

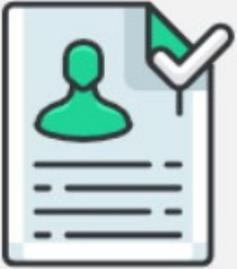
San Joaquin LAFCo

City of Manteca Planning Commission

February 20, 2025

What are LAFCOs?

(Local Agency Formation Commissions)



1 An important quasi-legislative agency that you've probably never heard about

1

2



2 LAFCOs sit in the space between the State Legislature and Local Governments



What are LAFCOs? (Local Agency Formation Commissions)

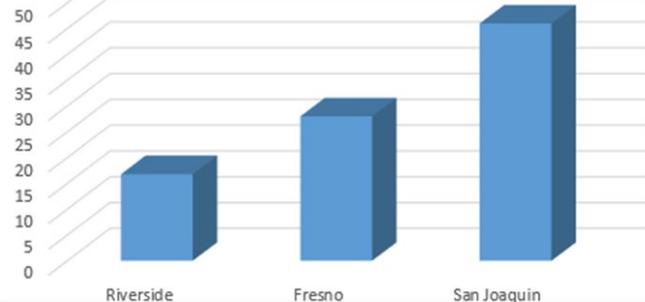
San Joaquin LAFCo has oversight responsibility over 142 public entities (8 cities and 97 independent special districts and 37 County CSA's).

LAFCOs regulate all city and most special district boundaries

3



Local Government Entities per LAFCo Employee
Sans County CSA



4



Every county in California has its own LAFCO

5



California laws require LAFCOs to plan for sustainable services while preventing urban sprawl, which also protects against the premature conversion of California's valuable agricultural and open space lands



What are LAFCOs? (Local Agency Formation Commissions)

County Natural Resource Conservation Districts and Agricultural Commissioners are a primary source of information.

The gross value of agricultural production In SJC for 2022 was more than \$3.2 billion, an increase of 1.6 percent from the 2021 value.

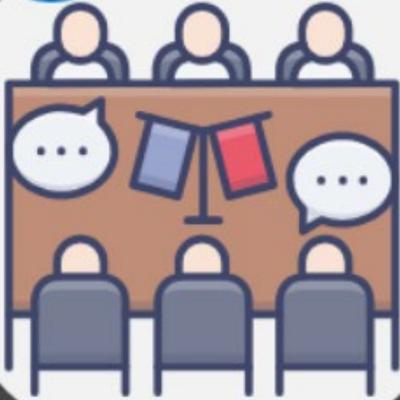




What are LAFCOs?

(Local Agency Formation Commissions)

6



The commissioners who sit on a LAFCO are drawn from locally elected county, city, and sometimes special district officials, as well as public members

SJLAFCO has 8 total Commissioners
2 County Supervisors, 2 City Councilmembers (different cities on a two-year rotational basis), and 1 public at large member with alternates for each classification.

7



Having local representatives on the commission keeps local control over growth inducing development decisions

What are LAFCOs?

(Local Agency Formation Commissions)



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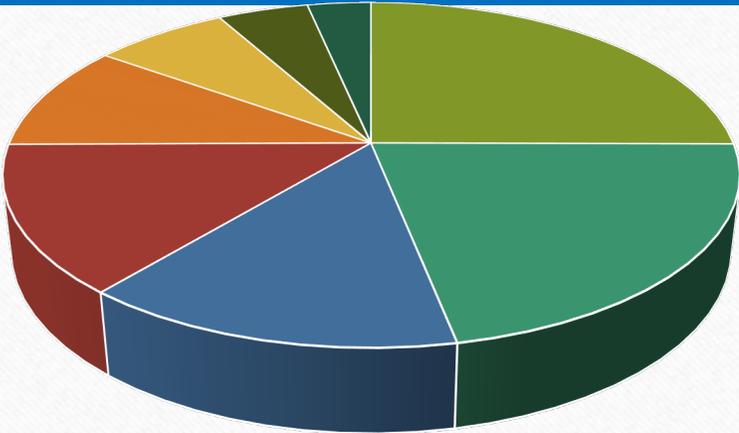


LAFCOs base decisions on data-driven analyses which consider things like population and land use patterns, socioeconomic conditions, present and projected governmental service needs, and efficient use of resources

2023 Central Valley Population Growth			
County	Jan. 1, 2023	Jan. 1, 2024	2023 Growth
San Joaquin	783,903	791,408	7,505
Fresno	1,010,914	1,017,431	6,517
Tulare	474,680	478,918	4,238
Kern	906,165	910,300	4,135
Stanislaus	545,753	548,744	2,991
Merced	285,193	287,303	2,110
Madera	157,909	159,328	1,419
Kings	151,629	152,627	998

2023
Central Valley
= 45% of
State growth

2023 Central Valley Population Growth



■ San Joaquin ■ Fresno ■ Tulare ■ Kern ■ Stanislaus ■ Merced ■ Madera ■ Kings

9



LAFCOs ensure that growth conforms to local values, and that it is sustainable due to the identification of the necessary and appropriate infrastructure and services

Why LAFCo's Came About

- Post WWII population and housing boom in California
- Street-car suburbs; scramble to finance and extend services
- City annexation “wars” proliferation of limited purpose special districts
- Governor Pat Brown’s Commission on Urban Problems focused on need to encourage orderly boundaries.



LAFCO History



1963



"Hey, guys,
great news - a brand new
housing development is going in
right outside of town on some
unused farmland."

"This week we have
13 subdivision plans to
approve, eight zoning
change requests, five
roundabout reviews,
seven master plan
revisions, the goat and
rare-frog issues from
last week and public
hearings about
Near-Ocean Notch,
Highwater Haven,
Congestion Cove and
Walk-to-Wawa Way."

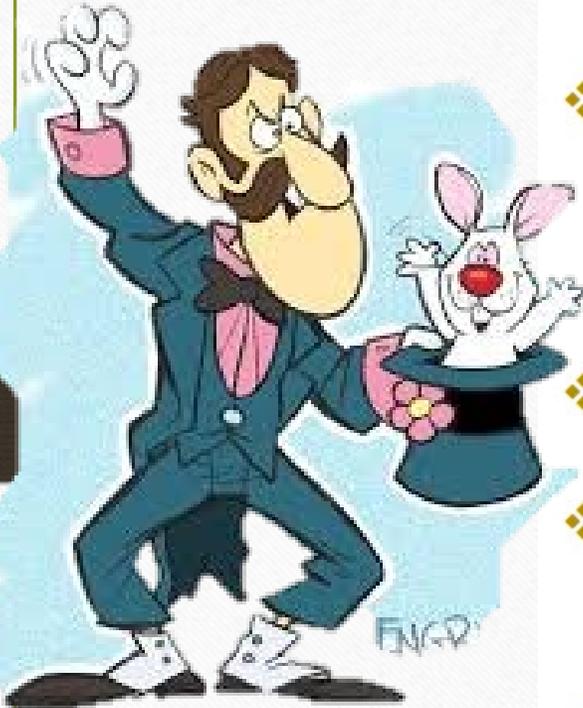
2023



Who is LAFCo? Unique Mix

- All local Folks – 2 County Supervisors, 2 City Council members, 1 public-at-large member. An Alternate member for each category = 8 Commissioners
- All commission members exercise their independent judgment on behalf of the interests of residents, property owners, and the public as a whole.
- Any member appointed on behalf of local governments shall represent the interests of the public as a whole and not solely the interests of the appointing authority. (Govt. Code Section 56331.4).
- Supporting the San Joaquin Commission is a staff of 2.45 FTE.

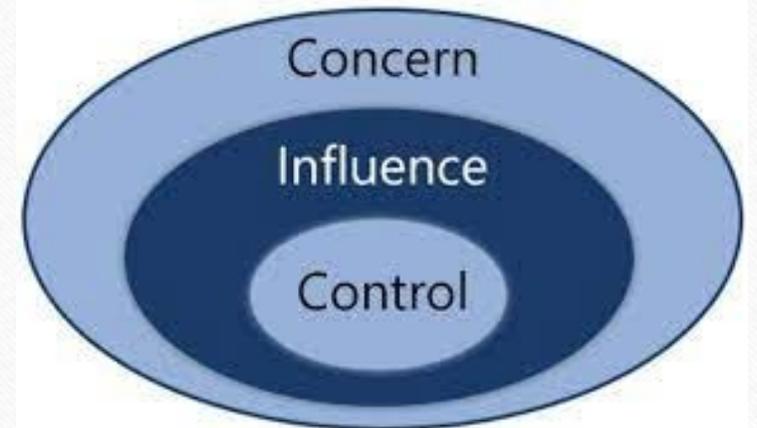
LAFCo Myths and Legends



- ❖ LAFCo has a “magic wand” that instantly solves boundary and service issues. **Nope!**
- ❖ LAFCo proceedings do not require deliberate review and analysis that require agency and public collaboration and/or support. **Nope!**
- ❖ LAFCo is an arm of the county, not the state. **Nope!**
- ❖ LAFCo’s sole mission is to dissolve agencies, particularly special districts. **Nope!**
- ❖ LAFCo’s role is always “reactive” and not “proactive.” **Nope!**
- ❖ Consult LAFCO at the last minute **Nope!**

LAFCO's Legislative Intent

- Discourage urban sprawl
- Preserve agriculture and open space
- Promote efficient public services
- Consider regional transportation, housing needs, water and other issues
- Encourage orderly boundaries



LAFCo Planning Functions

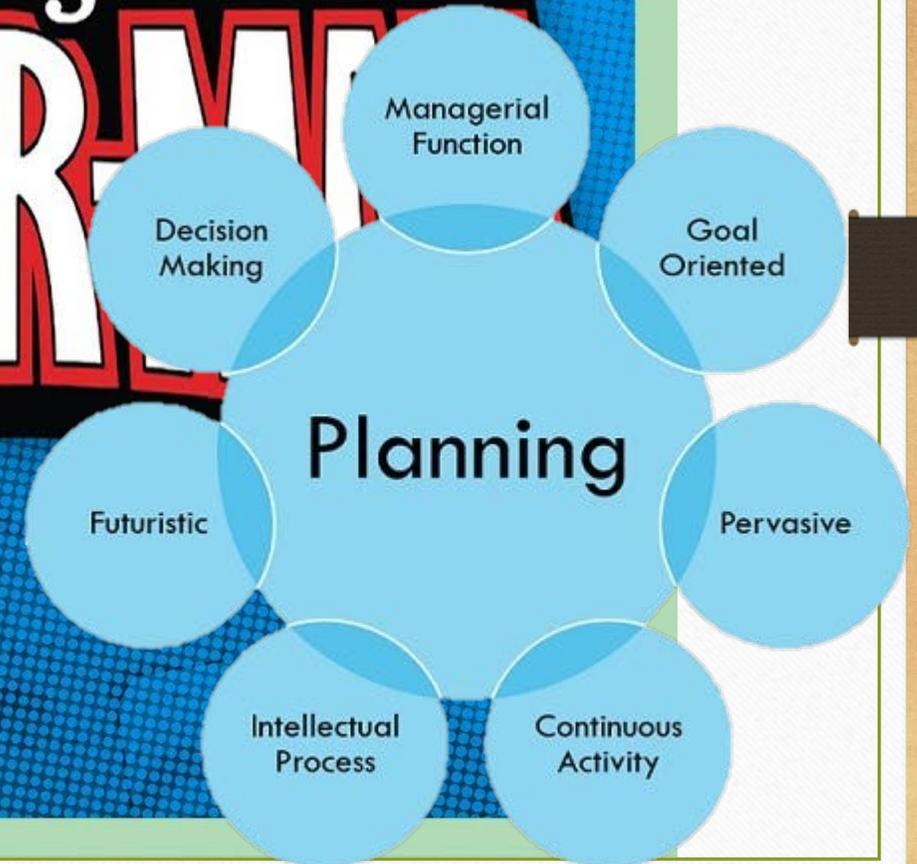
- Review and Analyze Service Reviews
- Evaluate Boundary Related Actions for Consistency with Required Factors – Govt Code, R&T, CEQA & Guidelines, etc.
- Prepare Special Agency Studies As Needed
- Comment On Local Agency Plans: General Plans, Area Plans, Master Utility Plans, Public Facilities Plans, etc.
- Facilitate Interagency Cooperation



Get to know
your ...



Friendly Neighborhood SPIDER-MAN



Not Land Use but Related Responsibilities

(a) **Population and population density; land area and land use...** the likelihood of significant growth in the area...

(b) **Community services;** present cost and adequacy of governmental services and controls in the area... services... includes public facilities.

(c) **Effect of proposed action and alternative actions, on adjacent areas,** mutual social and economic interests, on local governmental structure

(d) **Conformity with both policies** 1) **providing planned, orderly, efficient patterns of development, ... and 2) away from existing prime agricultural lands ... toward non-prime agricultural land**

e) **Effect on maintaining the physical and economic integrity of agricultural lands**

(f) **Definiteness and certainty of boundaries & ance boundaries** with lines of assessment or ownership, the creation of islands or corridors of unincorporated territory, and other similar matters.

(g) **Regional Transportation Plan**

(h) Consistency with **General & Specific plans.**

(i) **Sphere of influence** of any local agency

(j) **Comments** of affected agencies ...

(k) **Ability to provide the services including the sufficiency of revenues.**

(l) **Timely availability of water supplies**



Regional Transportation Plan

INDICATIONS THAT SUMMER TOURIST SEASON IS ABOUT TO BEGIN...



The unadjusted total daily VMT per capita is 23.63 for the plan in 2046, compared to 23.24 in the baseline condition of 2016.

Not Land Use but ... (cont.)

(m) Affect a city or cities and the county in achieving their respective **fair shares of the regional housing needs assessment (RHNA)**.

(n) Any **information or comments** from the landowner or landowners, voters, or **residents of the affected territory**.

(o) Information relating to **existing land use designations**.

(p) **Promote environmental justice**. Environmental justice means the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of people of all races, cultures, incomes, and national origins, with respect to the location of public facilities and the provision of public services, to ensure a healthy environment for all people such that the effects of pollution are not disproportionately borne by any particular populations or communities.

(q) Information contained in a **local hazard mitigation plan**, **information contained in a safety element of a general plan**, and **any maps that identify land as a very high fire hazard zone**



What Courts have Decided

- LAFCo is engaged in the pursuit of an overriding State purpose.
- State law fully occupies the field.
- LAFCo is quasi-legislative, limited legal challenge to LAFCo decisions.
- LAFCo is independent, not part of County
- LAFCo is the legislature's watch dog for government efficiency



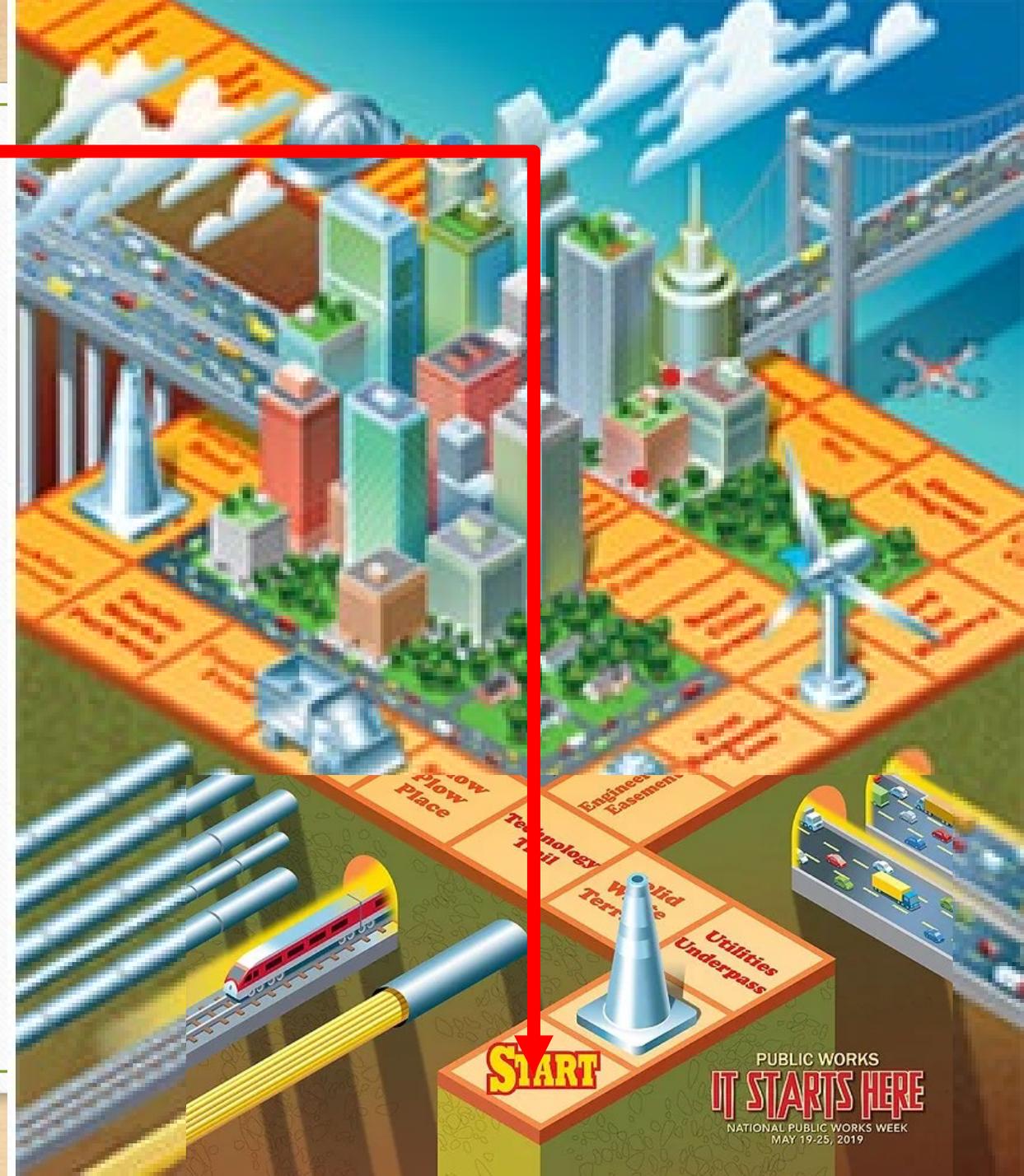
Sphere of Influence

Sphere of Influence – City may provide out of boundary service

"Sphere of influence" means a plan for the **probable physical boundaries and service area.** (Government Code 56076)

City may provide new or extended services by contract or agreement outside its jurisdictional boundary only if it first requests and receives written approval from the commission...(GC 56133(a))

The commission may authorize a City to provide new or extended services outside its jurisdictional boundary but within its sphere of influence. (GC 56133(b))



Services Review

"Service review" means an analysis conducted by LAFCo documenting and analyzing the services in a particular geographic region or jurisdictional area

To update spheres of influence ... the commission shall conduct a service review (GC 56430(a)).

(4) Financial ability of agencies to provide services.

(6) Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies



Service Review & Types of Audits

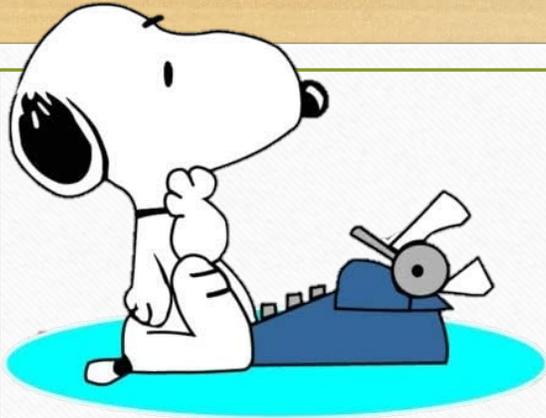
Performance – Provide information to improve public accountability and transparency as well as facilitate decision-making. Can include an assessment of the performance of a government organization, program, activity or function; the accuracy and reliability of information; and, the effective and efficient use of resources.

Financial – Financial statement and Financial-related audits:

Financial statement = reasonable assurance about whether financial statements present fairly **the financial position, results of operations, and cash flows** with generally accepted accounting principles.

Financial-related = can include if financial information is accurate, reliable, and presented in established or stated criteria; **examining revenues and expenditures; performing cost benefit analysis; and, if an entity has adhered to specific financial compliance requirements.**





Service Reviews

- Over-arching document that coordinates the findings of both types of audit, performance and financial, with other important agency documents, i.e. Human Resource Development, Capital Improvements Program/Short Term Operational Plan and/or Master Plans.
- Service Reviews and Audits can address compliance issues, including whether an entity or program is complying with applicable laws and regulations.
- An agency Service Review and SOI will allow that agency to apply for out of boundary service agreements to LAFCo for approval.
- Get to know your Local Agency Formation Commission.

SOI Required Ingredients



- Present and planned land uses in the area
- Present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.
- Present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services.
- Existence of any pertinent social or economic communities of interest in the area.
- For an update of a sphere of influence of a special district that provides public facilities or services related to sewers, water, or structural fire protection, the present and probable need for those public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing sphere of influence.
- Upon determination of a sphere of influence, the commission shall adopt that sphere.

D is for Dynamic, Determination and ...

Determination of sphere of influence, a commission **may** assess feasibility of governmental reorganization of an agency and recommend reorganization of agencies when reorganization is found to be feasible; **and**

if reorganization will further orderly:

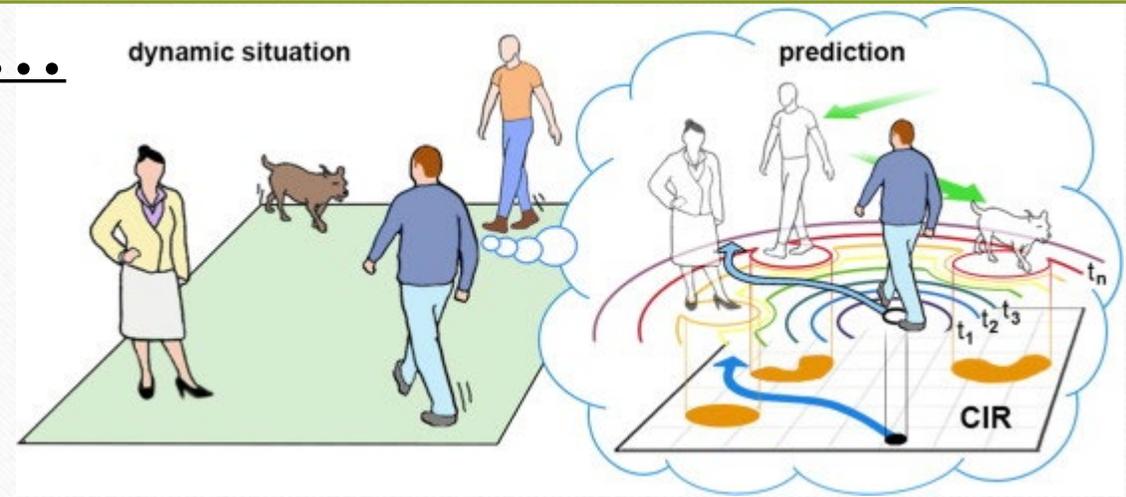
development and efficient and

affordable service **d**elivery.

A commission shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure wide

public **d**issemination of the

recommendations. (GC56425(h)).



LAFCo law realize that Cities are Dynamic. Operations and situations change over time and as needed.

Every five years, a commission shall, as necessary, review and update each sphere of influence. (GC 56425(g))

