

City of Los Angeles

CALIFORNIA

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May 14, 2026

Los Angeles City Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
City Hall, Room 395
Los Angeles, California 90012

Attention: Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CHARTER REFORM COMMISSION, COUNCIL FILE NO. 26-0489

Honorable Members:

Transmitted herein are the Office of the City Clerk's responses pertaining to the six recommendations proposed by the Charter Reform Commission. We appreciate the Committee's request for our responses for each of the following recommendations:

- **CRC 12** - Council Expansion (Charter Sections 241 and 487)
- **CRC 22** - Ranked Choice Voting (Charter Section 428)
- **CRC 23** - Lowering Voting Age to 16 (Charter Section 408)
- **CRC 24** - Ballot Access Requirements (Charter Sections 421-422)
- **CRC 25** - Commissioner Appointment Windows (Charter Section 502)
- **CRC 36** - Special Election Vacancy Requirements (Charter Sections 409)

Sincerely,

Signed with ClerkSign

May 14, 2026 5:13PM



Patrice Y. Lattimore
City Clerk

Enclosures: Response to Charter Reform Recommendations

PYL/RV/EM/CG/AS:ih
EXE-027-26

AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Charter Reform Commission Recommendation Response CRC 12

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

CRC 12 - Expand the City Council to 25 single-member districts, which shall be effective in 2032 upon the adoption of the final redistricting plan.

Responding Department:

Office of the City Clerk for the following sections: Administrative Services, Council and Public Services, Elections, Executive Office, Records Management, and Systems.

Administrative Impact(s):

Expanding the Council to 25 Members will necessitate significant administrative scaling across multiple Office of the City Clerk (City Clerk) divisions to support 10 additional Council Offices and up to 10 new Council Committees.

Administrative Services Division (ASD): ASD anticipates a significant increase in workload, with contract volume projected to rise from 150 to 250 and payment processing increasing from 9,672 to 15,500 instances. To manage this, the division requires 12 additional positions: (1) Senior Management Analyst I, (3) Management Analysts, (1) Accountant, and (7) Accounting Clerks.

Council and Public Services (CPS): To support additional Council Committees and increased number of Council meeting agenda items, CPS requires 11 new positions: (5) Legislative Assistants, (4) Senior Administrative Clerks, and (2) Management Analysts.

Elections: Additional as-needed/seasonal staff (candidate filing and petition verification) will be required to accommodate the increase in candidates and corresponding materials for candidate filing and nominating petition verification for at least two election cycles.

Executive Office: In order to manage more meetings and correspondences between the Executive Office and 10 more Council Districts, (1) Executive Administrative Assistant II.

Human Resources Services Section: Employee onboarding, offboarding, and training are expected to exceed 850 instances during rollover years. This volume necessitates nine additional positions: (1) Senior Personnel Analyst, (2) Personnel Analysts, (2) Management Analysts, (2) Senior Administrative Clerks, and (2) Administrative Clerks.

Records Management Division (RMD): The division must expand its capacity to handle record-keeping requirements for the new elected offices. This requires four additional

positions: (1) Archivist II, (1) Management Analyst, (1) Administrative Clerk, and (1) Warehouse and Toolroom Worker I.

Systems: To provide technical support for new Council Committee meetings and additional City Clerk administrative staff, the division requires five additional positions: (3) Systems Analysts and (2) Programmer Analysts III.

Fiscal Impact(s):

Total additional personnel costs will be \$6.04 million as follows:

- ASD - \$1.95 million
- CPS - \$1.2 million
- Elections - \$1.9 million
- Systems - \$567,769
- RMD - \$325,456
- Executive Office - \$94,273

Total additional contractual services, election expenses and office & administrative costs will be \$1.54 as follows:

- CPS - \$110,000 for interpretation and translation services.
- Systems - \$181,000 for equipment for new City Clerk staff added as part of this recommendation.
- Elections \$1 million increase in County costs. Ballot pages would include 18 more races in 2032. For each subsequent election, the County costs would just go up about \$250,000 for the additional five City Council Districts.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required:

While the increase in City Council Districts requires a Charter amendment, additional support staff within the City Clerk can be enacted through the annual budget process.

Advantage/Disadvantages of Proposal(s):

Advantage

Increasing administrative staff for the City Clerk will maintain transparent and responsive governance at Council meetings, while providing essential capacity for accounts payable and contracting tasks needed by the additional Council Districts.

Disadvantage

We anticipate that the City will need to allocate about \$6.04 million in funds for personnel and contracting to the City Clerk.

Additional Concerns:

None.

Departmental Liaison Contact:

Ed Moreno, Division Manager
Office of the City Clerk
Administrative Services Division
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Charter Reform Commission Recommendation Response CRC 22

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

CRC 22 - Creates a Ranked Choice Voting system that replaces the current electoral runoff system; effective in 2032.

Responding Department:

Office of the City Clerk – Elections and Business Improvement District Division

Administrative Impact(s):

Implementing Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) will have significant administrative impacts and may not be feasible by 2032. Implementation would first require technical and regulatory changes that either the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) or the City of Los Angeles (City) alone must initiate.

Although RCV technology is available and implementation is feasible, the RR/CC is not configured to run RCV elections or tabulations. A voting system with RCV capabilities would require State testing and certification, as well as a clear regulatory framework (through the State Code of Regulations). If these conditions are not met, the RR/CC cannot implement RCV for use in the City's elections.

Jurisdictions that have implemented RCV, like San Francisco or Redondo Beach, do so independently and with certified voting systems obtained on their own. Conducting RCV elections on our own will require amending the City's election schedules, a significant increase in departmental staff to conduct RCV municipal elections independently, purchasing a separate certified RCV-capable voting system, and conducting a significant voter outreach and educational campaign to inform voters of the new voting method. In a jurisdiction as large and diverse as Los Angeles, voter outreach must be multi-faceted and ongoing. Outreach must begin at least two years before RCV's first use.

Fiscal Impact(s):

Over time, the elimination of a runoff election will eventually bring election costs down. However, implementation of RCV will require significant start-up costs. First, holding RCV elections will require a new voting system, which could cost approximately \$25 million, not including annual licensing and warranty costs. Next, the City must reorient itself to conducting all municipal elections, independent from the County, and increase the number of staff required to conduct RCV elections. Finally, in order for RCV to succeed, the City must invest in a significant voter outreach and education campaign.

If the County were capable of conducting RCV elections, election costs will still likely increase in the short term.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: [Can these proposed recommendations be accomplished administratively (e.g., Los Angeles Administrative Code Amendment (ordinance) and internal policy changes or should it be done via Charter Amendment?]

Both Charter and Election Code amendments are required.

Advantage/Disadvantages of Proposal(s):

Advantages

- Fewer elections and reduced voter fatigue.
- Increased voter participation.
- Elimination of separate runoff elections.
- Ability to fill vacant seats quicker.
- Introduction of new candidates to the election process.
- Less negative campaigning.

Disadvantages

- Voter Confusion. A successful introduction and implementation of RCV requires a significant investment in voter outreach and education, to provide sufficient notice and reduce confusion.
- RCV cannot be implemented without a tested and certified voting system. Currently, the County's VSAP system cannot accommodate RCV.

Additional Concerns:

Unless the City wants to conduct its own elections again, which will necessitate Charter changes and a significant increase of municipal election staffing levels and costs, we must wait until the County has a voting system that is capable of conducting RCV elections before implementation is feasible.

Departmental Liaison Contact:

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Elections and Business Improvement District Division
Christopher.Garcia@lacity.org

Charter Reform Commission Recommendation Response CRC 23

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

CRC 23 - Lowers the voting age to 16 and allows these individuals to vote in elections for City offices and members of the Board of Education.

Responding Department:

Office of the City Clerk – Elections and Business Improvement District Division

Administrative Impact(s):

Currently, the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) cannot legally conduct a Los Angeles City (City) election that would allow 16- and 17-year olds to register and vote. Under State Election Code 10418, if an election is consolidated with a statewide election, it must be conducted in accordance with Federal, State, and local law. All elections conducted by the County must be held according to the same rules.

Without the RR/CC available to conduct this aspect of the election, the implementation of a lower voting age for City and Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) elections will require the City to develop a standalone voter registration system for 16- and 17-year-olds, which will also require a separate voting and tabulation process. Further, the City would be responsible for verifying the age of youth voters in addition to proof of residency and citizenship.

This proposed change will require a significant investment in youth voter registration, outreach, and education. The Office of the City Clerk (City Clerk) must develop voter information materials targeted specifically for youth voters that would explain the new eligibility requirements and voting process, including printed materials, online advertisements, social media postings, television/radio segments, etc. Additional outreach staff would be required to develop these materials and engage in in-person outreach with potential eligible youth voters at schools, public events, and other events.

Fiscal Impact(s):

Allowing 16- and 17- year olds to vote in City and LAUSD elections will require the City to acquire or develop a standalone youth voter registration system with the capability to verify eligibility (age, residence, and citizenship). A separate ballot and tabulation system would also be required, along with the corresponding increase in staffing to implement this program.

For outreach, additional staff would be needed to develop and implement an aggressive youth voter information campaign with materials targeted specifically for youth voters that

would explain the new eligibility requirements and voting process. This will likely include printed materials, online advertisements, social media postings, television/radio segments, etc. Staff would need to visit at least 200 high schools within LAUSD to begin informing eligible students of the new election changes.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: [Can these proposed recommendations be accomplished administratively (e.g., Los Angeles Administrative Code Amendment (ordinance) and internal policy changes or should it be done via Charter Amendment?]

The proposed changes will require Charter Amendment and Election Code revisions.

Advantage/Disadvantages of Proposal(s):

Advantages

Allowing 16- and 17-year olds to vote in City and LAUSD elections will increase civic participation. Youth voters will have direct input into services/institutions that directly affect their lives.

Disadvantages

Implementing a youth vote will require a significant increase in software development and staff costs and the implementation of a standalone registration and eligibility verification system will create significant administrative difficulties.

Additional Concerns:

Departmental Liaison Contact:

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Charter Reform Commission Recommendation Response CRC 24

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

CRC 24 - Changes ballot access requirements by extending filing deadlines/collection timeframes; lowers the signature threshold for nominating petition to 350 registered voters (previously 500).

Responding Department:

Office of the City Clerk – Elections and Business Improvement District Division

Administrative Impact(s):

An extension of candidate filing deadlines, the nominating petition gathering timeline, and a lowered signature gathering threshold for said petitions are feasible, with acceptable administrative impacts. An additional 15 as-needed staff will be required for increased petition processing and hired one week earlier for training. Outreach staff must begin an informational campaign earlier (at the beginning of the fiscal year), to alert the public and potential candidates of the new changes.

Fiscal Impact(s):

Funding would be needed to hire 15 as-needed staff and to purchase equipment. New printers will be required to implement the proposed petition timeframe. Currently, petitions are ready for candidate pick-up at the end of the candidate filing period. This proposal would allow candidates to pick-up their petitions in the middle of the filing period. Higher-functioning printers (with corresponding increases in toner, paper, etc.) would allow staff to print and prepare the petition packets within this timeframe.

For outreach, additional funds would be necessary to update outreach/informational materials and conduct an informational campaign ahead of the new changes. This would include an increase of funds needed to produce additional Candidate Statement Videos with Channel 35.

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: [Can these proposed recommendations be accomplished administratively (e.g., Los Angeles Administrative Code Amendment (ordinance) and internal policy changes or should it be done via Charter Amendment?]

No. These proposals require a Charter Amendment and Election Code revisions.

Advantage/Disadvantages of Proposal(s):

Advantages

This proposal should allow for more candidates to file for elected office. A lower petition signature threshold will be easier for candidates to meet and they will have more time to gather signatures.

Disadvantages

Implementing this proposal will require an increase in staff costs and expenses.

Additional Thoughts/Notes:

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**Charter Reform Commission Recommendation Response
CRC 25**

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

CRC 25 - Extends the appointment window of Commissioners from 45 days to 60 days when a vacancy occurs on a Commission/Board; prohibits appointing authority from requiring prospective appointees to sign a letter of resignation.

Responding Department:

Office of the City Clerk

Administrative Impact(s):

No administrative impacts are expected from this recommendation. The processing of Commissioner appointments by the Office of the City Clerk (City Clerk) and the City Council would be the same regardless of the length of the appointment window.

Fiscal Impact(s):

None

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required:

None

Advantage/Disadvantages of Proposal(s):

None

Additional Concerns:

None

Departmental Liaison Contact:

Andrew Suh

Office of the City Clerk

Charter Reform Commission Recommendation Response
CRC 36

Proposed Charter Reform Recommendation:

CRC 36 - Requires that a special election be called when a vacancy in City offices occur and the vacancy occurs more than one year before the expiration of the term of office; Special election must be held within 180 days of the vacancy.

Responding Department:

Office of the City Clerk – Elections and Business Improvement District Division

Administrative Impact(s):

Requiring special elections to be held for a vacant seat within the proposed timeframe will not be feasible to implement without additional changes in election timelines and requirements. Ideally, a special election would be held within 230 days of a vacancy, in order to allow potential candidates to be made aware of the residency deadline (30 days before the start of candidate filing) and to hire and train the necessary staff to oversee the candidate filing and petition process.

The proposed timeline will require the Office of the City Clerk (City Clerk) to hire and train staff on shorter notice. Further, without an option to consolidate a special election with an existing County-run election, the City of Los Angeles (City) may have no option but to conduct the special election on its own.

Fiscal Impact(s):

A special election for a single Council District may cost \$5.2 million (\$5 million for County and \$200,000 for candidate filing and petition verification). A Citywide election may cost closer to \$30.2 million (\$30 million for County and \$200,000 for candidate filing and petition verification).

Administrative or Charter Amendment Required: [Can these proposed recommendations be accomplished administratively (e.g., Los Angeles Administrative Code Amendment (ordinance) and internal policy changes or should it be done via Charter Amendment?]

Both Charter and Election Code amendments are required.

Advantage/Disadvantages of Proposal(s):

Advantages

None

Disadvantages

There may be an increase in the frequency of special elections, with an increased likelihood that a standalone special election will be required, which could cost the City up to \$30 million. The proposed timeline is not sufficient to prepare for candidate filing and petition verification, or to notify potential candidates of the residency and eligibility requirements.

Additional Concerns:

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