



City of Signal Hill

Introduction to Districting

September 2, 2026

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National Demographics Corporation

Election Systems

1. “At Large”
2. “From District” or “Residence” Districts
3. “By District”

The California Voting Rights Act
was written to specifically
encourage by-district elections.

CVRA Impact

❑ Switched (or in the process of switching) as a result of CVRA:

- ❑ At least 350 school districts
- ❑ 46 Community College Districts
- ❑ 217 cities
- ❑ 1 County Board of Supervisors
- ❑ Over 78 special districts

❑ Cases So Far:

- ❑ Palmdale, Santa Clara, Huntington Beach, and Santa Monica went to trial on the merits. Palmdale, Santa Clara, and Huntington Beach lost. Huntington Beach is deciding whether to appeal. Santa Monica went to the California Supreme Court, and is awaiting further proceedings.
- ❑ Modesto and Palmdale each spent about \$1.8 million on their defense (in addition to the attorney fee awards in those cases).
- ❑ Santa Monica has spent an estimated \$7 million so far. Plaintiffs in Santa Monica requested \$22 million in legal fees after the original trial.

❑ Sample settlements:

- ❑ Palmdale: \$4.7 million
- ❑ Modesto: \$3 million
- ❑ Highland: \$1.3 million
- ❑ Anaheim: \$1.1 million
- ❑ Whittier: \$1 million
- ❑ Santa Barbara: \$600,000
- ❑ Tulare Hospital: \$500,000
- ❑ Camarillo: \$233,000
- ❑ Compton Unified: \$200,000
- ❑ Madera Unified: about \$170,000
- ❑ Hanford Joint Union Schools: \$118,000
- ❑ Merced City: \$42,000

❑ An estimated \$16 million in total settlements and court awards so far.

Districting Process

Step	Description
Community Workshop September 2	Introduction and Q & A period
Two Initial Hearings September 8 & 22	Held prior to release of draft maps. Education and to solicit input on the composition of districts.
Deadline for draft maps October 2	Deadline for submission of draft maps for the October 13 public hearing
Release draft maps October 6	Maps must be posted at least 7 days prior to 3 rd hearing.
Two hearings on draft maps October 13 & 27	Two meetings to discuss and revise the draft maps and to discuss the election sequence.
Additional or Revised Maps October 20	Additional or revised maps posted 7 days prior to 4 th hearing. Additional or revised community maps may be submitted before October 16.
Map adoption November 10	Map adopted via ordinance Final map must be posted at least 7 days prior to adoption.

Districting Rules and Goals

1. Federal Laws

Equal Population
Federal Voting Rights Act
No Racial Gerrymandering



2. California Criteria

In prioritized order:

1. **Geographically contiguous**
2. **Avoid division of neighborhoods and “communities of interest”**
(Socio-economic geographic areas that should be kept together)
3. **Easily identifiable boundaries**
4. **Compact**
(Do not bypass one group of people to get to a more distant group of people)

2. California Prohibition

“Shall not adopt election district boundaries for the purpose of favoring or discriminating against an incumbent, political candidate, or political party.”

3. Other Traditional Redistricting Principles

Future population growth

Demographic Summary

In a 5-district map, each district contains about 2,382 people.

In a 4-district map, each district contains about 2,978 people

City of Signal Hill						
Category	Field	Total		Category	Field	Total
2020 Census	Total Population	11,911		Education (among those age 25+)	hs-grad	51%
Citizen Voting Age Pop	Total	8,346			bachelor	24%
Voter Registration (Nov 2024)	Total	7,479			graduatedegree	14%
Voter Turnout (Nov 2024)	Total	4,980				
Voter Turnout (Nov 2022)	Total	3,243		Child in Household	child-under18	30%
Age	age0-19	20%		Pct of Pop. Age 16+	employed	70%
	age20-60	60%		Household Income	income 0-25k	12%
	age60plus	20%			income 25-50k	9%
Immigration	immigrants	27%			income 50-75k	8%
	naturalized	65%			income 75-200k	46%
Language spoken at home	english	55%			income 200k-plus	20%
	spanish	26%		Housing Stats	single family	47%
	asian-lang	15%			multi-family	53%
	other lang	4%			rented	50%
Language Fluency	Speaks Eng. "Less than Very Well"	18%			owned	50%
Total population data from California's adjusted 2020 Census data. Citizen Voting Age Population, Age, Immigration, and other demographics from the 2020-2024 American Community Survey and Special Tabulation 5-year data. Turnout and Registration data from California Statewide Database.						

Defining Neighborhoods

1st Question: How do you describe or name the area where you live?

2nd Question: What are its geographic boundaries?

What other neighborhoods are there?

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



Defining Communities of Interest

California Elections Code Section 21130(c)(2):

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.

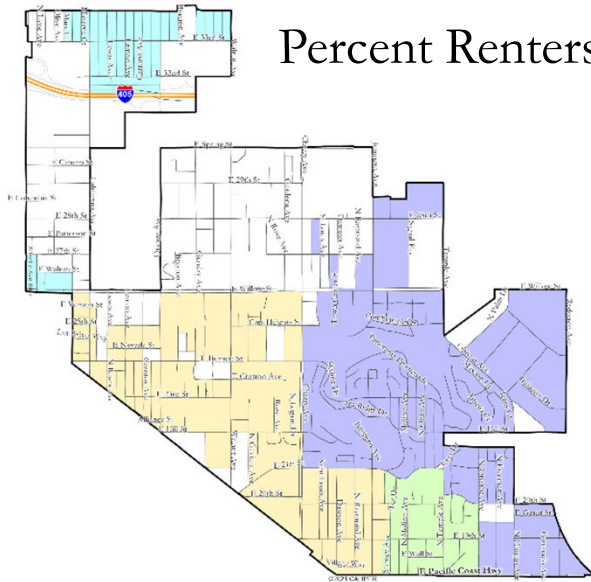
The shared interests may include (but are not limited to):

- ❑ Shared public policy concerns such as education, public safety, public health, environment, housing, transportation, and access to social services. cultural districts;
- ❑ Shared socioeconomic characteristics;
- ❑ Similar voter registration rates and participation rates; and /or
- ❑ Shared histories.

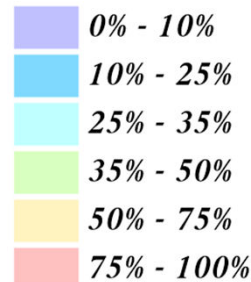
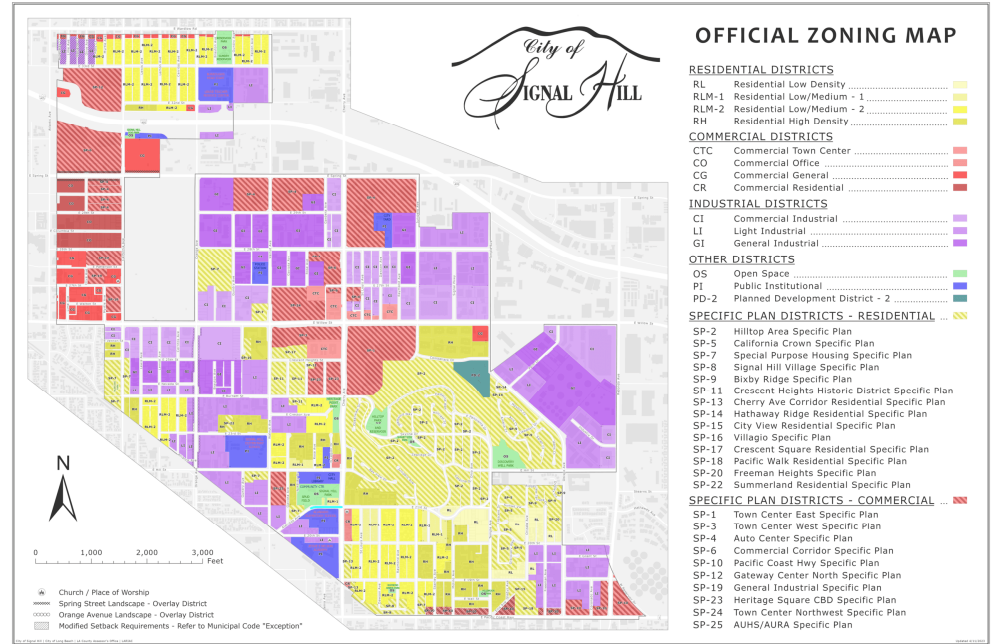
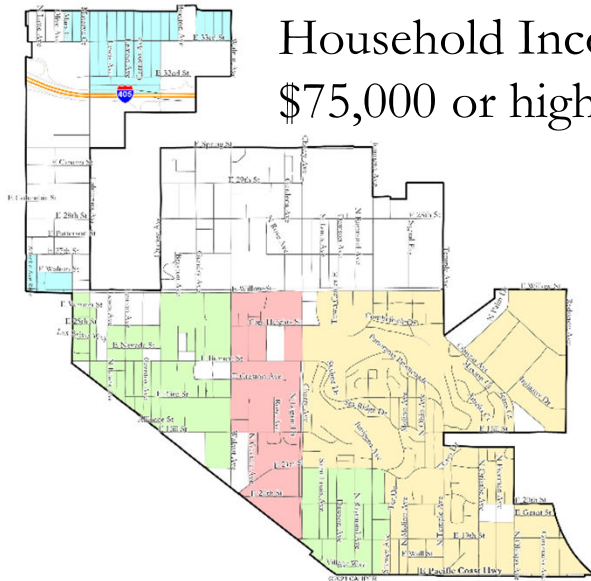
Definitions of Communities of Interest may not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.

Possible Neighborhoods / Communities

Percent Renters



Household Income
\$75,000 or higher



Public Mapping and Map Review Tools

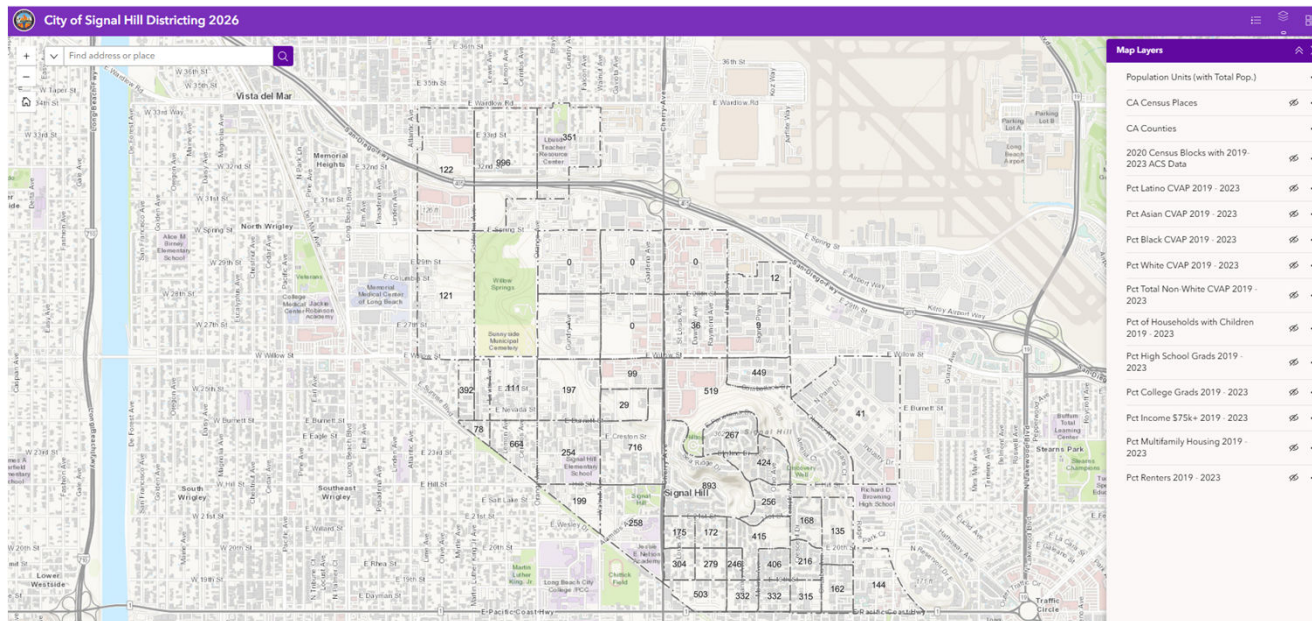
- **Different tools for different purposes**
- **Different tools for different levels of technical skill and interest**
 - Simple “review draft maps” tool
 - Easy-to-use “Draw your neighborhood” tool
 - Paper-based simple “Draw a draft map” tool
 - Powerful, data-rich online “Draw a draft map” tool

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

Map Review Tool

Online Interactive Review Map

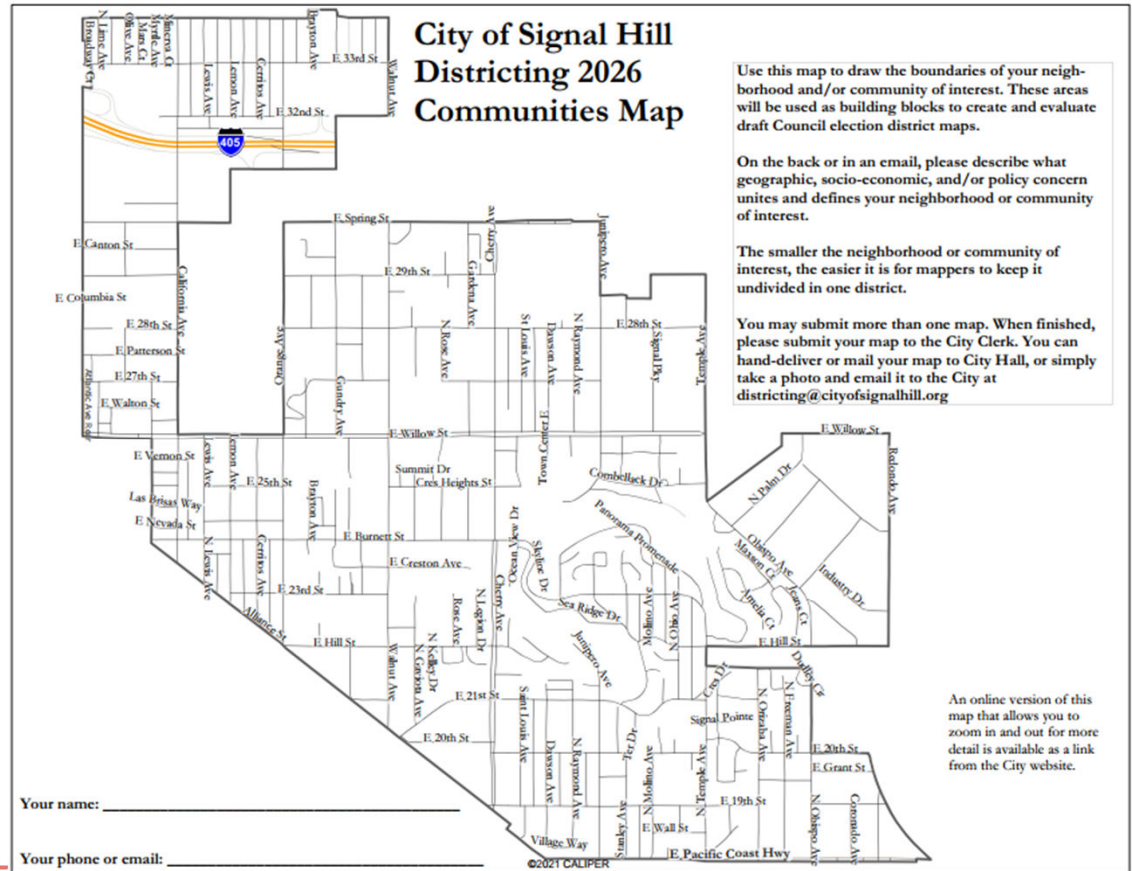
- ESRI's “ArcGIS Online” – similar to Google Maps in ease of use
- Used to review, analyze and compare maps, not to create them
- Includes overlays of “community of interest” and other data



Map for Drawing Communities

Draw Your Communities map

- For those not interested in drawing population-balanced districts
- No population numbers – just streets
- Show us where your community and explain what unites the area
- English and Spanish



**City of Signal Hill
Districting 2026
Communities Map**

Use this map to draw the boundaries of your neighborhood and/or community of interest. These areas will be used as building blocks to create and evaluate draft Council election district maps.

On the back or in an email, please describe what geographic, socio-economic, and/or policy concern unites and defines your neighborhood or community of interest.

The smaller the neighborhood or community of interest, the easier it is for mappers to keep it undivided in one district.

You may submit more than one map. When finished, please submit your map to the City Clerk. You can hand-deliver or mail your map to City Hall, or simply take a photo and email it to the City at districting@cityofsignalhill.org

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

Your name: _____

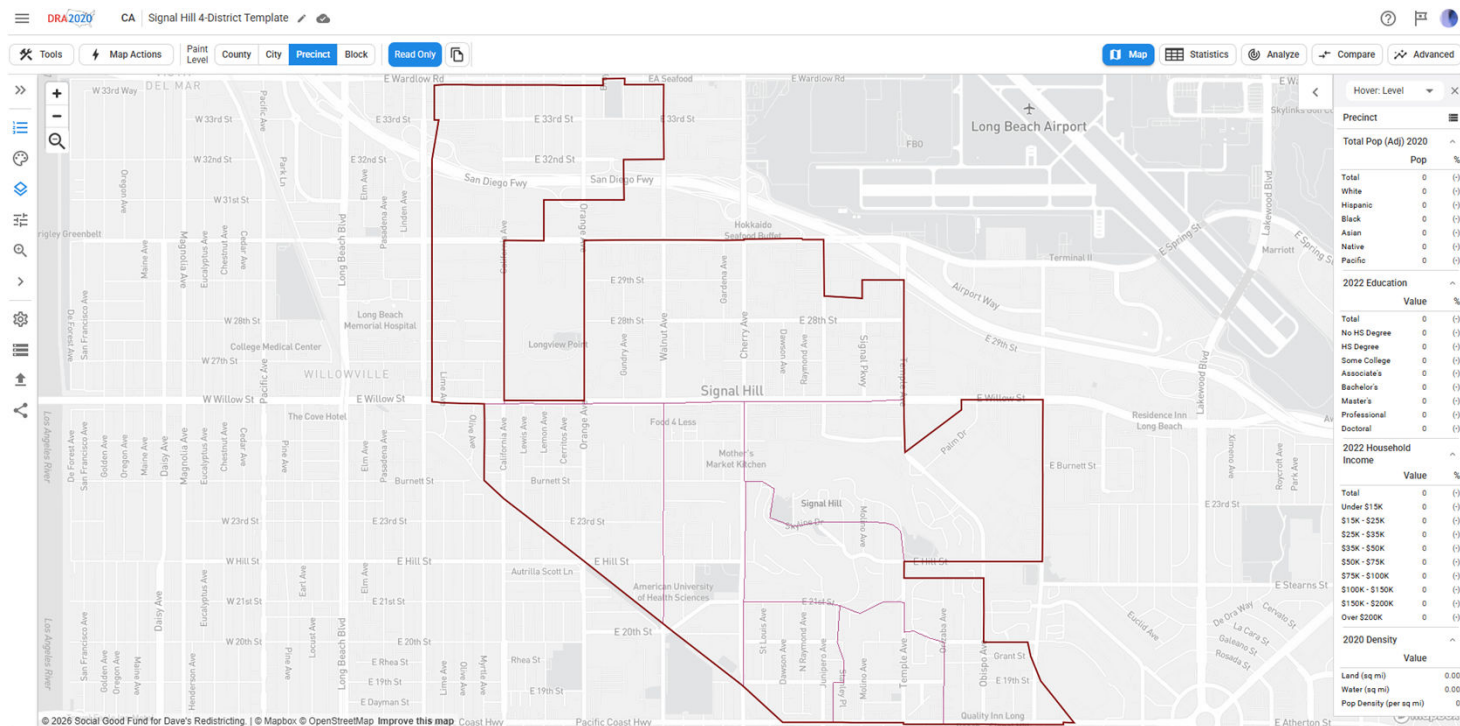
Your phone or email: _____

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Online Map Drawing Tool

Simple “paintbrush & eraser” tool. A 4-minute “how-to” video is on the website.

- Full demographic data available
- Create, collaborate and share your map
- Remember: you must send in the link to your map when you finish or the City has no way to know you drew a map.



Your Turn:

1. What area do you consider your neighborhood?
2. What are your “communities of interest”?
3. Any other questions about the process, criteria, maps, tools or any other part of this process?



Share Your Thoughts

Website

<https://drawsignalhill.org/>

Email

districting@cityofsignalhill.org