

THE CALIFORNIA VOTING RIGHTS ACT (CVRA)



Paramount Unified School District

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Frequently Asked Questions Regarding The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

Why is the governing board of the Paramount Unified School District considering a change from an at-large system of voting to a district-based system?

- The governing board of the Paramount Unified School District may wish to consider changing from an at-large system of voting to a district-based system because the California Voting Rights Act (CVRA) strongly discourages at-large voting and strongly encourages district-based voting.
- Almost every public agency that had an at-large voting system and was sued under the CVRA has lost in court and has had to pay attorney fees to the plaintiffs' attorneys.



Frequently Asked Questions Regarding The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

When was the CVRA enacted?

- The CVRA was enacted in 2002 by the California Legislature and signed by Gov. Gray Davis.

What was the intent or purpose of the CVRA?

- The intent of the CVRA was to enhance the voting rights protections embodied in the federal Voting Rights Act. In signing the legislation, Gov. Gray Davis stated that the purpose of the legislation was to provide voters with a cause of action to challenge at-large elections when it was shown that a minority's voting rights have been abridged or diluted.¹



Frequently Asked Questions Regarding The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

What does the CVRA prohibit?

- The CVRA prohibits the use of any election system (e.g., at large system) that impairs the ability of a protected class (e.g., racial or ethnic minority) to elect candidates of its choice or its ability to influence the outcome of an election.²



Frequently Asked Questions Regarding The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

How does the CVRA define district-based elections?

- The CVRA defines district-based elections as a method of electing members to the governing body of a political subdivision in which the candidate must reside within an election district that is a divisible part (usually five or seven district or trustee areas) of the political subdivision and is elected only by voters residing within that election district.³



Frequently Asked Questions Regarding The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

How does the CVRA define racially polarized voting?

- The CVRA defines racially polarized voting as meaning voting in which there is a difference in the choice of candidates or other electoral choices that are preferred by voters in a protected class, and in the choice of candidates or other electoral choices that are preferred by voters in the rest of the electorate.⁴



Frequently Asked Questions Regarding The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

When is the at-large method of voting in violation of the CVRA?

- The CVRA states that an at-large method of election may not be imposed or applied in a manner that impairs the ability of a protected class (e.g., racial or ethnic minority) to elect candidates of its choice as a result of a dilution or abridgment of rights of voters who are members of a protected class.⁵



Frequently Asked Questions Regarding The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

How is a violation of the CVRA determined?

- A violation of the CVRA is established if it is shown that racially polarized voting occurred in elections for members of the governing board or in elections incorporating other electoral choices by the voters of the political subdivision.⁶



Frequently Asked Questions Regarding The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

What is the process for drawing the boundaries for trustee areas?

- The process begins with two public hearings during Board meetings.
- During the public hearings, the members of the public may provide input to the Board on the criteria and composition of proposed trustee areas.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

- Following the second public hearing, the Board will consider a Resolution that identifies criteria for the demographer to use in preparing draft maps of trustee areas.
- Usually, the demographer will prepare at least two sets of draft trustee area maps and an election plan identifying in which trustee areas elections will be held in 2024 and 2026, for subsequent review by the Board.

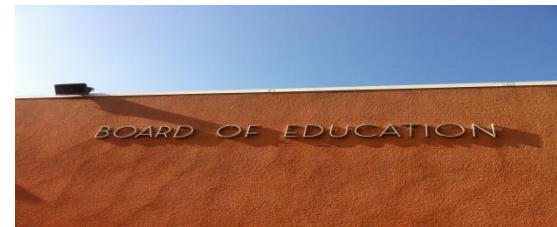


Frequently Asked Questions Regarding The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

- The demographer will then draft maps and a third and fourth public hearing will be conducted to obtain public input regarding the content of the draft trustee area maps and proposed sequence of elections.
- Following the fourth public hearing, the Board will vote on a Resolution adopting a trustee area map and sequence of elections and authorize submission of the proposal to the County Committee on School District Organization.
- The Board will also vote on submitting a waiver request to the County Committee.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding The California Voting Rights Act (CVRA)

- The County Committee on School District Organization will then hold a public hearing within the boundaries of the District and consider approval of the proposal to change the District's election system to a district-based system and the trustee area maps.
- Following approval by the County Committee on School District Organization, the proposal goes to the Registrar of Voters for implementation.



Footnotes

- ¹ Stats, 2002, ch. 129 (SB 976), Governor's Signing Statement.
- ² Elections Code section 14027.
- ³ Elections Code section 14026(b).
- ⁴ Elections Code section 14026(e).
- ⁵ Elections Code section 14027.
- ⁶ Elections Code section 14028(a).



VOTING AREA PROCESS

PARAMOUNT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

SEPTEMBER 26, 2023



COOPERATIVE
STRATEGIES
ASSESS • PLAN • FUND • BUILD

► VOTING AREA PROCESS

DATE	ACTIVITY
September 26, 2023	Board Meeting: First Pre-Map Public Hearing and Presentation
October 10, 2023	Board Meeting: Second Pre-Map Public Hearing
October 24, 2023	Board Meeting: First Public Hearing on Voting Area Scenarios
November 2, 2023	Community Meeting: Map Scenarios
November 6, 2023	Community Meeting: Map Scenarios
November 14, 2023	Board Meeting: Final Public Hearing on Voting Area Scenarios Board Selection of Voting Area Map Board Consideration of Change in Election Method
November/December 2023	County Committee on School District Organization Holds a Public Hearing and Considers Trustee Area Map. Cooperative Strategies sends Final Voting Area Map to the County of Registrar of Voters
November 2024	First Election Held Utilizing Voting Areas

► CONSIDERATIONS IN VOTING AREAS



Each area shall contain nearly equal number of inhabitants



Follow man-made and natural geographic features, as much as possible



Drawn to comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act



Respect incumbency, if possible



Compact and contiguous, as much as possible

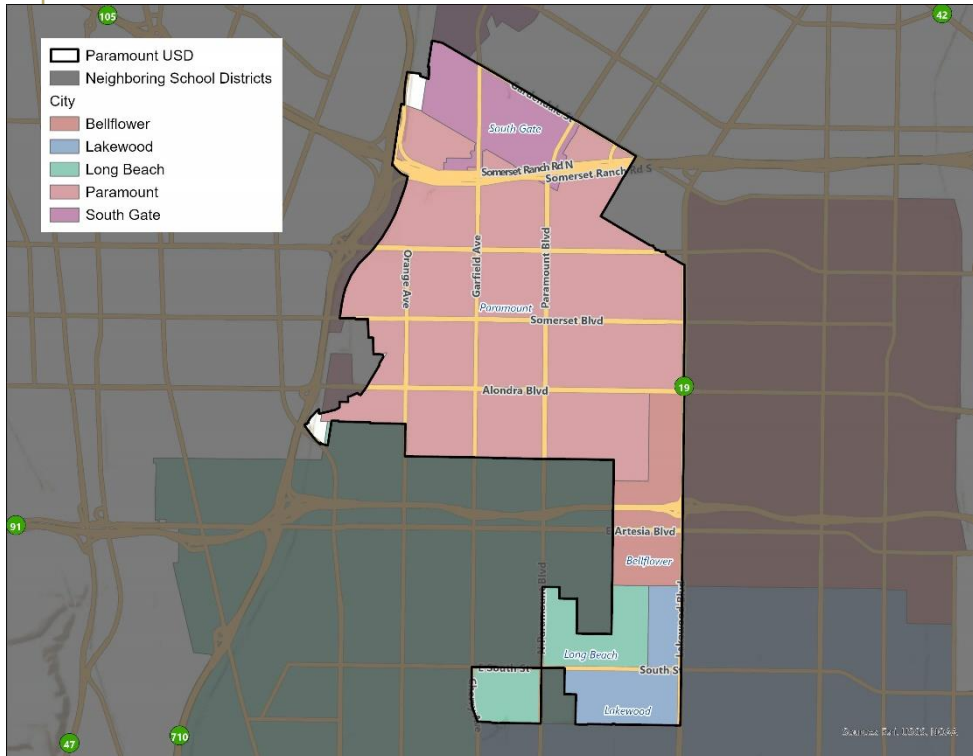


Other local considerations



Respect communities of interest, as much as possible

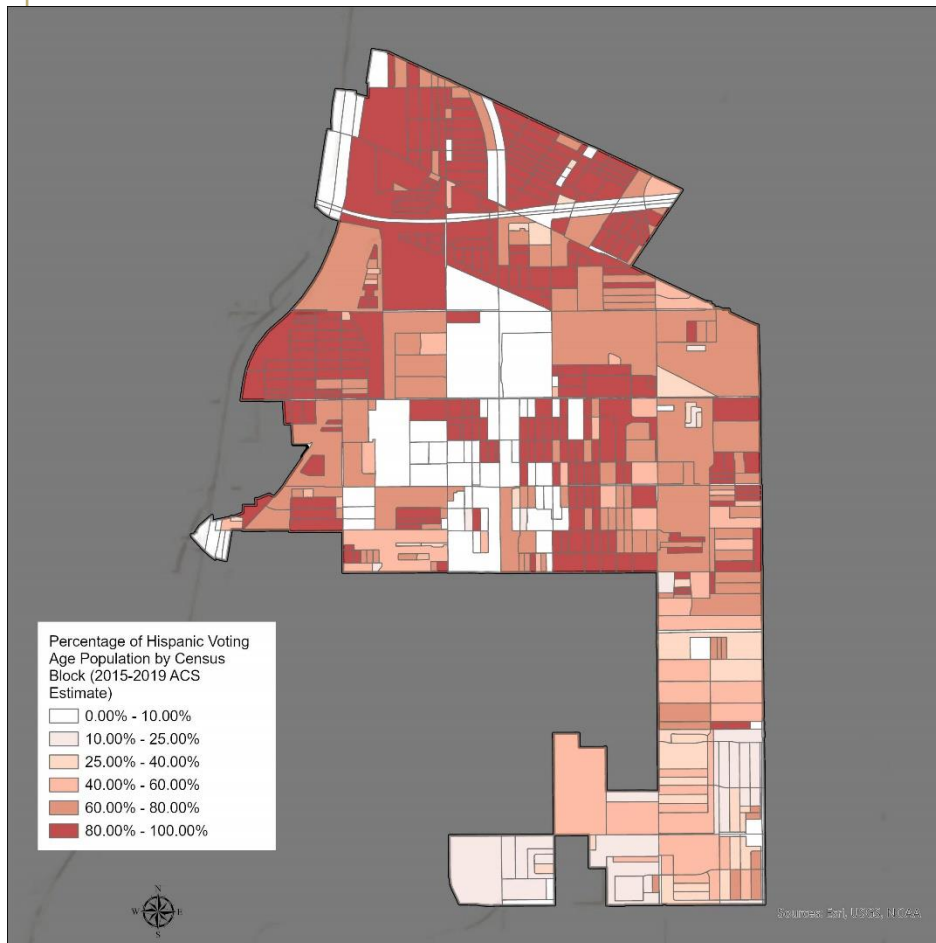
► DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS 2020 CENSUS DATA



Population	Total Population		Age 18 +	
	Total	%	Total	%
Hispanic/Latino	57,578	73.5%	41,975	71.7%
White	4,757	6.1%	4,205	7.2%
Black/ African American	9,793	12.5%	7,391	12.6%
American Indian/Alaska Native	146	0.2%	131	0.2%
Asian	3,995	5.1%	3,355	5.7%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	449	0.6%	352	0.6%
Other	316	0.4%	223	0.4%
Two or More Races	1,342	1.7%	929	1.6%
Total Population	78,376	100%	58,561	100%

► DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

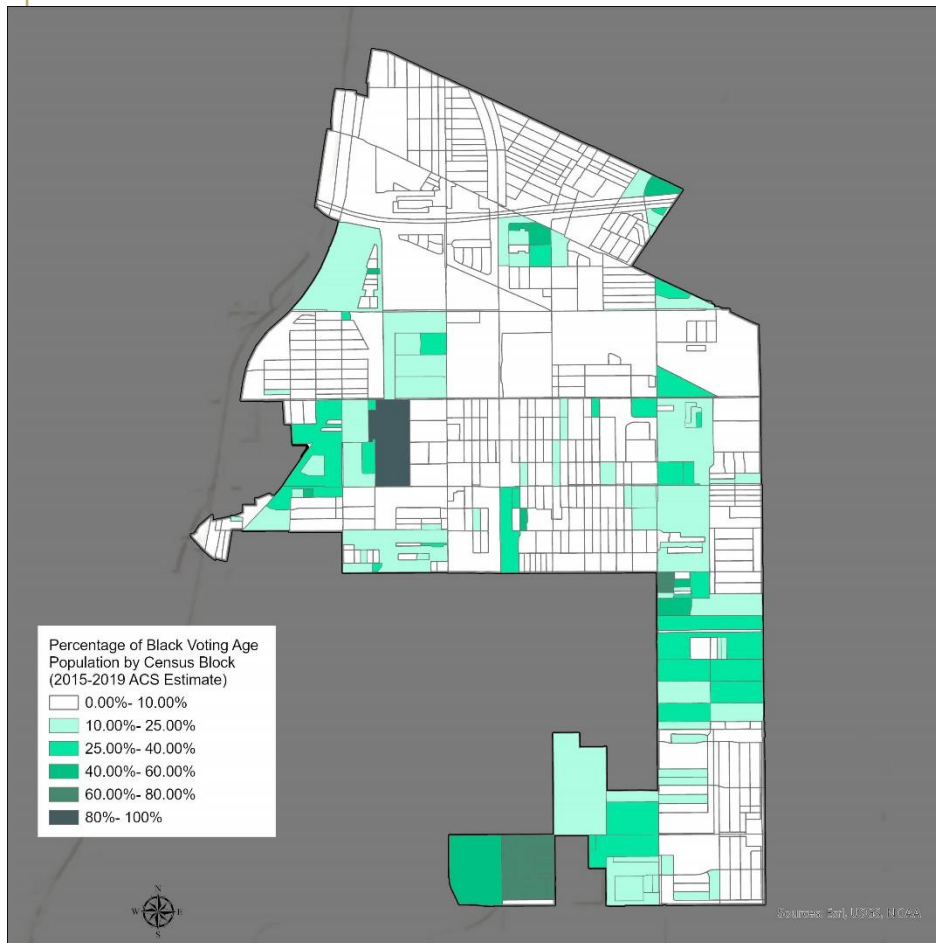
HISPANIC CITIZEN VOTING AGE POPULATION ESTIMATES



Population	2017-2021 CVAP	
	Total	%
Hispanic/Latino	30,167	68.4%
White	4,066	9.2%
Black/ African American	6,264	14.2%
American Indian/Alaska Native	56	0.1%
Asian	2,926	6.6%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	244	0.6%
Two or More Races	399	0.9%
Total Population	44,122	100%

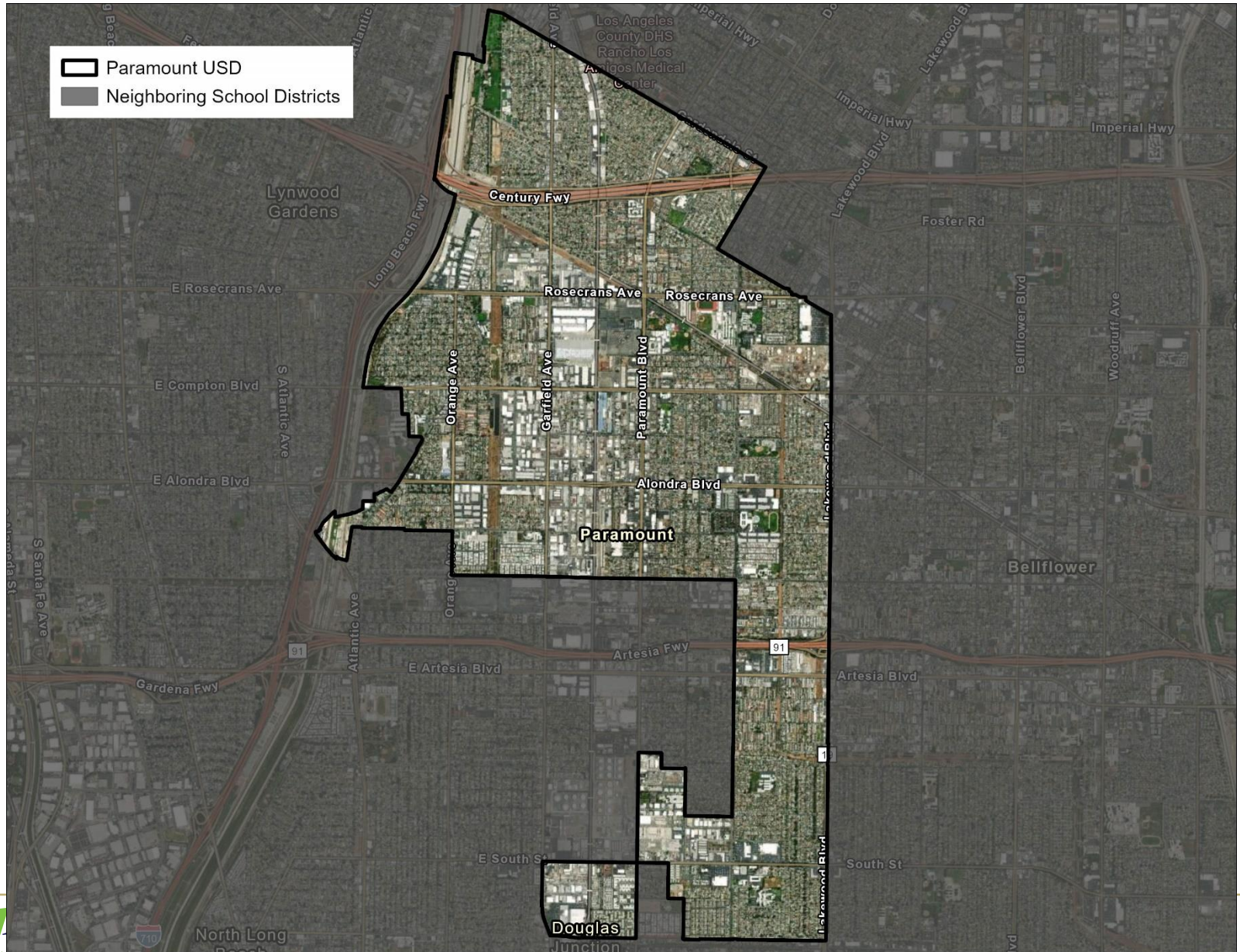
► DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

BLACK CITIZEN VOTING AGE POPULATION ESTIMATES



Population	2017-2021 CVAP	
	Total	%
Hispanic/Latino	30,167	68.4%
White	4,066	9.2%
Black/ African American	6,264	14.2%
American Indian/Alaska Native	56	0.1%
Asian	2,926	6.6%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	244	0.6%
Two or More Races	399	0.9%
Total Population	44,122	100%

► HOW SHOULD LINES BE DRAWN?



► PRE-MAP PUBLIC HEARING
EXAMPLES OF FEEDBACK FOR MAPPING PROCESS

“I would like to keep Neighborhood X and Neighborhood Y in the same voting area...”

► PRE-MAP PUBLIC HEARING
EXAMPLES OF FEEDBACK FOR MAPPING PROCESS

I think:

- ***Artesia Blvd.***
- ***Garfield Ave.***
- ***Rosecrans Ave.***

... may make sense as a voting area boundary because ...

- **It keeps communities together**
- **It provides good representation**

QUESTIONS?

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