

September 1, 2021

To: The San Diego County Redistricting Commission
From: Wayne Dernetz, Resident, City of Del Mar
Subject: Thoughts on Redistricting Supervisorial District 3

Relevant Community of Interest Factors

The Commission is charged with considering Community of Interest (COI) factors when drawing district boundary lines. COI is not clearly defined and may mean many things, in fact, may mean different things to different individuals. Here are the common COI factors I consider relevant to drawing County Supervisorial boundaries:

- What are the common interests in how residents travel and move about?
- What are the common interests in utilization of developed land uses among residents?
 - Where do they live?
 - Where do they work?
 - Where do they shop?
 - Where do they seek recreation?
- What political, economic, and social issues and concerns are most common to the residents?

Characteristics of Supervisorial District 3 in Its Present Configuration

As a longtime participant/observer of the political and governmental history of San Diego County (see my background below), District 3 traditionally has been representative of the North County Coastal area. This area has unique characteristics that differ from other areas of the County (see, for example: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Diego_County,_California).

In 2001, following the 2000 census, the County Board of Supervisors, led by Chair Bill Horne, reconfigured (gerrymandered) District 3. At the time, District 3 was represented by Pam Slater, who reflected the environmental values and priorities of the residents of the district. As such, Slater expressed a minority political view among the all-Republican Board. In an apparent effort to reduce Slater's influence, and perhaps make it more difficult for her reelection, Horne proposed, and the Board approved, the re-drawing of District 3 boundaries to include the City of Escondido (not previously part of District 3) and transferred the unincorporated communities of San Dieguito and Rancho Santa Fe from District 3 to Horne's own District 5. That is how the boundaries of District 3 today came to extend all the way from Torrey Pines Mesa to Leucadia, and from Mira Mesa to the farthest most-northerly tip of Escondido, but not including the coastal communities of San Dieguito or Rancho Santa Fe. It's time to correct this gerrymander.

Defining Today's North County Coastal Communities

The definition of the North County coastal communities can vary, but certainly does not include Escondido, which is generally considered an “inland valley” community, distinct from the coastal communities. On the other hand, the unincorporated communities of San Dieguito (encompassing the western portion of the San Dieguito River drainage basin) and Rancho Santa Fe arguably are considered part of the north coastal area ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_County_\(San_Diego_area\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_County_(San_Diego_area))).

Although Oceanside is generally considered to be geographically part of the north coastal area, primarily due to its beach front location, my experience has been that the COIs of Oceanside are more in line with those of the northern tier of cities along the SR 78 corridor (including Vista, San Marcos, and Escondido) than with those of the coastal zone. The SR 78 forms the major corridor of transportation and communication between Oceanside and the cities to the east, including Escondido. Shared COIs among these communities focus upon resources such as shopping, employment, and utilization of developed land uses and are more in common among those cities than with the coastal communities to the south of Oceanside. The political, economic, and social values of the residents of Oceanside also align more closely among these cities along the SR 78 corridor than with the coastal communities to the south. The SR 78 corridor includes SR 76, The Sprinter commuter rail service, and Oceanside Boulevard, all providing east/west public and private transportation access to the east of Oceanside.

From Carlsbad south to Torrey Pines Mesa (UCSD and the bio-tech research employment centers), there are numerous COIs shared among the residents. With its north/south transportation orientation, including The Coaster rail service, US 101/Coast Highway, the I-5 freeway, and even El Camino Real, daily or more frequent transportation access among the residents of these communities for shopping, employment, and other uses of developed land along the coastal corridor is common.

Prominent among the shared COIs of these communities are ocean front and beach issues. South of Oceanside, many of the beach areas include coastal bluffs and lagoon outlets that raise important environmental, recreational, and climate change adaptation issues all of which would benefit from collective efforts and political representation. The environmental integrity and preservation of the coastal lagoons is also tied to the communities of San Dieguito and Rancho Santa Fe that border along the drainage basins flowing into these lagoons. Recreational uses of the beaches, the Coastal bicycle trail, and hiking trails along the lagoons inland are all important COIs among many residents. The political, economic, and social values of the residents of these communities are also closely aligned.

The current southern limit of District 3 ends with Torrey Pines Mesa, Scripps Estates residential development, and the UCSD campus, but includes a major portion of the University City community of San Diego. How these boundaries might be adjusted is, in my opinion, a matter of fine tuning based on population balancing adjustments.

To sum up, my recommendations for adjusting the boundaries of District 3 would include the following five changes:

- Remove the City of Escondido area from the District;
- Add the unincorporated communities of San Dieguito and Rancho Santa Fe to the District;
- Add the City of Carlsbad to the District;
- Do not include the City of Oceanside in the District; and
- Adjust the southern boundary of the District according to population balancing requirements.

My Background

I have been a homeowner in the City of Del Mar since 1973, and a resident of that city since 1973, except from 1981 through 1991 when my career path took me to the San Francisco Bay Area. My wife and I currently live in Del Mar. My professional career has comprised public service in local government, as a city manager from 1973 to 1978 in Del Mar, and in other California cities. In 1992, I was appointed city attorney for the City of Vista and served there until my retirement in 2005. My education includes undergraduate and MA degrees from U.C. Berkeley in Economics and Public Policy, respectively, and a law degree from Cal Western School of Law, San Diego, in 1991. I was admitted to the California Bar in 1991. Since 2005, I have frequently consulted and volunteered in public service activities. I have closely followed San Diego local government and political issues throughout that period.

Disclaimer

The opinions and representations in this report are entirely my own and are based upon my first-hand knowledge and recollections. I have made reasonable efforts to verify the factual matters as represented. I may be reached at wdernetz@gmail.com.

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