Who Helped to Decide Los Angeles City Elections in 2026?

An Analysis of Asian, Black, Latino, and White Voters

UCLA Asian American Studies Center
ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER POLICY INITIATIVE
LMU Race, Politics and Policy Initiative

Executive Summary

Asian American candidates for city executive elected offices performed well in 2026. As a result, Asian Americans will hold the top three executive positions in the City of Los Angeles for the next term. This report analyzes racial voting patterns for the Los Angeles City Mayor and City Attorney election races in 2026 and finds the following:

- Asian American and Latino voters strongly supported Nithya Raman for Mayor while Black voters strongly supported Karen Bass
- Asian American, Black and Latino voters all supported Marissa Roy for City Attorney
- White voters for the 2026 Los Angeles City contests were relatively split for both the Mayor and City Attorney elections, which meant that Asian American and Latino voter preferences were most consequential to the outcome

Introduction

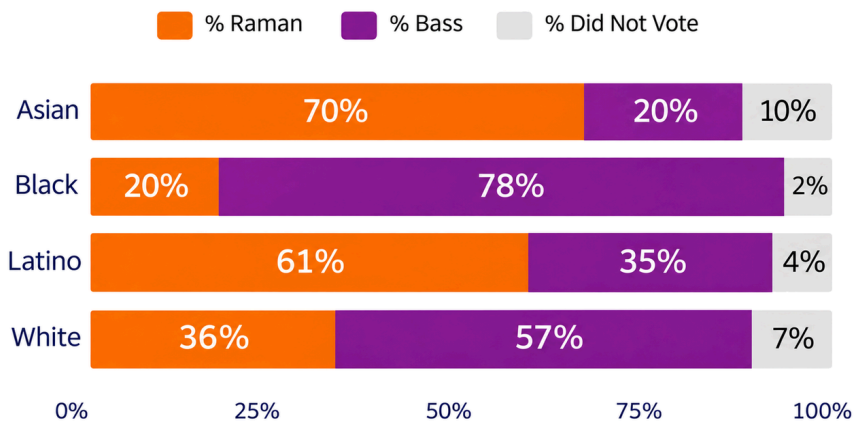
The 2026 election marked a historic moment for Asian Americans in Los Angeles city politics. Los Angeles voters in 2026 elected Nithya Raman as Mayor and Marissa Roy as City Attorney. Raman and Roy will join Kenneth Mejia, who was elected to serve as City Controller in 2022. Asian Americans will now hold all three citywide elected offices in the nation's second-largest city.[1]

In this election marked by so many firsts for Asian American representation, this report examines which racial groups helped elect these Asian American candidates to office in these Los Angeles City elections. While voting is anonymous and ultimately we cannot know for certain how an individual voted, we are able to use ecological inference strategies to glean the extent to which different racial groups supported Raman and Roy. We estimated the vote preferences of Asian, Black, Latino and White voters in Los Angeles to identify what type of voter coalitions helped to elect Raman and Roy into office.

Asian American and Latino Voters Helped to Elect Raman to the Mayor's Office

Nithya Raman won the Los Angeles City Mayor election with 54.9% of the vote.[2] Our analysis finds there to be a distinct racial pattern distinguishing support for challenger Nithya Raman and for incumbent Mayor Karen Bass. Raman received clear support from Asian American voters at an estimated 70% and from Latino voters at an estimated 61% (see Figure 1).[3] In contrast, Bass received overwhelming support from Black voters at an estimated 78%. Bass also received the majority support of White voters at an estimated 57%.[4] Relative to racial minority groups, White voters were more split between the two candidates. Our analysis finds that a coalition of Asian American and Latino voters was key to electing Raman into the mayor's office. Raman's election demonstrates the growing influence of Asian American and Latino voters in Los Angeles city elections. These two growing electorates increasingly demonstrate their power to influence outcomes in competitive contests.

Figure 1: Estimated Vote Choice for 2026 Los Angeles Mayor Election by Racial/Ethnic Group



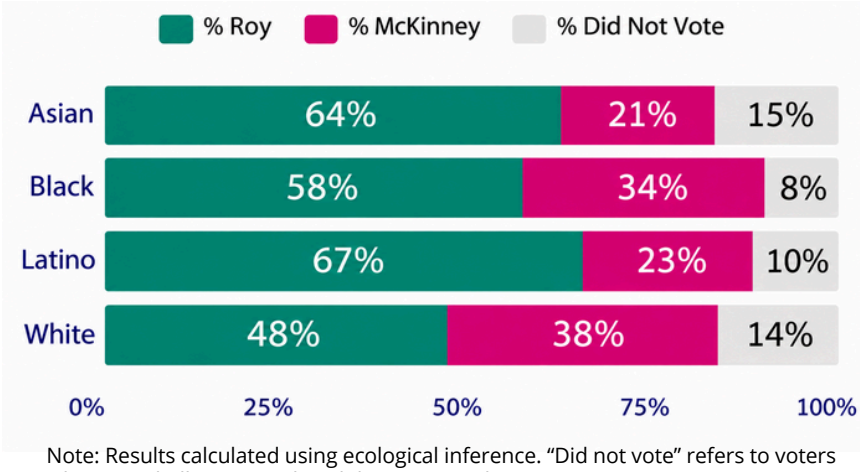
Note: Results calculated using ecological inference. "Did not vote" refers to voters who cast a ballot in 2026 but did not vote in the Mayoral contest.

One interesting insight we learned as we analyzed this data was that while Raman was able to mobilize the most support among Asian American voters, there may be some caveats to this support. We estimate that 10% of Asian Americans who cast a ballot in the 2026 general election did not cast a vote for either of the mayoral candidates. In comparison, the rate was 4% for Latinos, 2% for Black Americans and 7% for White Americans. We are cautious to offer interpretations for this finding, but this unique pattern may suggest that while Asian Americans strongly supported Raman, a share of Asian Americans did not want to vote for either mayoral candidate.

Roy Performed Best Among Racial Minority Voters in LA City Attorney Election

Marissa Roy earned an overwhelming 68.5% of the total vote and her successful win can be attributed to the broad coalition of minority voters who supported her candidacy.[5] Roy won the support of all racial minority groups. We estimate that 64% of Asian Americans, 58% of Black Americans and 67% of Latino voters supported Roy for City Attorney (see Figure 2).[6] In contrast, White voters were more split. While a plurality, 48%, supported Roy, 38% of White voters supported her opponent John McKinney.[7] Roy's success demonstrates the continued need for political candidates in Los Angeles City elections to win a multiracial coalition in order to be successful.

Figure 2: Estimated Vote Share for 2026 Los Angeles City Attorney Election by Racial/Ethnic Group



Note: Results calculated using ecological inference. "Did not vote" refers to voters who cast a ballot in 2026 but did not vote in the City Attorney contest.

The share of each racial group that did not vote in the City Attorney election was higher than what we estimated for the Mayoral election. This is an expected pattern. Voters tend to participate less often in down ballot elections because they know less about these contests.

Asian American and Latino Voters Demonstrated Strong Support for Asian American Candidates in Los Angeles City Elections

In both the 2026 Mayor and City Attorney elections, our analysis finds that Asian American and Latino voters were strongly supportive of Asian American candidates running for executive offices in the City of Los Angeles. Asian Americans were most strongly supportive of Raman for Mayor (70%), and they also strongly preferred Roy for Attorney (64%). In a previous report we conducted on the 2022 Los Angeles City election, we found that City Controller Kenneth Mejia earned an estimated 85% of Asian American support in the general election.[8] At the same time, Latino voters strongly voted for Raman (61%), Roy (67%), and Mejia (63%). Taken together, our research demonstrates that Asian American and Latino voters represent important constituencies for supporting Asian American candidates running for office and their strong support has helped to propel these Asian American candidates into elected office in Los Angeles.

Description of Election Data and Methodology Used For This Report

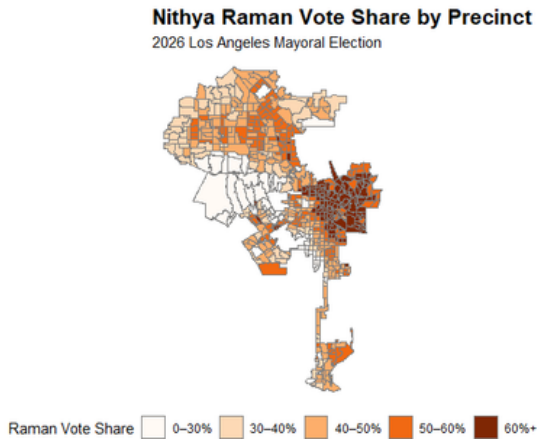
For the data, we employed the Statement of Votes Cast published by the Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters, downloaded on November 13, 2026 (see Appendix Figures A-D) and the 2024 5-year American Community Survey for citizen voting age population rates for each racial group. We used ecological inference methodologies which take aggregate level vote returns and demographic data to estimate support for candidates by racial and ethnic group. This is an established practice to estimate the vote share by racial group.[9] To ensure further confidence, we estimated the vote share across two different ecological inference methodologies developed by King (1997) and the RxC methodologies (Rosen et. al 2001) and confirm that the results are consistent across both methodologies.[10] We caution interpretation of the findings presented in this report as they are estimates. Because voting is conducted anonymously, it is not possible to determine with certainty how individuals voted in an election. Ecological inference provides an opportunity to provide reasonable estimates with the available data.

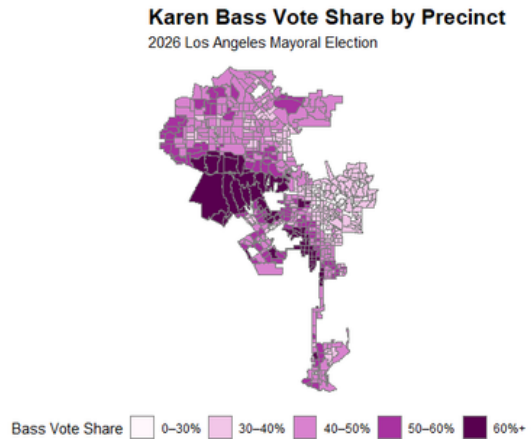
Endnotes

1. https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2026-11-10/asian-americans-won-all-three-of-l-a-s-citywide-elected-offices-this-year
2. Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters, 2026 General Election results, downloaded on November 13, 2026
3. To calculate vote share, we included all voters who cast a ballot in the election, even if they did not vote in the mayor's race. The 95% confidence intervals are: 65%-73% for Asian Americans, 17%-26% for Black Americans, 59%-63% for Latino Americans and 34%-37% for White Americans.
4. If we had calculated the vote share examining only those who cast a vote in the Mayoral race, the estimated vote share is 79% for Asian Americans (with the 95% confidence interval of 73%-85%), 18% for Black Americans (with the 95% confidence interval of 14%-22%), 65% for Latino Americans (with the 95% confidence interval of 63%-66%) and 38% for White Americans (with the 95% confidence interval of 36%-40%).
5. Los Angeles County Registrar of Voters, 2026 General Election results, downloaded on November 13, 2026
6. To calculate vote share, we included all voters who cast a ballot in the election, even if they did not vote in the attorney's race as the denominator. The 95% confidence intervals are: 60%-68% for Asian Americans, 55%-61% for Black Americans, 66%-69% for Latino Americans and 46%-49% for White Americans.
7. If we had calculated the vote share examining only those who cast a vote in the City Attorney's race, the estimated vote share is 75% for Asian Americans (with the 95% confidence interval of 68%-81%), 62% for Black Americans (with the 95% confidence interval of 59%-65%), 75% for Latino Americans (with the 95% confidence interval of 73%-77%) and 55% for White Americans (with the 95% confidence interval of 54%-57%).
8. Masuoka, Natalie and Nathan Chan. 2023. "Asian American, Latino, Black and White Voters in Los Angeles City Elections: Racial Diversity and Representation in 2020 and 2022." UCLA Asian American Studies Center. https://www.aasc.ucla.edu/resources/policyreports/RacialDiversityandLosAngelesCityElections.pdf
9. King, Gary. 1997. A Solution to the Ecological Inference Problem: Reconstructing Individual Behavior from Aggregate Data. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
10. King, Gary. 1997. A Solution to the Ecological Inference Problem: Reconstructing Individual Behavior from Aggregate Data. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press; Rosen, Ori, Wenxin Jiang, Gary King and Martin Tanner. 2001. "Bayesian and Frequentist Inference for Ecological Inference: the RxC case." Statistica Neerlandica 55(2): 134-159.

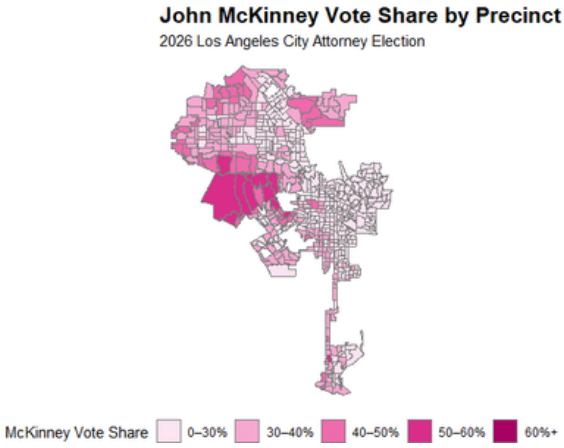
Appendix

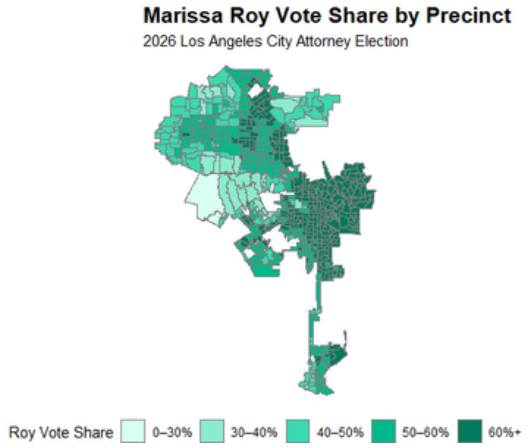
Figures A and B. Share of Votes Cast for Raman and Bass at the Election Precinct Level





Figures C and D. Share of Votes Cast for Roy and McKinney at the Election Precinct Level





Authors Nathan Chan, Natalie Masuoka, Joyce Nguy

Layout/Design Editor Miyako Singer

The views expressed herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the University of California, Los Angeles. The authors alone are responsible for the content of this report.

Read additional related research briefs here: https://www.aasc.ucla.edu/aapipolicy/default.aspx

---

The UCLA Asian American Studies Center (AASC) launched its Asian American & Pacific Islander (AAPI) Policy Initiative in the midst of the pandemic in 2021. We build on our long history as a recognized leader in Asian American Studies with a track record of excellence in applied policy research, publications, and leadership development.

The aim of the AAPI Policy Initiative is to support and produce research in collaboration with nonprofit advocacy organizations and policy makers to uplift AAPI perspectives in civic life and public decision-making in California and across the nation. As a nonpartisan research entity housed under AASC, the AAPI Policy Initiative will conduct applied research, develop and disseminate research reports and policy briefs, collaborate with stakeholders in policy formulation, conduct implementation and policy evaluation, and facilitate engagement between stakeholders, policy makers, and government decision-makers.

Access this research brief online:
https://www.aasc.ucla.edu/resources/policyreports/2026LACityElection_Nov2026.pdf