

# Valley ROADRUNNER

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## Valley News

# Not much time left to influence redistricting

*admin on November 19, 2021*



While many would disagree on who should represent us on the Board of Supervisors, state Assembly or Senate, most would probably concur that we should be in districts where we share things in common with other voters.

That is the guiding principal behind the current process for redistricting, a process that will end next month. The last opportunity for local residents to make their preferences known about this process is approaching like a speeding train.

At this point local residents face one of two likely iterations of the supervisor district maps. One in which District 5, which currently includes Valley Center and is represented by Jim Desmond, would acquire Escondido and lose Carlsbad; and one in which Valley Center would be lumped in with cities it shares little in common with, including parts of San Diego, Mira Mesa and Rancho Bernardo,—and a lot of East County.

After starting out with many maps for the supervisor districts, commissioners are down to two choices:

### **Map 10**

*Valley Center in District 2 in Map 10: The new District 2 includes approximately half of East County and all of Unincorporated North county, stretching from Alpine in the south, to Valley Center, Fallbrook and Camp Pendleton on the north.*

*District 2 in Map 10 also includes the city of Poway, parts of the city of San Diego, including Rancho Bernardo, Rancho Peñasquitos and Scripps Ranch.*

*Map 10 creates what is a combined San Diego and East County and North County district.*

### **Map 11**

*Valley Center in District 5 in Map 11: District 5 has always been the North County district and has always included Valley Center. This map includes cities of Oceanside, Vista, San Marcos and Escondido.*

*Unincorporated communities of: Valley Center, Fallbrook, Bonsall, Rainbow, Hidden Meadows, Warner Springs, Camp Pendleton and Borrego Springs*

*And the Tribal Reservations of La Jolla, Pala, Pauma & Yuima, Rincon, San Pasqual and Santa Ysabel.*

Here is a link to all the maps (again, only 10 and 11 are now under consideration)

[www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/redistricting/draft-map-under-development.html](http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/redistricting/draft-map-under-development.html)

Under Map 10 Valleyites could end up in the same district as Supervisor Joel Anderson, instead of Desmond's district.

Every ten years—after the census—in every state and county of the U.S., commissions work to take the new population information and change the boundaries of districts to reflect the new population.

Tuesday night a group of local residents met upstairs at VC Community Hall to hear information about this process and how it might affect VC.

Dori Rattray, the VC Community Planning Group's chairman of the redistricting subcommittee, introduced John Hoy to explain the process. "This is a really important issue," said Rattray. "This is going to affect all of us."

John Hoy, a consultant who has worked on several redistricting efforts, provided insights on how local residents can make their voices heard in the redistricting process.

He noted that the maps have gone through several iterations, with the operative term of art being "communities of interest."

The next (and possibly the most important) hearing that will be held is Thursday, December 2, 5 p.m. At the San Diego County Office of Education, 6401 Linda Vista Rd., Room 401-402, San Diego.

The map will be finalized on December 9 and on December 14, the commission will, in Hoy's words, "put a bow on it."

On November 13, the County Redistricting Commission heard many hours of testimony, followed by a lengthy review of each map by a consultant. In the course of testimony the number of draft maps has gone from 13 to two, with diametric differences between the remaining maps, 10 and 11.

Hoy, speaking as an independent person who closely follows the process, emphasized that redistricting has nothing to do with future anticipated growth but with growth patterns of the last decade. The process is very sensitive to ethnic groups, mainly Hispanic, although others, such as tribal groups, are also taken into account. The goal is not to dilute their influence.

Hoy remarked, "I could be a little bit cynical but I have been wowed by this commission's eagerness to listen to everyone who has something to say."

He added, "They are very focused, very fair and independent and non-political. We are lucky in that way, at least at the county level. Those who want to participate, can participate."

The latest public hearings have included eight to nine hours of public testimony. With commissioners obviously paying attention to what speakers have said.

One of the things about North County and the Fifth District that has come out during the hearings is the "interlocking relationships" of all of the agencies, which frequently work very closely together. "The commission had to be educated about this," said Hoy.

This is true of North County cities such as San Marcos and Vista, which have independent water districts both in and out of city limits.

Another example was how the Bonsall Union School District interacts with the City of Oceanside and even with the Pala Indian Reservation, which hosts one of its school campuses.

Also the way various fire districts in the Fifth District work almost as one in answering fire calls, regardless of boundaries.

“It’s helpful to have a supervisor who is familiar with those relationships,” said Hoy.

During the testimony several people testified why they opposed creating a Fifth District that would mostly be made up of incorporated cities. “Those kinds of things got the attention of the commission,” said Hoy.

Asked how the commission is leaning, Hoy said “at the end of the last meeting they took a straw vote and eight commissioners leaned toward Map 11 and four leaned toward Map 10, with two commissioners absent.

Although incumbent supervisors will, of course, be affected by the final decision, they have no role in redistricting. It violates the law to even consider where they live in deciding the boundaries. So, for instance, an incumbent could find himself moved out of his own district.

The North County tribes have gotten involved in the process. Rincon’s Tribal Chairman Bo Mazzetti and Pala’s Chairman Robert Smith both sent letters asking that all of the tribes of the Luiseño heritage be included in the same district.

The process has gotten down to just a few weeks.

Hoy advised, “If you care about this, make an effort to communicate with the commission.” You can do that by attending a meeting in person, calling into a hearing, emailing the commission or making comments on their website. “Making an appearance in person will make the most impact,” he said.

Dee Chavez Harmes, chairman of the VC planning group, asked how much impact a vote by the local planning group would have.

“Very much,” said Hoy. “Having a planning group take a position would have an impact.”

If you have questions you can email [johnpatrickhoy@gmail.com](mailto:johnpatrickhoy@gmail.com).

You can also visit [SanDiegoCounty.gov/Redistricting/](http://SanDiegoCounty.gov/Redistricting/)

## **Statewide Offices**

Roarke Shanley, who serves on Assemblywoman Marie Waldron’s staff, spoke on how the process works for state offices. First of all, it’s a completely different commission, working on the boundaries of 40 senate, 80 assembly and more than 50 congressional districts.

The commission includes five Democrats, five Republicans and five independents.

The draft maps have been out for public comment since November 10. The public is invited to give input. The commission will hold its final meeting December 23.

It is easy to submit comments, said Shanley. “This will impact Valley Center’s representation for the next ten years,” he said.

Shanley repeated what Hoy had said about the county process: “Change in the draft maps is possible. You can influence the process for the better.”

Go to this website to look at the proposed California district maps:

[www.wedrawthelinesca.org/map\\_viewer](http://www.wedrawthelinesca.org/map_viewer)