
Appendix E
LAFCO Policies

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LAFCO POLICIES

1. ENCOURAGE THE ORDERLY FORMATION OF

LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

a. SERVICE PROVISION

(3) POLICY: The plan for service provision submitted as part of an application for jurisdictional change shall include the following information: (1) an enumeration and description of the services to be extended to the affected territory, (2) the level and range of those services; (3) an indication of when those services can feasibly be extended to the affected territory; (4) an indication of any improvement or upgrading of structures, roads, sewer or water facilities, or other conditions the local agency would impose or require within the affected territory if the change of organization or reorganization is completed, and (5) information with respect to how those services will be financed.

In addition to the foregoing information, the following information will be required as part of each plan for service:

- (a) a list of the existing services available to the affected area, and the agencies providing those services
- (b) a list of services available through the affected agency or agencies
- (c) a comparison of the existing and proposed service levels and the effects of the proposed change on service in adjacent areas
- (d) a description of all special local taxes, assessments, fees, and outstanding bonds that will potentially affect the proposal area
- (e) identification of any resource shortages or facility inadequacies presently experienced or anticipated by the affected agency

(4) POLICY: All proposals involving jurisdictional change will include a plan for services. Those proposals initiated by resolution of the affected agency shall include the plan for service with the application. When proposals are initiated by petition, the Commission's staff shall

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notify the affected agency and request a plan for service. In cases where the proposed jurisdictional change involves a reorganization, the plan for service shall address all of the affected agencies.

b. COMMUNITY APPROACH

(2) POLICY: Service provision shall be viewed on a community basis. Annexation to a city shall generally be accompanied by simultaneous annexation to the special districts that serve that community. Likewise, when possible, annexation to a special district that serves a city shall include annexation to that adjacent city.

d. BOUNDARIES

(2) POLICY: The Commission will generally honor an agreement between a city and the County, or a city and a city with respect to the inclusion or exclusion of roads adjacent to one or more of the boundaries of a proposed annexation. If no such agreement is in place, the entire width of any roadway which is adjacent to the property to be annexed should be included within the annexation when one or more of the following conditions apply:

- (a) the roadway will include significant new facilities (such as sewer lines, water lines, storm drains, or notable traffic control measures) that will be maintained by the annexing jurisdiction;
- (b) based upon existing and future potential land uses in the area, the primary users of that portion of the road would most likely be generated by the annexing entity; or
- (c) whenever the Commission, after considering the overall impacts, adjacent land uses, historic and perceptual boundary concerns, and other factors relevant to LAFCO policy, determines that annexation of the roadway would be appropriate.

(3) The environmental documentation prepared for each project which proposes annexation of property to a city in which one or more of the boundaries between the city and the County or the city and another city are delineated by a road, shall include analyses which place the road within each of the jurisdictions. The environmental document or a supplemental document prepared by the applicant shall address the long-term maintenance costs associated with each of these potential scenarios.

(4) POLICY: Special districts shall be detached from an area when a city annexes that area and assumes the role of service provider in place of the special district.

2. PRESERVE AGRICULTURAL LAND AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

- (1) POLICY: The Commission encourages all agencies within the County to adopt and exercise development policies that promote orderly development and logical boundaries and protect productive agricultural lands and significant open space areas, including riparian areas.
- (2) POLICY: Unless the subject area is substantially developed to its ultimate use, annexation to a city or special district will be linked to a proposal to develop and not be speculative in nature. Development plans, including a timetable, will be required as part of the LAFCO application for annexation.
- (3) POLICY: Generally annexation of farmlands shall not be permitted when significant areas of non-productive farmland are already available. Development of vacant land within a city or district should be developed prior to fringe areas.

3. ENCOURAGE LOGICAL PATTERNS OF GROWTH AND DISCOURAGE URBAN SPRAWL

a. ORDERLY GROWTH

- (1) POLICY: The Commission encourages the urbanization of certain lands over others and hereby establishes a priority list for urbanization:
 - (a) vacant or undeveloped land within the existing boundaries of a city
 - (b) vacant or underdeveloped land within the adopted sphere of influence of a city
 - (c) vacant or underdeveloped land outside the adopted sphere of influence of a city
- (2) POLICY: The commission will consider the following factors in determining logical growth patterns in reviewing proposals for annexation to a city or expansion of a city's sphere of influence:
 - (a) adjacency with existing and planned growth pattern of the city
 - (b) projected growth demand and relationship to remaining lands to be developed within the city and its existing sphere
 - (c) ability of the city to provide and fund needed services (utilities, transportation, public safety, recreation, libraries) to the levels defined by the city's general plan

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pending or anticipated development applications to the County for areas within a city's existing sphere

- (3) POLICY: The commission discourages urban level development in unincorporated areas adjacent to city boundaries.

b. SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

(1) POLICY: To allow for the evaluation of projected growth demand and its relationship to remaining lands to be developed within the city, and the city's sphere, proposals for sphere of influence revisions (other than minor adjustments) shall require certain data for the consideration of the Commission. It is recognized that sphere reviews associated with periodic updates of the general plan will be more conceptual than those associated with specific projects. In any case, the data provided shall be as accurate, thorough, and pragmatic as possible. The data provided shall include the following:

- (a) A market absorption study analyzing proposed uses in relation to similar uses within the city and the city's sphere. The study shall:

- I. cover a 15 to 20 year planning horizon,
- II. include all major land use categories proposed within sphere revision (residential, commercial, office and industrial),
- III. identify project and citywide buildout capacities for the proposed land uses,
- IV. provide an analysis of the competitive strength of the affected city and land uses within the regional market, and the proposed project land uses within the anticipated capture,
- V. contain a breakdown of projected absorption and supply margins over time by both land use and by geographic planning area within the city. At a minimum, the analysis should distinguish projected absorption between the proposed sphere area and the existing (infill) portion of the city and the city's sphere area, and

- (b) Analysis of alternative project sites located elsewhere within the city or its existing sphere. This analysis shall be included as an alternative in the environmental document prepared for the proposed sphere expansion. If such alternative sites are determined not to be feasible as defined by CEQA, the environmental document shall include a discussion of the reasons and relevant data used to make such determinations.

LAFCO staff shall be afforded the opportunity to comment on the adequacy of the alternatives analysis prior to certification of the environmental document.

(2) POLICY: Expansions of city spheres of influence shall be discouraged if there is feasible land appropriate for the proposed uses already within the sphere of influence.

c. ANNEXATIONS

(1) POLICY: To allow for the evaluation of projected growth demand and its relationship to remaining lands to be developed within the city, proposals for annexations to a city or reorganizations including annexation to a city (except unincorporated islands and minor adjustments) shall be accompanied by the following:

(a) A market absorption study analyzing proposed uses in relation to similar uses within the city. The study shall:

- I. cover a 15 to 20 year planning horizon,
- II. include all major land use categories proposed within annexation (residential, commercial, office and industrial),
- III. identify project and citywide buildout capacities for the proposed land uses,
- IV. provide an analysis of the competitive strength of the affected city land uses within the regional market, and the proposed project land uses within the anticipated city capture of that regional market,
- V. contain a breakdown of projected absorption and supply margins over time by both land use and by geographic planning area within the city. At a minimum, the analysis should distinguish projected absorption between the proposed annexation area and the existing (infill) portion of the city, and
- VI. include a summary of key assumptions and methodologies used in generating the absorption projections.

(b) Analysis of alternative project sites located elsewhere within the city or its existing sphere. This analysis shall be included as an alternative in the environmental document prepared for the proposed annexation or reorganization including annexation. If such alternative sites are determined not to be feasible as defined by CEQA, the environmental document shall include a discussion of the reasons and relevant data used to make determinations. LAFCO staff shall be afforded the opportunity to comment on

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the adequacy of the alternatives analysis prior to certification of the environmental document.

(2) POLICY: Unless special circumstances can be demonstrated, city annexations or reorganizations including city annexations shall be discouraged if there are feasible alternative sites for the annexation proposal already within the city.

(4) POLICY: All city annexation proposals shall be prezoned. No subsequent change may be made to the general plan or zoning for the annexed territory that is not in conformance to the pre-zoning designations for a period of two years after the completion of the annexation.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

b. ENVIRONMENTAL

(1) POLICY: Whenever an agency is considering a project (such as prezoning, a general plan amendment, site development, or the installation of infrastructure) that requires annexation or some other jurisdictional reorganization, the environmental review for that project shall include consideration of the environmental impacts of annexation or jurisdictional reorganization, and LAFCO shall be treated as a responsible agency