

SUMMARY OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS REFORM COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

City Election Dates				
CAO/CLA report no.	MERC report no.	Recommendation	Current Practice	Key Issues
1	1	Change the City's municipal elections dates to June/November of even years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City's municipal elections are held on March/May of odd years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City cannot consolidate its elections with the County until the County's new voting system is in place. • A County consolidated election is required. Otherwise, concurrent elections will have to be held, which the Commission does not recommend. • November general election of even years showed significantly higher voter turnout despite drop off rates. • The gap in the terms of office resulting from the change in the start and end dates of service will have to be adjusted through a special election, or a temporary one and a half year term extension through a Charter change. • Charter changes require voter approval. • The terms of LAUSD board members would also be affected by the change in election dates. • Other City processes that may be impacted by the change in election dates should be reviewed. • The City will lose oversight control over the municipal election process under a County consolidated election. • The cost of conducting a County consolidated election utilizing the new voting system is unknown.
2	2	Change the City's municipal elections dates to June/November of odd years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City's municipal elections are held on March/May of odd years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June/November are familiar months for constituents to vote. • Voter turnout rates on June/November of odd years have not been significantly higher than the City's municipal elections. • The gap in the terms of office resulting from the change in the start and end dates of service will have to be adjusted through

				<p>a special election, or a temporary five months extension through a Charter change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter changes require voter approval. • The terms of LAUSD board members would also be affected by the change in election dates. • Other City processes that may be impacted by the change in election dates should be reviewed. • The City will lose oversight control over the municipal election process if the County were to administer the City's primary or general elections. • The cost of conducting the City's elections utilizing the new voting system is unknown.
3	3	Extend the time period between the primary and general elections, and extend the canvass period to 28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City's canvass period is 21 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change in election dates will require a Charter change. • Charter changes require voter approval. • The extension will make the City's canvass period consistent with the current State Election Code. • If the Governor signs SB 29 prior to September 30, 2014, then effective January 1, 2015, the State's canvass period will be extended to 30 days.

Voter Registration and Maintenance of Voter Files

CAO/CLA report no.	MERC report no.	Recommendation	Current Practice	Key Issues
4	1	Place voter registration forms on all of the City's public counters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voter registration forms are voluntarily placed by various Departments on their public counters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serves as a cost neutral expansion of voter registration efforts
5	2	Target voter registration efforts in neighborhoods with lower voter registration rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City Clerk will participate in events, in which registration forms are distributed, in neighborhoods with lower voter turnout for the 2015 municipal elections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County Registrar has the sole jurisdiction over the voter registration database. • Voter registration efforts should be led by the County Registrar.
6	3	Engage Neighborhood Councils (NCs) in voter registration activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk has not previously engaged the NCs in voter registration activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk can request the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) for assistance in engaging the NCs. • NCs can be involved through the Los Angeles Votes Committee (LAVC)
7	4	Partner with civic and service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk partners with various civic and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk can request members of the

		organizations to register and educate voters in public locations	service organizations that conduct voter registration and outreach efforts.	LAVC to increase efforts in registering and educating voters in public location.
8	5	Request County Registrar (Registrar) to issue an "Address Correction Requested – Do Not Forward" to voters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk cannot conduct voter list maintenance activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County Registrar has sole jurisdiction over updating the voter registration database. • The City Council may request the Registrar to conduct voter list maintenance activities.
9	6	Request County Registrar to be more proactive in identifying inactive voters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk cannot conduct voter list maintenance activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County Registrar has sole jurisdiction over updating the voter registration database. • The City Council may request the County Registrar to conduct voter list maintenance
Early Voting, Polling Places and Ease of Voting				
CAO/ CLA report no.	MERC report no.	Recommendation	Current Practice	Key Issues
10	1	Create a citywide network of early voting locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City does not have a Citywide early voting system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City Election Code allows for early voting. • Early voting has not increased overall voter turnout but provided high propensity voters with another method to vote. • There is currently no early voting computer equipment that is certified by the State of California.
11	2	Explore the expansion of non-traditional polling locations such as shopping centers, malls, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City utilizes the same polling locations as the County, to the greatest extent possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City Clerk prioritizes using the County's polling locations, to provide consistency and minimize voter confusion. Other polling locations are used only if the County's polling places are not available. • Polling locations are evaluated based on location, accessibility, availability, and other guidelines.
12	3	Transition to a greater use of public locations as polling places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City uses public locations to the greatest extent possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private facilities are only utilized when suitable public locations are unavailable.
13	4	Utilize the same facilities as the County Registrar to the greatest extent possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City uses the County Registrar's polling places to the greatest extent possible. 	
14	5	Replace the City's precinct-based election model with a voting center based model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only provisional voters are allowed to vote outside of their current precinct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This recommendation is contingent upon the successful implementation of both the County's new voting system and California's statewide voter database system. • The County would still remain in a precinct-based election model.

15	6	Simplify all voter materials and messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk reviews all its materials for effectiveness with the Los Angeles Votes Committee (LAVC) members during each election cycle 	
16	7	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City Clerk is in compliance with all state and federal language assistance requirements. • The City has recently added Armenian, Russian, and Farsi as additional languages to be provided. 	
17	8	Relax parking ticketing near polling places on Election Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City Clerk works in collaboration with the Department of Transportation to relax ticketing within two blocks of all City polling locations 	

Outreach to Voters, Public Information and Education, Civic Engagement

CAO/CLA report no.	MERC report no.	Recommendation	Current Practice	Key Issues
18	1	Remain cognizant of under-represented populations when designing programs to increase voter registration and voter participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk partners with various organizations, and the Department of Disability, to ensure that outreach efforts include under-represented populations which include City residents who have a disability or are non-English proficient 	
19	2	Fund programs that enhance voter awareness of elections and promote a culture of voting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgetary requests which require additional General Funds are requested through the annual budgetary process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional General Fund requests should be evaluated in light of the City's annual budget process.
20	3	Involve the City's workforce and Neighborhood Councils in promoting Election Day awareness and voter participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk has a City Employee Poll worker Program which allows City Employees to work as a poll worker, with the employing Department's approval, on Election Day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City Clerk can explore the expansion of the City Poll worker Program to include raising Election Day awareness and voter participation. • The City can request the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (DONE) for assistance in engaging the NCs.
21	4	Implement and fund the ten recommendations included in the City Clerk's Alternative Voting Methods report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 10 recommendations involve enhancing outreach, education, accessibility, and registration efforts by the City Clerk. • The City Clerk indicates that proposals can be implemented with the existing authority and current funding levels, except for the request to increase its traditional media presence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional General Fund requests should be evaluated in light of the City's annual budget process.
22	5	Develop voter outreach programs that include personalized messages and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MERC report sites that text messages have a mild positive impact on voter participation, 	

		trusted messengers.	and successful outreach campaigns include a familiar or trusted spokesperson.	
23	6	Expand use of video communications, in addition to Public Service Announcements (PSAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of video communications to provide process guides and other marketing materials are currently offered via PSAs and posting of video clips on the Clerk's You Tube page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video communications can provide additional training materials for poll workers and simplify process guidelines for voters on Election Day. • Additional funding necessary for continued development of video communication materials an airing advertisements on prime time.
24	7	Continue exploration of the use of technology, apps, and social media as a component of voter outreach and engagement efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk currently uses Facebook, Twitter, and You Tube 	
25	8	Expand use of technology to promote voter engagement as described in the Report of the Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk currently uses Facebook, Twitter, and You Tube 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City Clerk may wish to review performance outcomes of other cities, which utilize the suggested methods of technological expansions such as the City of Long Beach's municipal election application, prior to investing additional City resources.
26	9	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk has an existing FAQ document which can be expanded to include the voting myths discussed in the MERC report 	
27	10	Request that Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) restore civic education as a separate course at the 11 th or 12 th grade level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civics education was removed from LAUSD curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Education of the LAUSD has the authority to determine the LAUSD curriculum
28	11	Look for collaboration opportunities with LAUSD in conducting high school civic outreach activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk has a Student Poll worker Program which employs 1,800 students from local high schools to participate as poll workers 	
Absentee Voting/Vote-By-Mail				
CAO/CLA report no.	MERC report no.	Recommendation	Current Practice	Key Issues
29	1	Consider efforts to contact permanent absentee voters whose ballots are disallowed because of mismatched signatures or other irregularities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Clerk currently only follows up with Vote-By-Mail (VBM) ballots with missing signatures. Other irregularities are followed up only when staff time allows. However, mismatched signatures do not receive any 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to follow up or not inform VBM voters of their ballot irregularities would result in continued disqualification of their ballots, without notice to voters

			follow up.	
30	2	Promote Vote-By-Mail and enrollment as permanent Vote-By-Mail voter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City Clerk promotes the use of VBM through Public Service Announcements, press releases, and including information in the sample ballot. 	
31	3	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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State legislation (SB 29) is currently pending enactment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City Clerk is in support of this legislation The Governor has until September 30, 2014 to sign SB 29 into law.
32	4	Consider and study costs of providing pre-paid postage on Vote-By-Mail ballot envelopes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepaid postage is not provided for the majority of VBM ballots. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City can chose to provide a first class postage stamp on each VBM (estimated at \$1 mil) or use "Business Reply Mail," where postage is only charged when a response is mailed (estimated at \$200,000). However, the use of Business Reply Mail may cause undue delay in the delivery of the VBM because of the need to verify the postage account prior to completing delivery.
33	5	Clarify and simplify vote-by-mail instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City Clerk provides VBM instructions on all sample ballots. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City Clerk includes VBM instructions in its review of all election materials.