

Los Angeles City Council Redistricting Commission

**Presentation to the
Los Angeles Alliance of Neighborhood Councils (LAANC)
Saturday, June 5, 2021**

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The L.A. City Council Redistricting Commission (LACCRC)

Core Purpose:

- Draw proposed boundaries based on **census data and applicable law** that will allocate constituents **proportionately**
- Account for the unique **histories, experiences and interests of communities**
- Provide for the **highest probability of being served** by elected representatives and the City.

The LACCRC Composition

21 Members Appointed by LA Elected Officials

- Mayor Garcetti (3)
- City Council President (1)
- City Council (1 appointment per each of 15 Districts = 15)
- City Attorney (1 appointment)
- City Controller (1 appointment)

Basic Commission Structure: Monthly meetings + Committees

- Chair: Commissioner Fred Ali
- Two Vice Chairs: Community Outreach & Data/Mapping Committees
- Executive Director: Mr. Frank Cardenas
- Support: City Attorney, Chief Legislative Analyst, Additional LACCRC Staff

The LACCRC Mission Statement

Vision: To strengthen the governance of the City of Los Angeles by empowering its communities to have their diverse needs served through fair and inclusive representation.

Core Values:

Equity

Dignity

Integrity

Data-driven

Transparency

Solution-oriented

Respect

Interdependence

Compassion

What is Redistricting?

Redistricting is defined as **drawing new boundaries** that determine which residents are represented by each elected official.

- Population changes (births, deaths, migration into and out of City of LA) counted by U.S. Census 2020
- Areas where there were once roughly the same number of people become unequal
- Communities change (priorities, interests, goals, make up of community)

Which Laws Govern Redistricting?

- U.S. Constitution
- Los Angeles City Charter
- Federal Voting Rights Act
- California Elections Code
- California Constitution
- Case Law

The Constitution and the Census

The U.S. Constitution requires that every American receive as close to equal political representation as possible:

- **Equal Protection Clause**: “One Person, One Vote”
- Prevent **over-representation** or **under-representation** in government
- No “**gerry-mandering**”: Must “even out” the population between districts and create districts with the same number of people
- Deviation of **<10% is “presumptively valid”**, based on criteria (e.g., natural boundaries, neighborhoods, communities of interest)

The Constitution and the Census

All jurisdictions must update boundaries based on Census:

- **CALIFORNIA STATE:** The California Redistricting Commission (Congressional, State Senate, State Assembly and State Board of Equalization) Districts
- **L.A. COUNTY:** The LA County Redistricting Commission (5 Supervisors)
- **L.A. SCHOOLS:** The LA Unified School Redistricting District (LAUSD) (7 Districts)
- **L.A. CITY:** LA City Council Commission (15 Council Districts)

L.A. City Charter Redistricting Provisions

- Divides the City into **15 Council Districts** (§ 241)
- Requires that Council District lines be redrawn at least **every 10 years** (§ 204)
- Creates Redistricting Commission to obtain **public input**, prepare a redistricting proposal and present it to the City Council (§ 204)
- Provides the **City Council** with the **ultimate authority** to adopt a redistricting plan (§ 204)

L.A. City Charter Requirements

- Council districts “contain, as nearly as practicable, **equal portions of the total population** of the City as shown by the Federal Census” (§ 204(a))
- Districts conform to **state and federal** redistricting law (§ 204(d))
- Districts “keep **neighborhoods** and communities intact, utilize **natural boundaries** or street lines, and be **geographically** compact and contiguous” to the extent feasible (§ 204(d))

Federal Voting Rights Act

Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Section 2):

- Prohibits any voting practice or procedure that “results in a denial or abridgement” of the right to vote based on **race, color or language minority status**
- Prohibits redistricting plans that result in “**vote dilution**” by depriving minority voters of an equal opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice
- Cannot “**fracture**” or “**pack**” minority voters

Line Drawing Criteria

The Commission must follow these **criteria**, in this order. Districts must be:

1. Of nearly **equal population** to comply with the US Constitution.
2. Comply with the **Voting Rights Act** to ensure that minorities have a fair opportunity to elect representatives of their choice.
3. Drawn **contiguously**, so that all parts of the district are connected to each other.
4. **Minimize the division** of neighborhoods and communities of interest to the extent possible.
5. **Geographically compact** such that nearby areas of population are not bypassed for more distant populations. (This requirement refers to density, not shape).

In addition, the place of residence of any **incumbent or candidate** cannot be considered and districts may not favor or discriminate against an incumbent, political candidate, or political party.

“Communities of Interest”

Communities of Interest (COIs) are defined as a concentrated population which shares common social and economic interests that should be included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation.

Examples: Income level, education background, housing patterns (urban, rural, suburban), cultural and language, employment and economic patterns (e.g., transportation, work), health and environmental conditions.

A **Community of Interest** is not the same as a district, but COIs are key building blocks of districts. Some ways to describe your community:

- Geographic (waterways, rural, urban, mountains)
- Community or Service Boundaries (neighborhoods, school areas)
- Things you have in common

Your Voice Matters

Political Boundaries can:

- Make the difference between **empowering** and maximizing the voters' voices—or **minimizing** and muting those voices.
- Exclude communities from **political power**, if unfairly drawn or not reflective of common interests.

Your Voice and Full Participation can:

- Ensure **democracy**
- Help shape the **new political boundaries**
- Ensure the opportunity to **elect candidates** of your choice.
- Help keep your **community and neighborhood** “whole”

We Need Your Voices

DESCRIBE, DRAW, SEND

Your input is vital to the success of the Commission. Here are three simple steps to participate:

1. **DESCRIBE** your community. What are your shared interests? What brings you together? What is important to your community? Are there nearby areas you want (or do not want) to be in a district with? Why or why not?
2. **DRAW** your community on a map with new user-friendly software.
3. **SEND** your testimony directly to the Commission.

We Need Your Voices

DESCRIBE, DRAW, SEND

The Communities of Interest Mapping Tool (COI Tool) will allow you to **DESCRIBE**, **DRAW** and **SEND** your input to the Commission, and is coming soon. Submit your comments to the L.A. City Council Redistricting at:

redistricting.lacity@lacity.org

Or via USPS:

LACCRC

Los Angeles City Hall

200 N. Spring Street, Room 275, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attention: Mr. Frank Cardenas, Executive Director

redistricting2021.lacity.org/LACCRC

Public Hearings Are Coming – Join Us

- **Fifteen Public Hearings**, at minimum, will be held across the City from July through September 2021 to solicit public input
- **One** public hearing for each of the 15 **Council Districts** plus additional regional public hearings
- Outreach will be actively conducted to **Neighborhood Councils, community-based** and **faith-based organizations** and other stakeholders to get the word out
- The Commission's retained "**line drawer**" expert will transfer public input into our database for line drawing purposes

Join Us for a Planning Meeting

- **Engaging Neighborhood Councils**
 - Neighborhood Council leaders are being invited by the Los Angeles City Council Redistricting Commission (LACCRC) to a special meeting just for NC members on the Redistricting process for LA's 15 City Council Districts.
 - **Wednesday, June 9th at 6:30pm**
- **Valuing NC Input**
 - **Purpose of this meeting is to solicit from Neighborhood Councils their experiences and perspectives on how to best engage Neighborhood Councils in the City Council Redistricting Public Hearings** (*scheduled to begin in July and go until mid-September*) and throughout the Redistricting process that goes to the end of the year.
 - The LACCRC values the input from Neighborhood Councils and the many other stakeholders who will play a critical role in ensuring fair and inclusive representation.
- **Participation in the Planning Meeting**
 - **RSVP to redistricting.lacity@lacity.org**. Once you reserve your participation you will receive details on how to join the meeting online or by phone.

Thank You!

Get ready to **DESCRIBE, DRAW, and SEND**

Make Your Voice Heard. Empower Your Community.
Tell us what makes your community so special.

LACCRC website at:

redistricting2021.lacity.org/LACCRC

Follow LACCRC Meetings at:

<http://redistricting2021.lacity.org/index.html>

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