



Hopeful Trustee of the La Jolla Community Planning Association
Cameron Hunter Etienne
January 2026

I have lived in many places. I have felt the pulse of many different communities. I have worked as an in home salesman meeting with people all across get greater Washington DC area. I have worked as a business to business salesman meeting with companies in every size town in the territory from Ohio to Maine and Virginia. Pittsburg, Oahu, I have lived in college towns, sleepy coastal communities and major urban centers. I now work as a structural engineer and get to call La Jolla home.

I first came to California in 2012 and lived briefly in Huntington Beach. The Neighborhoods there felt austere and unwelcoming. I ended up settling in La Jolla on Girard just across from the Athenaeum and working at Puesto before it was the fine dining experience it is today. The owner Alan Adler would describe it as “you know, like chipotle”.

I had to return to the East Coast for a stint to pay off student loans but was so thoroughly impressed with life here in San Diego I made it my mission to return. In January of 2016, I made that goal a reality and moved to Mission Beach just off Santa Clara beachside of mission Blvd. I felt the community change while I was there. It felt like there was a new Air BnB somewhere every month. I felt the squeeze of rent hikes every year. Each raise I received only allowed me to continue to pay rent without any real change to my living circumstances. Ultimately I was dislocated because the apartment I was renting was sold and tuned into an Air BnB.

The pandemic happened, and the ADU program was created. San Diego became a test subject. I was offered an opportunity to grow my engineering skills and build buildings. It was a welcome opportunity after 5 years of designing signs. I found myself for the first time working as a structural engineer for a developer. The development industry was new to me. I did not initially appreciate the impact and effect of our work. I was mostly focused on learning how to design wood structures.

I watched as the developer would use the ADU program to build (5) 2-story buildings in a backyard in Clairemont in the name of solving the housing crisis. The buildings were “stacks”, tiny one-bedroom duplexes plopped in what were typical single family detached neighborhoods without any parking. They would buy as many lots as possible to repeat the project. The company was constantly raising money and selling the dream of high returns to any investor that would listen. The same developer working on the Chal-Cifica development.

I am happy to say I am no longer with that group, and have learned more in those years than is probably healthy. I have firsthand seen the harm possible from reckless and low integrity development. The built world is one that is lasting and enduring. The decision to build comes with high consequence. It should be done with the reverence it deserves so that our world may become better and not worse as a result.

La Jolla is a special place. I believe it may be one of the nicest places in the world. The concentration of wealth, the abundant natural beauty, the culture of art and recreation, so many factors have come together to make La Jolla a truly remarkable neighborhood and community. There is an unmistakable character of this place that is valuable to not only its residents, but so renowned that it is valuable even to the international community. La Jolla is a work of art. We should be careful when handling something of such great value.

It is unrealistic to think that La Jolla could remain unchanged. Change is the only constant. Attached is a picture of La Jolla from 96 years ago. In one lifetime much has changed. I would love to know who those first La Jollans were, what they thought and felt as they saw their neighborhood change. What drama's unfolded to yield what we now know as La Jolla?

The purpose of the La Jolla Community Planning Association is to act as stewards, and to ensure the community is adhering to the La Jolla Community Plan.

The waterfront, the green space, the sense of community, the feel of the space, the historic places, adequate public transit and mobility are all important parts of the plan and must be considered in any initiative that is presented to this group.

If allowed, I will do my best to act as a steward of this beautiful place while balancing the current interests of the residents and forces that seek to shape our home.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cameron Etienne

No AI was used to help write this. 😊

Please visit my website if you are interested.

<https://sites.google.com/view/cameronetienne?usp=sharing>

LA JOLLA 1930

