
Redistricting San Francisco: How it works and how to participate

San Francisco
Redistricting Task Force



Introduction to the Redistricting Task Force:

- **9 members – appointed by Board of Supervisors (BoS), Mayor (M) and Elections Commission (EC)**
 - Chair: Eric McDonnell (BoS)
 - Vice-Chair: Jenny Lam (BoS)
 - Mike Alonso (BoS)
 - Myong Leigh (M)
 - Sonia Melara (M)
 - Marilyn Mondejar (M)
 - David Pilpel (EC)
 - Mark Schreiber (EC)
 - Melissa Tidwell (EC)

What does the Task Force do and When?

- **Community Education**
 - Beginning in November 2011
- **Data Collection**
 - In progress and ongoing
- **Community Input**
 - December 2011 through March 2012 – ongoing community input through community meetings, written and online submission
- **Approve Redrawn maps**
 - No later than April 15, 2012

Task Force Meetings:

- Regular meetings are on the 1st Wednesday (6pm) and the 3rd Friday (3pm) of each month at City Hall

- Educational meetings are:
 - 1. November 15th – Hall of Flowers @ 6pm
 - 2. November 19 – Tenderloin Community School @ 10am
 - 3. November 30th – Balboa High School @ 6pm
 - 4. December 7th – Horace Mann Middle School @ 6pm

- Other meetings will be scheduled. Please check our website for dates! (<http://sfgov.org/rdtf>)

What is Redistricting?

- The constitutionally mandated redrawing of local, state, and federal political boundaries every ten years following the U.S. census.
- Redistricting is done to equalize the populations in the districts, using various criteria.
- The San Francisco Redistricting Task Force is charged with redistricting the boundaries for the Board of Supervisors.

Why should YOU participate in Redistricting?

- Participating in redistricting will give your community a voice, which is critical to ensuring that it has equal access to the political process.
- This participation can encourage citizens to register, vote, and remain politically engaged.
- It can also help lead to the adoption of redistricting plans that provide communities a meaningful opportunity to elect candidates who represent their interests on issues that are important to their lives, from getting street lamps in their neighborhoods, to securing safe schools and new playgrounds.
- Take advantage of opportunities to participate in all phases of the redistricting process!

Which Criteria are used?

San Francisco Charter:

Districts must conform to all legal requirements, including the requirement that they be equal in population. Population variations between districts should be limited to 1 percent from the statistical mean unless additional variations, limited to 5 percent of the statistical mean, are necessary to prevent dividing or diluting the voting power of minorities and/or to keep recognized neighborhoods intact; provided, however, that the redistricting provided for herein shall conform to the rule of one person, one vote, and shall reflect communities of interest within the City and County.

Other Criteria and 'Legal Requirements'

- Compliance with the Voting Rights Act (VRA)
Section 2
- Contiguity
- Compactness

In Sum: The Criteria the Taskforce will use for Redistricting:

Equal Population (within 1%/5% as applicable)

Compliance with Sec.2 of the Voting Rights Act

Contiguity

Preserve recognized Neighborhoods

Preserve Communities of Interest

Compactness

Equal Population

- That's why we do it!
- Constitutional requirement
- One person, One vote
- SF: Districts must be within 1% of the mean (+/- 732 people) unless:
 - Higher deviation needed for voting rights purposes
 - Higher deviation needed to keep recognized neighborhoods intact
- In these cases deviation can be 5% (+/- 3660 people)

S.F. Board of Supervisors – Deviations by district

Table 1: Total 2010 PL94 Population and Deviation from Ideal District Population

District	Population	Deviation	% Deviation
01	68,253	-4,950	-6.76%
02	68,021	-5,182	-7.08%
03	68,955	-4,248	-5.80%
04	71,586	-1,617	-2.21%
05	70,675	-2,528	-3.45%
06	94,788	21,585	29.49%
07	69,825	-3,378	-4.61%
08	69,263	-3,940	-5.38%
09	65,673	-7,530	-10.29%
10	78,661	5,458	7.46%
11	79,535	6,332	8.65%

Federal Voting Rights Act - Section 2

- Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 prohibits voting practices or procedures that discriminate on the basis of race, color, or membership in one of the language minority groups identified in the Act. Section 2 may be violated if, in the context of the "totality of the circumstance of the local electoral process," the standard, practice, or procedure under consideration has the result of denying a racial or language minority an equal opportunity to participate in the political process.
- Majority Minority Districts represent an area of concern under Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

Prevent division or dilution of minority voting power

Voting Rights Act Section 2 – Majority Minority Districts

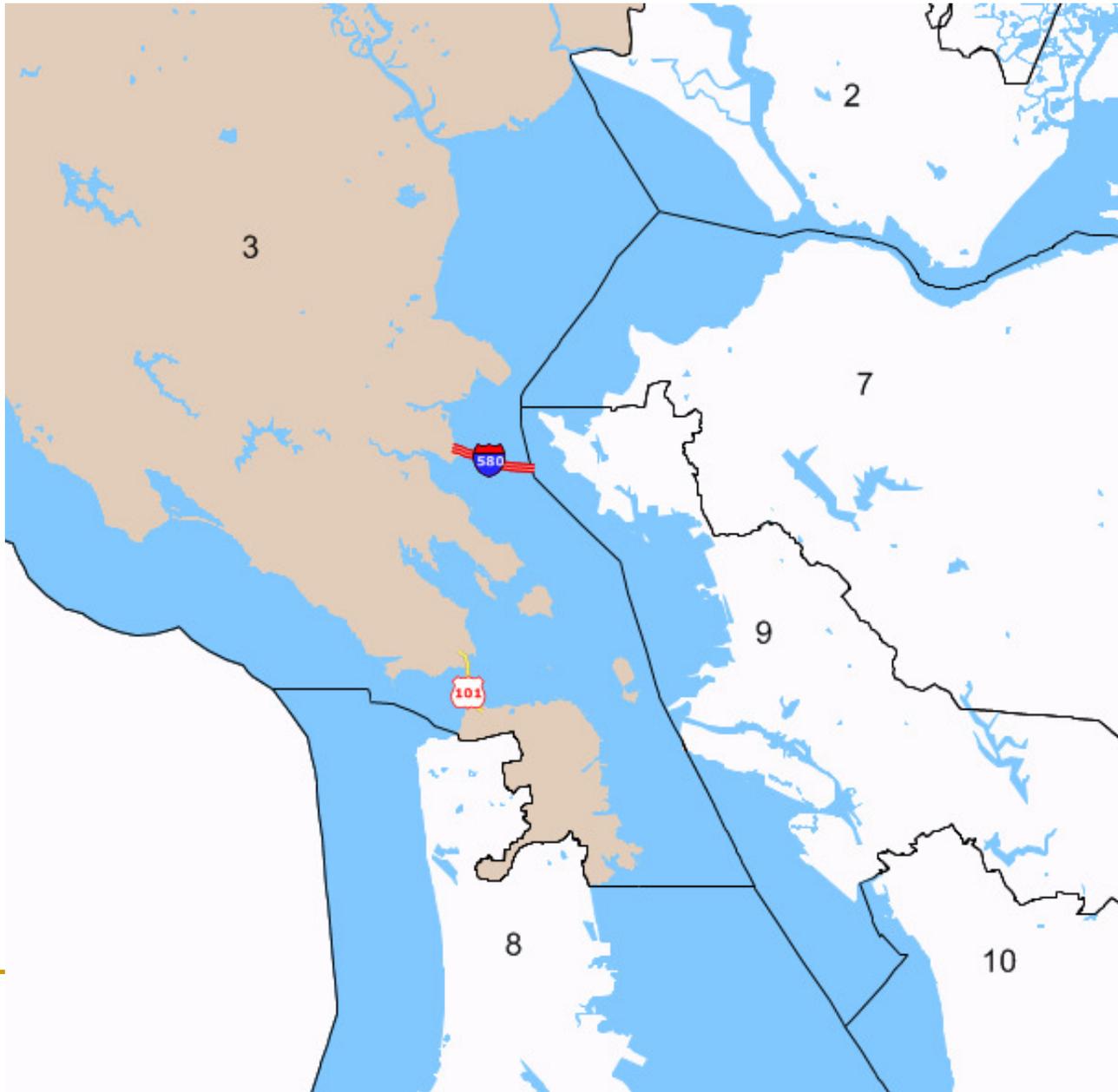
- >Minority group must be large enough to constitute a majority in the district (50%+CVAP)
- >Minority group must be geographically compact
- >Minority group votes cohesively
- >There must be evidence of polarized voting against the minority group

NOTE: Sec 2 does not prohibit the drawing of “influence seats” nor considering racial/ethnic Communities of Interest
HOWEVER: race/ethnicity can NOT be a predominant criterion!

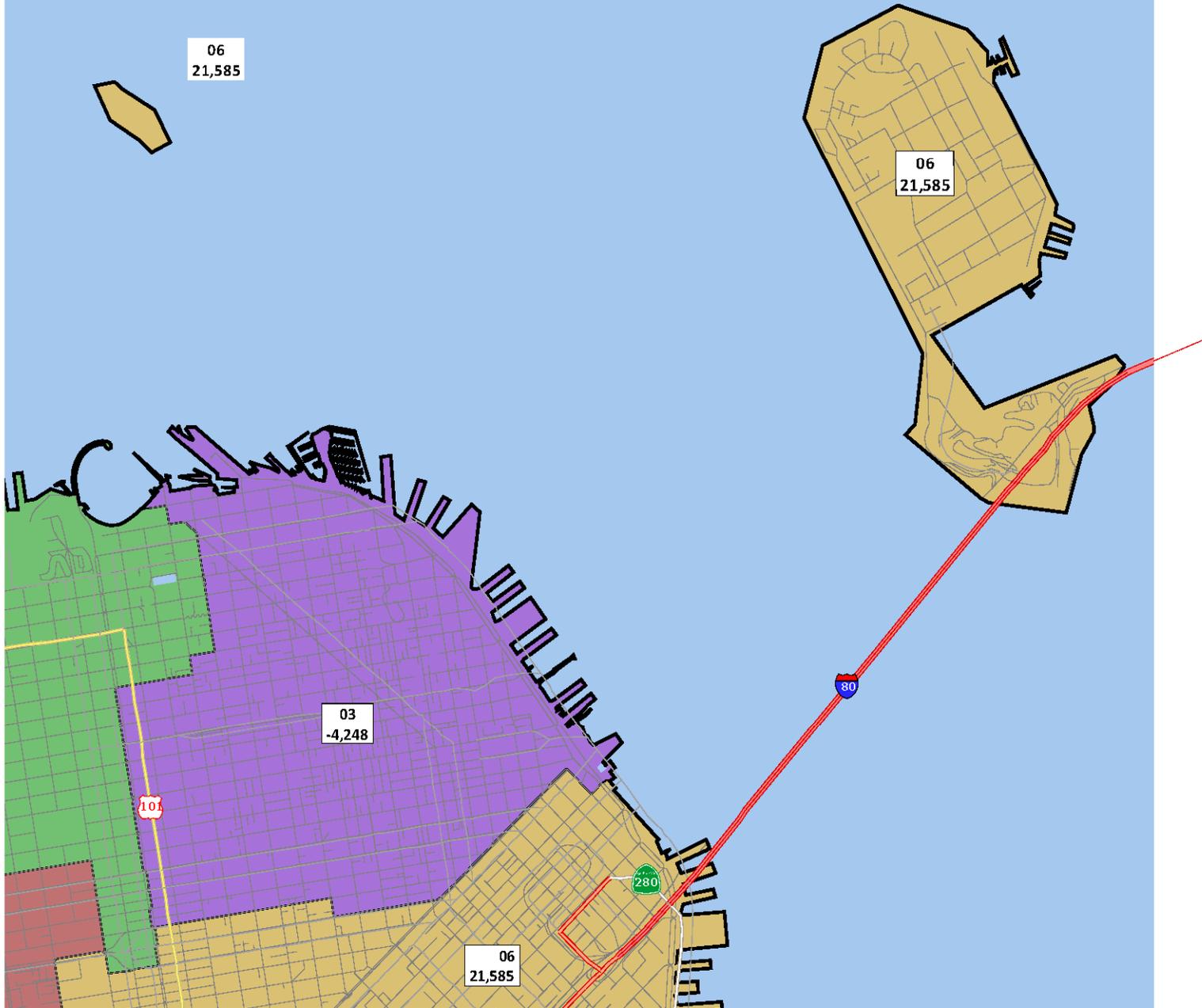
Contiguity:

- Definition: A district in which all parts are connected to each other
in other words:
- A district in which one may travel from any location to any other location without crossing the district boundary
- A district can be contiguous by water or a bridge!

Contiguity



Contiguity



Preserve recognized neighborhoods

- Recognized neighborhoods have been identified for various purposes by departments of the City and County of San Francisco
- There are differences in the definitions that the various departments use:
 - There are 37 neighborhoods used by the Planning Department
 - The Department of Elections uses 26 neighborhoods
- Public input can help the Task Force adjust the boundaries and/or help them understand which boundaries should be used

Communities of Interest:

What is a Community of Interest?

It depends...

A Group of people with a specific common interest...

(“actual shared interests” Miller v Johnson, 1995)

...That can be defined geographically

What are Communities of Interest NOT?

In SF: there is no limitation in the charter

How to document a Community of Interest – an example:

- Create a map of the boundaries (use Google maps if no Geographic Information System available)
or
 - Write down the boundaries
 - Outline what defines the Community of Interest:
What is your mission or your commonality?
 - >Show that your members live within the boundaries
 - >Explain what is different outside of the boundaries of your Community of Interest
 - Explain why it is important to be kept whole, and how the Community of Interest would be negatively impacted if split by an electoral (supervisory) boundary line
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Community of Interest definitions may include:

- Organizing around schools, school districts
- Transportation hubs
- Community Centers
- Dog parks

- Race and Ethnicity
 - Additional factors:
 - Shared experiences or history
 - Access (or lack of) to education
 - Higher number of kids per household/younger overall population
 - Shared languages and cultures

Compactness:

- Addresses the geography or ‘look’ of the district
- Many different measures developed
- “eyeball approach” “appearances matter”
- Assumed to “guard against all types of gerrymandering” “drastic departures from compactness are a signal that something may be amiss”

Be Informed: How to Get involved – How to Learn
more:

To participate in the process: testify, submit written testimony, send supporting information to the redistricting task force.

Please check our website for news and upcoming meetings.

Our email is: rdtf@sfgov.org

Our website is: <http://sfgov.org/rdtf>

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!