

County of Merced

Introduction to Redistricting

June 8, 2021

Dr. Jeff Tilton, Senior Consultant
National Demographics Corporation

Redistricting Process

Step	Description
Two Initial Hearings: June 8 & August 10	Held prior to release of draft maps. Educate and to solicit input on the communities in the Districts.
Mapping Workshop: July: TBD	Workshop to provide overview of available mapping tools, including ArcGIS Online mapping tool tutorial.
Census Data: Mid/Late August	Census Bureau releases official 2020 Census population data.
California Data: Early October 2021	California Statewide Database releases California's official 'prisoner-adjusted' 2020 redistricting data.
Draft Map Hearings: Nov. 16 & Dec. 7	Two meetings to discuss and revise the draft maps and to discuss the election sequence. (NOTE: Nov. 16, 6:30 p.m.)
Map Adoption: Target is Dec. 7, 2021	Final map must be posted at least seven (7) days prior to adoption.

Redistricting Rules and Goals

1. Federal Laws

Equal Population
Federal Voting Rights Act
No Racial Gerrymandering



2. California Criteria for Counties

Geographically contiguous
Undivided neighborhoods and “communities of interest”
(Socio-economic geographic areas that should be kept together)

Cities and CDP’s

Easily identifiable boundaries

Compact

(Do not bypass one group of people to get to a more distant group of people)

Prohibited:

“Shall not favor or discriminate against a political party.”

3. Other Traditional Redistricting Principles

Minimize voters shifted to different election years

Respect voters’ choices / continuity in office

Future population growth

Preserving the core of existing districts

Defining Neighborhoods

1st Question: what is your neighborhood?

2nd Question: what are its geographic boundaries?

Examples of physical features defining a neighborhood boundary:

- Natural neighborhood dividing lines, such as highway or major roads, rivers, canals and/or hills
- Areas around parks or schools
- Other neighborhood landmarks

In the absence of public testimony, planning records and other similar documents may provide definition.



Beyond Neighborhoods: Defining Communities of Interest

1st Question: what defines your community?

- Geographic Area, plus
- Shared issue or characteristic
 - Shared social or economic interest
 - Impacted by county policies
- Tell us “your community’s story”

2nd Question: Would this community benefit from being “included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation”?

- Or would it benefit more from having multiple representatives?

Definitions of Communities of Interest may not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.

Beyond Neighborhoods: Communities

Under the California Elections Code, “community of interest” has a very specific definition in the context of districting and redistricting cities and counties:

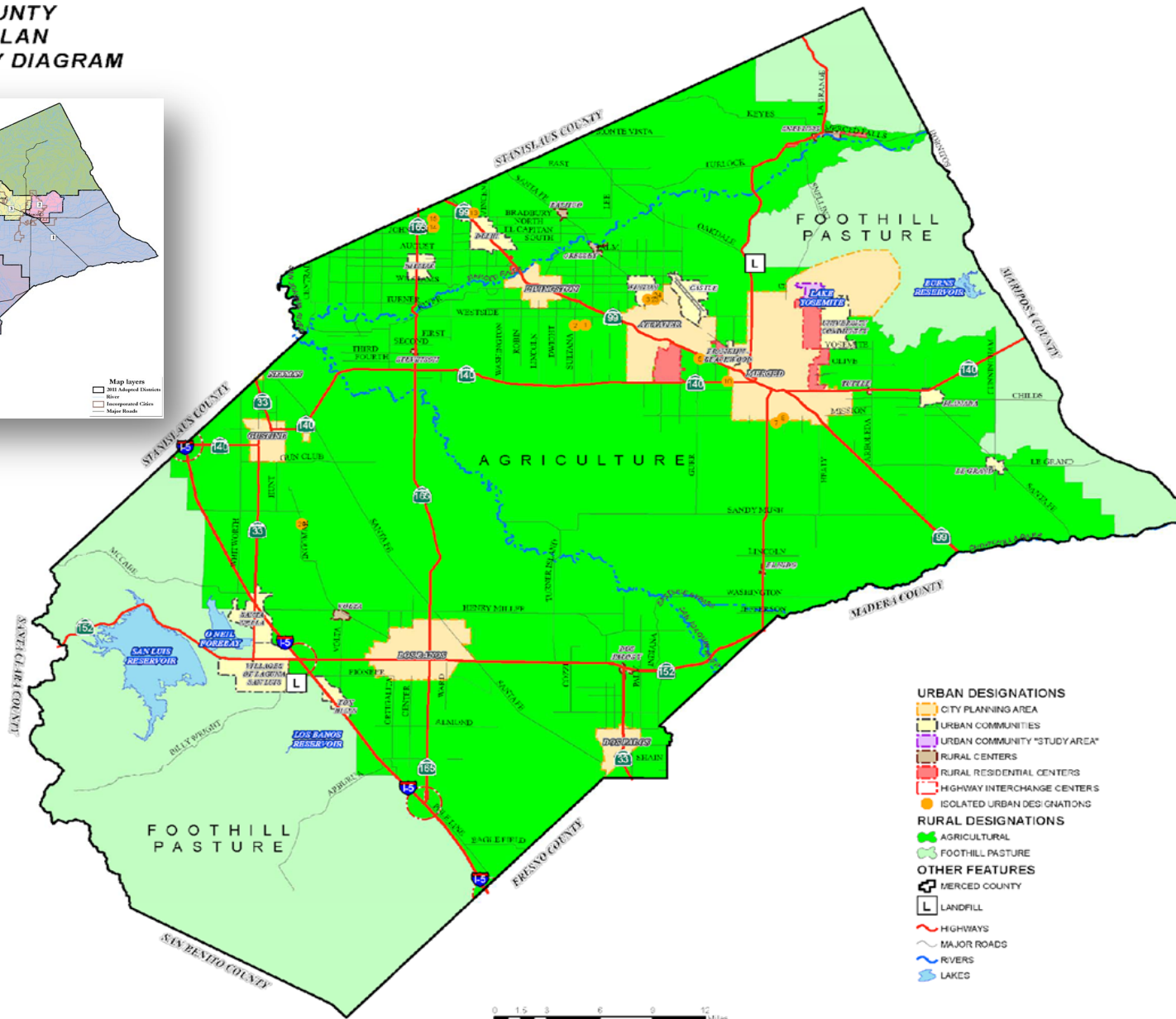
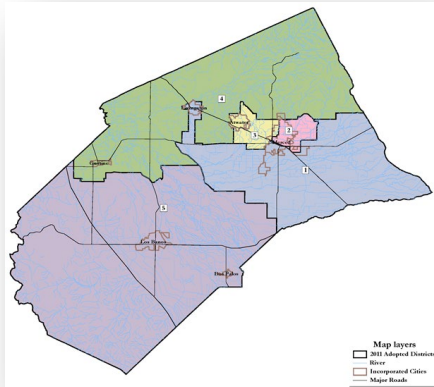
A “community of interest” is a population that shares common social or economic interests that should be included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation.

Communities of interest do not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.

(emphasis added)

Possible Neighborhoods / Communities

MERCED COUNTY GENERAL PLAN LAND USE POLICY DIAGRAM



- URBAN DESIGNATIONS**
- CITY PLANNING AREA
 - URBAN COMMUNITIES
 - URBAN COMMUNITY "STUDY AREA"
 - RURAL CENTERS
 - RURAL RESIDENTIAL CENTERS
 - HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE CENTERS
 - ISOLATED URBAN DESIGNATIONS
- RURAL DESIGNATIONS**
- AGRICULTURAL
 - FOOTHILL PASTURE
- OTHER FEATURES**
- MERCED COUNTY
 - LANDFILL
 - HIGHWAYS
 - MAJOR ROADS
 - RIVERS
 - LAKES



Public Mapping and Map Review Tools

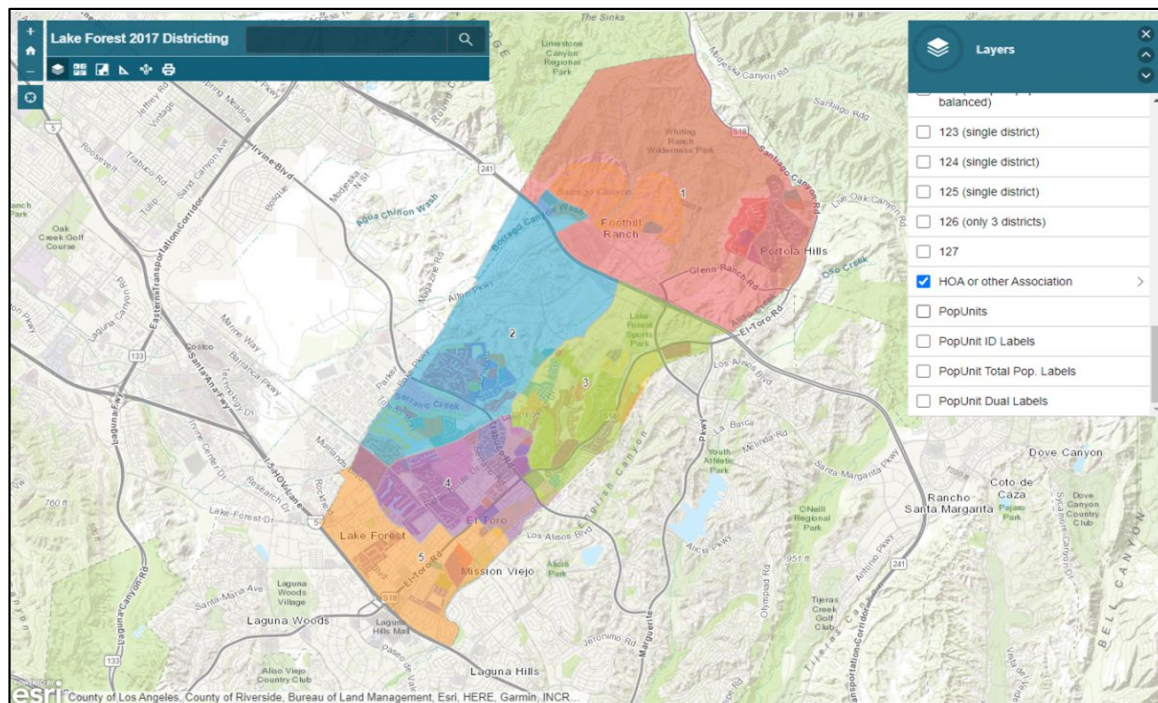
- **Different tools for different purposes**
- **Different tools for different levels of technical skill and interest**
 - Simple “review draft maps” tool
 - Easy-to-use “Draw your neighborhood” tool
 - Paper- and Excel-based simple “Draw a draft map” tools
 - Powerful, data-rich “Draw a draft map” tool

Whether you use the powerful (but complicated) online mapping tool, Excel, the paper kit, or just draw on a napkin, we welcome your maps!

Simple Map Review Tool

Online Interactive Review Map

- ESRI's “ArcGIS Online” – similar to Google Maps in ease of use
- Used to review, analyze and compare maps, not to create them
- Includes overlays of “community of interest” and other Story Map data
- Sample map from Lake Forest



Simple Map Drawing Tool

Paper “Public Participation Kit”

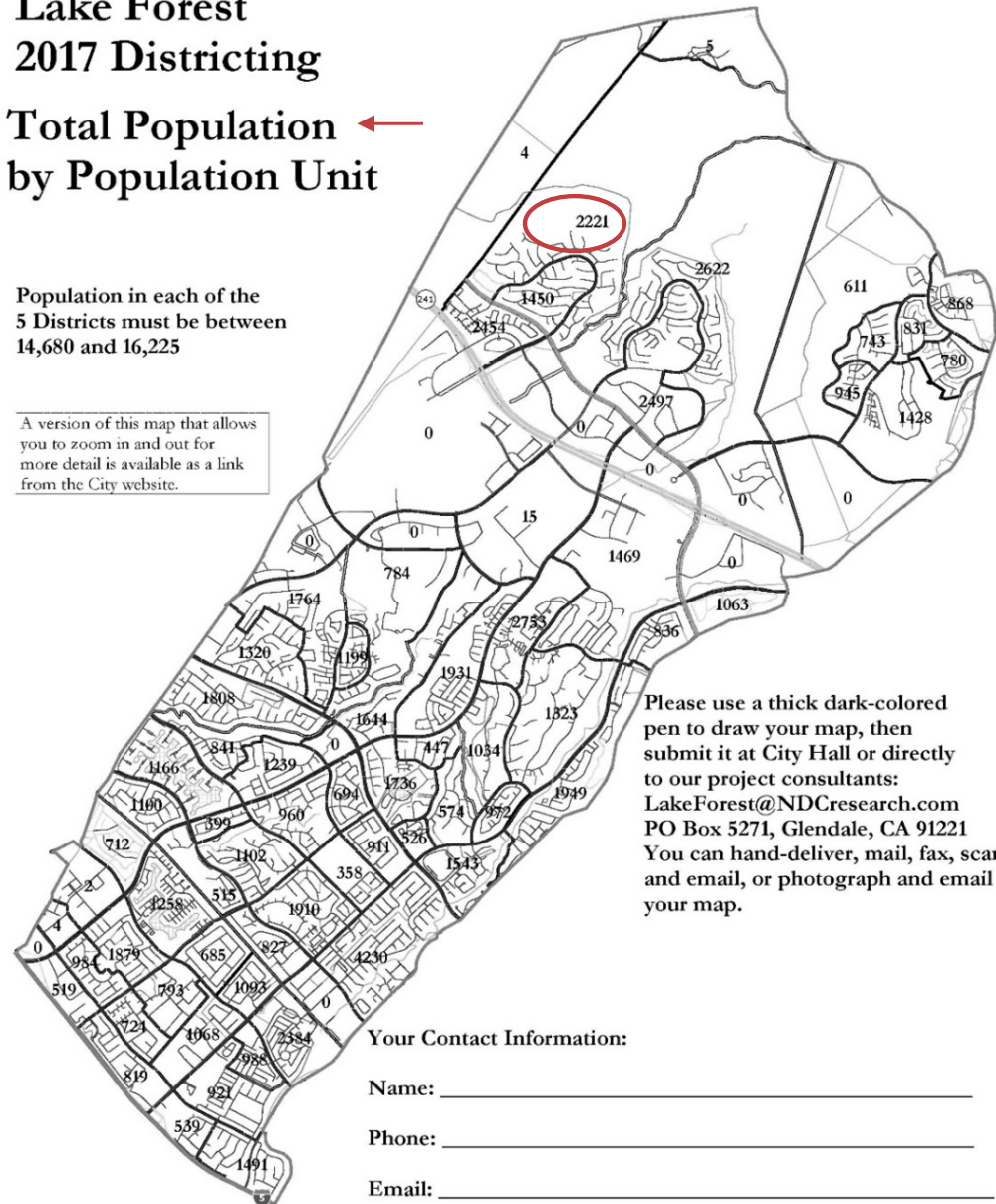
- For those without internet access or who prefer paper
- Total Population Counts only – no demographic numbers
- Geographic units would be tracts, CDP’s and smaller cities

Lake Forest 2017 Districting

Total Population ←
by Population Unit

Population in each of the
5 Districts must be between
14,680 and 16,225

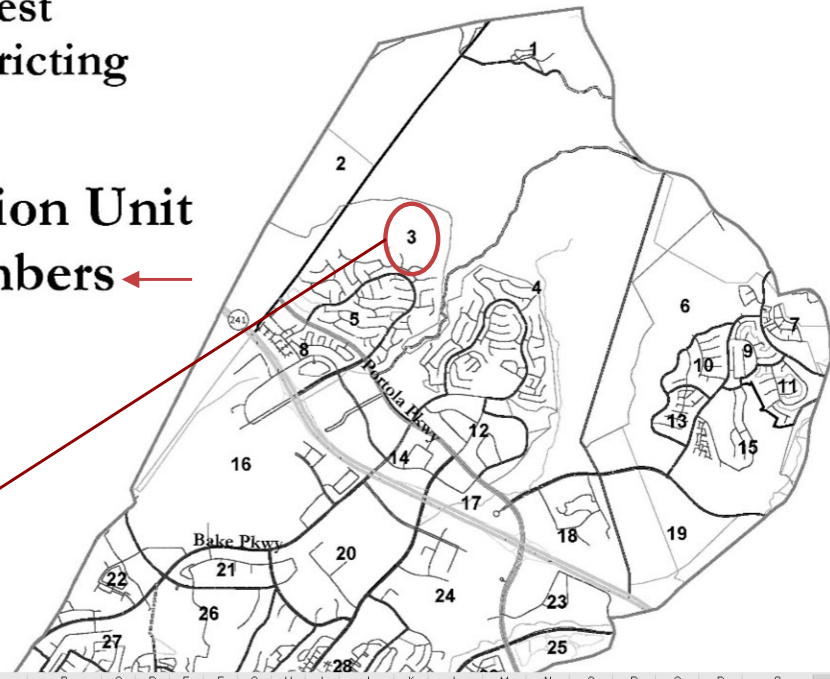
A version of this map that allows
you to zoom in and out for
more detail is available as a link
from the City website.



“Public Participation Kit”

- # Lake Forest 2017 Districting

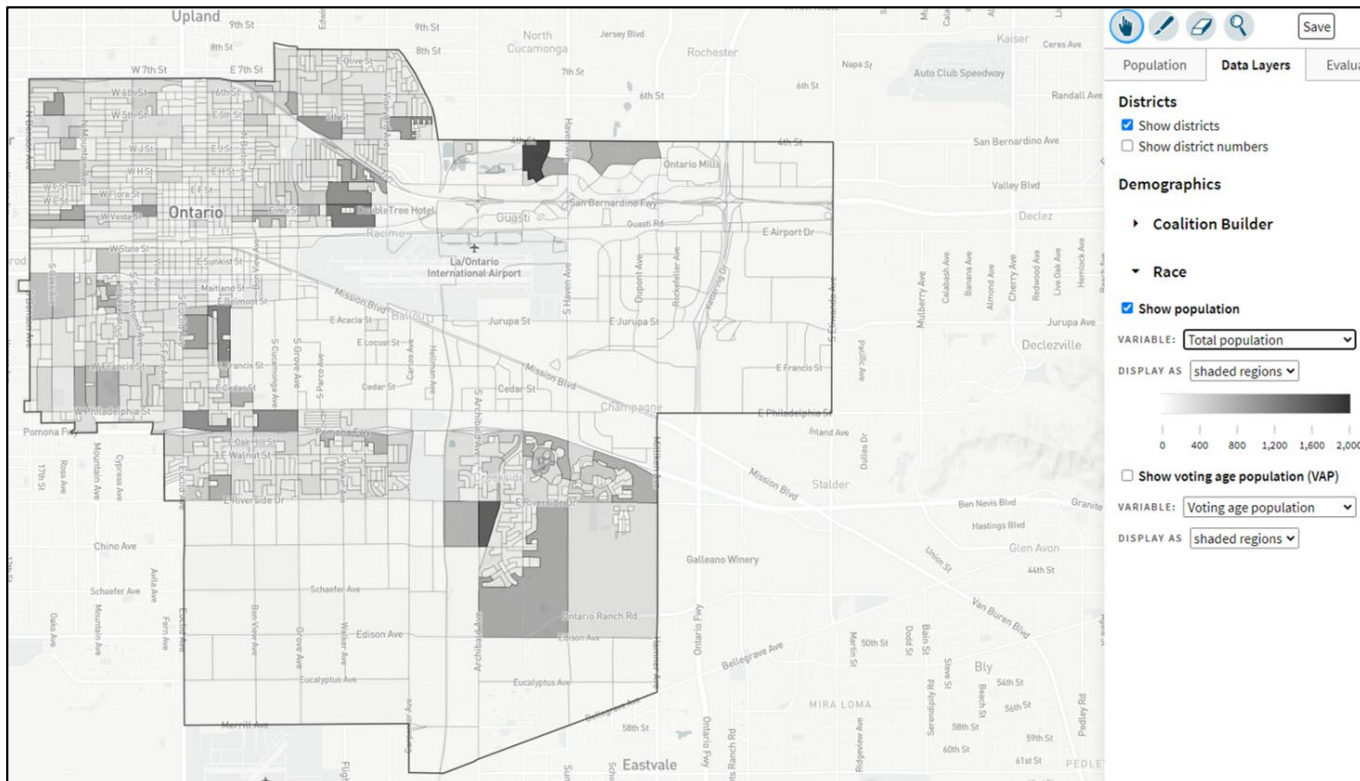
Population Unit ID Numbers

[illegible]

DistrictR

“Draw Your Community of Interest” focus

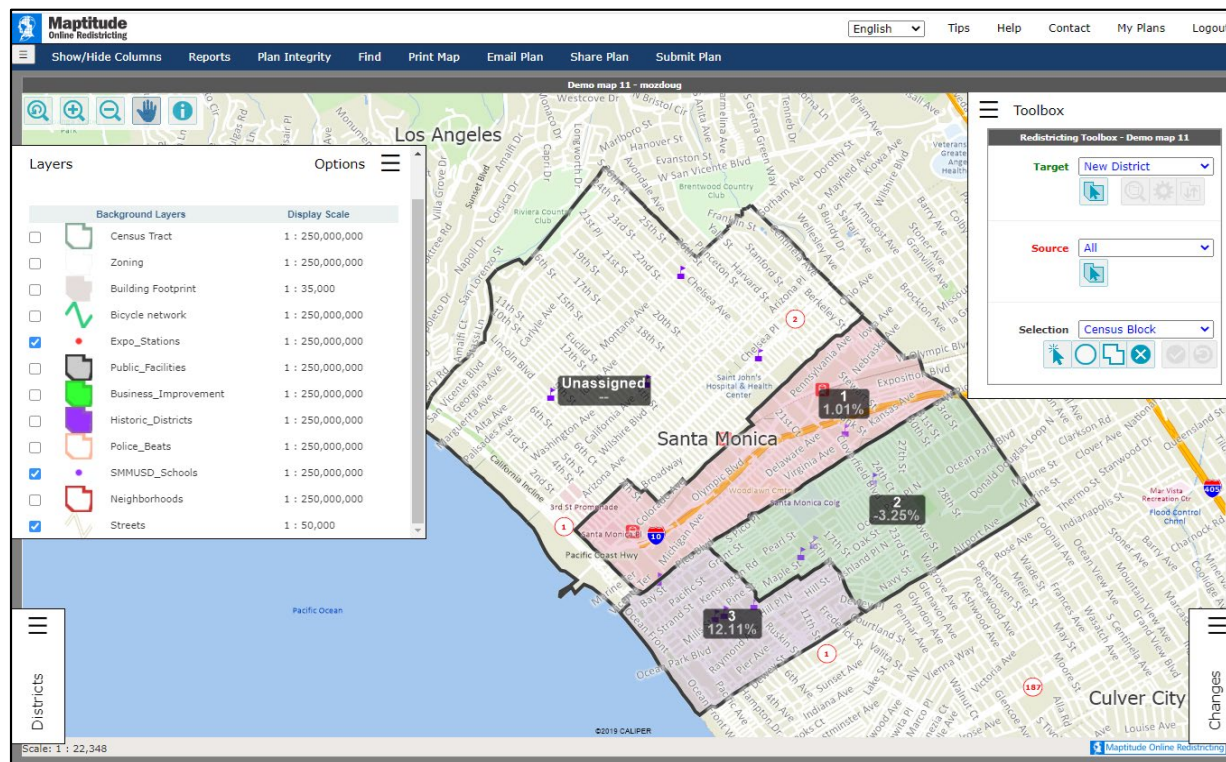
- Also includes simple district-mapping tool
- Only available in English
- Similar external options: Representable.org, DrawMyCACommunity.org



Caliper's “Maptitude Online Redistricting”

Full Database, Powerful Online Mapping Tool

- Powerful, common, data-rich online tool
- Six language options: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Mandarin and Korean
- [Quick Start Guide](#)



Public Hearing & Discussion

What is your neighborhood and what are its boundaries?

What other notable areas are in the County and its cities, and what are their boundaries?

Any questions about the mapping tools?

Share Your Thoughts

Website

DrawMercedCounty.org

Phone

209.385.7627

Email

Redistricting@CountyofMerced.com