

# **SPHERE OF INFLUENCE POLICIES**

## **A. General Guidelines**

1. Pursuant to Government code Section 56425, LAFCO must adopt a Sphere of Influence for each local governmental agency. Once established, a Sphere of Influence shall be used as a guide to LAFCO in the determination of any proposal concerning cities or special districts and territory adjacent thereto.
2. LAFCO may include areas of planning concern in city Spheres of Influence. Inclusion of territory within a Sphere of Influence should not necessarily be seen as an indication that the city will either annex or develop to urban levels such territory. The Urban Service Area boundary will serve as LAFCO's primary means of indicating a city's intention of development and provision of urban services.
3. The Commission may periodically review and update the Spheres of Influence developed and determined by it, either at the request of a local government agency or at its own discretion.

## **B. Adoption and Amendment Policies for city Spheres of Influence**

1. LAFCO will require consistency with city general plans in adopting or amending a Sphere of Influence. Joint City/County Specific Plans and factors such as density policies, development standards, geology, and future use will be considered by the Commission when establishing Spheres of Influence.
2. Pursuant to Government code Section 56425, LAFCO will consider and make a written finding regarding the following, in adopting or amending a Sphere of Influence:
  - a. The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands;
  - b. The present and probable need for public facilities and adequacy of public facilities and services in the area;
  - c. The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of services which the agency provides or is authorized to provide;
  - d. The existence of any social or economic communities of interesting the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.

3. LAFCO will consider fiscal impacts of proposed Sphere amendments. Where such amendments may have negative fiscal impacts upon the County or other local agencies, LAFCO may require mitigations thereof from the city proposing the amendment.
4. LAFCO will consider city annexation proposals outside the Urban Service Areas, but within Spheres of Influence, only if such annexations will promote LAFCO's mandate to preserve open space area, including agricultural open space and greenbelts.
5. LAFCO shall amend the Sphere of Influence of an affected agency in the event a change of organization is approved which does not conform to the adopted sphere of Influence.
6. Spheres of Influence for cities and special districts may overlap when both agencies expect to provide service to the area.

### **C. Adoption and Amendment Policies for special District Spheres of Influence**

1. Adoption or amendment proposals for special district spheres of Influence will be reviewed for conformity with the County General Plan and the general plans of the cities served by the district. Spheres of Influence for districts which provide urban services will generally be tied to city growth plans.
2. LAFCO will discourage duplications in service provision in reviewing new or amended Sphere proposals. Where a special district is coterminous with, or lies substantially within, the boundary or Sphere of Influence of a city which is capable of providing the service, the special district may be given a zero sphere of influence which encompasses no territory.
3. LAFCO will consider fiscal impacts of district growth upon the County, affected cities, and other special districts.