



City of Los Altos
Transition from At-Large to By-District
Elections: Adopted Map
Final Report
October 29, 2024

Executive Summary

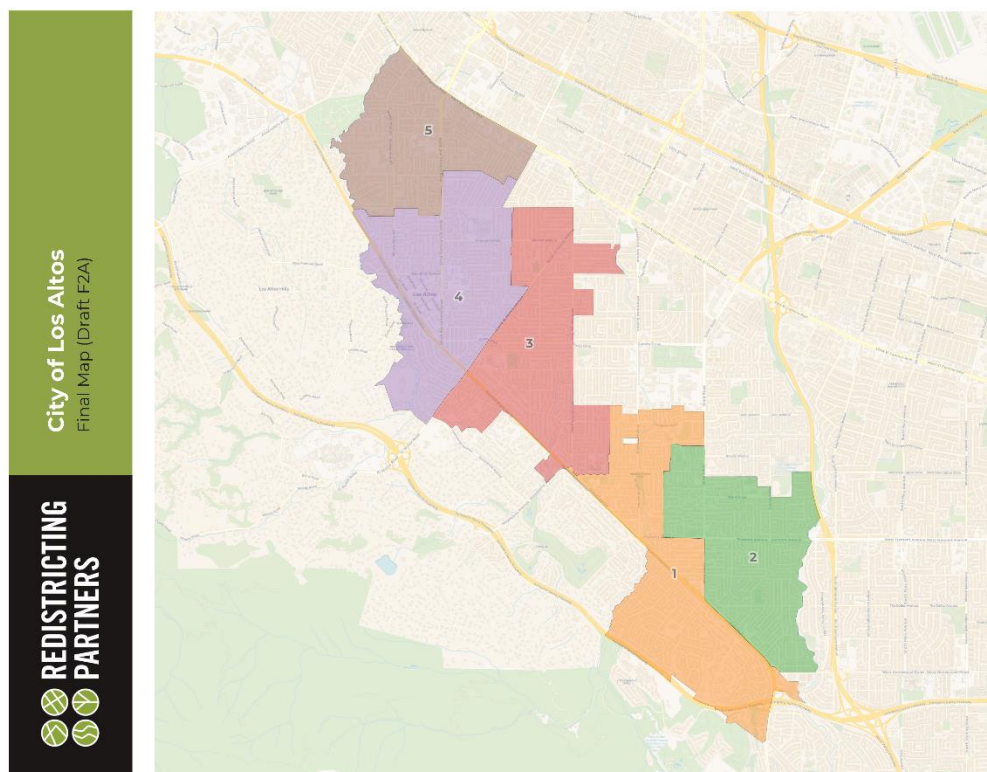
The City of Los Altos followed the FAIR MAPS Act and the California Voting Rights Act criteria to guide the city’s transition from at-large to by-district elections. The City hosted seven public hearings on converting to by-district elections, and the City Council voted on a final map on October 22, 2024, adopting Draft F2A. The adopted map meets all criteria required by state and federal laws, with minimal splits of communities of interest.

This report documents the specific criteria used during the districting process and describes the decisions made when communities of interest (COIs) were split. While the city did its best to maintain as many COIs as possible, splits were necessary in order to follow the higher-ranking criteria set forth by the FAIR MAPS Act. All decisions and deliberations were made by the City Councilmembers and Mayor in public meetings, and meetings and other relevant documents can be accessed here: <https://www.losaltosca.gov/cityclerk/page/district-based-elections>

Adopted Map: Draft F2A

Draft F2A originated from F map series, which was live-drawn during the September 24th public meeting. The City Council’s goal was to maintain communities of interest that included:

- Maintaining the El Camino Real community in the northern portion of the city
- Use shopping centers/commercial hubs are a logical community gathering point which residents patronize on a daily basis within their neighborhoods
- Ensure neighborhoods are maintained as much as possible, particularly the Highlands and Grant Park neighborhoods in the southern portion of the city



FAIR MAPS Act Criteria

As required, the City of Los Altos adopted a map that ensures the population is well balanced, uses the appropriate census dataset, follows the federal Voting Rights Act, and does not discriminate or favor a political party, incumbent or candidate. The total deviation for the adopted map is 8.5%, below the 10% total deviation maximum allowed for municipalities. Additionally, the City and its demographers used the required Statewide Database’s adjusted census data, which reallocated incarcerated residents throughout the state.

Using the FAIR MAPS Act criteria was emphasized since the first day of the districting process, and the demographers presented on these requirements at every public hearing. Furthermore, the demographers provided documentation to the City Council of which publicly drawn maps did and did not fulfill the FAIR MAPS Act criteria.

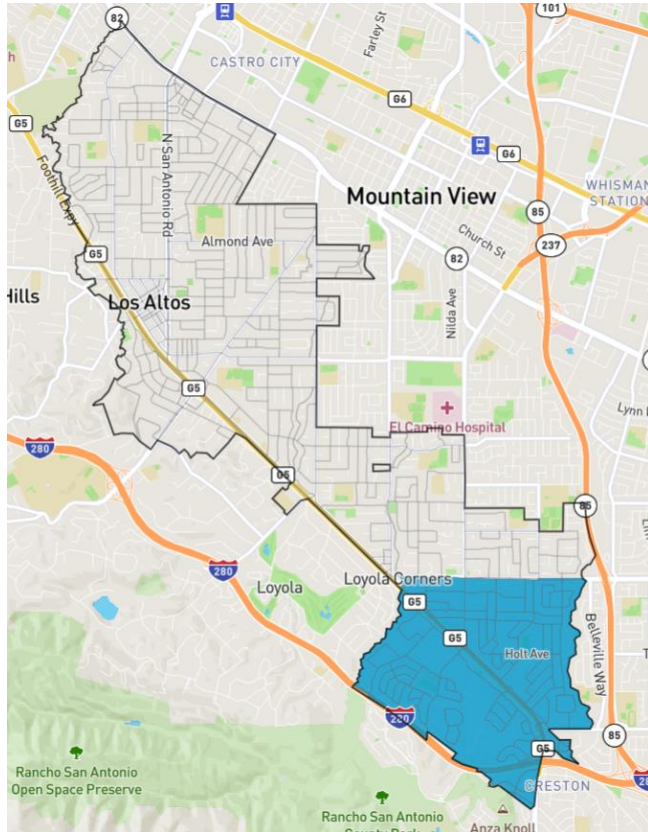
Below is the ranked list of criteria as required by the FAIR MAPS Act and how the Adopted Map met these criteria.

FAIR MAPS Act Ranked Criteria	Adopted Map (Draft E)
<i>To the extent practicable, council districts shall be geographically contiguous.</i>	All districts are whole and do not overlap with each other.
<i>To the extent practicable, the geographic integrity of any local neighborhood or local community of interest shall be respected in a manner that minimizes its division.</i>	The City does not have official neighborhood boundaries, but they do have well-established and historic communities. The city used definitions of neighborhoods and communities of interest as defined by the community and the Council Members and remained consistent in their definitions.
<i>Council district boundaries should be easily identifiable and understandable by residents. To the extent practicable, council districts shall be bounded by natural and artificial barriers, by streets, or by the boundaries of the city.</i>	Main thoroughfares such as El Monte Ave, Oakhurst Ave, and the Foothill Expressed were used as election district boundaries when possible. However, when main roads were not used, it was due to higher criteria, such as creating balanced populations and following US Census blocks, as required.
<i>To the maximum extent practicable, and where it does not conflict with the preceding criteria in this subdivision, election districts shall be drawn to encourage geographical compactness in a manner that nearby areas of population are not bypassed in favor of more distant populations.</i>	The City created compact districts and avoided constructions that would bypass nearby population in favor of more distant population. Most districts are more circular/square in appearance and any less compact portions are due to higher ranked criteria, like ensuring the neighborhoods of the Highlands and Grant Park remain intact.

Splits: Communities of Interest

Split 1: Cupertino School District

The southern portion of the City of Los Altos shares a school district with the neighboring City of Cupertino. Early in the districting process, residents recognized this group of residents as a community of interest. This population, however, is far too large to be grouped into one election district, so it was inevitable that this population of residents would need to be split due to the need to ensure equal population in each district.



There was robust discussion on the issue of whether it was important to keep this community together as much as possible and how best to split this community. Even at the last public hearing, Vice Mayor Pete Dailey advocated to keep this community together as much as possible due to the community a school district innately engenders within its boundaries.

However, by maintaining the school district as much as possible, it split the neighborhood of Grant Park, which is defined as the boundaries of Fremont Ave.(north), Grant Road (west), Foothill Expressway (south) and the city boundaries (east).

Additionally, as described by Mayor Jonathan Weinberg at the meeting on October 22nd, the neighborhood of Grant Park shares common bonds with the

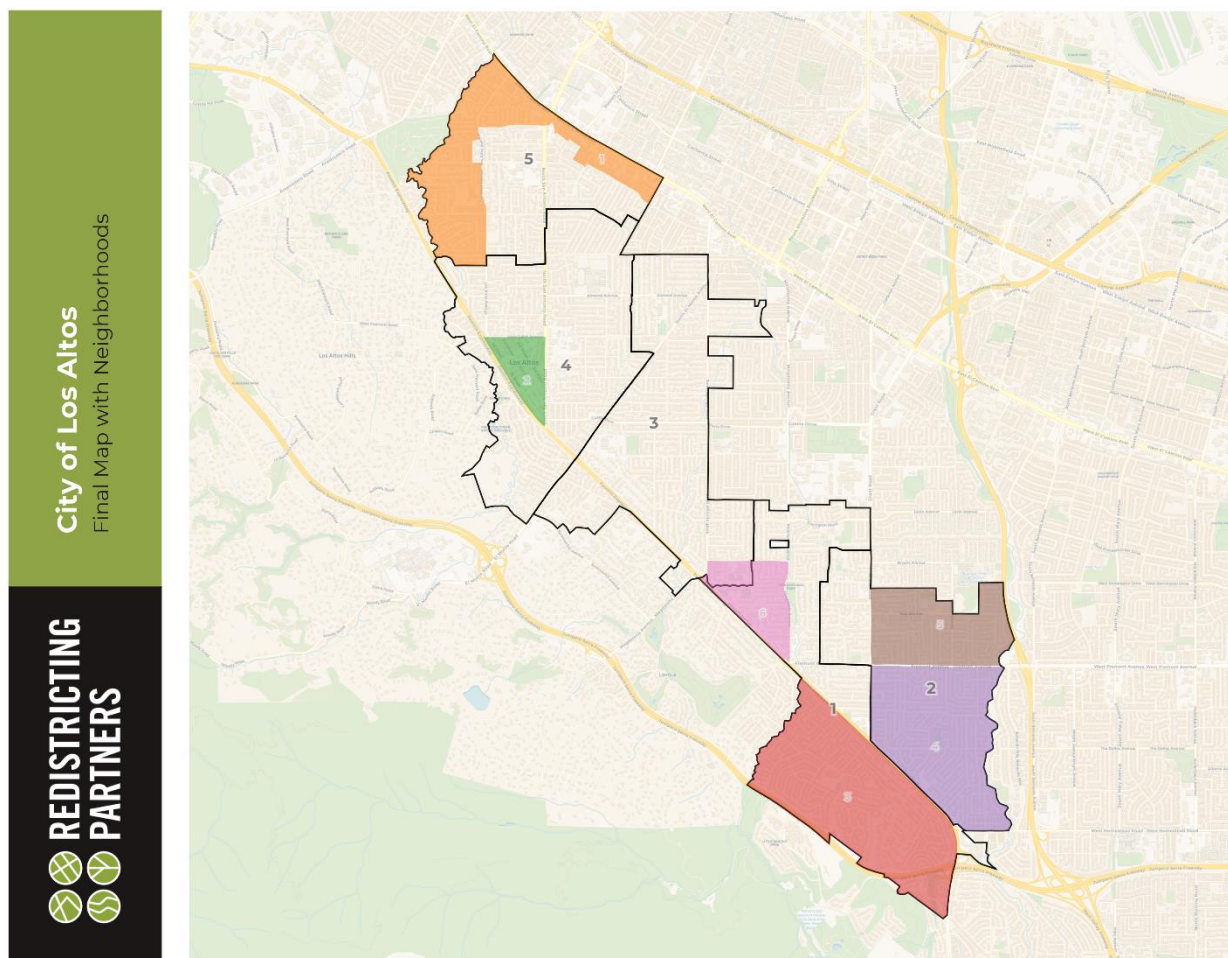
neighborhood of Oak just north of Grant Park, including city facilities such as parks and community centers that both neighborhoods use collectively. Additionally, the Highlands neighborhood shares interests with Loyola Corners, including the use of the shopping district in that part of Los Altos.

Numerous Grant Park residents emailed the City Council with testimony to keep their neighborhood together, even if that means splitting the school district.

Split 2: Loyola Corners Neighborhood

The City of Los Altos has historical and well-established communities within their city, but the boundaries of neighborhoods have never been defined in an official manner by the City. During the districting process, the most common communities and neighborhoods discussed included:

- The El Camino Real corridor (orange)¹
- Downtown (green)
- Loyola Corners (pink)
- The Highlands (red)
- Grant Park (purple)
- Oak (brown)



¹ The El Camino Real corridor follows the historically significant road of El Camino Real, which also serves as a commercial hub for residents. Due to an unusually shaped census block, this community contains the northwestern portion of the city, which otherwise would not be included in the definition of this community.

District 5 contains the El Camino Real corridor. District 4 maintains the Downtown neighborhood and commercial hub and protects the area surrounding the high school. District 2 maintains the neighborhoods of Oak and Grant Park. District 1 maintains the Highlands neighborhood and the bulk of Loyola Corners. However, due to population balance, it was necessary to split Loyola Corners. The majority of the neighborhood is in District 1, while a portion including the Loyola Elementary School is located in District 3. The Council discussed that this was not ideal, but it was unavoidable due to the requirements under the FAIR MAPS Act while maintaining the Highlands and Grant Park.

The City Council discussed numerous points of interest and communities of interest, and a map of all the considered interests is included on the following page.

REDISTRICTING PARTNERS

City of Los Altos Final Map with landmarks

