Rancho Santa Margarita
Introduction to Districting

August 16, 2023

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 275 school districts
- □ 36 Community College Districts
- □ 191 cities
- □ 1 County Board of Supervisors
- □ 53 water and other special districts.
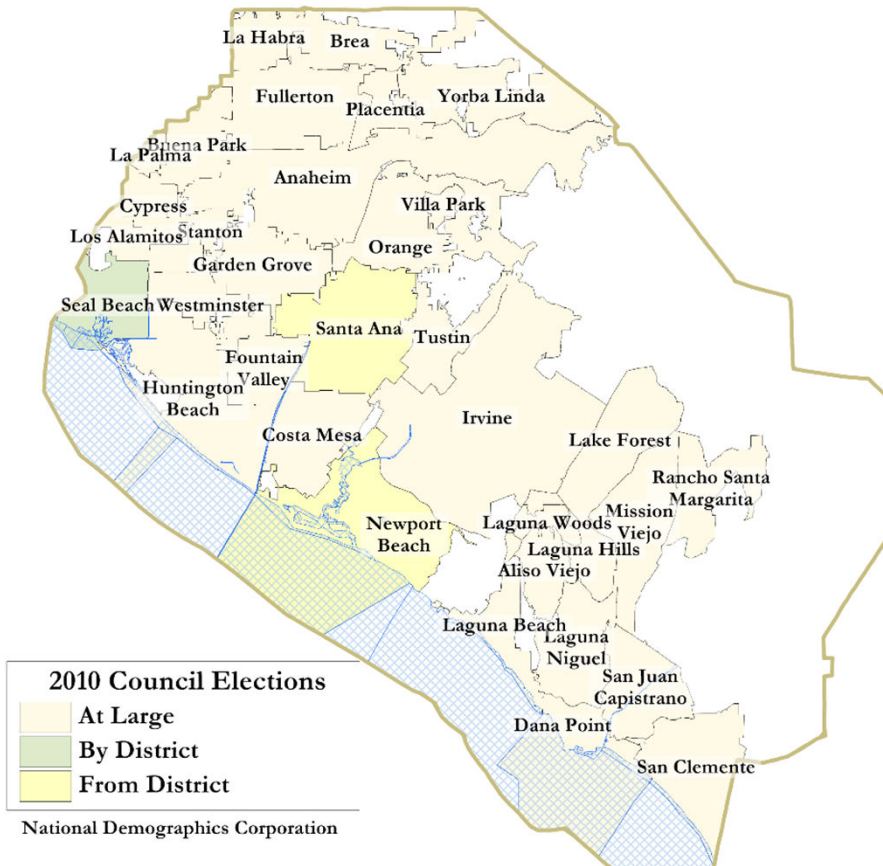
□ **Cases So Far:**

- □ 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.
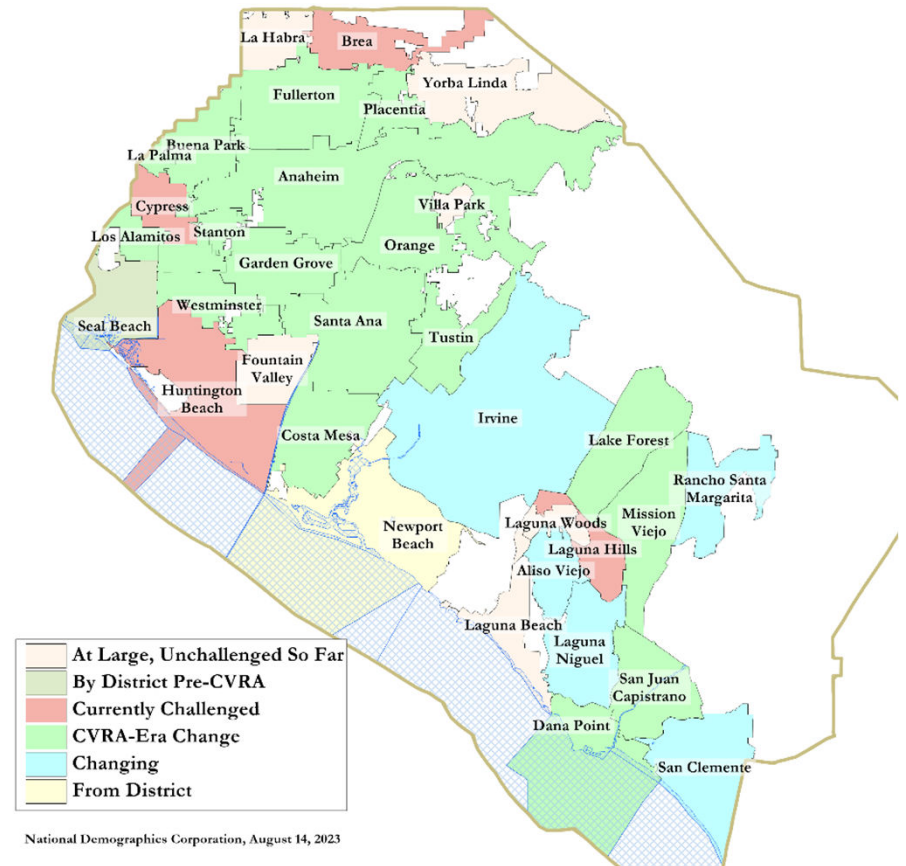
□ **Key settlements:**

- □ 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.**

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CVRA Impact in Orange County

Council Elections in 2010

2010 Council Elections
- At Large
- By District
- From District

National Demographics Corporation

Council Elections today

- At Large, Unchallenged So Far
- By District Pre-CVRA
- Currently Challenged
- CVRA-Era Change
- Changing
- From District

National Demographics Corporation, August 14, 2023

Districting Process

Step	Description
Two Initial Hearings Aug 16 & 28	Held prior to release of draft maps. Education and to solicit input on the composition of districts.
Initial Public Map Submission Deadline Sept. 1	Public map submissions must be received by 5pm on Sept. 1 to be considered by the Council at the Hearing on September 13.
Release draft maps Sept. 6	Maps must be posted at least 7 days prior to 3rd hearing.
Initial draft map hearing Sept. 13	Two meetings to discuss and revise the draft maps and to discuss the election sequence.
Final Public Map Submission Deadline Sept. 15	Public map submissions must be received by 5pm on Sept. 15 to be considered by the Council at the Hearing on September 27.
Release draft maps Sept. 6	Maps must be posted at least 7 days prior to 3rd hearing.
Second draft map hearing Sept. 27	Two meetings to discuss and revise the draft maps and to discuss the election sequence.
Map adoption October 11	Map adopted via ordinance. Final map must be posted at least 7 days prior to adoption.

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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 Redistricting Principles

Respect voters' choices / continuity in office
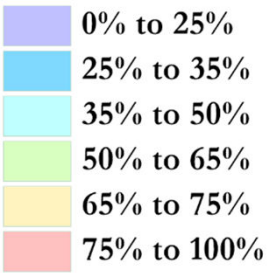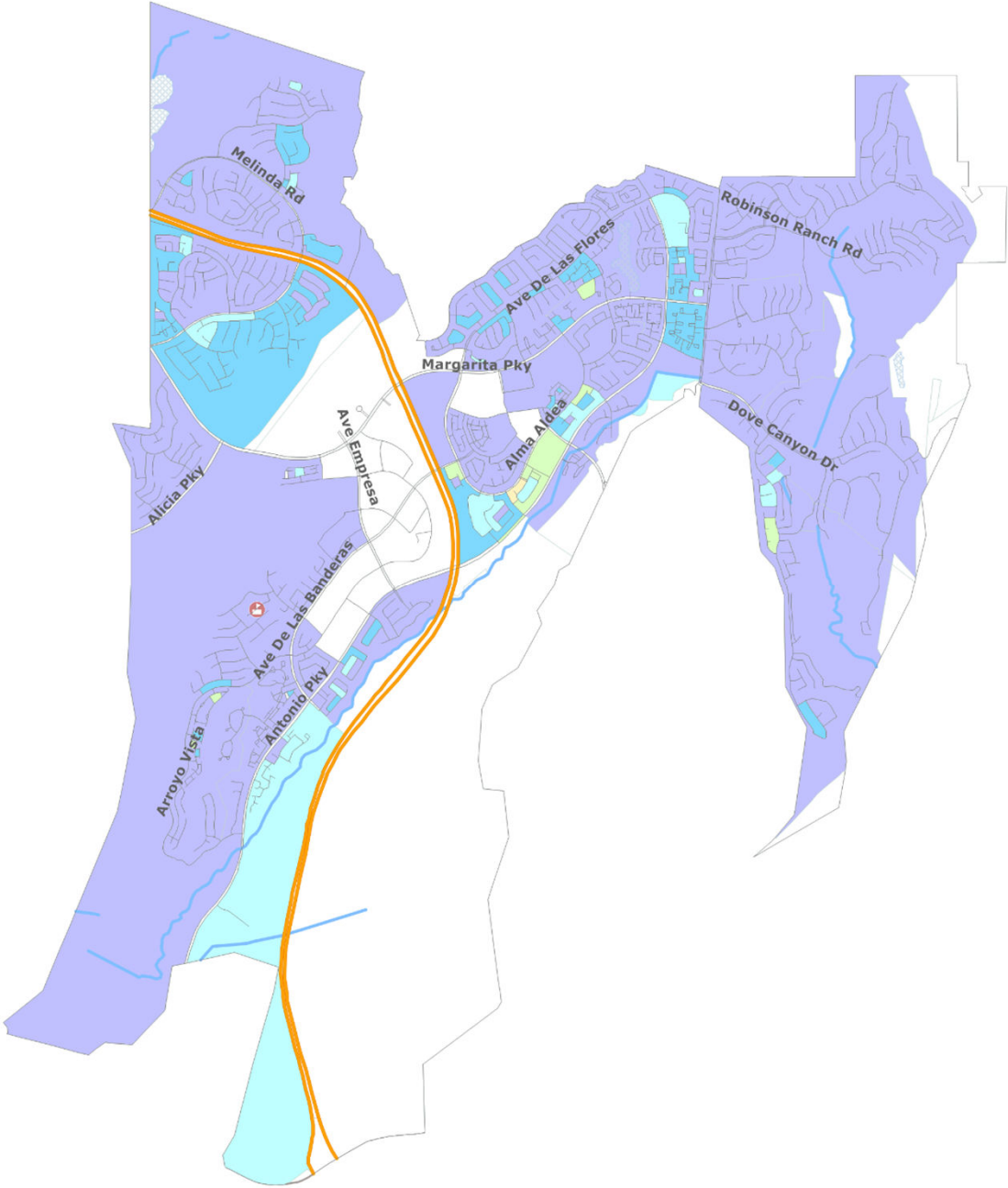
Future population growth

Demographic Summary

Each of **four** districts must contain about 12,000 people.

Each of **five** districts must contain about 9,600 people.

Category	Field	Total		Category	Field	Total
2020 Census	Total Population	48,000		Age	age0-19	26%
Total Pop.	Hispanic/Latino	21%			age20-60	56%
	NH White	58%			age60plus	17%
	NH Black	2%		Immigration	immigrants	18%
	NH Asian/Pac.Isl.	16%			naturalized	62%
	NH Native Amer.	1%		Language spoken at home	english	78%
Citizen Voting Age Pop	Total	33,337			spanish	11%
	Hisp	17%			asian-lang	5%
	NH White	68%			other lang	6%
	NH Black	2%		Language Fluency	Speaks Eng. "Less than Very Well"	6%
	Asian/Pac.Isl.	12%		Education (among those age 25+)	hs-grad	45%
	Native Amer.	1%			bachelor	34%
Voter Registration (Nov 2020)	Total	31,668			graduatedegree	16%
	Latino est.	15%		Child in Household	child-under18	38%
	Spanish-Surnamed	14%		Pct of Pop. Age 16+	employed	73%
	Asian-Surnamed	6%		Household Income	income 0-25k	7%
	Filipino-Surnamed	2%			income 25-50k	9%
	NH White est.	75%			income 50-75k	11%
	NH Black	3%			income 75-200k	45%
Voter Turnout (Nov 2020)	Total	28,279			income 200k-plus	29%
	Latino est.	14%		Housing Stats	single family	74%
	Spanish-Surnamed	13%			multi-family	26%
	Asian-Surnamed	6%			rented	28%
	Filipino-Surnamed	2%			owned	72%
	NH White est.	76%				
	NH Black	3%				
Voter Turnout (Nov 2018)	Total	20,189				
	Latino est.	13%				
	Spanish-Surnamed	12%				
	Asian-Surnamed	5%				
	Filipino-Surnamed	1%				
	NH White est.	78%				
	NH Black est.	3%				

Total population data from California's adjusted 2020 Census data. Citizen Voting Age Population, Age, Immigration, and other demographics from the 2017-2021 American Community Survey and Special Tabulation 5-year data. Turnout and Registration data from California Statewide Database. "Latino" figures calculated by NDC using Census Bureau's Latino undercount by surname estimate.

Latino CVAP

There is a geographic concentration of Latinos in and around the Villas Antonio apartments (next to Pavilions/CVS).

	0% to 25%
	25% to 35%
	35% to 50%
	50% to 65%
	65% to 75%
	75% to 100%

Asian-Americans and African-Americans are not geographically concentrated anywhere in the City.

Defining Neighborhoods

1st Question: What is your neighborhood?

2nd 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

1st Question: What defines your community?

- Geographic Area, plus

- Shared issue or characteristic

  - Shared social or economic interest

  - Impacted by county policies

- Tell us "your community's story"

2nd 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 <u>not</u> include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.

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Census Block Problems

☐ Census Block lines (shown in blue) do not turn out well where there are hillsides, cul-de-sacs or other neighborhoods not clearly bounded by streets.

☐ Census Block lines in RSM cut through neighborhoods and combine neighborhood pieces almost randomly.

☐ NDC has carefully divided the Census Blocks and assigned their population shares to the underlying neighborhoods.

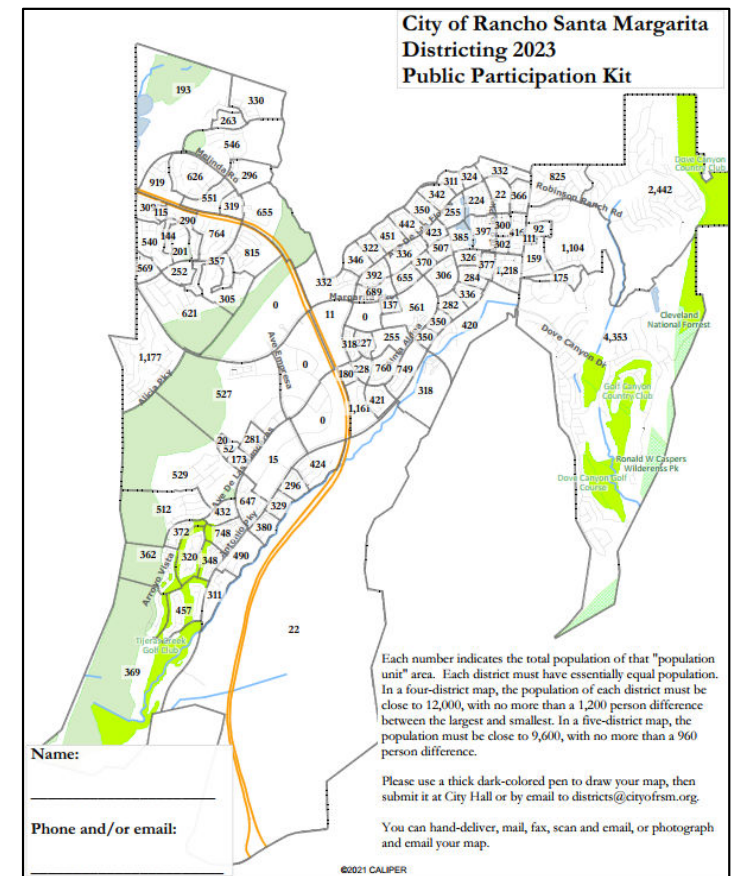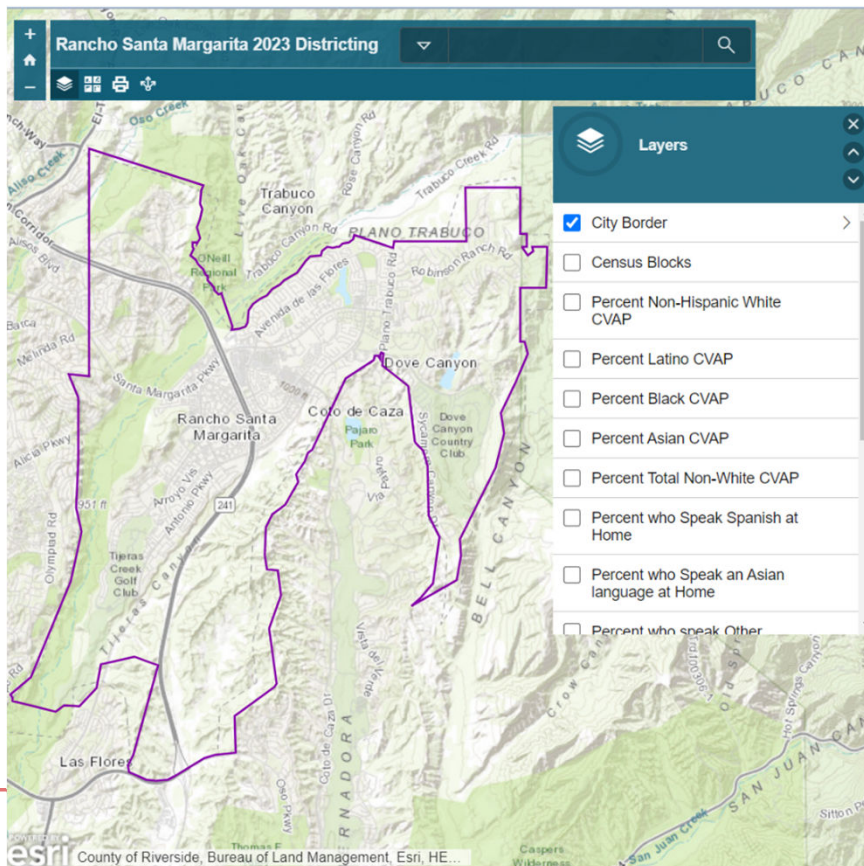☐ The base layer of geography for maps will be based on local neighborhood boundaries within Census Blocks.

Homeowner Associations

Public Mapping and Map Review Tools

- **Different tools for different purposes**

- **Different tools for different levels of technical skill and interest**
  - Simple "review draft maps" tool
  - Paper-based "Draw a draft map" tool

Public Hearing & Discussion

What is your neighborhood and what are its boundaries?

What other notable areas are in the City, and what are their boundaries?

Any questions about the map tools?

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Share Your Thoughts

Website

DrawRSM.org

Phone

(949) 635-1806

Email

districts@cityofrsm.org