



NOVATO SANITARY DISTRICT
CREATING WORTH FROM ALL OF NOVATO'S WASTE

Districing of the Novato Sanitary District

Karin Mac Donald
Principal Consultant
Q2 Data & Research, LLC
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Presentation Overview

- 1) What is an at-large versus by-district election system
- 2) Criteria and Data
- 3) The Districting Process and Timeline
- 4) Participation by the public

At-large versus By-district Elections

▶ At-Large Elections (current)

- In an at-large electoral system, all voters in the jurisdiction elect all representatives

▶ By-District Elections

- In a district-based electoral system, representatives are elected from districts (“zones”), by the voters that live in each district.
- Candidates must reside in the district or zone they represent.
- Districting is the process of drawing the boundaries that divide the NSD’s population into five districts (zones).

Criteria, Data & Potential Process

- ▶ Districting Criteria
 - Constitution
 - Statute
 - “Traditional”
- ▶ Data to create Districts or Zones
 - Census
 - American Community Survey
 - Public Input
- ▶ What will the districting process look like?

What are the districting criteria?

- ▶ 5 criteria used for drawing districts or zones
 1. Equal Population
 2. Compliance with Federal Voting Rights Act (FVRA)
 3. Contiguity
 4. Compactness
 5. Respect for Communities of Interest

Criterion 1 – Equal Population

- ▶ “One person, one vote”
 - U.S. Constitution requires districts (zones) have “reasonably equal” populations.
 - Some deviation above/below “ideal” is allowed (~5%)
- ▶ 14th Amendment
 - Intentional discrimination is prohibited (Equal Protection).
- ▶ 15th Amendment
 - Bans racial discrimination in voting.

Criterion 1 – Equal Population

- ▶ Ideal = Total population / Number of Zones
- ▶ Population numbers are based on the most recent Census
- ▶ Everyone who was counted by the census will be assigned to a district
- ▶ Zones are built using the total population, not voters, citizens or other subgroups

Criterion 2 – Federal Voting Rights Act (FVRA)

- ▶ Prohibits the denial or abridgement of voting rights on the basis of *race or language minority status*.
 - FVRA defines Language minority as Asian, Native American, Alaskan Native, or Spanish heritage
- ▶ Prohibits practices that have the purpose or effect of discriminating on the basis of race or language minority status.
- ▶ Applies nationwide to all jurisdictions that conduct elections.

FVRA and Districting: Vote Dilution

- ▶ Electoral systems can limit the “ability to elect a candidate of choice” by a protected class of voters in various ways:
 - Example: at-large election systems can make it impossible for even a large minority group to elect a candidate of choice, when the majority votes against them.
 - Example: single-member districts can be drawn in ways that minimize voters’ ability to elect a candidate of choice.
- ▶ Systems that limit ability to elect in this way are said to “dilute” minority voting strength.

FVRA and Districting: Methods of Vote Dilution

- ▶ A districting plan can dilute minority voting strength through two main ways:
- ▶ “Cracking”
 - Dividing up a politically viable population concentration so it doesn’t constitute a majority in any district or zone.
- ▶ “Packing”
 - Drawing high proportion minority population into one district or zone when it could be politically viable in more than one district

Race and Districting

- ▶ Supreme Court opinions have limited the role that race can play in districting
- ▶ Race cannot be the predominant criterion in line drawing
- ▶ Race should not subjugate “traditional districting principles” (Compactness, Contiguity, Communities of Interest)
- ▶ District appearance has been important in some cases.

Criterion 3 – Contiguity

- ▶ A geographic Criterion
- ▶ Definition: A contiguous district is one in which all parts are connected to each other

In other words:

- ▶ A district or zone in which one may travel from any location to any other location without crossing the district boundary

Criterion 4 – Compactness

- ▶ Addresses the geography of the district or zone
- ▶ Many different ways to measure
- ▶ Assumed to “guard against all types of gerrymandering” “drastic departures from compactness are a signal that something may be amiss”
- ▶ Most common complaints come from appearances:
 - Does a district or zone look funny?
 - “eyeball approach” “appearances do matter”

Criterion 5 – Communities of Interest

- ▶ A Community of Interest (COI) generally refers to a contiguous population that shares social or economic interests
 - Examples
 - Schools, culture, transportation, parks
 - Shared goals of improving parks, safety, historic resources
 - Employment or lack of thereof and economic opportunities
 - Neighborhoods may be Communities of Interest
 - Law does not limit the kinds of interests that may bind a community
- ▶ Communities of Interest are not Districts (zones):
 - Frequently smaller; may be used as building blocks to construct districts
- ▶ No datasets available: defined by public input – YOU!

Process overview

- ▶ Initial Hearings
 - 2 Hearings before line drawing begins
 - Collection of public input
- ▶ Construction of Map(s)
- ▶ Publicizing the Draft Map
- ▶ Feedback Hearings
 - 2 Hearings to collect feedback on a draft map
- ▶ Hearing to adopt the ordinance

Outreach – Collaboration – Participation

Timeline: April – June 2019

Monday, April 1	Board adopted Resolution of Intent to transition from at-large to by-district elections
Monday, April 8	1st Public Hearing (Regular Meeting)
Monday, April 15	2nd Public Hearing (Special Meeting)
By Monday, April 29	Publish draft map(s)
Monday, May 6	3rd Public Hearing (Special Meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adjustments of Draft maps live• Publication of any new or amended district maps and potential sequence of elections.
<u>Tuesday</u> , May 28	4th Public Hearing (Special Meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possible Adjustments of Draft maps live• Publication of new or amended district maps (if applicable) and potential sequence of elections
Monday, June 10	5th Public Hearing (Regular Meeting) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adoption of new District Boundaries

Why and How to participate

▶ Why?

- To make sure we know about Communities of Interest.
- To give communities a voice and make sure they have equal access to the political process.
- To help shape a districting plan that provides communities a meaningful opportunity to elect candidates who represent their interests on issues that are important to their lives.

▶ How?

- Testify, submit written testimony, send supporting information to the district

▶ Stay informed – Our Website:

- ▶ <http://www.novatosan.com> (click on District Elections)

THANK YOU! QUESTIONS?

