

December 15, 2017

Dear Mayor Nasarenko and City Councilmembers,

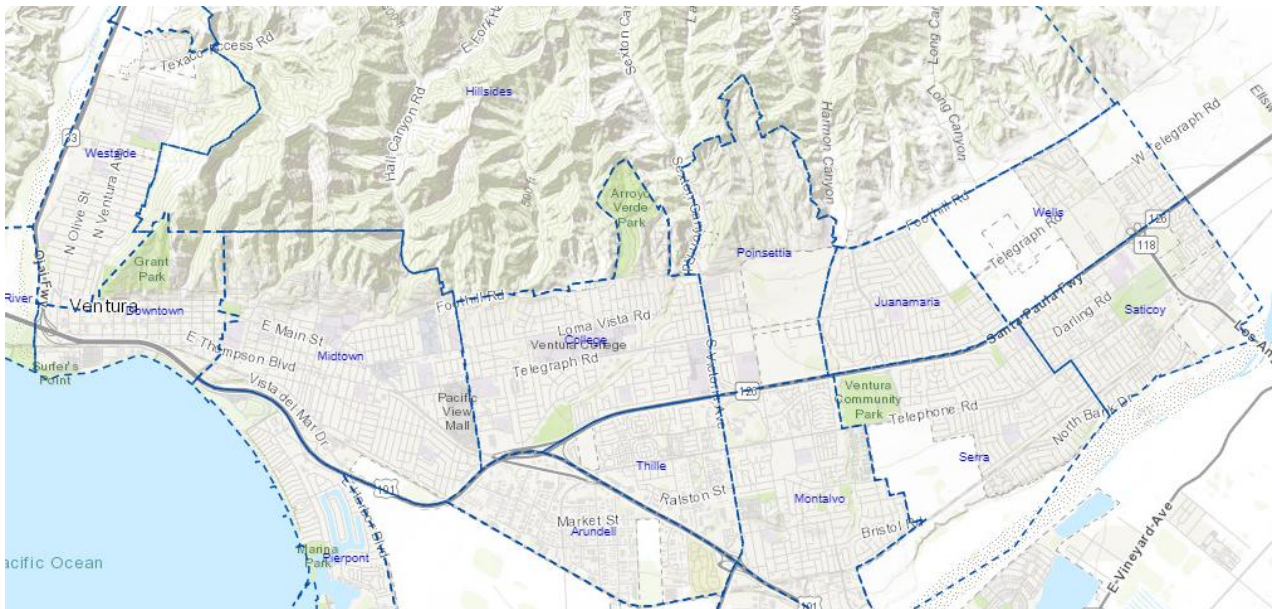


Thank you for your work to assess the dozens of Ventura district maps submitted by community members in a short period of time. The decisions before you will set the precedent for representation in Ventura for many years to come and we know you see the voting rights issues before you with the utmost importance.

All four of the selected maps include a clear Westside district, although **Maps 22 and 23 have a 47% Latino CVAP Westside district, while 11 and 16 are only 45% Latino eligible voters** due to the inclusion of more hillside neighborhoods. **However, the more difficult task is selecting a map that provides a voice for the many thousands of Latino residents, renters, low-income and working-class families on the city's Eastside, particularly in the Montalvo and Saticoy areas.** Montalvo and Saticoy are difficult to define, with Ventura residents having broad and diverse perceptions of whether they live in these neighborhoods that stretch well beyond the original unincorporated communities or the city's general plan definitions. However, we urge you to select a map that as closely as possible mirrors Ventura residents' understandings of the boundaries of these communities and protects the voice of the most socioeconomically disadvantaged neighborhoods in the Eastside.

To assist in this task, we have prepared a **chart with key demographics of disadvantaged residents in different Eastside neighborhoods**, as defined by the boundaries in the city's General Plan. They are grouped together as three distinct regions within the city's Eastside that share communities of interest.

Eastside Neighborhoods (as defined by general plan)				
Neighborhood	Latino	Renter	<\$25k income	Non-College
Wells	34%	50%	19%	71%
Saticoy	38%	41%	22%	73%
Montalvo	37%	46%	21%	76%
Thille	35%	54%	22%	69%
Serra	26%	35%	17%	66%
Juanamaria	21%	20%	17%	60%
Pointsettia	18%	29%	16%	45%



The first is the **Wells Road corridor**, composed of the **Wells and Saticoy** General Plan neighborhoods above and below the 126. Here the edge of the city meets the vast agricultural fields of the Santa Clara River Valley, giving the neighborhood a rural feel. It includes a diverse mix of mobile home parks, dense apartments, affordable housing complexes, and single family neighborhoods. The core of its Latino community is the historic Cabrillo Village, started by local farmworkers who turned their farm labor camp into a nonprofit housing cooperative. The Wells and Saticoy General Plan neighborhoods have high shares of Latino residents and renters, low-income and working-class families.

The second is the lower **Victoria Avenue corridor**, flanked on either side by the **Montalvo and Thille** General Plan neighborhoods. Tied to this busy commercial corridor and the Ventura County Government Center, it is the economic engine of the Eastside and is seeing significant development. This area has a large share of the city's apartments and condos, making it the only part of the city's Eastside that is majority renters. It is Ventura's most racially diverse neighborhood and has the city's second largest and growing Latino community.

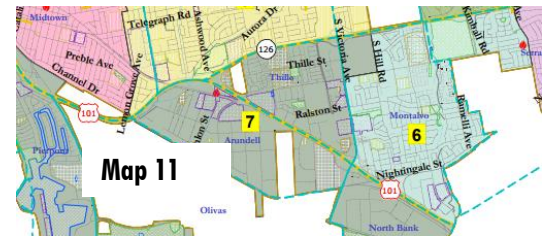
The third is the heavily residential heart of the Eastside, including the **Juanamaria, Serra and Pointsettia** General Plan neighborhoods. Made up of mostly planned subdivisions of single-family homes, it centers around the Ventura Aquatic Center on Kimball, one of the largest parks for local families in the city. The population is mostly middle-class homeowner families in postwar suburban neighborhoods with almost no commercial zoning. These neighborhoods have higher shares of homeowners and college-educated residents and lower shares of low-income and Latino residents.



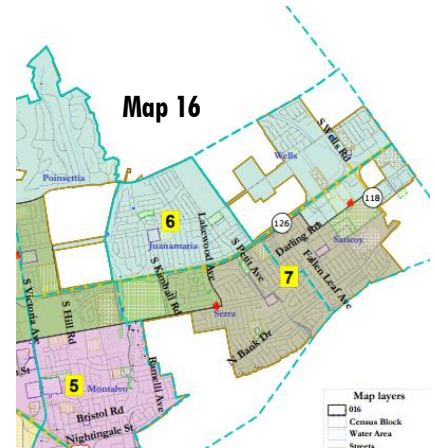
These three demographically distinct subsections encompass the city's Eastside, and as much as possible should serve as the basis for districts. Because of the equal population requirements for the city's seven districts, it will not be possible to perfectly align district boundaries with city general plan neighborhoods. However, the framework of connecting the Wells and Saticoy general plan neighborhoods and the Montalvo and Thille general plan neighborhoods. should guide district mapping on the Eastside as much as possible.

Maps 22 and 23 submitted by CAUSE are drawn with the intent of keeping together communities of interest along the lower Victoria Avenue and Wells Road corridors with large numbers of Latino families, working-class neighborhoods, and multifamily housing complexes.

The revised map 11 dilutes Latino voting power down to 26% of citizens of voting age in the Montalvo-based district, compared to 31% in Map 22. This is the result of cutting away the densely populated heavily Latino apartments and condos on the west side of the Victoria corridor and connecting them to affluent beachfront homes in Pierpont and the Keys, which they do not share a community of interest with, also resulting in a somewhat non-contiguous district.



Map 16 chooses to cut a Saticoy district North/South at the 126 freeway, rather than the East/West cut roughly along Petit Ave. we saw in the majority of maps submitted by Ventura residents. This separates the many apartments and mobile homes both above and below the 126 on the eastern edge of town, placing them instead with more affluent suburban subdivisions in the interior of the Eastside, which will dilute their voting power as elections in these districts become dominated by residents of wealthier neighborhoods.



While the interest from Council in Maps 11 and 16 seem to be driven more by concerns around how to shape districts in Midtown and Pierpont, they divide key communities of interest on the Eastside, weakening the voice of disadvantaged neighborhoods along the lower Victoria corridor and Wells corridor. We urge the Council to support Map 22 or 23 instead, to maintain the voice of our Latino and immigrant community, working-class and low-income families, and renters and multifamily housing residents. Thank you for your consideration.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at lucas@causenow.org or (805) 658-0810 x204.

Sincerely,

Lucas Zucker
Policy Director
Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE)