

**SACRAMENTO AREA BLACK CAUCUS**  
**Testimony for the Citizens Redistricting Commission**  
**February 26, 2011**  
**State Capitol, Room 126**

**Testimony for the California Redistricting Commission**

**By Lauren Hammond, Retired Councilmember**

**Representing the Sacramento Area Black Caucus**

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Thank you for holding this hearing. Congratulations to the Commissioners who successfully navigated a long, competitive process.

The Sacramento Area Black Caucus formed in 1972 is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization for people of African Descent. Its forty year history of community organizing, mobilizing and collaboration is unparalleled in Sacramento County. The address is 4104 44<sup>th</sup> Street, Sacramento, CA 95820, (916) 484-5025.

The purpose of this meeting is to find out what community groups are doing to reach their constituents about state redistricting and congressional reapportionment. I have a series of questions I hope the Commission and its staff can answer or at least consider before the next local hearing.

What efforts has the commission made to outreach to the community about the process? Signing up for the email list has been problematic. My telephone call to the commission has been unanswered.

How do you plan to advertise your hearings? What measures will you take to reach the average citizen and voter? How will you ensure your community meetings will be better than the legislative hearings? How will the public input be reflected in the maps drawn? Who will draw those maps? The Legislature spent millions of dollars using private consultants to draw maps according to political party priorities and member politics. What will this commission do differently?

Is the diversity of this state reflected in the chosen staff or contracted services? What was the process? Are you using no bid contracts to hire consultants? No one I know even heard about any staff openings until the Executive Director position was mentioned in a newspaper article last month. Redistricting and reapportionment are complicated, byzantine government necessities. Here in California the people voted to do this differently when they passed Proposition 11 of 2008 and Proposition 20 of 2010.

That effort may be rendered useless if the hiring practice reflects state government practices of the 1950s. Creating 173 districts for the State Assembly, Senate, Board of Equalization and House of Representatives is too important to squander. If your staff looks alike and thinks alike or grew up in similar circumstances how will they effectively judge the merits of community concern and thereby make recommendations to the Commission? How can they communicate to you something they've never experienced or understood?

As an example, in South Sacramento the neighborhoods of Meadowview, Parkway and North Laguna have been removed from the Sacramento Assembly or Senate district proposals into bay area or central valley district for the last three decades. Because of our relationship with our elected Legislators we were able to reverse these egregious attempts by the Legislature's private consultants. How will the commission be different?

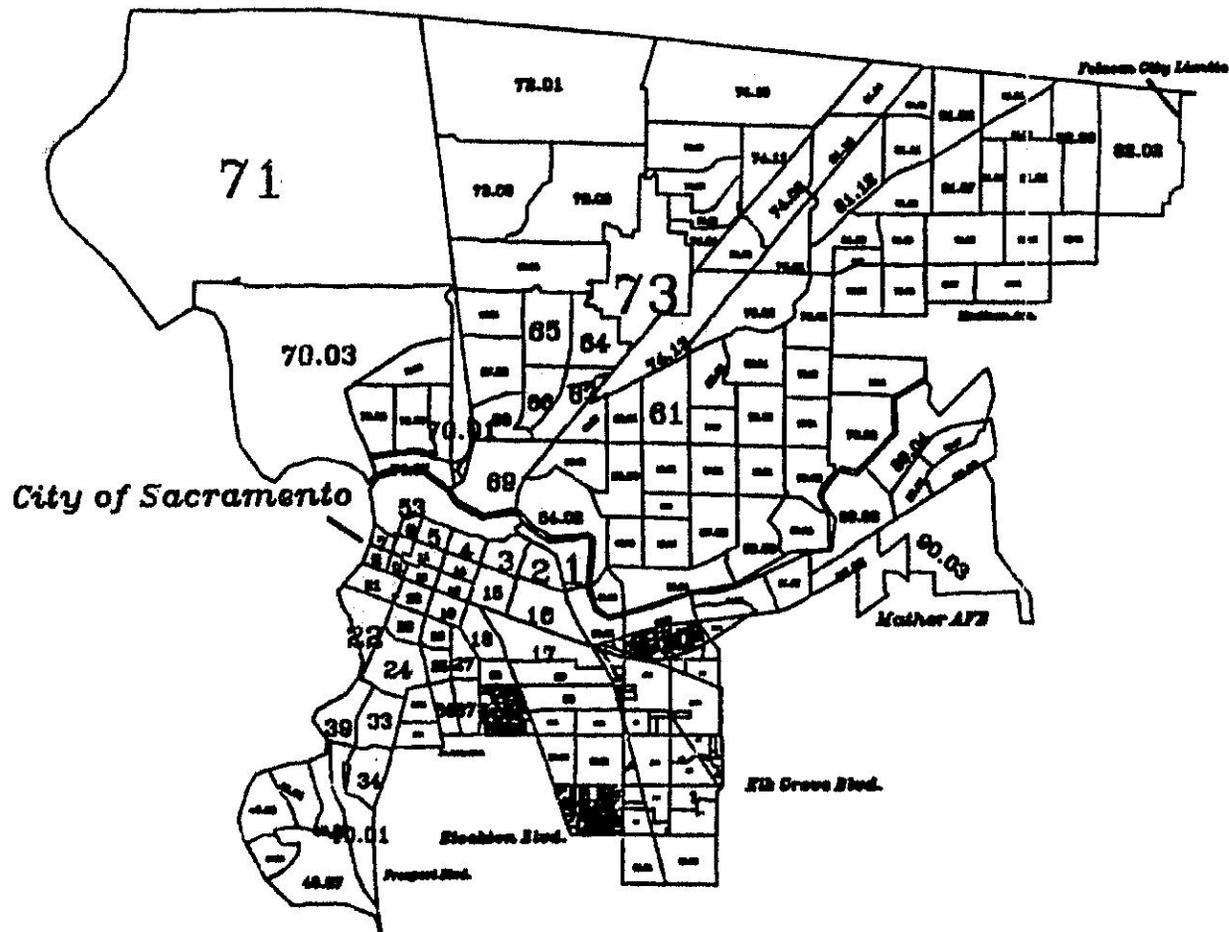
With all due respect, this looks like a project being completed on the cheap, adding another government department with insufficient funding. This work will only occur once every ten years. If implementation of this initiative fails then California will remain ungovernable. The whole point of this exercise is to change the dynamics of the state's election process. Let the voters choose their representatives and not the other way around. That idea coupled with the open primary is supposed to create opportunities for more moderate candidates with a real connection to the voters. And make public policy that moves California and its people in the right direction.

Community groups have GIS software and systems which we have used for redistricting for the last two decades. When we complained about our community being gerrymandered we were asked to provide alternatives. And because we were equipped with the technology and the skill set we were able to present fixes that were later adopted in the final plan. Even with staff in the Assembly and Senate assigned to the Redistricting and Reapportionment Committees the Legislators hired private consultants to draw the plans. These political consultants didn't know that drawing a line could disenfranchise thousands of voters. And they looked alike and thought alike. Why weren't community groups considered for contracts? Or is that the real purpose of this hearing? MALDEF is not the only group who has the expertise to do this work.

The California population is a majority of people of color. Women are also the majority gender. The 1991 Legislative Plan completed by the Courts increased the number of women in the legislature. The 2001 Legislative Plan eliminated those gains. This Commission is a majority of women. Yet the women of your staff are in subordinate positions. Do you see why I am concerned about the process, personnel, direction and product?

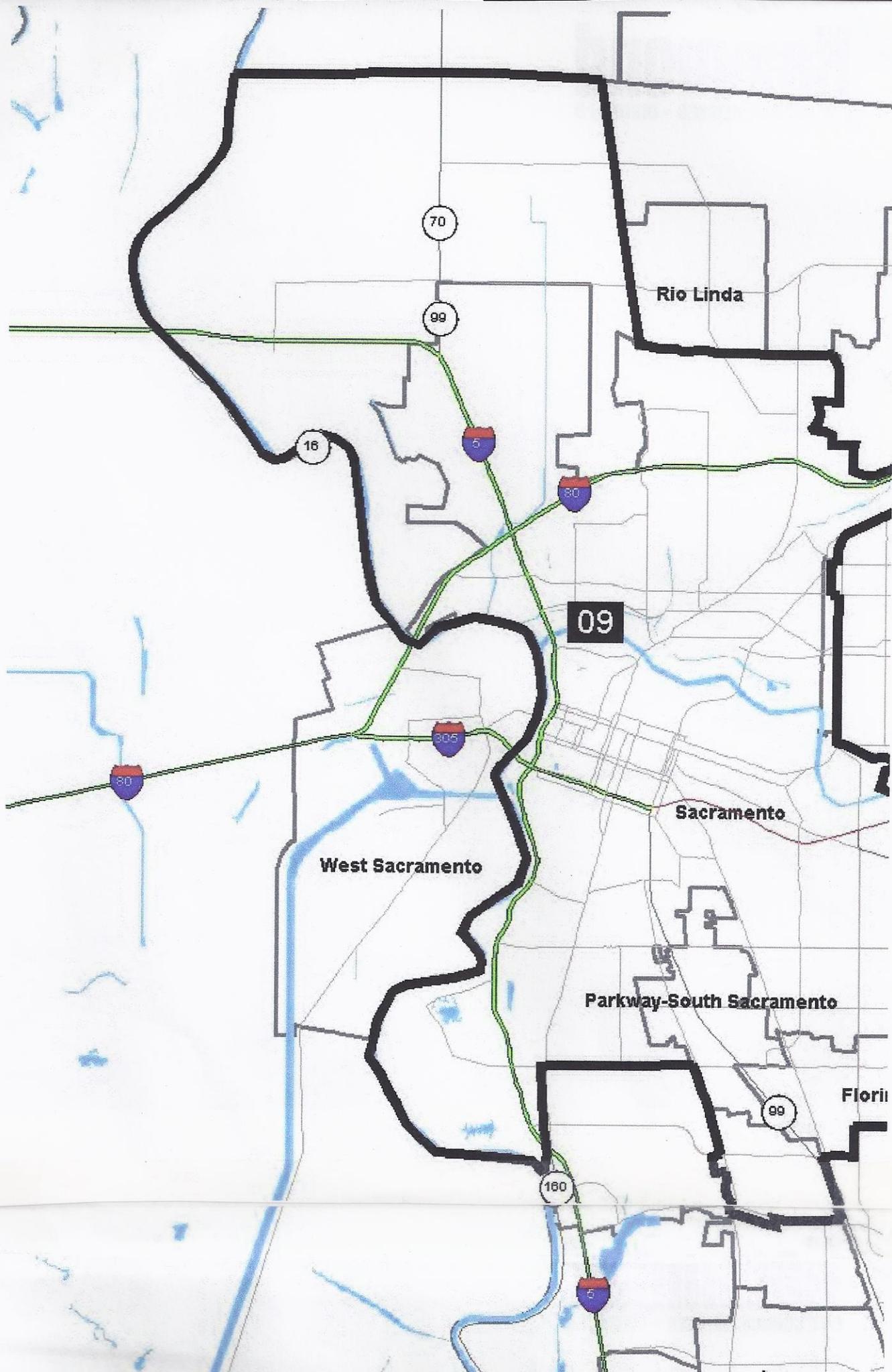
The California census numbers found in Public Law 94-171 summary files will be released in April. You have a lot of work to do in a short period. Good luck.

Sacramento County Line



Senate District 6  
SB 587

02-Ber  
12:28  
SCHOOL



Rio Linda

09

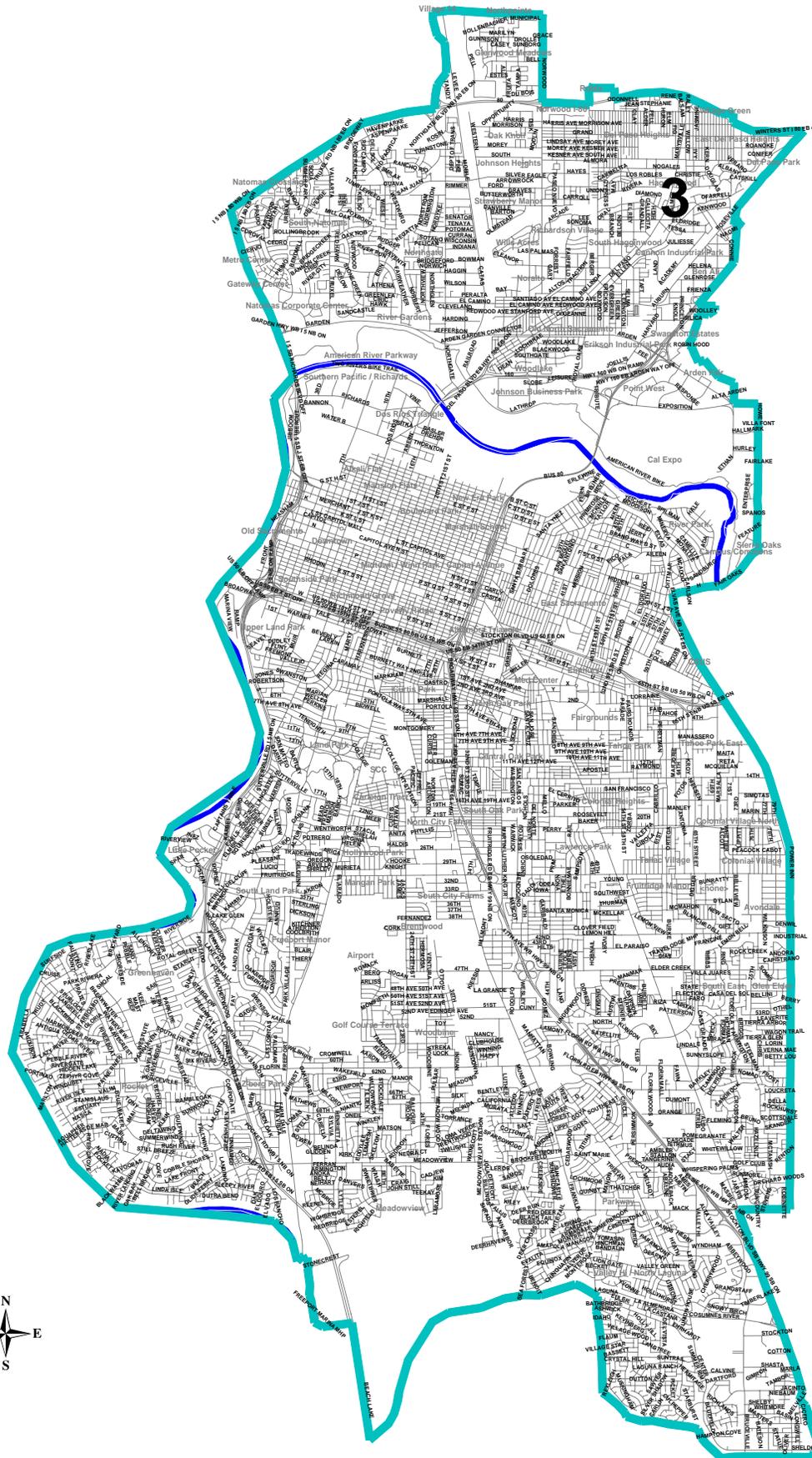
Sacramento

West Sacramento

Parkway-South Sacramento

Florin

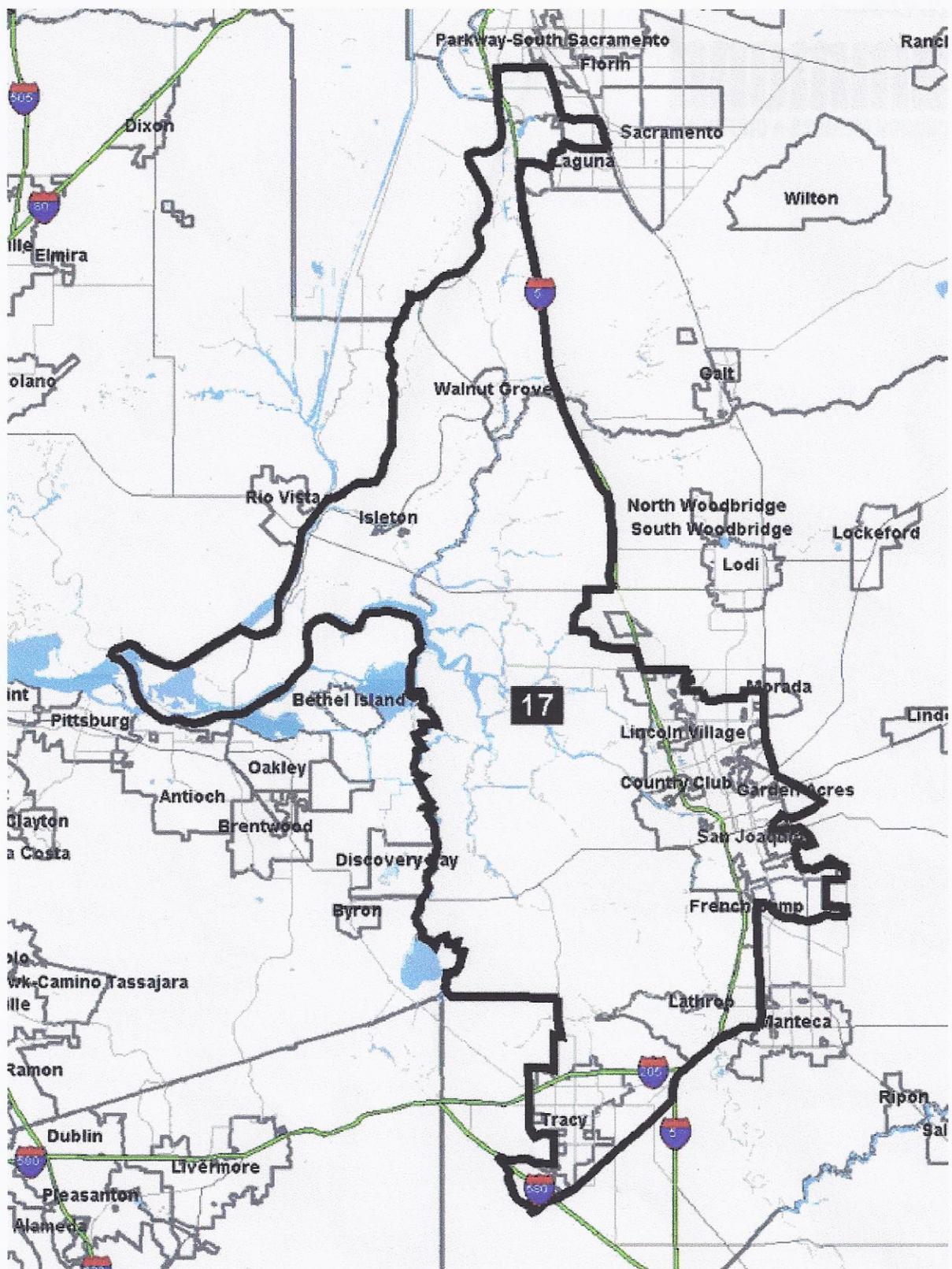
# California State Assembly District 9



**Map layers**

- MAIN\_RIVERS
- neigh\_hd.shp
- centerlines
- 2002 Lower Leglisl.

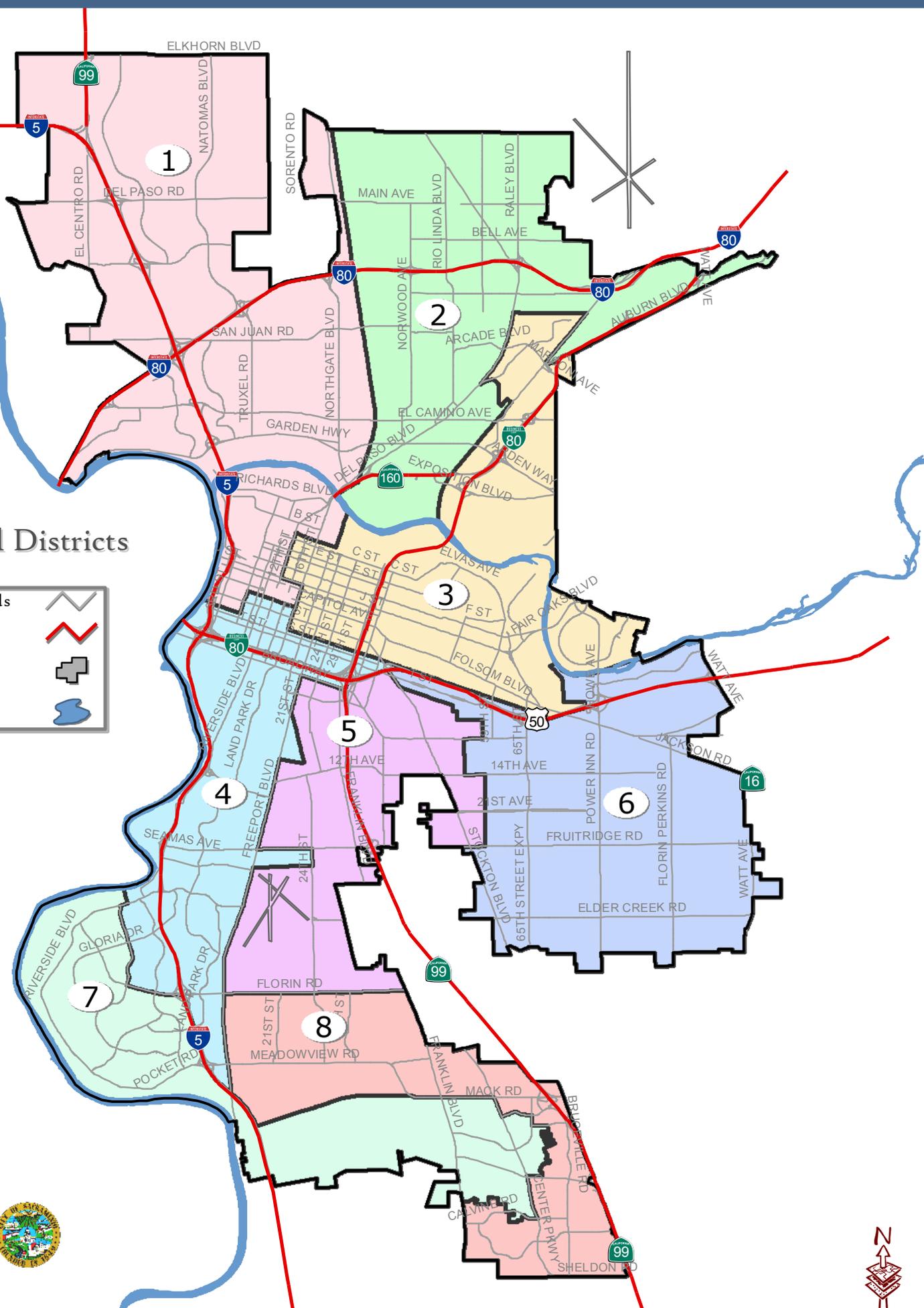
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# City of Sacramento

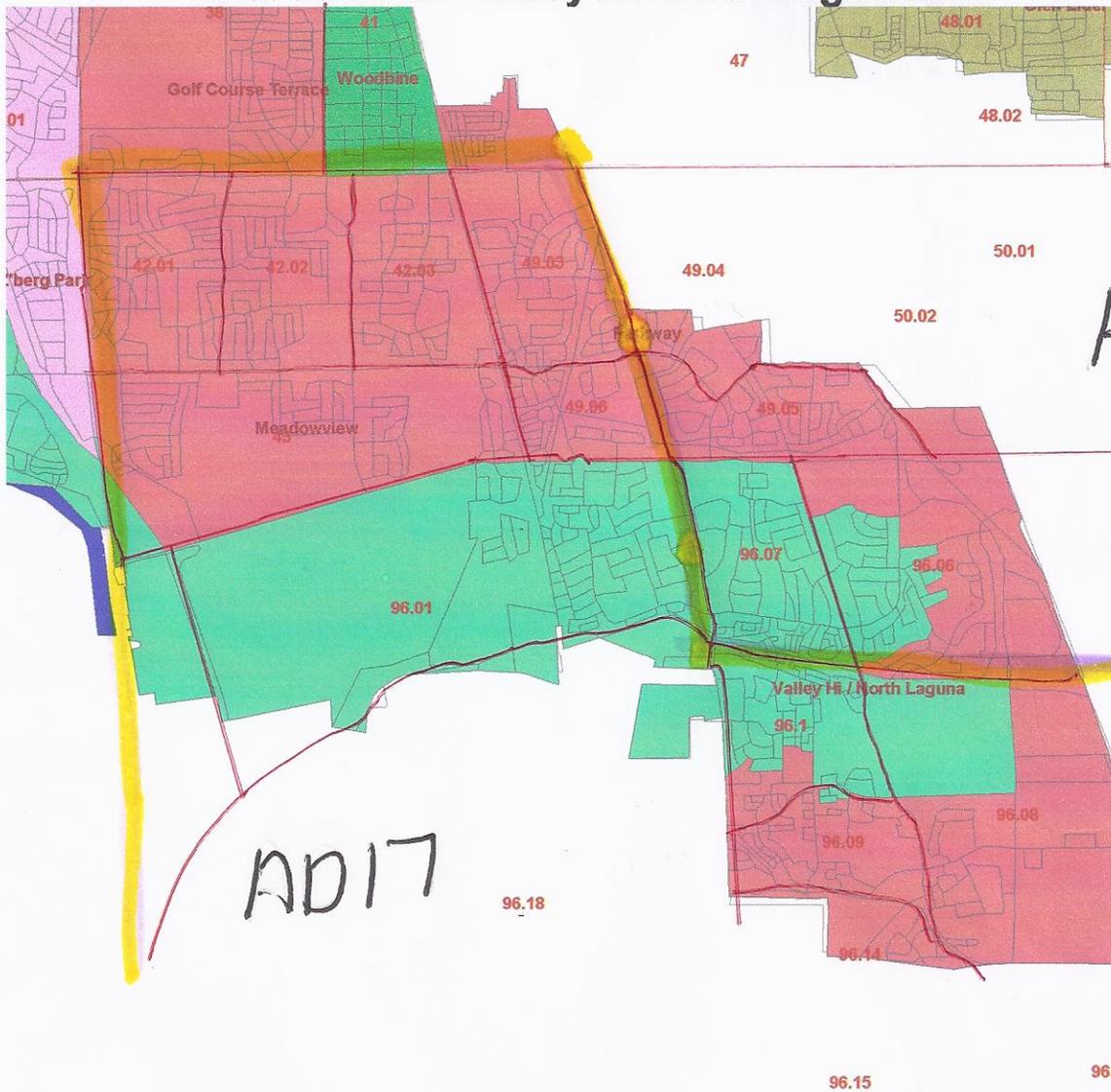
## Council Districts

Major Roads	
Freeways	
Districts	
Rivers	



# City of Sacramento Redistricting 2001

## Meadowview-Valley Hi-North Laguna

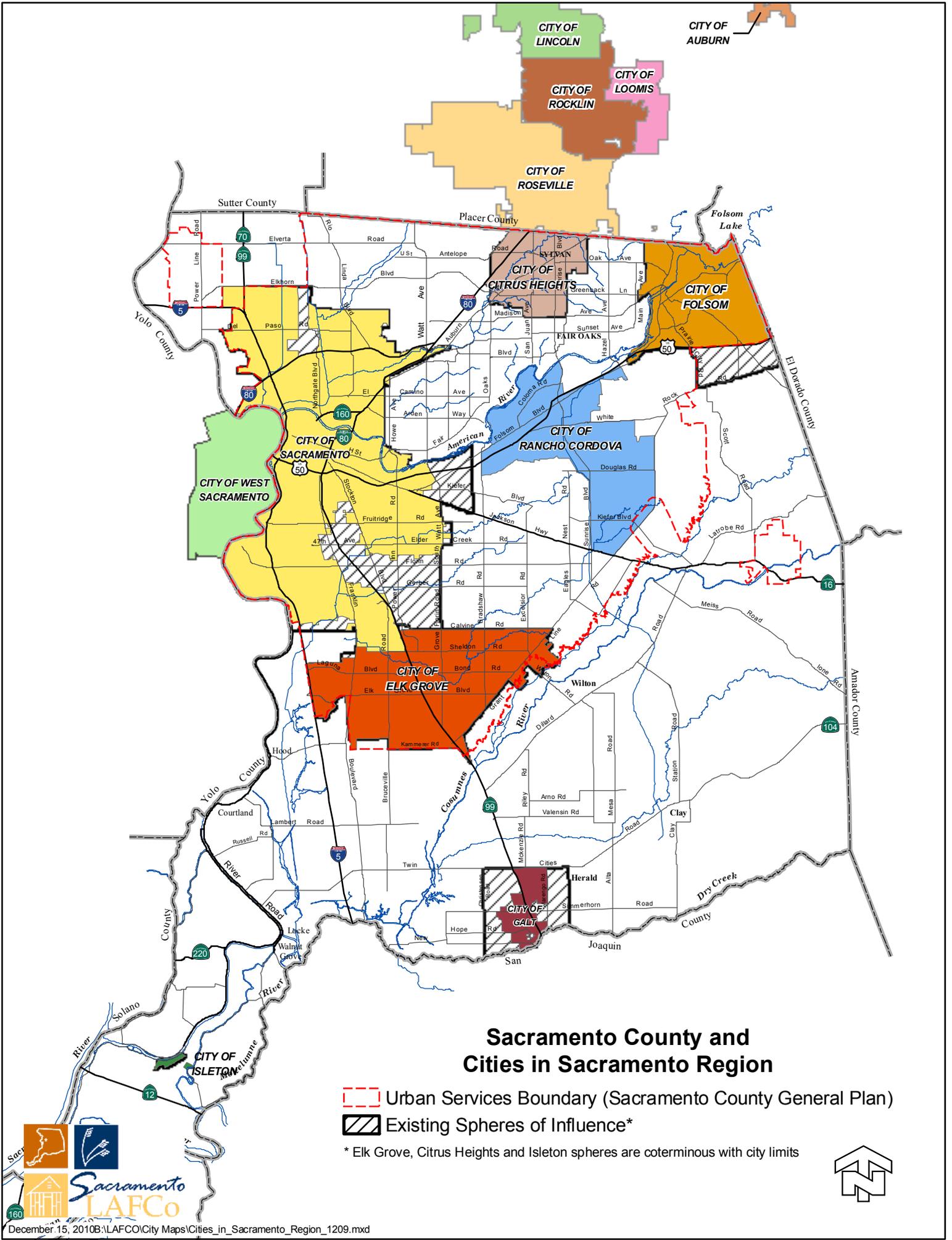


- Schools
  - Parks
  - Neighborhoods
  - Rivers
  - Rails
  - Existing Council Districts
  - Census Tracts
- | Census Blocks by District |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1                         | 5 |
| 2                         | 6 |
| 3                         | 7 |
| 4                         | 8 |



Scale: 1 inch = 0.95 miles

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## Sacramento County and Cities in Sacramento Region

- Urban Services Boundary (Sacramento County General Plan)
- Existing Spheres of Influence\*

\* Elk Grove, Citrus Heights and Isleton spheres are coterminous with city limits

