

LAFCo Terms

Annexation: The inclusion of territory in a city or special district.

Change of organization: Any of the following: city incorporation, district formation, annexation to or detachment from a city or district, city disincorporation, district dissolution, city or district consolidation, or merger or establishment of a subsidiary district.

Conducting authority: The Local Agency Formation Commission of the principal county of the entity proposing a change of organization or reorganization, unless another conducting authority is specified by law. Pursuant to a delegation of power from the Commission, the Executive Officer may also perform any function of the conducting authority.

Consolidation: The uniting or joining of two or more cities, or two or more districts located in the same county, into a single new successor city or successor district.

Contiguous: In the case of annexation, territory adjacent to an agency to which annexation is proposed. Territory is not contiguous if the only contiguity is based upon a strip of land more than 300 feet long and less than 200 feet wide.

Coterminous: Having the same boundaries.

Dependent special district: A special district whose board of directors is another legislative body such as a city council or board of supervisors. Also see "Special district."

Detachment: The removal of territory from a city or district.

Disincorporation: The termination of the existence of a city.

Dissolution: The termination of the existence of a district. This may include establishing a successor agency to assume the services of the dissolved district.

Formation: The creation of a district.

Incorporation: The creation of a city.

Independent special district: A special district that has a directly elected board of directors. Also see "Special district."

Inhabited territory: Territory within which 12 or more registered voters reside. Inhabited territory is subject to a different protest process than an uninhabited area.

Petition: A document signed either by registered voters or landowners that requests that LAFCo consider a change of organization or reorganization.

Island: Unincorporated territory wholly or substantially surrounded by a city, or territory surrounded by a city on one or more sides and the Pacific Ocean on the remaining sides.

Merger: The termination of the existence of a district (dissolution), and the assumption of the district's responsibilities by a city.

Prime agricultural land: An area of land that has not been developed for use other than agriculture and meets certain criteria related to soil classification or crop and livestock carrying capacity.

Reorganization: Two or more changes of organization initiated in a single proposal.

Special district: A local governmental agency formed pursuant to general law of the state or a special act.

Special reorganization: A reorganization that includes the detachment of territory from a city and the incorporation of the entire detached territory as a city.

Sphere of influence: A plan for the probable physical boundaries and service areas of a city or district.

Sphere of influence amendment: The changing or modification of an adopted sphere of influence.

Sphere of influence determinations: In establishing a sphere of influence, the Commission must consider and prepare written determinations related to present and planned land uses, need and capacity of public facilities, and existence of social and economic communities of interest. Sphere designations include: Zero – that services could be assumed by a city or another agency and the district should be dissolved, Status Quo – no change in existing boundaries, Coterminous – same as existing boundaries (this designation may be combined with another such as Subsidiary District, Current boundaries plus additional territory, Subsidiary District – a district should become a subsidiary of a city.

Subsidiary district: A district of limited powers for which a city council is designated as the ex officio board of directors of the district. At least 70 percent of a district's land area and registered voters must be within the city limits for it to become a subsidiary district.

Uninhabited territory: Territory within which less than 12 registered voters reside. Uninhabited territory may be annexed to a city or district without protest in certain circumstances.

September 24, 2015