

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Novato Sanitary District enacting this process now?

All special districts with electoral divisions must engage in “redistricting” every 10 years following the decennial federal census in order to ensure that all divisions continue to have equal populations and follow all state and federal laws. In 2019, NSD transitioned from at-large elections to by-division based elections prior to the release of the 2020 federal census data. So, Novato Sanitary District must now ensure that no changes are needed in light of the new 2020 federal census data and must go through the regular decennial redistricting process.

How are the divisions drawn?

Generally, the following factors are considered when drawing special districts (divisions), such as the Novato Sanitary District ([California Elections Code 22000](#))

- Each divisions should contain nearly the same number of people;
- Boundaries shall be drawn in a manner that complies with the United States Constitution and the Federal Voting Rights Act;
- Local topography;
- Local geography;
- Cohesiveness, contiguity, and compactness of territory;
- Divisions shall respect communities of interest. Communities of Interest (COI) generally refers to a contiguous population which shares common social and economic interests that should be included within a single divisions for purposes of fair and effective representation;
- The demographer will disregard the location of incumbents and candidates, as well as the interests of political parties.

In summary, this means the following:

- We will use a mapping program to construct divisions after public input has been received.
- Census data will be used to find out how many people live in each part of the electoral divisions and ensure that each division contains roughly the same number of people.
- Census geography will be used to ensure that the divisions are compact and contiguous
- We will collect and utilize Community of Interest data from the residents of Novato Sanitary District to use in the building of divisions.
- We will not use any address information for current Board of Directors or potential candidates or use political party affiliation or information in the drawing of divisions.

How many people should be in each division?

As counted by the 2020 Census, the Novato Sanitary District had a total population of 57,303. Because the decennial census is the only survey that counts everyone, we have to use those data to draw divisions. There are 5 electoral divisions. To figure out the 'ideal population' for each division, take the total population (57,303) and divide it by the number of divisions (5) which equals 11,460 persons.

Do we use the number of voters to draw division?

Electoral divisions are drawn using the total population as counted by the last census. Everyone who was counted, irrespective of age or other demographics, has to be assigned to a division. Divisions are not equalized using voters, registered voters or citizens.

What information do you need from me?

One of the criteria to draw maps is called "Communities of Interest" or COI. Because there are no datasets available for Communities of Interest, we appreciate your help to define them for the Novato Sanitary District. A COI is a group of people in a defined geographic location that share a common bond or interest. The State's redistricting criteria define Community of Interest as "a contiguous population which shares common social and economic interests that should be included within a single division for purposes of fair and effective representation." Please tell us what defines your Community of Interest, where it is located, and why it should stay together.

We have informational handouts that explain the many different ways to submit COI testimony.

- How to Create Your Community of Interest (COI) Online
- NSD COI Written Form

Why should I get involved in the redistricting process?

We would like to hear from you so we can make informed decisions about where to put division boundaries. Specifically, we need information from you about your neighborhoods and communities of interests. You are the expert who knows your communities and neighborhoods! If we know the geographic locations of the Communities of Interest in NSD, we

can consider them when drawing lines and we won't inadvertently split them! Keeping communities together in the same division can help to get more responsive representation.

When are the public hearings?

Date	Meeting/Event	Time
September 13, 2021	Meeting 1: Redistricting Kickoff	5:30pm
September 20, 2021	Draft Maps Posted Online for Feedback	
October 11, 2021	Meeting 2: Map Drawing	5:30pm
November 8, 2021	Meeting 3: Feedback and Final Vote	5:30pm

How do I get answers to additional questions?

If you have more questions, we are available to answer them!

- You can attend any of the Novato Sanitary District meetings.
- Or email your question to: info@novatosan.com
- Or mail your question to: Novato Sanitary District, 500 Davidson Street, Novato CA, 94945
- Or call us: (415) 892-1694