



SJCC



San Jose Redistricting Commission
200 E. Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

October 14, 2021

RE: Item 21-2239

Redistricting Commissioners:

On behalf of the members of our respective organizations, we want to thank you for your dedication to the City of San Jose and the critical process of decennial redistricting. How our electoral districts are drawn is a key element to ensure effective, responsive and diverse representation occurs for all of the residents in the nation's tenth largest city.

It is the importance of the outcome of this process that has compelled us to write to you today to ask for your consideration of an issue that perhaps was overlooked in the draft maps under review at your October 14, 2021 meeting. The draft maps, as presently constructed, would divide important small business communities in a way that could dilute their representation before Council. Of particular note are three areas - South First Street, East Santa Clara Street, and Alum Rock – which have a high concentration of minority-owned, family-owned, and community-based businesses. Moreover, several iterations of the maps bifurcate our downtown boundaries and split the core into at least two council districts, which would be detrimental to the overall cohesiveness of our downtown.

Coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, many small businesses are struggling to recover the prosperity they had achieved prior to the global events of March 2020. In conversation after conversation, our organizations have heard that small businesses are earning a fraction of their pre-pandemic revenue. For many, support from government can be the difference between entrepreneurial survival and closure. It is always important that members of our community do not feel their representation has been divided; these next few years will be even more so for small businesses throughout our city.

By drafting maps that divide many business districts down the center of the streets in which they are located, the proposed boundaries threaten to confuse small business owners when they are attempting to be heard by the local government on community projects and could threaten the robustness of their representation. We are not suggesting this was done intentionally; we are asking that now that this has been brought to your attention, that you take adequate steps to address it by returning with proposed maps that keep these small business communities intact.

On behalf of all of our members, we want to thank you for your advocacy, leadership and support of our City by serving on this important commission. We greatly appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to working with you to ensure that all of our small businesses remain adequately represented before our local government.

Sincerely,

Connie Alvarez
Alum Rock Santa Clara Street Business Association
President

Carlos Diaz
Alum Rock Business Network (ABN)
President

Mimi Hernandez
Prosperity Lab
Executive Director

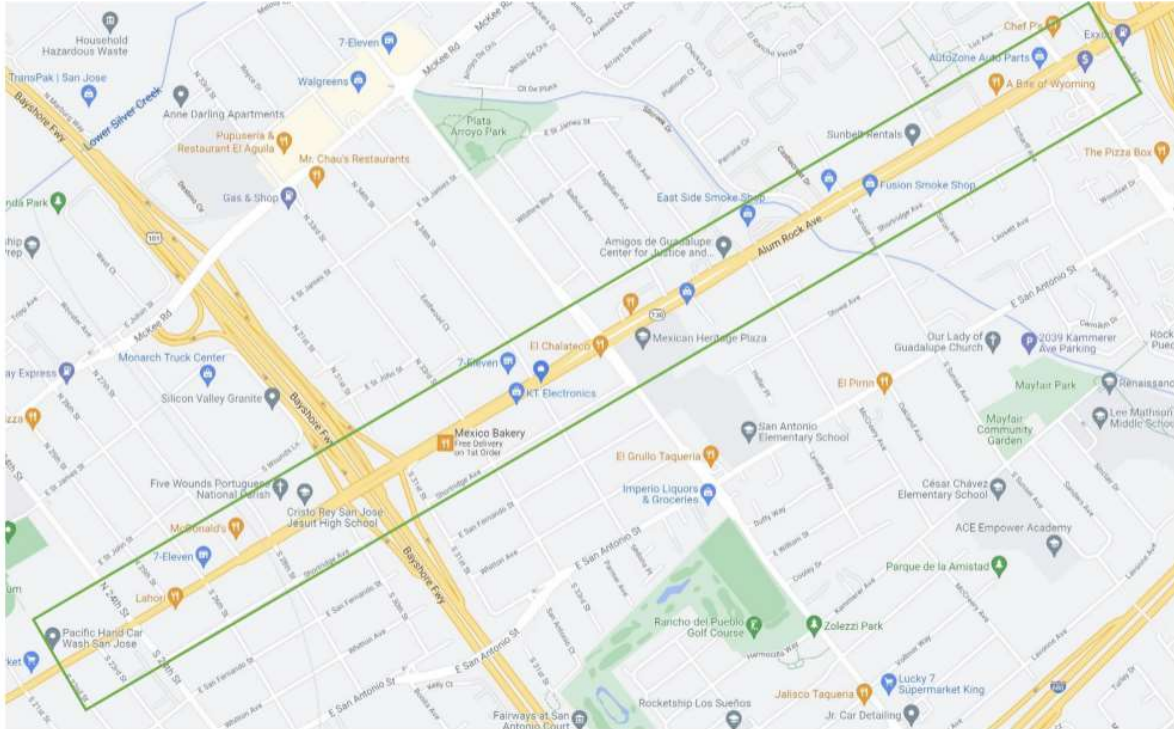
Scott Knies
San Jose Downtown Association
Executive Director

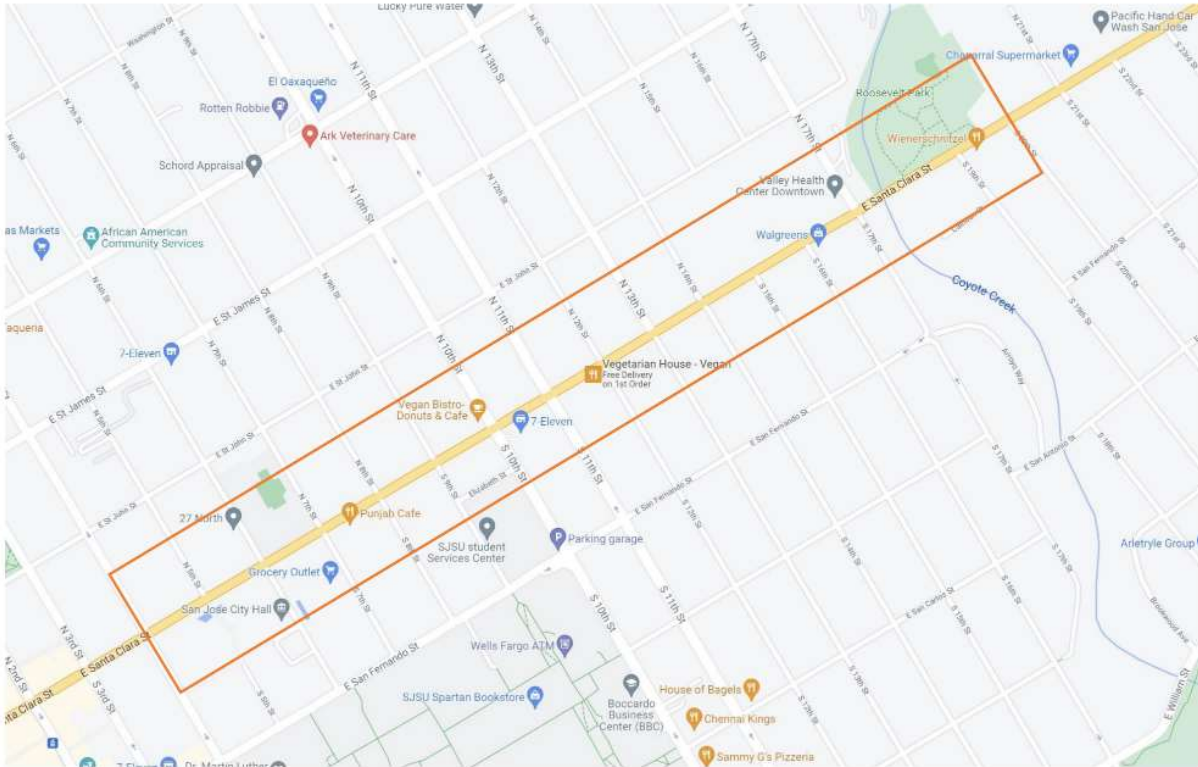
Chris Patterson-Simmons
East Santa Clara Street Business Association
President

Derrick Seaver
San Jose Chamber of Commerce
President & CEO

Attachments: Maps of the affected business districts

ALUM ROCK SANTA CLARA STREET BUSINESS ASSOCIATION – CORRIDOR 1.83 MILES





**SAN JOSE DOWNTOWN
BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**



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ASSOCIATION**

