



Amador Local Agency Formation Commission

What is LAFCO?

- ❖ LAFCO is an acronym for Local Agency Formation Commission. It is a regulatory agency with countywide jurisdiction, established by state law for the purpose of encouraging the orderly and efficient provision of municipal services.
- ❖ LAFCO is responsible for reviewing and approving proposed jurisdictional boundary changes, incorporations of new cities, formations of new special districts, and consolidations, mergers, and dissolutions of existing districts and determining spheres of influence for each city and district.
- ❖ LAFCO's policy is to encourage orderly growth and development.
- ❖ LAFCO does not have direct land use authority and may not manage or operate local agencies.

Who are LAFCO members?

- ❖ LAFCO is comprised of two members of the County Board of Supervisors, two members representing the cities of Lone and Sutter Creek, and one member representing the public. The Commission has three alternates representing the County, cities and the public.

New State requirement

- ❖ In 2000 the State passed a new law, the Cortese-Knox Hertzberg Act (AB 2838), requiring LAFCOs to review and update the spheres of influence of cities and districts in their jurisdiction once every five years.
- ❖ Before each sphere of influence review and update, LAFCO must comprehensively review municipal services in the county.

What is a Sphere of Influence (SOI)?

- ❖ An SOI is the probable future boundary and service area of a city or a district, as established by LAFCO. It is a planning boundary, and sometimes extends beyond an agency's legal boundary.
- ❖ Most SOIs were initially established in the 1980s.
- ❖ The new State law requires that they be updated to reflect growth, service capacities, public preferences, and new development strategies for the future.

What is a Municipal Service Review (MSR)?

- ❖ An MSR is a review of municipal services in a county, such as water, fire protection, reclamation, and cemetery services.
- ❖ An MSR provides comprehensive knowledge of available services, future needs for each service, and the efficiency and expansion capacity of service providers.
- ❖ MSRs examine the pros and cons of reorganizing service providers.
- ❖ MSRs must be completed prior to (or concurrent with) SOI reviews and updates.

What is an MSR required to include?

- ❖ Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs or deficiencies;
- ❖ Growth and population projections for the affected area;
- ❖ Financial ability of agencies to provide services;
- ❖ Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities; and
- ❖ Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies.

What was the legislative intent?

- ❖ The Commission on Local Governance for the 21st Century was concerned about future growth, constrained local agency finances, a lack of public engagement, and a lack of state plans for future growth.
- ❖ MSRs are intended to provide LAFCO with a knowledge base to encourage orderly growth and advantageously provide for present and future needs in the county.
- ❖ Meaningful spheres are regularly updated based on comprehensive studies of growth, service capacities and public preferences.

Is LAFCO required to act on MSR determinations?

- ❖ LAFCO is not compelled by the State to act on MSR determinations.
- ❖ LAFCO is not required to initiate government structure options identified in the MSR.
- ❖ LAFCO is required by the State to update local agencies' SOIs.

The MSR and SOI update process

- ❖ The preparation of an MSR is a cooperative effort among local agencies, LAFCO, stakeholders, and consultants.
- ❖ LAFCO serves as a fair and impartial reviewer, following specific guidelines for the assessment of municipal services.
- ❖ Local agencies will have several opportunities to review the findings before they are adopted by LAFCO.
- ❖ After the MSR is completed, agency and district SOIs are reviewed. Some SOI updates may simply involve the affirmation of existing SOI boundaries, while others may involve boundary modifications to address specific growth or service issues.

What roles do local agencies play?

- ❖ Share information and public documents with LAFCO and its consultant.
- ❖ Participate in an interview with the LAFCO consultant.
- ❖ Review the LAFCO map of the agency boundary and SOI.

- ❖ Recommend or propose sphere of influence changes or governance alternatives.
- ❖ Review the draft MSR report.

Benefits to agencies

- ❖ An opportunity for agencies to shape regional policy and plan for future growth.
- ❖ An opportunity for agencies to identify common goals and share expertise.
- ❖ An opportunity to build on the momentum of regional water, wastewater and hazard mitigation planning.
- ❖ The MSR report details best practices among local agencies.
- ❖ The MSR report serves as a valuable reference volume for local agencies and stakeholders.
- ❖ Standardization and digitization (GIS) of maps, which LAFCO makes available to local agencies.

Amador County LAFCO Commissioners

- ❖ Jerry Sherman, City of Ione
- ❖ Tim Murphy, City of Sutter Creek
- ❖ Louis Boitano, County of Amador
- ❖ Ted Novelli, County of Amador
- ❖ Jim Vinciguerra, Public
- ❖ Drew Stidger, City Alternate
- ❖ Richard Forster, County Alternate
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