

Charter reform panels strike deal

By Patrick McGreevy
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The heads of Los Angeles' two charter reform commissions reached an agreement Tuesday on a single set of proposals for budget powers in the new charter and will pitch their compromise to a conference committee of other commissioners on Thursday.

Erwin Chemerinsky, chairman of the elected Charter Reform Commission, declined to provide details of the compromise proposal but said he is encouraged by his meeting with George Kieffer, chairman of the City Council-appointed Charter Reform Commission.

The elected panel has proposed dividing the responsibilities of the city administrative officer so that a new budget office would report directly to the mayor and other functions would remain with the CAO, who would continue to report to both the mayor and council. The appointed panel has proposed the CAO's office intact.

The consensus on a narrow part of the charter still leaves major differences on other key issues, including the power of the mayor to remove managers and whether neighborhood councils will be elected or selected by caucus.

Also Tuesday, former City Councilman Marvin Braude said he

is prepared to vote for the new appointed commission's charter on the June ballot.

The panel proposed the creation of a system of advisory neighborhood councils, an expansion of the City Council from 15 to 21 members and a streamlining of the charter to make it easier to understand.

The new charter, Braude said, is "the most thorough, thoughtful and effective document of government reform I have seen in my more than 30 years of service to the city of Los Angeles."

Braude said he still hopes the appointed charter panel can reach a compromise with the elected commission on a joint proposal.