



**SUBMISSION BY THE ASIAN AMERICAN INSTITUTE
TO THE ILLINOIS HOUSE REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE
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I. INTRODUCTION

Asian American Institute (AAI) appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony during the 2011 redistricting process. This submission attaches detailed demographic analysis of the three compact and cohesive Asian American communities that AAI has previously identified. For the convenience of the Committee, AAI also attaches here the materials submitted in previous testimony. We urge the Illinois General Assembly to give meaningful consideration to the input of Asian Americans, give us an opportunity to review and comment on draft maps, and incorporate our input into the new district lines.

AAI is a pan-Asian, non-profit, non-partisan organization located in Chicago, Illinois whose mission is to empower the Asian American community through advocacy, research, education, and coalition-building. AAI's programs include legal advocacy, community organizing, and leadership development. AAI is a member of the national Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, whose other members include Asian American Justice Center in Washington, D.C., Asian Law Caucus in San Francisco, and Asian Pacific American Legal Center in Los Angeles.

2011 redistricting will critically affect people's day-to-day lives because redistricting helps determine who can vote, who can run for office, and who can win in a given district. When minorities are distributed fairly throughout districts, they have a fair



chance to influence the outcome of elections so that representatives will be responsive to their needs. But historically in Illinois, minorities' voting rights have been diluted by unfair and illegal practices such as cracking or packing. For many years, AAI has been working with the Asian American community at large to unite our neighborhoods into single districts and prevent further vote dilution as a result of redistricting. We work in coalition with other minority groups and reform groups, including Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community (CBCAC), Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), Illinois Campaign for Accountable Redistricting/Draw the Line Illinois (ICAR), and United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (UCCRO).

In coalition with concerned community leaders, AAI aims to make a positive impact on the redistricting process. This submission describes the legal protections of Asian American voting rights; current demographics of Asian Americans in Illinois; the vote dilution of Asian Americans at state *and* Congressional levels; details about three of the areas of concern in and around the north side of Chicago and an example of district lines that would protect the voting rights of Asian Americans in this area; and the need for transparency throughout the redistricting process.

II. LEGAL PROTECTIONS OF ASIAN AMERICAN VOTING RIGHTS

Under federal and state law, Asian Americans have the right to have votes that count. Section 2 of the federal Voting Rights Act prohibits any voting practice or procedure that results in the denial or abridgement of a person's right to vote based on race, color, or minority language status.¹ Specifically, the federal Voting Rights Act prohibits laws or practices that deny minority voters an equal opportunity to participate in the political process and to elect candidates of their choice.²

¹ 42 U.S.C. § 1973; *Thornburg v. Gingles*, 478 U.S. 30 (1986).

² *Id.*



The recently enacted Illinois Voting Rights Act provides additional protections for racial and language minorities.³ In addition to reiterating the federal Voting Rights Act, the new law also requires that the Illinois General Assembly draw “crossover districts,” where the minority is potentially large enough to elect the candidate of its choice with help from voters outside the minority; “coalition districts,” where more than one minority group could form a coalition to elect the candidate of their choice; and “influence districts,” where a minority can influence an election outcome even if its preferred candidate cannot be elected.

The Asian American community is deeply concerned about having an equal opportunity to participate in the political process and the ability to elect representatives of our choice. AAI has testified repeatedly about the fragmentation of the Greater Chinatown and Asian neighborhoods on the north side of Chicago, as well as other compact communities in Illinois whose members have common ground in terms of history, ethnicity, language, and social concerns. When trying to voice these concerns, neighborhood residents often have to go to two, three, or more legislators, who might not all agree with each other or who do not take Asian Americans seriously because the current district lines dilute the community’s vote. Asian Broadcasting Network, Cambodian Association of Illinois, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community, Council for Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago, Hamdard Center for Health and Human Services, Indo-American Center, Korean American Community Services, Islamic Circle of North America, and several other community leaders and organizations have testified in recent weeks with details about our rising population and the devastating harm that we face as a result of unfair vote dilution. The fair representation of our community is a crucial step in having our unique needs effectively addressed.

During 2011 redistricting, the Illinois General Assembly must (1) protect the functional opportunity of racial and language minorities to elect the candidates of their

³ ILL. PUBLIC ACT 096-1541 (2011).



choice; (2) guard against packing, cracking, and other forms of unfair vote dilution; and (3) keep cohesive communities of interest united when drawing district lines by respecting boundaries defined by the communities themselves. Below is updated Census and demographic information that demonstrates that Asian Americans are a rapidly growing population whose voting rights must be respected during 2011 redistricting.

III. OVERVIEW OF ASIAN AMERICANS IN ILLINOIS

Since 2000, the Asian American population in Illinois has grown by 39%⁴, and we have been one of the fastest-growing populations in the state, while most other races have seen an overall decline. Asian Americans represent almost 5% of the state's population⁵, and in certain areas, the concentration is much higher. In areas such as Greater Chinatown, neighborhoods on the north side of Chicago, and portions of suburban Cook County, Asian Americans make up over 25% of the population; in DuPage County, Asians are 10% of the population. Twelve counties in Illinois experienced 100% or more Asian population growth since 2000.⁶ Even though Chicago's population decreased by nearly 7% since 2000, its Asian population increased by approximately 17%.⁷ Since 2000, the Asian population in Skokie and Morton Grove grew by 23% and 31%, respectively.⁸ And as discussed further below in Section V, in certain geographic areas of concern to our community, Asian populations have grown significantly even though the overall population in those areas went down.

⁴ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2000 & CENSUS 2010. In 2000, the number of people in Illinois who were Asian alone was 423,603. In 2010, this number increased to 586,934, a 39% increase. These figures were calculated using totals of people who selected a single race category of Asian. Additional data and citations are available from AAI upon request. In the coming months, AAI will be providing more analysis and details as additional Census figures continue to be released.

⁵ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2010. In 2010, the number of people in Illinois who were Asian alone was 586,934 out of a total population of 12,830,632, which represents 5% of the population.

⁶ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2000 & CENSUS 2010. Of these twelve counties, Cook, DuPage, and Lake Counties had the highest total Asian American population in 2000, and they continue to do so in 2010.

⁷ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2000 & 2010.

⁸ *Id.*



Locally and nationally, Asian and Latino populations have grown considerably, in part because of relatively higher levels of immigration.⁹ Nationwide, between 2000 and 2010, the population of those who identify as Asian alone grew faster than any other major race group.¹⁰ Newly naturalized Americans, specifically Asians and Latinos, make up an increasingly large portion of the electorate – nationwide and in Illinois.¹¹

AAI and its many community partners have worked to increase the civic engagement of Asian Americans in the Chicago area through projects such as Census outreach, non-partisan voter education and voter turnout, and redistricting advocacy. AAI's community partners include ethnic-specific and neighborhood-specific organizations throughout the Chicago area, and AAI collaborates on civic engagement efforts with groups such as Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment, Apna Ghar, Cambodian Association of Illinois, Asian Broadcasting Network, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community, Chinese American Service League, Chinese Mutual Aid Association, Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago, Hamdard Center, Islamic Circle of North America, Indo-American Center, Muslim Women's Resource Center, Korean American Community Services, Korean American Resource and Cultural Center, Korean American Women in Need, Lao American Organization of Elgin, Metro Asian Family Services, Pui Tak Center, South Asian American Policy and Research Institute, Southeast Asia Center, Vietnamese Association of Illinois, and Vietnamese Senior Association of Chicago.

⁹ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, *2010 Census Shows America's Diversity: Hispanic and Asian Populations Grew Fastest During Decade* (Mar. 24, 2011) (press release).

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Rob Paral & Assocs., *The New American Electorate: The Growing Political Power of Immigrants and Their Children*, at 4 (Oct. 2008), available at

<http://immigrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/docs/NewCitizenVotersWEBversion.pdf>; Rob Paral & Assocs., *Supplement to The New American Electorate: The Growing Political Power of Immigrants and Their Children*, at 5 (Oct. 2008), available at <http://robparal.com/downloads/NewAmericansSupplementEthnicity.pdf>.



IV. VOTE DILUTION OF ASIAN AMERICANS AT STATE AND CONGRESSIONAL LEVELS

Asian Americans are now nearly 5% of the state's population¹², and Asian Americans have assumed a growing role as leaders in the state's business, educational, and community organizations, but an Asian American has still never been elected to the Illinois General Assembly or any statewide office. Over 100 Asian Americans in Cook and DuPage Counties have run for elected office, including federal, state, and local positions, with the majority of these candidates running for office in the past 10 years. Yet, since 2000, over 75% of these Asian American candidates have lost, and *all* Asian American candidates for the Illinois General Assembly or statewide offices have lost.

Contributing to the problem of Asian Americans not having the full and fair opportunity to elect candidates of their choice, redistricting in Illinois has fragmented Asian American neighborhoods and diluted the community's vote. After the 2000 Census, *five* Illinois Senate districts were over 10% Asian American¹³; yet, after the lines were redrawn in 2001, only *two* Senate districts were over 10% Asian American¹⁴. *Based on the current district lines and recently released 2010 Census data, 16 House districts and 10 Senate Districts are over 10% Asian American.*¹⁵

Similarly, at the Congressional level, four Congressional districts were over 7% Asian American after the 2000 Census, but after 2001 redistricting, only two districts remained over 7%.¹⁶ The most recent Census shows that there are now five districts that are over 7%.¹⁷ The Asian American population in the northwest suburbs is booming, and

¹² U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2010.

¹³ Redistricting Website of Illinois Speaker of the House, *available at* <http://clients.ecampaigning.com/ilr/data/2ksenate.htm> (*citing* 2000 U.S. Census Data by Illinois Senate District).

¹⁴ Redistricting Website of Illinois Speaker of the House, *available at* http://clients.ecampaigning.com/ilr/data/currieii_house.htm (*citing* Currie II (as Amended by Bilandic Amendment) House Districts – Total Population).

¹⁵ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2010.

¹⁶ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2000.

¹⁷ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2010.



it is now is over 12% of the population there.¹⁸ For example, in Hoffman Estates, Asian Americans make up 23% of the population, and in Schaumburg, Asian Americans make up 20% of the population.¹⁹ There are similarly large Asian American communities in South Barrington, Streamwood, Hanover Park, Buffalo Grove, and other places in close proximity. Despite this fact, Asian Americans in these areas are divided into at least three congressional districts – Congressional Districts 6, 8, and 10 – thus diluting their electoral strength.

Clearly, Asian Americans are an important stakeholder in this year’s redistricting process at the state and Congressional levels.

V. NORTH CHICAGO AND OTHER NEARBY ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

You are all by now familiar with the example of the Greater Chinatown area in Chicago, a cohesive community that has experienced unfair fragmentation. We are also here, however, to bring your attention to three other compact Asian American communities whose residents have common ground in terms of history, ethnicity, language, and social concerns and who should be kept together in single districts during redistricting. AAI and its allies have articulated boundaries of three such communities, after obtaining input from community leaders and organizations and consulting the people who live, work, and serve residents in Asian American neighborhoods. AAI has also endorsed maps drawn by United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (specifically, House districts labeled as “AA1” and “AA2” by UCCRO and depicted on the attached map) that show an example of district lines that would protect the voting rights of Asian Americans in this area.

¹⁸ *Asian Population Booming in Suburbs*, DAILY HERALD (Mar. 6, 2011), available at <http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20110306/news/703069929>.

¹⁹ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2010.



As detailed in the attached maps and profiles, not only is there a high concentration of Asian Americans in the north side of Chicago and nearby suburbs, but there is also a plethora of institutions in the area that are vital to our community members, including non-profit organizations; religious institutions; schools; and ethnic media, retail, and commercial outlets. The demographics of these clusters appear in a chart attached to this testimony, and this provides a striking illustration of the concentration of Asian American communities and the corresponding fragmentation that they face. The clusters contain between 24% and 31% Asian Americans and are currently each splintered into three to six Illinois House districts. Each cluster makes up less than an entire district and should be incorporated into a district. As can be seen on the attached map and demographics pages, the AA1 and AA2 Illinois House districts proposed by United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (UCCRO) would protect the voting rights of Asian Americans in the clusters, while still respecting the voting rights of Latinos and other minority populations.

In order to determine these specific cluster and district boundaries, AAI has spent significant time consulting community leaders who live, work, and serve residents in these areas, including but not limited to Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment, Cambodian Association of Illinois, Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago, Hamdard Center for Health and Human Services, Indo-American Center, Islamic Circle of North America – Chicago, Korean American Resource and Cultural Center, Muslim Women’s Resource Center, Nepali Pariwar, and South Asian American Policy and Research Institute. AAI also has discussed and is continuing to discuss these boundaries with other minority communities, including Latino and African American communities represented by Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, UCCRO, and Draw the Line Illinois. Through such collaborations, AAI demonstrates its commitment to protecting the voting rights of all minorities.

As shown by recently released Census data, districts in this area (namely, Illinois House Districts 15, 16, 17, and 57, and Illinois Senate Districts 8, 9, and 29) all faced loss



of population or their population stayed the same between 2000 and 2010.²⁰ However, each of these same areas experienced significant growth of Asian population, ranging from 10% to 32% growth.²¹ This demographic trend points to the need to protect the voting rights of these Asian Americans and consider their input when redrawing these lines.

As detailed on the attached profiles of the North Chicago Area, Skokie Area, and Des Plaines Area, the residents of the communities represented on the maps have common ground not just in terms of race, but also in terms of history, ethnicity, language, and social issues.²² Even though there is diversity within these communities, Asian Americans are a cohesive group that share many common concerns, such as the need for linguistically and culturally appropriate social services, as well as concerns about education, affirmative action, immigration, discrimination, hate crimes, and racial profiling. Residents of this particular area of Chicago and suburban Cook County face similar social problems, including limited access to public transportation; low income; and limited English proficiency and linguistic isolation.²³ People in this area also have other unique concerns that unite them, including concerns about small, minority-owned businesses; commercial corridors and business development; cultural diversity and demographic change; residential development and public spaces; government services; crime; and education.²⁴ This area is a gateway for many immigrants and new citizens who are in the process of adjusting to the United States. The Asian Americans in this area identify as a unified community of interest and will be better represented when they are united into a single district or fewer districts.

²⁰ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2010.

²¹ *Id.*

²² *See, e.g.*, WEST RIDGE COMMUNITY SURVEY, University of Illinois Extension - Cook County (Oct. 2007) (research study analyzing data and collecting input from over 90 residents of West Ridge as well as several community organizations, over the course of eleven one-hour focus groups and over 700 comments about life in West Ridge); U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2005-2009 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATE.

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ *Id.*



VI. NEED FOR TRANSPARENCY AND CONSIDERATION OF PUBLIC INPUT

In order for there to be meaningful transparency and consideration of public input during redistricting, the General Assembly should (1) hold public hearings *after* maps are drafted but *before* they are finalized; (2) make draft maps available for review by community groups as soon as possible, with reasonable time for them to review the proposals; and (3) give serious consideration to maps and comments from the public, especially community groups who are familiar with the needs of the neighborhoods at stake. Those drawing the maps cannot legitimately keep in mind the needs of communities unless they hear first-hand from the public both before and after coming up with draft maps. The public must also have prompt access to redistricting data, draft maps, and hearing transcripts and recordings, in order to give useful input on where district lines should be drawn. Asian Americans gave input during the 2001 redistricting process, but our communities were still further splintered, which points to the need for greater consideration of public input.

VII. CONCLUSION

Asian American Institute urges the Committee and other members of the General Assembly to remain mindful of the voting rights of Asian Americans and other minority communities in Illinois. UCCRO has drawn districts that show that it is possible to protect Asian American voting rights while still protecting the voting rights of other minority groups. The Asian American community has faced egregious vote dilution a result of past redistricting. We urge you to ensure that this unfortunate history is not repeated. Many of our community members and allies have been actively involved in recent redistricting hearings to express that Asian Americans' input should be meaningfully considered during the redistricting process. AAI would be glad to provide additional information or analysis upon request.



Cluster and District Demographic Breakdown: Total Population

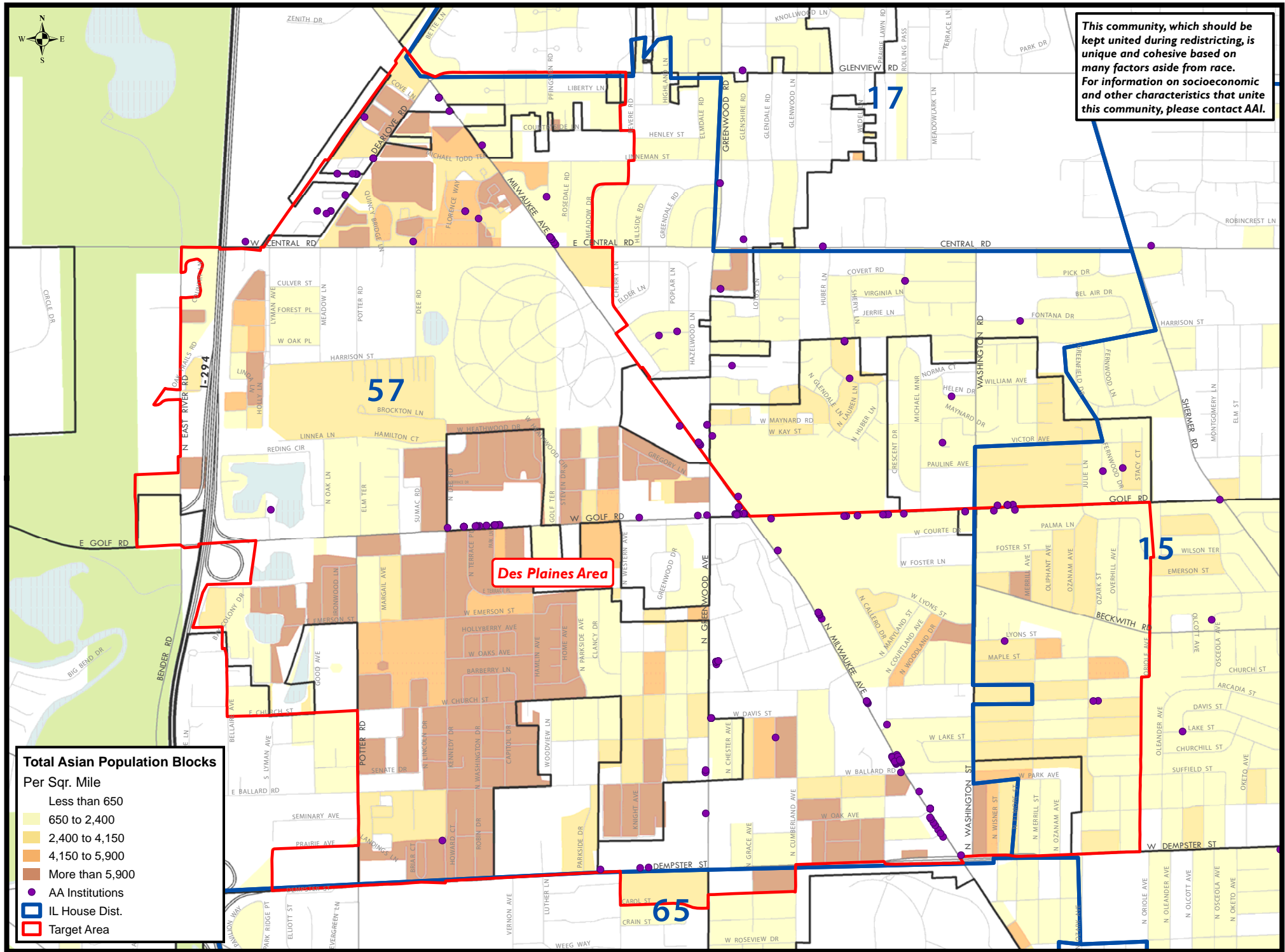
	Total	Latino	%	White	%	Black	%	Asian	%	% Total Cook County Asian Population	IL House District	IL Senate District	Total Sqr. Miles	Asian Pop. Per Sqr. Mile
Des Plaines Area	41,949	5,889	14%	20,127	48%	1,849	4%	12,805	31%	4.0%	15, 57, 65	8, 29, 33	4.1	3,123
Skokie Area	40,541	3,777	9%	20,671	51%	2,617	6%	12,094	30%	3.8%	15, 16, 17	8, 9	4.1	2,950
North Chicago Area	91,546	24,395	27%	33,618	37%	7,921	9%	22,344	24%	7.0%	11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 40	6, 7, 8, 20	3.9	5,729
Greater Chinatown Area	89,903	27,074	30%	24,763	28%	9,353	10%	27,420	30%	8.6%	1, 2, 5, 6, 9	1, 3, 5, 13	6.6	4,155
UCCRO AA1 House District	108,734	19,711	18%	48,120	44%	8,901	8%	28,231	26%	8.9%	13, 14, 15, 16, 17	7, 8, 9	7.0	4,033
UCCRO AA2 House District	108,771	10,820	10%	63,203	58%	4,462	4%	27,389	25%	8.6%	15, 17, 20, 57, 65	8, 9, 10, 29, 33	12.9	2,123

Cluster and District Demographic Breakdown: Voting Age Population

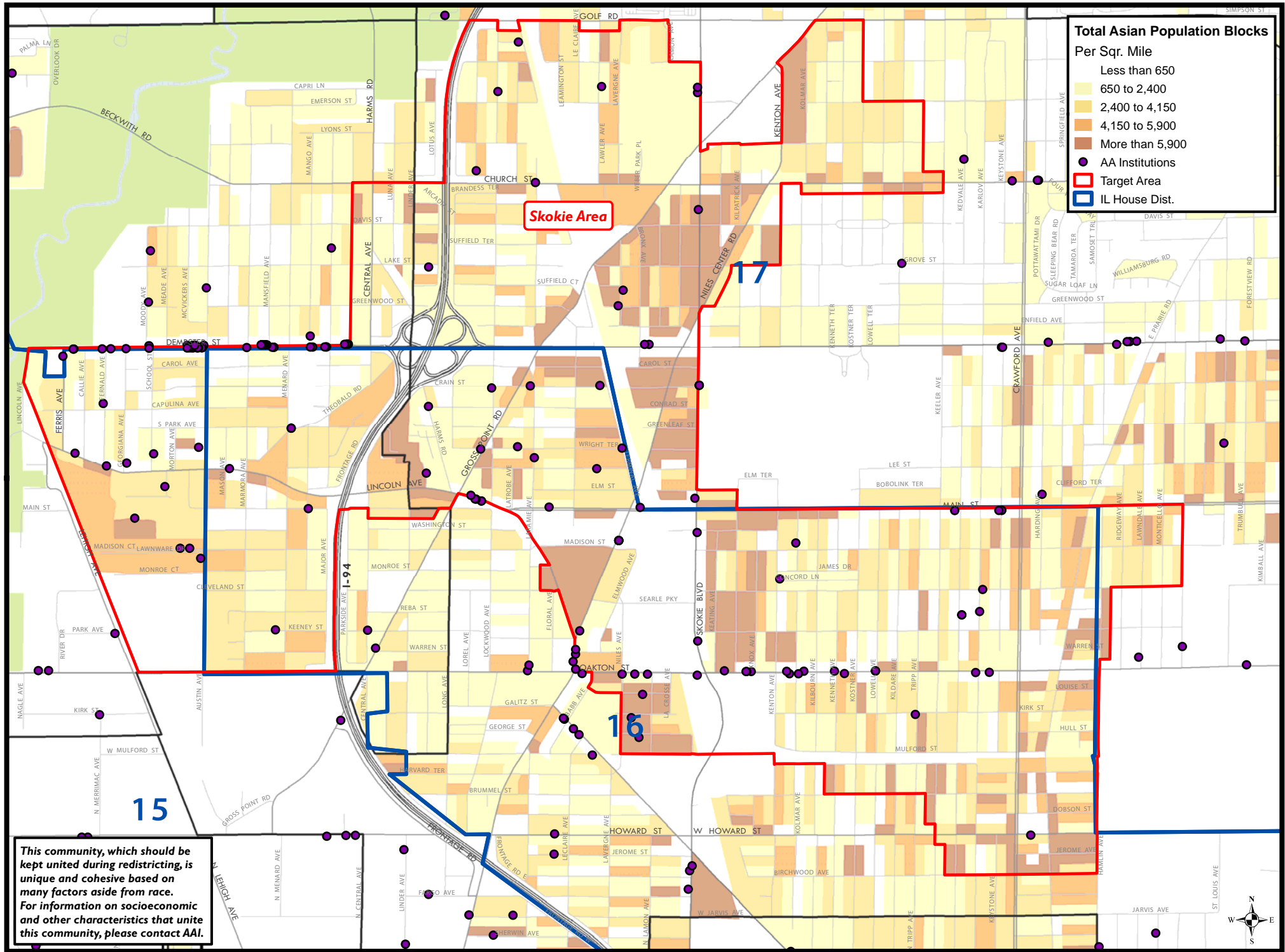
	Total	Latino	%	White	%	Black	%	Asian	%	% Total Cook County Asian Population	IL House District	IL Senate District	Total Sqr. Miles	Asian Pop. Per Sqr. Mile
Des Plaines Area	33,457	3,858	12%	17,390	52%	1,335	4%	9,957	30%	3.1%	15, 57, 65	8, 29, 33	4.1	2,429
Skokie Area	31,853	2,528	8%	17,393	55%	1,745	5%	9,341	29%	2.9%	15, 16, 17	8, 9	4.1	2,278
North Chicago Area	69,540	16,513	24%	28,105	40%	5,579	8%	17,191	25%	5.4%	11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 40	6, 7, 8, 20	3.9	4,408
Greater Chinatown Area	71,183	18,210	26%	21,993	31%	7,674	11%	22,411	31%	7.0%	1, 2, 5, 6, 9	1, 3, 5, 13	6.6	3,396
UCCRO AA1 House District	82,739	13,341	16%	39,236	47%	6,185	7%	21,569	26%	6.8%	13, 14, 15, 16, 17	7, 8, 9	7.0	3,081
UCCRO AA2 House District	86,814	7,218	8%	53,158	61%	3,194	4%	21,357	25%	6.7%	15, 17, 20, 57, 65	8, 9, 10, 29, 33	12.9	1,672

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Des Plaines Area Map



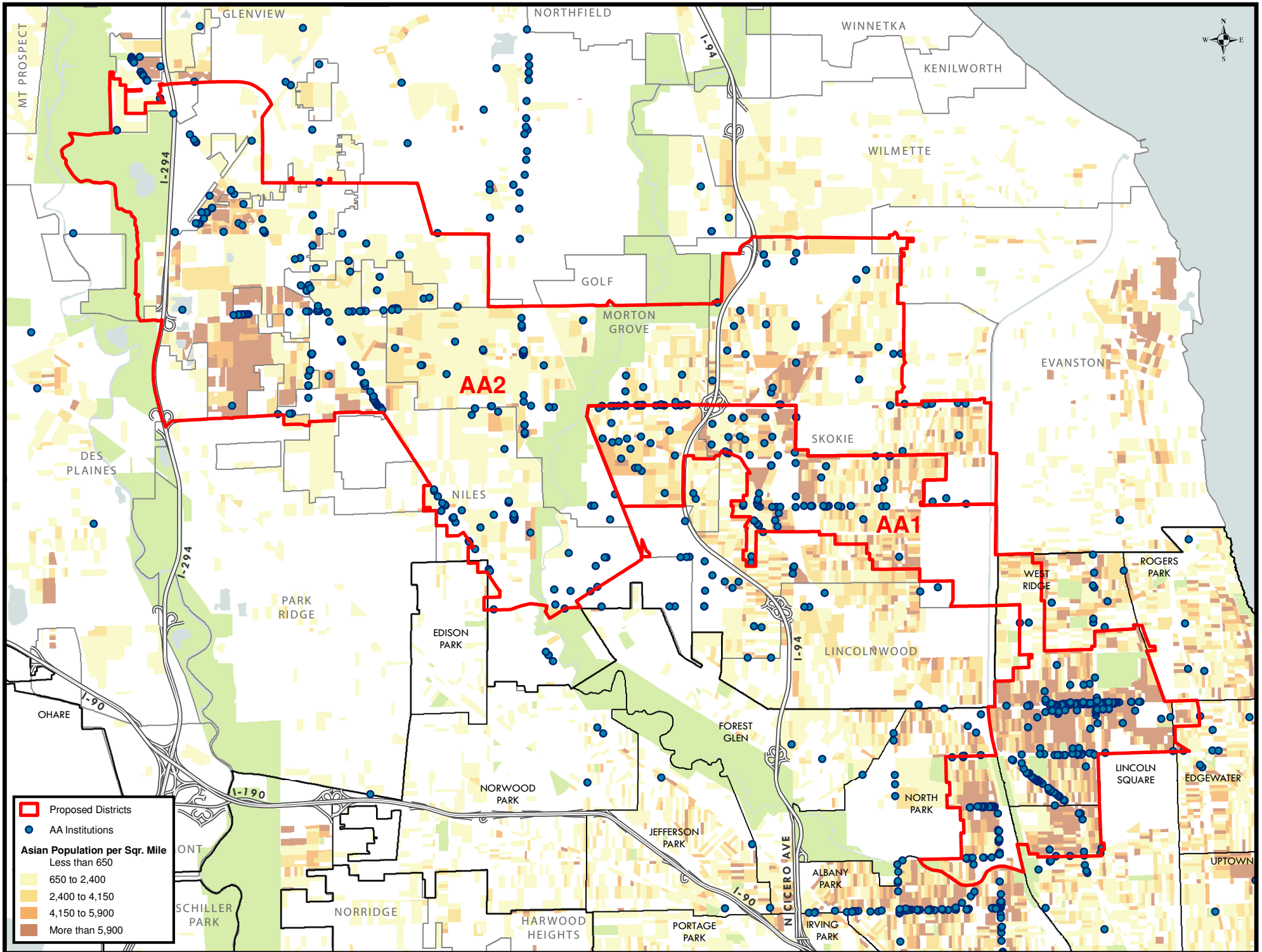
Skokie Area Map



This community, which should be kept united during redistricting, is unique and cohesive based on many factors aside from race. For information on socioeconomic and other characteristics that unite this community, please contact AAI.



UCCRO Proposed Districts AA1 and AA2





PROFILE OF THE DES PLAINES AREA

INTRODUCTION

The portion of Cook County designated by Asian American Institute as the “Des Plaines Area” cluster constitutes a unique and cohesive community of interest whose voting rights must be respected during the 2011 redistricting process. This area is defined by the boundaries indicated on the attached map. The western half of the Des Plaines Area falls in an unincorporated area just east of Des Plaines, north of Park Ridge, and south of Glenview; the eastern half of the Des Plaines Area contains the northern tip of Niles and westernmost section of Morton Grove.

Asian American Institute (AAI) created the attached map and this profile with the input of numerous individuals and groups that reside, work, or serve as leaders in the Des Plaines Area, including Korean American Community Services (KACS), Korean American Women in Need (KAN-WIN), Korean American Resource and Cultural Center, Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago, Hamdard Center for Health and Human Services, and Asian Broadcasting Network.

As background about a few of the organizations that are most familiar with Asian American residents of this region, KAN-WIN is a non-profit community organization established in 1990, committed to safe and healthy communities. KAN-WIN provides comprehensive services to women and children affected by domestic violence and works within the larger community towards women’s empowerment and social change. KAN-WIN serves women and children in Chicago and north and northwest suburbs. KACS is an organization that works to empower all members of the community by providing educational, legal, health and social services. Since 1972, KACS has responded to the needs of the Korean American community and contributed to enrich their lives. KACS currently serves more than 7,000 clients per year in the city of Chicago and surrounding area.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND ISSUES OF CONCERN IN THE DES PLAINES AREA

Families, community members, and individuals who live, work, or serve in leadership positions in the Des Plaines Area regard it to be a strong, growing Asian American community. The area contains over 200 institutions of importance to the Asian American community, including social, civic, religious, health care, educational, and commercial institutions that are geared towards serving Asian Americans.

The Des Plaines Area serves as a gateway for new immigrants when they first come to the United States. Asian Americans in Illinois grew by 39% since 2000.²⁵ Even though districts in this area (namely Illinois House Districts 15 and 57 and Illinois Senate

²⁵ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2000 & CENSUS 2010.



Districts 8 and 29) faced loss of population between 2000 and 2010, each of these same areas experienced significant growth of Asian population, ranging from 11% to 25% growth.²⁶ The attached demographics sheet (based on 2010 Census data) shows that 31% of residents in this area are Asian American and 30% of the voting-age population (residents ages 18 and up) are Asian American. Most Asian Americans in this area are of Indian, Filipino, and Korean descent.²⁷ Many Muslims of various racial backgrounds also live in this area. Particular issues faced by residents in the Des Plaines Area include linguistic challenges, social isolation, and lack of access to transportation. For example, Korean Americans with limited English proficiency have undue difficulty accessing social services, receiving public benefits, and receiving responsiveness from the criminal justice and legal systems (for example, when they have suffered domestic violence). Furthermore, many Asian Americans in this area are socially isolated, have low incomes, lack access to transportation, and are in the process of adapting to American life as they have very recently come from other countries.

Residents facing these problems need responsiveness from their elected officials, which requires them to be united into a single district. In order to serve this population more effectively, social service agencies and community-based organizations need elected officials who are well educated about the needs of the community and who are truly committed to the community. In other words, it is crucial that this area not be fragmented or otherwise the already difficult work of serving marginalized community members becomes even more difficult. Additionally, given that much of the Des Plaines Area is unincorporated, residents do not have city or town-level representatives, making it even more crucial that state-level elected officials feel truly accountable to respond to the needs of residents.

According to recent United States Census and American Community Survey data, there are many factors aside from race that unite residents of the Des Plaines Area and make it a cohesive and unique community of interest.²⁸ 50% of residents of the Des Plaines Area are foreign-born (including naturalized citizens as well as non-citizens), as opposed to 30% residents of the immediately surrounding area and 21% of Cook County residents being foreign-born.²⁹ The average per capita annual income of Asian Americans in the Des Plaines Area is quite modest at approximately \$25,500, which is below the Cook County average of \$29,000.³⁰

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2005-2009 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATE.

²⁸ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2010; U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2005-2009 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATE.

²⁹ *Id.*

³⁰ *Id.*



CONCLUSION

Given the growing number of Asian Americans residing in the area, as well as the harm caused by past fragmentation of Asian American neighborhoods in Illinois, mapdrawers must respect the boundaries of the Des Plaines Area as defined by community members themselves. The Des Plaines Area is a unique and cohesive community of interest that must be respected during the 2011 redistricting process, not only because of the high density of Asian Americans in the area, but also because of the social and economic concerns that unite Des Plaines Area residents of all races. As can be seen on the attached map and demographics pages, the AA1 and AA2 Illinois House districts proposed by United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (UCCRO) would protect the voting rights of Asian Americans in the Des Plaines Area and surrounding areas, while still respecting the voting rights of Latinos and other minority populations.



PROFILE OF THE SKOKIE AREA

INTRODUCTION

The portion of Cook County designated by Asian American Institute as the “Skokie Area” cluster constitutes a unique and cohesive community of interest whose voting rights must be respected during the 2011 redistricting process. This area is defined by the boundaries indicated on the attached map and contains portions of Skokie and a small portion of Morton Grove.

Asian American Institute (AAI) created the attached map and this profile with the input of numerous individuals and groups that reside, work, or serve as leaders in the Skokie Area, including Indo-American Center, Muslim Women Resource Center, Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago, Hamdard Center for Health and Human Services, Gayatri Gyan Mandir, Gandhi Memorial Trust Fund, Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment, and Asian Broadcasting Network, as well as individuals such as Mr. Jerry Clarito, Mr. Pramod Shah, Ms. Lakshmi Lakshmanan, and Mr. Harendra Mangrola, who all live and work in the Skokie Area, with the exception of Ms. Lakshmanan who does not live in the area but has an immigration law practice in the area serving the South Asian community.

As background about a few of the organizations that are most familiar with Asian American residents of this region, the Indo-American Center is a Chicago-based non-profit organization working in Chicago’s West Ridge community and nearby regions to assist South Asian immigrants as they adjust to American society. The Center is one of the largest and well-established organizations serving the South Asian community in the Chicagoland area. The Center’s mission is to promote the well being of South Asian immigrants through services that facilitate their adjustment, integration and friendship with the wider society, nurturing their sense of community, and fostering appreciation for their heritage and culture. In accordance with this mission, the Center operates seven main programs to offer a full range of community support, including Citizenship and Immigration Services, Public Benefits Assistance, an Adult Literacy Program, a Youth Development Program, Civics and American History courses, Computer courses, and a Seniors’ Milan Program. Hamdard Center for Health and Human Services is a not-for-profit specializing in providing social and primary care services to the South Asian population in Rogers Park, Edgewater, Skokie, and other outlying areas.

Families, community members, and individuals who live, work, or serve in leadership positions in the Skokie Area regard it to be a strong, growing Asian American community. As can be seen on the attached map, the area contains over 200 institutions of importance to the Asian American community, including social, civic, religious, health care, educational, and commercial institutions that are geared towards serving Asian Americans.



The Skokie Area serves as gateway communities for new immigrants and families moving from West Ridge, Albany Park, Rogers Park, and other Chicago neighborhoods. Historically speaking, the Skokie Area has been home to many leading pioneers of the Asian American community for the state of Illinois. This rich tradition has resulted in many successful partnerships between local government officials and Asian American community leaders, such as the dedication of the Mahatma Gandhi statue (in Skokie Heritage Park on McCormick Avenue) by the Gandhi Memorial Trust in partnership with the Village of Skokie. The Gandhi Memorial Trust educates the Skokie community on non-violence, tolerance, and conflict resolution skills. It is important for the voting rights of Asian Americans in the Skokie Area to be respected during redistricting, so that residents can have stronger connections to the elected officials who represent them and continue this tradition of collaboration with state and local government.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE SKOKIE AREA

The Skokie Area has long been and continues to be a home for Asians and other minorities. Asian Americans in Illinois grew by 39% since 2000.³¹ Additionally, since 2000, Asian Americans in Skokie grew by 23% and by 31% in Morton Grove.³² Even though districts in this area (namely Illinois House Districts 15, 16, and 17 and Illinois Senate Districts 8 and 9) faced loss of population or their population stayed the same between 2000 and 2010, each of these same areas experienced significant growth of Asian population, ranging from 10% to 32% growth.³³ The attached demographics sheet (based on 2010 Census data) shows that 30% of residents in the Skokie Area are Asian American and 29% of the voting-age population (residents ages 18 and up) are Asian American. Most Asian Americans in this area are of Indian, Filipino, Korean, and Chinese descent, and there are also significant numbers of Asian Americans in this area who are Pakistani or Vietnamese.³⁴ Many Muslims of various racial backgrounds also live in this area.

According to recent United States Census and American Community Survey data, there are several factors aside from race that unite residents of the Skokie Area and make it a cohesive and unique community of interest.³⁵ 42% of residents of the Skokie Area are foreign-born (including naturalized citizens as well as non-citizens), as opposed to 33% of residents of the immediately surrounding area and 21% of Cook County residents being foreign-born.³⁶ The average per capita annual income of Asian Americans in the Skokie Area is quite modest at approximately \$23,000, and the average income of all

³¹ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2000 & CENSUS 2010.

³² *Id.*

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2005-2009 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATE.

³⁵ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2010; U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2005-2009 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATE.

³⁶ *Id.*



residents in the Skokie Area is approximately \$27,500, still lower than the Cook County average of \$29,000.³⁷

Growing numbers of Asian American children and families in the Skokie Area have unique concerns that need to be addressed effectively by the elected officials who represent them. The Village of Skokie has reported that approximately 56% of their public school students speak a language other than English at home, and of these languages, the largest categories are Urdu or Spanish (between 2004 and 2010, Urdu and Spanish have gone back and forth as the first and second top languages spoken at home by Skokie students, other than English).³⁸ Significant numbers of Skokie students also speak other Asian languages at home, including Tagalog, Korean, Gujarati, Arabic, Malayalam, Vietnamese, and Cantonese.³⁹ In the areas of Skokie, Morton Grove, Niles, and Lincolnwood, there are 11 school districts where Asians make up over 25% of the enrollment.⁴⁰ In two of these 11 school districts, Asian enrollment is higher than the enrollment of any other race.⁴¹ In nearly all of these 11 school districts, over 20% of the school's students have limited English proficiency.⁴²

ISSUES OF CONCERN TO RESIDENTS OF THE SKOKIE AREA

The voting rights of residents in the Skokie Area must be respected during the 2011 redistricting process, not only because of the high concentration of Asian Americans in the area, but also because of common social and economic concerns that are shared by residents of all races. Asian Americans and others in the Skokie area share many similar cultural, religious, social, political, and economic concerns. These concerns include but are not limited to immigration, culturally sensitive social services, English as a Second Language (ESL) and English Language Learning (ELL) classes, education, citizenship classes, voter registration workshops, healthcare reform, job development, transportation, as well as the increasing need for a food pantry program.

Asian Americans have resided in and will continue to move to the Skokie Area due to the existing and potential growth of commercial and social opportunities, and their need for accessible transportation will continue to be an important issue. Many residents rely on public transportation options through the Chicago Transit Authority, (CTA) such as the "Skokie Swift" or CTA Yellow Line, and community members are in need of even greater access to public transportation. The Skokie Swift serves as a vital transportation route for Skokie Area residents to access jobs and services in Evanston and Chicago, especially for new immigrants who do not have cars,.

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ VILL. OF SKOKIE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.

³⁹ *Id.*

⁴⁰ ILL. STATE BD. OF ED. SCHOOL REPORT CARDS (2010); U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2005-2009 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATE.

⁴¹ *Id.*

⁴² *Id.*



Another shared concern is the need for English (ESL and ELL) classes, as well as accessible social service and government resources for seniors, new immigrants, and low-income individuals. It is challenging for these marginalized individuals and families to access appropriate and effective resources due to language, cultural, and transportation barriers. For example, case workers at Hamdard Center for Health and Human Services, a multilingual, multicultural social and health service agency, repeatedly must advocate on behalf of their Skokie clients in accessing public benefits and serve as a liaison between their clients and government officials. The Nilas, Skokie, and Morton Grove Public Libraries in partnership with Oakton Community College all offer ESL and ELL classes, and they provide resources on preparing for the United States citizenship exam. Due to the great increase in new immigrants, Nilas Township School District recognized the need for assisting immigrant parents in navigating the school system and created the ELL Parent Center (“The Center”). The Center’s mission as stated on their website (www.ellparentcenter.org) is to “help immigrant parents access community resources in the areas of citizenship, health, human services, and English language acquisition. We also aim to educate parents on how to navigate the American school system.”

As the population of Asian Americans of the Muslim faith has increased in the Skokie area, so has the demand for parochial education for the Muslim community. The Muslim Community Center Full Time School (“MCC School”) in Morton Grove is the only full time Islamic school (preschool through 8th grade) in the Skokie Area. MCC School currently has a wait-list for students, with a total enrollment of approximately 400 students. MCC School also conducts voter registration drives, and it registered many new voters in the last election cycle.

During the past decade, there has been tremendous commercial growth in businesses in the Skokie Area that cater to the needs of the Asian American community, such as Asian grocery stores, restaurants, and salons. This has resulted in many community members patronizing their local businesses.

Although existing social service organizations, civic institutions, commercial outlets, and English classes can partially help to address the community’s needs, community members are still in need of continued responsiveness from elected officials, especially in light of recent state budget cuts and other funding limitations. It is crucial that such needs continue to be met by elected officials who are responsive to the needs of Skokie Area residents, and this can only be improved by reducing the fragmentation of the Skokie Area during redistricting.

Along with the increase in the Asian American population in this region, there is also a significant improvement in the community’s civic engagement and their expressed interest in electing candidates of their choice. In 2005, Jerry Clarito, executive director of Filipino advocacy group AFIRE (Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment), was elected to the Board of Park Commissioners for the Skokie Park



District, and he currently serves as the Vice-President. In 2009, Skokie elected Pramod Shah as Trustee and Shajan Jose to the Board of Education, and more than a dozen South Asians have been appointed to the various boards and commissions in the Village of Skokie. Habeeb Quadri, Principal of MCC School in Morton Grove, has served in a leadership role in interfaith efforts with the nearby Niles Township School District and students of different faith backgrounds. These developments signify that there has been a very significant increase in civic participation for the Asian American community and, provided the opportunity, Asian Americans are eager to elect the candidates of their choice.

CONCLUSION

Given the growing number of Asian Americans residing in the Skokie Area, as well as the harm caused by past fragmentation of Asian American neighborhoods in Illinois, mapdrawers must respect the boundaries of the Skokie Area as defined by community members themselves. The Skokie Area is a unique and cohesive community of interest that must be respected during the 2011 redistricting process, not only because of the high density of Asian Americans in the area, but also because of the social and economic concerns that unite Skokie Area residents of all races. As can be seen on the attached map and demographics pages, the AA1 and AA2 Illinois House districts proposed by United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (UCCRO) would protect the voting rights of Asian Americans in the Skokie Area and surrounding areas, while still respecting the voting rights of Latinos and other minority populations.



PROFILE OF THE NORTH CHICAGO AREA

INTRODUCTION

The portion of Cook County designated by Asian American Institute as the “North Chicago Area” cluster constitutes a unique and cohesive community of whose voting rights must be respected during the 2011 redistricting process. This area is defined by the boundaries indicated on the attached map and contains portions of West Ridge, Albany Park, and nearby neighborhoods.

Asian American Institute (AAI) created the attached map and this profile with the input of numerous individuals and groups that reside, work, or serve as leaders in the North Chicago Area, including Hamdard Center for Health and Human Services, Indo-American Center (IAC), Council of Islamic Organizations of Grater Chicago (CIOGC), Muslim Women Resource Center (MWRC), Korean American Resource and Cultural Center (KRCC), Alliance of Filipinos for Immigrant Rights and Empowerment (AFIRE), Korean American Community Services (KACS), and Nepali Pariwar, as well as individuals such as Pramod Shah, Harendra Mangrola, Sharda Thapa, Dr. Mujahid Ghazi, and Rabya Khan. These people and organizations articulated the interconnectedness of the North Chicago Area as a community of interest based on the characteristics, issues, and life experiences that unite them.

The attached map of the North Chicago area shows that this community of interest is currently being represented by six state representatives and three state senators. Being represented by so many different elected officials, the Asian American community’s votes are diluted and they are less of a priority for any one of the elected officials. When Asian Americans are grouped together into single or fewer districts, elected officials will be more responsive to the community’s needs, as discussed further below.

Families, community members, and individuals who live, work, or serve in leadership positions in the North Chicago Area regard it to be a vibrant Asian American community. As can be seen on the attached map, the area contains over 500 institutions of importance to the Asian American community, including social, civic, religious, health care, educational, and commercial institutions that are geared towards serving Asian Americans. These landmarks help longtime residents and new arrivals to survive and thrive. These institutions reflect the cultural diversity of the residents in West Ridge. In addition to Christian and Jewish religious institutions, there are also multiple institutions for Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh residents within the North Chicago Area. Devon Avenue, Lawrence Avenue, Bryn Mawr Street, Lincoln Avenue, and other areas within the North Chicago Area are also strong commercial and social centers for Asian Americans and other neighborhood residents.



DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE NORTH CHICAGO AREA

The North Chicago Area has long been and continues to be a home for Asians and other immigrants and minorities. Since 2000, Asian Americans in Illinois grew by 39% and Asian Americans in Chicago grew by 17%.⁴³ Even though key districts in this area (namely Illinois House Districts 15 and 16 and Illinois Senate District 8) faced loss of population or their population stayed the same between 2000 and 2010, each of these same areas experienced significant growth of Asian population, ranging from 10% to 12% growth.⁴⁴ The attached demographics sheet (based on 2010 Census data) shows that 24% of residents in this area are Asian American and 25% of the voting-age population (residents ages 18 and up) are Asian American. Asian Americans in these areas are predominantly Indian, Pakistani, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, and Chinese.⁴⁵ As a frame of reference, the neighborhood of West Ridge has approximately five times as many Asians per square miles as the City of Chicago's average.⁴⁶ Many people of Bhutanese, Assyrian, orthodox Jewish, Central European, or Latino backgrounds also reside in the North Chicago Area. Many Muslims of various racial backgrounds also live in this area. Languages spoken in the area include Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, Punjabi, Malayalam, Bengali, Telegu, Nepali, Tagalog, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Cambodian. This community is diverse but nonetheless shares many cultural and social commonalities.

According to recent United States Census and American Community Survey data, there are several factors aside from race that unite residents of the North Chicago Area and make it a cohesive and unique community of interest.⁴⁷ 47% of residents of the North Chicago Area are foreign-born (including naturalized citizens as well as non-citizens), as opposed to 31% of residents of the immediately surrounding area and 21% of Cook County residents being foreign-born.⁴⁸ The average per capita annual income of Asian Americans in the North Chicago Area is quite modest at approximately \$20,000 is much lower than the Cook County average of \$29,000.⁴⁹ As a point of comparison, the average income of all residents in the North Chicago Area is approximately \$27,000, and the average income of all residents in the immediately surrounding area is approximately \$28,000.⁵⁰ About 49% of residents in the North Chicago Area who are 25 ages or older have no more than a high school education, as compared to the 39% rate in the

⁴³ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2000 & CENSUS 2010.

⁴⁴ *Id.*

⁴⁵ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2005-2009 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATE.

⁴⁶ WEST RIDGE COMMUNITY SURVEY, University of Illinois Extension - Cook County (Oct. 2007) (research study analyzing data and collecting input from over 90 residents of West Ridge as well as several community organizations, over the course of eleven one-hour focus groups and over 700 comments about life in West Ridge).

⁴⁷ U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CENSUS 2010; U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2005-2009 AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 5-YEAR ESTIMATE.

⁴⁸ *Id.*

⁴⁹ *Id.*

⁵⁰ *Id.*



immediately surrounding area.⁵¹ Many residents of the North Chicago Area have limited English proficiency, and the number of Asian families who are linguistically isolated (meaning that no one aged 14 or older in the household is proficient in English) actually exceeds the number of linguistically isolated Asian households in Chinatown.⁵²

Due to the relatively larger family size and many multi-generational families living in the same home, there are various social and economic issues unique to the North Chicago Area. The average household size in the North Chicago Area is higher than that of the immediately surrounding area.⁵³ In addition to single family homes, high rise apartment complexes, and 2-4 flat buildings are prevalent in the North Chicago Area, with a combination of renters and owners.

ISSUES OF CONCERN TO RESIDENTS OF THE NORTH CHICAGO AREA

The voting rights of North Chicago Area residents must be respected during the 2011 redistricting process, not only because of the high concentration of Asian Americans in the area, but also because of the social and economic concerns that unite residents of all races. Such concerns were detailed extensively in a 2007 University of Illinois Extension report based on input from over 90 residents and community leaders, who gave over 700 comments, as well as statistical and demographic analysis of the area.⁵⁴

Asian Americans have settled and will continue to settle in the North Chicago Area because of the commercial and social opportunities in proximity, and their need for accessible transportation will continue to be an important issue. Because many of the recent immigrants lack a car, they rely on public transportation to get to work and improved transportation lines are crucial to their economic survival.

Another shared concern is the lack of accessibility of social services for seniors, recent immigrants, and low-income individuals, due to language, cultural, and transportation barriers. As mentioned above, many residents of the North Chicago Area have limited English proficiency. Many of these people are able to handle day-to-day matters by dealing with merchants and service providers who speak their language, ranging from banks and social service agencies to bookstores, auto repair shops, and beauty salons. However, many community needs still go unmet. There are many social service agencies, including several who gave substantial input to Asian American

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² *Id.*

⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁴ WEST RIDGE COMMUNITY SURVEY, University of Illinois Extension - Cook County (Oct. 2007) (research study analyzing data and collecting input from over 90 residents of West Ridge as well as several community organizations, over the course of eleven one-hour focus groups and over 700 comments about life in West Ridge). The West Ridge Community Survey addressed a particular community area within the City of Chicago, but many of the observations and trends also apply to other parts of the “North Chicago Area.” The report is on file with AAI and is available upon request.



Institute's maps and community profile, who face serious funding challenges for crucial programs that provide access to public benefits in a linguistically and culturally appropriate manner. In light of the low income levels, low education levels, and high foreign-born population (discussed in detail above), Asian Americans need support and responsiveness from their local elected officials. Many of these marginalized community members are Americans and are entitled to public benefits; however, they face significant barriers accessing such resources because they lack the knowledge and language skills to do so. Therefore, the unique programs described above play a crucial role in successful integration of recent immigrants, as well as support for our aging senior population. For example, many newly arrived immigrants depend on organizations like the Indo-American Center to help them integrate into American society through job training, such as English and computer classes.

Residents of the North Chicago Area also face common economic concerns.⁵⁵ The North Chicago Area is home to various strong commercial corridors, including many small, family-owned businesses specializing in ethnic-specific goods and services. The commercial corridor of Devon Avenue, Lincoln Avenue and Lawrence Avenue are an anchor for economic activity serving the Asian American residents of the North Chicago community. Yet, many residents have serious concerns about stale, vacant storefronts; closure of small, family owned-businesses; garbage and parking problems; and the lack of a plan for beautification and redevelopment. Because of government neglect, lack of leadership among elected officials and a stagnant economy, the businesses on Devon Avenue have negatively been impacted. High turnover of stores, the lack of parking, increased crime and panhandlers, and no economic development plans are all contributing to the decline of Devon Avenue's economy. Many of Devon Avenue's public parking spaces have disappeared despite the plea of the business owners, residents, and customers. Business owners and their local customers are eager for their interests to be represented by elected officials who feel more accountable to the sizeable and unique Asian American community.

Immigration policies, including family reunification and social services for immigrants, deeply affect residents of the North Chicago Area. In this globalized economy, most Asian Americans have at least one family member who migrated from Asia and therefore are in constant touch with relatives overseas. South Asians still travel abroad to get married, only to then wait years before being reunited as a family. Many children are separated from their parents and spouses are separated from each other for long periods of time, and a large amount of capital is spent traveling abroad to for families to be able to visit each other.

Since the tragic events of September 11, 2001, South Asians, Muslims, and others in the North Chicago Area have experienced backlash, prejudice, racial profiling, and hate crimes, and neighborhood residents at large have experienced changing racial

⁵⁵ *See id.*



dynamics – another issue of concern in the community. According to community leaders, within their ethnic enclaves that are included within single districts, they have stronger support from local legislators who have held town hall meetings to address hate crimes and other community concerns. For community members who live in enclaves that are fragmented by district lines, elected officials have been less responsive or do not feel that it is necessary to work with these smaller fragments of Asian American communities. For this reason, it is imperative to respect the voting rights of residents of the North Chicago Area, as many Asians Americans live, work, and worship in this area.

With the increase in the Asian American population in the area, there has been a corresponding increase in civic participation, including an increase in candidates running for office, voters going to the polls, and residents participating in town hall meetings and engaging with elected officials. Since the 2001 redistricting process, three Asian Americans have run for election for Alderman of the 50th Ward. Asian American voter registration and participation in the North Chicago Area has steadily increased over the years. Asian Americans in the North Chicago Area have participated in town hall meetings and legislative visits on issues including immigration reform, the state budget crisis, and hate crimes. Before the Chicago mayoral election of 2011, Asian Americans from West Ridge, Albany Park, and other parts of the North Chicago Area came together for an Asian American Mayoral Forum that highlighted issues commonly shared by all Asian ethnic groups, such as access to public resources for small businesses, social services, safety, education, and language access. During the same election cycle, Filipino, Cambodian, Vietnamese, Korean, Indian, Pakistani and Afghani Americans conducted a joint Get Out The Vote effort that was quite successful. These developments signify that there has been a very significant increase in civic participation for the Asian American community and, provided the opportunity, Asian Americans are eager to participate in their local communities and elect the candidates of their choice.

COHESIVENESS BETWEEN WEST RIDGE AND ALBANY PARK

Asian Americans in the West Ridge and Albany Park neighborhoods constitute a cohesive community with similar social issues and interests, as many of them are recent immigrants who have working-class lifestyles. This community contains many Asian Americans of Filipino, Korean, Indian, Vietnamese, and Pakistani backgrounds. Many of Filipino and South Asian residents in both in the West Ridge neighborhood and Albany Park neighborhood feel strong connections to each other, particularly because of the social service institutions, religious institutions and schools, ethnic media outlets, and retail outlets that serve residents in West Ridge and Albany Park.

Many Filipino residents in both in the West Ridge neighborhood and Albany Park neighborhood feel strong connections to each other, and the same is true for the South Asian residents of the respective neighborhoods. Many of the Filipino residents in West Ridge go to Albany Park for Filipino groceries and other retail outlets. Also, many Filipino residents in West Ridge are members of Catholic parishes in Albany Park.



Similarly, the South Asians living in West Ridge frequent Albany Park to visit places of worship. Many West Ridge residents send their children to religious school in Albany Park. Major South Asian media outlets are located both in Albany Park and West Ridge, all addressing similar issues in the collective community.

Thus, it is natural that over the past several years, there have been pan-Asian coalitions formed with members of these communities to work on civic engagement and voter participation programs. For example, for the 2010 Census, organizations in Albany Park and West Ridge, among others, came together to conduct Census outreach in 10 different languages, making it the most accessible Census campaign in history for the local Asian American population. For the 2011 mayoral election in Chicago, many of the same Asian American organizations came together to educate voters in Albany Park and in West Ridge, and many of the residents in these neighborhoods united at the first ever Asian American Mayoral Candidates' Forum. Over 1000 Asian American Chicagoans attended this forum to hear what the candidates had to say about issues that mattered to their community such as public safety, public education, funding for immigrant integration social services, and support for small businesses.

Despite all these commonalities and connections between West Ridge and Albany Park, this contiguous area is currently split into six different Illinois House districts and three Illinois Senate districts.

CONCLUSION

Given the growing number of Asian Americans residing in the North Chicago Area, as well as the harm caused by past fragmentation of Asian American neighborhoods in Illinois, mapdrawers must respect the boundaries of the North Chicago Area as defined by community members themselves. The North Chicago Area is a unique and cohesive community of interest that must be respected during the 2011 redistricting process, not only because of the high density of Asian Americans in the area, but also because of the social and economic concerns that unite North Chicago Area residents of all races. As can be seen on the attached map and demographics pages, the AA1 and AA2 Illinois House districts proposed by United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations (UCCRO) would protect the voting rights of Asian Americans in the North Chicago Area and surrounding areas, while still respecting the voting rights of Latinos and other minority populations.