

APPROVED 5-0 ON NOVEMBER 26, 2024

AGN. NO. 19

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS LINDSEY P. HORVATH AND
HILDA L. SOLIS

November 26, 2024

AMENDED BY SUPERVISOR HOLLY J. MITCHELL ON 11/26/24

Los Angeles County Governance Reform: Implementing the Voter Mandate for a More Representative, Accountable, and Transparent Los Angeles County

Measure G's approval by voters paves the way for historic changes to Los Angeles County's governance structure. The comprehensive set of reforms will result in a government that is more accountable, transparent, representative, and responsive to individuals and communities in greatest need. This comes after six previous attempts to update Los Angeles County's governance structure failed to secure Los Angeles County voter approval in 1962, 1976, 1992, 2000, and legislative support in 2015, and 2017. Now, this once-in-a-generation change is coming to Los Angeles County through a voter mandate.

The passage of Measure G amends the Los Angeles County Charter, establishing the first elected County Executive, creating four additional Supervisorial districts, establishing an independent Ethics Commission, and requiring public departmental budget hearings. The reforms will modernize and reorganize the County's governance structure with true checks and balances - through the separation of legislative and executive authorities - to meet the complex challenges currently facing the County and the nation.

MOTION

Solis _____

Mitchell _____

Hahn _____

Barger _____

Horvath _____

The measure includes changes that are required immediately; therefore, bold steps must be taken today to ensure the structural overhaul meets voter-approved deadlines. It is the County's responsibility to deliver on the promise of greater transparency and improved service delivery to County residents. The timeline for the Charter amendment includes:

- Immediately requiring County departments and agencies to present their budgets to the Board of Supervisors in open, public meetings, prior to adoption of an annual budget.
- Immediately strengthening "revolving door" policy prohibiting former County officials from lobbying the County for a minimum of 2 years after leaving County service.
- Immediately authorizing the suspension with or without pay for elected officials criminally convicted of a crime related to a violation of official duties.
- By 2026, creating an independent Ethics Commission as well as an Office of Ethics Compliance, to be led by an Ethics Compliance Officer.
- By 2026, requiring all non-urgency, items of business agenda at a regular Board of Supervisors meeting be publicly posted for a minimum of 120 hours (five days) before Board action.
- In 2028, electing a County Executive and establishing the County Legislative Analyst and Director of Budget and Management positions.
- Following the 2030 Census and upon the completion of the Independent Redistricting process, elect four additional members of the Board of Supervisors in 2032.

During this process, many have expressed a desire to help shape how this monumental change moves forward. The County must be committed to a robust public engagement process beginning now. The Charter amendment states, “The Board of Supervisors shall establish a Governance Reform Task Force, with representation from the County workforce, responsible for implementation of this Charter amendment upon adoption by the voters, including robust community and stakeholder outreach.” It further states, “Implementation efforts and recommendations by the Governance Reform Task Force shall use existing County funding sources, and any implementation costs shall be offset by cost savings determined through the annual County budgeting process, with no additional costs to, or taxes imposed on taxpayers.” The Charter amendment requires the Governance Reform Task Force to convene no later than 180 days after certification of the vote (June 1, 2025). Immediate action must be taken to implement the Charter amendment, and meet the timelines imposed (see attached Overview of County Charter Amendment).

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE, THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

- 1) Direct the Board of Supervisors Executive Office (EO), in consultation with County Counsel, to establish the Governance Reform Task Force (GRTF) to research and analyze the current governance structure, conduct public outreach, and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors (Board) on a reorganization proposal that implements the voter-approved Charter amendment to transition the County’s governance structure. The GRTF shall strive for consensus in all decisions. For the GRTF’s implementation recommendations to the Board, non-consensus recommendations shall be noted. The GRTF will be comprised of thirteen members. The composition of the GRTF will include five Board appointed members (one appointed by each Supervisor), three labor appointed members, and five at-large members to be selected by the five Board appointed members as follows:
 - a) Application and selection process: Within 60 days, the EO, in consultation with County Counsel, must develop an online GRTF member application that follows a similar application process to the LA County Independent Redistricting Commission, which each potential GRTF member will be required to complete.

The final composition of the GRTF must:

(1) Reflect the diversity of the County of Los Angeles, to the extent feasible, and permissible by law, including, but not limited to:

- i. Race/Ethnicity
- ii. Gender
- iii. LGBTQ+ Identity
- iv. Age
- v. System Impacted (formally incarcerated, unhoused, foster youth, etc.)
- vi. Income Levels
- vii. Education Levels
- viii. Disabilities
- ix. Renters and Homeowners
- x. Geographical Diversity

(2) Include at least two GRTF members who reside in an unincorporated area of the County at the time of appointment.

(3) Include no more than two at-large GRTF members who reside in the same Supervisorial District at the time of appointment.

b) Criteria for selecting GRTF members must include:

i) Minimum Requirements:

(1) Adults over age 18.

(2) Must reside or work within Los Angeles County at the time of service.

(3) Willingness to work on a highly visible advisory body.

(4) Ability to commit the necessary time.

(5) Demonstrated qualifications and experience in community outreach/engagement with marginalized and socioeconomically disadvantaged populations.

(6) Possess experience that demonstrates analytical skills relevant to the performance of governmental functions and execution of governmental duties under applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

(7) Must explain their reason for seeking to be a member of the GRTF.

(8) Upon selection, file a Statement of Economic Interest (Form 700)

ii) Desirable Qualifications:

(1) Skills, knowledge or lived experience that will help the GRTF fulfill its roles and responsibilities particularly around municipal or civic administration, stakeholder engagement, and project planning and implementation.

(2) Commitment to, and experience with, advancing the County's core values of anti-racism, equity, communication, collaboration, transparency, "care first" and fiscal responsibilities.

(3) Demonstrated knowledge and expertise in matters relevant to governance reform, including backgrounds in public administration, policy development, academia, and/or organizational leadership.

(4) Ability to leverage community connections to support community engagement efforts of the GRTF, including with marginalized and socioeconomically disadvantaged communities.

(5) Local government experience/knowledge is preferred, including but not limited to cities within the County.

iii) Applicants will be disqualified from GRTF membership if they, or an immediate family member, are currently:

- Appointed to, elected to, or a candidate for office at the local, state, or federal level representing any area within the County of Los Angeles.
- Serving as appointed staff of, or a paid consultant for, an elected representative at the local, state, or federal level representing the County of Los Angeles.
- Serving as an employee of, or paid consultant for, a candidate for office at the local, state, or federal level representing the County of Los Angeles.
- A registered state or local lobbyist.
- The disqualifications above do not apply to the following:

- (a) appointed staff not working directly for an elected official's office;
 - (b) commissioners; and
 - (c) employees of organizations representing local cities.
- c) Develop an application that presents questions to the applicants that best demonstrate their qualifications. Once the application is finalized, it must be posted on the EO website for a minimum of 30 days (application period) to provide applicants the opportunity to complete and submit their applications.
- d) Within 10 business days after the close of the application period, applications must be reviewed for completeness and provided to the Board, including a summary of which qualifications identified above each applicant possesses.
- e) Within 45 days after the close of the application period, each Supervisor shall select from the applicants one (1) GRTF member for appointment by the Board, for a total of five (5). Board appointed GRTF members must participate in the application process.
- f) Within 45 days of the closing of the application period, three additional GRTF members shall be nominated by labor as follows:
 - i) One nominated by the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor;
 - ii) One nominated by SEIU Local 721;
 - iii) One nominated by the Coalition of County Unions; and
 - iv) The labor nominees must participate in the application process, to be confirmed by the Board within 30 days of receiving the nominations. No other GRTF members shall be representatives of labor, including members appointed by the Board or the GRTF to ensure equitable distribution across all stakeholder sectors. Representatives of labor include individuals that are members of labor unions.
- g) The remaining qualified applications must be provided to the five Board appointed GRTF members, for the purpose of selecting individuals to fill the five at-large GRTF member seats as described in Directive 1 of this motion. At least one individual on the GRTF shall represent the interests of each of the following stakeholder groups; the business sector, municipal government, and community-

based organizations, as well as an individual with significant knowledge or experience in public sector ethics. If any of these sectors are not represented by Board appointed GRTF members, the Board appointed GRTF members shall fill any gaps with their selection of at-large GRTF members. Within 30 days of being appointed, the five Board appointed GRTF members must, by a four-fifths majority vote, select five at-large GRTF members for appointment by the Board, provided however that each Supervisor's Board appointed GRTF member must have been included in the majority selecting at least one at-large GRTF member for appointment.

- h) Consistent with the Board's intention for the GRTF to operate independently, a GRTF member may only be removed by a four-fifths majority vote of the Board. In considering any removal, the Board shall give the utmost consideration possible, as permitted by law, to the recommendation of the GRTF to the Board.
- i) While the GRTF should strive for consensus in all decisions, the following require the approval by a supermajority of nine (9) GRTF members:
 - i. Adoption of, or revisions to, the rules and procedures of the GRTF;
 - ii. Recommendation for removal of a GRTF member;
 - iii. Adoption of any GRTF recommendation for submission to the Board.
- j) All recommendations of the GRTF shall, when submitted to the Board:
 - i. Identify funding sources to cover all costs associated with their establishment and ongoing operation. Recommendations may only utilize existing County funding sources, and cannot result in any additional costs to, or taxes imposed on taxpayers. Any cost savings relied upon in any recommendation must be clearly identified, including the amount, source and affected program.
 - ii. Analyze and justify how such changes would improve County governance and service delivery, as well as performance metrics (both quantitative and qualitative) and accountability mechanisms for evaluating these changes at regular intervals in future years.
 - iii. Analyze and justify, if changing the direction and oversight of municipal services for the unincorporated areas (in particular the respective roles of

both the County Executive and the Supervisor representing a particular unincorporated area), how such changes would improve the quality and responsiveness of services and representation of the unincorporated areas.

2) Direct the EO, in consultation with County Counsel and other relevant departments, to do the following within 60 days:

a) Prepare for the GRTF's consideration a proposed scope of work that will guide the GRTF's work that includes short- and long-term focus areas, and timelines for the GRTF, as outlined in the Charter amendment (summary attached) and to be provided to the Board for consideration. The GRTF shall have the ability to amend the draft scope of work. The draft scope of work for the GRTF must include, but not be limited to, the following:

i) Public Budget Hearings (2025)

(1) A proposed process for departments to present their budget requests in a public Board meeting, including schedules that comply with state law, starting with the FY 2026-27 Budget (see Directive 3a).

ii) Five-Day Posting Requirement for Non-Urgency Legislation (2026)

(1) A process to provide notification to Board offices and departments of the updated filing instructions for board letters and motions reflecting the Charter amendment change which requires all non-urgency, County legislation be publicly posted for a minimum of 120 hours (five days) before Board action.

iii) Ethics Commission (2026)

(1) A proposed structure for the independent Ethics Commission utilizing County Counsel's report on Ethics Reform in addition to a public input process that is completed in time to implement the Commission by 2026.

iv) County Executive (2028)

(1) Reorganization options that include the creation of a County Legislative Officer, a Director of Budget and Management, including staffing and budget.

(2) A staffing and budget proposal for the County Executive's office.

v) Board Expansion (2032)

- i) A staffing and budget proposal for the new nine-member Board.

vi) Charter Commission (2034)

- (1) Proposal and timeline to establish a Charter Review Commission to meet at least decennially (i.e., every 10 years) to review Los Angeles County's governance and the County Charter, and make recommendations to the Board, which the Board must place on agenda for vote no later than 90 days after transmittal.

b) Support the development of a draft comprehensive public engagement strategy inclusive of community and stakeholder outreach and input required by Section 11.74 of Measure G, for consideration by the GRTF, which includes:

- i) Holding GRTF meetings throughout the County, including in each Supervisorial District, with an option for virtual participation.
- ii) Substantively engage with community organizations and stakeholders from each Supervisorial District.
- iii) Engaging and seeking feedback from all organizations and individuals who provided public comment (in any form) in connection with the Board meetings at which Measure G (or the original motion) was considered.
- iv) Making all efforts to host meetings at locations that are accessible to persons with disabilities and accessible to affordable public transportation.
- v) Ensuring language access to the general public, including providing professional interpretation services, translated written materials, and clear mechanisms for requesting accommodations.
- vi) Providing drafts of all recommendations to the general public at least 10 days prior to each meeting.
- vii) Adopting a recommendation only after a public meeting (with public comment) has been held for such recommendation, and after its final text has been public for at least 30 days.

c) Establish a website as a central point of information for the public on the County's governance transition efforts, including educational materials for the public on the voter-approved Charter amendment and the governance transition.

- d) Provide recommendations for the project management and/or staffing of the implementation of the Charter amendment, including support for the GRTF. Consider both internal and external candidates and/or consultant support to effectuate the implementation of the adopted Charter amendment. A project management plan must be included to support the work of the GRTF, including but not limited to an executive director/project manager, counsel (both in-house and outside) and communications and outreach personnel. Intended funding sources should be identified for effectuating the staffing plan.
 - e) Propose fair compensation to be provided to GRTF members to assure that a wide range of residents can participate. The compensation should be on a per diem basis.
 - f) Explore the potential willingness of philanthropy to provide funding to support the County's governance transition planning efforts.
- 3) Direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to prepare the following within 60 days, unless noted otherwise and begin to:
- a) Within 30 days, develop a proposal that aligns with the implementation of the Charter amendment, subject to the Board's approval, to amend the FY 2025- 26 budget calendar and process to include public departmental budget hearings before the Board, as an interim step for FY 2025-26, until the GRTF has recommended a process for FY 2026-27 and beyond.
 - b) Identify available funding to support the GRTF in the current budget and for FY 2025-26 and FY 2026-27, including budget, staffing, and placement within the EO and ensure that direct services are not impacted to achieve this directive.
- 4) Direct County Counsel to:
- a) Identify a lead counsel to be responsive to the requests of the GRTF;
 - b) Report back publicly in 75 days on ordinance updates or legislative proposals that may be required or recommended to implement the Charter amendment.—The report must also include recommendations regarding:
 - i) Ex-parte communications between the GRTF and the Board and conflict of interest policies that could be applied to the GRTF;

- ii) Establishing procedures and requirements to minimize conflicts of interest and ensure the independence of the Task Force;
 - iii) Delegating authorities essential to the Task Force's function;
 - iv) Setting forth minimum fundamental standards for public notice and participation, language access, culturally responsive and proficient outreach;
 - v) Submission of final recommendations to the Board for approval; and
 - vi) Compliance with any other applicable laws.
- 5) Direct County departments, including but not limited to, the Auditor Controller, the Registrar-Recorder, EO and CEO to respond in a timely manner to information requests related to the implementation of the Charter amendment from the EO, the GRTF and/or their consultants.
- 6) Delegate authority to the EO to amend work order number EO RFS#24-01 under the CEO Master Agreement for Strategic Planning and Related Consulting Services to add support for the GRTF, including additional tasks related to the work of the GRTF without eliminating any of the current tasks or work in the existing work order.
- 7) Require the GRTF to respond to reasonable requests from the Board for updates on its work.
- 8) Within the recommendations to the Board, the GRTF may include internal Board procedures, in order to achieve holistic and effective recommendations the Board can consider when approving the reorganizational structure and implementation measure necessary to effectuate the Charter Amendments. This provision and the GRTF's work shall not prevent or prohibit the Board from making any changes to their internal procedures prior to the GRTF providing the Board their recommendations.