

University leaders convene the L.A. Governance Reform Project to research and develop independent proposals for L.A. City structural reform

(February 21, 2023) Recent controversies at L.A. City Hall, including revelations surrounding the most recent redistricting process, have brought the need for structural reform to the fore. A team of leading Los Angeles university scholars, researchers, and leaders has come together to develop independent City of L.A. reform proposals that will advance transparent, accountable, and community-driven governance. The L.A. Governance Reform Project (LAGRP) brings together university leaders with years of combined experience in governance research and practice for our diverse and dynamic region.

As these university leaders research, analyze, and develop reform proposals, they will cast a wide net in the academic, governmental, civic, and activist communities. The LAGRP's mission is to offer independent proposals informed by research and practice that help advise the policy-making process and enrich the broad-based civic discourse and education essential to what will ultimately be a citizen-approved charter reform.

The LAGRP's first task will be to produce policy recommendations for an independent redistricting process to be presented to policymakers in the coming months. Following the completion of this first stage of the LAGRP, the university team will turn to other areas, including but not limited to council expansion, ethics, and land use reform. The LAGRP will issue updates on its work in the coming weeks and plans to be in operation throughout 2023. The University Leadership Team members are:

- [Fernando Guerra](#), Ph.D., Professor of Political Science and Chicana/o Latina/o Studies, Director, Center for the Study of Los Angeles, Loyola Marymount University
- [Ange-Marie Hancock](#) (Co-Chair), Ph.D., Dean's Professor of Gender Studies and Political Science, University of Southern California (on leave)
- [Boris Ricks](#), Ph.D., Associate Professor, Political Science Department, Director, Center for Southern California Studies, California State University, Northridge
- [Sara Sadhwani](#), Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Politics at Pomona College, Commissioner, California Citizens Redistricting Commission, Senior Researcher, AAPI Data
- [Gary Segura](#) (Co-Chair), Ph.D., Professor, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs
- [Raphael Sonenshein](#) (Administrator), Ph.D., Executive Director, Pat Brown Institute for Public Affairs, Professor of Political Science and Public Administration, Cal State L.A.

According to co-chair Dr. Ange-Marie Hancock, "While this period has been truly alarming, it has also exposed the long-standing need for meaningful governance reform in the City of L.A. This moment represents an historic opportunity for meaningful initiatives to address the structural problems and generate new reforms that will serve the community well today and in the future."

"This is an all-hands-on-deck moment in Los Angeles. Interest in reform is high throughout the community, and the best reforms will generate the widest and broadest community support," said co-chair Dr. Gary Segura.

The LAGRP has received strong initial support from L.A.'s philanthropic community. To date the project has received funding from the California Community Foundation, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, and the Weingart Foundation.

“The current lack of confidence in City government calls for an immediate review and reform of the City’s governance systems,” said the leaders of each foundation in a joint statement. “We are proud to join our colleagues in philanthropy to support the independent L.A. Governance Reform Project to advance greater transparency, accountability, and representation in Los Angeles. We urge our City leaders to seriously consider the recommendations that result from this unprecedented collaboration.”

Philanthropic funding for the L.A. Governance Reform Project is fiscally coordinated and sponsored by the California Community Foundation Community Initiatives Fund. The ongoing work of the Project will be administered by the Pat Brown Institute for Public Affairs at Cal State LA.

For inquiries, please contact:

Dr. Ange-Marie Hancock (co-chair)

Dr. Gary Segura (co-chair)

Dr. Raphael Sonenshein (administrator)

hancock.39@osu.edu

segura@luskin.ucla.edu

raphael.sonenshein@calstatela.edu