

CITY OF SAN DIEGO
M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: November 16, 2001

TO: Gabriela Coverdale, GIS Manager, IT&C

FROM: Betsy McCullough, Deputy Planning Director

SUBJECT: Official Boundaries of “Communities” and “Neighborhoods”

Periodically, questions have been directed towards Planning Department staff regarding the identification and maintenance of official “community” and “neighborhood” boundaries. The purpose of this memo is to document Planning Department and Police Department processes associated with the aforementioned boundaries.

Community boundaries are mapped in association with a wide variety of land use planning documents. The City’s General Plan and community plans all have the community boundaries in them. These plans are adopted by Council resolution, therefore so are their boundaries. Also, City Council Policy 600-24 authorizes one “recognized” community planning group for a community area. The boundaries of authority for each planning group are mapped in their bylaws that are approved by the City. The City and other jurisdictions such as the San Diego Association of Governments [SANDAG] tabulate land use and population data based on the areas identified in the community plans. Given that consistent, adjoining boundaries are critical for work to be conducted within planning areas as the City uses the boundaries adopted in the community plans - the long-term planning documents for the City. Therefore, the Planning Department is the City’s “keeper” of these boundaries.

Neighborhoods are boundaries reflecting the perception of residents within a particular area, but they are built upon the pseudo census blocks maintained by Planning Department staff. Neighborhoods often are contained within communities, although they may not be entirely within one community. In some community plans, neighborhoods are mapped in the plan as of the date of plan adoption. Because perception of neighborhood boundaries is more fluid than that of community boundaries, the Police Department conducts a periodic outreach to residents to identify any perceived shift in boundaries. Adjustments to neighborhood boundaries are made by the Police Department over time based on input provided by citizens and Police Department needs. Therefore, the Police Department is the City’s “keeper” of neighborhood boundaries.

As a policy, the Police Department and Planning Department will keep in contact regarding changes in boundaries in the community areas, pseudo census blocks, and the neighborhood areas as identified in official City documents.

cc: Deena Bowman-Jamieson, GIS Analyst, Police Department
Andrew Abouna, MIS Manager, Planning Department
Planning Department Managers
Development Services Department Deputy Directors
Bob Parrott, San Diego Association of Governments
Department Directors via email

THIS MEMO WILL BECOME PART OF THE DEPARTMENT’S POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL.