

Community Impact Statement

October 13, 2021

From the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council

Submitted to the Los Angeles City Council Redistricting Commission 2021

Based on a review of Map K-2.5, the Board of the Van Nuys Neighborhood Council (VNNC) strongly objects and opposes the division of the VNNC's geographic area between Council District N (2 or 4) and Council District M (6) and strongly requests that the boundary of District M (6) be extended west to the 405 Freeway so that the VNNC territory is covered by a single City Council District.

Arguments in favor of the VNNC position:

1. As shown in the following page of References taken from the Commission's website, the Commission states in its Operating Principles, Region 4 Summary of Principles, and Inter-Regional Ad Hoc Summary of Regional Concepts that "to the extent feasible" an effort will be made keep a Neighborhood Council territory together in one Council District.

However, Map K-2.5 divides the VNNC territory into two parts – with the western portion that is currently located primarily in CD 6 assigned to a newly created West Valley District N (designated as CD 2 or 4) on the map and most of the portion that is currently located in CD 2 assigned to the new CD 6.

Our principal concern is that we want the NC territory to be contained within a single Council District for the reasons stated in the Region 4 Summary of Principles, i.e. "to coordinate with only one Councilmember in order to ensure adequate access to social services and support for community projects."

2. We cannot see any rationale for incorporating the western portion of Van Nuys into a Council District that primarily serves the West Valley communities of Canoga Park, Winnetka, Reseda, and Lake Balboa. Most of these communities are distinct from Van Nuys, and it appears that issues that are unique to Van Nuys would receive little attention or focus in such a district. In addition, Van Nuys has little in common with many of these communities.
3. We see no rationale for splitting the commercial districts of Van Nuys between two Council Districts – with the Sepulveda Blvd. corridor in one district and the Van Nuys Blvd. corridor in another district. It is important that unified business and economic strategies be applied to the whole of Van Nuys.
4. We find no rationale for splitting Van Nuys from North to South along a minor street – other than perhaps the map drawer was trying to correct the error in the current boundaries of Council Districts where the east and west sides of Van Nuys Blvd. are split between present Council Districts 2 and 6. We see this as a violation of the Region 4 principle that "major commercial corridors remain intact within a singular city council district." Before the end of this decade, Van Nuys Blvd. will have a major rapid transit line running down the center of the street. The land use planning issues (including adding more housing) must be addressed over an area on either side of Van Nuys Blvd. that is greater than a

few blocks. Yet the proposed boundary line would have some of this new development spilling into the new District N (2 or 4), which will make coordinated planning extremely difficult.

5. The awkwardness of trying to place a portion of Van Nuys in District N is made obvious by the unsightly "bulge" in the eastern end of the map of District N. In accordance with principles of trying to follow natural boundaries, it is quite clear that the 405 Freeway is a natural boundary between the East Valley and the West Valley. Given the relatively even lines of the rest of District N, it appears that the logical eastern boundary for the district should have been the 405 Freeway. The map "bulge" eastward suggests that perhaps the district needed more voters, so an arbitrary move was made to graft on some territory east of the 405 Freeway. This action does not respect the integrity of the Van Nuys community and the benefits to be achieved by placing the VNNC territory in one council district.
6. Neighborhood Council territories in the West Valley are kept relatively intact within the newly drawn Council Districts. It is only when the map reaches Van Nuys that the Neighborhood Council territory is severed in what appears to be an arbitrary manner. Our community has many serious social and economic issues that need to be addressed in a comprehensive manner. We request the same consideration be given to Van Nuys that was given to other Neighborhood Councils in the drawing of this map.

References

First of the 10 “Operating Principles”:

- **We will adhere to City**, state and federal laws governing redistricting and, to the extent feasible, keep neighborhoods & communities intact, utilize natural boundaries or street lines, and be geographically compact.

From September 13th memo with the subject “Region 4 Summary of Principles”:

- To the extent feasible, ensure that Neighborhood Councils (“NC’s”), neighborhoods and major commercial corridors remain intact within a singular city council district
 - The Commission heard from various members of the public about the need for NC’s and communities of interest to coordinate with only one Councilmember in order to ensure adequate access to social services and support for community projects.
 - This principle includes protecting commercial corridors that have been hit hard by the pandemic and uplifts the need to assist the economic development of stressed communities.

From September 16th memo titled “Inter-Regional Ad Hoc Summary of Regional Concepts”:

- Motion 2: The Commission’s Draft Maps will adhere to the Los Angeles City Charter’s requirement of keeping neighborhoods, Neighborhood Councils and communities of interest intact to the extent feasible, while taking into consideration the impact of the 2020 Census undercount.