



Solano County

REDISTRICTING COMMUNITY OUTREACH PLAN

**SOLANO COUNTY REDISTRICTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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Solano County Redistricting Community Outreach Plan

Outreach is a critical part of the redistricting process. State law under the Fair Maps Act and the California Voting Rights Act emphasizes the identification of Communities Of Interest (COI), and establishes that these communities should be protected through the process of converting to a districted system or adjusting district boundaries through a decennial redistricting process.

So called “COI Testimony” can take multiple forms – either a member of the public submitting a written document, or publicly testifying, or submitting a map of their community, even submitting full district boundary proposals.

The process benefits from this COI testimony as it helps identify the best ways of grouping together areas and can be used along with objective data from the US Census, the American Community Survey, and other sources as the foundation for final election district boundaries. After the line-drawing process is completed, a report on the final district lines will include information on what COI testimony and other legal and appropriate datapoints were used in determining the structure of district boundaries.

To achieve the necessary community engagement counties can build upon what we know has worked in the past, and then look to a few emerging tools from other local governments conducting the same or similar work – including the California Redistricting Commission, the CA Counts census outreach programs, and other local redistricting efforts within the region. Some of this work will be similar to what was effective outreach in the last redistricting cycle, however it will need to be supplemented with technological interventions that are required given statewide and regional health orders.

There will be two phases of engagement.

Phase one: Soliciting pre-mapping community input and COI testimony. This phase can be done without the updated Census data as it is about existing communities, who they are, and how they relate to their local government.

Phase two: After the census data has been released, using the new data and COI testimony from phase one to develop draft maps and receive specific community input on those plans.

The following outlines the County’s outreach process. It is intended to provide a framework for the Redistricting Advisory Committee’s community engagement. As of this writing, outreach will be conducted within the current state and local limitations stemming from the pandemic rather than full in-person public outreach meetings as done in the past.

Creating an Open / Transparent Process

The public has made it clear that they want the state and local governments to engage in public and open/transparent process for any creation of districts. This has been a significant change over the past 20 years as the process of drawing election districts has moved out of the backrooms, and into the public domain. The need for transparent/open processes exists for redistricting commissions, advisory committees, cities, counties and all local agencies. This process is inclusive of the public hearings, website, and any mapping tools or other technology that may be used to engage direct community involvement.



Hearing & Public Comment

The goal of community outreach is to have involvement by the public in the development of COI testimony and feedback on potential districting lines, much of which will be conducted via online meetings. It is imperative that they are accessible, informative, and can provide information to the public and effectively receive information from residents, local organizations, and, when necessary, do so in multiple languages.

The County's redistricting hearings will be held at specific times so the public can know when they will have an opportunity to learn about the process. This means having a set time on an agenda where other business will be paused so the redistricting item can be brought up. In addition, due to the regular scheduled times of Board of Supervisors meetings, one hearing will be held after 6 pm or on a weekend. The County Board of Supervisors has approved November 16, 2021 at 6 pm to hold a public hearing dedicated to redistricting.

There are some minimum requirements for any programs being used as a part of this outreach process:

- Systems must show video of all participants, staff and others conducting the meeting.
- There must be an ability for the presentation of visual information, including PowerPoints, maps, and screensharing.
- There must be a way for the public to call-in and have an opportunity to give input.
- All hearings must be recorded, and those videos posted on the web for public access.

As a best practice, there should be multiple ways that individuals or organizations can participate in the redistricting process by submitting comments. These include:

Written or Email Comments: All public comment received either through written submissions or emails should be recognized during the hearing, either read or summarized, and provided with the agenda and other hearing materials.

Call-in During Hearing: without any advanced notification requirement, call in testimony will be allowed at designated times during redistricting hearings. Comments may be limited to 1-2 minutes and be done on a first-come-first-served basis. Speakers will be asked to, but not required to, identify themselves and where they are from. These commenters do not need to be seen on the video – simply having their audio input is sufficient.

Pre-Scheduled Testimony – if a local group or individual has a specific request of the county, a community of interest or district mapping option that cannot be supported through a 1-2 minute audio testimony, they may be supported through a longer 5-minute, prescheduled public comment window.

In this instance, it may be appropriate for them to be seen in the video conference, but without screensharing ability. If they have a draft map, staff will request it be sent prior to the hearing so it can be brought up on the screen during their testimony.

Scheduled Presentations – Groups who want a 10-minute window can schedule ahead. These are the major statewide or regional organizations. Slots may be limited and there can be an objective basis created for determining who gets these slots. These presenters get screenshare and can discuss their submissions at greater length.



Community of Interest Forms

Simple COI forms are a low-tech way for the public to engage, define their COI, and explain how their interests as a community intersect with the county.

These forms have been used well in other jurisdictions and can be done either as PDF forms to be downloaded, filled out and returned, or can be done as online forms or surveys. Below is the link to the County's online COI form. A PDF version can also be downloaded and sent in via email or regular mail.

- COI Form Page:
- PDF Worksheet:
- Online Form:

Mapping Software

In the 2010 redistricting process conducted by the State's independent redistricting commission, the online mapping tools were only a small part of the outreach, and they were not used by many local governments at that time. For this redistricting cycle, online tools are emerging as the primary way that commissions and even local city, school board, and other redistricting efforts will engage the public.

The County has selected RedistrictR for online mapping services which will be built into the County's website and accessible by anyone connected to the Internet.

There are two primary ways that RedistrictR can be used by the public:

Drawing COI - A key element of the redistricting process will be understanding how residents view themselves within their community, neighborhood, or other geographic space. These do not need to be approximations of potential districts and can be much smaller or larger than the ideal district size. What is important is to take the idea of a connected set of residents and develop some sense of where the footprint of that community lies, according to members of that community. This will be most important in Phase 1 of the process before draft maps are created.

Drawing districts or full Plans - This will be a more meaningful part of the mapping process after we have the 2020 data – but members of the community could still submit complete or partial maps of districts. In order to facilitate the most engagement, community members should be encouraged to draw either their own district, or districts in the areas they are most familiar – or draw a full plan. Any submission can be valuable for the process.

A critical part of this online map drawing will be training:

- Training videos posted online – these would likely be generalized training videos produced by Redistricting Partners.
- Availability of staff from Redistricting Partners to facilitate a training for the Redistricting Advisory Committee.



Public Website

The following is a list of items that the Fair Maps Act requires the County to provide on a dedicated webpage.

- 5 days advance posting of agendas
- A calendar of hearings with time and location
- Archived videos of all hearings
- All presentations and handouts, including a description of the redistricting process
- All public comments and how a member of the public can provide testimony
- Maps being considered by the commission, with 7-day public notice
- Maps and public submissions from residents or organizations
- Materials in additional languages as necessary

The County's newly designed website adheres to all these requirements and is a one-stop shop for all its redistricting information including hearing schedules, agendas, presentations, maps and public comments.

Outreach Methods

The beginning of an outreach plan involves taking an inventory of current resources that are available and can be recruited into the process, these include any existing regular communication with the public, existing organizations that can be supportive of these efforts, and underlying known structures that define these communities.

Building on Current Outreach

Some of the best initial outreach can be done through these normal communications channels and will be used to support both phases of the outreach process. In addition, staff will with information about any upcoming hearings, ways that the community can provide input, and mapping tools that can be used by the public.

These will be used as the basis for an initial communications plan around the redistricting process.

- An electronic mailing will be sent out to approximately 97k registered voters using data obtained from the Registrar of Voters.
- Create a postcard or 8.5" x 11" mailer to be mailed to the 178k residential and business addresses in the county advising them of their opportunity for public engagement in the redistricting process.
- The same information included in the mailer will be uploaded to the County's redistricting website to allow for sharing via social media.
- The County's Boards of Supervisors regularly communicates with the public through official and unofficial means. Board members are being requested to include similar information and include it in their regular newsletter or communications with their constituents. Staff will provide some language for the Board members to include.
- Flyers will be made available at any facilities, message boards, or advertising locations owned and/or operated by the County.

Local Media

The California FAIR MAPS Act requires counties take steps to inform the public by providing information to media organizations that provide county news coverage. Since Solano County straddles two media markets, the Bay area and Sacramento, information is sent to both as listed below:



- Daily Republic <https://www.dailyrepublic.com/>
- The Reporter <https://www.thereporter.com/>
- Vallejo Times Herald <https://www.timesheraldonline.com/>
- The Press Democrat <https://www.pressdemocrat.com/northbay/solano/>
- Access Local.TV <http://accesslocal.tv/>
- ABC 7 news <https://abc7news.com/tag/solano-county/>
- The North Bay Business Journal <https://www.northbaybusinessjournal.com/northbay/solano/>
- Patch: <https://patch.com>
- KUIC radio: <https://KUIC.com>
- SF Chronicle: <https://SFChronicle.com>
- Sac Bee: <https://Sacbee.com>
- KRON News: <https://Kron4.com>
- ABC 10 News: <https://Abc10.com>
- CBS KPIX News: <https://SanFrancisco.CBSlocal.com>
- Univision: <https://univision.com>
- Fox 40 News: <https://Fox40.com>
- KOVR 13 News: <https://Sacramento.CBSlocal.com>
- KQED NPR Radio: <https://kqed.org>
- Bay Area News Group: <https://bayareanewsgroup.com>
- KRON 4 News: <https://Kron4.com>
- KCRA 3 News: <https://kcra.com>

Known Local Neighborhood and Community Based Organizations

Within each local government there are existing structures that can be utilized to build outreach and then eventually be used as a basic structure of the districting process. These should be identified and used as a basic structure for outreach.

Building this list can be done through existing staff who may already be working with community organizations. Another likely source for information would be those working with the CA Counts program to improve the US Census in 2020 – those networks are some of the same which will be utilized in the redistricting cycle.

Neighborhood Associations – the state law specifically names cities and other underlying local entities as key elements in both outreach and defining communities of interest in the line-drawing process. A part of this can be obtained through Redistricting Partners by identifying any GIS sources for neighborhoods, commercial sources through Zillow or other websites. Beyond this, most cities have either official or unofficial networks of neighborhoods that either participate in city government, or in some cases, have an underlying neighborhood council structure that may have an official governmental role.

Community Groups – these could be organizations around a student population, senior centers, homeowners’ groups, and other existing community-based organizations.

The following CBOs are active in Solano County and most participated in the Census Complete Count Committee:



- Advancement Project
- APAPA <https://www.apapa.org/>
- Community Clinic Consortium <https://clinicconsortium.org/>
- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority <https://deltasigmatheta.org/>
- Fighting Back Partnership <https://fight-back.org/>
- La Clinica <https://www.laclinica.org/>
- Planned Parenthood Northern California <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-northern-california>
- Shelter Solano <https://shelterinc.org/what-we-do/shelter-solano/>
- Solano County Black Chamber of Commerce <https://www.solanoblackchamber.org/>
- Tri-City NAACP <https://www.tri-citynaacp.org/>

Education Institutions – there will be opportunities to reach out to schools and colleges for additional outreach or participation.

- Engage colleges / Student Governments
- High School Instructors / Administrators
- Presentations to classrooms – these can be to get student involvement or urge them to get their parents involved, assist them with the technology.

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- Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District <https://www.fsusd.org/>
- Solano Community College <https://welcome.solano.edu/>
- Solano County Library <https://solanolibrary.com/>
- Solano County Office of Education <https://www.solanocoe.net/>
- CAL Maritime <https://www.csum.edu/>
- UC Davis <https://www.ucdavis.edu/>
- Chapman University <https://www.chapman.edu/>
- Saint Mary's College Extended Education <https://www.stmarys-ca.edu/>
- Touro University <http://tu.edu/>

Language Access

The Fair Maps Act requires counties to produce materials in-language to support the outreach to communities that may have language barriers. The County will begin looking for translation services to ensure the County is prepared to meet any additional in-language requests if requested within 72 hours of a hearing.

Outreach Checklist

- Creation of Public Hearing Schedule
- Technology for public hearings with video and recordings.
- Public comment procedures
- Website with all required redistricting information
- Community of Interest Form
- Online Mapping Software
- Training Schedule
- Outreach to Local Media
- Contact with Local Community Organizations
- Direct Communications (email/mail)
- Language Access