

From: [REDACTED]
To: [COSD, Redistricting](#)
Subject: [External] Comments on Elfin Forest/Harmony Grove
Date: Thursday, December 9, 2021 10:02:02 AM

December 9, 2021

Mr. David Bame
Chair, San Diego County Independent Redistricting Committee

RE: THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE FOR HARMONY GROVE TO REMAIN IN "NORTH COUNTY"

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Ernie Cowan. As a long-time resident and former Mayor of the City of Escondido, I have a unique appreciation and pride for what constitutes complementary land uses in and around the center of North County.

Regarding the communities of Elfin Forest and Harmony Grove, it's important to note that nearly 80% of the 2,689 Elfin Forest-Harmony Grove residents live in Harmony Grove.

With this background, I offer a few comments, which come from understanding the actual lived experience and governmental operations perspective:

- There is STRONG rationale for working to ensure that Harmony Grove REMAINS in a "North County" Supervisorial District.
 - Harmony Grove is literally surrounded by the borders of San Marcos and Escondido. There is NO rationale to make this location inappropriately vie for the governance attention of residents in more affluent, coastal/beach settings. Harmony Grove would have NO voice in this case.
 - Harmony Grove going to a COASTAL district is UNACCEPTABLE.
 - The perfect compromise between the two areas is simple, placing these communities in the North County Supervisor District.
 - Harmony Grove is a literal extension of the City of Escondido.

The two places share a border.

Two of Harmony Grove's most important public services are provided by special districts that are shared with Escondido:

- * Public Education: Escondido Elementary School District and Escondido High School District
- * Water and Sewer: Rincon Del Diablo Municipal Water District (Escondido)

Retail, Employment and Major Transportation linkages are located in Escondido, within two miles of Harmony Grove. If you ask a Harmony Grove resident where they live, the answer you get will be "Escondido."

Elfin Forest is five (5) miles to the west of Harmony Grove. The two places are separated by a range of hills that peak at an elevation of over 1,700 feet (Mt. Whitney).

- It is important that the Commission hear from, and seriously consider ALL relevant voices when making such a crucial governance decision as the one before you today. Please get this decision right: Harmony Grove is a North County location.

In watching these proceedings, I have noticed that the Commission has received SEVERAL written letters advocating this same position for Harmony Grove, including:

- The Escondido Unified School District (2)
- Rincon Del Diablo Municipal Water District
- The City of Escondido Deputy Mayor
- Palomar Health
- The North County Economic Development Corporation
- Various Local Residents

At the very least, the Commission should consider separating the two communities and allow Harmony Grove to be placed correctly in the North County Supervisorial District.

In closing, I thank you for your service in working towards the most equitable solutions to this important aspect of quality of life for all our residents—fair, representative governance.

The ask is simple and straightforward:

Place Elfin Forest-Harmony Grove in the North County Supervisorial District.

Respectfully

Ernie Cowan
Escondido

