

October 14, 2024

Heidi Vonblum
Director of Planning
City of San Diego
San Diego, CA 92101

RE: Proposal for a College Area & Kensington-Talmadge Community Plan Area Boundary Change
(This letter updates the CAPC/KTPG Letter of June 14, 2021)

Dear Director Vonblum;

On June 9, 2021 both the College Area Planning Committee (CAPC) and the Kensington-Talmadge Planning Group (KTPG) unanimously passed motions to support a change to our mutual boundary along Montezuma Road and Collwood Boulevard.

To provide some history, the chairs have been discussing a possible planning area boundary change since 2014. In November 2016, the chair of the KTPG gave the first presentation on the topic to the College Area CPG, which was followed with additional presentations in November 2017, and May 2019.

While members of the College Area board had questions, they were agreeable to it being discussed as part the community plan update process which appeared to be the most appropriate time to consider a boundary change between two community planning areas.



The areas covered by the proposed change are outlined in orange, red, and green in the map above as the reasons for the change differ in nature depending on the area.

The strongest consensus of both planning groups is that the green area should be a part of the Talmadge community.

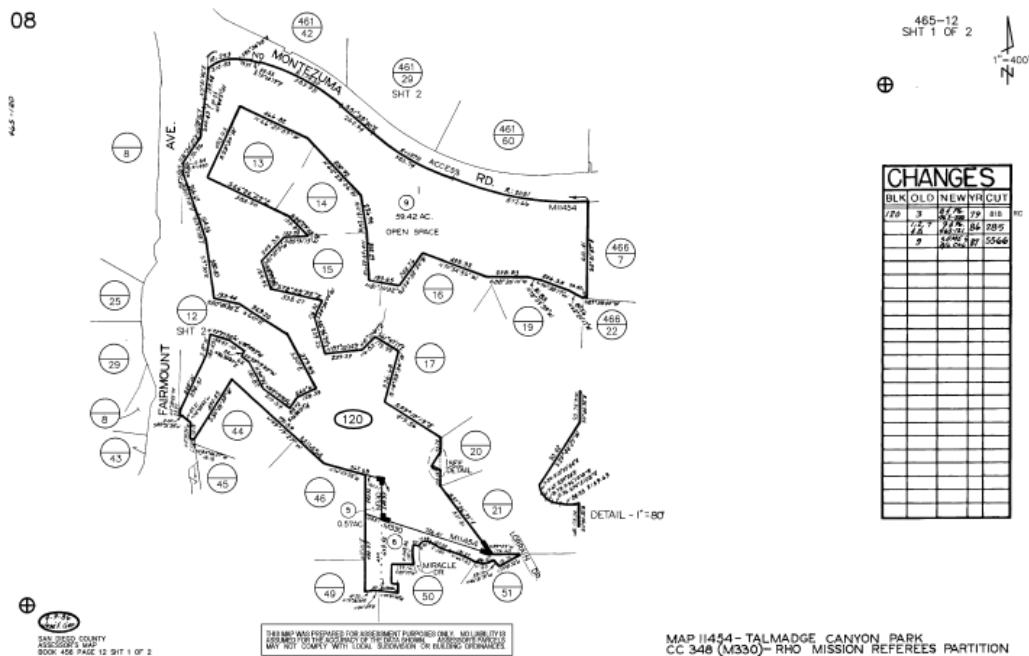
1. The current planning area boundary between College and Kensington-Talmadge is not a natural demarcation line, but the interior property lines between 5304 and 5308 Monroe Avenue on the north side, and the 5275 and 5343 Monroe Avenue, Las Palmas Apartments and Wesley Terrace respectively, on the south side.
2. History has shown both planning groups that confusion about community boundary lines exists even among planning professionals in the San Diego area. For example:
 - a. When SANDAG was engineering the Meade-Monroe bicycle route, the KTPG had to remind SANDAG staff that the Monroe/Collwood intersection was entirely within the College community planning area.
 - b. When the Housing Commission did its required community outreach for the Wesley Terrace renovation, they contacted the KTPG because they thought the tower was located within Talmadge. They had to be reminded that it was located within the College community planning area.

A change in the boundary will reflect the reality of how planning professionals perceive and deal with projects in this area.

3. City services like police, fire, park & recreation, library, are more likely to serve this area through Talmadge, via its immediately accessible interior community streets. As point of fact, the area is already part of the 824 Police Beat which encompasses the rest of Talmadge¹. Also, if a park were to be developed in Talmadge these residents would more likely utilize the Talmadge Park.
4. Other planning and economic development activities will be easier to accomplish if this area is incorporated into Talmadge because this Census Block Group is part of the Census Tract which extends west to Winona Avenue in Talmadge². Many federal, state, and local policies align their metrics with existing census tracts and census block boundaries.
5. Finally, residents of Talmadge include this area in their community efforts for neighborhood improvement, as shown by their participation in the volunteer watch, graffiti paint out, and other community-wide events.

For the area outlined in orange, both groups believe that the merits of its inclusion within the Kensington-Talmadge planning area are obvious and beneficial both to the property owners, and city Fire and Planning departments.

1. The entire orange area is only a portion of a single parcel that extends west and south, and is owned by the Talmadge Canyon Row apartments (see map immediately below). It is unusual for a privately owned parcel to be split between two different planning areas, and a disservice to its owner.
2. Fire safety - When palm trees began to overgrow the canyon on the south side of Montezuma, it was homeowners in Talmadge who noticed and initially brought it to the attention of authorities with the helpful assistance of the College CPG.
3. The area is part of the 824 Police Beat which encompasses the rest of Talmadge¹.
4. Since the parcel is uninhabited, its changeover could be easily accomplished.

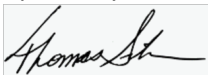


Some might argue as to which planning group the red area should adhere, however both planning groups agree this community would be better served if it were included in this boundary change.

1. The current boundary between College and Kensington-Talmadge in this section is not a natural demarcation line, but rather the interior property lines between properties abutting 51st and Contour on the west side, and the western property line of the Collwood condominium complex abutting Collwood Boulevard.
2. While its physical connections upslope to the rest of Talmadge aren't good, residents can walk up Collwood to Monroe, and at no point would they have to cross a road, much less a major road.
3. Its connections to the College Area commercial district, or even across the street aren't good either. There is no safe way to cross Collwood except at three signalized traffic signals because of the high speed and volume of traffic on Collwood Blvd. For much of its length, the Collwood condominiums front a cliff face as their connection to the College Area. Collwood is truly a road that divides these two communities, so the boundary should reflect reality.
4. The area is part of the 824 Police Beat which encompasses the rest of Talmadge¹.
5. Merging with the Kensington Talmadge Planning Area would combine it with the remainder of its Census Block Group located within Talmadge². The splitting of this census block group creates work for city staff every time various data must be collected.

In summary, when all three changes are taken as a whole, they create a complete and easily identifiable community boundary.

Respectfully submitted,



Tom Silva
Chair, College Area Planning Committee



David Moty
Chair, Kensington Talmadge Planning Group

Sources:

¹<https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/police/pdf/2011policecitywidemap.pdf>

²https://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/GUBlock/st06_ca/county/c06073_san_diego/DC10BLK_C06073_220.pdf