Community Feedback

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American Canyon is a growing City and has been the center of student growth for the NVUSD for the past decade. It is highly likely that with the additional building projects approved for American Canyon that this growth engine will be restarted soon, despite the current pandemic. Therefore, especially in light of the NVUSD's ongoing poor treatment of the residents and students in American Canyon, it is imperative that of the 2 map options being considered for district-based elections starting in 2020, Map 2 be selected. Map 2 gives American Canyon the possibility of having 2 Trustees on the NVUSD Board, which should improve the odds of better treatment for this wonderfully diverse community which makes up over 25% of the non-charter school student population as of 2018-19 for the NVUSD. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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I wanted to submit some info regarding our community here in American Canyon in regards to redistricting.

Even though the city of American Canyon is located in the county of Napa, we are our own community. We are the most diverse city in the county. Our population of approximately 20,359, consist of 35 % asian, 27% hispanic, 23 % white, 7 % black/African American, 8 % other, 7 % two or more race and less than 1 % of Native American and 1 % Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders. Our population has grown tremendously over the years and it's expected to continue to grow. Much of our shopping is done in Vallejo, Fairfield, Benicia and Napa; however the traffic to Napa makes it difficult to shop there. We have a variety of cultural rituals and beliefs within our community but are not being represented in schools and differs with most of the county.

Before the city incorporated in 1992, many of the residents located here because they worked at Mare Island Shipyard. Many of them were military veterans. To this day we still have many veterans residing here and they have become a close knit group. Prior to the middle and high school being built here, our children were bussed to the City of Napa to attend school. It was difficult not only because they would have to get up extremely early to be bused to Napa, but because the students never really fit in there, nor felt like they belonged as part of Napa's community. Since even before the City was incorporated there has been a long history of Napa not accepting American Canyon. Napa often referred to American Canyon as the "armpit of Napa."

Our city's growth rate has slowed, but it is expected to continue. Our student population is approximately 4800. The NVUSD Board is made up of seven members, but only one would represent American Canyon. The needs of the other Napa trustee areas are much similar and

closely align with each other. American Canyon needs are different and it often feels that American Canyon is overlooked or out voted during the meetings. We may not have enough student population to necessitate two board trustees, however, it would give us some support to allow our needs to be heard, met and not continuously out voted by aligning board members.

When in tough times, like most communities, our community comes together. The distance between Napa and American Canyon assist in hampering community collaboration. Most cities in the County of Napa are deeply invested in wine and tourism. While American Canyon supports it, we are not really as connected with it with exception of wine warehouses and some local vineyards. We are often referred to as a "bedroom community" since many families work outside of the area and spend much time commuting to larger cites to for employment. Although I do think having two trustees representing American Canyon would level the playing field when it comes to our area being outnumbered by by board representation it would do a huge disservice if you were to divide our city in two while including portions of Napa within our district.

Sadly the Redistricting process was not only cut short given this was brought forth by a legal petition, but also hampered by the Covid 19 which limited the necessary and needed outreach. No doubt you will do your due diligence to create the district areas fairly.

Thank you for your time,

Mother, grandmother and community member

Dear NVUSD Board of Trustees,

Thank you for providing the resources online to help residents understand the NVUSD redistricting process. We are parents of 2 NVUSD students (Canyon Oaks Elementary and American Canyon Middle School) and appreciate the opportunity to provide input.

Below is a list of our comments:

1. Redistricting should take into account the near-future influx of residents from sizable construction projects CURRENTLY underway.
In American Canyon, The Village at Vintage Ranch (corner of American Canyon Road and Highway 29) is anticipated to have 500 residents from 160 units at completion (projected for end of 2020). Currently, at least two buildings have already been completed and rented out. We did not see any information on your website about whether this development was included in calculating the ideal population for trustee areas. Perhaps designing a trustee area that encompasses this development should have less than ideal population numbers to accommodate the additional 500 residents.
https://www.villageatvintageranch.com/

2. Consider including areas covering the 2 very large FUTURE development projects in different trustee areas.
Related to item 1 regarding population growth, there are at least 2 very large FUTURE development projects -- Napa Pipe in South Napa and Watson Ranch in North American Canyon -- that have been approved by the respective cities. These developments are anticipated to start building in the next 1-2 years with an anticipated build out to be phased in over 10-15 years. We don't expect these future additional residents to be included in current redistricting efforts because both developments have not yet broken ground, and both plan to start with a phase that do not add to the NVUSD population. However, the trustee area(s) that encompass these 2 developments could be designed to have slightly less than ideal population numbers to help buffer the influx of residents when residential homes start being built, and before the next opportunity to redistrict (assuming the district waits until the 2030 census). Because both large projects are following a similar timeline and in a similar timeframe, perhaps these 2 large developments could be in different trustee areas to not disproportionately affect one trustee area.
* Napa Pipe Project (945 Homes; https://www.northbaybusinessjournal.com/industrynews/construction/10567119-181/napa-pipe-housing-retail-construction)
* Watson Ranch Project (1,253 Homes; http://watsonranchproject.com/?page_id=274)

3. To better address the issues that prompted the current redistricting, we are in favor of having one trustee area that is within the city of American Canyon to guarantee at least 1 trustee will be from American Canyon.
Although splitting American Canyon down Highway 29 would allow for 2 trustee areas representing similar population sizes drawn from American Canyon (~10,000 residents each side), there is no guarantee that at least 1 trustee will be from American Canyon. In the scenario where no trustees live in American Canyon, there will be the perception that American Canyon is not being represented. Therefore, to ensure fair representation, American Canyon should be represented by at least 1 American Canyon-specific trustee area.

4. Suggested trustee areas related to American Canyon.
A suggested trustee area map for NVUSD, taking into account the above comments and using the NVUSD-provided website, is in the following link: https://districtr.org/edit/3292
Please note that although the other 4 trustee areas to the North of American Canyon are included in our draft map, we defer to others who are more knowledgeable about communities of interests in those areas to draw the trustee area lines.

5. Additional suggestions to help stakeholders understand the maps better.
a. Identify more visibly (in all zoom levels preferable) where NVUSD schools are located on the redistricting map tool.

b. Enable overlay of % Households in NVUSD who speak Spanish, and Asian and Pacific Islander Languages by Census Block Group within redistricting map tool (Data Layers > Demographics) rather than on a separate map.
c. Provide draft map link to the redistricting map tool to allow easier access to play around with adjusting boundaries.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments. Please contact us if you have any questions about these comments and suggestions.

Best regards,
[redacted]
American Canyon Residents

First of all, these comments reflect my own personal views and not that of the City of American Canyon or of the City Council.

With that said, I support Concept #2, which creates two districts for American Canyon, generally split along the Highway 29 Corridor. I appreciate the idea of giving our community two potential votes on the Board. I believe it not only recognizes American Canyon as an area with future growth potential, but also acknowledges the community of interest that is our community. With two potential seats on the Board, American Canyon can ensure our voice is heard--at least in a parliamentary sense, since we could make and second motions.

However, in reviewing the map boundaries (and working with the online map generator tool), it is also clear that American Canyon is not currently large enough to avoid including portions of southern Napa City/County. In the short run, this runs the risk of disenfranchising those residents.

In the longer run, American Canyon will be growing. As Watson Ranch and the Broadway District areas develop, we could easily see an increase of up to 10,000 people. This would then allow the District to redraw the lines (potentially in 2020) to more completely include American Canyon (or more accurately, exclude areas that are not American Canyon in the two districts).

Thank you for giving all of us an opportunity to provide input, especially online opportunities, given the COVID-19 situation. ***I hope you will give strong consideration to Concept #2, thereby ensuring American Canyon will have a better voice in the education of our future voters!***

[redacted]

Our household votes for Concept 4. American Canyon and its surrounding area to the east and north should be kept as one district.

Attached is my Community of Interest response form.

Thank you for soliciting our feedback!

In the County of Napa every County Board of Supervisor has a little slice of the City of Napa in their district. What I have seen over the years is that many in the City of American Canyon are disconnected with what is happening in the 26 other schools that our elected officials represent throughout the district. By allowing AC two reps and those reps districts coming into the City of Napa, it would widen their scope of representation.
I feel that not only does it diversify the areas that they represent, but also widens the interest scope.

Dear NVUSD Trustees, Superintendent, and Staff

We are so glad to be able to utilize the online resource to provide our Public Comment regarding the Redistricting of the Trustees lines.

We feel very strongly about having better representation at the District level for American Canyon. We are advocating for 2 trustees in the American Canyon area. American Canyon has 25% of the NVUSD population as it stands now.
Not to mention the soon to be build or finished:

- Watson Ranch Project (1,253 Homes; http://watsonranchproject.com/?page_id=274)
- https://www.villageatvintageranch.com/
- Canyon States http://www.canyonestateshomes.com/ which will be adding 35 luxury homes full of children in 2020.

Our current Trustees and Staff cannot denied that American Canyon is not fully represented at the District level.
American Canyon has 5 schools,the last time the District drew lines, American Canyon only had 2 schools, Our students were being bus to Napa for Middle and High School education.

We support Two Trustees in American Canyon and the lines to be drawn to represent the demographics of American Canyon, which we know is the 2nd largest city in Napa County. We

feel that the lines need to be moved to the American Canyon City limits instead of part of it to continue to be in the Napa City lines.

We thank you for taking the time to read our comments, and we hope you continue to be healthy and safe during this hard time.

To Whom it May Concern:
We would like to submit this map into the public record.
It is a map the Napa County Progressive Alliance developed showing the current trustee areas and their corresponding population.
It shows that one district has twice as many residents as another.
This huge disparity in population is reason alone to district prior to the presidential election, not to mention the already-stated benefits to candidates campaigning over a more reasonable area and increasing the likelihood that American Canyon's residents, with their unique population, will elect their trustee(s) of choice.

Sincerely,
Gary Orton
NCPA Secretary

(see attachment)

Describe your Community of Interest (COI) below: Please include ***what*** makes it a Community of Interest (e.g. shared culture, common neighborhood projects, etc.) ***where*** it is located (i.e. streets, creeks, freeways, or other places in the NVUSD make up the exterior boundaries of your COI) and ***why*** it should be kept together (e.g. easier to work with 1 Trustee). A COI can be any size – large or small – and does not need to be the same size as a Trustee Area. COIS are usually smaller than Trustee Areas and often multiple COIs are included in one Trustee Area!

One community of interest is the Old Town neighborhood in which I live— the Napa Abajo neighborhood.

Another COI would be my neighborhood schools, which are Shearer Elementary, Silverado Middle, and Napa High.

What is the mutual interest?

For my neighborhood, mutual interests include preserving the charm and character of our homes and the neighborhood itself, our neighborhood parks, walkable streets, and general safety.

For our neighborhood schools, a mutual interest would be safe routes to school as there are few bike lanes even on major streets. Also, the Napa Abajo neighborhood is high Latino in the south (South of Spruce St.) and mainly anglo in the North. Many of the anglo parents do not send their children to our neighborhood elementary school (Shearer) and have them go to other elementary schools. It would be ideal if Shearer could become a dual immersion school, similar to NVLA or Pueblo Vista, to bring the community together and become the school of choice for all of the families living in the area regardless of ethnicity.

Where is it located? Please be as specific as possible – what streets, highways, rivers, etc., make up the boundaries of your Community of Interest?

My neighborhood: Jefferson St. to the West, Imola Ave. to the South, the Napa River to the East, and North into Downtown Napa.

For our neighborhood schools, the boundaries would still be Jefferson to the West and Imola to the South but would extend further North to Pueblo Ave. and East into Alta Heights/Coombsville area.

Why should it be kept together?

My neighborhood: As much as possible neighborhoods should be kept together to increase the likelihood that you will run into the trustee who represents your area and get to know that person.

Neighborhood schools: As much as possible trustees should live in a district that contains their neighborhood schools— the elementary schools that feed into the middle school and if possible the high school, so they have the best chance of interacting with families whose children (of various ages) attend those schools.

Name (optional): [redacted]

P.S. As a general note, I hope that similar to the demographer for the city of Napa that the demographer for NVUSD will commit to not knowing where the various trustees live until after a map is adopted. I also hope that the NVUSD demographer will go a step further than the city and also make the recommendation in terms of the sequence of the elections and which four districts should run candidates in 2020 versus which three in 2022. We have learned working with the city that the sequence will likely be as political as the map itself (if not more), so bias should be taken out of the entire process— both in terms of the map and the recommended sequence.

To Whom it May Concern:
This is a followup to the input I provided previously in terms of my personal communities of interest (COIs), as a resident of the Napa Abajo neighborhood, now that draft maps have been released.
In my prior communications, I focused on maintaining neighborhoods and respecting major geographic definers, in particular Hwy. 29 (where one cannot cross by foot), as well as school attendance boundaries, balancing these three factors as much as possible. I described the boundaries of the neighborhood in which I live and also the schools that correspond with this neighborhood (Shearer Elementary, Silverado Middle, and Napa High). I did fail to mention before that the Napa Abajo neighborhood is part of a larger COI, which is Old Town Napa, which is made up of a few neighborhoods and covers a larger geographic area. Looking at the district in which my neighborhood would fall (District 4) and Old Town as a whole, I feel that Map C (District C4) is spot on, followed by Map B (District B4). (Both maps A and D break up Old Town.)

District C4 not only keeps the Napa Abajo neighborhood in tact, but it keeps all of Old Town in tact, and is the only map that does so. The boundaries for Old Town extend North to Lincoln, West to Highway 29, South to Imola, and extend into the southwestern portion of Alta Heights to East Avenue. The only change I would suggest is that the eastern border stop at East Avenue as East Avenue is a major boulevard and better geographic definer than the small streets to the east where that district currently ends. District C4 also does a good job of keeping the neighborhoods together whose families would send their children to Silverado Middle and Napa High School, which District B4 does not.

This is not an endorsement of Map C as a whole, because I do not think it maintains COIs in American Canyon of which I think Map D does a better job; it is just a strong endorsement of District C4 from the perspective of someone who lives in that area.



I prefer Map D, of the three choices, because it is the only one that leaves American Canyon with a pure area (not shared with a portion of Napa).

Each of the concept maps shows trustees areas that are continguous and tolerably compact. The stated basis for the defining boundaries is exclusively the use of streets and highways, with the exception of Concept 4, which considers the corporate limits of American Canyon. The streets chosen in concept map 1 and carried over to other maps are not necessary the most recognizable. To the extent they follow neighborhoods, this is not stated. Most critically, there are no demographic variables to determine how well trustee areas in each map provide a dedicated trustee for communities that have exceptional needs or have been chronically underrepresented.

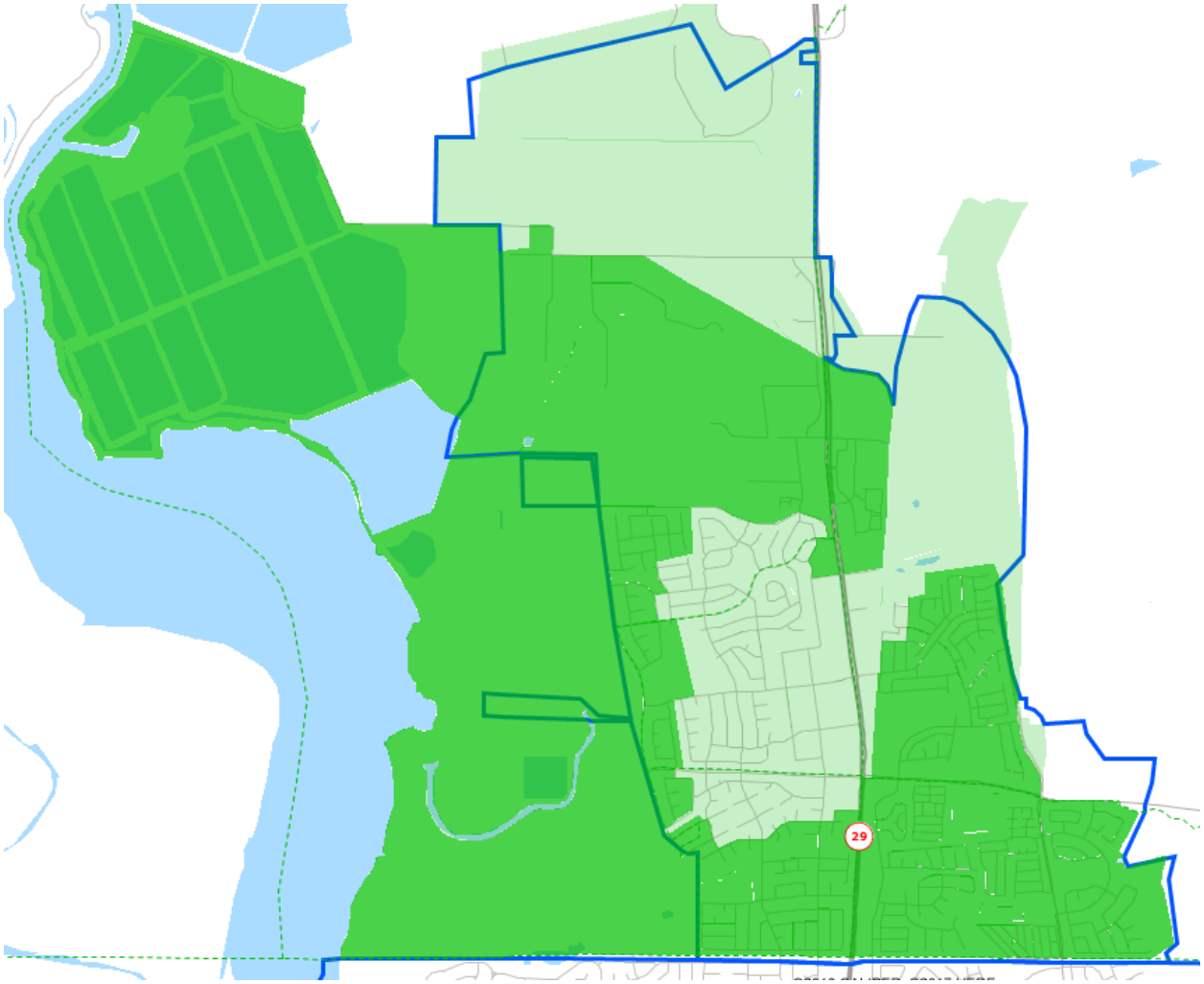
We demonstrated racially polarized voting from a Latino perspective; i.e., high-Latino precincts vote differently from low-Latino precincts. As such, Latino influence is diluted. The same is likely true of the Asian immigrant community in American Canyon. Asian immigrant precincts vote differently than non-Asian precincts. Differences in issue priorities and voting behavoirs can lead them to choose candidates that are different from the non-Asian choices.

The primary purpose of the CVRA is to redress racial voter dilution, so it is possible to analyze districts solely from that perspective. My clients disagree with that approach for two reasons. First, it assumes too quickly that the protected group is integrated to a uniform degree. Typically, in well-to-do neighborhoods, Latinos and non-Latinos vote less differently than elsewhere and Latino candidates-of-choice are more likely to appeal to non-Latino voters. So an exclusively racial focus does not tailor the remedy for the more severely disenfranchised portion of the protected group. In their neighborhoods, Latinos and other protected groups often vote in coalition and with cross-over white Anglo voters. A more appropriate lens is to seek to identify areas that are distinguished by demographic variables that show high need and limited capacity for political influence. Because the protected groups continue to experience legacies of discrimination, these variables of high need and lack of influence do correlate with race. However, the broader promise of state and federal voting rights laws is to enfranchise citizens of all races in these disempowered communities.

Most of the variables I would rely on can be found in the American Community Survey, released Jan. 31, 2020. They include an analysis by block group of percent in poverty, median income, unemployment, education attainment, internet penetration, crime, limited English proficiency, homeownership, home values, years of tenure, foreign birth, limited English proficiency, health insurance. Neighborhoods that score poorly on these measures of influence and prosperity should be placed in their own areas, so that they may have a dedicated trustee who truly knows and understands their life experience. A trustee elected by such an area can best articulate how the values and needs of its residence should influence the policies of the District. It is important not only to look for high minority share of CVAP, but also to look at low total CVAP, since this usually indicates a large number of children or non-citizens. The needs of such

areas are typically greater than average, but the winner-take-all, at large system minimizes their influence.

One composite measure is the Hard-to-Count index generated at the tract and block group levels by the California state government in preparation for the census. Areas that are Hard-to-Count may be less visible to local government as well. In American Canyon, the index suggests that the areas west of 29, to the extent that they were settled before 2000, have demographic qualities that resemble the rest of Napa County. Other block groups in and near American Canyon score high on such components are foreign-born population, unemployed, non-high school graduates, limited English proficiency. Neither Route 29 nor the city limits isolates the disenfranchised population, which inhabits the darker green area, largely built out between 2000 and 2010. Without full demographic data, I have not been able to analyze the boundaries within City of Napa from the standpoint of an "equity lens," but the discussion during the city's process provides some guidance.



Walnut Creek

Hello!

I've been getting caught up on all of the discussion and maps surrounding the proposed redistricting process for the coming election. There are so many issues to sort through! So thankful for the thoughtful work that the board, superintendent's office, and many community members have already put into determining the best path forward for our district and ultimately our kids.

As an American Canyon community member and parent I want to express my concern over a growing east/west mentality in our town. I wouldn't necessarily describe it as hostile. Rather, there is a lack of unity between town members separated by the Highway 29. Are there any similar dynamics in Napa? Any history from the experience in Napa from which the American Canyon community can learn? It seems to be continuing into the next generation too - being identified as a Napa Junction kid or Donaldson Way kid as opposed to a Canyon Oaks kid. In every town it seems that there inevitably be "the other side of the tracks" simply based on geography. But I think there are things we can do as a young community to not let it affect the way we treat one another.

As another concern - it's important for our community to be represented well on the school board. Why? Simply because our community is different than the others in Napa County. The demographic data tells us that. It's important that one of the board members not only have "feet on the ground" but I'd say "heart in the town"...someone who knows the pulse of the community, the different passions and driving factors that cause us to walk, talk and make decisions the way we do. And in this case, most importantly how we make decisions for our kids.

Based on those concerns, after reviewing the maps I'd like to put my hearty support behind Map D or something close to the intentions behind it.

One last question - I believe we have built into the process the ability to change the districts in the future? That could be important for the American Canyon community in the future with anticipated housing growth.

Thank you!

[redacted]
Dedicated Parent & Community Member
[redacted]