

## CITY OF ESCONDIDO - INDEPENDENT DISTRICTING COMMISSION

### **Preliminary City Council District Plan Report**

#### **Overview**

On Tuesday, October 29, 2013, the Independent Districting Commission (IDC) for the City of Escondido voted to accept the boundaries of a Preliminary District Plan for Escondido's City Council districts. The plan is available for review by the public on the City's website at: <http://www.escondido.org/independent-districting.aspx>

Below is a brief description of the public and transparent process the IDC created to collect information that informed the Preliminary Plan:

During the month of October, the IDC held six public hearings in geographically diverse locations throughout the City of Escondido. The hearings were held at the following dates and locations:

- Thursday, October 10 – 6 pm Bear Valley Middle School, 3003 Bear Valley Pkwy., 92025
- Saturday, October 12 – 9 am at Hidden Valley Middle School, 2700 Reed Rd., 92027
- Thursday, October 17 – 6 pm at Church of the Resurrection, 1445 Conway Drive, 92027
- Saturday, October 19 – 9 am at Mission Middle School, 939 E. Mission Ave., 92025
- Thursday, October 24 – 6 pm at Felicita Elementary School, 737 W. 13th Ave. 92025
- Sunday, October 27 – 3 pm at City Council Chambers, 201 N. Broadway, 92025

The hearings were conducted in a workshop style, beginning with a presentation by the expert consultant team to inform attendees about the process, methodologies, legal requirements and data used in the Escondido districting. Translation services were provided in Spanish, and were also available in Chinese, Vietnamese and Filipino. Handouts and materials were also made available in these languages as well as in English.

Then, during a 20-30 minute break, attendees were invited to view large scale maps, ask questions and outline their Communities of Interest (COIs) and Neighborhoods. Attendees had the opportunity to interact with the Commissioners, work with the expert consultants to digitize their COIs, and assess population totals of interest during this break as well as before and after the hearings. After the break, the commission went back into session and collected public input.

The number of attendees at the 'public input hearings' ranged from about fifteen to approximately thirty-five persons. Attendees actively participated in each hearing and many stayed after the conclusion of the hearings to work with the consultants on defining their COIs.

Public input was collected in various ways. As described above, attendees at hearings could provide public testimony to the IDC verbally, or they could fill out a form in writing and turn it in with the City Clerk at the hearing. The public could also submit input via email communication or by mailing or dropping off written communication at the City Clerk's office at City Hall.

The commission received input in all of these ways. Some input included maps, other input described areas of concern by listing street boundaries, again other input commented on more general issues concerning the districting of Escondido. Communities of Interest and Neighborhoods that were submitted by the public were digitized by the consultant team and made available to the Commission at all hearings and meetings in digital form.

Upon conclusion of the public input hearings, the IDC held two public 'line drawing meetings' at the following dates and location:

- Sunday, October 27 – 3 pm at City Council Chambers, 201 N. Broadway, 92025
- Tuesday, October 29 – 6 pm at City Council Chambers, 201 N. Broadway, 92025

During the public line drawing meetings, which were also televised and are available on the City's website, the Commission worked with its consultants to construct the Preliminary Plan that was finalized on October 29, 2013.

### **Preliminary District Plan Construction**

The Preliminary Plan was constructed in compliance with the Criteria outlined in the Consent Decree.

The Plan:

1. Complies with the U.S. constitution, including reasonably equal population
2. Complies with the Federal Voting Rights Act
3. Is contiguous<sup>1</sup> and geographically compact
4. Respects the geographic integrity of Neighborhoods and Communities of Interest
5. Does not consider the residences of incumbents or candidates; or discriminate against or favor political parties, incumbents or political candidates.

---

<sup>1</sup> The City of Escondido has one non-contiguous area that was included in district 2 which is geographically closest to it.

At the start of the line drawing, the Commission asked the consultants for the results of a demographic analysis concerning Section 2 of the Federal Voting Rights Act. The consultants reported that an analysis of the 2007 - 2011 Citizen Voting Age Population Data from the American Community Survey showed that a district could be constructed that would have a majority of Latinos of Citizen Voting Age, and that was also compact and contiguous. The Commission asked the Consultants to show three variants of district formations that would meet those criteria and selected the most compact version of the three to begin the line-drawing process. This district is located roughly in the center of the City and was labeled District 1. The commission made adjustments to the consultant draft to unite a gated community at the north-western corner of the district, while maintaining the required Citizen Voting Age population numbers and roughly equal population with the other districts.

The commission then moved north to an area about which a large COI had been submitted, to assess whether this COI could remain intact along with District 1's boundaries. District 2 was largely constructed keeping this COI intact but making some adjustments to maintain VRA compliance in District 1. While assessing the potential boundaries of District 2, the commission also considered a COI located at the south western border of the District, which was left intact in District 4. On the southeastern boundary of District 2, the commission spent significant time in trying to unite a Home Owners Association (HOA) that is currently split by a census block boundary. The Commission believed it was important not to split the HOA and to preserve the communities of Eureka Springs and Hidden Trails. Therefore, the Commission requested a legal opinion on splitting Census block number 20709.1 Per the Attorney's Office memo, splitting this Census block is legally permissible under the Consent Decree and applicable law. (See separate Memorandum). The consultant analyzed the two portions of the Census block based on factors including housing units and occupancy to determine the populations. The consultant found that this Census block can be split, as proposed by the Commission, and still result in populations for District 02 and District 03 which are within the five percent maximum suggested deviation.

District 2's outer boundaries follow the northern City boundaries and also include a non-contiguous area located to the northeast of the majority of the City.

District 3 is located in the southeastern portion of the City and follows the City boundaries along the south/southeastern borders. Its northern boundaries are comprised of the southern boundaries of Districts 1 and 2. The commission considered COI submissions that encompassed large portions of this district as well as parts of district 1. On the western side of the district, the commission used the boundaries of the historic old-town Escondido COI to finalize the district.

District 4 follows the southwestern city boundary. Its northwestern boundary was constructed to maintain a COI and then follows toward the east along the southern boundary of District 2 and the southern edge of District 1. It was also drawn to respect other submitted COIs which are wholly contained in the southwestern portion of the City.

### **Compliance with Criteria**

All district boundaries were drafted to maintain reasonably equal population and to be contiguous and compact.

The City of Escondido's total population, reflecting adjustments to incorporate annexations that took place after the census boundaries were collected, is 143,908 persons. The ideal population for each district is 35,977 persons.

The population of District 01 is 34,691, which is 1,286 below the districts' ideal population of 35,977. The population of District 01 deviates 3.58% below the ideal population. The percent Latino Citizen Voting Age Population of District 01 is 50.04%

The population of District 02 is 35,743, which is 234 below the districts' ideal population of 35,977. The population of District 02 deviates 0.63% below the ideal population.

The population of District 03 is 37,141, which is 1,164 above the districts' ideal population of 35,977. The population of District 03 deviates 3.23% above the ideal population.

The population of District 04 is 36,333, which is 356 above the districts' ideal population of 35,977. The population of District 04 deviates 0.97% above the ideal population.

The following publicly submitted Communities of Interest and Neighborhoods were respected:

DISTRICT 01 encompasses nearly half of a COI that was digitally submitted on 10/09/2013 (100901SD<sup>2</sup>). The population of the COI exceeds the Ideal Population of two districts. The sole census block of DISTRICT 01 which is not encompassed by said COI is north of El Norte Parkway and is included in DISTRICT 01 for VRA compliance. Another COI, submitted at the 10/24/2013 Public Input Hearing (102408), is wholly encompassed in DISTRICT 01. DISTRICT 01 also contains a majority of a COI submitted at a Public Input Hearing on 10/19/2013 (101904), but for population equality reasons and VRA compliance, this COI was split. Finally, a COI that was submitted

---

<sup>2</sup> The code contained in ( ) refers to the digital file name assigned to submitted geography. SD means 'submitted digitally'

digitally on 10/31/2013 (103101SD) remains largely intact in DISTRICT 01. Some areas of this COI are not included for population equality and VRA compliance purposes.

DISTRICT 02 encompasses more than half of a COI submitted at the 10/10/2013 Public Input Hearing (101001). The population of this COI exceeds the Ideal Population (35,977) for one district. With the exception of one census block, a COI that was submitted digitally on 10/16/2013 (101601SD) remains intact inside DISTRICT 02. A COI submitted at the 10/29/2013 (102902) hearing is completely encompassed in DISTRICT 02. A large majority of a COI submitted at the 10/17/2013 hearing remains intact in DISTRICT 02; the only areas split from this COI are excluded from the district for VRA compliance of DISTRICT 01. Similarly, much of the COI submitted by the ECCHO group on 10/24/2013 (102402) is included in DISTRICT 02, with areas excluded for VRA compliance. The majority of a COI submitted at the 10/10/2013 input hearing (101003) is kept whole in DISTRICT 02. The population not included in DISTRICT 02 is included in DISTRICT 01 for VRA compliance. Geographically similar COIs were split for the same reason (101001SD, 101201, 101203, 101701, and 101909).

DISTRICT 03 wholly encompasses a COI submitted at the Public Input Hearing on 10/27/2013 (102704). DISTRICT 03 also contains the majority of a COI submitted at the 10/17/2013 hearing (101706). Some areas of the COI were necessarily included in DISTRICT 01 for VRA compliance, and others included in DISTRICT 02 for population purposes. Much of a COI submitted through public testimony at the 10/19/2013 hearing (101902) is included in DISTRICT 03, however portions were included in DISTRICTS 01 and 02 for VRA compliance and population purposes, respectively. Same with 101903.

DISTRICT 04 contains two COIs submitted at the 10/19/2013 Public Input Hearing (101903B and 101906), one COI submitted at the 10/27/2013 hearing (102705), and much of a COI submitted at the 10/24/2013 hearing (102409). The area of the 10/24 COI not included in DISTRICT 04 was excluded for population purposes.

### **Terms and Standards**

COI = Community of Interest

CVAP = Citizen Voting Age Population

IDC = Independent Districting Commission

Ideal Population = The total population counted in census 2010 for the City of Escondido divided by the number of districts

VRA = Federal Voting Rights Act