



Districting 101



June 6, 2023

Agenda

Things we will cover:

- The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)
- What is Districting
- What is the Voting Rights Act
- Traditional Districting/Redistricting Principles
- The Mechanics of Districting
- GWSD population data
- Public Hearing Schedule

What is the CVRA?

The California Voting Rights Act is a state law that prohibits the use of At Large Election Systems in local government if there is Racially Polarized Voting.

“At Large” is defined as anything other than a system in which an elected official lives in a district, and is only elected by members of that district. Does not include “multi-member” districts.

“Racially Polarized Voting” is defined as differences in voting patterns which can be shown to be correlated to race, religion, national origin, or membership in any other protected class.

What is the CVRA?

The California Voting Rights Act takes the principles of the Federal Voting Rights Act and expands it regarding districted elections in two key ways:

While Federal law uses “majority minority” districts as a standard for vulnerability, the CVRA only requires “ability to influence.”

The CVRA requires that plaintiffs get full reimbursement for legal fees associated with any successful challenge.

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While Federal law uses “majority minority” districts as a standard for vulnerability, the CVRA only requires “ability to influence.”

The CVRA requires that plaintiffs get full reimbursement for legal fees associated with any successful challenge. ***These can be lessened or eliminated if the district follows a strict and prompt process for districting.***

What is Districting

Definition

Districting is the initial process of creating election district boundaries.

These boundaries determine:

- Eligibility to run for office – must live within boundaries to qualify for election.
- Who votes in the election – only voters within the zone vote for their board member.

What is Districting

Definition

Districting is the initial process of creating election district boundaries.

These boundaries do not determine:

- How the district decides to govern. The district can still work to achieve goals that benefit the district as a whole rather than the interests of any single zone.
- How services or relationships between the district and the public are managed.

What is the Voting Rights Act?

The Voting Rights Act is federal Law that seeks to remedy racial disenfranchisement. It has two sections impacting redistricting:

Section 2 – Majority Minority Districts

Section 5 – Preclearance (inactive)

The California Voting Rights Act prohibits the use of At Large Election Systems in local government if there is Racially Polarized Voting.

What is the Voting Rights Act?

The Voting Rights Act Section 2 is enforced when a jurisdiction meets certain preconditions:

- 1) A minority group must be sufficiently large and geographically compact to comprise a majority of the district;
- 2) The minority group must be politically cohesive (it must demonstrate a pattern of voting for the same candidates, also known as “bloc voting”); and,
- 3) A majority of voters vote sufficiently as a bloc usually to defeat the minority group’s preferred candidate.

Required Redistricting Criteria

Traditional redistricting principles used throughout the country and written into state law

There are a number of criteria that are required under the FAIR MAPS Act (ranked):

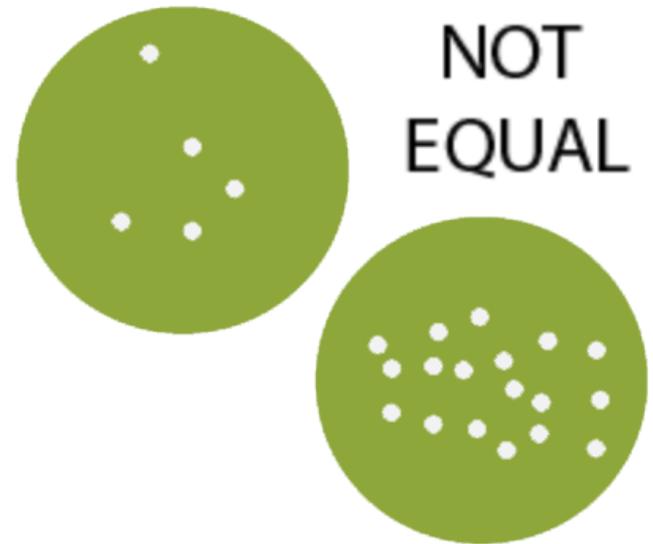
- **Relatively equal size - people, not citizens**
- Contiguous – districts should not hop/jump
- Maintain “*communities of interest*”
- Easily identifiable and understandable lines, following city, natural, and man-made boundaries
- Keep districts compact – appearance/function

Equal Population

Utilizing the US Census Decennial File

What is “equal” population has been a key subject in districting litigation.

- Population Equality is based on “People” not citizens or voters or other metrics.
- 10% deviation presumed equal. Other agencies / states have different plan deviation requirements.



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Contiguity

Two definitions for what is contiguous

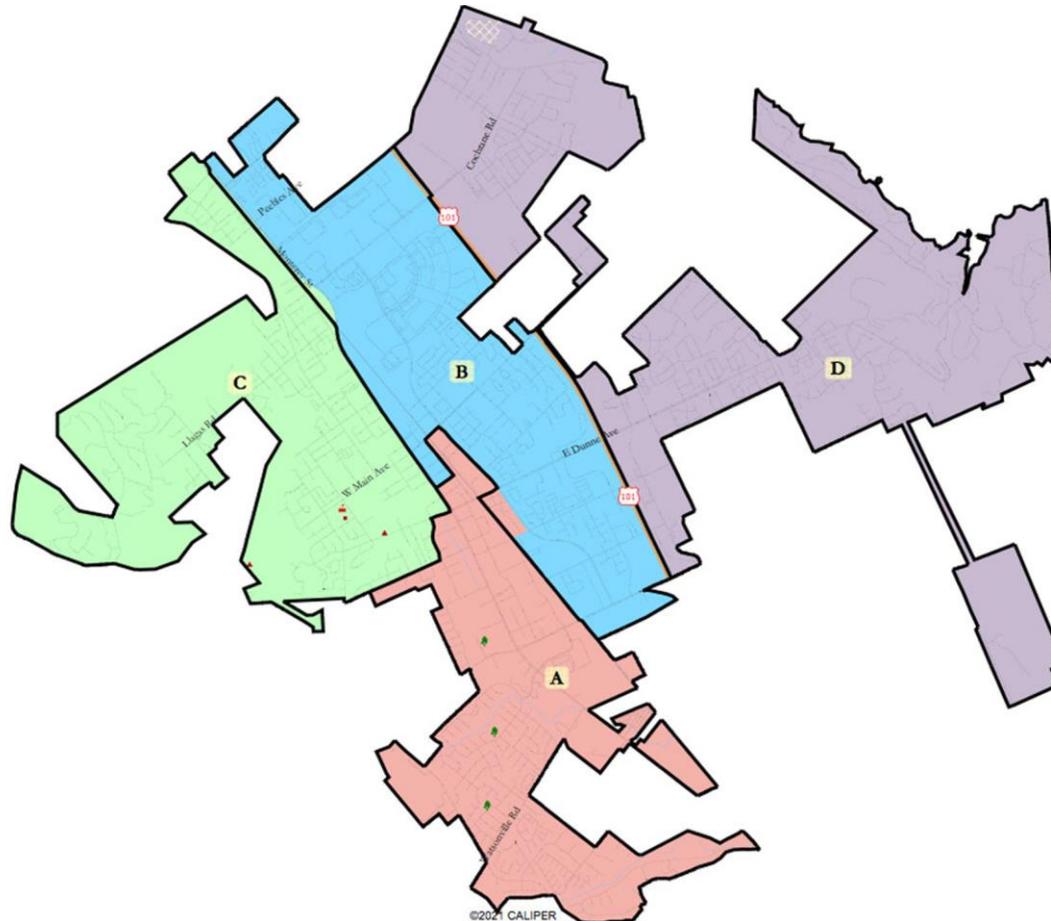
Contiguity should be thought of as “literal” and “functional.”

- An area that is one whole piece is “literally contiguous.”
- An area that represents how the population functions or how people are connected is “functionally contiguous.”



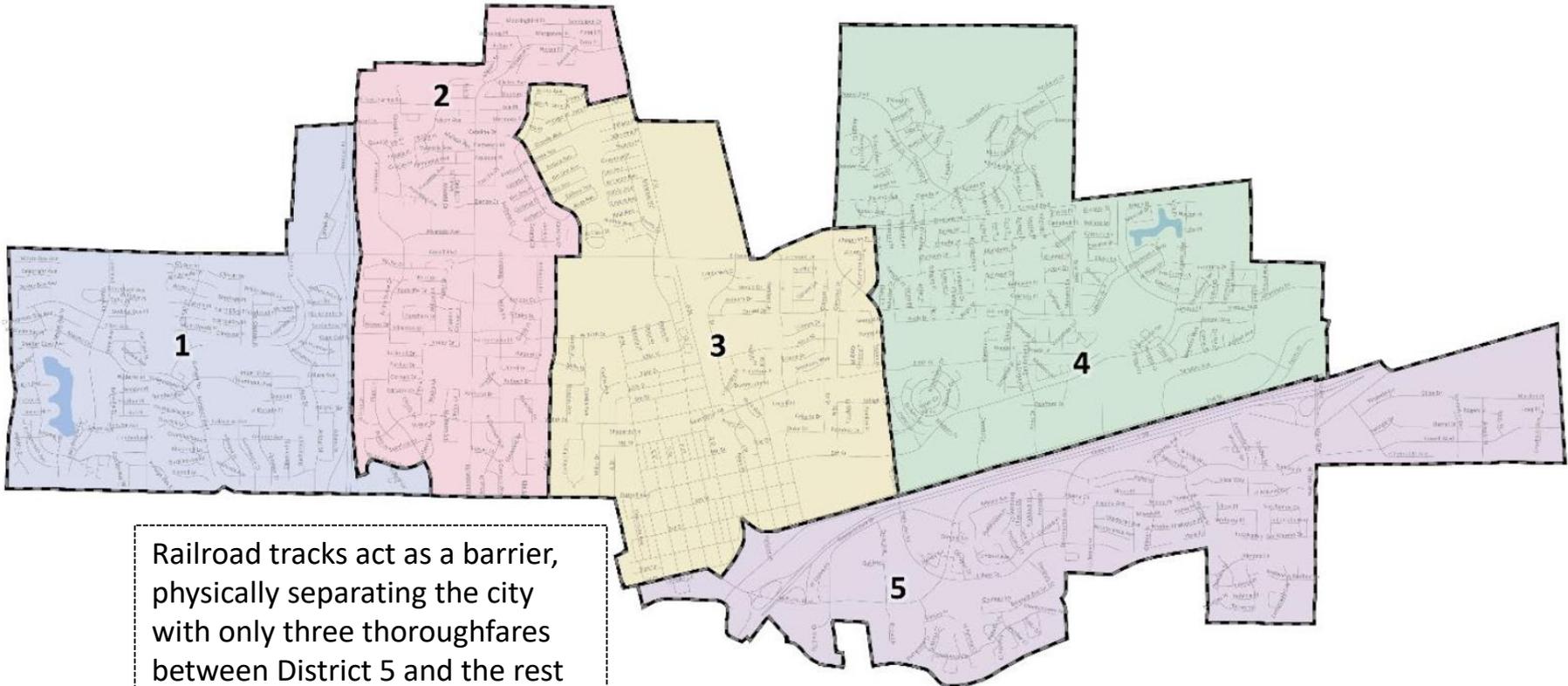
Contiguity

Determining what is “contiguous”



Contiguity

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Railroad tracks act as a barrier, physically separating the city with only three thoroughfares between District 5 and the rest of the city.

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Communities of Interest

Bringing like people together for representation

Communities of interest are the building blocks of election-districts. A community of interest includes ethnic and language minorities and other groups.

- Subjective
- Open-ended to be as inclusive as possible

Examples of Voting Rights Act Communities

- Latinos
- Asians
- African Americans

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While communities of interest may include race, it cannot be the *predominant factor* in drawing district boundaries.

Communities of Interest

Bringing like people together for representation

What are you looking for in trying to judge the applicability of a Community of Interest to the districting process?

- Group with shared culture / characteristics
- Geographic Nature / Density / Ability to be mapped
- Relationship to Agency / Policies

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- **Keep districts compact – appearance/function**

Compactness

Determining what is “compact”

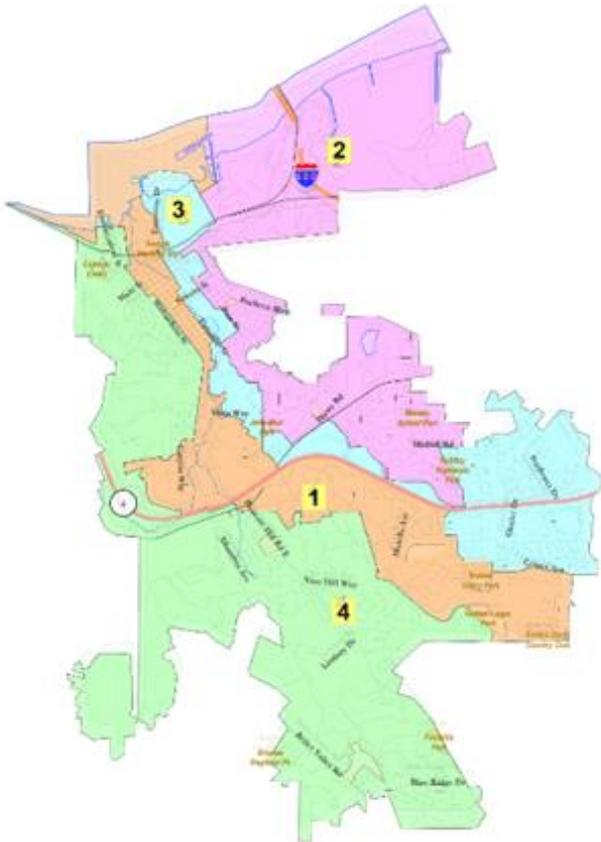
The measure of compactness can get complicated.

- Ratio of the circumference of a district and the area of a district.
- Measuring the number of distinct straight lines and the number of kinks and bends.
- Simply outlawing funny shapes.



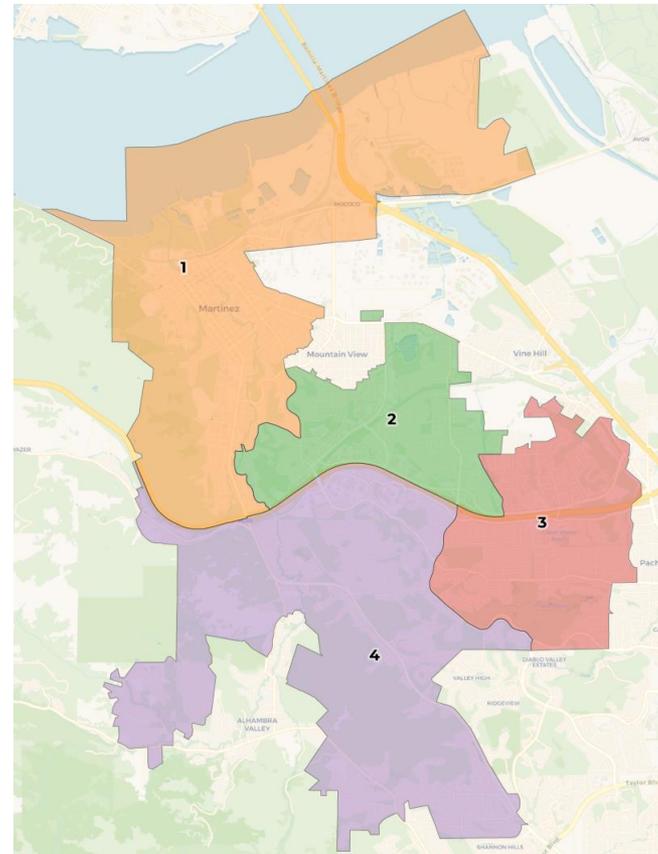
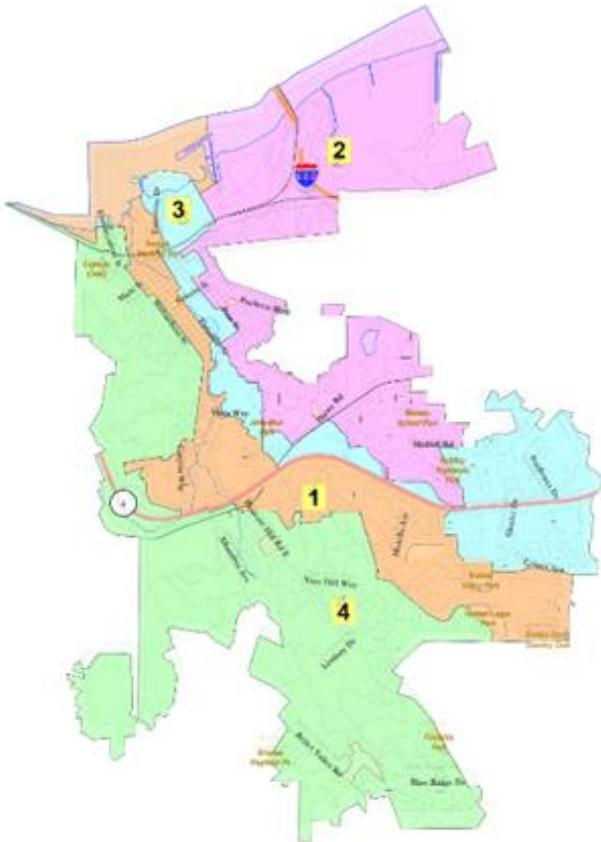
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The Mechanics of Districting

Census Data

The Geography is called the
TIGER Files

- *Topologically Integrated Geographic
Encoding and Referencing*

- *Nested geographic units*

- *Block*
- *Block Group*
- *Tract*

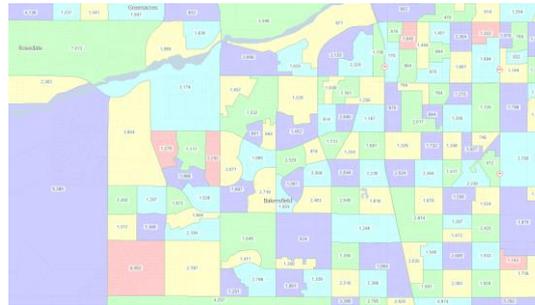


The mechanics of Redistricting

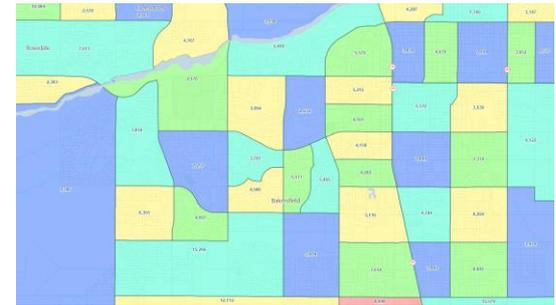
Census Data



Census Blocks



Census Block Groups

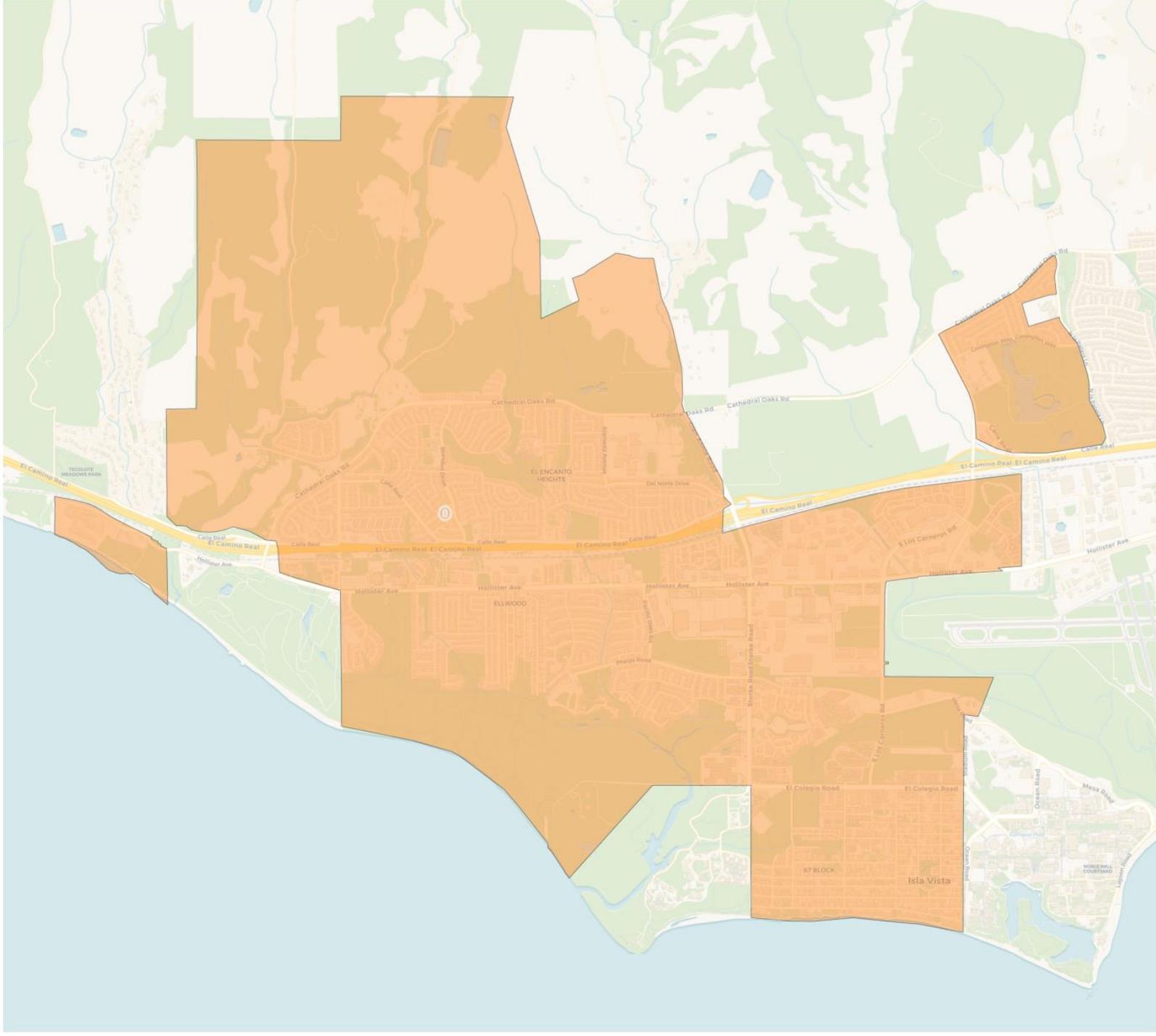


Census Tracts



**REDISTRICTING
PARTNERS**

**Goleta West Sanitary
District
At-Large**



2020 Census

	Districtwide
Population	41,575
Deviation	0
Deviation %	0.0%
Other	21,013
Other %	50.5%
Latino	12,769
Latino %	30.7%
Asian	7,088
Asian %	17.0%
Black	705
Black %	1.7%

Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP)

	0
Total CVAP	30,592
Other CVAP	18,635
Other CVAP %	60.9%
Latino CVAP	7,408
Latino CVAP %	24.2%
Asian CVAP	3,280
Asian CVAP %	10.7%
Black CVAP	1,269
Black CVAP %	4.1%

Redistricting Partners

Public Hearing Structure	
Hearing #1	Public Hearing with information about the districting process, descriptions of the data and mapping tools, introduction of ways the community can provide input.
Hearing #2	Repeat of first hearing, with additional emphasis on receiving community of interest testimony for the purposes of driving map creation.
Hearing #3	Presentation of maps of new potential district boundaries produced by the demographer and published seven days in advance . These maps are expected to drive additional feedback from the public and the Board of Directors.
Hearing #4	Public Hearing with revised map(s). Additional public input regarding the revised map(s) and concluding with direction from the board on a final map.
Hearing #5	Public Hearing to adopt final map

Goleta West Sanitary District

Districing Timeline

Proposed Schedule:

June 6, 2023

Public Hearing #1 (Pre-map)

July 18, 2023

Public Hearing #2 (Pre-map)

August 1, 2023

Public Hearing #3: Introduce Draft Maps

September 5, 2023

Public Hearing #4: Revised Draft Maps

September 19, 2023

Public Hearing #5: Final Vote



REDISTRICTING PARTNERS