



San Ramon City Council Districting

City of San Ramon
Public Informational Meeting

January 29, 2019

The Purpose for This Meeting

- The City Council wanted a forum where residents could hear from experts on this important issue.
- The meeting is prior to any action on the part of the Council so residents are well prepared to provide public input.
- Questions are encouraged at this meeting, but not a meeting to provide feedback to Council. That is why there will be Public Hearings
- Some of the information is technical and legal – that was intentional because we are recording the meeting.

How We Got Here?

- The City received a demand letter from the Bay Area Voting Rights Initiative on November 5, 2018
- Letter alleges City is in violation of the California Voting Rights Act.
- The fact that the City has not intentionally discriminated is of no relevance when considering the CVRA.
- The City could either choose to voluntarily move to District Elections or could contest the letter which would result in a lawsuit.

What Have Other Cities Done?

- In general, complied with the demand letter
- Consideration was given to fighting, but all cities to date who litigated similar demand letters have failed
- In fact, the track record for those who did contest is not favorable. Some examples of costs incurred are:
 - Palmdale: \$4.5 million
 - Modesto: \$3 million
 - Anaheim: \$1.1 million
 - Whittier: \$1 million
 - Santa Barbara: \$600,000
 - West Covina: \$220,000
- Therefore to minimize exposure to substantial legal fees which could range in the millions of dollars, the City Council directed staff to begin the process

District Elections – A Three Step Process

Step 1: Gather Public Input to Develop Draft Maps

- City Council to consider Resolution of Intent
- If Resolution of Intent is adopted, two public hearings will be held to determine communities of interest
- Map development by the demographer contracted by the City

Step 2: Public Review and Refinement of Maps

- Maps presented in Public Hearing in April/May.
- Second public hearing to review map options

Step 3: Adoption

- If maps agreed upon the City Council will formally adopt.
- Effective for the November 2020 City Council election.
- Election will include two District Council members and the at large Mayor.

Public Input

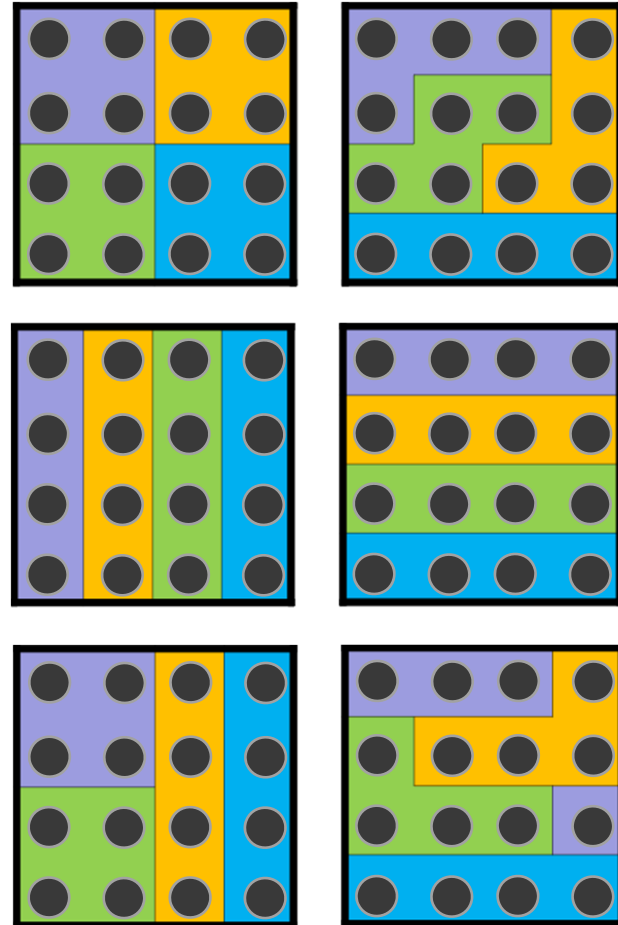
- Informational webpage launched December 21, 2018
- Nextdoor post published announcing webpage on December 27, 2018
- City Council closed session on January 8, 2019
- Informational meeting announced on Nextdoor January 15, 2019
- East Bay Times article published January 17, 2019
- Danville San Ramon article published January 22, 2019
- Second announcement on Nextdoor January 25, 2019
- Third announcement on Nextdoor January 28, 2019
- Informational community meeting January 29, 2019
- City Council will consider Resolution of Intent on February 12, 2019

What is Districting?

As opposed to an at-large system, representatives are elected from districts

Districting is simply the process of drawing boundaries to divide a jurisdiction into those districts

How those lines are drawn affects how people are represented



What is Districting?

San Ramon	Total	White*	Latino	Asian*	Black*
Population ('10)^	72,175	48.5%	8.7%	38.3%	3.1%
Voting Age Population ('10)^	50,818	52.6%	8.0%	35.2%	2.9%
Citizen Voting Age Population ('12-'16)+	44,512	52.9%	8.3%	34.6%	3.3%

* Does not include Latinos. Calculated pursuant to OMB BULLETIN NO. 00-02.

^ 2010 Census Redistricting Data [P.L. 94-171] Summary File, U.S. Census Bureau.

+ Citizen Voting Age Population Special Tabulation from the 2012-2016 5-Year American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

Districting

- Law and Criteria
- Geography and Data
- Next Steps

Relevant Laws

U.S. Constitution

Federal Voting Rights Act

California Voting Rights Act

State Constitution and Code

Case Law

Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment

Equal Population: Districts must be substantially equal in population. i.e. “One-Person, One-Vote”

Exact equality not required. Good faith effort is

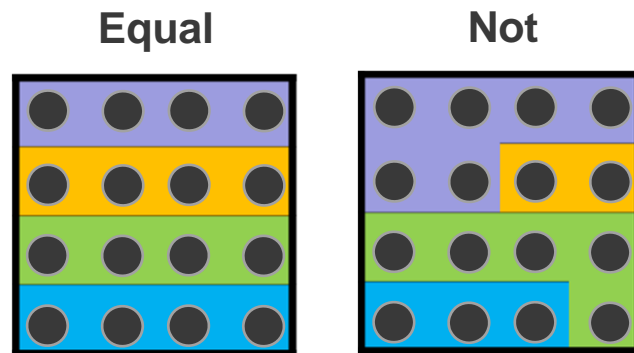
10% is no longer a clear “safe harbor.” Deviations should be justified

San Ramon

72,175 people (2010)

Ideal district size with 4 districts:
18,044

Deviation: Percent difference between actual district size and ideal district size



Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment

Race: Must not be the “predominant” factor

Does not prohibit considering along with traditional, race-neutral, criteria

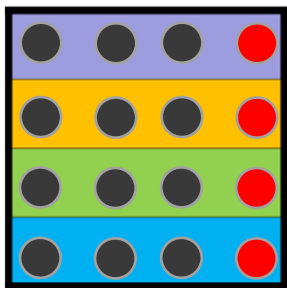
Traditional criteria must not be subordinate

Federal Voting Rights Act

Vote Dilution: Depriving minority voters of an equal opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice.

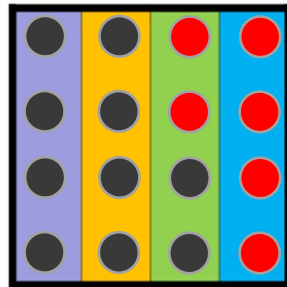
Discriminatory intent not required, only effect.

Cracking



Dispersing voters into several districts such that a block-voting majority can routinely outvote them.

Packing



Concentrating voters to minimize their influence in other districts.

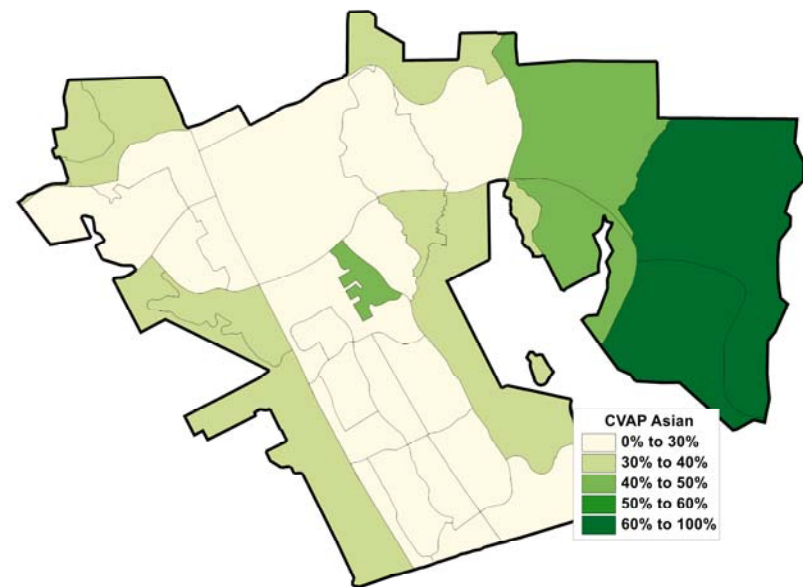
Federal Voting Rights Act

Gingles Criteria

1. The minority group must be sufficiently large and geographically compact to constitute a majority in a district.
2. The minority group must be politically cohesive.
3. The white majority votes sufficiently as a block to enable it to usually defeat the minority's preferred candidate.

San Ramon

Asian Citizen Voting Age Population



California Voting Rights Act

Enacted to implement the equal protection and voting rights provisions of the California Constitution

Can require jurisdictions to transition to district elections

When jurisdictions do transition, provides guidance for sequencing of elections

California Election Code 21601

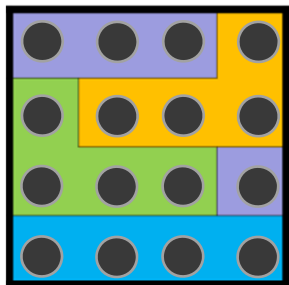
In establishing the boundaries of city council districts, “the council may give consideration to the following factors:

- (a) topography,
- (b) geography,
- (c) cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity, and compactness of territory, and
- (d) community of interests of the council districts.”

California Election Code 21601

Contiguity: All parts of the district should be connected

Non-Contiguous

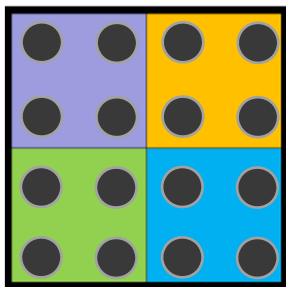


California Election Code 21601

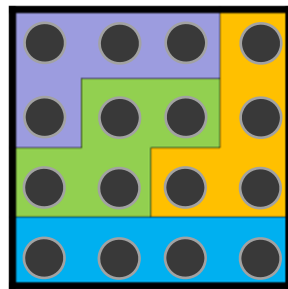
Compactness: Many technical measures

Be aware of shape and appearance

More Compact



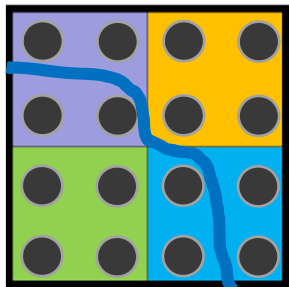
Less Compact



California Election Code 21601

Topography and Geography: Natural and man-made barriers and boundaries are not always compact

More Compact, But...



San Ramon



Dougherty Hills are an example of non-compact natural topography

California Election Code 21601

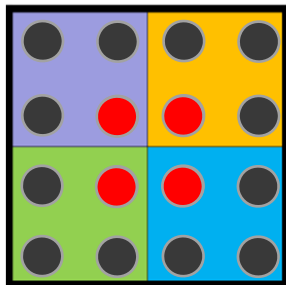
Communities of Interest: Sharing common interests. Bringing like people together for representation

Law does not limit the kinds of interests that may bind a community. Can represent current situation or common goals

Can consider existing city planning information such as boundaries of housing developments but there is no dataset that defines communities of interest

Examples include neighborhoods, common assets like schools and shopping areas, housing, culture and language, and employment

More Compact, But...



Need Public Testimony!

Districting

- Law and Criteria
- Geography and Data
- Next Steps

Census Geography and Data

Census Block

Smallest unit of analysis. 2010 census data on population used to determine if populations are equal

Census Block Group

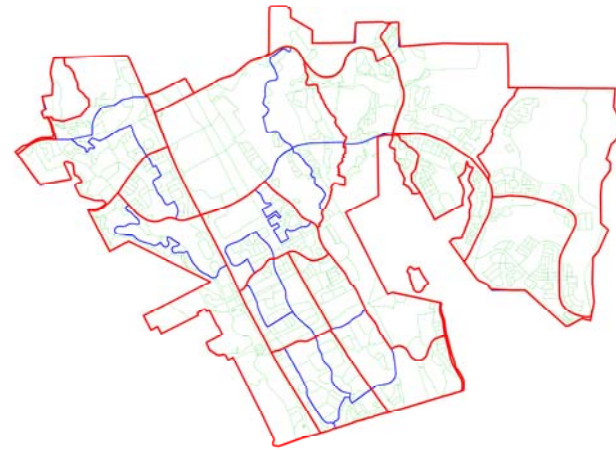
Next smallest unit of analysis. Smallest unit for American Community Survey demographic information

Including CVAP data used for compliance with federal Voting Rights Act

Census Tract

Still larger unit of analysis. Some ACS data is only available at this size

San Ramon



803 blocks averaging 90 persons each

33 block groups averaging 2,187 persons each

16 tracts averaging 4,511 persons each

* Including geographies split and only partially within the city.

Census Geography and Data

Slices

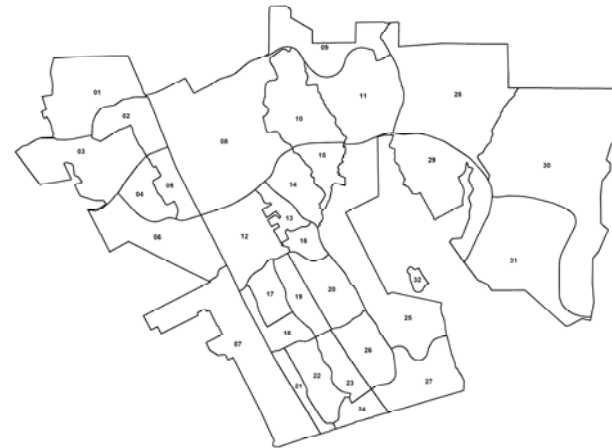
Based primarily on census block groups

Adjusted to account for the fact census block groups do not always align well with city boundaries

And split up some larger census block groups

Used to facilitate public input and submission of redistricting plans

San Ramon



32 slices averaging 2,255 persons each

Electoral Geography and Data

Precincts

Smallest unit of analysis for electoral data

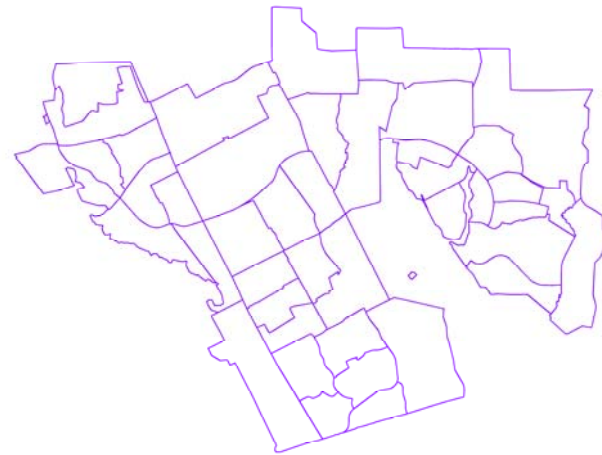
May change with each election and do not always line up with census geography

Includes information on who is registered, who voted, and results for state contests

Other

Assembly, Senate, Congressional, Supervisorial, Board of Equalization, Community College, High School, Elementary School...

San Ramon



44 registration precincts in 2018
averaging 1,640 persons each

Things to Remember

Strive for population equality. Be prepared to justify any deviations

Focus on traditional redistricting criteria. Draw contiguous, compact districts when possible while respecting existing boundaries and communities of interest

Do not use race as the predominant factor. Only consider as one of many factors.

Ensure compliance with federal Voting Rights Act. Avoid vote dilution where required.

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Resolution of Intent

- The City Council will hold a public hearing to consider a resolution of intent on District Elections
- The Public Hearing will provide a forum for public participation prior to the City making a formal decision
- Members of the public are encouraged to attend and participate in this process
- If passed, the City will then hold four public hearings to establish:
 - Communities of Interest (Meeting 1 and 2)
 - Communities of Interest and Criteria Prioritization (Meetings 3 and 4)

Resources for More Information

Informational Webpage

- http://www.sanramon.ca.gov/residents/district_elections

Staff Contact

- Eric Figueroa, Assistant City Manager – 925.973.2632

Email Contact

- districtelections@sanramon.ca.gov