

City Attorney's Impartial Analysis of Proposed Charter for City of Carson

A proposed Charter for Carson is on the November 6, 2018 General Municipal Election Ballot in compliance with state law.

There are two types of cities in California, about 350 general-law and about 120 charter-law cities. Carson is currently a general law city. Residents of a charter city have greater local authority over their city than residents of a general law city. A charter can both limit and increase control over certain local issues, but a charter city must still comply with all laws considered matters of statewide concern. Examples of charter cities are Culver City, Long Beach, Signal Hill and Torrance. Carson's proposed Charter imposes a number of limits and obligations on the Mayor and Council, while providing for more local control for residents.

Under the Charter, the Council's ability to levy taxes on residents and businesses is more limited than under state law. The Charter imposes strict term limits on the Mayor and all Councilmembers. The Charter removes the City Clerk's and City Treasurer's term limits. If the population of Carson exceeds 100,000, by resolution, the Council may be enlarged from five to seven. The Charter prohibits conflicts of interest or financial interests by City-officials in City contracts. The Charter prohibits nepotism and favoritism.

The Charter authorizes formation of a Civil-Service Commission to process employment matters at City Hall. The Charter bans marijuana dispensaries in Carson. The Charter prohibits eminent domain of property currently zoned and used for residential purposes. The Charter provides for imposing mitigation fees on truck-intensive businesses. The Charter requires the City to consider the votes of mobilehome park residents regarding park closures and conversions. The Charter prohibits selling City-owned real-property valued over \$2,500,000 without a two-thirds vote of the Council. Compensation for Councilmembers will be set at the "Low Income Limits" for a family of four as set forth in 2018 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the Los Angeles area. The Charter prohibits the appropriation of funds in excess of \$20,000,000 for capital projects unless approved by a two-thirds vote of the Council. The Charter requires Project Labor Agreements for projects larger than \$500,000, mandates a local hiring preference program for Carson residents and paying of prevailing wages.

The Charter sets a goal for Carson to be a balanced environmentally responsible community, providing employment opportunities, retail services, recreational activities, and quality neighborhoods, while pursuing economic development. Specific goals include eliminating blight, encouraging private investment, improving public infrastructure, and causing the remediation and redevelopment of contaminated property.

Before the Charter was placed on the ballot, public input was received at 6 Council public hearings and at 11 public meetings of the Carson Charter Committee composed of varied Carson stakeholders, including residents, local businesses and three former Carson elected officials. The proposed Charter was placed on the ballot by the City Council.

The proposed Charter for the City of Carson requires approval by a majority of voters. A "Yes" vote approves the Charter. A "No" vote disapproves the Charter.

If you desire a copy of the proposed Charter, please call (310) 952-1720 and a copy will be mailed at no cost to you.