

## KEEPING THE TL & SOMA TOGETHER

### *Why Redistricting Matters*

Redistricting is a process that splits up a voting population into groups based on geography. Historically redistricting has been used to disempower minority communities i.e. the term “gerrymandering.” However, we can also use redistricting to make sure that the voices of underrepresented communities are heard through local elections by keeping them together in a single voting block and not splitting them up.

The Tenderloin and SOMA have been an incredibly powerful voting block in the city of San Francisco. As a part of District 6, SOMA and the TL have played a huge role in picking the District 6 Supervisor, and also help to shape the priorities of the city.

As neighborhoods the Tenderloin and Central and West SOMA face many of the same challenges: concentration of high density housing, affordable housing (more than anywhere else in the city), impacts of development, high traffic areas, homelessness, street cleanliness issues, lack of access to greenspace, etc. The two neighborhoods also share a legacy of arts and culture, historic nightlife scene, and an incredible diversity that keep them linked both socially and economically. Keeping these neighborhoods together helps unite communities in advocating for positive change, and also helps preserve the institutions, histories, and culture that make these neighborhoods special.

Most importantly, the Tenderloin and SOMA both have deep roots with a number of special interest communities: the LGBTQ, African American, Filipino community, Arab, South East Asian, Chinese, Latinx, and Indigenous communities all have a high concentration of folks in these two neighborhoods. By splitting up these two neighborhoods, instead of having a strong voice in our local elections, these communities in particular become disempowered which puts them and their needs in danger of de-prioritization and displacement.

Currently the San Francisco Redistricting Task Force is entertaining maps that would split up these two communities, and if we want to preserve the LGBTQ, African American, Filipino community, Arab, South East Asian, Chinese, Latinx, and Indigenous vote in SF, as well as protect the voices of immigrant, poor, and working class San Franciscans, we must do everything we can to keep them together.

How do we do this? By showing up to public comment at one of the upcoming Redistricting Task Force Meetings.

I know that it may be new or hard for some folks to show up to public comment at a random meeting you have never attended, but the reality is that these decisions will impact how elections happen in San Francisco for the next 10 years which could be the difference between protecting, preserving, and advancing a diverse communities agenda, or completely erasing these communities from these neighborhoods.

The Task Force has released a first draft proposed redistricting map, that “basically slices the Castro and the queer community in half” (Supervisor Rafael Mandelman). Some proposals also put the Transgender District and the LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District into different districts, dividing our communities. Other communities are similarly affected. See [here](#) and [here](#). View the Task Force’s proposed maps [here](#), and learn more about the Task Force and the process [here](#).

[San Francisco Rising](#) and the [SF Unity Map Coalition](#) have been working on an alternative map that reflects these concerns. You can read about it [here](#) and view their proposed “SF Community Unity Map” [here](#).

We encourage you to share your views at the Redistricting Task Force meetings, either in person or remotely by phone or videoconference. View the agendas with logon details [here](#). Consider using these talking points:

1. Communities of interest ( LGBTQ, African American, Filipino, Arab, South East Asian, Chinese, Latinx, and Indigenous communities) should stay together in the same District.
2. The Transgender District must stay in the same District as the Leather District and SOMA Pilipinas - these are special interest groups that are fighting for the survival of their communities. Splitting them up would be devastating.
3. The LGBTQ population should not have their influence diminished by being cut in two in the Castro.
4. The Community Unity Map addresses all these concerns and was created with feedback from a broad range of community groups from all over the city.

## ***MEETING INFORMATION***

April 6, 2022 - 5:30 PM

### **IN-PERSON MEETING**

City Hall, Room 416 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place San Francisco, CA 94102

REMOTE ACCESS VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE WATCH:

<https://bit.ly/3MP9hYz>

PASSWORD: comment

PUBLIC COMMENT CALL-IN 1 (415) 655-0001

Meeting ID: 2486 912 0805 # # (Press \*3 to enter the speaker line)

## ***SAMPLE TALKING POINTS***

You should feel free to speak from your heart why you believe the Tenderloin and SOMA should stay together. Many of you have personal experiences in both neighborhoods that link them, and know why these two neighborhoods should continue to be kept together. However, feel free to use these talking points, copy them, and then edit them to make your own to tell your own story. Try not to just read the talking points verbatim so we don't hear the same thing over and over again. Personalize them if you can! But if you can't, that's OK too. Every public comment will help!

Hello, my name is:

I'm from the TL/SOMA community and have lived in SF for X years

- We must move forward with map 4-D
- We have to keep West SOMA, Central SOMA, and the Tenderloin whole and together
- Please do not carve up the SOMA LGBTQ cultural district and split up historical assets like The Eagle and Eagle Plaza from Mr. S Leather, or Oasis from the Powerhouse or Wicked Grounds
- Keep the Western Boundary at Van Ness and Division
- The Southern Boundary must be Townsend
- We cannot split up our LGBTQ communities, cultural assets, and important nightlife corridors like on 11th St and Folsom Street
- Splitting up the TL & West and Central SOMA splits up several communities of interest: Black, Latino, Arab, API, Filipino, and LGBTQ
- Splitting up the TL & West and Central SOMA also unnecessarily splits up renters and people living in affordable housing
- If D6 must be reduced further, consider keeping Treasure Island in D3, putting the hub in D5, or dividing up those communities that have yet to be established
- Also, Keeping Russian Hill whole and in D2 would also help solve many issues
- Pulling apart communities of interest and cutting up neighborhoods and communities that have existed for over 50 years, violates the law
- Please keep the most vulnerable communities whole, don't take away the little power they have in being heard
- Keep the Tenderloin, West SOMA, and Central SOMA whole and together
- Thank you

Here are some samples:

- 1) Good afternoon, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am calling to ask the Redistricting Taskforce to keep the Tenderloin and SOMA together in District 6. The Tenderloin and SOMA are

both neighborhoods with great importance to the LGBT community. Historically many LGBT bars and venues have existed in both neighborhoods, and even today, many LGBT people currently live, work, and go out here in the Tenderloin and SOMA. This is especially true for our more working class and low-income community members who may not be able to afford to live in the Castro. It is really important that our community not be split up, that we preserve the historic link between the Tenderloin and SOMA, and make sure that the LGBTQ community's voice remains united. We ask that you please move forward with Map 4D and please keep the Tenderloin and West and Central SOMA together. Thank you.

- 2) Good afternoon, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am calling to ask the Redistricting Taskforce to please make sure that SOMA and the TL do not get split up. The Tenderloin and SOMA have a lot of similarities and a history of working together as a community. What impacts the TL impacts SOMA and vice versa. Many of the issues we face are the same, from high density housing, a lack of access to greenspace, issues related to poverty and displacement, quality of life issues, and also a shared history of nightlife, arts and culture. Splitting up these two neighborhoods would split up many communities of interest including the LGBTQ, African American, Filipino, Arab, South East Asian, Chinese, Latinx, and Indigenous communities. Please do not tear these communities apart by splitting up the TL & West and Central SOMA. We ask that you please move forward with Map 4D and please keep the Tenderloin and West and Central SOMA together. Thank you.
- 3) Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am calling to support keeping the Tenderloin and SOMA together. We absolutely cannot split up the Tenderloin and SOMA. These two neighborhoods makeup the heart of the city, and by splitting them up, we are literally ripping these communities in half. The LGBTQ, African American, Filipino, Arab, South East Asian, Chinese, Latinx, and Indigenous communities are all concentrated in these two neighborhoods and need representation in our local government. We shouldn't be splitting these communities up, but making sure that we keep them together so that their voices can be heard. We ask that you please move forward with Map 4D and please keep the Tenderloin and West and Central SOMA together. Thank you.
- 4) Hello my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am calling to oppose splitting up the TL and SOMA. These two neighborhoods belong together. Anyone who walks the streets of the Tenderloin and SOMA can see that they are linked. Market st is not a boundary that separates our communities here. We share many of the same issues and constituencies, and splitting us up weakens our collective voice and power. Splitting up the Tenderloin and SOMA will do real harm to our community and is completely unnecessary. We know that District 6 needs to shrink, but we have to keep the cultural integrity of the district intact, and we have to protect the votes of the special interest communities that live here including the LGBTQ, African American, Filipino, Arab, South East Asian, Chinese, Latinx, and Indigenous communities. We ask that you please move forward with Map 4D and please keep the Tenderloin and West and Central SOMA together. Thank you.
- 5) Good afternoon, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am here to ask you to please keep the TL and SOMA together. Our communities are in danger of being split up. SOMA and the TL are two neighborhoods that hold special meaning for the LGBTQ community. We have

both the SOMA Leather & LGBTQ Cultural District and the Transgender Cultural District located in these two neighborhoods. Splitting them up and cutting the Trans District in half will be extremely harmful to our communities. It will undermine all the work we have done so far to build and protect our spaces, and weaken our collective power. Please consider this when finalizing the redistricting map, and we ask that you please move forward with Map 4D, and please keep the Tenderloin and West and Central SOMA together. . Thank you.

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