



TERSZIA D'ELGIN

Writer · Illustrator

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City of San Diego Redistricting Commissioners

RE: Redistricting Greater Golden Hill and Comments from Outside the Neighborhood

Hello, esteemed Commissioners,

With respect for the weight and difficulty of the task before you, I strongly object to any redistricting of Greater Golden Hill that might split away the southern portion into District 8.

Context: I have lived in Greater Golden Hill, both north and south of A Street for more than thirty years, long enough to remember when “South Park” merchants first organized to promote themselves. I served on the mayor’s Community Forest Advisory Board for 12 years, and led an initiative to overhaul the badly blighted 32nd Street Canyon, for which community volunteers raised ~ \$500,000 through the Golden Hill Community Development Corporation. In 32nd Street Canyon, we initiated a “Kids in Canyons” curriculum that inspired an additional program in City Heights. Community members and I have pressed for other “green infrastructure” and stormwater improvements over the last twenty years.

Investment of love and responsibility, in concert with political representation: Many of my neighbors engage in community improvement, go to planning-committee meetings, and have nurtured commerce, streets, right-of-ways, open spaces and their residences with the help of the past and present councilmembers. These socio-political relationships are long term. We know our present State Senator Toni Atkins, Assemblyman Ward, and Mayor Gloria personally, because we knew them as our councilmembers. Such representation feels like representative democracy at its most functional.

Spurious motivation: We have heard that interests outside Greater Golden Hill have seeded the Redistricting Commission website’s comment section with appeals to shunt the southernmost portion of Golden Hill into Council District 8. This strikes us as categorically despicable if not corrupt. I am therefore curious about your process and whether you learn if those pressing for redistricting Greater Golden Hill actually live here. Is there any means of learning whether those who submit comments are actually local? Or whether they might have a fiscal agenda that has little or nothing to do with the wellbeing of those who actually live here?

(more)

Respectful community building: Our time in Greater Golden Hill has been an eye-widening, compassion-building experience. Diversity and the interdependence between renters and homeowners has better equipped me, my son, and my neighbors to understand multiple issues, to engage in respectful discourse, to roll up our sleeves. Separating the community at A Street might divest the homeowners of the renters, contributing to the very have-have-not schism that we Americans so wish to overcome. Such a thought is utterly heartbreaking to me. Further, it fills me with worry for our children and shame for not better tending our political representation myself.

The inundating hillsides of Golden Hill represent a coherent and historical mix of renters and homeowners. Its reinvigorating over the last decades is a benefit of this coherence. Businesses, bars, and baristas cater to all residents without exclusivity. We'd as soon keep it that way. Please let the gravity of what I describe sink in, dear Commissioners. It is far from insignificant.

Sincerely yours,



Tershia d'Elgin

CC: Senator Toni Atkins

Assemblymember Chris Ward

Mayor Todd Gloria