



City of Menlo Park

Introduction to Election Systems

October 30, 2017

California Voting Rights Act Impact

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- Switched (or in the process of switching) as a result of California Voting Rights Act challenges:
 - ▣ At least 169 school districts
 - ▣ 32 Community College Districts
 - ▣ More than 77 cities
 - ▣ 1 County Board of Supervisors
 - ▣ 10 water and other special districts.
- Key decisions & settlements
 - ▣ Only Palmdale has gone to trial on the merits (the city lost)
 - ▣ Key settlements:
 - Palmdale: \$4.7 million
 - Modesto: \$3 million
 - Anaheim: \$1.1 million
 - Whittier: \$1 million
 - Santa Barbara: \$600,000
 - Tulare Hospital: \$500,000
 - Madera Unified: about \$170,000
 - Hanford Joint Union Schools: \$118,000
 - Merced City: \$42,000
 - Placentia: \$20,000

Demographic Summary

Latinos are 18% of the total population and 12% of the eligible voters (measured by Citizen Voting Age Population counts).

African-Americans are 5% of total population, and Asian-Americans are 12%.

Sources: 2010 Census, California Statewide Database (2012 and 2014 November elections), 2011-2015 American Community Survey Special Tabulation of Citizen Voting Age data, and 2011-2015 American Community Survey data. "Latino" registration and turnout numbers are Spanish-surnamed data adjusted with US Census Population Division's California adjustment factor.

Race/Ethnic Profile	Count	Percent	ACS Profile	Count	Percent
Total Population	32,026		ACS Total Population	32,644	2%
Latino	5,902	18%	Age 0 - 19	8,802	27%
NH White	19,841	62%	Age 20 - 60	18,003	55%
NH Black/ African-American	1,601	5%	Age 60+	5,839	18%
NH Native American	99	0%			
NH Asian-American	3,831	12%	Immigrant	8,103	25%
NH Pacific Islander	470	1%	Naturalized (pct of total immigrants)	3,530	44%
NH Other	83	0%	Age 5+	30,042	
NH Multi-Race	199	1%	Speak English at home	20,374	68%
Voting Age Population total	24,221		Speak Spanish at home	5,013	17%
VAP Latino	3,942	16%	Speak an Asian language at home	1,901	6%
VAP NH White	15,646	65%	Speak other language at home	2,754	9%
VAP NH Black/ African-American	1,283	5%	Speak English only "well" or less	3,331	11%
VAP NH Native American	75	0%	Age 25+	22,380	
VAP NH Asian-American	2,781	11%	Age 25+, no HS degree	1,868	8%
VAP NH Pacific Islander	317	1%	Age 25+, HS degree (only)	5,161	23%
VAP NH Other	53	0%	Age 25+, bachelor degree (only)	6,621	30%
VAP NH Multi-Race	124	1%	Age 25+, graduate degree (only)	8,731	39%
Citizen VAP total	20,317		Households	11,776	
CVAP Latino	2,436	12%	Child under 18 in Household	4,119	35%
CVAP NH White	13,755	68%	Income \$0-25k	1,048	9%
CVAP NH African-American	1,284	6%	Income \$25-50k	1,451	12%
CVAP NH Asian & Pacific Islander	2,734	13%	Income \$50-75k	1,344	11%
CVAP Other	108	1%	Income \$75-200k	4,298	36%
Voter Registration (Nov. 2014)	17,603		Income \$200k+	3,635	31%
Latino Reg	1,722	10%	Housing units	12,447	
Asian-Surnamed Reg.	1,113	6%	Single-Family	7,832	63%
Filipino-Surnamed Reg.	126	1%	Multi-Family	4,615	37%
Est. NH White Reg.	13,516	77%	Vacant	671	5%
Est. African-Amer. Reg	1,140	6%	Occupied	11,776	95%
Democratic Reg.	8,895	51%	Rented	5,206	44%
Republican Reg.	3,581	20%	Owned	6,569	56%
Other/No Party Reg.	5,127	29%			
Voters Casting Ballots (Nov. 2014)	10,199	58%	Voters Casting Ballots (Nov. 2012)	14,450	81%
Latino voters	594	6%	Latino voters	1,189	8%
Asian-Surnamed voters	559	5%	Asian-Surnamed voters	767	5%
Filipino-Surnamed voters	57	1%	Filipino-Surnamed voters	85	1%
Est. NH White voters	8,524	84%	Est. NH White voters	11,577	80%
Est. African-Amer. Reg	472	5%	Est. African-Amer. Reg	828	6%
Democratic voters	5,285	52%			
Republican voters	2,346	23%			
Other/No Party voters	2,569	25%			

Alternative Elections Systems I

□ **General Law Cities:**

1. **At Large** with 5, 7 or 9 members of the City Council
 - Mayor can be selected by the voters or by the City Council
 2. **By District** with 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9 districts
 - Odd numbers have Mayor selected by the City Council, even numbers have at-large elected Mayor
 - Candidates for a district seat must live in the district, and only the voters in the district vote in that district election
 3. **From District** with 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9 districts
 - Odd numbers have Mayor selected by the City Council, even numbers have at-large elected Mayor
 - Candidates for a district seat must live in the district, but the election is held city-wide
- Only a “By District” system provides a “safe harbor” from a California Voting Rights Act lawsuit

□ Charter Cities Options:

1. **“Instant Runoff” also known as “Ranked Choice Voting”**
 - Voters rank candidates. Candidates must receive 50 percent of “live” ballots to win.
 - Elections remain citywide.
 - Used in San Francisco, Oakland and San Leandro.
2. **“Cumulative Voting” (and “Limited Voting”)**
 - If two or three seats are up for election, voters get two or three votes, and a voter can group all of his/her votes for a single candidate.
 - Election remains citywide.
 - Used as a Federal Voting Rights Act remedy in Peoria IL and Port Chester NY.

- ❑ Cities can only transition from General Law to Charter at a statewide general election.
- ❑ Only a “By District” system provides a “safe harbor” from a California Voting Rights Act lawsuit.
- ❑ Possible approach: move to by-district elections for 2018, and take the time to study alternative options for a future Charter.

Introduction information for if the City Council approves a move to by-district elections

Traditional Districting Criteria

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Federal Laws

- ❑ Equal Population
- ❑ Federal Voting Rights Act
- ❑ No Racial Gerrymandering



Traditional Criteria

- ❑ Communities of interest
- ❑ Compact
- ❑ Contiguous
- ❑ Visible (Natural & man-made) boundaries
- ❑ Respect for voters' wishes and continuity in office
- ❑ *Planned future growth*

Since the district lines will be redrawn in 2021, after the 2020 Census data are released, future growth is not usually a significant factor in line-drawing this year.

Latino Citizen Voting Age Population

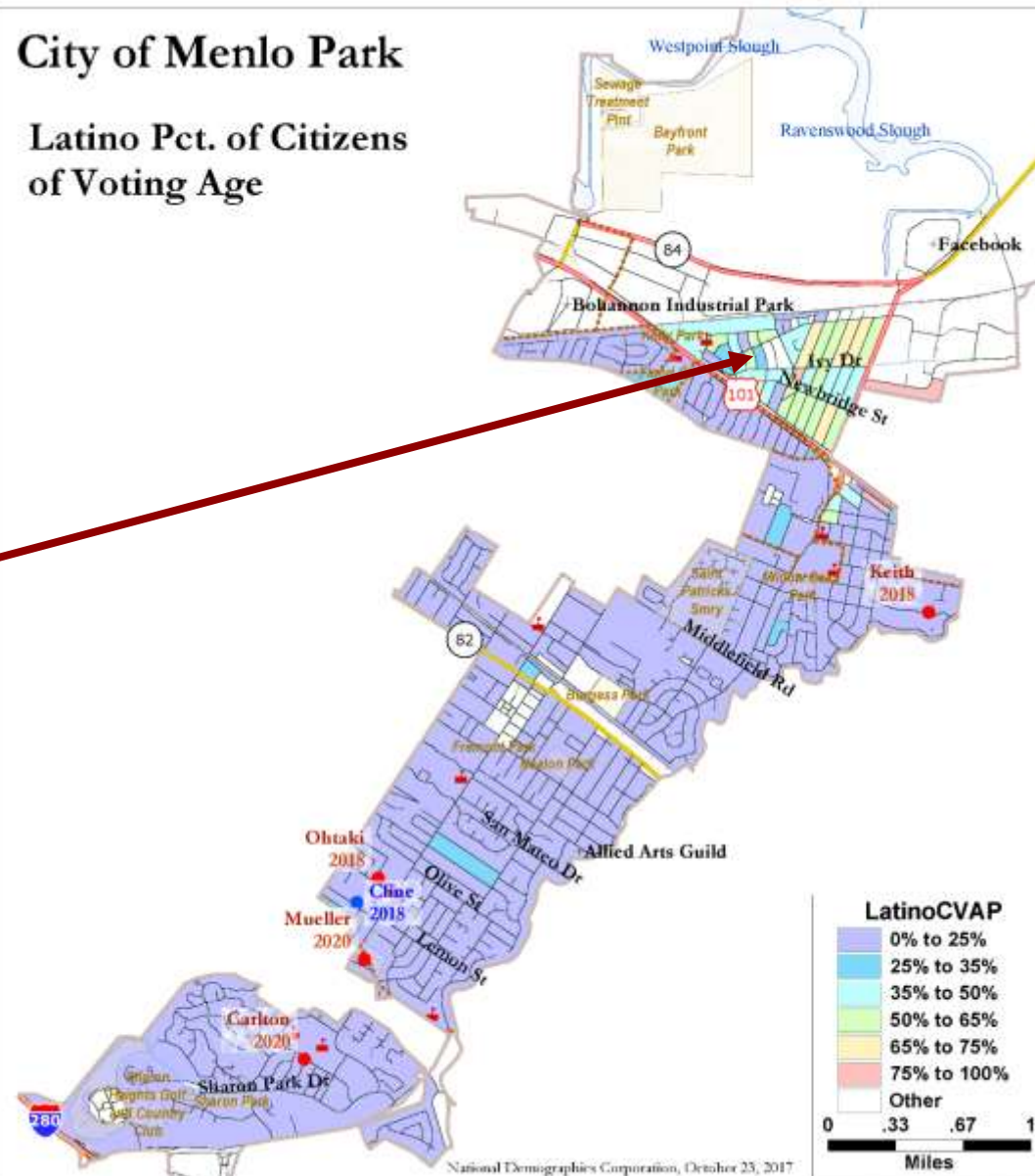
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Citizen Voting Age Population, or CVAP, is the best available measure of the number of eligible voters.

The eligible voters in Belle Haven are 51% Latino, 30% African-American, 10% White, 5% Pacific Islander and 4% other.

City of Menlo Park

Latino Pct. of Citizens of Voting Age



Defining Communities of Interest

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1st Question: what is your neighborhood or community of interest?

A Community of Interest is generally defined as a neighborhood or community of shared interests, views, problems, or characteristics.

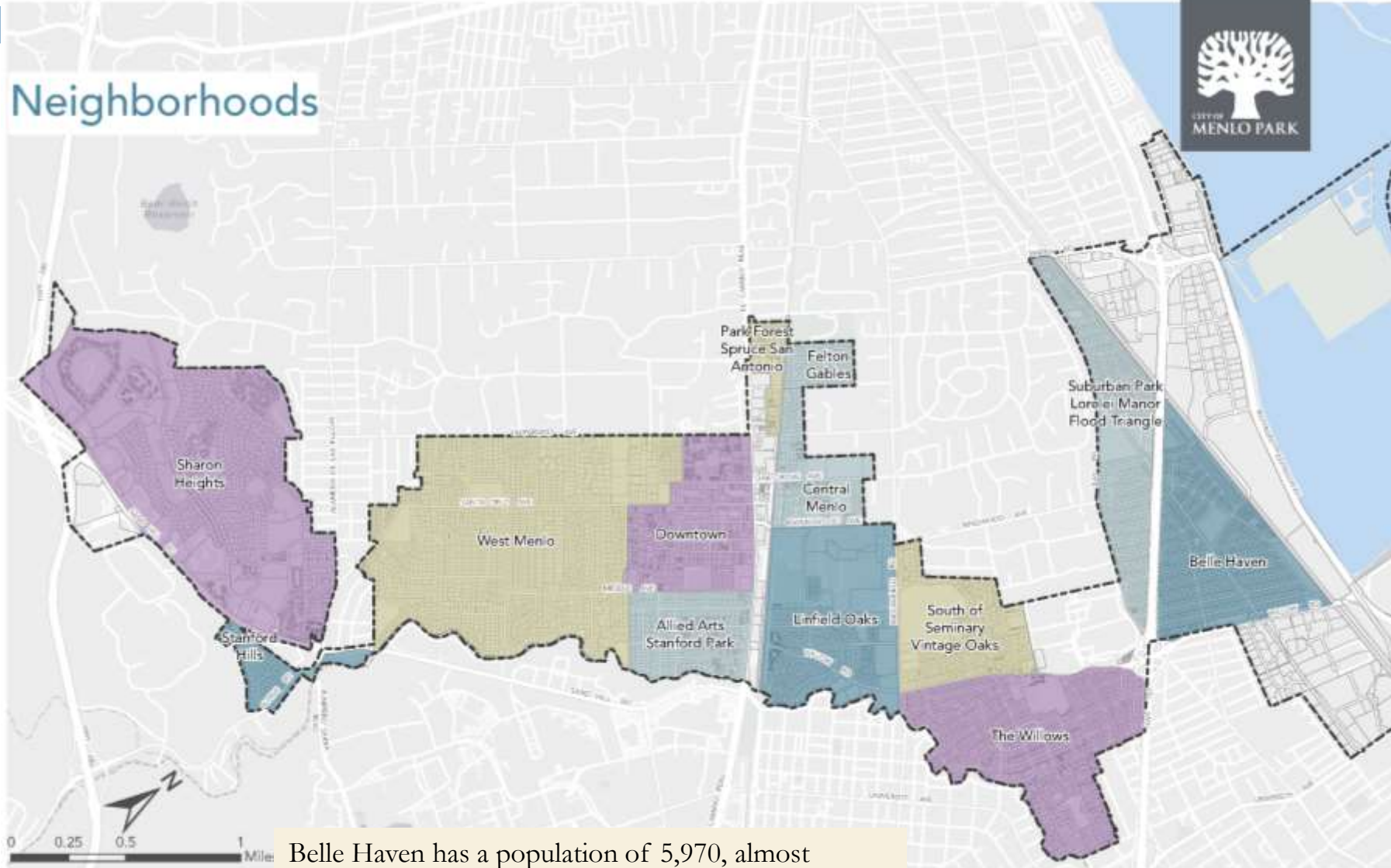
Possible community feature/boundary definitions include:

- ❑ School attendance areas
- ❑ Natural neighborhood dividing lines, such as highway or major roads, rivers, canals, and/or hills
- ❑ Areas around parks and other neighborhood landmarks
- ❑ Common issues, neighborhood activities, or legislative/election concerns
- ❑ Shared demographic characteristics
 - ▣ Such as similar levels of income, education, or linguistic isolation

2nd Question: Does a Community of Interest want to be united in one district, or to be divided to have a voice in multiple elections?



City Neighborhoods Map



Belle Haven has a population of 5,970, almost enough to make a full district in a 5-district system.

If the City Council decides to go to by-district elections:

1. How many districts should be evaluated?
2. Do you want to form a Citizens Voting Commission and Districting Commission?
3. Do you want to opt for the “public participation kits” (allows public to draw and submit their own plans using PDF maps and Excel spreadsheet) \$4,000
4. Do you want to opt for an online interactive system (allows public to draw and submit proposed district plans through a standard web browser) \$14,500
5. What is your neighborhood or “community of interest”
6. Do you prefer your neighborhood be kept together in one district or have multiple representatives?
7. What are other communities of interest in the City that should be considered when drafting maps?