

Hello,

My name is Olivia Seideman, Civic Engagement Coordinator with Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, a community-based organization that works alongside residents in South Merced on issues such as land use, housing, and water access.

Attached to this email is a PNG of a Merced City BOS district, created in DistrictR. We strongly urge the Board to ensure that the blue district is South Merced's district, which was drawn based on our work with the South Merced communities. The boundaries of this district are:

- **North:** W Olive Ave between Spelling Hwy and McKee Rd
- **East:** McKee Rd at Santa Fe Ave, along Baker Drive to the Farmdale Lateral Canal down to E Childs Ave, then down Campus Parkway to E Mission Ave, down Healy Rd to Vassar Ave
- **South:** Vassar Ave between Healy Rd and Los Banos Hwy; W Dickenson Ferry Rd between Los Banos Hwy and S Thornton Ave
- **West:** S Thornton Rd between W Dickenson Ferry Rd and McSwain Rd; X St between McSwain Rd and Hwy 99; Snelling Hwy between W Olive Ave and V St

The current District 1, which groups South Merced with Livingston and Planada, dilutes the voice of South Merced residents. Livingston and Planada are much more agricultural communities, while South Merced has more in common with other City of Merced communities (namely Central Merced). For example, residents in unincorporated South Merced that rely on private wells and septic tanks would like to connect to the City of Merced's water and sewer infrastructure and are actively trying to do so. Additionally, both incorporated and unincorporated south Merced residents have advocated together to bring resources, such as grocery stores, sidewalks/trails and parks, to South Merced that would enhance its quality of life and make it comparable to neighborhoods in north Merced. It should also be mentioned that much of the new growth areas in Merced are located on the north side near the UC; thus separating South Merced from central and north Merced only further segregates this area within the City of Merced (mainly in District 2), while also giving it little to no representation in District 1 amongst other communities. It is critical for South Merced to have a meaningful voice within its county district.

Many of the proposed maps thus far similarly group South Merced (South of Hwy 99) with Livingston, Planada, and other rural communities. We urge the Board to instead group South Merced with similar communities in the City of Merced.

Using DistrictR, the attached image's blue district includes South and Central Merced. The population of this district is 56,803 - close to the ideal district size of 56,219.6. It is 59.2% Hispanic/Latino CVAP; Merced County must have two effective VRA districts with a majority Hispanic/Latino CVAP.

As such, we urge the Board to adopt a supervisorial map that uses this district for South Merced and Central Merced, preserving an important community of interest and giving voice to the residents of South Merced.

Best,
Olivia Seideman

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