

City Council D3 Application – Christine Mary Spencer

Name (as registered to vote): Christine Mary Spencer

Address (as registered to vote): [REDACTED]

E-mail address: [REDACTED]

Home Phone: [REDACTED]

Work Phone: [REDACTED]

Years lived in Escondido: 9

Years lived in Escondido City Council District 3: 3

Employer: Coastal Roots Farm

Occupation: Director of Grants and Impact

Education Level: Masters

Additional Languages Spoken: Spanish

Prior or current civic experience (Include membership in professional, charitable or community organizations) Offices held (if any) and Dates of Membership I am the current Secretary of the Old Escondido Historic District Board (October 2021-Present), a current member of Leadership North County (August 2022-Present), the current Membership Coordinator of the San Diego Grant Professional Association (October 2021-Present), a current member of the San Diego Women’s Foundation (August 2022-Present), a monthly volunteer at Interfaith Community Services (August 2017-Present), a former member for of the Patient Advisory Council at UCSD Health (2014-2016), a former volunteer chair of San Diego JDRF (2008-2011).

Have you ever been convicted of any crime or violation of any law or statute other than minor traffic violations? If yes, please explain. No

Please describe your qualifications, education and work experience/training that you believe are relevant in your potential role as a Councilmember. I have a Master of Public Administration with classes in public service, and the role of each level of government including local, state, and national. I have worked in the political arena as a Constituent Liaison and Legislative Assistant for a United States Senator and led successful campaigns. I am currently involved in Leadership North County, a program for emerging leaders who want to better understand the region’s challenges and opportunities. This Program is comprised of individuals interested in developing a

systemic understanding of how our region works because important issues that impact the North County's future include business and community leaders, current and aspiring elected officials, leaders of volunteer and nonprofit organizations, educators, and school board members, city employees, leaders of public agencies and active community citizens. I have worked with nonprofit organizations for more than 16 years in key leadership positions serving people who are food insecure, higher education, food assistance, regenerative agriculture, and access for low-income and underserved communities to receive proper education and services. This has taught me about the issues that are most critical in San Diego and more importantly North County. I have extensive experience in budget development and as well as helping create a sustainable future for organizations with budget deficits. I am currently the Director of Grants and Impact at Coastal Roots Farm. Through key grants with the STEM Education Program, all 4th graders from Escondido Union School District visit the Farm on scholarship and free bus transportation. I have grown up around and in Escondido and purchased my first home here. This is truly a unique and vibrant place and I have become involved in community events and groups that care for this region.

Why do you want to serve on the Escondido City Council? I have been involved in public service for many years. My work experience has enabled me to hear the voices of those who need to be heard and what is important in our region. I want to use my education, experience, involvement in the community, and ability to listen to the voices of the residents of Escondido to truly bring change to our wonderful city. Escondido is ready for some profound change in so many different areas and I want to help steer this amazing city to the greatness it was and could be once again.

If appointed, would you consider running for the City Council District 3 seat during the November 5, 2024 Election? Yes

What are your three top priorities for the City? 1. Redevelopment of Escondido and development of areas that are currently vacant. 2. Finding a true solution to help people experiencing homelessness with partnerships. 3. Housing and safety for all who need a place to live in Escondido that brings back a sense of community and togetherness for all.

Have you reviewed the City's General Plan? True

Have you reviewed the City's budget? True

How would you address the City's structural budget deficit? The city made a great decision to put the increase in city sales tax measure on the ballot for the last election. Unfortunately, it was not publicized, and the citizens of Escondido were not educated about the important measure, so it was voted down. At a quarterly meeting with the City of Escondido, a wonderful presentation was made by a city official and after listening to this information I was excited to vote for this crucial measure for the city. There needs to be concerted emphasis on marketing and public information to educate the public about these measures and the budget deficit. As a professional grant writer and nonprofit leader, balancing a budget is crucial to ensure an organization remains in the green and

can continue to provide crucial resources to our most underserved residents. Not only does there need to be an even closer analysis of extra spending but also how to bring in extra money for the city. Mirroring similar strategies throughout the North County region and similar cities throughout the state will help with key brainstorming and relationship-building with cities surrounding Escondido. Reading through the budget for Fiscal Year 2022/2023 some specific areas need to be addressed and modified to halt the balance of expenses over revenue. Other cities in North County have had a deficit and made bold steps to reverse this issue. There need to be discussions with these cities to adopt an efficient budget. The General Plan for Escondido written in 2012 has not been effectively adopted and needs to be read in detail once again. This Plan created a roadmap for Escondido to ensure viability and success, not crime and protests by residents. There is an obvious problem with increasing streams of revenue for the city and this needs to be addressed as soon as possible.

Do you have a plan for attracting businesses to Escondido? Escondido has a history of not attracting key businesses to the city. If there is an emergence of new and much-needed diversity in residential areas, new ventures will be attracted to open here. Escondido needs to have safe and attractive places for business owners, in all areas of the city, not just downtown. The amount of discount and thrift stores needs to decrease immediately as this is a detriment to innovation and most current residents in Escondido complain about these stores. There is an emergence of a younger generation that is excited about opening new shops and businesses but feels we need to get rid of those stores in the area that are not welcoming, old, and not aesthetically pleasing. There is also a new strength in the region with new homeowners. We need to be out in the community asking these questions for great ideas. This can be accomplished through town halls and increased participation of City Council members and the mayor at community events. Allowing the members of our city to speak for three minutes each at a City Council meeting is not welcoming and people do not feel heard and accepted here.

How would you define Smart Growth? I would define Smart Growth as the principle to effectively develop and maintain the vibrancy of a city. Smart Growth encourages a mix of buildings for housing, businesses, and transportation that all work together, especially in downtown areas. In the 2012 City of Escondido General Plan, there was a focus on changing from developing vacant land to reinvestment in current neighborhoods. The plan for growth is what the city still needs to adopt in 2023, and the groundwork has already been laid for us. There is vacant land that has not been developed and could be used for mixed-use construction with green space for residents. New housing development solutions are being sought throughout the County of San Diego and could be an effective plan for these vacant areas and lots that need to be redeveloped, providing the community a place to live, work, and play. There are so many areas of Escondido that need to be updated such as apartment complexes literally falling down with managers and owners who do not care about the welfare of their renters.

What is your position on the development of more housing in Escondido? What we are currently doing with the housing situation in Escondido is not working. The city needs to research new concepts such as Nolen Communities that will not only bring various levels of housing (including addressing the affordable housing issue) but also attract new businesses and green space to bring a sense of community. Only creating extra housing that is called “affordable,” is not working at all. Other cities are adopting innovative ideas and plan to ensure there is not only housing for all but a sense of community and belonging to their area. The 2012 General Plan for Escondido had a wonderful proposal for the redevelopment of current regions to ensure Smart Growth. The Plan needs to be followed closer as the city has strayed away from these great initiatives.

How would you address homelessness in Escondido? There is no quick solution to help those experiencing homelessness in Escondido. Organizations such as Interfaith Community Services are doing an excellent job with wrap-around services and providing mental health therapy and housing placement for those who need it. There are many reasons why people do not have housing and there is no band-aid. I think the city should be working with these organizations that know this population well and provide extra locations so they can provide the care and services to become members of our community.

What is your 10-year vision for the City of Escondido? My ten-year vision for Escondido includes: 1. Neighborhoods that are welcoming for all and show their sense of community and vibrancy. This can be accomplished through the development of vacant land and lots for mixed housing to include context-sensitive communities such as condominiums, townhomes, single-unit homes, businesses, and transportation. 2. Becoming a key city of choice for families in North County. This can be accomplished through the creation of additional and much-needed green space for neighborhood use that is safe such as community gardens and parks that create healthy lifestyles and a sense of togetherness. Enticing more income diversity for the region will help existing businesses remain open and bring excitement for new business ventures. 3. Becoming a truly safe city for everyone who lives here. There needs to be a redirection of the budget from crime prevention and protection to community services and quality of life. 4. Getting out of a major deficit that hurts the city. This can be accomplished by developing innovative revenue streams for the city including an increase in sales tax. 5. Open lines of communication and a true sense of collaboration with other cities in North County San Diego to assist Escondido to create an infrastructure that is strong and sustainable.

What are the key issues you see facing our community? Why do you think these are the key issues and what might be the solutions? There is a major lack of income diversity in Escondido. 70% of residents are low-income and there is not much attention placed on attracting families and young professionals to the city. This hurts businesses, safety, and a sense of community. There need to be drastic measures to address this issue and appeal to a more diverse population. The budget deficit is a significant problem and if not resolved can lead the city down an even darker future. Budget consultants who deal with deficits in local governments should be hired as contractors

to build strong and attainable measures to help Escondido get out of this hole. Though this might be an extra expense currently the return on investment would be very positive. People experiencing homelessness are always going to be here. The city needs to work with organizations such as Interfaith Community Services already helping to find solutions and increase their viability to truly help people. The education system in Escondido desperately needs to be reviewed and updated for all schools. There are only two elementary schools with good ratings (above 5 on Great Schools) and this causes many families to transfer their children to those specific schools that are considered safe and secure for their children. All schools need the same access to quality education, parents should be strongly encouraged to help their children learn and grow and if they need help, services should be offered at all schools. The issue of housing is something that was addressed in the General Plan with some great concepts. Escondido needs to collaborate with great urban designers who believe in Smart Growth and strive to create communities that embrace their surroundings and provide people with unique places to live, work, and play. These designers utilize diverse housing for all income levels, provide a space for residents to enjoy the outdoors around them, and preserve history which is such an important part of our city.

What do you bring to the position that is missing from the current City Council? I

feel most City Council members are not listening to the voices of the people they serve at each meeting and every day. Members of the City Council are trusted by the citizens they represent, and their own political views should not be the focus of any meeting, personal social media platform, or discussion with residents. If you truly listen to the people living in Escondido, you will hear they are upset and would like to be heard more. I do listen to those around me especially my neighbors and would bring a new perspective from the middle-income, working-class families. I live in Escondido, my children attend school here, and I am involved in community groups. This is the time to change the future of Escondido because this may be the last chance we have to bring the City back to a time when it was viewed as a destination city for everyone.

Have you ever held a public office? If yes, name the office title, dates of service and describe the duties. I have never held a public office.

What would you do to make Escondido a place where people want to live, work, and visit? I would continue to make the downtown area a beautiful and vibrant place for all to visit, shop, eat and have fun. There are other areas in Escondido in desperate need of repair and rid of extreme safety issues that need to redevelop as soon as possible. This is where urban and suburban designers with innovative ideas are able to assist in this endeavor and presently excited to approach the city. There needs to be an additional focus on community services for all who live here to foster a sense of togetherness.

The Escondido City Council regularly meets on the first four Wednesdays of each month at 4:00 p.m. (Closed Session) and 5:00 p.m. (Open Session) and periodically has additional special meetings and workshops. Councilmembers also serve on a number of subcommittees, commissions and outside agency

boards. Please describe any time constraints or obligations that might limit your availability. I would have no time constraints with meetings and subcommittees.
Is there anything else you would like to share with the Council? I am excited about the opportunity to be a member of City Council to truly find solutions and ensure our wonderful city is a place for everyone.

Christine Spencer



Summary of Experience

- Individual and corporate major gifts, foundation philanthropy, annual giving, planned giving and business development
- Experience in supervising a team
- Grant development, writing, reporting, and management
- Cultivating lasting relationships with donors, organizations, internal departments and external relations
- Donor and prospect research and management
- Budget development and compliance
- Developing and executing short-term and long-term goals and strategies
- Maintaining high-level professionalism in any situation with a positive attitude with all people

Education

The University of Colorado at Denver, May 2005, Master of Public Administration, specializing in Health Policy

Texas Christian University, December 1998, Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Minor in Spanish

Work Experience

Coastal Roots Farm

Director of Grants and Impact

February 2022-Present

- Identifies and develops strategies to optimize the grants administration process
- Submits grant applications for all programs at the Farm
- Oversees the grant reporting process and compiles and analyzes all quantitative and qualitative program evaluation content and provides detailed reports to grant funders
- Collaborates with program, philanthropy, and finance team members to prepare grant program budgets and ensure proper administration of grants, including invoicing, expense reporting, and other administrative needs to ensure successful execution of grant process
- Regularly updates grant content and strengthens evidence-based metrics to inspire storytelling and effectively communicate the breadth and depth of Farm's impact
- Regularly assesses the Farm's evaluation strategy and build on and improve processes.

Foundation for Animal Care and Education

Director of Development

July 2020-March 2022

Job Duties

- Developed and oversaw the annual fundraising program and strategy
- Created and grew the corporate partnership program
- Created and grew a major gifts program including identification, cultivation and solicitation of major donors
- Maintained ongoing communications with private and corporate donors

- Built strong and successful relationships and secure financial support from individuals, foundations and corporations
- Built the planned giving program (FACE's Legacy Society)
- Provided input on special events and helped to secure special event sponsors
- Supervised the grant writer and established the Standard Operating Procedures for research, grant submission, grant awards, and reporting
- Spoke at engagements to share information about FACE with the community
- Worked closely with FACE's Executive Director and Board of Directors on development initiatives and education

Phoenix Children's Hospital Foundation

January 2018-January 2022

Corporate Grants Officer

Job Duties

- Developed and builds relationships with key corporate partnerships
- Developed and manages a formal process for the entire grant life cycle including solicitation, preparation and submission, award processing, reporting, and support
- Managed production and assignment schedules and progress for corporate foundations and corporate grant opportunities for philanthropic support
- Worked alongside Phoenix Children's Hospital to ensure implementation of awarded proposals and all compliance requirements are met each year
- Performed prospect research on corporations and corporate foundations for grant opportunities
- Worked to achieve the multi-million-dollar foundation goal

Feeding San Diego, San Diego, California

Corporate & Foundation Relations Manager

April 2016-September 2017

Job Duties

- Responsible for reaching a \$1.8 million goal for corporate and foundation support in fiscal year 2017
- Personally managed a portfolio of 100+ current corporate donors and worked to increase their level of support
- Handled all third-party events and cause marketing campaigns
- Scheduled and conducted corporate donor and prospect calls, visits and meetings each month to engage prospects with Feeding San Diego
- Developed written cultivation, solicitation and stewardship plans for corporate donors, corporate foundations and prospects
- Supervised two grant writers and reviewed all grant requests before submission

UC San Diego, San Diego, California

Assistant Director of Development, Jacobs School of Engineering

September 2014-April 2016

Job Duties

- Managed an individual portfolio of prospects capable of donating gifts from a minimum of \$1,000 to greater than \$100,000
- Comprehensive understanding of University priorities and regulations, regularly meeting with prospects, donors and corporations regarding major gift donations, planned giving and special events
- Traveled throughout California and Washington to meet with prospects
- Attended and spoke about development updates at all Computer Science and Engineering department board meetings

- Prepared regular gift proposals for individual and corporate donations
- Regularly met with key figures in corporations associated with the Jacobs School of Engineering to develop and strengthen the relationship

Texas Wesleyan University, Fort Worth, Texas

Director of Annual Giving/Director of Development

October 2011-April 2014

Job Duties

- Developed and managed a comprehensive annual fund program that included personal solicitations, telemarketing, direct mail, corporate solicitations and web-based campaigns
- Identified, cultivated and solicited individual prospects, as well as corporations and foundations
- Cultivated major gift supporters who have donated at least **\$25,000** to the university
- Increased the donor giving percentage to the Wesleyan Fund from **3.23% to 7.96%**
- Increased faculty and staff giving from **26% to 53%**
- Created targeted programs for specific groups of alumni, friends, parents, trustees, current and prospective donors, such as the new GOLD (Graduates of the Last Decade) Society
- Managed the student phonathon campaign, with an increase of **30%** in donations with this solicitation method

Breast Cancer Network of Strength, San Diego, California

Development Manager

December 2008-October 2010

Job Duties

- Represented the organization at all speaking engagements including media interviews, corporate events, Walk and Ride events and anything affecting the organization in the community
- Organized all logistics for the Walk to Empower in San Diego, including management of a \$50,000 budget, completed and maintained a projection and progress plan and organized the annual Corporate Breakfast, Team Luncheon, kick-off presentations and information session
- Managed 400 volunteers
- Increased money raised at the Walk to Empower from **\$100,000 to \$200,000**
- Responsible for all national and local corporate sponsors for the organization, including new and renewals

St. Paul's Senior Homes & Services, San Diego, California

Special Projects Coordinator

October 2006-July 2008

Job Duties

- Staff coordinator for two major fundraisers, The LUV Gala and the Wine Fest
- Legislative Liaison which included cultivation of relationships with congressional leaders and staff, meeting and coordinating with organizational leaders and organizing the annual Legislative Breakfast
- Coordinated all annual special events for the CEO including the annual Board Tea, Volunteer Appreciation Event, Board Retreat and the Clergy Appreciation Events

Total Longterm Care, Denver, Colorado

Administrative Assistant/Marketing

December 2002-October 2006

Job Duties

- Provided executive support to the Center Director
- Planned all meetings and events for the center

- Provided tours for potential participants
- Assisted with marketing for housing facilities and independent contracts
- Supervised the Receptionist

United States Senate, Texas/Washington D.C.

Constituent Liaison

February 1999-March 2001

Job Duties

- Interviewed constituents in order to handle their immigration, passport, and border dilemmas
- Aided in the filling out of immigration forms
- Worked with federal agencies putting together legislation for immigration policy
- Analyzed new federal immigration policy and reported findings to the senator

Internships

House of Commons, London, England

Former Assemblyman Jan Goldsmith, San Diego, CA

Language Skills

Speaks Spanish