



# City of Arroyo Grande Introduction to Districting

# Election Systems

1. “At Large”
2. “From District” or “Residence” Districts
3. “By District”

**The California Voting Rights Act  
was written to specifically  
encourage by-district elections**

# California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

- Under the Federal Voting Rights Act (passed in 1965), a jurisdiction must fail 4 factual tests before it is in violation of the law.
- The California VRA makes it significantly easier for plaintiffs to force jurisdictions into “by-district” election systems by eliminating two of the US Supreme Court Gingles tests:
  - Can the protected class constitute the majority of a district?
  - Does the protected class vote as a bloc?
  - Do the voters who are not in the protected class vote in a bloc to defeat the preferred candidates of the protected class?
  - Do the “totality of circumstances” indicate race is a factor in elections?
- Liability is now determined only by the presence of racially polarized voting

# CVRA Impact

- Switched (or in the process of switching) as a result of CVRA:
  - ▣ At least 240 school districts
  - ▣ 34 Community College Districts
  - ▣ 154 cities
  - ▣ 1 County Board of Supervisors
  - ▣ 35 water and other special districts.
- Cases So Far:
  - ▣ Palmdale, Santa Clara and Santa Monica went to trial on the merits. Palmdale and Santa Clara lost. Santa Monica is awaiting a decision.
  - ▣ Modesto and Palmdale each spent about \$1.8 million on their defense (in addition to the attorney fee awards in those cases).
  - ▣ Santa Monica has spent an estimated \$7 million so far. Plaintiffs in Santa Monica requested \$22 million in legal fees after the original trial.
- Key settlements:
  - ▣ Palmdale: \$4.7 million
  - ▣ Modesto: \$3 million
  - ▣ Highland: \$1.3 million
  - ▣ Anaheim: \$1.1 million
  - ▣ Whittier: \$1 million
  - ▣ Santa Barbara: \$600,000
  - ▣ Tulare Hospital: \$500,000
  - ▣ Camarillo: \$233,000
  - ▣ Compton Unified: \$200,000
  - ▣ Madera Unified: about \$170,000
  - ▣ Hanford Joint Union Schools: \$118,000
  - ▣ Merced City: \$42,000
- An estimated \$16 million in total settlements and court awards so far.

# Districting Process

Step	Description
Initial Pre-Draft Hearings: July 27 & August 10	Held prior to release of draft maps. Education and to solicit input on the communities in the City. Identify “neighborhoods,” “communities of interest,” and “secondary areas.”
Initial deadline for draft maps: February 4	Deadline for the public to submit draft maps for inclusion in the next hearing packet and presentation
Release draft maps: February 15	Draft maps posted to project website
Two hearings on draft maps: Feb. 22 & March 8	Two meetings to discuss and revise the draft maps and to discuss the election sequence.
Map adoption: March 22	Map adopted via ordinance/resolution. Final map must be posted at least 7 days prior to adoption.

# Districting Rules and Goals

## 1. Federal Laws

- Equal Population
- Federal Voting Rights Act
- No Racial Gerrymandering



## 2. California Criteria for Cities

1. **Geographically contiguous**
2. **Undivided neighborhoods and “communities of interest”**  
(Socio-economic geographic areas that should be kept together)
3. **Easily identifiable boundaries**
4. **Compact**  
(Do not bypass one group of people to get to a more distant group of people)

### *Prohibited:*

*“Shall not favor or discriminate against a political party.”*

## 3. Other Traditional Districting Principles

- Respect voters’ choices / continuity in office
- Future population growth

# Defining Neighborhoods

1<sup>st</sup> Question: what is your neighborhood?

2<sup>nd</sup> Question: what are its geographic boundaries?

**Examples of physical features defining a neighborhood boundary:**

- ❑ Natural neighborhood dividing lines, such as highway or major roads, rivers, canals and/or hills
- ❑ Areas around parks or schools
- ❑ Other neighborhood landmarks

In the absence of public testimony, planning records and other similar documents may provide definition.



# Beyond Neighborhoods: Defining Communities of Interest

## 1<sup>st</sup> Question: what defines your community?

- ❑ Geographic Area, plus
- ❑ Shared issue or characteristic
  - ❑ *Shared social or economic interest*
  - ❑ *Impacted by city policies*
- ❑ Tell us “your community’s story”

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Question:

Would this community benefit from being “included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation”?

- ❑ Or would it benefit more from having multiple representatives?

*Definitions of Communities of Interest may not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.*



# Demographic Summary

Estimates using official 2020 demographic data and NDC's estimated total population figures.

Each of the 4 districts must contain about 4,500 people.

Check out the [Arroyo Grande Story Map](#) for maps of some of this demographic data.

Arroyo Grande							
Category	Field	Count	Pct	Category	Field	Count	Pct
	2020 Est. Tot. Pop.	18,132					
Citizen Voting Age Pop	Total	14,084		Age	age0-19	3,931	22%
	Hisp	1,807	13%		age20-60	8,866	49%
	NH White	11,160	79%		age60plus	5,335	29%
	NH Black	167	1%	Immigration	immigrants	1,538	8%
	Asian/Pac.Isl.	708	5%		naturalized	993	65%
Voter Registration (Nov 2020)	Total	13,222		Language spoken at home	english	15,142	88%
	Latino est.	1,601	12%		spanish	1,026	6%
	Spanish-Surnamed	1,438	11%		asian-lang	413	2%
	Asian-Surnamed	302	2%		other lang	682	4%
	Filipino-Surnamed	161	1%	Language Fluency	Speaks Eng. "Less than Very Well"	726	4%
	NH White est.	10,985	83%		Education (among those age 25+)	hs-grad	6,245
NH Black	143	1%	bachelor	2,860		22%	
Voter Turnout (Nov 2020)	Total	11,756		graduatedegree	1,709	13%	
	Latino est.	1,314	11%	Child in Household	child-under18	1,795	25%
	Spanish-Surnamed	1,180	10%	Pct of Pop. Age 16+	employed	8,762	58%
	Asian-Surnamed	267	2%		Household Income	income 0-25k	1,011
	Filipino-Surnamed	141	1%	income 25-50k		1,098	15%
	NH White est.	9,881	84%	income 50-75k		1,165	16%
NH Black	127	1%	income 75-200k	3,282		46%	
Voter Turnout (Nov 2018)	Total	9,150		income 200k-plus	539	8%	
	Latino est.	847	9%	Housing Stats	single family	6,499	84%
	Spanish-Surnamed	761	8%		multi-family	1,266	16%
	Asian-Surnamed	189	2%		rented	2,338	33%
	Filipino-Surnamed	98	1%		owned	4,757	67%
	NH White est.	8,008	88%				
NH Black est.	95	1%					

Surname-based Voter Registration and Turnout data from the California Statewide Database. Latino voter registration and turnout data are Spanish-surname counts adjusted using Census Population Department undercount estimates. NH White and NH Black registration and turnout counts estimated by NDC. Citizen Voting Age Population, Age, Immigration, and other demographics from the 2015-2019 American Community Survey and Special Tabulation 5-year data. 2020 Est. Tot. Pop calculated by NDC starting from 2010 Census counts and adding in ACS-identified population growth, then subtracting out state prison populations.

# Public Mapping and Map Review Tools

- Different tools for different purposes
- Different tools for different levels of comfort and interest, found at WEBSITE LINK
  - ▣ Simple “learn about your community” [Story Map](#)
  - ▣ Simple “review draft maps” [interactive mapping tool](#)
  - ▣ Paper- and Excel-based simple “Draw a draft map” tools
  - ▣ Easy-to-use online “Draw your neighborhood” / “Draw a draft map” tool (coming soon)

**Whether you use the online mapping tool, Excel, the paper kit, or just draw on a napkin, we welcome your maps!**

# Public Hearing & Discussion

- What are the neighborhoods of the city, and what are their boundaries?
- What other notable areas are in the city, and what are their boundaries?
- Any questions about the mapping tools?