

Subject: Per the Commission's request, my recommended boundaries for the West and North San Fernando Valley.

Date: Friday, May 6, 2011 5:33 PM

From: Abrams Creative [REDACTED]

Reply-To: <abrams@usa.net>

To: <votersfirstact@crc.ca.gov>

Conversation: Per the Commission's request, my recommended boundaries for the West and North San Fernando Valley.

Dear California Citizens Redistricting Commission:

Hello, my name is Al Abrams and I'm a resident of the West San Fernando Valley community of Tarzana. I'm the President of the Los Angeles Board of Neighborhood Commissioners which draws the lines and sets policies for L.A.'s ninety-three Neighborhood Councils.

I was speaker #12 at the public hearing in Los Angeles City Hall on Thursday evening, April 28th.

The Redistricting Commissioners asked me to follow up with a letter identifying myself and specifying my recommended boundaries for the West and North San Fernando Valley. I've attached that letter and a regional map of Neighborhood Councils to this e-mail note.

Please confirm delivery of this letter to you.

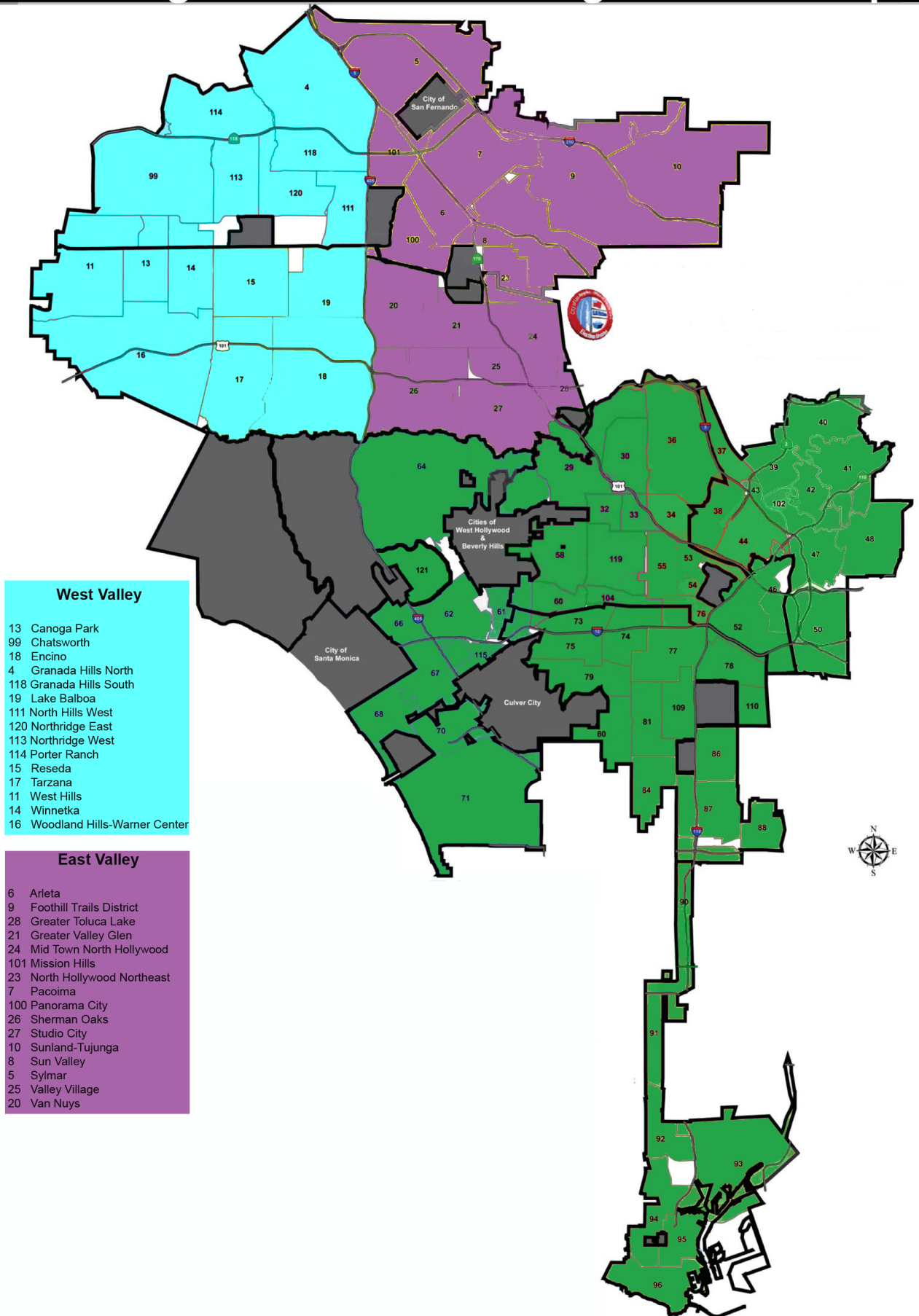
Many thanks,

Albert Abrams
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2010 Neighborhood Council Regional Area Map



May 6, 2011
4647 Caritina Drive
Tarzana, CA 91356

Dear California Citizens Redistricting Commission:

Hello, my name is Al Abrams and I'm a resident of the West San Fernando Valley community of Tarzana. I'm the President of the Los Angeles Board of Neighborhood Commissioners which draws the lines and sets policies for L.A.'s ninety-three Neighborhood Councils.

I was speaker #12 at the public hearing in Los Angeles City Hall on Thursday evening, April 28th. The Redistricting Commissioners asked me to follow up with a letter identifying myself and specifying my recommended boundaries for the West and North San Fernando Valley.

I watched on the web your hearings from Norco, and I would like to correct an important misconception as to the proposed boundaries of the San Fernando Valley, and particularly the West San Fernando Valley.

The West San Fernando Valley is the area west of the 405 Freeway, **and it starts in the south on Mulholland Drive along the peak of the Santa Monica Mountains** and goes all the way north to the Los Angeles City limits. This mapping has the additional advantage of respecting Los Angeles City limits. Making the 101 Freeway the southern boundary is a mistake.

I saw on the screen a proposed San Fernando Valley community of interest that did not include the areas between Mulholland Drive to the south and the 101 Freeway to the north. This is a major error. That area is not only considered within the San Fernando Valley, and within the City limits of Los Angeles, and it is within the Neighborhood Council official boundaries of the communities of Encino, Tarzana, and Woodland Hills. **I cannot stress how important it is for the Commission to be sure to include ALL of those areas in the West San Fernando Valley.**

It would be an error for you to divide those three communities and to relegate the people who live in southern Encino, southern Tarzana, and southern Woodland Hills as not living in the San Fernando Valley. As I stated, this would be a serious mistake.

As we all do in Los Angeles, **please use Mulholland Drive as the southern most boundary line for the West San Fernando Valley**. This is critically important to prevent disenfranchisement.

In fact, the quintessential Boulevard of the San Fernando Valley is Ventura Boulevard, which is often referred to by our residents as “The Boulevard”. Leaving Ventura Boulevard out of the San Fernando Valley would be like leaving Times Square out of New York.

Likewise, you erred in drawing the line so that the San Fernando Valley goes only as far north as the 118 Freeway. This leaves out two neighborhoods served by the Neighborhood Councils: Granada Hills North and Porter Ranch. Those two communities are within the City of Los Angeles and within the San Fernando Valley. I’ve attached a map of the Neighborhood Council, which shows the communities of the West San Fernando Valley.

You also had a discussion in Norco as to whether the 405 Freeway is the line between the West Valley and the East Valley. The fact is, every neighborhood as defined by the official Los Angeles City Neighborhood Councils is either west or east of that line. It is true that there is one West Valley community, which is defined as North Hills West and that is west of the 405, and another one which is North Hills East, which is east of the 405 and in the East San Fernando Valley.

While “North Hills” applies to both areas, it is clear that when the City of Los Angeles established these Neighborhood Councils, they understood that the 405 was the line, and that there were two communities included in North Hills, one west of the 405 and one east of the 405 Freeway.

Finally, I urge you not to chop up the West San Fernando Valley by including our residents in a district that is not based in the West San Fernando Valley.

This was done to us in 2001, as I mentioned in my remarks to the Commission, when a big chunk of the West San Fernando Valley was lumped into a Congressional District that is dominated by Beverly Hills and West Los Angeles (including Westwood, Brentwood and Bel Air).

If you want to put other areas in with the West San Fernando Valley you should look at two adjoining areas. First, if you happen to have a piece of the East San Fernando Valley leftover, we would be happy to take in our brothers and sisters in the East San Fernando Valley. The East San Fernando Valley deserves its own Congressional District and State Senate District. However, if there are some East Valley residents that can’t be kept in an East Valley district, we will welcome them.

We are also naturally connected to the Conejo Valley, starting with the communities of Agoura Hills and Westlake Village. Unfortunately, Agoura Hills, Westlake Village, Hidden Hills and Calabasas are all unfortunately currently linked with Malibu, which is far to the south.

I suggest that you can keep the entire West San Fernando Valley together in the State Senate, Assembly and Congressional seats.

If you put hundreds of thousands of West Valley residents into a non-West Valley district and hundreds of thousands of West Valley residents in a distant non-related district, you will have hundreds of thousands of aggrieved people.

If you create an eastern Ventura County seat and it needs more population, I would invite you to look at the Santa Clarita Valley as a basis of population. Some of the testimony that you heard in the City of San Fernando argued that the Simi Valley and Santa Clarita Valley were quite connected. **However, you should not relegate over 150,000 West Valley residents to live in a non-West Valley seat.**

If you create an Antelope Valley-based seat and need more population, I invite you to include Victorville.

Do not use hundreds of thousands of West Valley residents to round out districts that are based in Antelope Valley, or based in eastern Ventura County, or based elsewhere. That was done to us in 2001 and shouldn't be done to us again.

I would be glad to help the Commission with other specific recommendations regarding the West San Fernando Valley, or the Valley as a whole, since I oversee the Los Angeles Commission which is responsible for drawing the lines of every neighborhood and every community in the City of Los Angeles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Albert N. Abrams".

Albert Abrams
President
City of Los Angeles
Board of Neighborhood Commissioners
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