

3.

Rural Conditions: These socio-economic etc., conditions can also be found in West Fresno, in the rural cities and communities of the county. While doing research for the Fresno Redevelopment Transportation Plan, El Concilio's surveys found rural areas lack adequate transportation. While there is public transit, it is limited. Fresno Ministry, a local nonprofit organization, has identified lack of transit service in rural communities as the greatest hurdle to health care access.

Lack of City Attention:

The previous mayor of Fresno was Mr. Alan Autry, on several occasions described Fresno as the "Tale of Two Cities." He was correct, the northern part of Fresno has amenities that SW and SE Fresno do not have even today.

Civics/Voting Participation: Another distinction between north of Shields Avenue community and southern one is the lack of citizen participation and voting in elections. The northern areas not only vote, but they vote in significant numbers vs. the voting rate in the southern part. In the most recent Fresno mayoral election of November 2008, the distinction was something like 70 to 30 percent of the voters voted for the north end candidate Mrs. Swearingin instead of the Latino candidate from southeast Fresno, Mr. Henry T. Perea.

Citizens need to feel and have hope that government is responsive to their aspirations, dreams, and basic needs as tax payers. Having representative government is essential to citizens believing that government is responsive to its citizenry. Citizens must see that government provides the opportunity for one of their own to be elected who will respond to their concerns.

We request the commission, in its wisdom and through its ambitious task, will give high priority to these factors when developing new boundaries for assembly and senate districts where it impacts Southeast Fresno and its community of interests:

1. Changing demographics
2. High unemployment rate
3. Gradual curtailment of quality public education
4. Continued cost of post secondary education
5. City of Fresno bureaucracy's lack of attention to the area
6. High cost and un accessibility to health care
7. High rate of home foreclosures, and
8. Recession's impact on persons in low to middle income levels & how residents respond and participate in their communities.

Cordially,



Venancio G. Gaona, chair

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Enclosure: Maps

