



DEVELOPING BOUNDARIES FOR A DISTRICT-BASED ELECTORAL SYSTEM

City Council Meeting – October 4, 2017

Presented by,
Anthony J. Mejia, Chief City Clerk

Public Hearing No. 4

- Purpose:
 - Inform the public about the districting process, to hear from the community regarding the draft district boundary maps, and to select a final map for adoption.





How Did We Get Here?

- June 5, 2017
 - The City received a letter alleging violations of the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA).
- July 19, 2017
 - The City Council adopted Resolution No. 7524, declaring its intention to transition to district-based elections.
 - Provides for 90-day safe harbor period in which to conduct four (4) Public Hearings to develop District Maps and adopt an Ordinance.



Potential for a CVRA Lawsuit

- The CVRA prescribes an extremely light burden on the plaintiff to establish a violation, by merely demonstrating the existence of “racially polarized voting.”
- The plaintiff would be entitled to reimbursement of attorney’s fees and expert witness costs, if prevailing.
- The City is not entitled to recover any attorney’s fees or expert witness costs, even if it prevails.
- Even if the City were to prevail, another plaintiff could file a future lawsuit following any future election alleging “racially polarized voting.”
- Estimated cost to defend against litigation: \$500,000+
- Estimated cost if the plaintiff prevails: \$2,000,000+

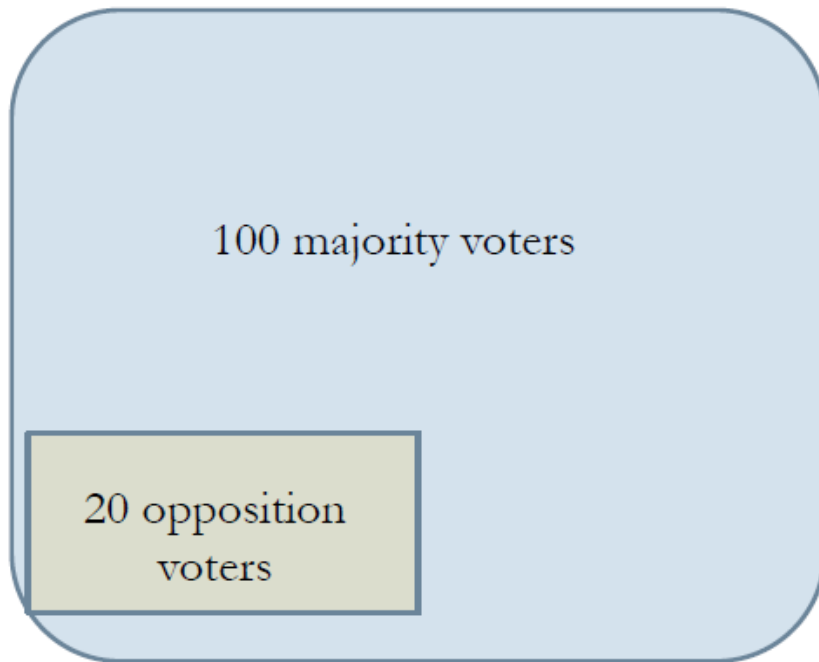


Community Outreach and Notice

- New Webpage: www.southpasadenaca.gov/districts
(Updated Daily) www.southpasadenaca.gov/districtsfaq
- Legal Noticing 10 days prior to each Public Hearing
 - La Opinión (Spanish)
 - World Journal (Chinese)
 - Korea Times (Korean)
 - South Pasadena Review
 - With instruction on how to obtain the translated notice materials and to request interpreter services to participate in the Public Hearings.
- Multiple articles in South Pasadena Review and Star News
- Facebook with expanded marketing
- National Night Out
- Community Groups
 - Meetings of Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, & Exchange
 - Notified to Chinese American Club and Vecinos Representatives

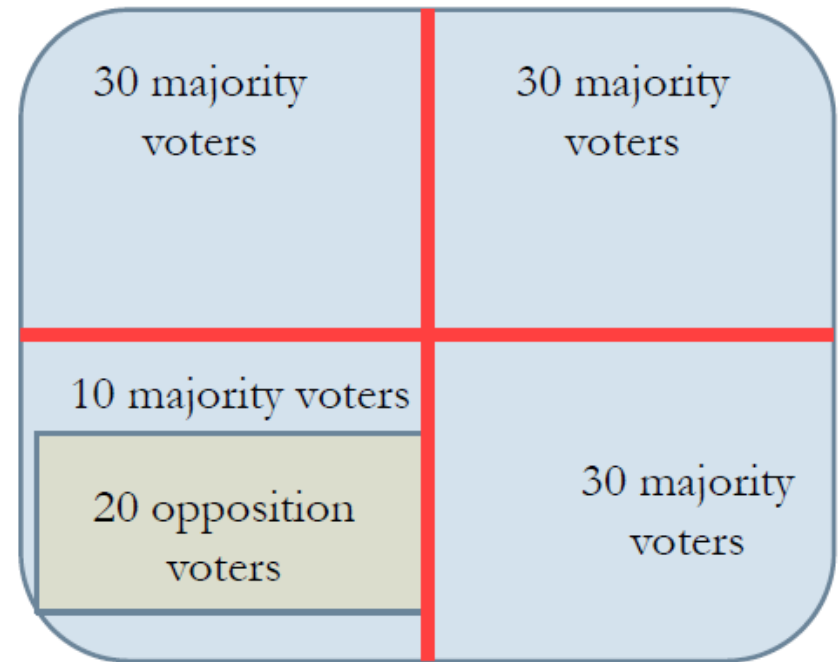
How Are District Elections Designed To Work?

At-Large Election



When one voting bloc significantly outnumbers another, the majority wins every at-large seat.

By-District Election



But if the smaller group is geographically concentrated, it can elect someone who shares their views to the Council or Board.



Meeting and Hearing Schedule

- July 19, 2017: City Council Meeting to introduce topic and adoption of the Resolution of Intent to transition from at-large to district-based elections. **(Day 1)**
- August 16, 2017: City Council Meeting to seek community input and to provide direction on “communities of interest” and the composition of districts. Public Hearing #1: **(Day 28)**
- September 6, 2017: City Council Meeting to seek community input and to provide direction on “communities of interest” and the composition of districts. Public Hearing #2: **(Day 49)**



Meeting and Hearing Schedule

- September 16, 2017: Saturday Community Workshop to seek input on the content of the draft maps and sequencing of elections. (**Day 59**)
- September 20, 2017: City Council Meeting to seek community input and to provide direction on the content of the draft maps and sequence of elections. Public Hearing #3 (**Day 63**)
- October 4, 2017: City Council Meeting to select a preferred district map and to adopt an ordinance to transition to district-based elections (Govt. Code 36937[a]).
Public Hearing #4 (**Day 77**)



Criteria for District Boundaries

Mandatory Criteria

- Equal Population Based on Census Data.
 - Not voter registration or eligible voting age population.
- Compliance with Federal Voting Rights Act.
- No Racial Gerrymandering

Traditional Criteria

- Topography
- Geography
- Cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity, and compactness
- Communities of Interest
- Respect for voters' wishes and continuity of office.
 - Avoidance of incumbent head-to-head contests.
 - Leaves the decision of re-election to the voters.



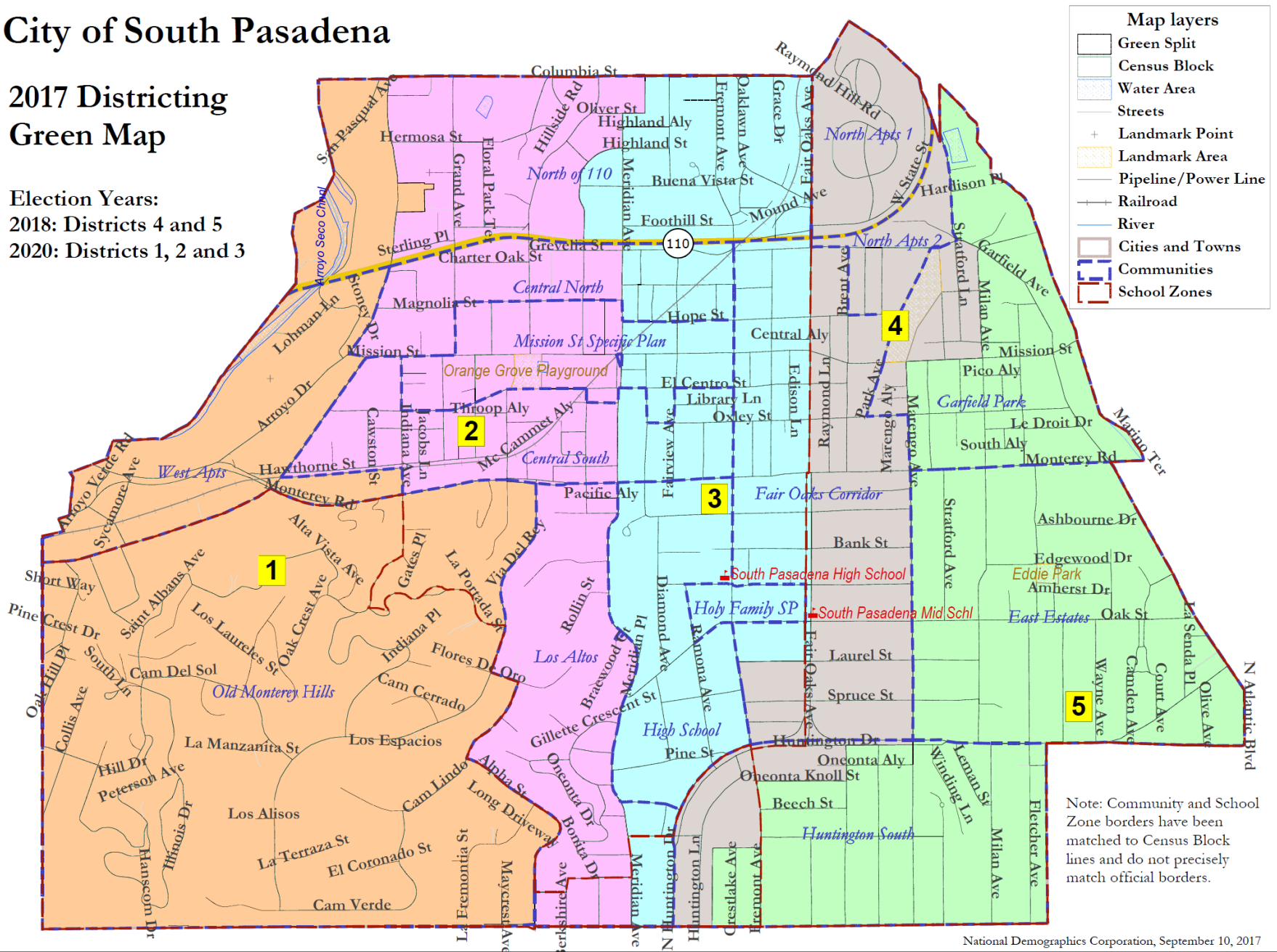
City of South Pasadena

2017 Districting Green Map

Election Years:

2018: Districts 4 and 5

2020: Districts 1, 2 and 3



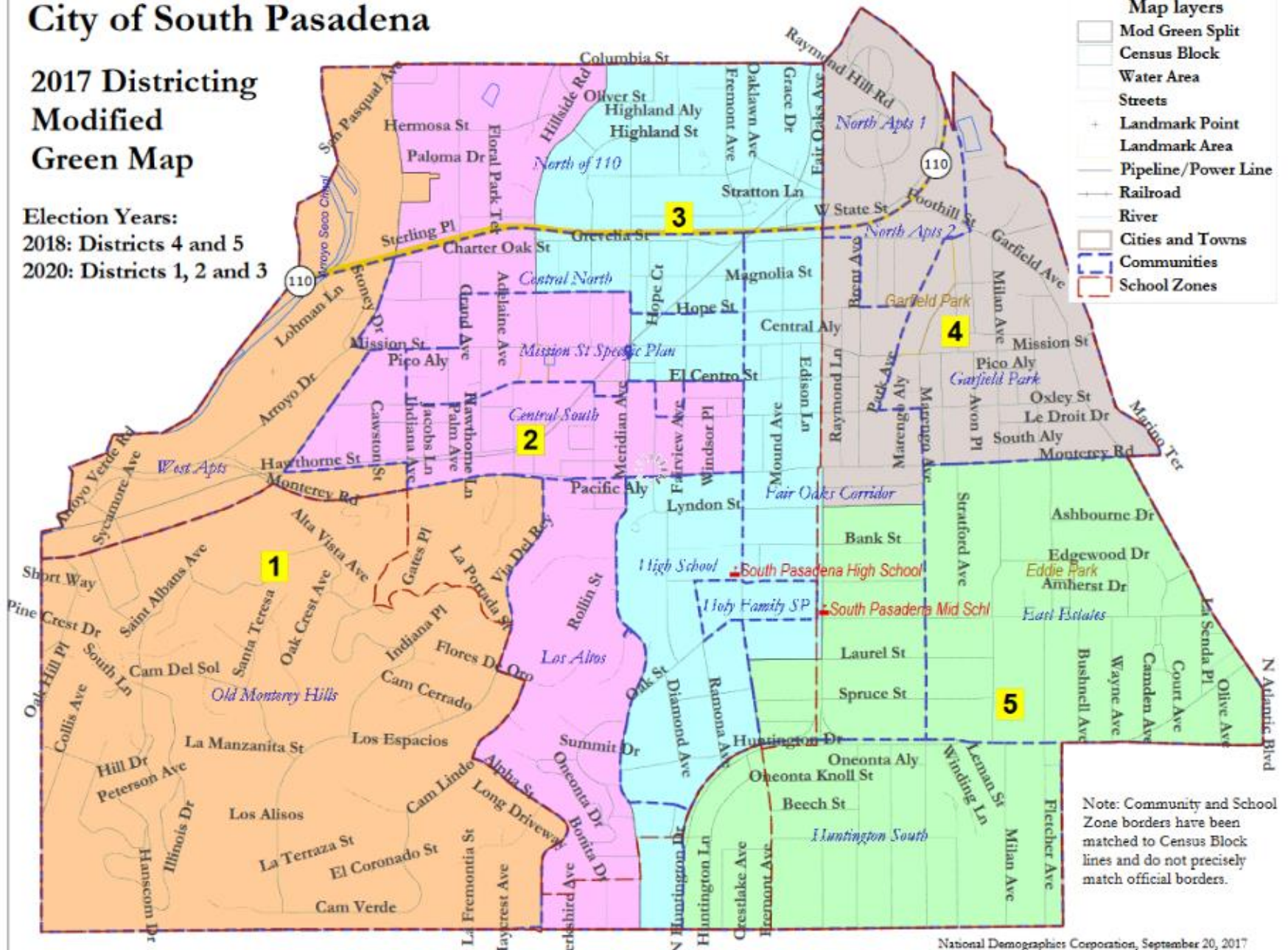


City of South Pasadena

2017 Districting Modified Green Map

Election Years:
2018: Districts 4 and 5
2020: Districts 1, 2 and 3

- Map layers**
- Mod Green Split
 - Census Block
 - Water Area
 - Streets
 - Landmark Point
 - Landmark Area
 - Pipeline/Power Line
 - Railroad
 - River
 - Cities and Towns
 - Communities
 - School Zones



Note: Community and School Zone borders have been matched to Census Block lines and do not precisely match official borders.



Recommendation

- Select a preferred map of voting district boundaries.
- Adopt an Ordinance entitled “An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of South Pasadena, California, adding a new Article XV to Chapter 2 (Administration) to the South Pasadena Municipal Code to change the City’s electoral system from at-large to by-district elections with respect to electing members of the City Council, establishing district boundaries, and sequencing of elections within the districts.”