

Districting submissions

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Jul 5, 2018, 2:21
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to districts, Rob, bcc:
me

To whom it may concern:

Attached are two maps, one for 6 districts and one for 7. I modified the 6-district spreadsheet given to us by Dr. Gobalet to make the 7-district map, and provide it in its entirety for others to use, or find errors in. The 7-district plan is incomplete and cannot be done nicely for the reasons I state below.

I would request that this e-mail message be attached as part of my submission, unlike with my last districting committee submission of which the committee omitted my comments and printed only the district pieces.

Justifications:

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While the districting committee wording was heavy on "6-districts", the judge had asked the plaintiffs to provide both 6-district and 7-district maps. There was no indication as to which one was preferred, but I find it remiss to submit only a 6-district map and rob the residents of Santa

Clara the opportunity to define its own 7-district map if that is the direction the judge decides to go.

The judge made it clear that CVRA trumps charter city power, which is why district maps of any sort are even considered during the remediation phase. The possibility of going to seven districts is similarly on the table regardless of city charter.

Issues:

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While the "pieces" data may have seemed sufficient to split the city into two parts, we can see with just a little bit of work that they are not sufficient when considering six and especially seven districts. If we try to make seven districts with the pieces Dr. Gobalet defined, Piece #17 has to stand on its own and adjacent pieces are often too populated to be combined. This is similarly true with six districts. I tried to work off of the block data, but it is unlikely that I will finish or that Dr. Gobalet can validate such a submission within the timeframe.

Even with six districts, the size of the pieces obviates several groupings once a single district is created. When creating an initial group based on the districting criteria (namely: Topography; Geography; Cohesiveness; contiguity, integrity, & compactness of territory; and "Communities of interest"), the other districts tend to define themselves once you try to meet the population deviation guidelines. This is why so many attempts look almost exactly, if not exactly, like Dr. Gobalet's original drafts.

Consider Piece #17 alone and you will see that there are only a few options with six districts -- and, as mentioned above, only one possible option with seven districts. This is largely true of Piece #28 as well. In fact, Piece #17's population alone deviates more than 2100 between the 2010 census and 2017 estimates.

While there seems to be some freedom with the large pieces that contain fewer people (see District 2 in Draft Plan1 and District 1 in Draft Plan 2), that is a false hope that does not help balance the numbers or improve representation.

There seems to be some work done to create additional pieces since the last districting committee meetings earlier this year (there are an additional five pieces created by splitting some of the original 31 pieces, for a total of 36 pieces in the most recent Pieces map). It would have been nice to have also spent time dividing the most populous areas into smaller pieces as well, especially since the definition of more districts essentially requires an increase in the "resolution" of each area with respect to population. Perhaps a guideline stating that each piece should contain no more than some number (on the order of $(\text{total_population} / \text{number_of_districts}) / \text{pieces_desired_for_each_district}$, where $\text{pieces_desired_for_each_district}$ is at least 3) people/CVAP.

Comments on Draft Plans:

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Draft Plan 2, in addition to breaking up major ethnic groups, splits off many people affected by the stadium from the stadium itself. Neither seems like a good idea, which eliminates Draft Plan 2 from my choices.

While Nextdoor neighborhoods may seem like a good way to define communities, they are arbitrary, often set by the first person or group to request a Nextdoor account in that area. I am a member of two Nextdoor groups because my community is not defined well by either Nextdoor definition. That fact, in conjunction with an "Old Quad" district that spreads too far west -- it almost encompasses Central Park, for goodness' sake -- eliminates Draft Plan 3 from my choices.

Which leaves only a preference for Draft Plan 1, if we must pick a city drafted plan.

Thank you.

Kevin Park

2 Attachments



Districts

Jul 5, 2018, 12:04
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