



# 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):

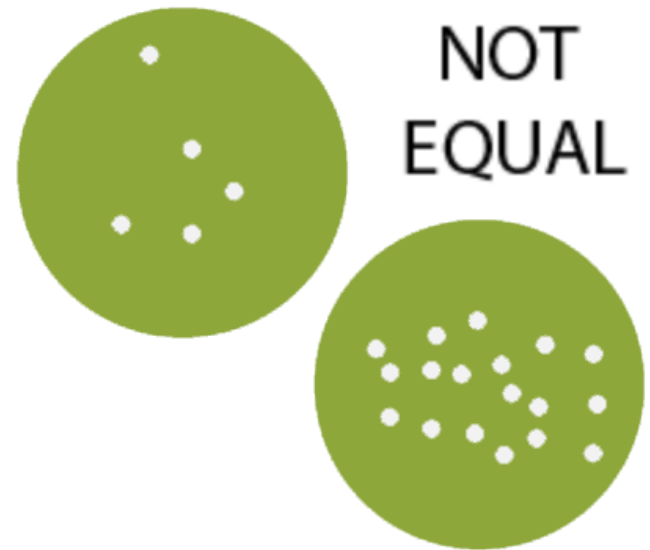
- **Relatively equal size - people, not citizens**
- Contiguous – districts should not hop/jump
- Maintain “*communities of interest*”
- Easily identifiable and understandable lines, following city, natural, and man-made boundaries
- Keep districts compact – appearance/function

# 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

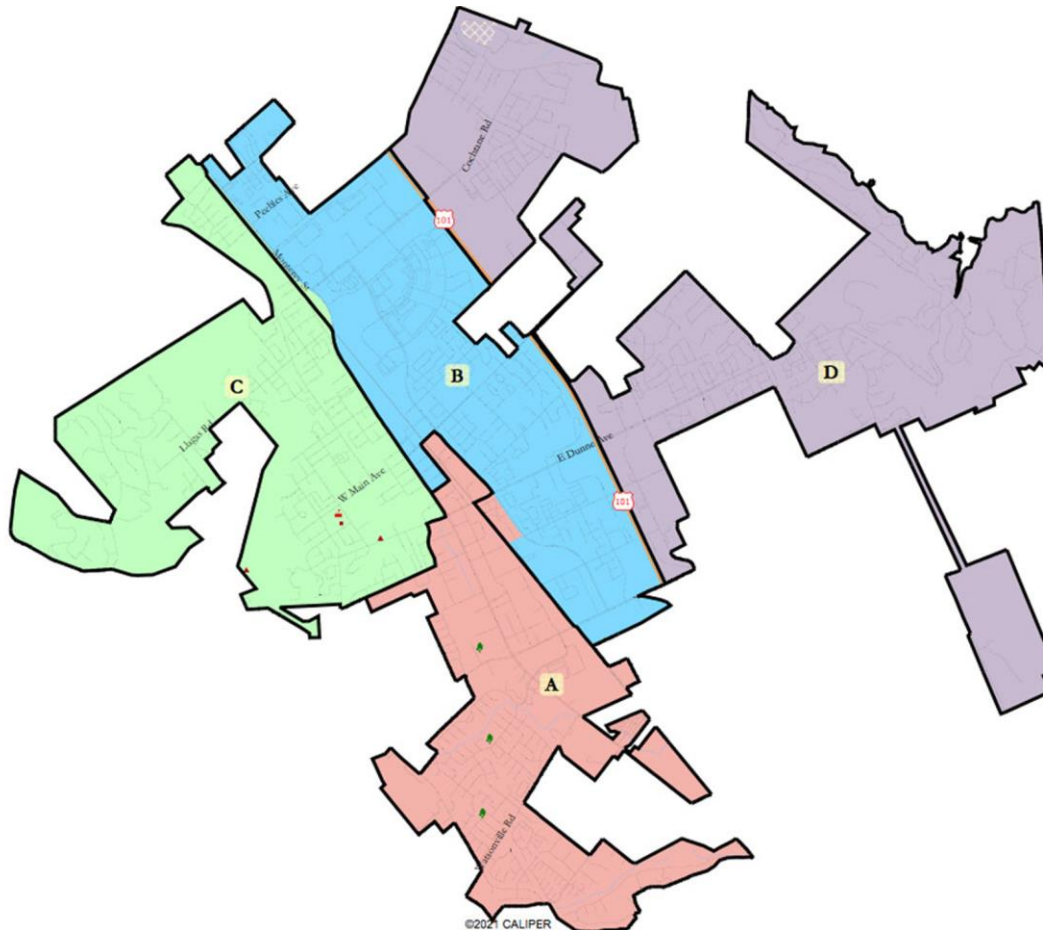
Contiguity should be thought of as “literal” and “functional.”

- 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.”



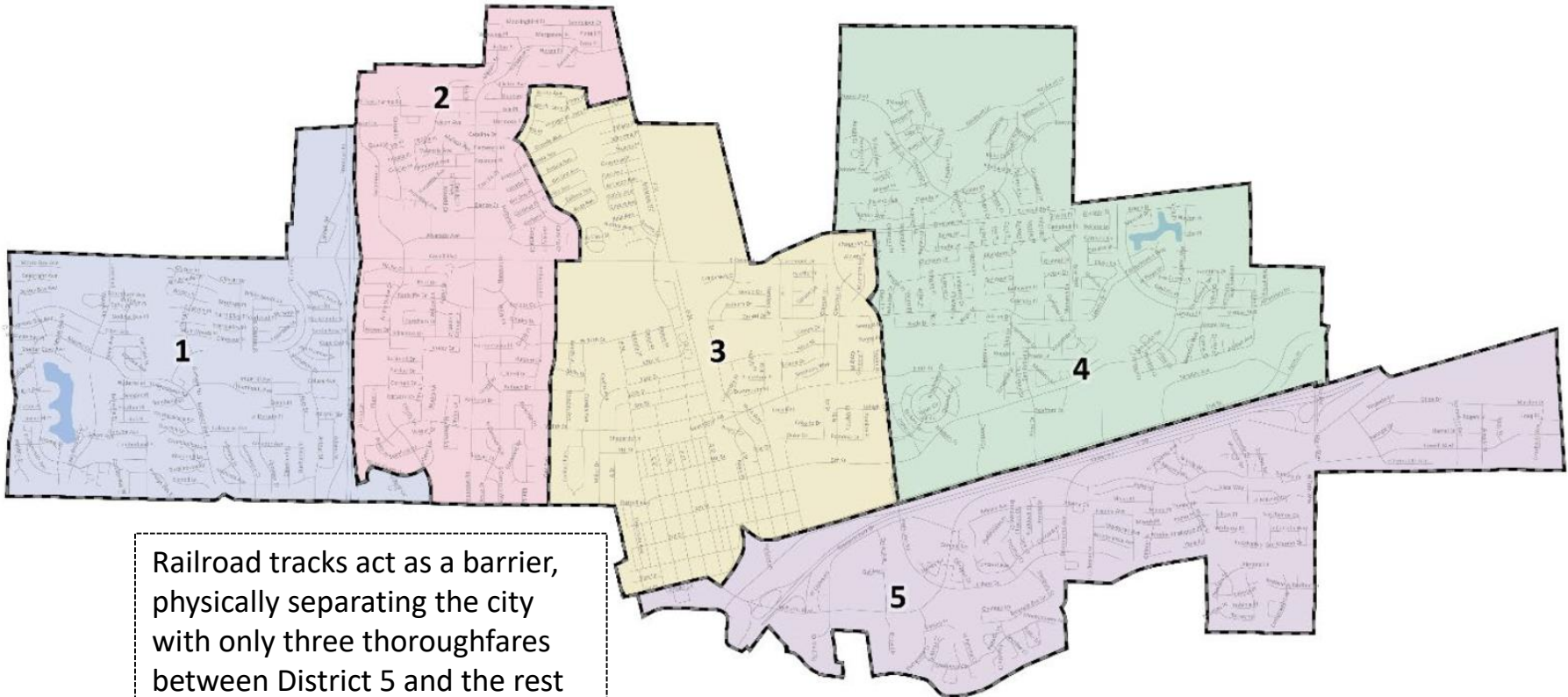
# Contiguity

Determining what is “contiguous”



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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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# Compactness

## Determining what is “compact”

The measure of compactness can get complicated.

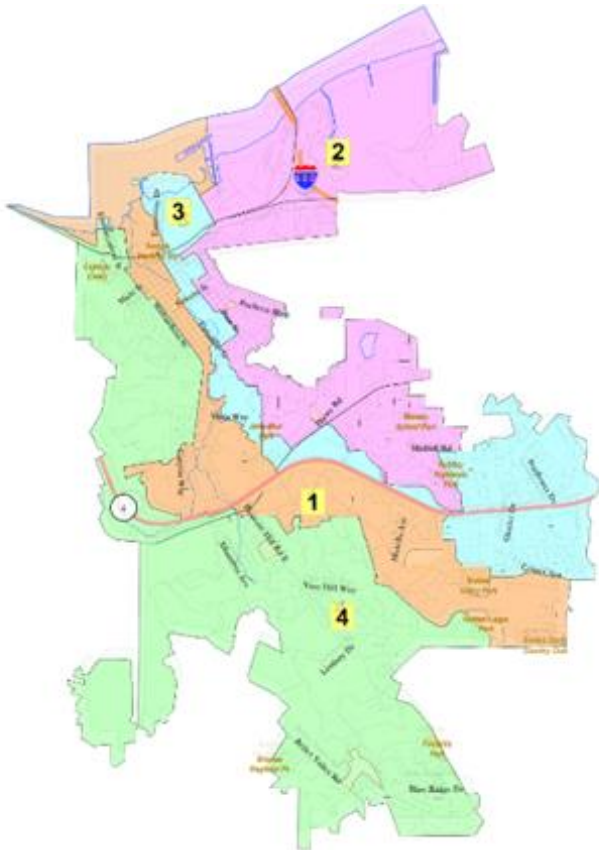
- Ratio of the circumference of a district and the area of a district.
- Measuring the number of distinct straight lines and the number of kinks and bends.
- Simply outlawing funny shapes.

NOT  
COMPACT



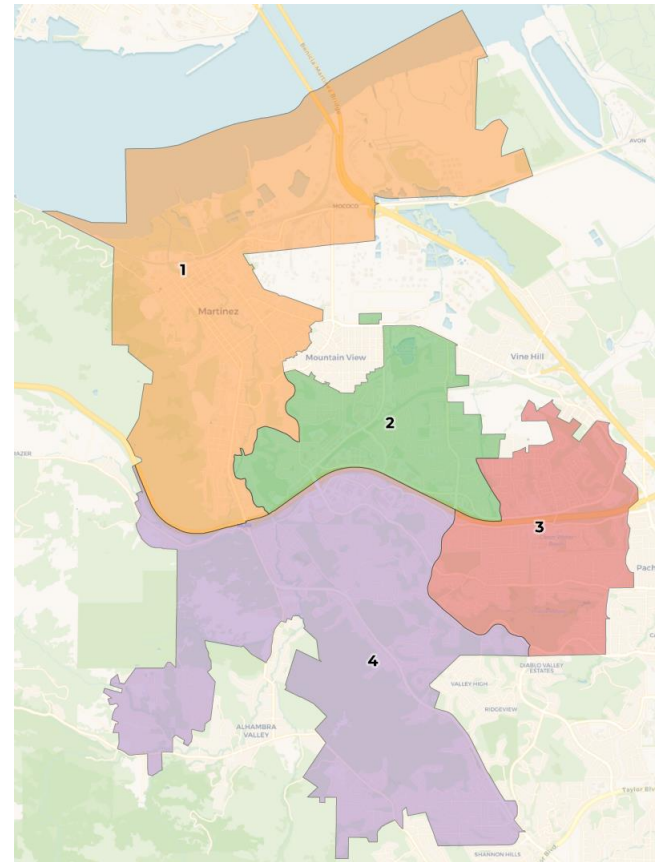
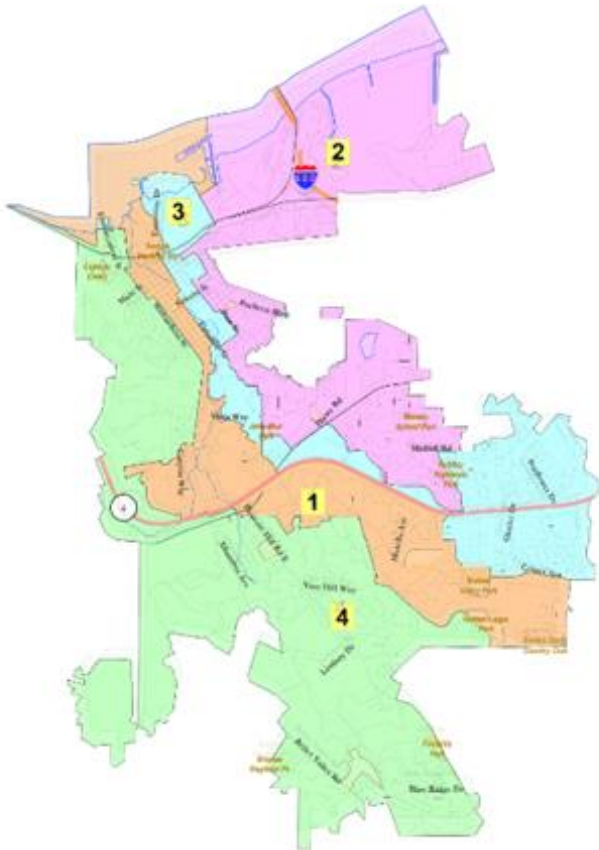
# Compactness

Determining what is “compact”



# Compactness

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# The Mechanics of Districting

## Census Data

The Geography is called the  
TIGER Files

- *Topologically Integrated Geographic  
Encoding and Referencing*

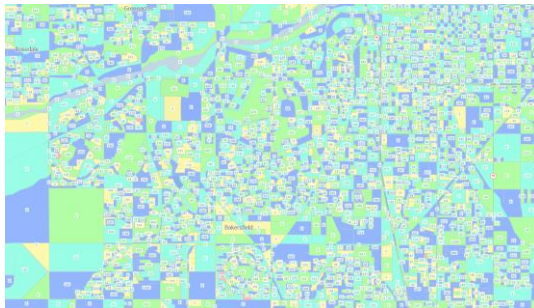
- *Nested geographic units*

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

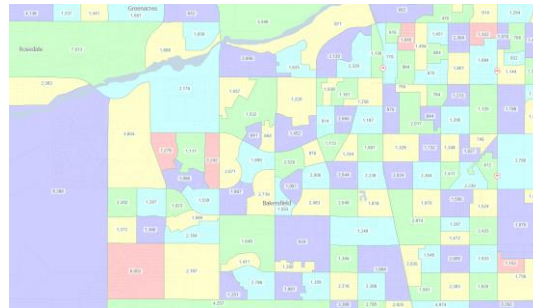


# The mechanics of Redistricting

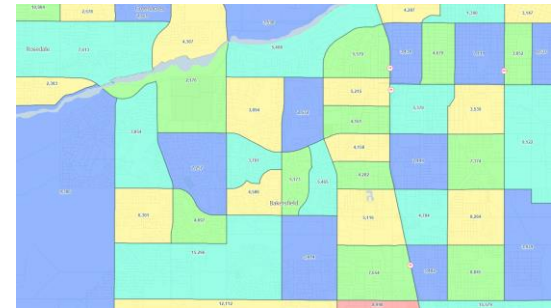
## Census Data



Census Blocks



Census Block Groups

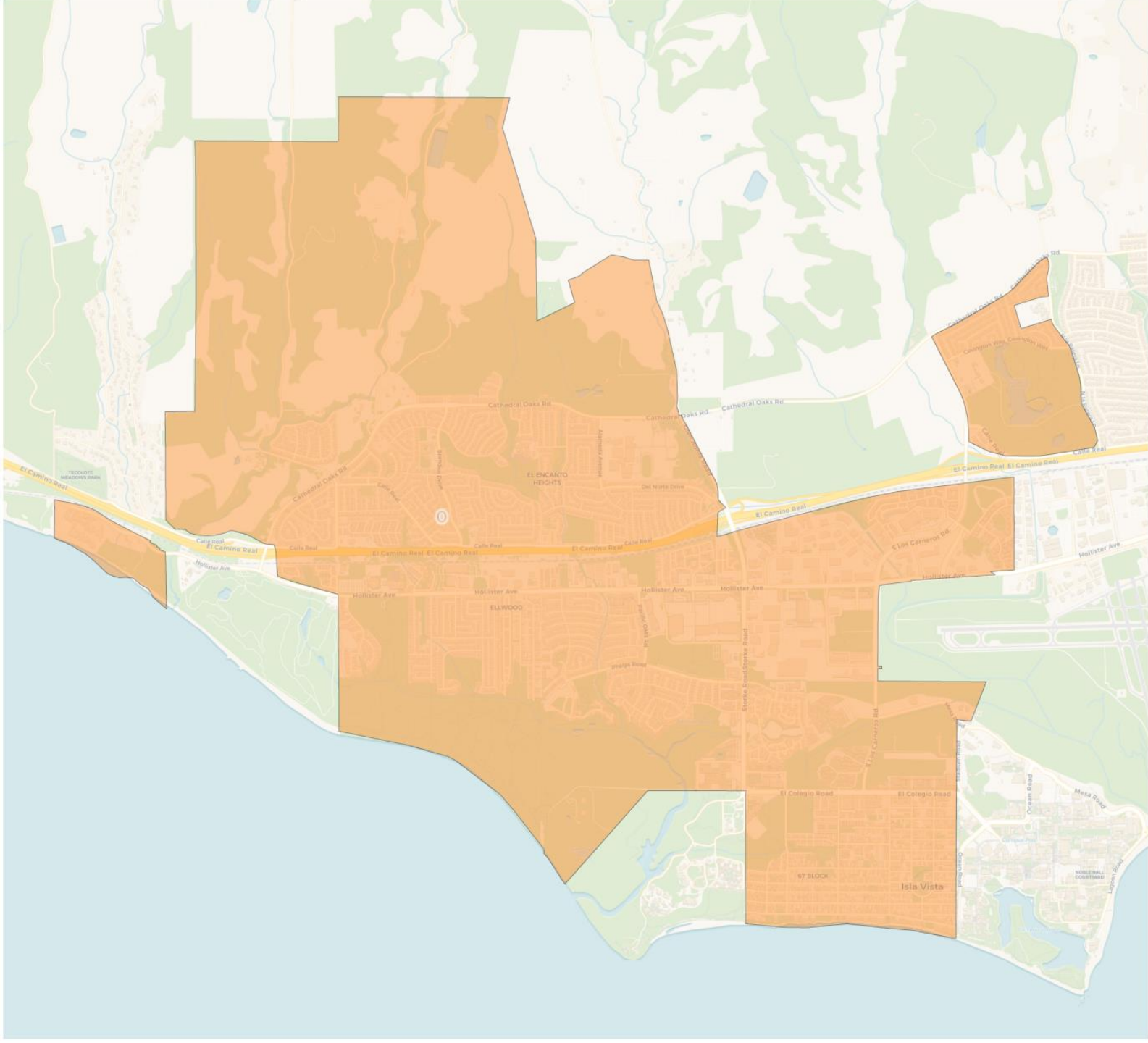


Census Tracts



**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 <b>published seven days in advance</b> . 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)**

August 1, 2023

Public Hearing #2 (Pre-map)

September 5, 2023

Public Hearing #3: Introduce Draft Maps

September 19, 2023

Public Hearing #4: Revised Draft Maps

October 3, 2023

Public Hearing #5: Final Vote



# REDISTRICTING PARTNERS