



Yolo Local Government

Transparency and Accountability Program

VISION

Our vision is to promote open government and transparency for government agencies countywide (cities, County, special districts, and joint powers authorities), thereby fostering public trust and accountability. We will achieve this by:

- Requesting that LAFCo add selected types of joint powers authorities/agencies to its municipal service review process already conducted with the cities and special districts.
- Supporting LAFCo to develop a scorecard measuring local agency website transparency, performed on a regular basis.
- Agreement to a common checklist of information used to measure the level of transparency in local agency websites.
- Ensuring that city/county websites are a model for other local government agencies to follow.
- Encouraging local special districts and JPAs to create a web presence if they do not already have one.

GOALS

The agencies seek to improve:

- Transparency and accountability.
- Oversight.
- Service delivery and efficiency.
- Coordination among agencies.
- Public understanding of local government.
- Good governance by creating a standard of basic elements for a well-run governmental organization (annual budget, CIP, audits, etc.).

VALUES

TRUST AND INTEGRITY which the agencies will demonstrate by following through on their commitments, duties, and responsibilities.

Adopted by the cities and County on the following dates:

City of Davis – October 17, 2017

City of West Sacramento – November 1, 2017

Yolo County – November 7, 2017

City of Winters – November 7, 2017

City of Woodland – November 21, 2017

OPEN, HONEST, AND CLEAR COMMUNICATION within each organization, between agencies and with the public.

FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY as demonstrated by making budgets, financial practices, compensation, and audits available to the public.

PROMOTING AWARENESS of local government by promoting a website presence that describes the agency's reason for existing, a description of services it provides, and the area it provides services to.

ENCOURAGING UNDERSTANDING of where tax dollars go and how to easily contact board members and agency management.

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY through access to board meeting schedules, agendas and minutes so the public can more easily attend board meetings and become involved.

TRANSPARENCY to respond to the growing movement to make governmental information available and searchable online.

REPRESENTATION to inform the public regarding board members (names, contact information and terms of office) and their election/appointment process.

JPA/SHARED PROGRAMS FINANCIAL BEST PRACTICES

City/County managers will determine assignments to each JPA/Shared Programs for liaison/oversight purposes. Shared programs include programs that are funded via city/county cost sharing, e.g. Yolo County Animal Services, Office of Emergency Services, West Valley Fire Training Consortium, etc.

Budget integration between JPAs/Shared programs and "member" agencies that fund them will be improved by implementation of the following process performed annually:

- City/County managers will prepare a consolidated summary-level budget preparation memo for the JPAs and other shared programs that require city/County funding. The memo should convey the budget stance for the upcoming fiscal year, plus a longer range outlook. The intent is to create JPA alignment with the cities/County budget stance and mirror agency cycles of budget reductions or growth.
- City/County managers may schedule budget workshops with the JPAs and shared programs each year around the March timeframe or as appropriate.
- JPAs and other shared programs are requested to provide draft budgets for funding agencies' executive manager review by May and final adopted budgets no later than June 15th of each year for integration into each funding agency's budget.

Formation of any new JPAs or shared programs should only be considered when the following criteria are met.¹ The proposed JPA/shared program:

- Will demonstrate cost reduction.
- Is more efficient.

¹ Governments Working Together, A Citizen's Guide to Joint Powers Agreements, California State Legislature, Senate Local Government Committee, August 2007

- Will reduce or eliminate overlapping services.
- Will result in the sharing of resources.

JPA agreements should include common policies supporting JPA funds to be held in the County Treasury (as appropriate), open government, and transparency.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION – MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEWS OF SELECTED TYPES OF JPAs

The Cities/County request that LAFCo conduct Municipal Service Reviews every five years of selected types of JPAs whose service area is mostly within the county and includes: (1) JPAs that provide municipal services; (2) JPAs that employ staff; and/or (3) JPAs with boards comprised of agency staff. New JPAs may be created in the future and added to this list, but currently those JPAs include:

1. Valley Clean Energy Alliance
2. West Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency
3. Woodland-Davis Clean Water Agency
4. Yolo County Public Agency Risk Management Insurance Authority
5. Yolo Emergency Communications Agency
6. Yolo Habitat Conservancy
7. Yolo Subbasin Groundwater Agency

LAFCo steps to complete Municipal Service Reviews on a five-year cycle of these JPAs include:

- Compiling publicly and readily available information.
- Requesting any additional information from the JPA, minimizing JPA staff time.
- Developing JPA recommendations regarding each of the seven standard MSR determinations.
- Completing an administrative draft report for preview by JPA management.
- Responding to any comments and preparing a draft report available for public review.
- Publishing a hearing notice for public review and comment of the draft MSR.
- Adopting the MSR at a public hearing, finalizing the report, and posting it online.
- Sharing MSR findings with city/county managers, including any cumulative recommendations on ways to streamline and improve efficiencies with the governance structures countywide.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION - WEBSITE TRANSPARENCY SCORECARD

A website transparency scorecard will be prepared by LAFCo on a regular basis involving the following steps:

- Creating list of cities, County, JPAs and special districts
- Encouraging local JPAs and special districts to establish websites and assist them, if desired
- LAFCo conducts preliminary review of agency websites
- LAFCo shares preliminary results with each agency to provide an opportunity for improvement
- LAFCo conducts follow up review
- The agency scorecard is finalized, adopted by the LAFCo Commission, shared with local agencies, and posted online

AGENCY WEB TRANSPARENCY CHECKLIST²

The scorecard will be based on the following criteria:

1. Overview
 - a. Mission Statement: What is the agency's reason for existing?
 - b. Description of services/functions: What actions does the agency undertake and what services does the agency provide?
 - c. Boundary of service area: What specific area does the agency serve?
2. Budget
 - a. Budget for current fiscal year and three years prior to the current year.
 - b. Financial reserves policy: What is the agency's policy for designated reserves and reserve funds? (The policy should be in the agency policy manual but also may be restated and found in the budget or audit reports).
3. Meetings
 - a. Board meeting schedule: When and where specifically does the agency meet?
 - b. Archive of Board meeting agendas & minutes for at least the last 6 months: Both approved minutes and past agendas
4. Elected & Appointed Officials
 - a. Board members (names, contact info, terms of office, compensation, and biography): Who specifically represents the public on the Board? How can the public contact them? When were they elected (or appointed)? How much do they earn in this role (as required by Assembly Bill 2040 effective January 1, 2015)? What background about the members illustrates their expertise for serving on the Board?
 - b. Election procedure and deadlines: If the public wishes to apply to be on the Board, how and when can they do so?

² 2015-16 Web Transparency Report Card, Marin County Civil Grand Jury, March 17, 2016

- c. Reimbursement and compensation policy: Which (if any) expenses incurred by the Board are reimbursed? Do the Board members receive compensation?
- 5. Administrative Officials
 - a. General manager and key staff (names, contact info, compensation, and benefits): Who specifically runs the agency on a day-to-day basis? How can the public contact them? How much do they earn in this role (as required by Assembly Bill 2040 effective January 1, 2015)? What specific benefits are they eligible for (healthcare, retirement plan, educational benefits, etc.)?
- 6. Audits
 - a. Current financial audit
 - b. Financial audits for the three years prior to the current year
 - c. Most recent annual financial report provided to the State Controller's Office, or a link to this information
 - d. Most recent LAFCo Municipal Service Review, if applicable
- 7. Contracts
 - a. Current request for proposal and bidding opportunities (over \$25,000 in value)
 - b. Instructions on how to submit a bid or proposal
 - c. Approved in force vendor contracts (over \$25,000 value)
- 8. Public Records
 - a. Online/downloadable Public Records Act (or FOIA) request form: What is the best way for the public to request public records?
- 9. Revenue Sources
 - a. Summary of fees received: fees for services, if any
 - b. Summary of revenue sources: bonds, taxes, loans and/or grants
- 10. Agency Specific Criteria
 - a. Municipalities: Total number of lobbyists employed and total spent on lobbying, downloadable permit applications, and zoning ordinances
 - b. Special Districts: Authorizing statute/enabling act (Principal Act or Special Act), board member ethics training certificates, link to the LAFCo website and any state agency providing oversight
 - c. Joint Powers Authorities: A copy of the joint powers agreement as filed and adopted (with any updates)