

# Santa Barbara Public Forums Summary Report

## Public Outreach

The City hosted two public forums to discuss potential lines for City Council election districts. At 9am on Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, approximately 100 people attended the first informational session, which was held in the Main Library's Faulkner Gallery. The City Attorney presented background on the City's decision to move to a by-district election system, the Administrative Services Director shared the process and public engagement plan, and the City's demographic consultant made a presentation on city demographics, the rules and criteria for drawing lines, how to use the paper maps provided by the City to submit draft plans, and how to use the online redistricting system provided by the City to submit proposed districting plans. The demographic consultant also presented three initial draft plans for consideration by the public and for use as potential draft plans.

The public then had two weeks to submit comments and proposed plans, with a deadline of 5:30pm March 12<sup>th</sup> for maps to be turned into City Hall, or 5pm March 13<sup>th</sup> to be submitted online.

At 6pm on Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, the second public forum was held in City Hall to present and discuss the plans received. Approximately 40 people attended this forum. The City's demographic consultant presented a review of all of the submitted plans, followed by comments by members of the public.

Spanish translators were available at both forums. And both forums were recorded and rebroadcast on the City television channel. And the demographer's presentations were translated into Spanish and posted on the City website.

## Public Participation

Both the paper maps and the online system proved very popular with the public. Seventy-two pages of public comment forms and paper maps were received by the deadline and 135 members of the public set up accounts in the online districting system.

## Plans Presented

In addition to the original three draft plans, plaintiffs requested a revision to Draft 1 moving just one zero-population census block (to unite Harding Elementary School campus in one Council district). And the following seventeen original plans were drawn and submitted by the general public:

1. 3-2-1 Distribution
2. CA Center for Public Policy (CCPP)
3. Community Neighborhood Alliance
4. Crow
5. Downtown District
6. Elings Park
7. Eyes on State
8. Green
9. Maintaining Neighborhoods of Interest
10. Mission Heritage
11. Mission Heritage Plan 2
12. Paige Plan
13. Roosevelt Elementary
14. SB Community Plan
15. SB Neighborhood
16. SB Community Plan 2
17. Vassallo

## Santa Barbara Public Forums Summary Report

(An 18<sup>th</sup> plan, “Santa Barbara Community Plan (1)”, was submitted, but replaced by Plan 2 and withdrawn.)

All plans are contiguous. All plans except “Mission Heritage” are reasonably compact (and the issues with Mission Heritage are fixed in “Mission Heritage 2”).

In terms of population balance, Drafts 1, 2 and 3, Draft 1 Revised, and six other plans have less than 5 percent plan population deviation. Only one plan (Crow) is so far out of population balance that it cannot be brought to within 5 or, at most, 10 percent deviation while remaining true to the submitter’s expressed plan goals. Six plans have between 5 and 10 percent and could likely be brought below 5 percent with minimal changes to the plans. Two plans are between 10 and 12 percent, and they also could likely be brought below 5 percent with minimal changes. And two plans are too high – at 28 and 33 percent – but were submitted with directions from the submitter on how to bring them into balance if they are the plans the City wishes to pursue further.

Another easily-measured test is whether plans comply with the following provision of the legal settlement:

The intent of the Parties is the electoral district map shall include two electoral districts in which Latino eligible voters constitute a majority of the eligible voters according to the most recently available relevant estimates from the Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, tailored to the greatest extent possible in a manner consistent with the applicable law described in the immediately preceding sentence, so as to address any issue of vote dilution.

The electoral district map required in Paragraph 1 shall be designed in accordance with applicable federal and State law, including, without limitation, the CVRA, the Constitutions of the United States and of the State of California, the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended, 52 U.S.C. §§ 10301, et seq., the criteria set forth in California Elections Code section 21620, and such other criteria as have been held by the courts to be legitimate redistricting criteria.

Including the original three draft plans and Draft 1 Revised, a total of 9 plans have two districts where Latinos are estimated to be a majority of Citizens of Voting Age, and three additional plans have one estimated majority district and a second that is close at an estimated 47 to 49 percent.

Only two plans (3-2-1 Distribution and Crow) cannot be brought up to having two estimated majority-Latino districts while remaining true, or at least close, to the submitter’s expressed plan goals, though a third (Paige) would be fairly difficult to get to have two estimated majority-Latino seats.

The other plans are close (estimated between 44 and 49 percent Latino in each of two districts) and could be brought to estimated majority-Latino status while staying reasonably close to the submitter’s expressed plan goals.

### Summary Plan Characteristics and Preferences

Among those submitting plans, Draft Plan 3 was clearly the preferred template, with eight submitters basing their plans relatively closely on Draft 3. Draft 1 / Draft 1 Revised trailed with three submitters basing their plans on Draft 1, and no submitter based his or her plan on Draft 2.

In the following table, the “Pro” and “Con” counts do not include the comments of the original submitter. The bold green cells indicate values within the target ranges for the listed criterion. The yellow cells are not quite within target ranges, but could be modified to reach the target value. And the

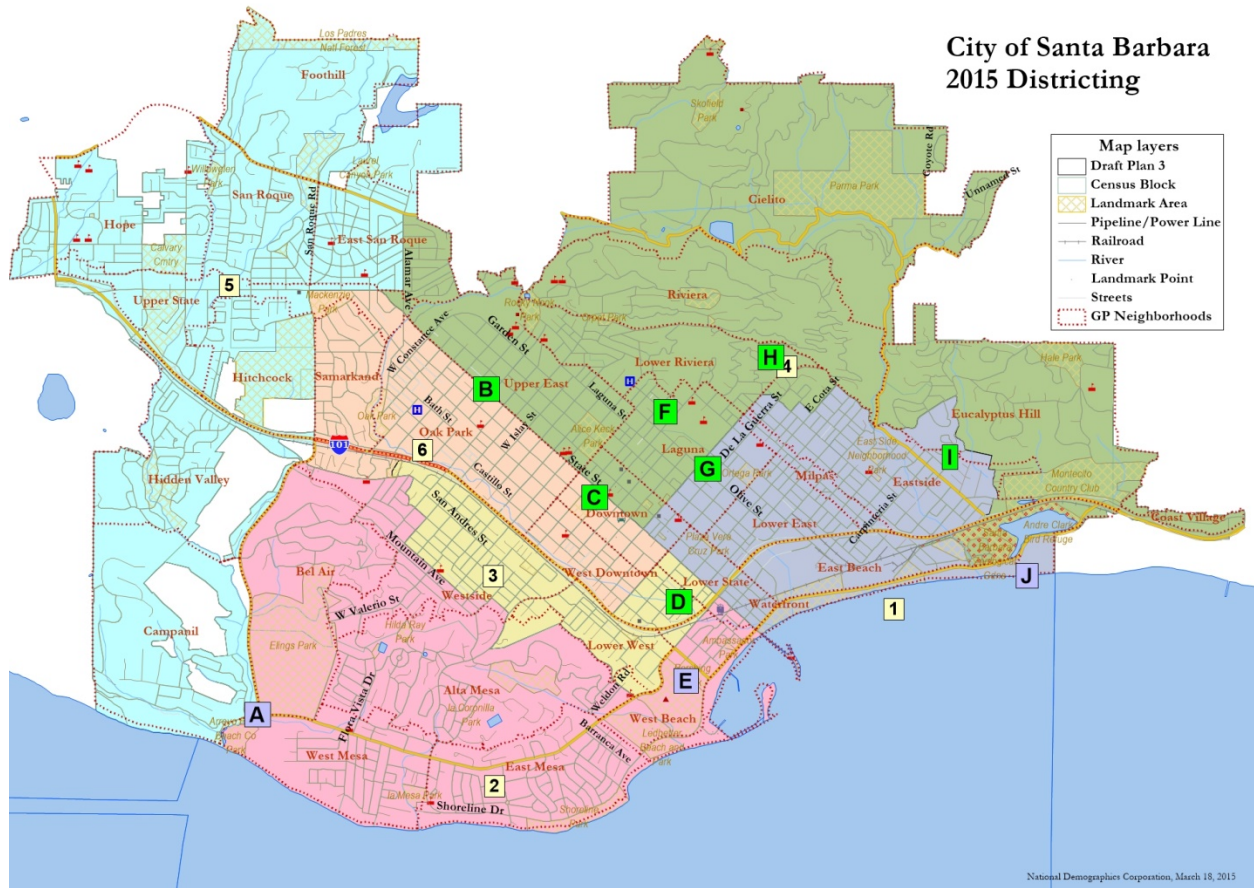
red cells indicate plans that the demographic consultant recommend be dropped from consideration for population imbalance and/or the difficulty of achieving the goals of the settlement agreement:

Plan Name	Based on Draft	Population Balanced	Contiguous	Relatively Compact	Most-Latino Seat	2nd Most-Latino	Soledad Change	Support	Oppose
Draft 1	1	3.90%	Yes	Yes	53%	50%			5
Draft 1 Revised	1	3.90%	Yes	Yes	53%	50%			5
Eyes on State	1	1.08%	Yes	Yes	49%	45%			
Redistricting Paige	1	9.50%	Yes	Yes	51%	43%			
Roosevelt Elementary	1	7.28%	Yes	Yes	53%	50%	Yes		
Draft 3	3	4.36%	Yes	Yes	53%	50%		10	2
Elings Park	3	4.36%	Yes	Yes	53%	50%		9	
CCPP	3	27.68% *	Yes	Yes	56% *	50%			
Community Neighborhood Alliance (CNA)	3	3.66%	Yes	Yes	49%	48%	Yes	1	
Green	3	32.85%	Yes	Yes	50%	47%	Yes		
SB Community 1	3	5.16%	Yes	Yes	52%	49%			
SB Community 2	3	7.04%	Yes	Yes	52%	50%		4	
SB Neighborhood	3	5.08%	Yes	Somewhat	49%	45%	Yes		
Vassallo	3	6.79%	Yes	Yes	53%	51%			
Maintaining Neighborhoods	1 & 3	3.07%	Yes	Somewhat	55%	50%	Yes		
Mission Heritage	1 & 3	11.10%	Barely	No	53%	49%			1
Mission Heritage 2	1 & 3	10.99%	Yes	Yes	53%	49%		3	1
Draft 2	2	3.75%	Yes	Yes	49%	45%		4	1
3-2-1 Distribution	none	1.32%	Yes	Yes	46%	41%			
Crow	none	197%	Yes	Yes	36%	31%			
Downtown District	none	0.78%	Yes	Yes	52%	44%	Yes		

\*: The CCPP plan can be brought to population balance by adding back in areas east of Salinas until Districts 1 and 4 reach population balance, but those changes will also bring down the estimated Latino percentage of District 1 (the “most-Latino” seat in the plan).

### Specific Issues / Concerns Raised

Like the plan submitters who adopted a Draft Plan as their template, even the “Support” comments often indicated there were changes that they thought would improve the plan. The map below indicates the areas prominently mentioned for change. The numbers indicate the District number (using Draft Plan 3 as the underlying map, given its relative popularity). The letters match the comment below the map describing the issue(s) raised. Purple background on A, E and J indicate those changes involve few to no population. The green backgrounds on the other issues indicate more significant numbers of people involved in the area in question (specific numbers are given below the map).



**A: Elings/Arroyo Burro: Zero Population:**

Probably the most common issue raised was a desire to have Elings Park and Arroyo Burro together with Campanil. The reasons stated included both the relationship between those areas and the watershed, and the traffic and parking impacts of those areas on Campanil since the entrances to both are on their west sides.

**B: Oak Park / Upper East Side: Oak Park 8,200 population; Upper East: 2,900:**

Concerns were expressed that the draft plans divided Upper East, including separating some of the neighborhood association board members from the main body of the neighborhood. The “Mission Heritage” plans were submitted with the express goal of uniting Upper East in a single district (together with Oak Park).

Concerns were also expressed that Oak Park has more connection to downtown than to Bel Air or to Samarkand, as Oak Park is more densely populated and its renters vs owners ratio is more similar to downtown than to Samarkand.

**C: Downtown: 800 population:**

One commenter worried that dividing downtown would undermine 60 years of work to preserve downtown’s special character, and the “Downtown District” plan was submitted with the goal of

uniting downtown in one seat. Others, including the “Eyes on State” plan, preferred to see many Council Districts drawn to represent pieces of downtown, so that each Councilmember would have a stake in the area’s future.

There were also numerous comments about what nearby neighborhoods share common interests, issues, and characteristics with downtown, including West Downtown, Laguna, the Bungalow District, and Oak Park.

**D: West Downtown / Brinkerhoff: 358 people in Vassalo area; 3,068 in Rincon-Ibarra area**

Three commenters expressed concern that the Brinkeroff area and other parts of West Downtown were separated from the rest of downtown in various plans, and asked that they be united in whatever map was adopted.

**E: Pershing Park: 97 people**

Multiple commenters said or wrote that Pershing Park belongs with District 3. While much of the College campus is in the same Census Block as the park, none of the student housing is in the block. Only the small block with apartments immediately north of the Park contains population in this block. The Census Block could be divided to put just those apartments and the Park in District 3, without moving the campus. But, with or without the campus, moving the Park into District 3 in most plans then requires a narrow 400-foot-wide ‘neck’ of District 2 to go between the park and the ocean, reducing the compactness of the plan.

**F: Bungalow District (about 800 people) and Santa Barbara High School (1500 people between Canon Perdido on the south, State St on the west, Anapamu on the north, and Milpas on the east)**

One speaker at the public forum made an extensive case for keeping the Bungalow District together and for putting the Bungalow District into the same Council District as Downtown. He expressed the many ways that the Bungalow District’s community of interest is with downtown rather than the hills.

Also in this area, numerous plans were submitted that extended District 1 north to incorporate the High School into District 1 (though not going all the way to include the Bungalow District).

**G: Roosevelt Elementary Attendance Area between Canon Perdido and De La Guerra: 1,000 people:**

A couple of commenters asked that the border of District 1 be moved south from Canon Perdido to De La Guerra, to unite the Roosevelt Elementary Attendance Area (which extends south to De La Guerra).

**H: The neighborhood around Soledad St and the end of De La Guerra: 350 to 400 people:**

A number of plans were submitted and comments made requesting that this area in the northeast corner of Eastside be included in District 1. While not shown on most maps, the commenters all wanted the part of Soledad Ave that is just north of De La Guerra included, which is not shown

because it would involve dividing another Census Block. That Block can be divided if this is a change the City wishes to make to the plan.

**I: Salinas St to Eucalyptus Hill: About 2,300 people**

This is perhaps the most technically challenging area to put into a plan, because one Census Block includes 1,611 people and extends to include Eastside houses and apartments on the east side of Salinas Street with Eucalyptus Hill houses on the west and south sides of Rametto Rd, Alston Rd, and other streets in the area. The plaintiffs in the case and a number of commenters and plan submitters requested that the 1,611 person Census Block be divided generally along the Eastside/Eucalyptus Hill border, but some also specifically requested that the Census Block with Cleveland School be kept in District 1 with the Eastside.

**J: El Escorial Apartments: 335 people**

A couple of commenters asked that the El Escorial Apartments be kept in District 4 (and one mentioned wanting the cemetery also kept in District 4).

**Conclusion**

Some changes, such as moving the zero-population Elings Park and Arroyo Burro area into District 5, can be made easily with little or no impact on the surrounding districts. When only a few (or no) people are involved in a change, that change can often be made with little or no “ripples” across the other districts.

Unfortunately, the districting criteria, in particular the equal population and contiguity requirements, sometimes put neighborhood requests in conflict with each other. For example, there is a request for Oak Park to be with Downtown, but the submitted Mission Heritage map has Oak Park with Upper East, and adding Downtown to that district in the Mission Heritage map would exceed the equal population limits.

The demographic consultant can discuss the tradeoffs and potential accommodations involved in accepting or not accepting the changes raised in each of these areas, along with any additional changes that may be raised by the public or the Council at this meeting, and plan revisions can be made and/or tested live during the Council discussion, if desired.