



REPORT TO
City of Sacramento
Sacramento Redistricting Citizens Advisory Committee
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[www. CityofSacramento.org](http://www.CityofSacramento.org)

Staff Presentation/Information
May 9, 2011

Members of the Sacramento Redistricting Citizens Advisory Committee

Title: Neighborhoods as a Redistricting Criterion

Location/Council District: Citywide

Recommendation: Receive and file

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Department: Community Development Department and Department of Parks and Recreation

Organization No: 21001223

Background: At the April 25th meeting (Agenda Item #6), staff presented a Primer – an Overview of Redistricting Criteria to provide the SRCAC and the public with a foundational understanding to get involved with the redistricting process. Fundamentally, the primary consideration for redistricting is equipopulous districts. Secondary considerations are (1) topography, (2) geography, (3) cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity and compactness of territory, (4) community of interests / neighborhoods in the districts; and (5) other criteria deemed relevant. Additionally, draft boundaries are checked for compliance with the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965.

This evening's item presents Primer #3, which drills down into the significance of neighborhoods in the districts and how neighborhoods are defined.

Merriam-Webster's dictionary generally defines neighborhood as a distinctive place or region with characteristics that distinguish it from the surrounding areas.

Neighborhood mapping is an exercise that is part art and part science, acknowledging that neighborhood boundaries are not necessarily the same as self-identified boundaries of neighborhood groups, and that larger neighborhoods may be comprised of smaller neighborhoods. What is important is understanding and articulating the purpose, context, origin, and evolution of neighborhood boundaries.

Because the City has never engaged in a robust neighborhood mapping exercise, the Sacramento Neighborhoods Map shown in the attached Primer #3 – Neighborhoods, represents the City's *working draft* of neighborhood boundaries. It is anticipated that during the Redistricting Process considerable public testimony will be offered that the boundaries do not fully and accurately reflect precise neighborhood identities. Accordingly, staff recommends that the Redistricting Committee weigh the public testimony on neighborhoods as valid redistricting criteria.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Scot Mende, AICP, Principal Planner

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Sacramento Redistricting Citizens Advisory Committee

Session 3 - May 9, 2011

Primer #3

Neighborhoods

City of Sacramento 2011 Redistricting



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Discussion: How neighborhoods can be considered in redistricting.

Neighborhoods - Defined

Neighborhoods are not static. They are dynamic and they evolve. Their boundaries reflect a snapshot in time regardless of who defines them. Neighborhoods and their boundaries can be defined by any one or more of the following:

- Residents and neighborhood groups (not always in agreement)
- Subdivision map
- Parcel map
- Welcome signs / gateway monument signs
- Community Facilities (e.g., parks, community centers, schools, churches, historic buildings)
- Business corridors (e.g., Property & Business Improvement Districts)
- Redevelopment area
- City Council district

[LA Times Mapping LA.](#)

Mapping L.A. began last year with publication of The Los Angeles Times' [map of 87 neighborhoods](#) in the city of Los Angeles, redrawn with the help of readers who agreed or disagreed with initial boundaries. It provides maps and information about demographics, crime and schools in 272 neighborhoods across the county. The shapes of the tracts are frequently out of sync with the geographical, historic and socioeconomic associations that define communities. However, by using the tracts as building blocks, The Times was able to compile a statistical profile of communities.

To define neighborhoods across the county, The Times primarily used the U.S. Census Bureau's boundaries of 88 cities and 43 census-designated places set aside for special tabulation. The Census Bureau maps were adjusted in some areas to conform to more recent maps produced by the Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning. In addition, The Times adopted 12 unincorporated areas proposed by the county for future designation as census places. In rare instances, the census place names were changed to reflect the names used by residents. Large rural areas were divided, as much as possible, using rivers, ridgelines or highways and given generic names.

Unlike most other attempts at mapping L.A., the Times project follows a set of principles intended to make it visually and statistically coherent: It gathers every block of the city into reasonably compact areas leaving no enclaves, gaps, overlaps or ambiguities. Except when there was a compelling reason not to, we kept schools and other landmarks in the communities bearing their names. It differs from other neighborhood mapping projects:

- The city of Los Angeles has posted hundreds of blue street signs denoting scores of neighborhoods — from Little Ethiopia to Little Tokyo to Little Armenia. But the city has never drawn the official boundaries of those districts.

- The Thomas Guide shows the names of many communities but does not try to make clear where neighborhood boundaries are.
- Neighborhood councils within the city sometimes reflect narrow political considerations, and many have a propensity for names like People Involved in Community Organizing, which don't do much to define a community. Many areas of the city have no neighborhood council, even as prized turf such as Occidental College is claimed by more than one council. The same problems apply with even greater force to homeowner associations.
- ZIP Codes provide many people with a community identity but are designed only to speed up the mail.

City of Sacramento Neighborhoods: Definition & Mapping

The attached map represents approximate population totals by City neighborhood. The map is to be used for general reference purposes only and by no means represents exact population totals for neighborhoods. These estimates were developed from 2010 Census block data. Where neighborhood boundaries bisect Census blocks, the center point of the block was used to establish which neighborhood to assign the total population.

The neighborhoods represented in the map come from a variety of different sources. When Neighborhood Services was established as a City Department in 1993 with a focus on geographic-based services, neighborhood maps were essential. Data was taken from parcel maps, subdivision maps, development projects, neighborhood groups, etc., to generally describe neighborhood geographic boundaries. Over the years the City of Sacramento has relied on Neighborhood Services to help identify and navigate neighborhood boundaries as the City grows and neighborhoods change.

The Sacramento Neighborhoods Map also serves more than one function. An added dimension of neighborhood mapping is mapping crime statistics. With the advancements in technology, increase in neighborhood organizing (e.g., neighborhood groups, neighborhood watch, business groups, etc.), and focus on crime prevention, neighborhood mapping has become increasingly important.

Neighborhood mapping is an exercise that is part art and part science, acknowledging that neighborhood boundaries are not necessarily the same as self-identified boundaries of neighborhood groups, and that larger neighborhoods may be comprised of smaller neighborhoods. What is important is understanding and articulating the purpose, context, origin, and evolution of neighborhood boundaries.

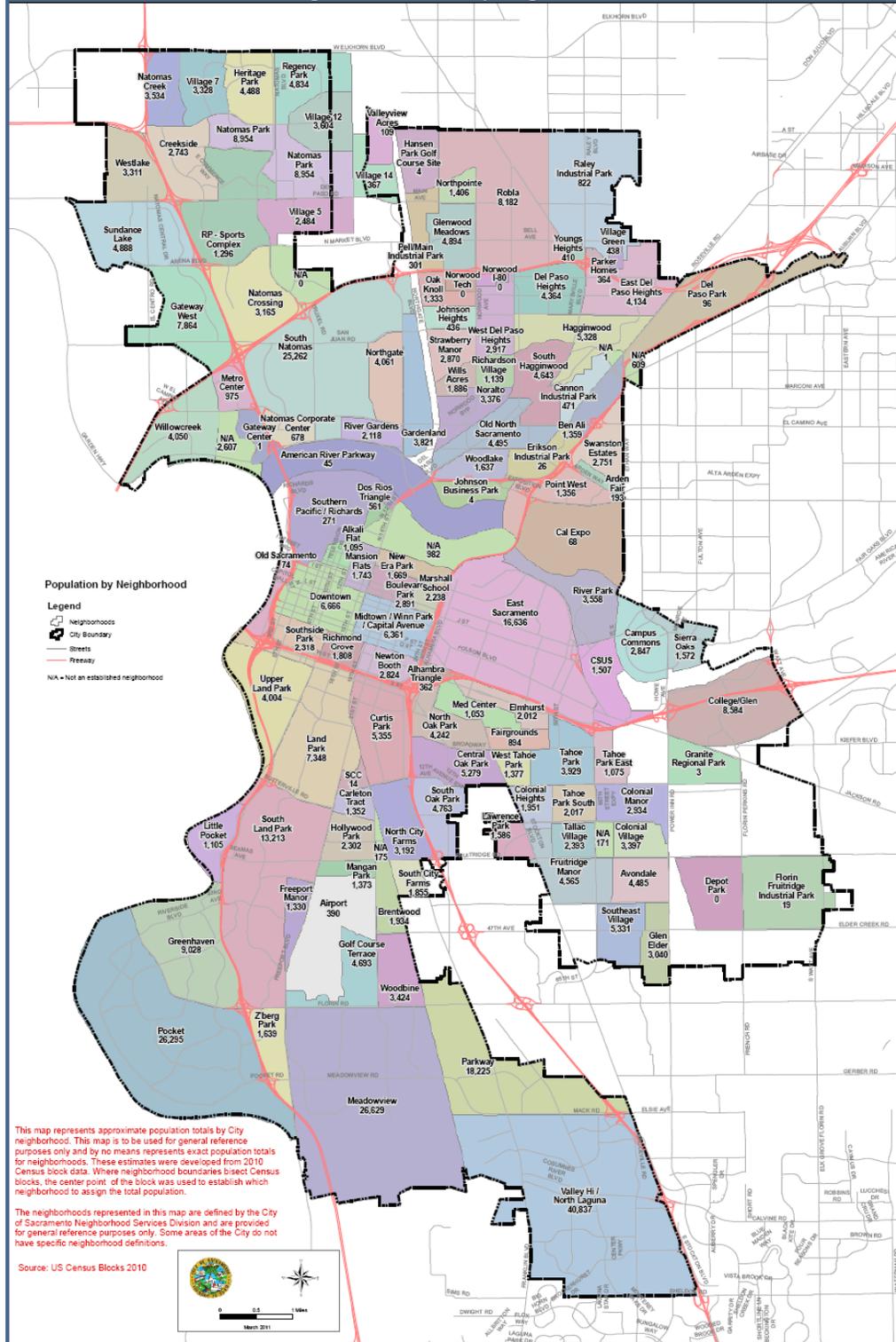
Neighborhoods identified on the map are provided for general reference purposes only. Some areas of the City do not have specific neighborhood definitions. The mapping effort was not vetted to the same degree as the Mapping L.A. project; accordingly, the Sacramento Neighborhoods Map should be used as a general working guide only – without strict reliance as to its accuracy of defining neighborhood boundaries. Moreover, various neighborhood associations may define their neighborhoods differently from the City's Sacramento Neighborhoods Map; the neighborhood association boundaries also may be a legitimate redistricting consideration (as a "community of interest").

City of Sacramento – Communities

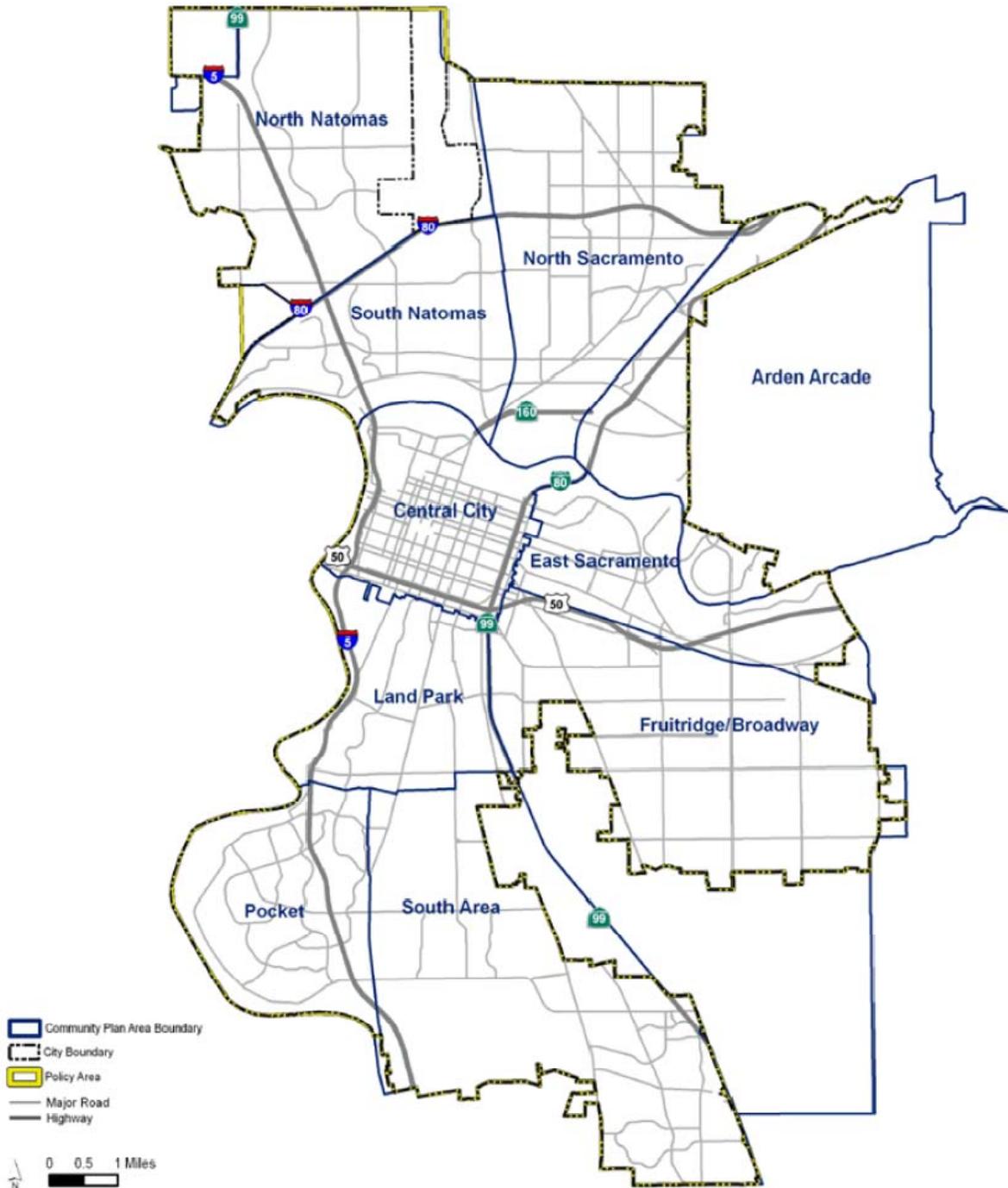
The City of Sacramento has a long history of using community plans to provide policy direction for the various areas of the city. In the 1960s, the City Council adopted the City's first set of 21 community plans. In the 1970s, the City Council redrew community plan boundaries, reducing the number of community plan areas to 11 and establishing a policy basis for the City to eventually update all of its community plans according to the new boundaries.

As part of the development of the 2030 General Plan program (adopted March 2009), the City once again adjusted community plan boundaries, reducing the number of community plan areas from 11 to 10; reorganized, streamlined, and updated the policy content of the existing community plans; and physically incorporated the community plans within Part 3 of the General Plan document. See attached map of the 10 Community Plan areas of the City.

City of Sacramento 2010 Population Estimates by Neighborhoods



COMMUNITY PLAN BOUNDARIES



(FROM 2030 GENERAL PLAN, Figure CP-1, Page 3-3)