

**Report on
Complaints Received by
the Ombudsman's Office
February 2020 - February 2021**

March 17, 2021



CITY OF DETROIT

OMBUDSMAN

BRUCE SIMPSON, CITY OMBUDSMAN

"Improving Your Quality of Life On a Daily Basis"

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March 17, 2021

The Honorable Detroit City Council
City of Detroit
1340 CAYMC
Detroit, MI 48226

RE: Ombudsman Budget Analysis FY 2021-2022

Dear Council Members:

I would like to say thank you to your Honorable Body for giving me the opportunity to address the service delivery concerns and complaints of our citizens. This is the fifth report that has been issued to your Honorable Body by this Ombudsman Office. This year we have processed 3,979 complaints. Of the 3,979 complaints, the majority of them have come from the Building Safety Engineering and Environmental Department (BSEED) and the Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA). Combined, they account for 74% of all complaints received.

The recommendations that I have provided to you in this report address blight, safety and health. With these recommendations and analysis of the budget we attempt to speak to the concerns of the masses throughout the City.

I applaud the administration for its handling of the pandemic. Addressing COVID-19 is a challenge that was met by our municipal government and its leadership.

I submit this report on behalf of our residents, property owners, business owners and all persons who have contacted the Ombudsman Office during the time period of February, 2020 through February, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Simpson
City Ombudsman

"Improving Your Quality of Life On a Daily Basis"

Section 1

Complaints by Department
February 2020 - February 2021

Department	Complaints	Percentage
BSEED	1583	40%
Elections	6	0.24%
Finance	68	1.70%
Fire	9	0.22%
General Services	235	6.00%
Health	13	0.33%
Human Resources	7	0.18%
Law	3	0.08%
Municipal Parking	5	0.13%
Non Departmental & Non Jurisdictional	62	1.56%
P&DD	2	0.05%
Police	148	3.72%
PLD	31	0.78%
Public Works	236	5.93%
Recreation	1	0.00%
DDOT (Transportation)	10	0.25%
DWSD (Water & Sewerage)	114	2.87%
DLBA	1341	34.00%
Other	105	2.64%
TOTAL	3,979	



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Ombudsman Recommendations

- Sidewalk Replacement
- Yard waste and Bulk Trash Removal
- Demolition
- Health Department Taskforce

Sidewalks

The City of Detroit has demolished over 21,000 structures under the current administration and almost 9,000 structures from the Bing administration. In many instances, due to the demolition that has taken place, the sidewalks have been damaged and are now a hazard to the community. We have not been consistent in our request to have demolition contractors replace the sidewalk. Some years we required replacement and some years we did not. Through the Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA) we have sold many vacant lots and properties where the sidewalks have never been replaced. We are not asking to redirect funding that has been allocated for sidewalk replacement due to city owned trees, but we do believe additional funding is necessary to address the sidewalks that have been damaged as a result of demolition. Whether the sidewalk was damaged by a tree or demolition equipment, it can be a hazard to the community.

Yard Waste and Bulk Trash Removal

This year has been challenging as it relates to the consistency of yard waste and bulk trash removal. There is a clear need to increase the educational opportunities and communication between the City and its residents. The criteria that has to be met regarding yard waste and bulk trash removal has to be clearly spelled out on a more frequent basis. With that being said, there have been scenarios where bulk trash and yard waste have sat curbside for weeks. Resulting in additional illegal dumping, blight violations for residents and an eyesore to the community. We do not have the answer, but it is clear we need greater consistency in the removal of bulk trash and yard waste. We want to ensure that we are not adding to the serious problem of blight that already exists.

Demolition

We recommend that the Demolition Director provide your Honorable Body with a breakdown of violations associated with hazardous materials, stop work orders, suspensions and any other action taken by a

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contractor that could potentially harm our communities. Going forward, this information should be provided on a monthly basis. Currently, there is no mechanism in place to alert Council of said activity.

With the approval of Proposal N we know our neighborhoods will experience the presence of demolition crews as they attempt to remove blighted structures. We want to ensure that this Honorable Body has the most current information regarding that status of the program's participants.

Health Department Task Force

Local restaurants, corner stores, markets and gas stations within our communities should be a reflection of what we want our communities to look like and they are not. Blighted gas stations and local businesses should not be tolerated. Loitering at the local party store should be prevented.

It is not only the exterior of these locations that require attention, but there should be greater supervision and inspection of the goods that are being provided to our residents.

It is our recommendation that a taskforce led by the Detroit Health Department (DHD) be put in place to inspect the cleanliness of the businesses, as well as the goods that they are selling to residents. There are a number of people who are not mobile and they find themselves at the mercy of the businesses within their communities. This is especially true for young children and the elderly. The Detroit Health Department, Police Department (DPD), Buildings Safety Engineering and Environmental Department (BSEED) would all have a role to play. The Health Department has demonstrated through its handling of the pandemic, the level of compassion and effectiveness necessary to lead this effort.

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Section 2

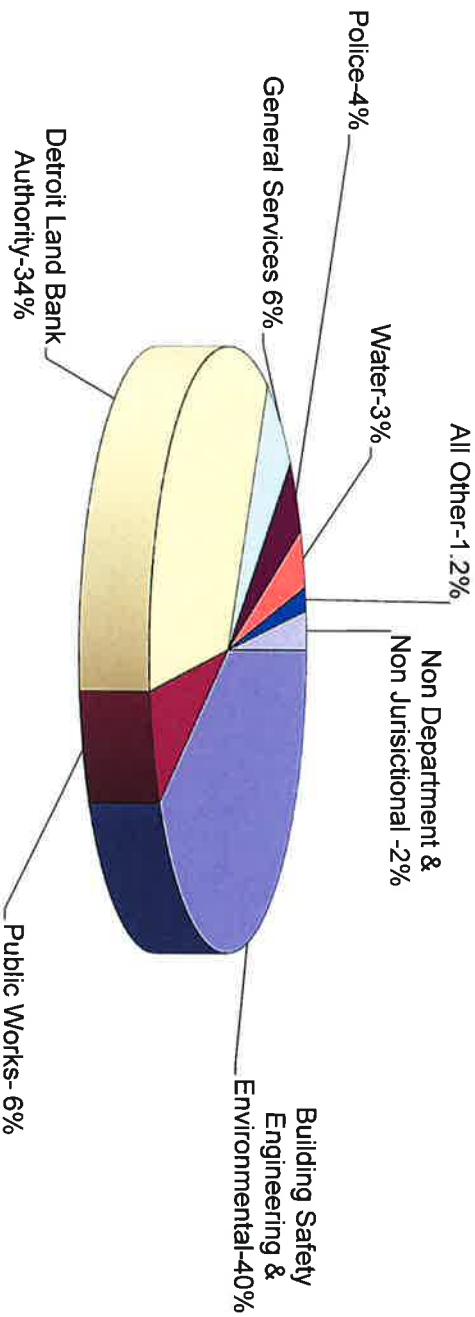
**Complaints by Zip Code
February 2020-February 2021**

Zip Codes	Complaints Received	Percentage
48201	11	0.30%
48202	42	1.05%
48203	136	3.41%
48204	271	6.81%
48205	424	10.70%
48206	101	2.53%
48207	55	1.38%
48208	23	0.58%
48209	30	0.75%
48210	179	4.50%
48211	28	0.70%
48212	69	1.73%
48213	196	4.92%
48214	91	2.28%
48215	127	3.19%
48216	8	0.20%
48217	28	0.70%
48219	195	4.90%
48221	164	4.12%
48223	137	3.44%
48224	194	4.88%
48226	53	1.33%
48227	357	8.97%
48228	223	5.60%
48234	202	5.08%
48235	209	5.25%
48236	1	0.25%
48238	396	9.96%
48239	8	2.00%
Other	21	0.52%

Total **3979**

Buildings Safety Engineering & Environmental	40%
Public Works	6.00%
Detroit Land Bank Authority	34%
General Services	6%
Police	4%
Water	3.00%
All other Departments	1.20%
Non Departmental & Non Jurisdictional	2.00%

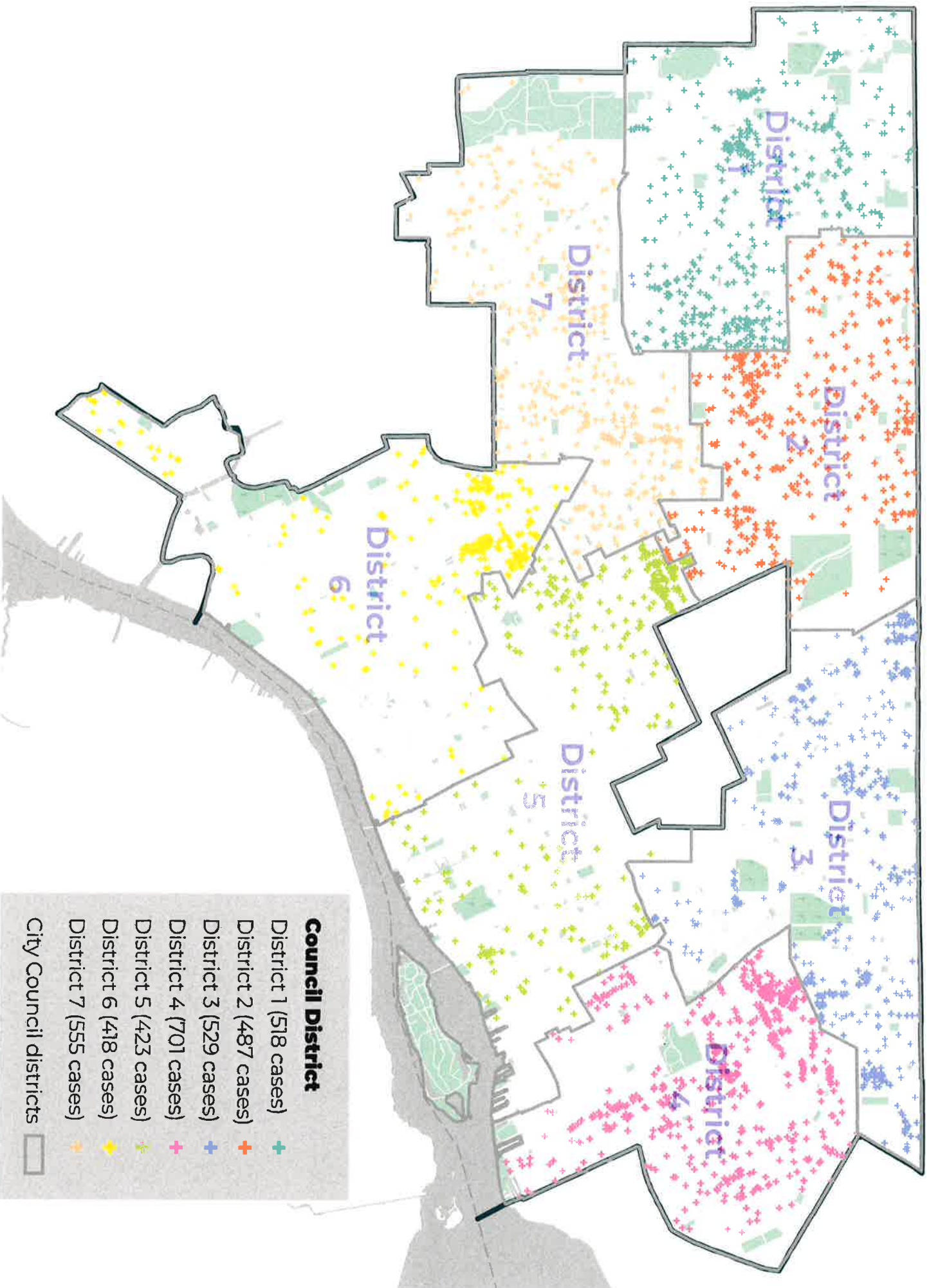
Ombudsman Complaints by Department



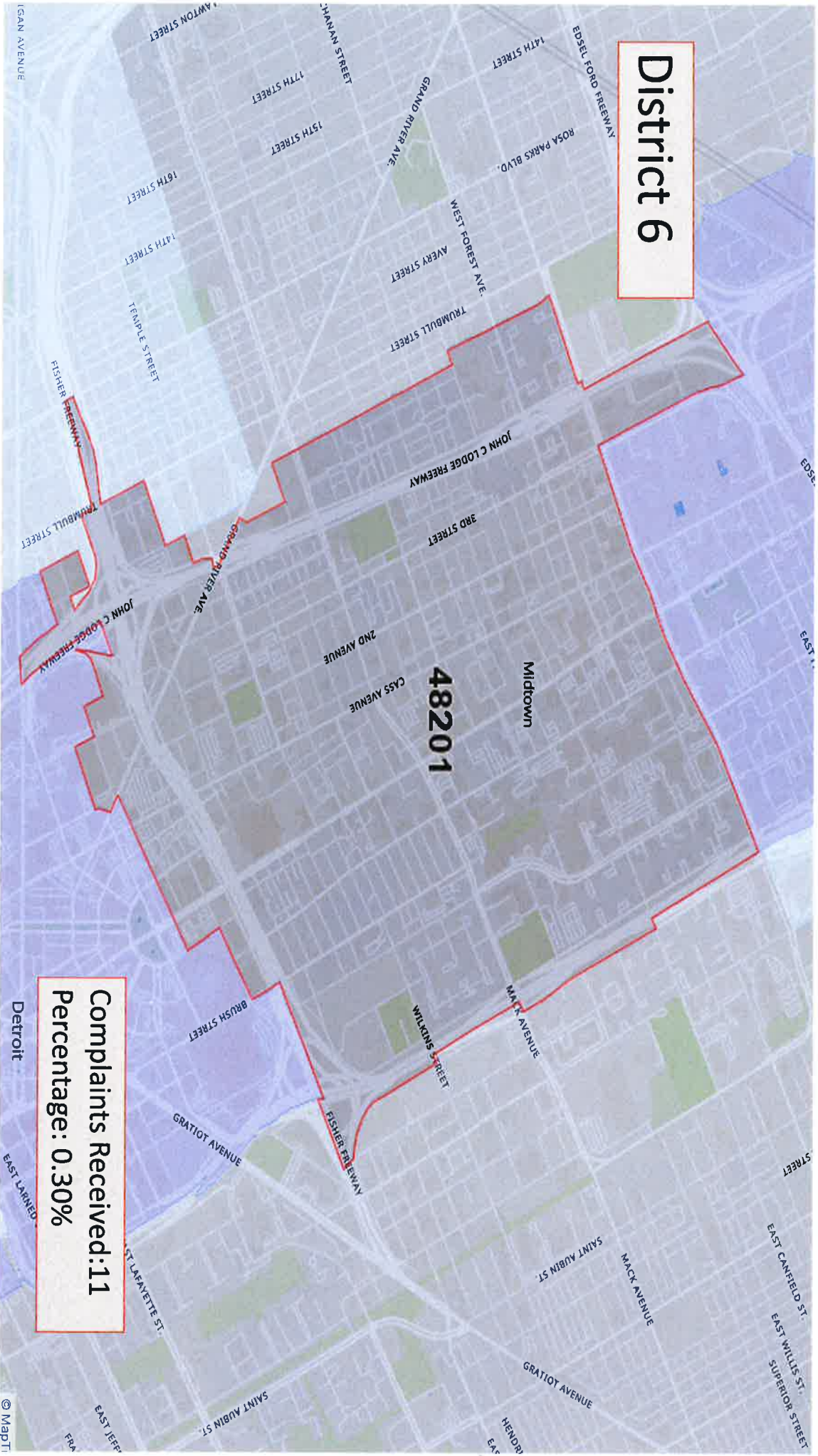
"All Other" represents several departments with less than two percent of the total complaints and as a result they were combined for chart clarity purposes.

Section 3

Complaints by Council District



District 6

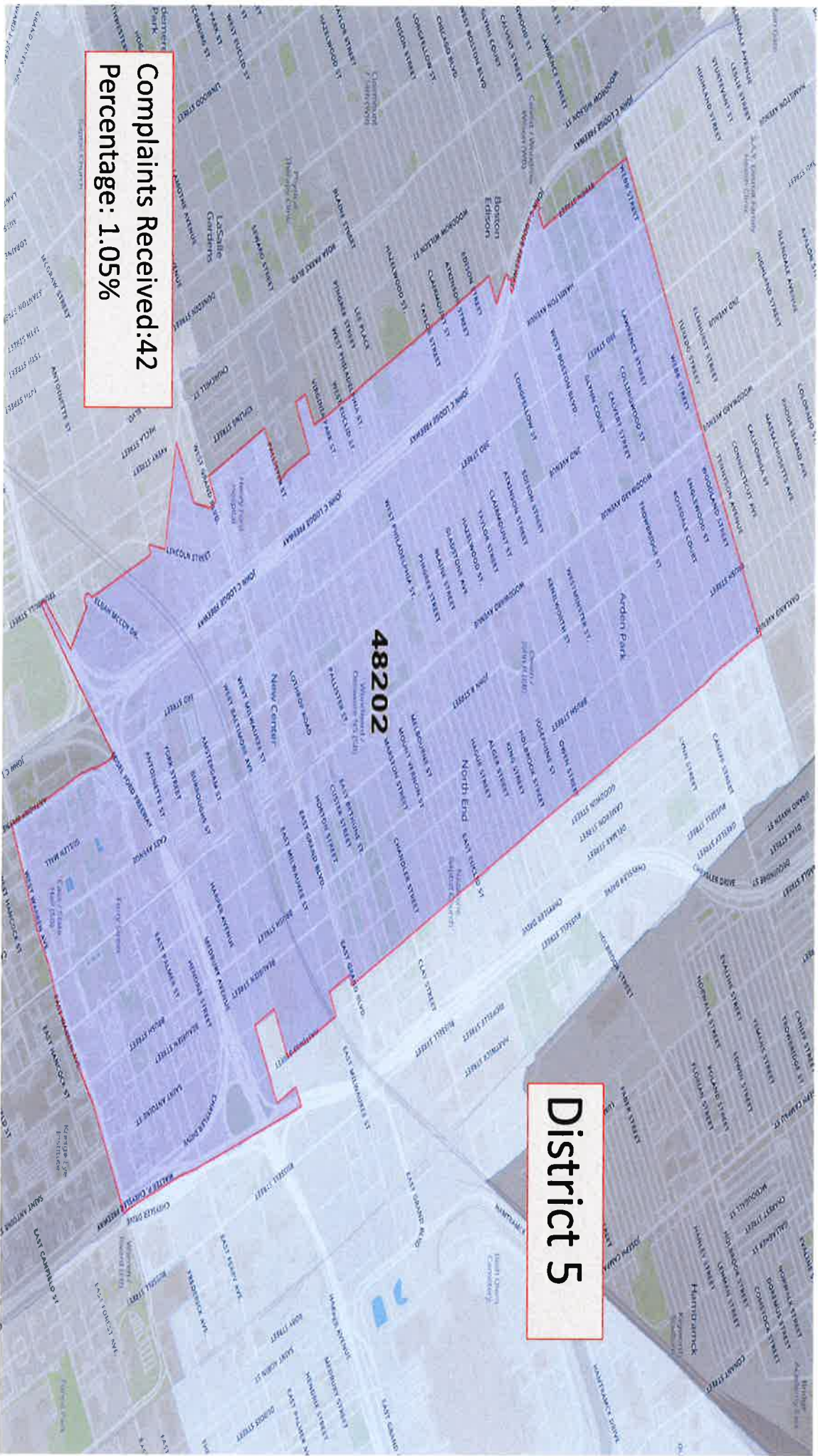


48201

Midtown

Complaints Received: 11
Percentage: 0.30%

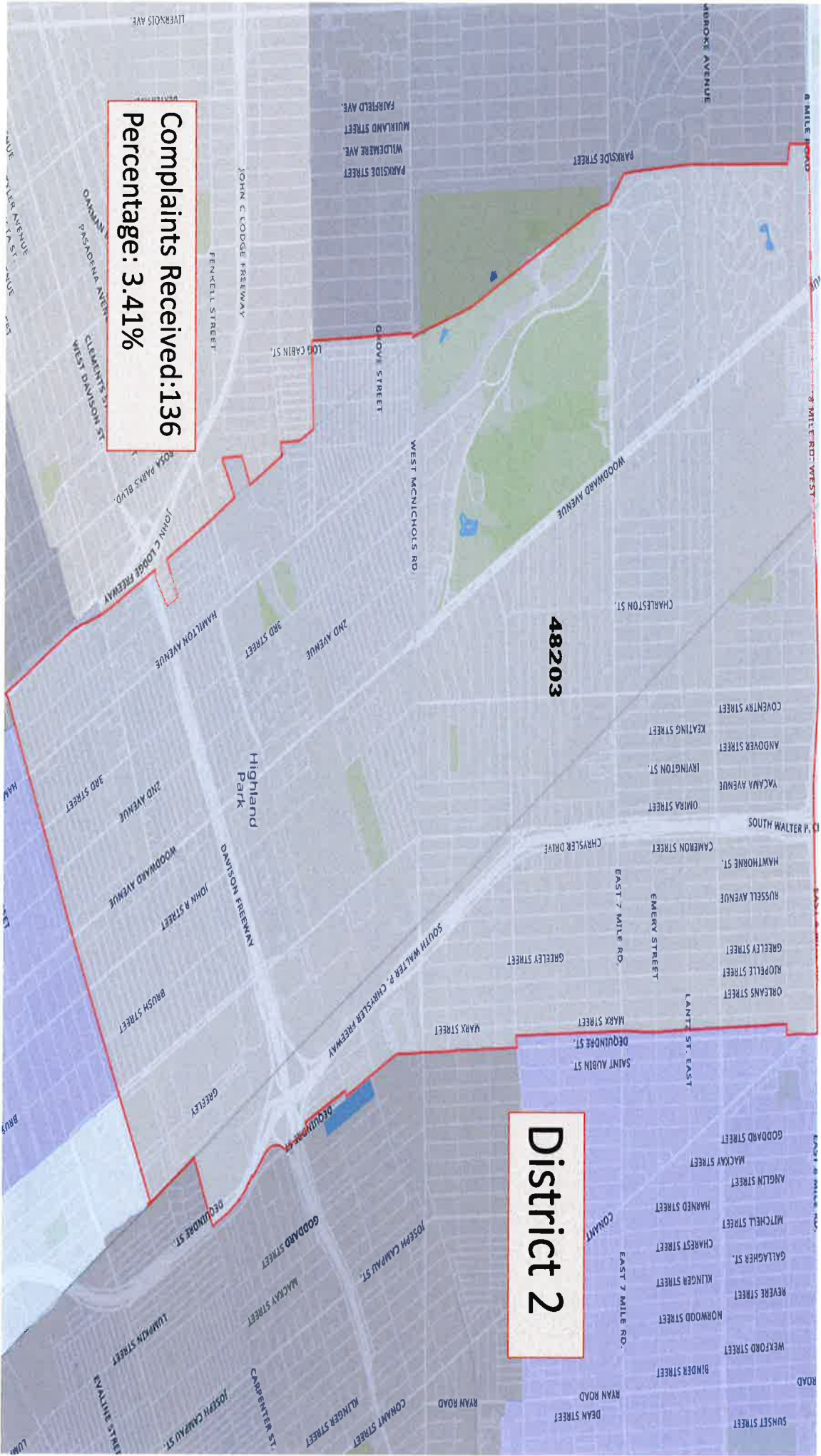
Detroit



Complaints Received: 42
Percentage: 1.05%

District 5

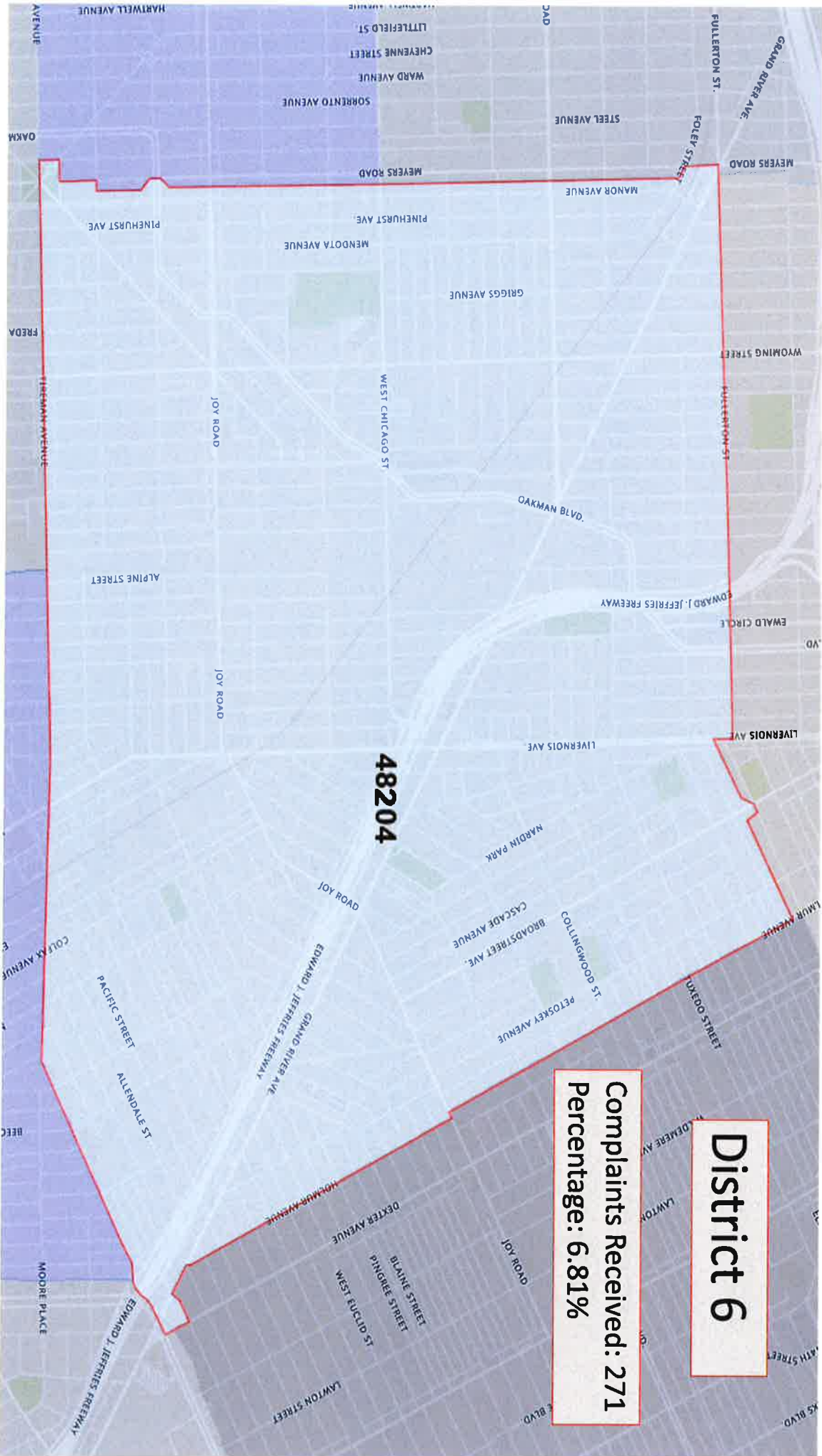
48202



Complaints Received: 136
Percentage: 3.41%

District 2

48203



48204

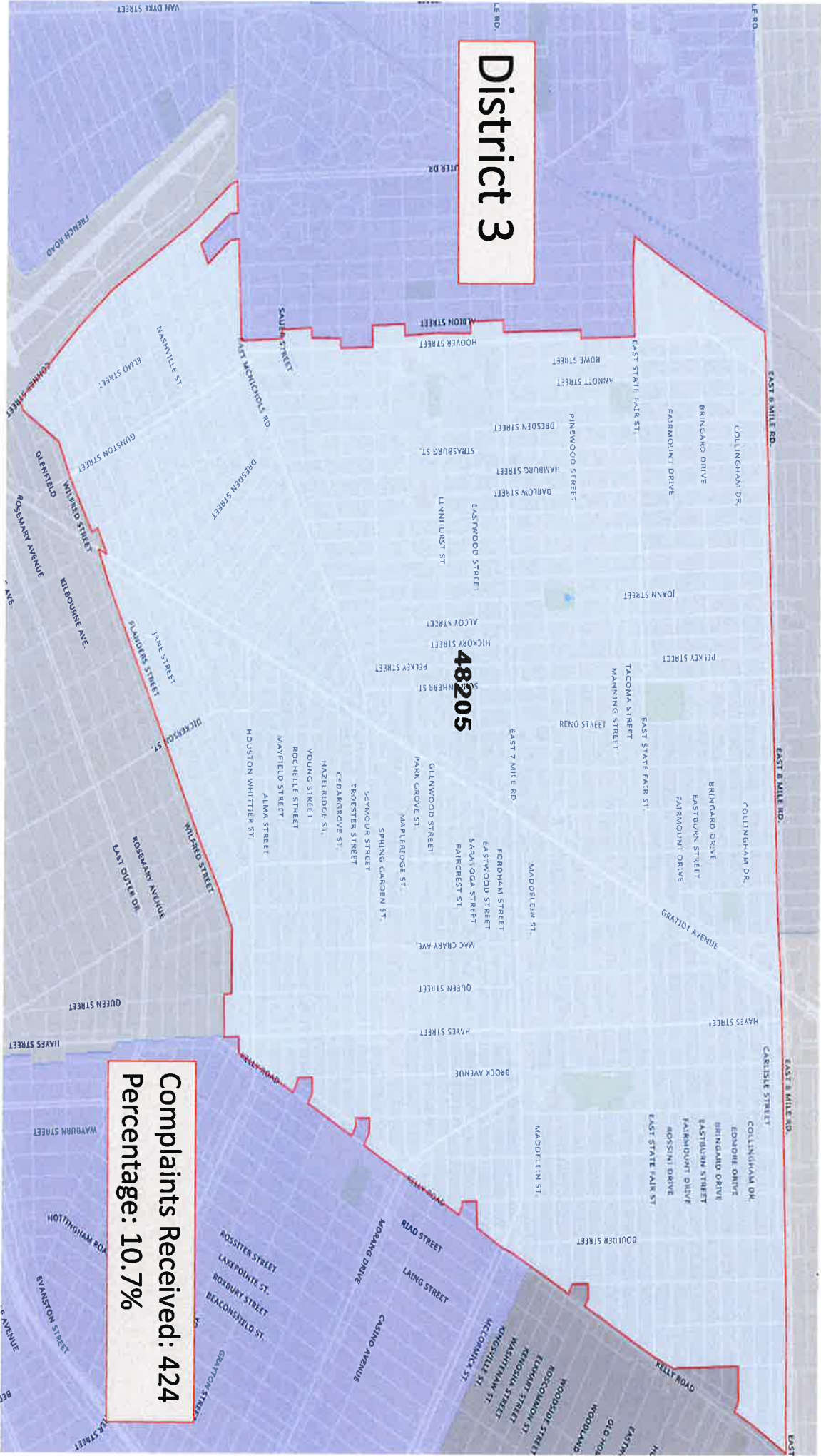
District 6

Complaints Received: 271
Percentage: 6.81%

District 3

48205

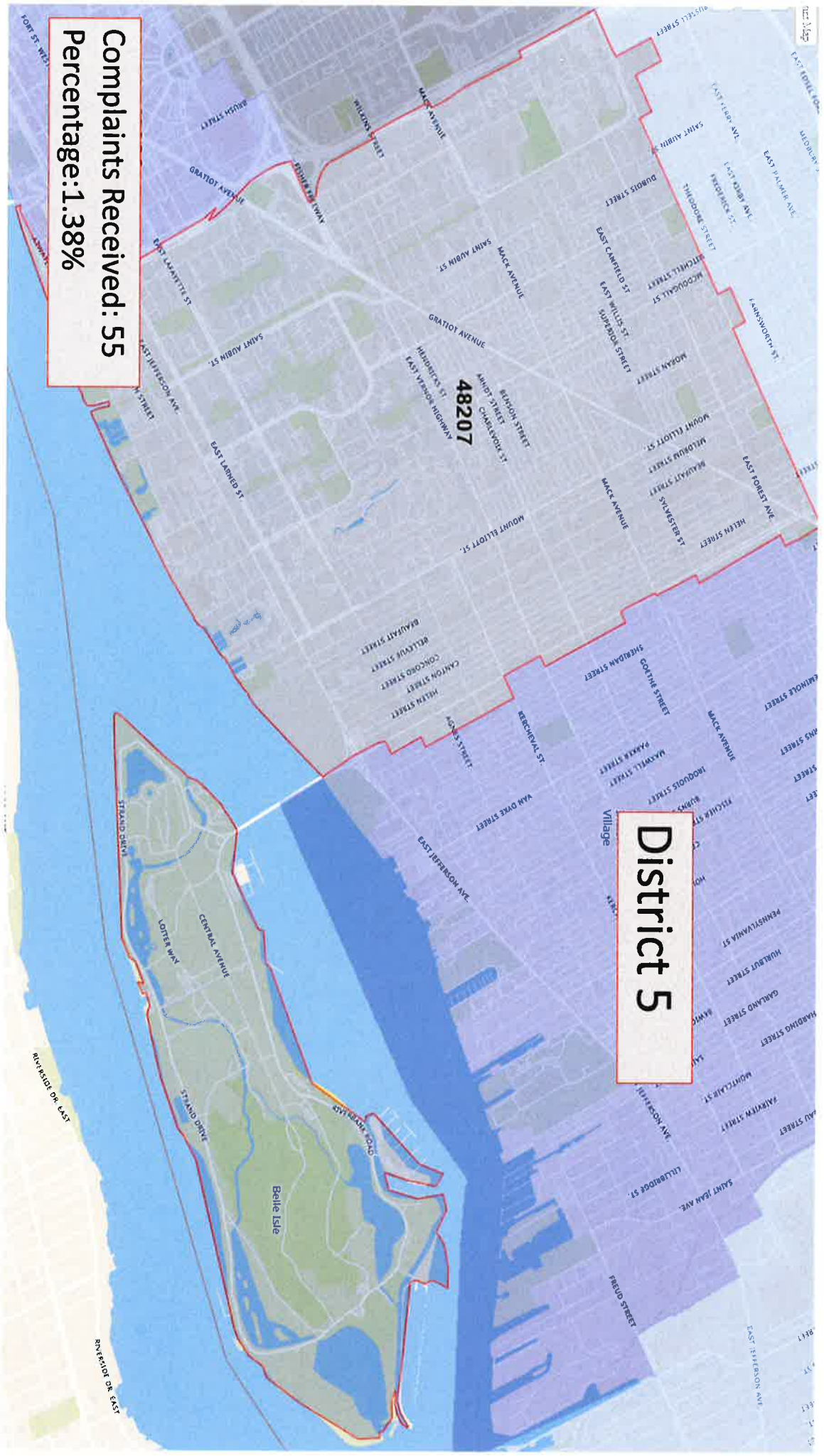
Complaints Received: 424
Percentage: 10.7%



Complaints Received: 101
Percentage: 2.53%



District 5



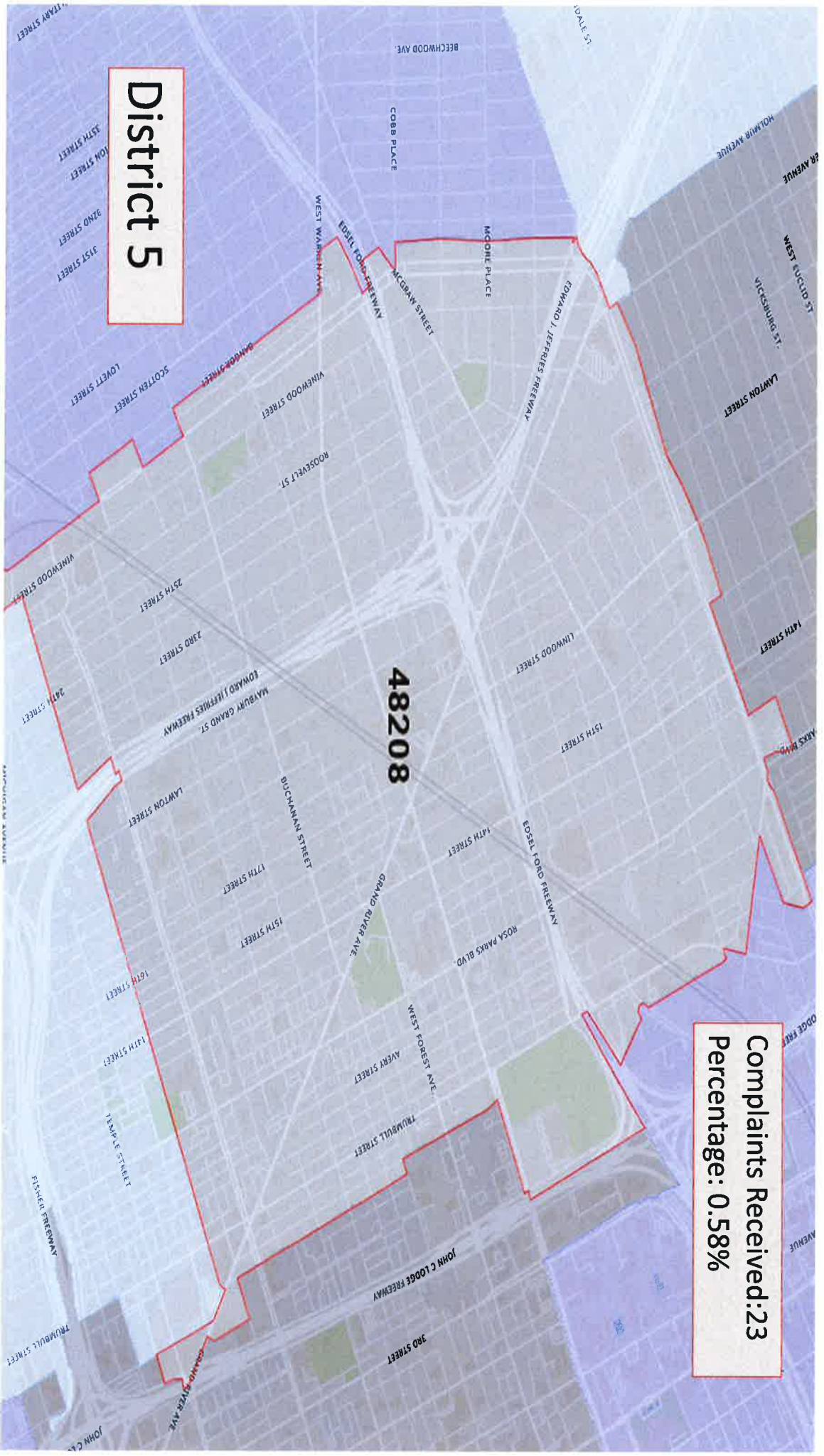
Complaints Received: 55
Percentage: 1.38%

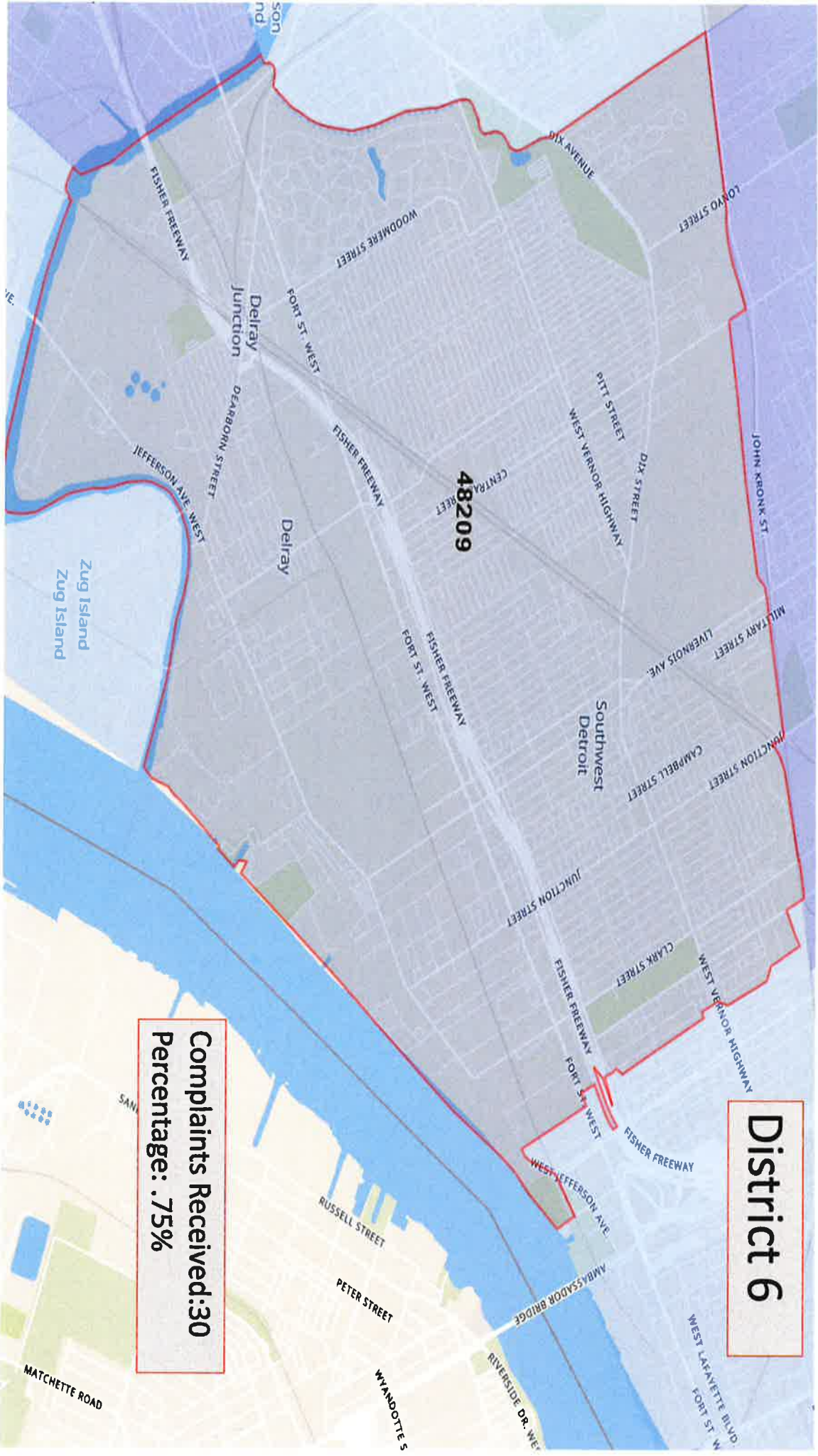
District 5

District 5

48208

Complaints Received: 23
Percentage: 0.58%



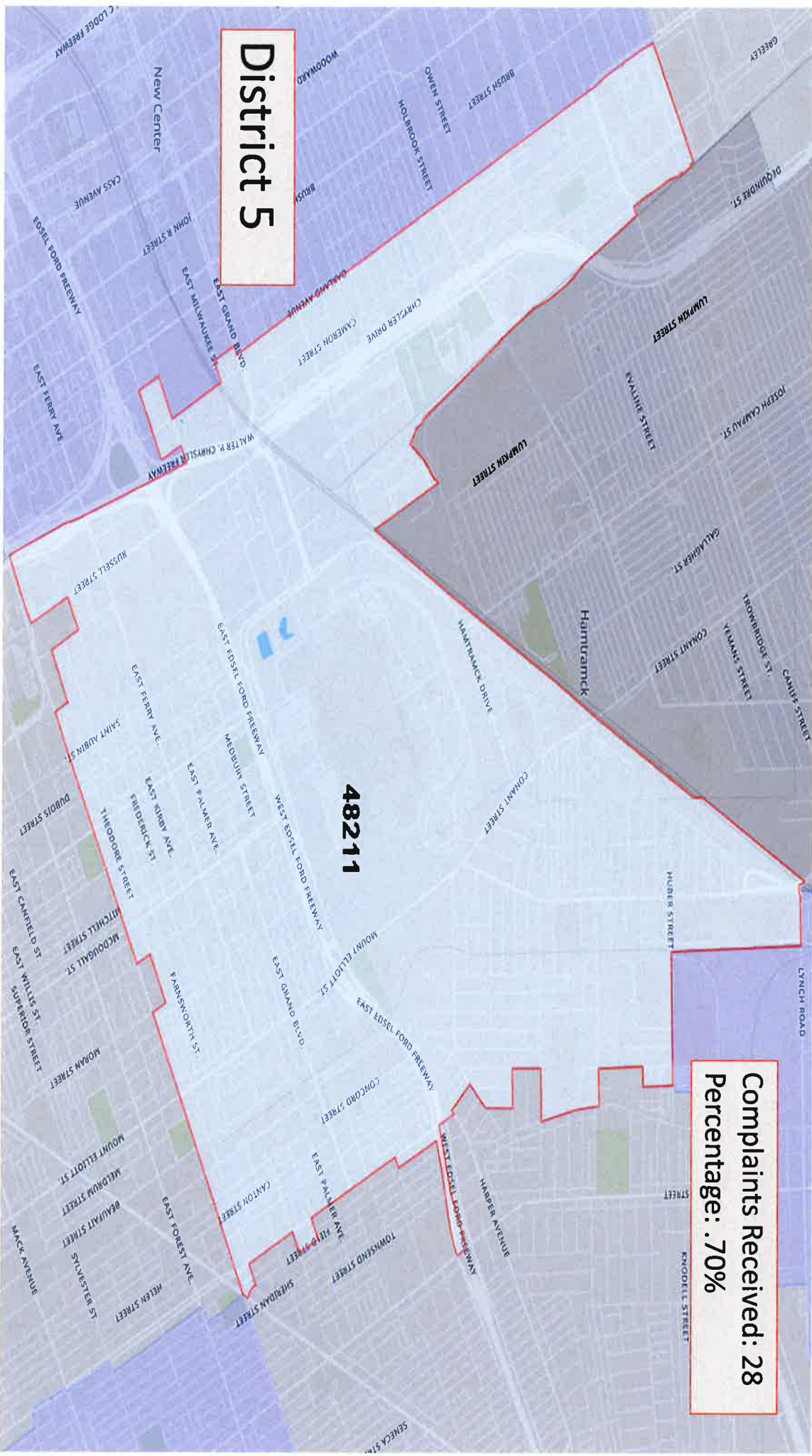


District 6

Complaints Received: 30
Percentage: .75%

48209

District 5



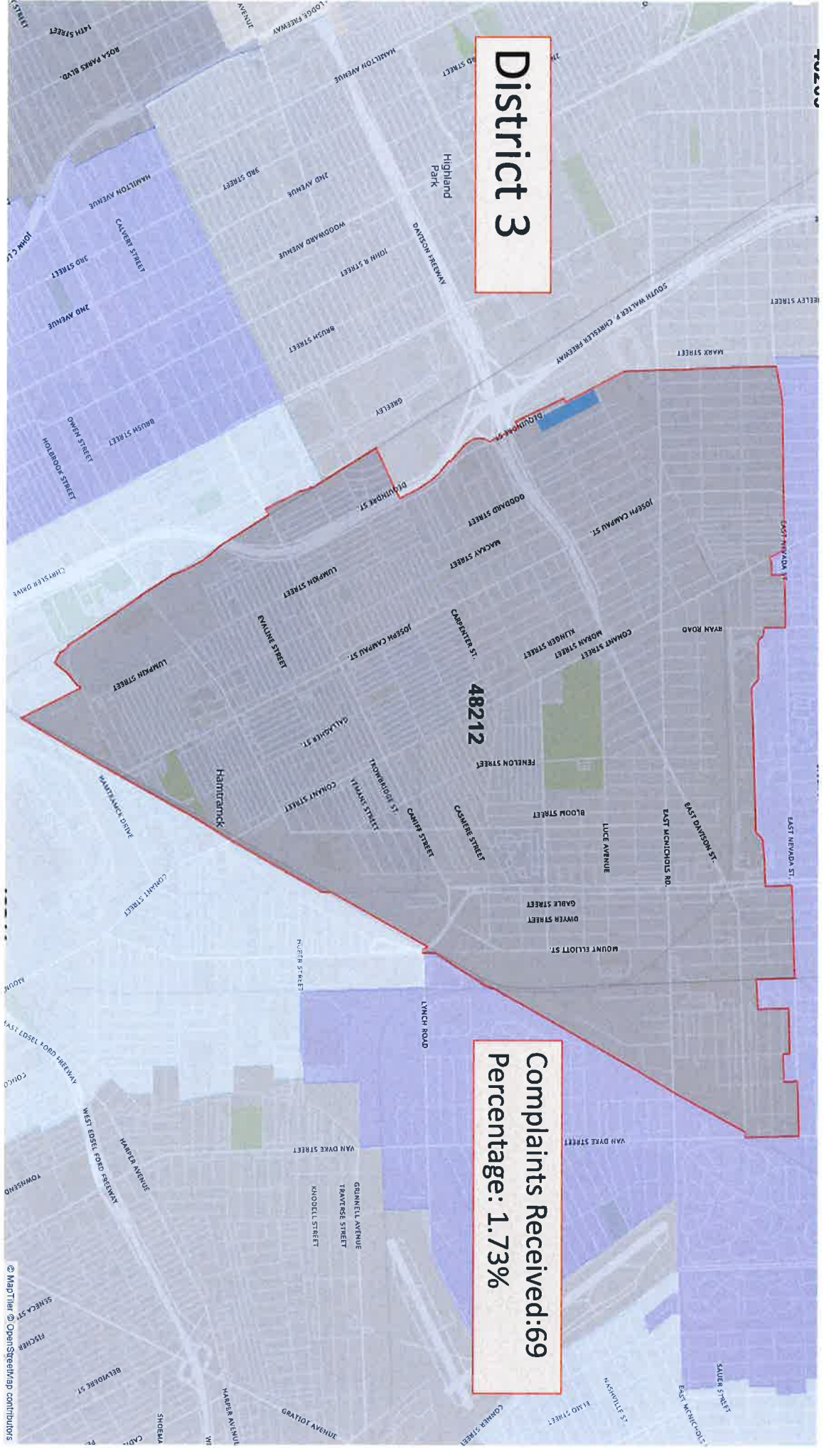
48211

Complaints Received: 28
Percentage: .70%

District 3

48212

Complaints Received: 69
Percentage: 1.73%

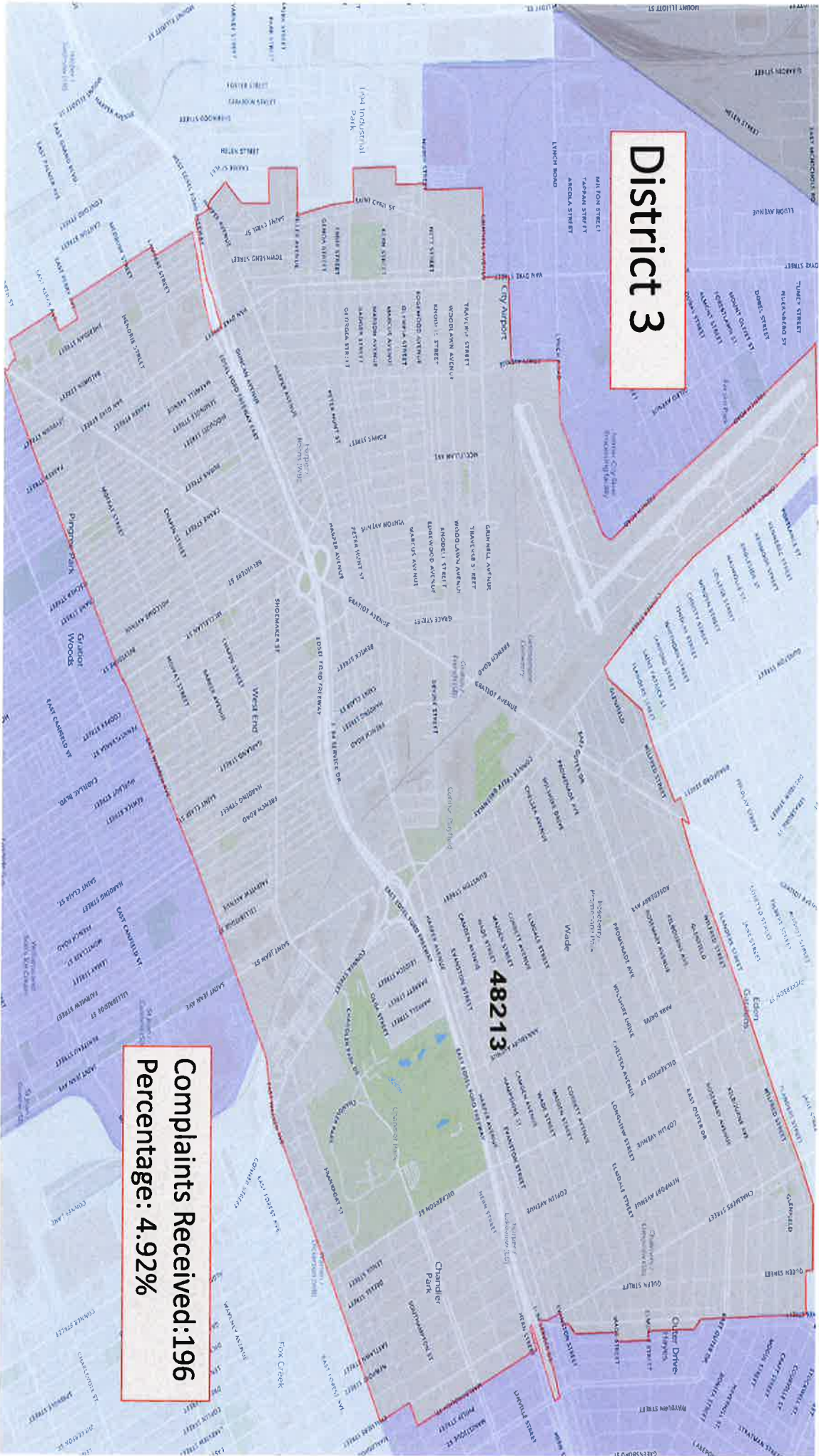


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District 3

48213

Complaints Received: 196
Percentage: 4.92%

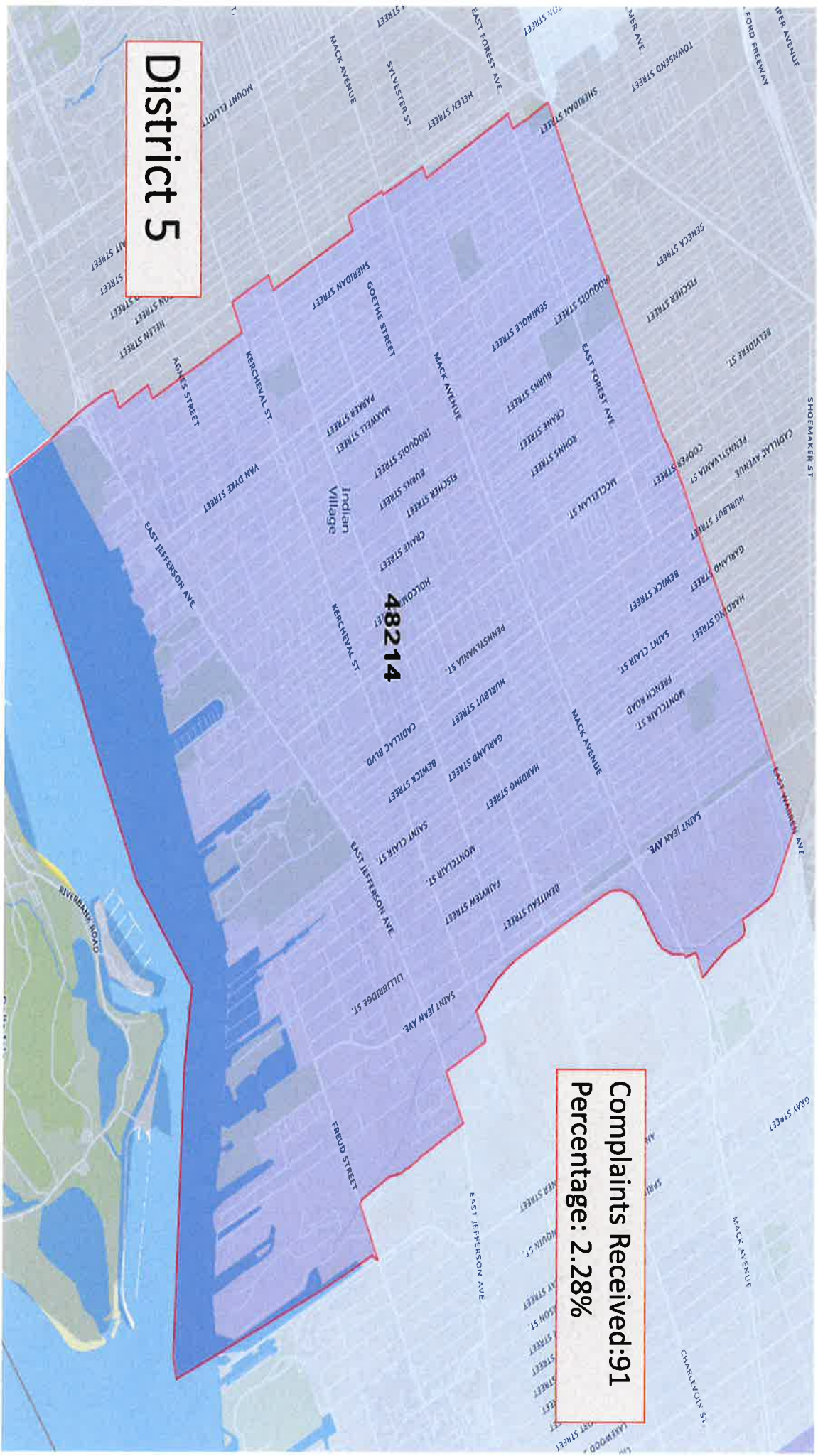


District 5

48214

Indlian Village

Complaints Received: 91
Percentage: 2.28%

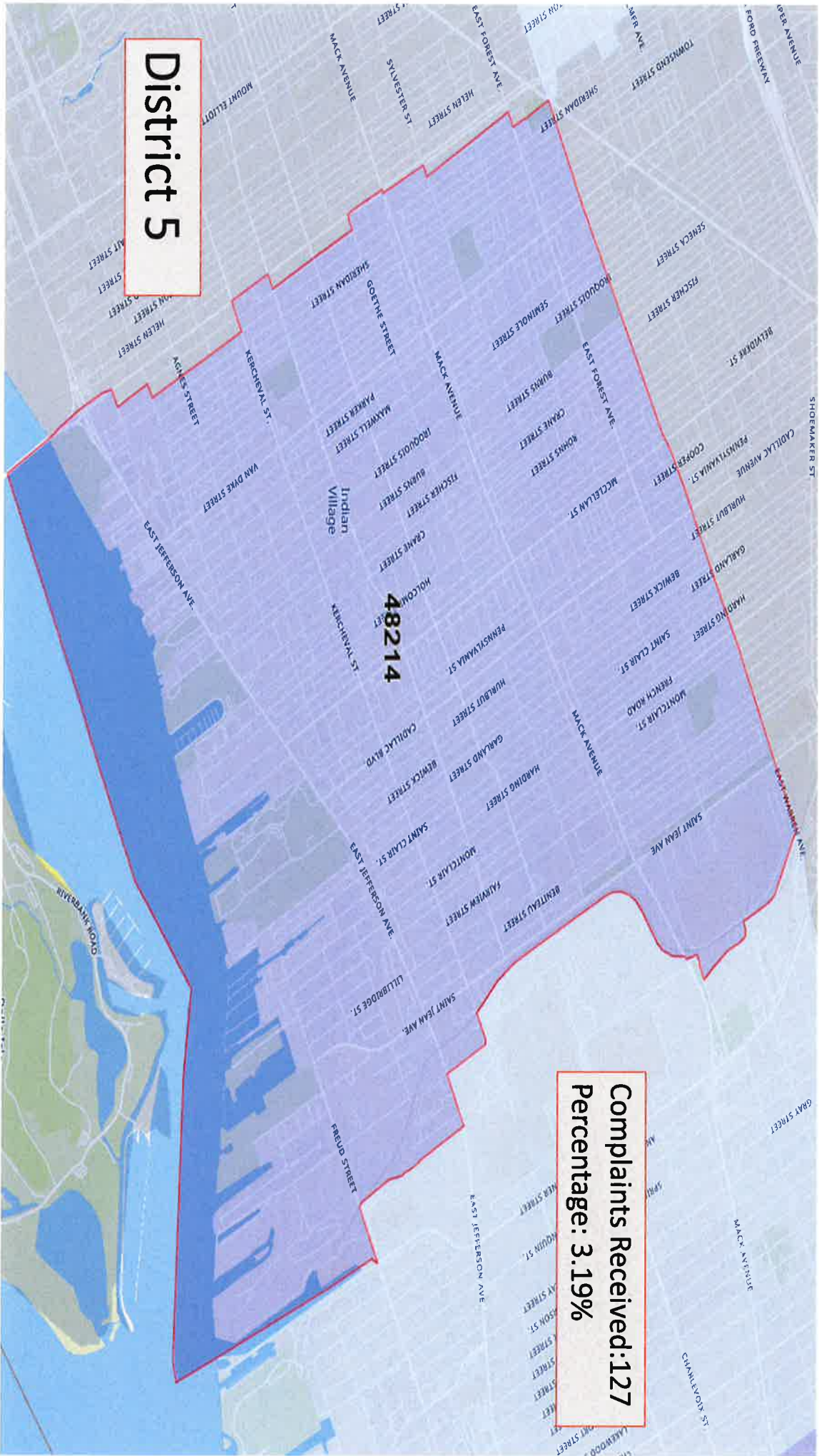


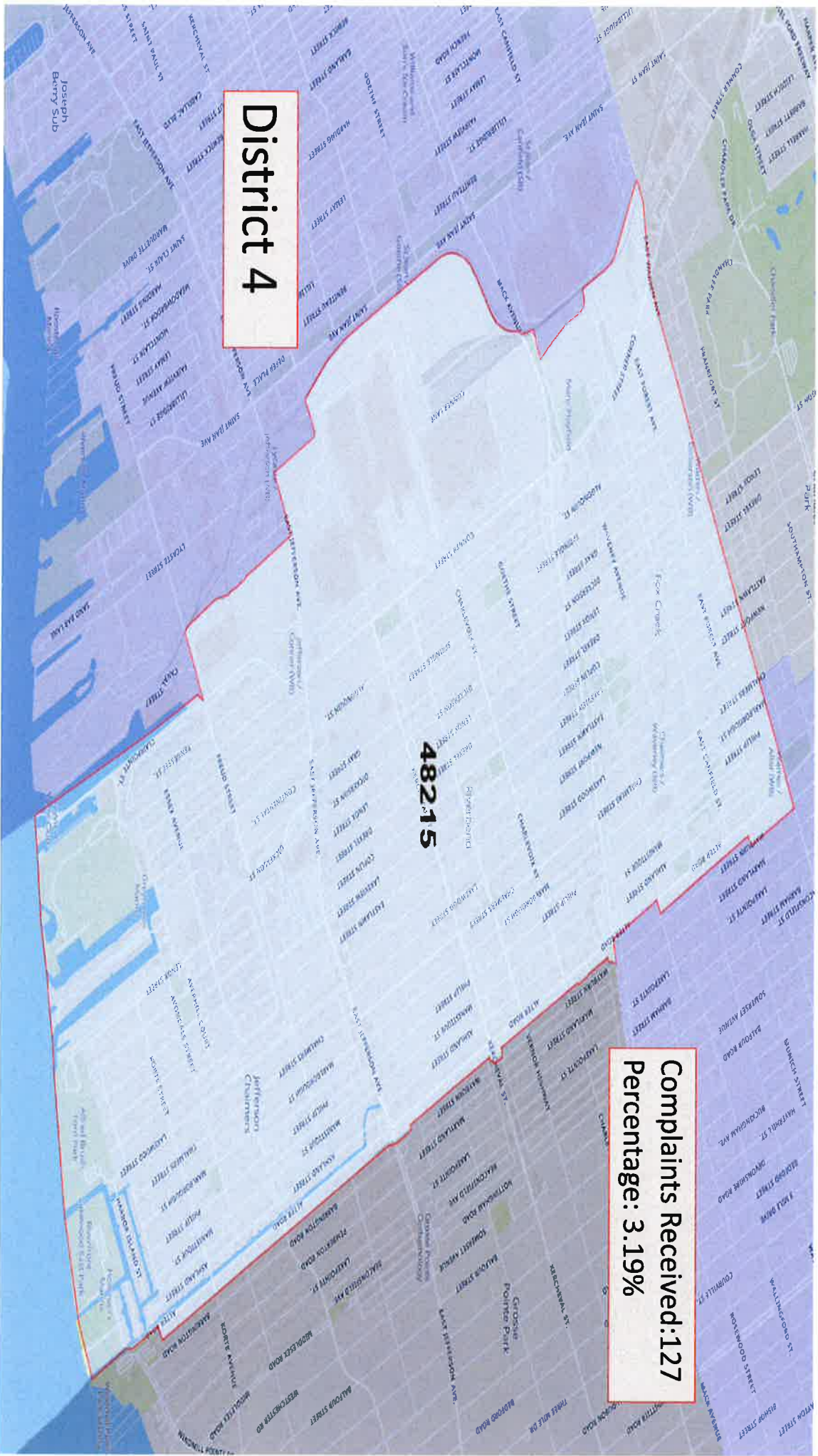
District 5

48214

Indian Village

Complaints Received: 127
Percentage: 3.19%

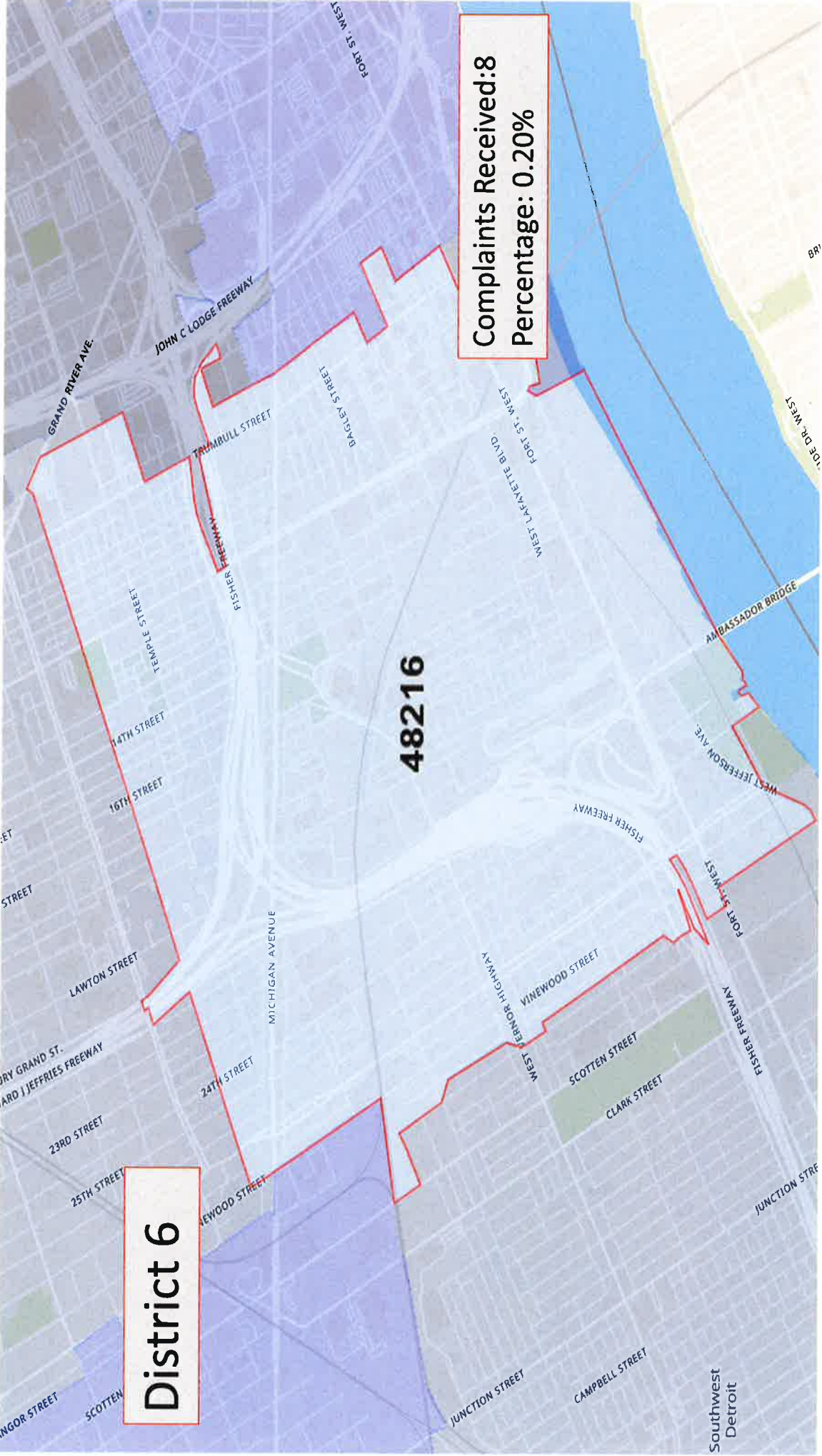




District 4

48215

Complaints Received: 127
Percentage: 3.19%

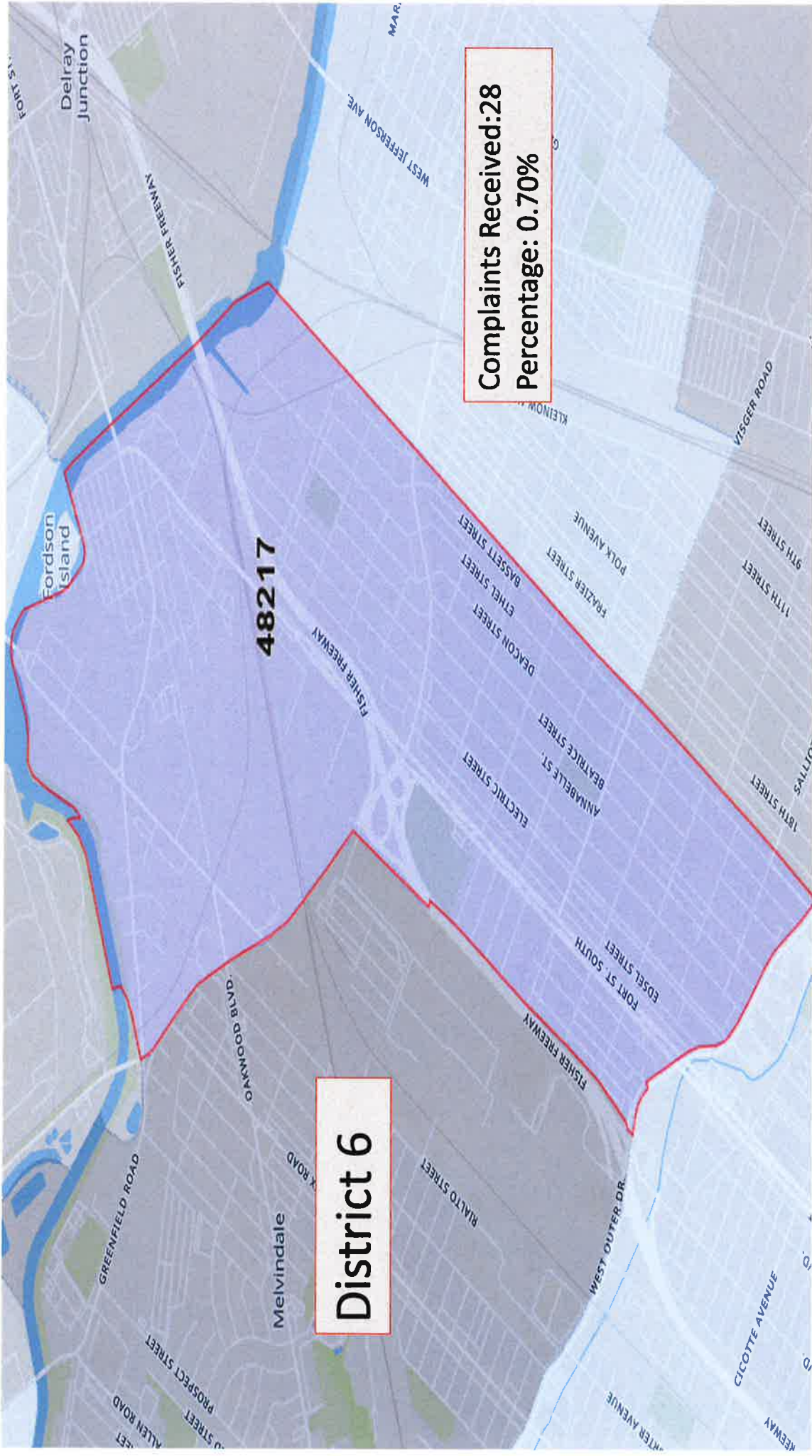


District 6

48216

Complaints Received: 8
Percentage: 0.20%

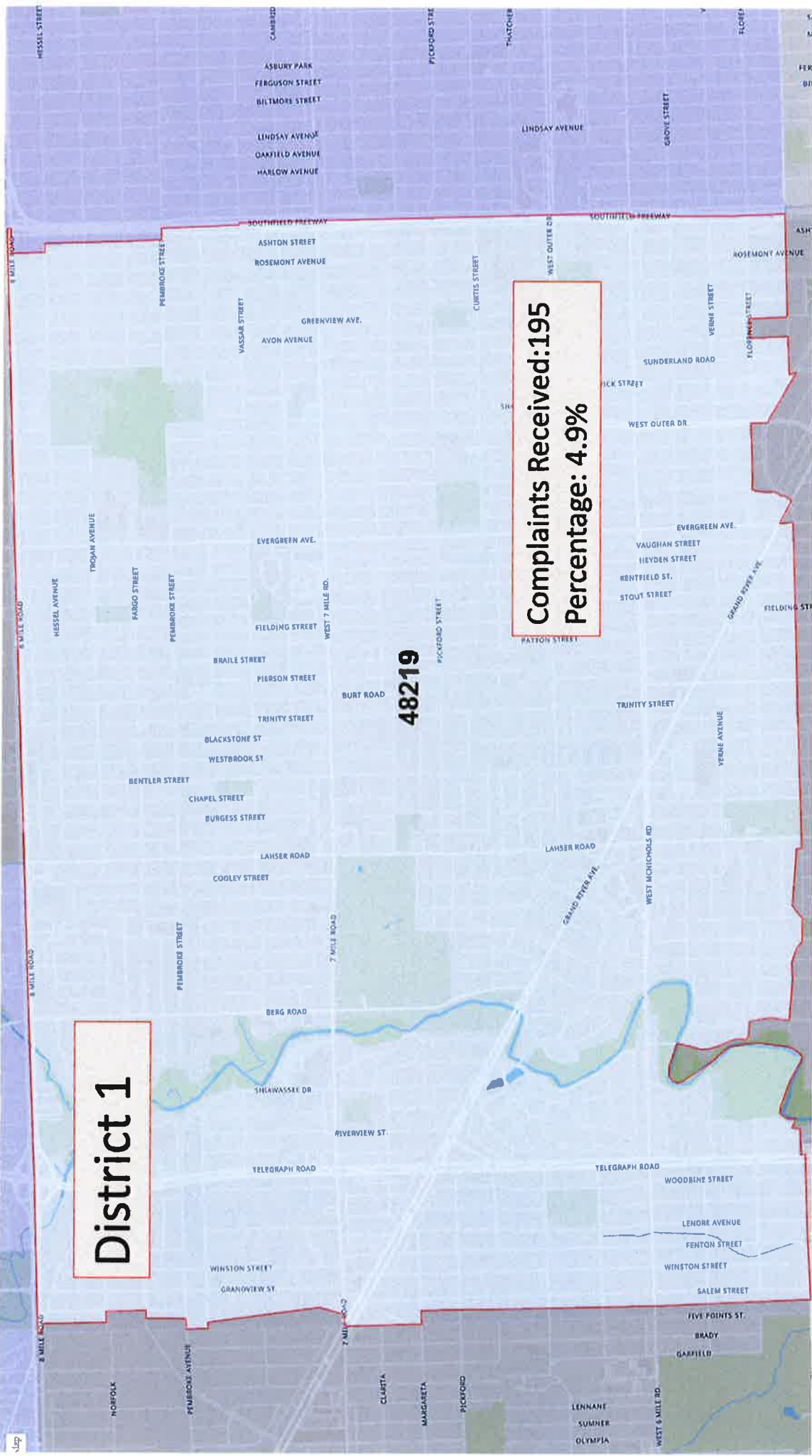
Southwest
Detroit



Complaints Received: 28
Percentage: 0.70%

District 6

48217



District 1

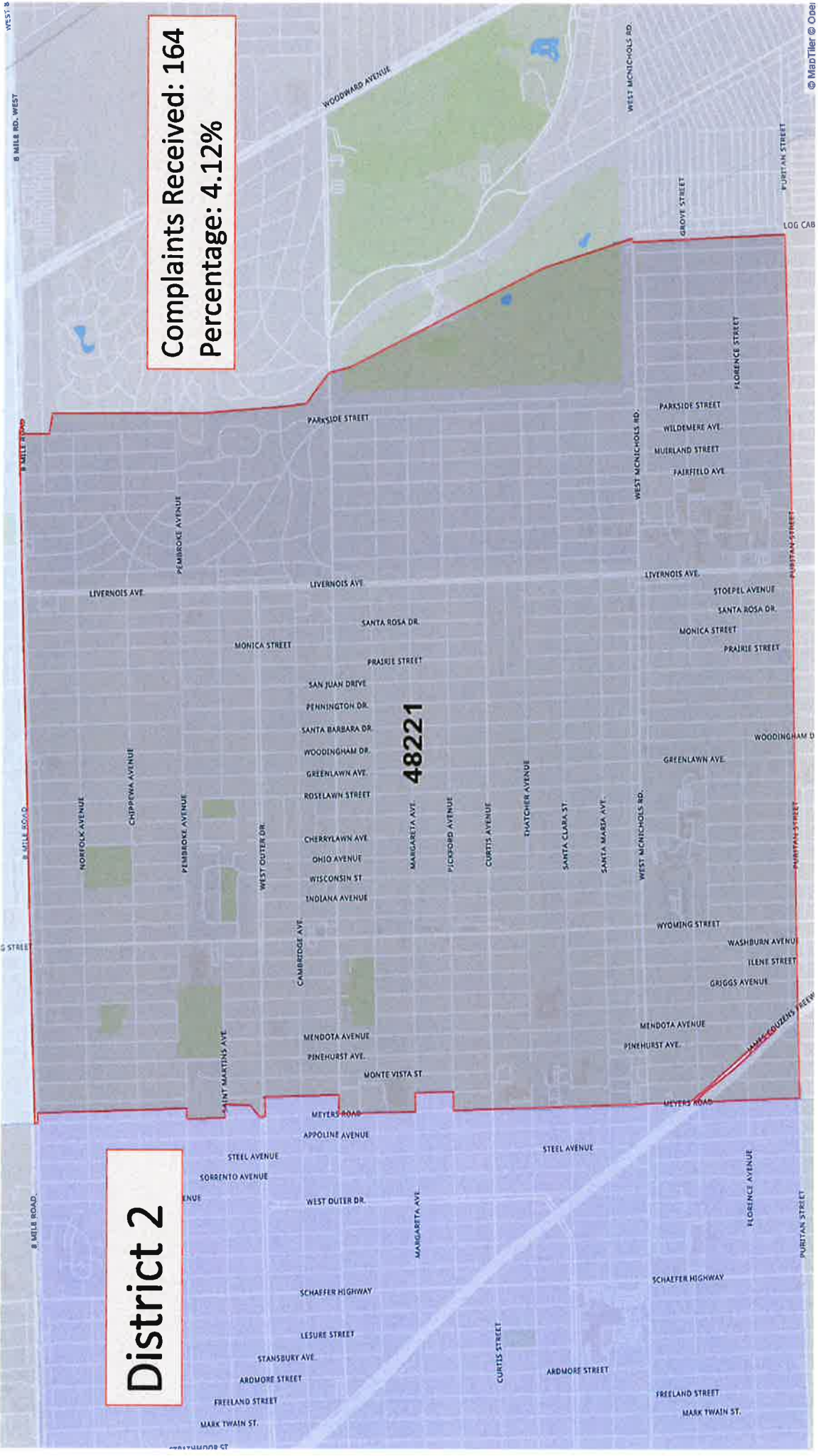
**Complaints Received: 195
Percentage: 4.9%**

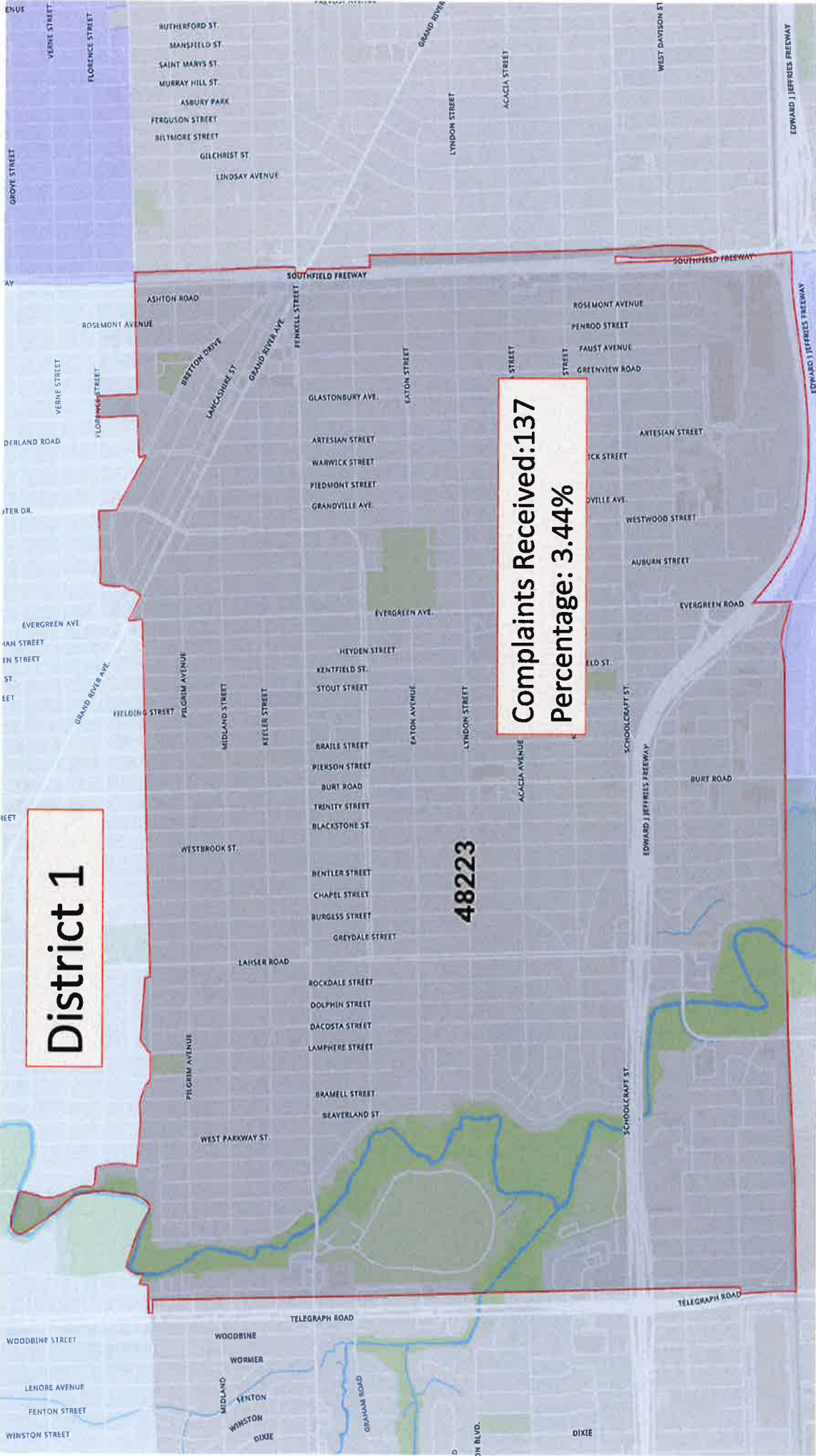
48219

Complaints Received: 164
Percentage: 4.12%

48221

District 2





District 1

Complaints Received: 137
Percentage: 3.44%

48223



Complaints Received: 194
Percentage: 4.88%

District 4

48224

Harper Woods

Grosse Pointe Farms

Grosse Pointe



District 6

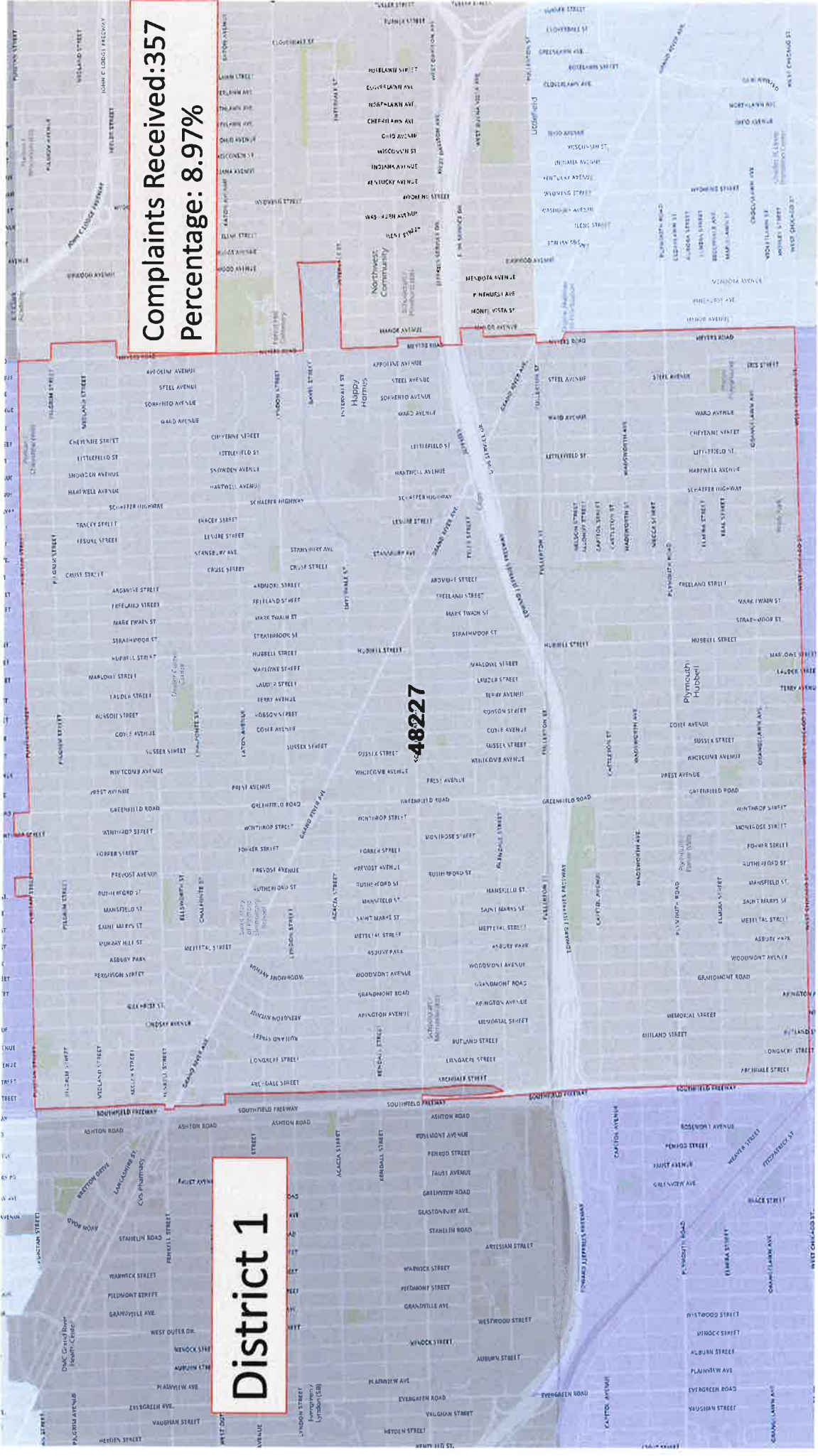
48226

Complaints Received: 53
Percentage: 1.33%

Complaints Received: 357
Percentage: 8.97%

48227

District 1

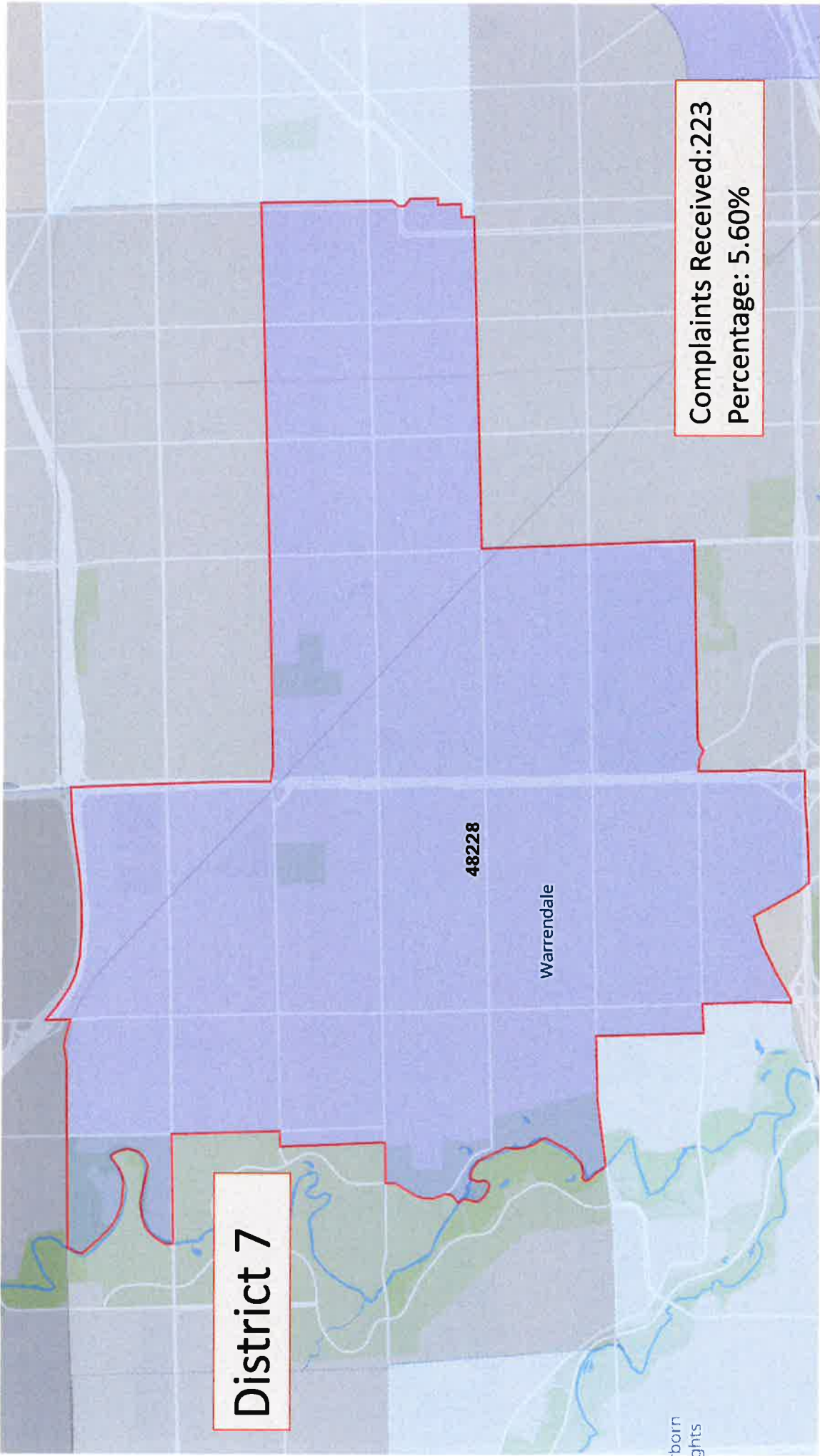


District 7

48228

Warrendale

Complaints Received: 223
Percentage: 5.60%



District 7

Complaints Received: 396
Percentage: 9.96%

48238



District 7

Redford Township

Redford
48239
Beech

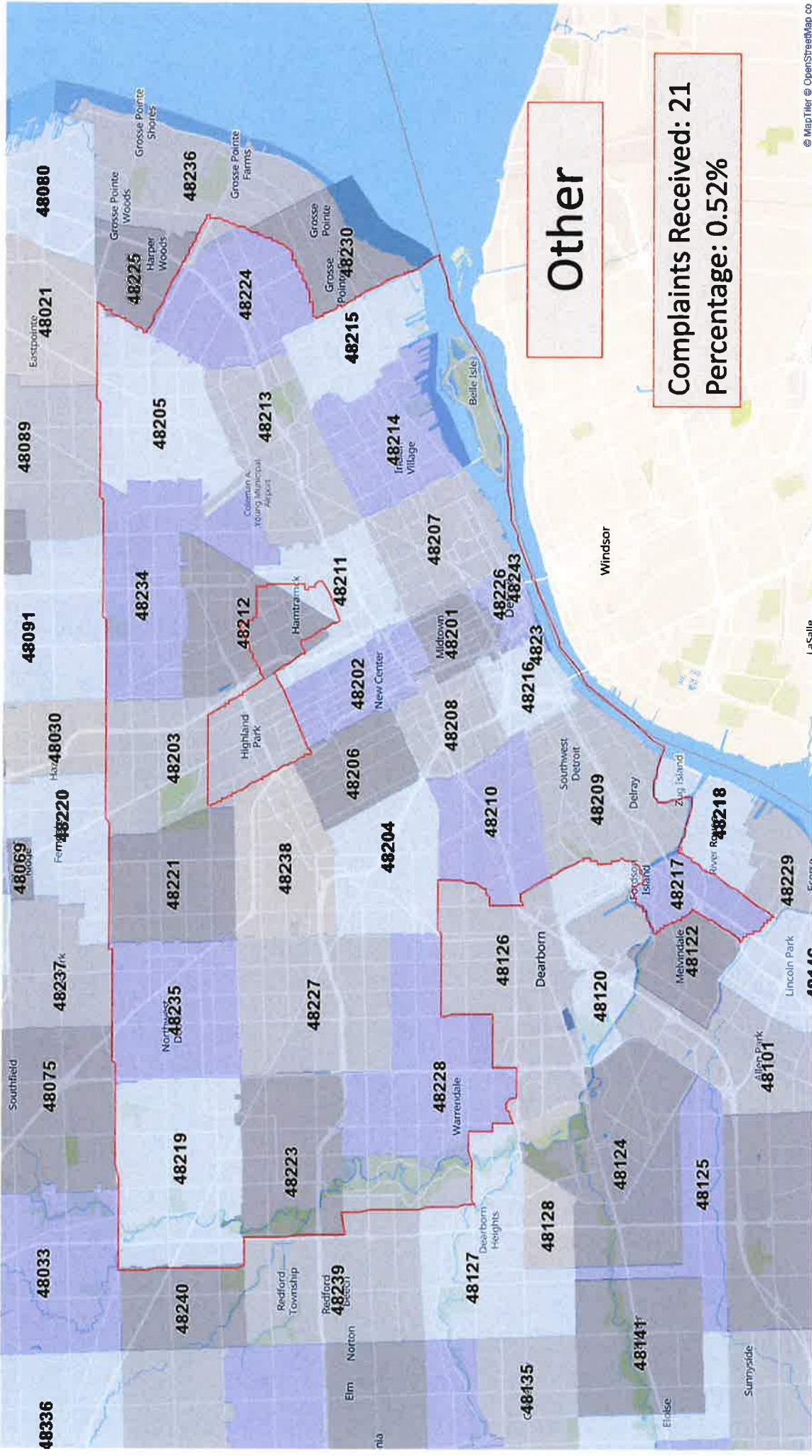
Norton

Elm

Complaints Received: 8
Percentage: 0.20%

Dearborn

Warrend



Other

Complaints Received: 21
Percentage: 0.52%