

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

Summary of Legal Criteria that Governs the Redistricting Process City Attorney's Office

Equal Population Principle – Council districts must contain, as nearly as practicable, equal portions of the total population of the City. This principle is established in the City Charter and also in the United States Supreme Court's "One-Person, One-Vote" decisions. The Commission should also keep in mind that some deviation from the ideal district size is allowable under the existing law provided such deviations are supported by a legitimate public policy rationale, for example following Traditional Redistricting Criteria.

U.S. Constitution's Equal Protection Clause – The United States Supreme Court has held that race cannot be used as the predominant factor in drawing district lines such that traditional redistricting criteria are subordinated to considerations of race.

Voting Rights Act of 1965 – The Voting Rights Act prohibits voting practices which result in a denial or abridgement of the right to vote on account of race, color or language minority status. Redistricting plans must be analyzed under the Voting Rights Act to ensure they do not deprive minority voters of an equal opportunity to elect representatives of their choice in violation of the Act. The Commission must also consider the Voting Rights mandate to prevent "vote dilution" of covered minority constituencies -- which is a district plan which minimizes or cancels the power of minority groups to elect representatives of their choice, when delineating boundaries.

Traditional Redistricting Criteria – Federal, state and city law have established several traditional redistricting criteria all of which shall be considered to the extent feasible when drawing district lines:

- **Contiguity** – all parts of a district should connect
- **Compactness** – districts should be geographically compact
- **Existing Boundaries** – districts should consider boundaries such as geographic, street and political boundaries
- **Communities of Interest** – districts should preserve communities of people sharing common interests