

Christopher Chin
Community Advocate - Advancing Justice Asian Law Caucus

Hello, my name is Christopher Chin, and I am the Community Advocate on the Voting Rights team at Advancing Justice-Asian Law Caucus, located in San Francisco, CA. I am calling in today to share information about the communities where our clients live in San Francisco and to provide an introduction for the AAPI & AMEMSA State Redistricting Collaborative for the San Francisco Peninsula & the East Bay.

As the Commission may know, along with Advancing Justice-LA, the ALC leads the AAPI and AMEMSA State Redistricting Collaborative, and have worked to engage organizations and individuals in the San Francisco Peninsula & the East Bay. The testimony that my colleagues and I have prepared for you reflects our engagement with community members and community based organizations to identify COIs that capture the diversity of our regions.

Similar to our Collaborative's work in the South Bay, our SF Peninsula & East Bay regional tables each held 4 community workshops, reaching 18 community based organizations and over 30 community members and staff. Besides identifying COIs, we also used these meetings to educate attendees on the importance of redistricting and share the various ways for community members to engage. The feedback that we have collected for you today comes from a variety of stakeholders, including community health providers, families, leaders, and community organizers.

As the nation's first legal & civil rights organization serving low-income Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders, the Asian Law Caucus is committed to utilizing advocacy, community engagement, & direct legal service to uplift the most vulnerable of our communities. In San Francisco alone, our Housing and Workers' Rights programs provided legal counseling and representation to over 200 clients in 2020. Significant concentrations of the clients we serve are found in historic San Francisco Chinatown, as well as the Excelsior and Balboa Park neighborhoods.

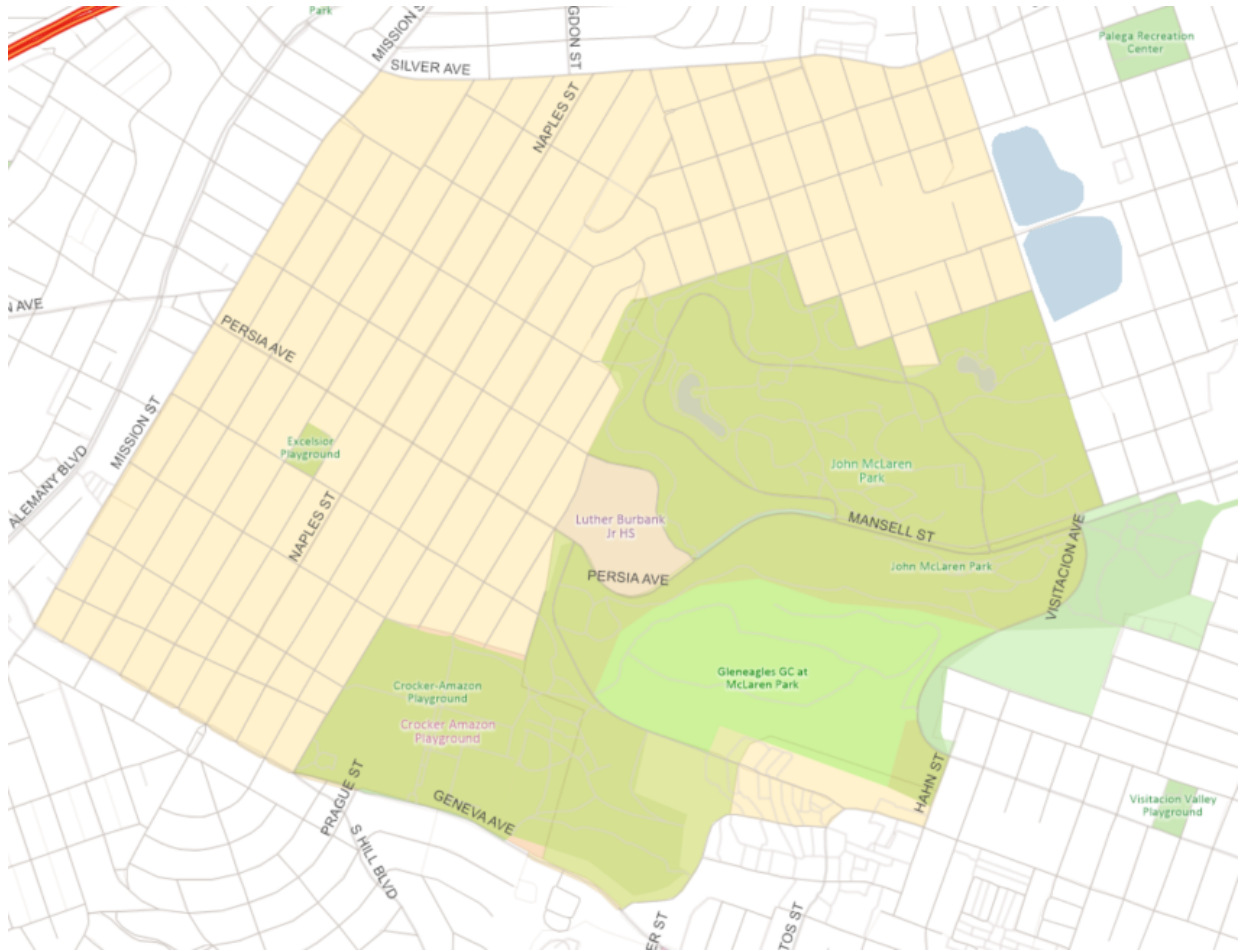
As the oldest Chinatown in North America, San Francisco's Chinatown houses a large portion of senior, limited English proficient immigrants. Many of the community members we serve in Chinatown are working class and SRO residents, having similar policy needs including a need for language assistance as well as tenant & employment protections.

Farther south, there is another large concentration of low-income and immigrant communities in the Excelsior & Balboa Park neighborhoods. Many of the clients we serve within these areas are low-income Chinese residents, many of whom have been historically displaced due to rising housing costs in the city. Many residents in these neighborhoods have come to us with concerns related to unemployment assistance and eviction from their homes. Language barriers are also a challenge for many of our clients from Excelsior & Balboa Park.

Today, I am urging the commission to respect the integrity of both of these COIs, each holding importance for the Chinese communities we serve in San Francisco. Thank you so much for hearing from me today and the rest of the AAPI & AMEMSA State Redistricting Collaborative.



Screenshot of boundaries of SF Chinatown COI



Screenshot of boundaries of Excelsior COI