issues and provisions referred by the city council. The commission will have an executive director appointed by the mayor and council as well as 13 commissioners. All meetings of the commission must comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act and other applicable open meeting laws.

Per section 8.333 of the ordinance, prior to the review of the City Charter, the commission must develop and transmit to the city council an outreach and engagement plan. This plan should include strategies to ensure the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders including community based organizations, labor, business, parent centers, and faith-based groups. This includes a dedicated engagement process for the participation of the city’s Neighborhood Councils, with the goal of receiving Community Impact Statements from at least 60 percent of these bodies. The ordinance requires that the plan include a town hall event in each council district with some meetings being held after 6 p.m. and on weekends with the public being notified at least five days prior to the date. Live translation should also be available in relevant languages at each event.

Project Messaging:

- ***What is the city charter?***
 - The Los Angeles City Charter is the foundational legal document that defines the organization, powers, functions, and essential procedures of the city government. This includes:
 - Defining the structures and powers of each government body such as the Mayor, Council, and City attorney.
 - How city departments are organized and governed.
 - Rules for municipal elections, terms of office, and campaign financing.
 - Rules for elected officials and city employees.

- ***What is the charter reform process?***
 - The charter has periodically been changed and updated with the last major revision occurring in 1999.

- The reform process will entail a commission composed of eight commissioners appointed by the mayor and council. These commissioners will then select an additional five members through an application process.
- The commission will review the charter and hold a wide ranging community engagement process to solicit feedback on potential changes.
- The proposed changes will be delivered to the city council no later than April 2nd, 2026. The council will then decide whether to place these recommendations onto the November 2026 ballot for voters to adopt.

Neighborhood Councils

The NCs will be invited to meetings throughout the process. Staff has already met with the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment to discuss and begin outreach, as well as presented at the Board of Neighborhood Councils. We will continue to invite NC's to meetings and events while soliciting Community Impact Statements, a number of which have already been filed. Our goal is to receive more than 60% of the 99 NC's impact statements.

Engagement Strategies - City Fabrick

The Charter Commission Staff will hire an outreach consultant to engage the public in the work of the commission and solicit feedback on the charter. Specific outreach activities will include:

Public Events

- Inclusive public events to introduce the Charter Reform process to community members, provide access to civic resources, celebrate community voice, and invite input on governance priorities. The event will feature food, entertainment, multilingual access, and curated opportunities for feedback.

Pop Up Events

- Neighborhood-scale engagements at existing community events or public gathering spaces to share information about charter reform, invite feedback, and build awareness. Materials and facilitation will be tailored for cultural and linguistic accessibility.

Interactive Engagement Boards

- Multi-lingual presentation boards that communicate key reform questions and collect feedback through interactive methods (e.g., dot voting, written notes).

Digital and Print Survey

- Online and print surveys, hosted on a dedicated webpage with regular content updates and social media integration. The survey will collect broad input early in the process and complement in-person engagement.

Social Media Engagement

- A coordinated social media strategy to broaden awareness, drive engagement, and promote transparency. Tactics may include developing online informational fliers, flash surveys, live streaming of events, and

registration links for activities. Posts will be tailored across platforms, supported by a paid and organic push.

Email Marketing and Newsletters

- Inform stakeholders about the engagement process through emails including a biweekly newsletter to summarize past meetings and engagement activities and inform people about upcoming events.

A-Frame Signage

- Multilingual signage to support on-site engagement at pop-ups and events. Signage will encourage participation, direct attendees to surveys, and enhance visibility.

Community Voting Boxes

- Deploy branded drop boxes with printed surveys, placed in trusted community locations. Feedback will be collected and synthesized with digital responses.

Informational Postcards

- Multi-lingual postcards to distribute at businesses, events, and neighborhood walks. Cards will introduce charter reform and direct recipients to surveys or sign-up opportunities.

“I Support” banners

- Produce large format banners for use at engagement events. Participants may write what aspect of the Charter Reform effort they most support on heart cut-outs and place them on the banner, creating a visual expression of community values.

Mini-Grants

- Subgrantee Program to expand community-based participation in the Charter Reform process. This program will include a public Call for Applications targeting community organizations, neighborhood associations, and trusted local leaders who are deeply rooted in their communities and already engaged in meaningful grassroots work. Selected subgrantees will serve as on-the-ground partners to support local engagement strategies and promote direct participation in the planning process.

Neighborhood Council Outreach

- Outreach to Neighborhood Councils to inform them about commission meetings, give input on specific aspects of the charter, and submit Community Impact Statements with the goal of receiving impact statements from over 60% of the 99 Neighborhood Councils.

Overall Timeline

- **Spring 2025:** Initiate Charter Commission and adopt engagement plan.
- **Summer 2025:** Start engagement process and identify priority areas.
- **Fall 2025:** Create first draft of recommendation.
- **Winter/Spring 2025/26:** Finalize recommendation.
- **Spring 2026:** Transmit to city council.

Engagement Plan

Month	Tasks	Details	Deliverable(s)	Team(s) Responsible
May-July	Create budget	Create commission budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A budget outlining commission expenses as well as consultants • A letter addressed to City Council with budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • CAO • City Attorney
	Hire outreach consultant	The outreach consultant will assist with the facilitation of the commission meetings as well as outreach and engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotional materials including flyers and social media • Provide translation at events and for materials • Staff events, including registration and child care • Produce survey and outreach materials • Create and maintain an email database • Partner with local CBO's in various parts of the city to help with outreach • A monthly newsletter summarizing commission meetings and charter related topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultant • Commission
	Engage with council offices about outreach in their district	Discuss schedule and location of outreach events in their district as well as local CBO's to partner with.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of meeting locations in each council districts • Language needs in each council district • A list of CBO's and other stakeholders to outreach to in each council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant • Council offices

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	Vet meetings locations with city departments	Create a plan with Clerk, RAP, GSA, and ITA to find meeting locations suitable for hosting a public meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of meeting locations in each council district • Book meeting locations • A plan for making publicly accessible recordings of each meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant • ITA • RAP • GSA • Clerk
	Work with DONE to create an outreach strategy for Neighborhood councils	Create a NC outreach strategy with the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) including how to communicate with NCs and specific materials and a timeline for receiving CISs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An NC outreach plan and communications strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DONE • Consultant • Commission
	Prepare materials for each event	Create presentations, materials, and invite speakers for each outreach event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite speakers including departments, advocates and outside experts. • Presentations • Outreach materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant • Various city departments
Tuesday June 10th	Meeting 1 City Hall 1060 2 PM	Initiate commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select interim chair and vice chair • Discuss selection process for additional commissioners • Discuss draft Outreach and Engagement Plan and budget • Gather community input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission
Tuesday June 17	Meeting 2 City Hall 1010 2 PM	Select remaining commission members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select remaining commission members • Send to council • Gather community input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission

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June 18th to July 1st	Council Meeting	Commissioners heard in council		
Wednesday July 16th	Meeting 3 City Hall Council Chamber	Select officers and approve budget and Outreach and Engagement plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Select chair, vice chair, and second chair ● Approve budget and Outreach and Engagement Plan and forward to City Council for consideration and approval 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commission
Saturday July 19th	Meeting 4 Cal State Northridge Grand Salon Council District 12	Town Hall Study Session: Overview of the charter and previous reform efforts in Los Angeles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presentation on the city charter ● History of recent efforts to reform the charter ● Gather community input ● Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presenters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Experts on 1999 reform effort ○ Expert on charter ● Commission
Wednesday July 30th	Meeting 5 Baldwin Hills Library Council District 10	Town Hall Study Session: Planning and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss possible ways the charter could be reformed to improve infrastructure and planning ● Discuss other cities' approaches to infrastructure ● Gather community input ● Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presenters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Infrastructure and planning advocates ○ Mayors office ○ City Departments ○ Long Beach Infrastructure expert ● Commission

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Saturday August 9	Meeting 6 Encino Community Center Council District 4	Town Hall Study Session: Government structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss how the government structure could be changed to improve representation. ● Discuss recent charter reform efforts in other cities ● Gather community input ● Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presenters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advocates focused on governance reforms ○ Portland expert ○ Academic experts ○ City Departments ● Consultant ● Commission
Monday August 18th	Meeting 7 City Hall	Deliberate on Planning and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approve a tentative list of topics to study further relating to Planning and Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commission
Friday August 22nd	Meeting 8 City Hall	Deliberate on Government Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approve a tentative list of topics to study further relating to Government Structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commission

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Saturday September 6th	Meeting 9 Council District 11	Town Hall Study Session: Better Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss strategies for removing council people ● Gather community input ● Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presenters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advocates focused on governance reforms ○ Academic experts ○ City Departments ● Consultant ● Commission
Saturday September 13th	Meeting 10 Council District 15	Town Hall Study Session: Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss how hiring of city workers could be improved and streamlined ● Have speaker from Long Beach to discuss recent charter reforms there ● Gather community input ● Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presenters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Labor ○ City Departments ○ Long Beach expert ● Consultant ● Commission
Wednesday September 17th	Meeting 11 City Hall	Deliberate on Better Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approve a tentative list of topics to study further relating to Better Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commission

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Tuesday Monday September 29th	Town Hall Virtual	Host virtual Town Hall event for the public to inform and engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hold virtual public event to give an overview of the charter reform process and issues being discussed ● Allow for public comment and engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultant
September- October	Initial recommendations	Synthesize initial community and stakeholder feedback. Create the first draft of recommendations for charter reform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Synthesis of feedback ● Initial recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commission ● Consultant
Wednesday October 8th	Meeting 12 City Hall	Deliberate on Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approve a tentative list of topics to study further relating to Personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commission
Saturday October 18th	Meeting 13 Council District 7	Town Hall Study Session: Planning and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Present feedback and initial recommendations for planning and infrastructure ● Gather community input ● Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commission ● Consultant
Wednesday October 22nd	Meeting 14 City Hall	Deliberate on Planning and Infrastructure Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliberate and vote on Planning and Infrastructure Recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commission ● Consultant

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Saturday November 8th	Meeting 15 Council District 1	Town Hall Study Session: Better Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present feedback and initial recommendations for Better Government • Gather community input • Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant
Wednesday November 12	Meeting 16 Council District 3	Town Hall Study Session: Government Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present feedback and initial recommendations for government structure • Gather community input • Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant
Wednesday November 19th	Meeting 17 City Hall	Deliberate on Better Government and Government Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate and vote on Better Government and Government Structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant
Wednesday December 3rd	Meeting 18 Council District 9	Town Hall Study Session: Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present feedback and initial recommendations for hiring • Gather community input • Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant
Saturday December 6th	Town Hall Council District 13	Host Town Hall event for the public to inform and engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold public event to give an overview of the charter reform process and issues being discussed • Allow for public comment and engagement • Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultant

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Wednesday December 10th	Meeting 19 City Hall	Deliberate on Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliberate and vote on Better Personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission Consultant
December	Create final recommendations	Synthesize initial community and stakeholder feedback. Create the first draft of recommendations for charter reform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesis of feedback Initial recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission Consultant
Saturday January 10th	Meeting 20 Council District 2	Town Hall Study session: Planning and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present feedback and final recommendations for planning and infrastructure Gather community input Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission Consultant
Wednesday January 14th	Meeting 21 City Hall	Deliberate on final recommendation for planning and Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliberate and vote on final recommendation for planning and Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission Consultant
Wednesday January 21st	Meeting 22 Council District 6	Town Hall Study Session: Better Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present feedback and initial recommendations for Better Government Gather community input Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission Consultant

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Saturday February 7th	Meeting 23 Council District 5	Town Hall Study Session: Government Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present feedback and final recommendations for government structure • Gather community input • Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant
Wednesday February 11th	Meeting 24 City Hall	Deliberate on final recommendation Government Structure and Better Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate and vote on final recommendation Government Structure and Better Government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant
Saturday February 14th	Town Hall Council District 14	Host town hall event for the public to inform and engage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold public event to give an overview of the charter reform process and issues being discussed • Allow for public comment and engagement • Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultant

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Wednesday February 18th	Meeting 25 Council District 8	Town Hall Study Session: Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present feedback and final recommendations for hiring • Gather community input • Outreach to NC's and other stakeholders in the council district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant
Wednesday February 25th	Meeting 26 City Hall	Deliberate on final recommendations: Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate and vote on final recommendation Personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant
Saturday March 7th	Meeting 27 City Hall	Town Hall Study Session: final recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate on final recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant
Saturday March 14th	Meeting 28 City Hall	Discuss final recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and vote on final recommendations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission
By April 2nd 2026	Transmit recommendations to council	Create a final report sharing recommendations: this should include a list of activities and an appendix with the feedback received.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare final report with recommendations and a summary of the outreach and feedback received 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Consultant