Oceanside Districting Handout

Understanding the term "Communities of Interest"

Your input is needed to shape Council Districts!

What is a Community of Interest (COI)?
A COI is a group of people in a defined geographic location that share a common bond or interest. The definition is broad, leaving communities a lot of discretion in determining which issues are important to them. The City's districting criteria define Community of Interest as "a contiguous population which shares common social and economic interests that should be included within a single district for purposes of fair and effective representation."

Communities of Interest are best documented through oral or written input from individuals or groups with first-hand knowledge of them. Census and other outside data can lend support, but cannot replace personal knowledge of the community. That's why we want to hear your feedback on your community; you know it best!

The 3 Steps to document your COI:

Please answer the following questions:

1. What is the nature of the bond or common interest of your community?

Please describe what the common interests of your community are, and why or how they are important. For example:

- If your Community of Interest is built around a community center then your testimony should include the name and location of the center and describe the community's involvement in it or why it is important. You might say that the surrounding community accesses a variety of educational and recreational opportunities for children, adults and senior citizens at the center and that neighborhood meetings are held there.

- You may also identify a Community of Interest based on a shared culture or heritage of residents in a specific area. Please indicate why it is a common bond, e.g. "because of our shared history and language, we work together on cultural projects and this creates a sense of unity and understanding."

2. Where is your community located?

Tell us where the exterior boundaries of your COI are so we can locate it on a map. For example, write down landmarks, streets, bodies of water, or railroad tracks that delineate the outside border of the community.

A map showing the location of the COI, along with oral or written testimony identifying the location can be extremely helpful to locate the COI. A map can be created using free online programs such as **Google Maps.**

3. Why is it beneficial for your community to be kept together in a district?

When you talk about your Community of Interest, consider explaining why it should be kept together in a district and why splitting it would be problematic. For example:

- A COI working on creating economic opportunities might note that redevelopment and job creation activities are more effective when residents in the respective area can work together with one, rather than multiple representatives.
- A small Community of Interest that is working to receive government support may find that it has lesser chances of receiving funding if split into two.

You've documented your COI: now what?

Please get the information about your Community to us in one of the following ways:

- Attend one of the **community meetings or City council hearings!**
  You can provide the information to the City's consultants in person either verbally or by dropping off the information.
- Email the information to: DistrictElections@ci.oceanside.ca.us
- Mail or drop it off at: City Clerk, City of Oceanside, attn.: Districting Team, 300 North Coast Hwy, Oceanside, CA 92054

We hope to hear from you as soon as possible! In order to process your Community of Interest input before the draft maps are drawn, please get the information to us by May 30, 2017.

Thank you for participating in this important project!