

City of Los Altos

Communities of Interest

July 13, 2024



Agenda

Things we will cover:

- What is Districting/Redistricting
- Required Districting/Redistricting Criteria
- Communities of Interest
- How to Get Involved
- Los Altos Census Data
- Public Hearing Schedule

What is Districting

Definition

Districting is the initial process of creating election district boundaries.

These boundaries determine:

- Eligibility to run for office – must live within boundaries to qualify for election.
- Who votes in the election – only voters within the zone vote for their board member.

What is Districting

Definition

Districting is the initial process of creating election district boundaries.

These boundaries do not determine:

- How the district decides to govern. The district can still work to achieve goals that benefit the district as a whole rather than the interests of any single zone.
- How services or relationships between the district and the public are managed.

Required Districting Criteria

Traditional redistricting principles used throughout the country and written into state law

There are a number of criteria that are required under the FAIR MAPS Act (ranked):

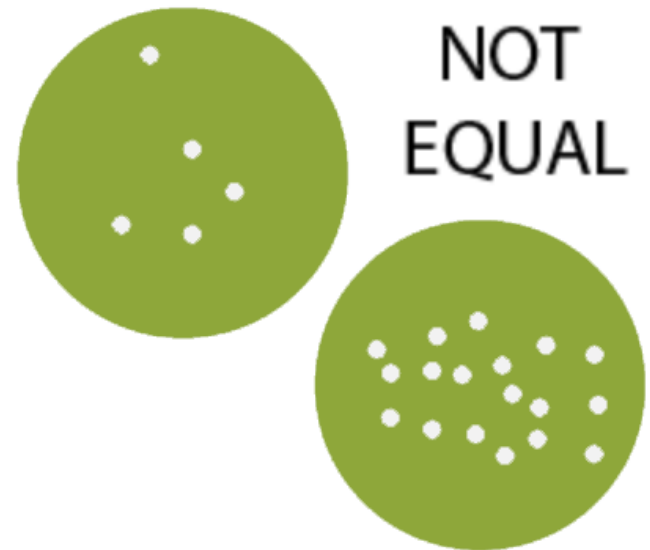
- **Relatively equal size - people, not citizens**
- Contiguous – districts should not hop/jump
- Maintain “*communities of interest*”
- Easily identifiable and understandable lines, following city, natural, and man-made boundaries
- Keep districts compact – appearance/function

Equal Population

Utilizing the US Census Decennial File

What is “equal” population has been a key subject in districting litigation.

- Population Equality is based on “People” not citizens or voters or other metrics.
- 10% deviation presumed equal. Other agencies / states have different plan deviation requirements.



Required Districting Criteria

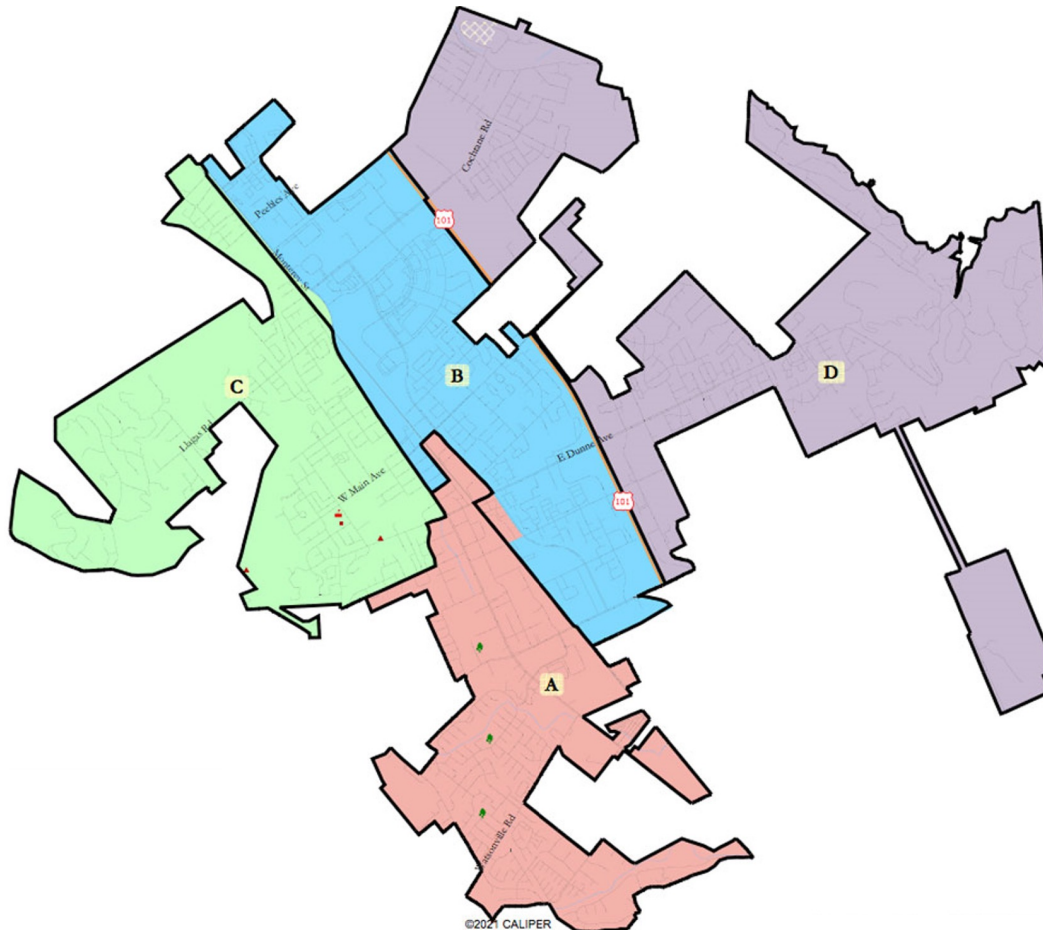
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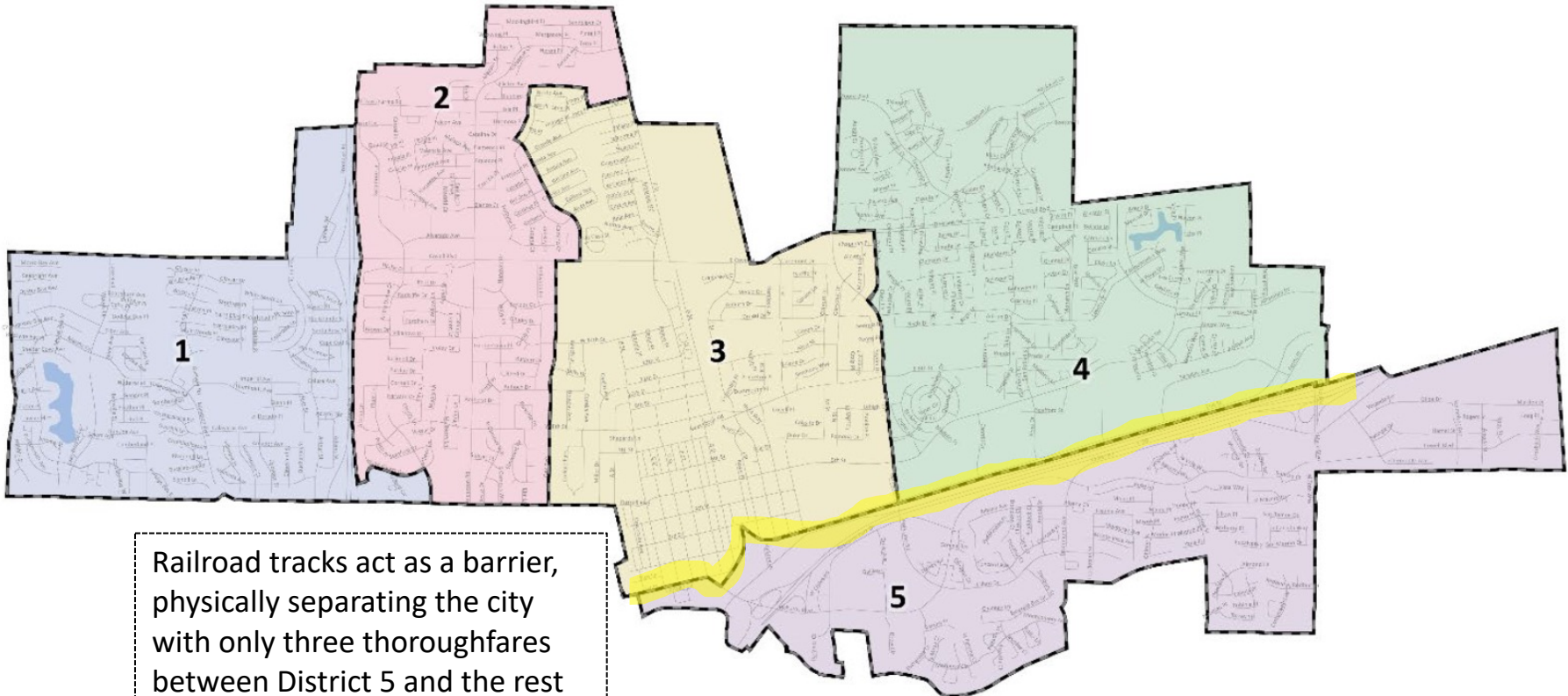
Contiguity

Determining what is “contiguous”



Contiguity

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Railroad tracks act as a barrier, physically separating the city with only three thoroughfares between District 5 and the rest of the city.

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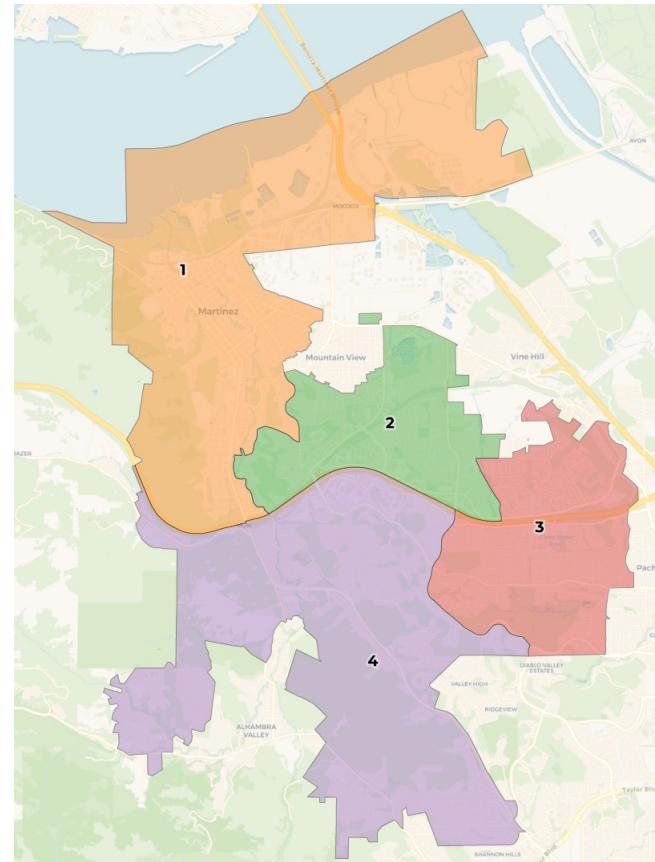
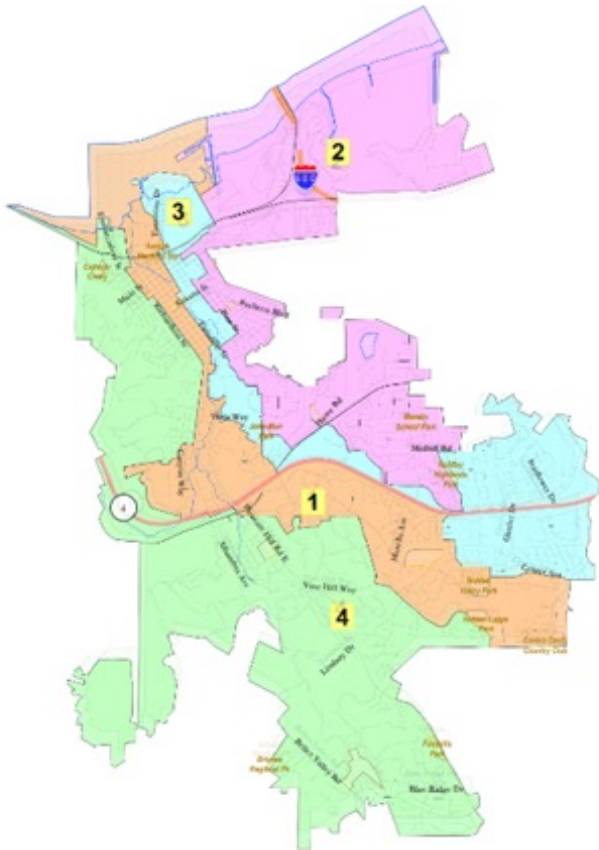
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Compactness

Determining what is “compact”



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Communities of Interest

As defined by the FAIR MAPS Act

A “**community of interest**” is a population that shares common social or economic interests that should be included within a single election district for purposes of its effective and fair representation.

Characteristics include:

- shared public policy concerns
- public safety
- public health
- environment
- housing
- transportation
- cultural districts
- shared socioeconomic characteristics
- shared histories

Communities of Interest

Bringing like people together for representation

Communities of interest are the building blocks of districts.

A community of interest includes ethnic and language minorities and other groups.

- Subjective
- Open-ended to be as inclusive as possible

Communities covered by the Voting Rights Act

- Latinos
- Asians
- African Americans

While communities of interest may include race, it cannot be the *predominant factor* in drawing district boundaries.

Communities of Interest

Bringing like people together for representation

- Historical communities
- Economic interests
- Racial composition
- Ethnic Areas
- Cultural amenities
- Religious facilities
- Immigrant communities
- Languages spoken
- Geographic features
- Neighborhoods
- Economic opportunity zones
- Tourism Areas
- School attendance areas
- Outdoor recreation areas
- Communities defined by natural resource features
- Downtown / Urban
- Rural or Agricultural
- Homeowner or Renters
- Creative arts communities
- Media markets
- *Many, many more*

What is NOT a Community of Interest

Preventing a Districting from Becoming a Gerrymander

The FAIR MAPS Act explicitly prohibits these groups from being considered as communities of interest

- Political party affiliation
- Incumbents
- Political candidates

It also is hard in districting to truly consider:

- *Groups of similarly minded people who do not share a similar geographic location.*
- *Communities of Interest that are citywide.*

Communities of Interest

Three Critical Questions in Defining YOUR Community

- Does the community have a shared culture, characteristics or bond?
- Is the community geographic in nature? Is the community able to be mapped?
- How would you describe the community's relationship with the City of Los Altos, and how is your community affected by the policy decisions made by the elected officials?

How to get involved

FAIRMAPS Act emphasizes public engagement and participation

- Provide written or in-person testimony
 - Community of Interest Form
 - Let us know which map you prefer
- Draw maps of your community of interest or districted map
- Visit the website:
www.losaltosca.gov/cityclerk/page/district-based-elections



Tell Us About Your Community

Help shape the future of City of Los Altos's City Council Districts

The City of Los Altos is in the process of transitioning from an at-large election system to a district-based election system. This means that there will soon be city council districts – and you have the ability to influence the lines. The City Council wants to hear from you on how these boundaries should be drawn. Complete this form to tell the City Council about your **community of interest** – keeping communities of interest together is a high-ranking criteria in the line-drawing process.

What is a Community of Interest?

A Community of Interest is a group of people in the same geographically definable area who share common social and economic interests. Some examples of Communities of Interest are:

- Senior citizens
- LGBTQIA+ communities
- Renters/Homesteaders
- People who live downtown or in a neighborhood
- Dog park community
- Residents who share a common language
- People who use the same transportation systems

What criteria will help the City Council understand the importance of your community in the districting process?

When documenting your community, it is important to address the following questions to assist the City Council in the re-boundary process:

1. Does your community have a shared culture, characteristics, or bond?
2. Is your community geographic in nature? Is your community able to be mapped? Is there density within your community?
3. How would you describe your community's relationship with the City, and how it is affected by policy decisions made by the City Council?

The public can submit any testimony, but it is important to remember that your input can be best used if it addresses all three of these questions.

How to get involved

Draw your own map

- Draw your own districted map
- Divided by neighborhoods and census blocks
- Census numbers are rounded and allows you to draw a balanced map

DISTRICTING MAPPING EXERCISE

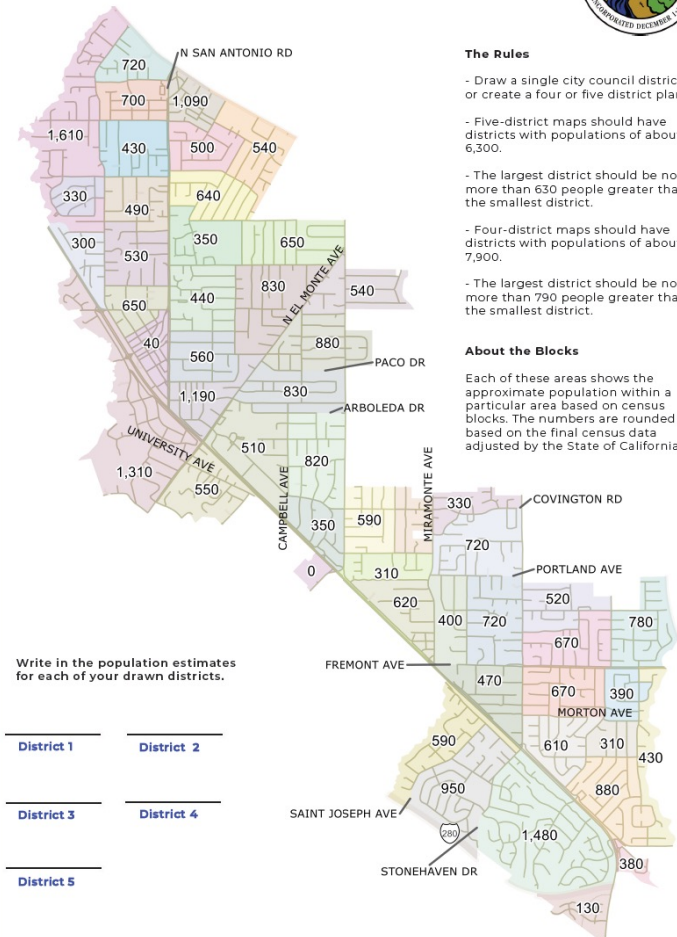


The Rules

- Draw a single city council district or create a four or five district plan.
- Five-district maps should have districts with populations of about 6,300.
- The largest district should be no more than 630 people greater than the smallest district.
- Four-district maps should have districts with populations of about 7,900.
- The largest district should be no more than 790 people greater than the smallest district.

About the Blocks

Each of these areas shows the approximate population within a particular area based on census blocks. The numbers are rounded based on the final census data adjusted by the State of California.



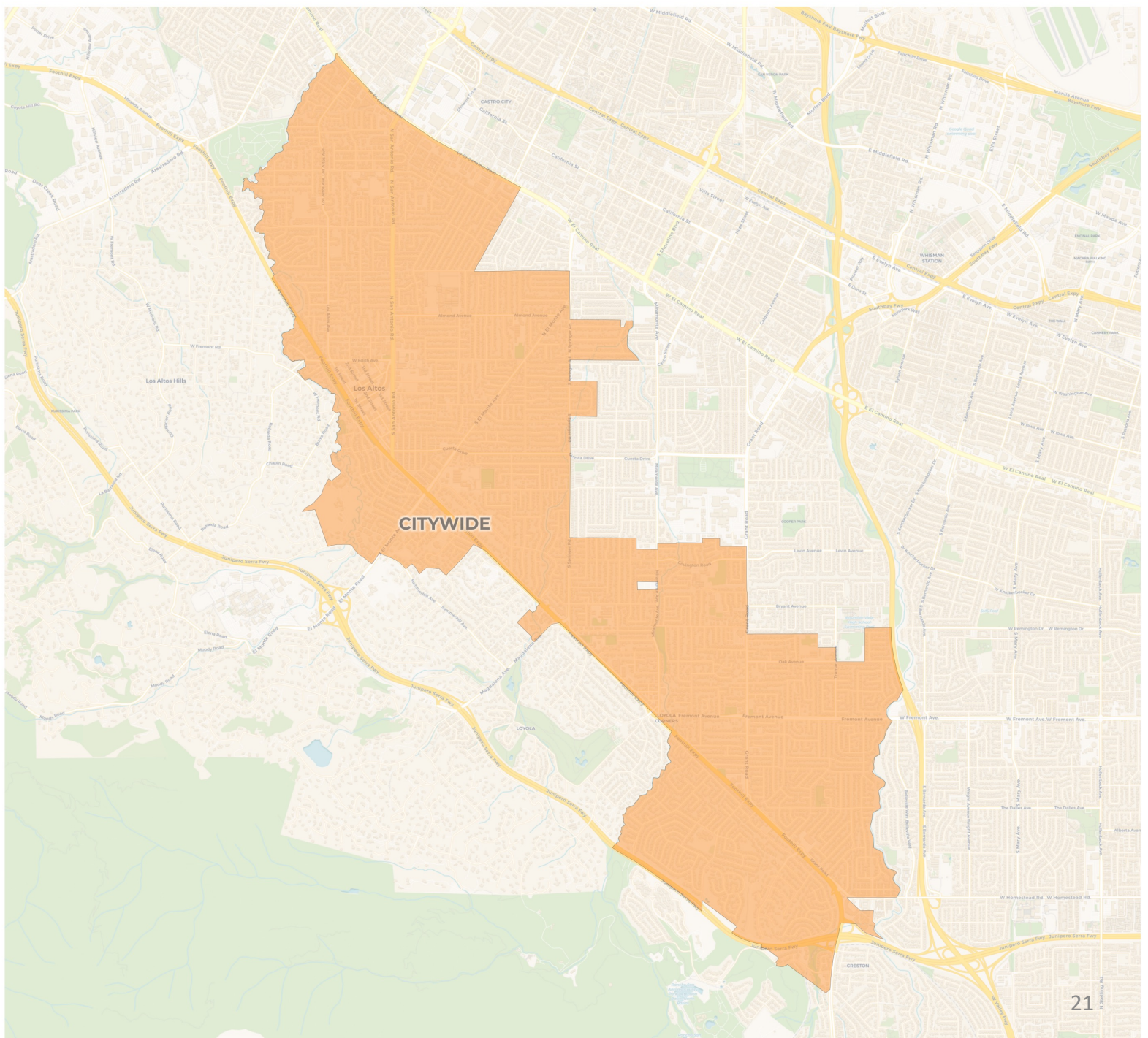
Write in the population estimates for each of your drawn districts.

District 1	District 2
District 3	District 4
District 5	

ONCE COMPLETE

1. Email a photo of your completed map to: administration@losaltosca.gov
2. Mail It to: City Clerk
Los Altos City Hall
1 North San Antonio Road
Los Altos, CA 94022

3. Drop it off a public meeting. To view the schedule, visit the website: <https://www.losaltosca.gov/cityclerk/page/district-based-elections>



2020 Census

	CITYWIDE
Population	31,668
Deviation	0
Deviation %	0.0%
Other	18,784
Other %	59.3%
Latino	1,553
Latino %	4.9%
Asian	11,147
Asian %	35.2%
Black	184
Black %	0.6%

Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP)

	CITYWIDE
Total CVAP	20,081
Other CVAP	13,424
Other CVAP %	66.8%
Latino CVAP	838
Latino CVAP %	4.2%
Asian CVAP	5,614
Asian CVAP %	28.0%
Black CVAP	205
Black CVAP %	1.0%

Districting Schedule

First two meetings devoted to community of interest information gathering and education on districting process

Proposed Schedule:

June 11, 2024

Public Hearing #1 (Pre-map)

July 13, 2024

Public Hearing #2 (Pre-map)

August Recess

August 28, 2024

Public Hearing #3 (Post-map)

September 24, 2024

Public Hearing #4 (Post-map)

October 8, 2024

Public Hearing #5: final vote



REDISTRICTING PARTNERS