

## **ITEM NUMBER**

**2**

# Redistricting San Francisco: How it works and how to participate

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San Francisco  
Redistricting Task Force



## Introduction to the Redistricting Task Force:

- **9 members – appointed by Board of Supervisors (BoS), Mayor (M) and Elections Commission (EC)**
  - Chair: Eric McDonnell (BoS)
  - Vice-Chair: Jenny Lam (BoS)
  - Mike Alonso (BoS)
  - Myong Leigh (M)
  - Sonia Melara (M)
  - Marily Mondejar (M)
  - David Pilpel (EC)
  - Mark Schreiber (EC)
  - Melissa Tidwell (EC)

## What does the Task Force do and When?

- **Community Education**
  - Beginning in November 2011
- **Data Collection**
  - In progress and ongoing
- **Community Input**
  - December 2011 through March 2012 – ongoing community input through community meetings, written and online submission
- **Approve Redrawn maps**
  - No later than April 15, 2012

## Task Force Meetings:

- Regular meetings are on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday (6pm) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday (3pm) of each month at City Hall
- Educational meetings are:
  - 1. November 15<sup>th</sup> – Hall of Flowers @ 6pm
  - 2. November 19 – Tenderloin Community School @ 10am
  - 3. November 30<sup>th</sup> – Balboa High School @ 6pm
  - 4. December 7<sup>th</sup> – Horace Mann Middle School @ 6pm
- Other meetings will be scheduled. Please check our website for dates! (<http://sfgov.org/rdtf>)

## What is Redistricting?

- The constitutionally mandated redrawing of local, state, and federal political boundaries every ten years following the U.S. census.
- Redistricting is done to equalize the populations in the districts, using various criteria.
- The San Francisco Redistricting Task Force is charged with redistricting the boundaries for the Board of Supervisors.

## Why should YOU participate in Redistricting?

- Participating in redistricting will give your community a voice, which is critical to ensuring that it has equal access to the political process.
- This participation can encourage citizens to register, vote, and remain politically engaged.
- It can also help lead to the adoption of redistricting plans that provide communities a meaningful opportunity to elect candidates who represent their interests on issues that are important to their lives, from getting street lamps in their neighborhoods, to securing safe schools and new playgrounds.
- Take advantage of opportunities to participate in all phases of the redistricting process!

## Which Criteria are used?

### San Francisco Charter:

Districts must conform to all legal requirements, including the requirement that they be equal in population. Population variations between districts should be limited to 1 percent from the statistical mean unless additional variations, limited to 5 percent of the statistical mean, are necessary to prevent dividing or diluting the voting power of minorities and/or to keep recognized neighborhoods intact; provided, however, that the redistricting provided for herein shall conform to the rule of one person, one vote, and shall reflect communities of interest within the City and County.

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## Other Criteria and 'Legal Requirements'

- Compliance with the Voting Rights Act (VRA) Section 2
- Contiguity
- Compactness

In Sum: The Criteria the Taskforce will use for Redistricting:

Equal Population (within 1%/5% as applicable)  
Compliance with Sec.2 of the Voting Rights Act  
Contiguity  
Preserve recognized Neighborhoods  
Preserve Communities of Interest  
Compactness

## Equal Population

- That's why we do it!
- Constitutional requirement
- One person, One vote
- SF: Districts must be within 1% of the mean (+/- 732 people) unless:
  - Higher deviation needed for voting rights purposes
  - Higher deviation needed to keep recognized neighborhoods intact
- In these cases deviation can be 5% (+/- 3660 people)

## S.F. Board of Supervisors – Deviations by district

**Table 1: Total 2010 PL94 Population and Deviation from Ideal District Population**

<b>District</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Deviation</b>	<b>% Deviation</b>
<b>01</b>	<b>68,253</b>	<b>-4,950</b>	<b>-6.76%</b>
<b>02</b>	<b>68,021</b>	<b>-5,182</b>	<b>-7.08%</b>
<b>03</b>	<b>68,955</b>	<b>-4,248</b>	<b>-5.80%</b>
<b>04</b>	<b>71,586</b>	<b>-1,617</b>	<b>-2.21%</b>
<b>05</b>	<b>70,675</b>	<b>-2,528</b>	<b>-3.45%</b>
<b>06</b>	<b>94,788</b>	<b>21,585</b>	<b>29.49%</b>
<b>07</b>	<b>69,825</b>	<b>-3,378</b>	<b>-4.61%</b>
<b>08</b>	<b>69,263</b>	<b>-3,940</b>	<b>-5.38%</b>
<b>09</b>	<b>65,673</b>	<b>-7,530</b>	<b>-10.29%</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>78,661</b>	<b>5,458</b>	<b>7.46%</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>79,535</b>	<b>6,332</b>	<b>8.65%</b>

## Federal Voting Rights Act - Section 2

- Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 prohibits voting practices or procedures that discriminate on the basis of race, color, or membership in one of the language minority groups identified in the Act. Section 2 may be violated if, in the context of the "totality of the circumstance of the local electoral process," the standard, practice, or procedure under consideration has the result of denying a racial or language minority an equal opportunity to participate in the political process.
- Majority Minority Districts represent an area of concern under Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

## Prevent division or dilution of minority voting power

### Voting Rights Act Section 2 – Majority Minority Districts

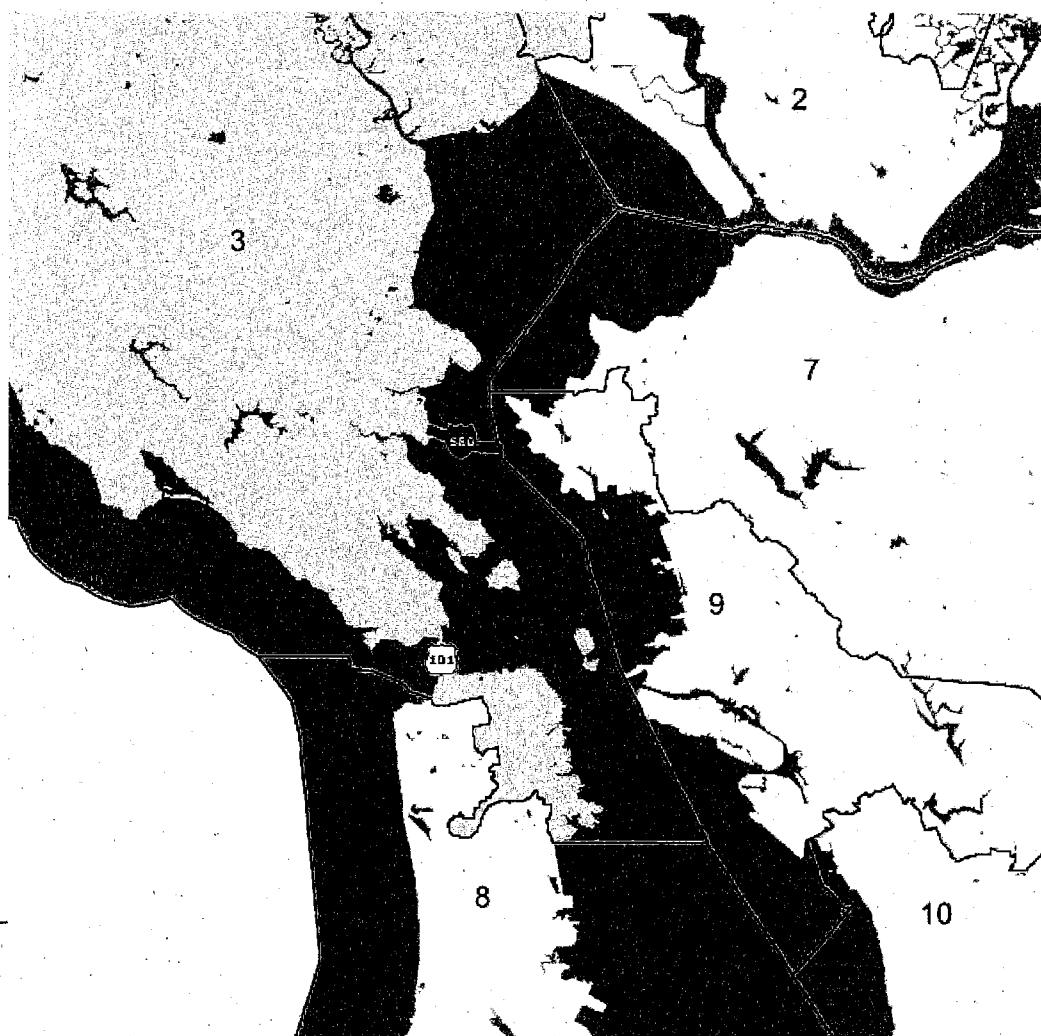
- >Minority group must be large enough to constitute a majority in the district (50%+CVAP)
- >Minority group must be geographically compact
- >Minority group votes cohesively
- >There must be evidence of polarized voting against the minority group

NOTE: Sec 2 does not prohibit the drawing of “influence seats” nor considering racial/ethnic Communities of Interest  
HOWEVER: race/ethnicity can NOT be a predominant criterion!

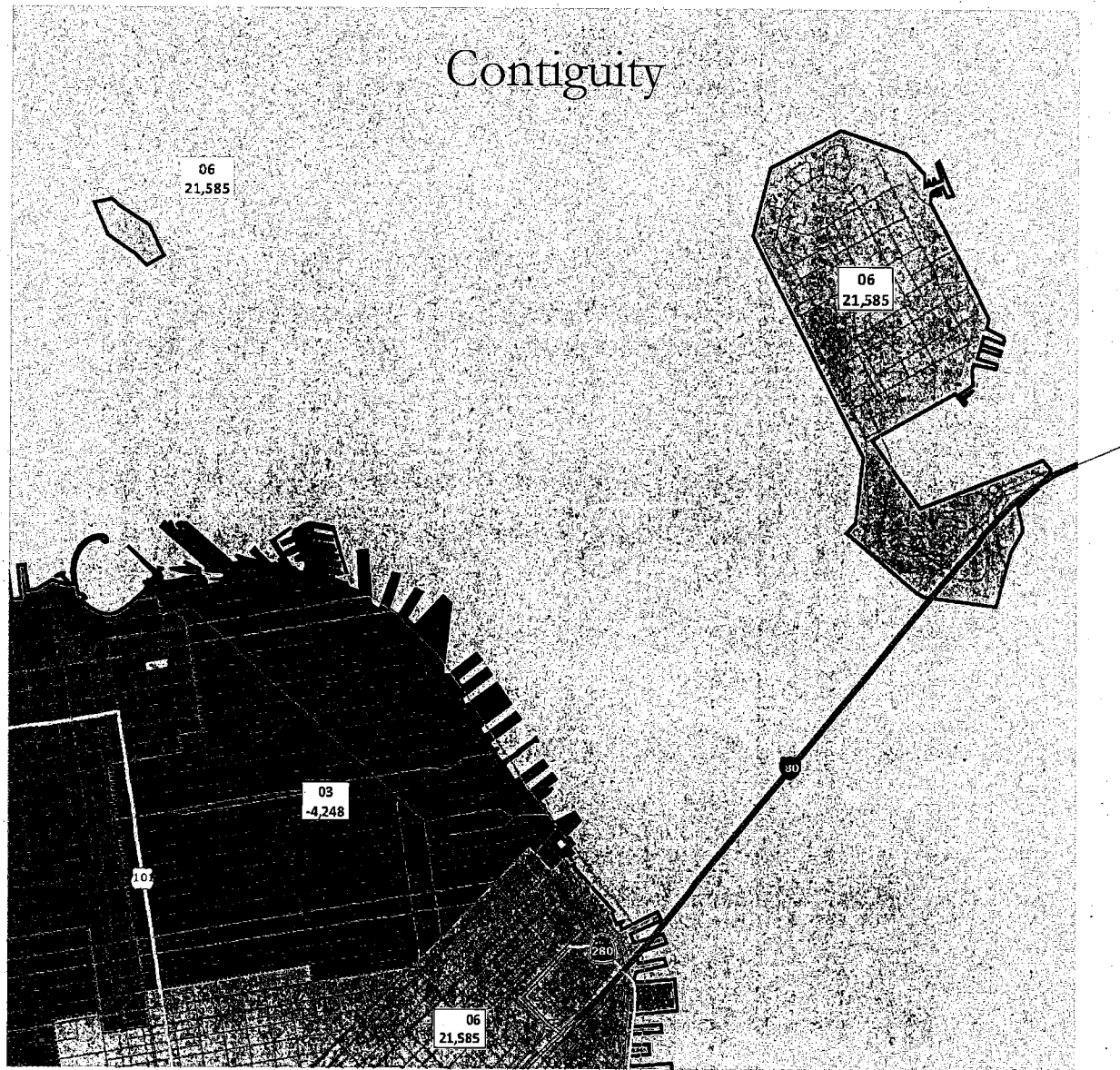
## Contiguity:

- Definition: A district in which all parts are connected to each other  
in other words:
- A district in which one may travel from any location to any other location without crossing the district boundary
- A district can be contiguous by water or a bridge!

## Contiguity



# Contiguity



## Preserve recognized neighborhoods

- Recognized neighborhoods have been identified for various purposes by departments of the City and County of San Francisco
- There are differences in the definitions that the various departments use:
  - There are 37 neighborhoods used by the Planning Department
  - The Department of Elections uses 26 neighborhoods
- Public input can help the Task Force adjust the boundaries and/or help them understand which boundaries should be used

## Communities of Interest:

What is a Community of Interest?

It depends...

A Group of people with a specific common interest...

(“actual shared interests” Miller v Johnson, 1995)

...That can be defined geographically

What are Communities of Interest NOT?

In SF: there is no limitation in the charter

## How to document a Community of Interest – an example:

- Create a map of the boundaries (use Google maps if no Geographic Information System available)  
or
  - Write down the boundaries
  - Outline what defines the Community of Interest:  
What is your mission or your commonality?
    - > Show that your members live within the boundaries
    - > Explain what is different outside of the boundaries of your Community of Interest
  - Explain why it is important to be kept whole, and how the Community of Interest would be negatively impacted if split by an electoral (supervisory) boundary line
-

## Community of Interest definitions may include:

- Organizing around schools, school districts
  - Transportation hubs
  - Community Centers
  - Dog parks
  
  - Race and Ethnicity
    - Additional factors:
      - Shared experiences or history
      - Access (or lack of) to education
      - Higher number of kids per household/younger overall population
      - Shared languages and cultures
-

## Compactness:

- Addresses the geography or 'look' of the district
- Many different measures developed
- "eyeball approach" "appearances matter"
- Assumed to "guard against all types of gerrymandering" "drastic departures from compactness are a signal that something may be amiss"

Be Informed: How to Get involved – How to Learn more:

To participate in the process: testify, submit written testimony, send supporting information to the redistricting task force.

Please check our website for news and upcoming meetings.

Our email is: [rdtf@sfgov.org](mailto:rdtf@sfgov.org)

Our website is: <http://sfgov.org/rdtf>

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!**

## REDISTRICTING TASK FORCE



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### Community of Interest

One of the criteria for the drawing of supervisorial districts in San Francisco is called "Communities of Interest." This criterion is considered a "traditional redistricting principle" and it is found in the County Charter. This hand-out is designed to explain how to think about what a community of interest is, and how to document it so that it can be considered in the supervisorial redistricting.

### WHAT IS A Community of Interest (COI)?

A COI is a group of people in the same area that shares a common bond or interest. The definition is broad, leaving communities a lot of discretion in determining which issues are important to them and bring them together.

Communities of interest are best established through oral or written testimony from individuals or groups with first-hand knowledge of them. Census and other outside data can lend additional support, but should not replace first-hand knowledge of the community. COI testimony should address at least the first two of the following three points: the community's interests and its geographic location, and if possible also the third point: why it should be kept together in a district.

It is up to those most familiar with a community, those who live in or work with it, to identify the interests that unite it. These interests could include social, economic, environmental and/or many other factors. Neighborhoods often think of themselves as communities of interest.

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### How Does One Establish or Document One's COI?

COI testimony should address at least the first two of these three key areas:

#### 1. Explain the nature of the bond or common interest that informs the community:

Your oral or written testimony should describe the interests that the community shares. You should establish as clearly as possible what the common interests are and why or how they are important to the community. For example:

- Testimony about a common interest in a community center should include the name and location of the center and describe the community's involvement in it or why it is important, e.g., the community accesses a variety of educational and recreational opportunities for children, adults and senior citizens at the community center.
- Testimony about a shared culture or heritage should identify the heritage and indicate why it is a common bond, e.g., common history, language, culture, etc.

#### 2. Explain the geographical location of the community of interest:

Testimony must establish the geographic location of the COI so line drawers know where it is. This includes at least a description of the COI's exterior boundaries, such as streets, bodies of water, railroad tracks, or shopping centers, that delineate the outside border of the community.

A map showing the location of the COI, along with oral or written testimony identifying the location can be extremely helpful to allow both community members and the Redistricting Task Force to locate the COI. A map can be created using free online programs such as google maps.

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3. Explain why the COI should be kept together in a district:

In addition, testimony might explain why the COI should be kept together in a district to allow for its fair representation. This includes why the COI's interests would be best represented together and why splitting the COI would be problematic. For example:

- Testimony about an economic interest, such as advocacy to improve economic opportunities, might note that redevelopment and job creation activities are most effective when residents in the respective area can work together with one, rather than multiple representatives.
- Splitting the COI might frustrate efforts to obtain government support by making the COI too small to gain the representative's attention to the issues at hand.

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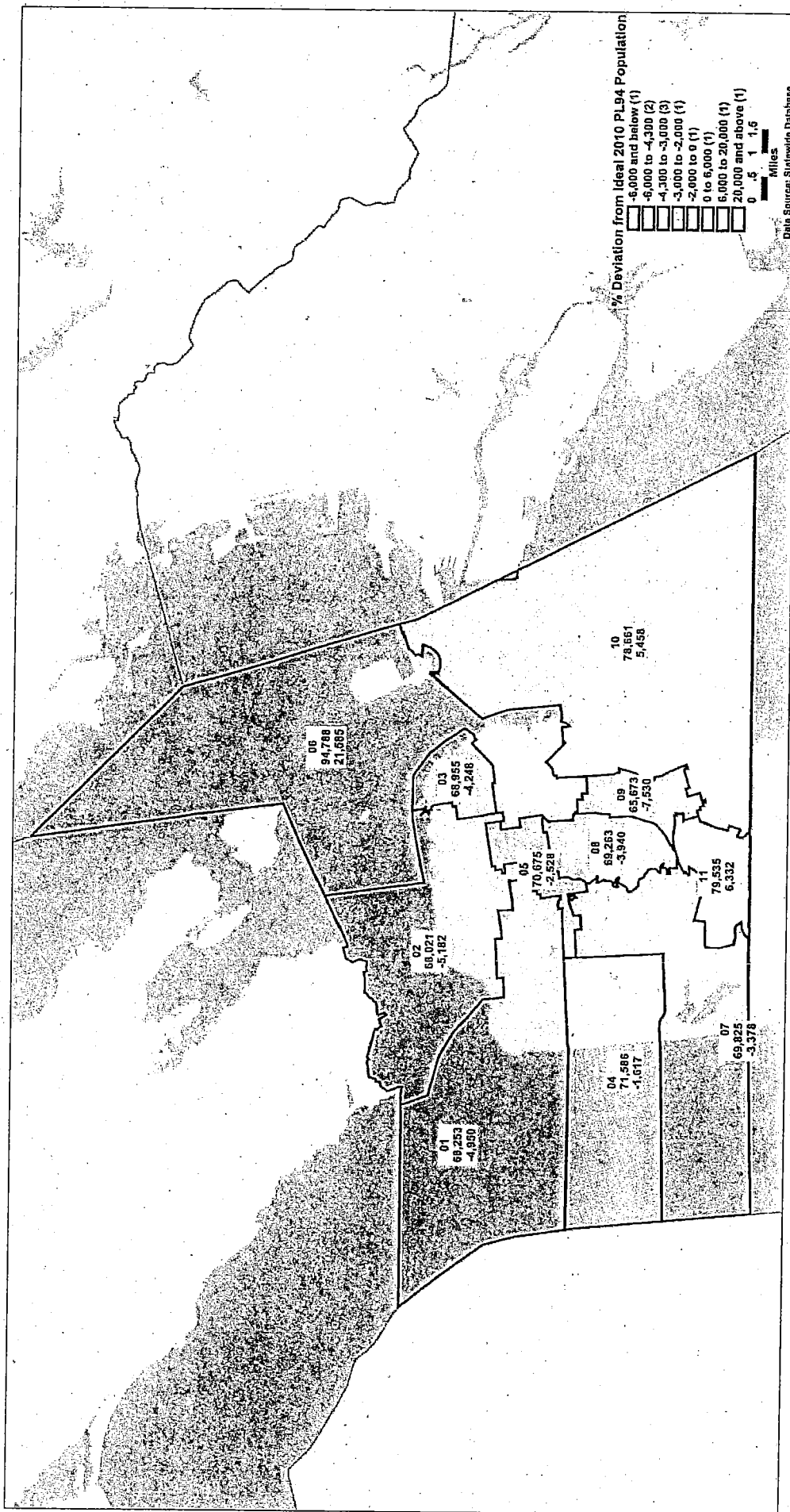


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S.F. Board of Supervisors – Deviations by District

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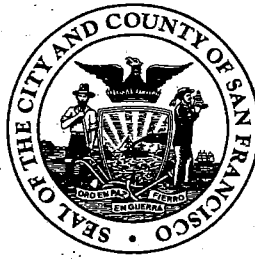
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## **How to Create a Map of your Communities of Interest using Google Maps**

**In addition to describing the interests that bond your community of interest (COI) and why it should be located in a single district, you should tell the Task Force where your COI is located. Google Maps is a tool you can use for this.**

1. Open Google Maps: <http://maps.google.com/>. Click on the upper-left tab, "My Maps," then the "Get Started" button. Sign in with your Google Account, or create one as needed.
2. Give your map title. Add any description as needed. Click the "Save" button.
3. Zoom in to your neighborhood area.
4. Select the "draw a Shape" tool in the drop-down menu under the Line tool (looks like a blue zig-zag) to draw a border around your neighborhood or community. Your cursor should take the form of an "X."
5. To draw the border, click on one point on the border of the area you want to use and then trace the entire border by clicking along the way, especially at every bend or turn in the border. To finish the border, double-click or click on your starting point. You will end up with a shape showing your neighborhood or community; the shape is sometimes called a "polygon." Enter a name and description for your map (polygon).
  - a. If you want, you can change the color of your polygon by first selecting the polygon, then clicking the upper-right hand square in the text box which shows the current color of your polygon. Click "OK" to save changes.
6. To show any significant places (e.g., schools), click on the "Placemark" tool, which looks like a blue balloon, and then click the location on the map you want to show. Enter a title and description for your placemark. You may change the icon of the placemark to make it easier to identify by clicking on the square in the upper right corner of the Placemark text box and selecting a new icon.
7. For submission to the Task Force: either send your map electronically OR print and clearly label the following: city, county, names of streets or other landmarks that form the boundaries, and the name and address of any significant places you show on the map.

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## Redistricting Criteria San Francisco Board of Supervisors Districts

Districts must conform to all legal requirements, including the requirement that they be equal in population.

Population variations between districts should be limited to 1 percent from the statistical mean unless additional variations, limited to 5 percent of the statistical mean, are necessary to prevent dividing or diluting the voting power of minorities and/or to keep recognized neighborhoods intact; provided, however, that the redistricting provided for herein shall conform to the rule of one person, one vote, and shall reflect communities of interest within the City and County.

The criteria the Task Force will use for redistricting of the supervisorial districts are:

- Population Equality
- Compliance with the Voting Rights Act, Section 2
- Contiguity
- Respect for Communities of Interest
- Respect for Recognized Neighborhoods
- Compactness

Population Deviation: limited to 1 percent (+/- 732) from the statistical mean unless additional variations, limited to 5 percent (+/- 3660) of the statistical mean, are necessary to prevent dividing or diluting the voting power of minorities and/or to keep recognized neighborhoods intact

## Redistricting Glossary

**Census Block:** The smallest level of census geography used by the Census Bureau to report census data. In urban areas, census blocks usually conform to city blocks, and in rural areas they are formed by other physical features and legal boundaries such as bodies of water and roads. Redistricting is based on census block-level data.

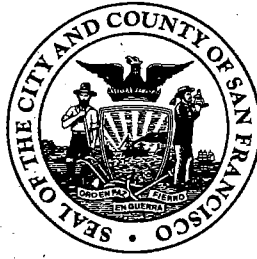
**Census Tract:** A small, relatively permanent statistical subdivision of a metropolitan statistical area or selected non-metropolitan county, delineated for the purpose of presenting decennial census data. Census tracts contain between 2,500 and 8,000 inhabitants. Census blocks nest in census tracts.

**Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP):** The number of Citizens that are above 18 years of age.

**Community of Interest:** Group of people with one or more specific common interests. For redistricting, communities of interest are defined geographically based on where people with common interests live.

**Compactness:** Compactness refers to a district's shape and contours, focusing on how closely a district's borders resemble a circle or square. When a district has 'tentacles' or oddly shaped borders, it is often said to be non-compact.

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**Contiguous OR Contiguity:** A contiguous district or is one in which all parts are geographically connected to each other in some way. Within a contiguous district, one may travel from any location to any other location without crossing the district boundary.

Some districts are "water-contiguous" which usually means that islands have to be connected to the mainland; others are contiguous via a bridge. Drawing contiguous districts is applying the criterion of 'contiguity.'

**Cracking:** A term used in Voting Rights that describes splitting significantly sized racial or ethnic communities into multiple districts, rather than keeping them together. Cracking is a particular problem when the division prevents the community from electing a candidate of its choice because it constitutes too small a portion of the electorate in the multiple districts.

**Criteria for Redistricting:** Rules established in the law that the redistricting body must follow when drawing electoral district boundaries. For example, one criterion is that districts have reasonably equal populations.

**Deviation:** The difference between the total population of the district and the ideal population of the district.

**Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Software:** A computer program for capturing, storing, checking, integrating, manipulating, analyzing and displaying data related to positions on the Earth's surface. Examples of commonly used GIS software include Google Earth, ArcGIS, Mapitude and MapInfo.

**Map layer(s):** GIS term for spatial/ geographic data files as they are displayed by GIS software. Map layers may display attribute data. The term 'map layer' is sometimes used interchangeably with 'spatial file' and 'GIS data file.'

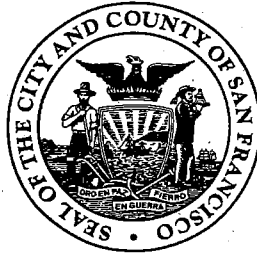
**Packing:** A term used in Voting Rights that describes over-concentrating a significantly sized racial or ethnic community within one district when it could have been allocated between two or more districts in which it had the ability to elect a candidate of its choice. Packing is a problem because over-concentrating a community in one district reduces or dilutes its ability to achieve fair representation in the legislative body in general.

**Racially polarized voting or racial bloc voting or simply 'polarized voting':** Racially polarized voting occurs when voters of different races tend to vote for different candidates. For example, in an area where white voters tend to vote against the candidates for which Asian American voters cast their ballots, racially polarized voting is present.

**Reasonably Equal Population:** The redistricting criterion that implements the one-person, one-vote concept derived from the 14th Amendment to the US Constitution.

**Redistricting:** The constitutionally mandated redrawing of local, state, and federal political boundaries every ten years following the U.S. census. Redistricting is done to equalize the populations in the districts, using various criteria.

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### **Redistricting Data (P.L. 94-171) Summary File OR 'P.L. 94-171 Summary File':**

The official name of the file that contains data used for redistricting. Creation of this file, using data collected through the Decennial Census was mandated by Public Law 94-171.

The P194-171 file reports basic demographic data for all people in the U.S. and is released on the census block level.

**Section 2 (of the Voting Rights Act):** Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) prohibits voting practices, policies, or procedures that have a discriminatory purpose or effect on racial or language minorities; this section applies nationwide and is a permanent provision of the VRA. To be in compliance with Section 2 of the VRA districts must provide voters with an equal opportunity to elect candidates of their choice.

**Total Deviation:** The sum of the combined deviations of all districts.

**Voting Age Population (VAP):** The number of people age 18 years or older.

**Voting Rights Act (VRA):** The Voting Rights Act (VRA) was originally passed in 1965 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of race or color. It has been amended several times, and now also prohibits discrimination based on membership in certain language minority groups. In addition to prohibiting discrimination, the VRA requires certain jurisdictions to obtain preclearance before changing their voting practices or procedures.