

**MICHIGAN  
INDEPENDENT  
CITIZENS  
REDISTRICTING  
COMMISSION**



# Communities of Interest Process

References: Tom Ivacko, CLOSUP, "Report to the MICRC"; Justin Levitt, "Rules of Redistricting: COIs"

# Mission, Vision, and Values

**Mission:** Lead Michigan's redistricting process to assure Michigan's Congressional, State Senate, and State House district lines are drawn fairly in a citizen-led, transparent process, meeting Constitutional mandates.

**Vision:** Chart a positive course for elections based on fair maps for Michigan today and for the future.



## Core Values:

- ✓ Integrity
- ✓ Respect
- ✓ Transparency
- ✓ Purposeful

# Why Communities of Interest are Important in Redistricting



- To promote fair, representative districts by reflecting diverse communities and their distinct interests
- To keep common interest groups intact, so they can elect representatives, who will be responsive to their unique interests
- To encourage continuing interaction and civic engagement among community members in the communities in which they live
- Although COIs have been used for decades in redistricting, an open, transparent process for people to self-identify as COIs is new.



# Why Communities of Interest are Important in Redistricting



It is so important that it is ranked 3rd in the list of criteria in the Michigan Constitution after

1. Federal requirements for equal population and Voting Rights Act
2. Geographically continuous



# What are Communities of Interest?

“Communities of Interest may include, but shall not be limited to, populations that share cultural or historical characteristics or economic interests

...

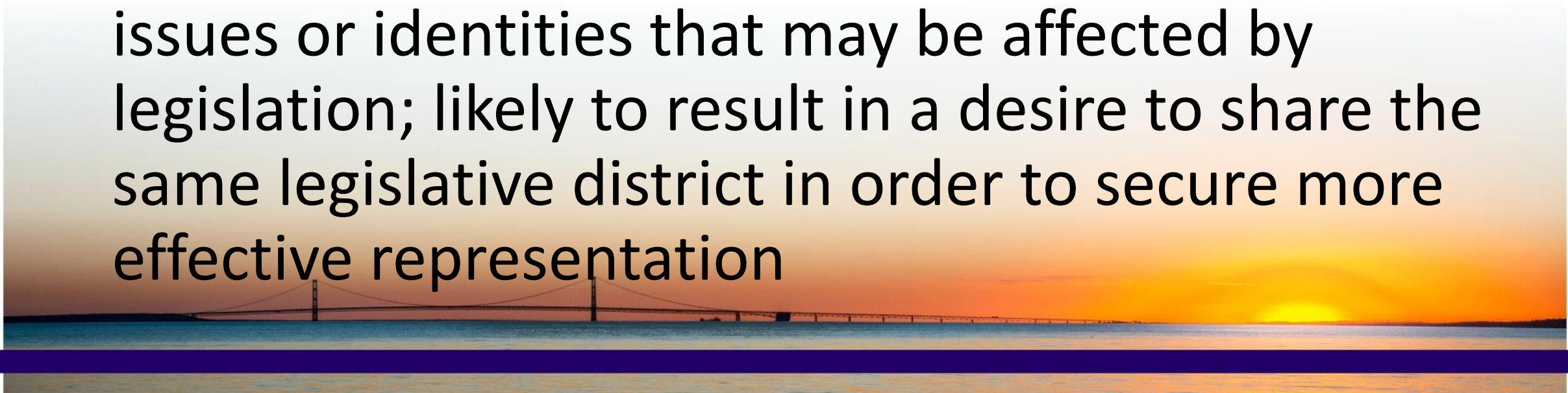
do not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.”





# Characteristics of Communities of Interest

- Self-defined by the local community members
- Associated with a contiguous area on a map
- Shared common bonds linked to public policy issues or identities that may be affected by legislation; likely to result in a desire to share the same legislative district in order to secure more effective representation



# What does the MICRC Want to Know about Communities of Interest?



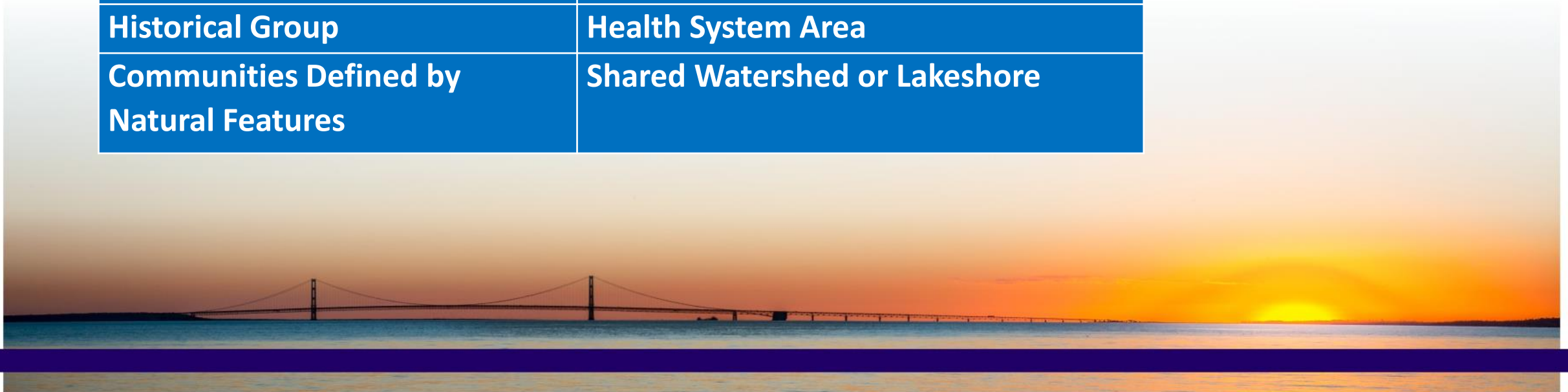
- What name would you give your community?
- What is the common bond that creates your community's shared identity?
- What is the geographic area covered by your community?
- What governmental policies are important for your community?
- How would keeping your community intact enhance the quality of your representation in Congress or the Michigan legislature?
- Are there nearby areas that strengthen or weaken your COI?



# Examples of Communities of Interest



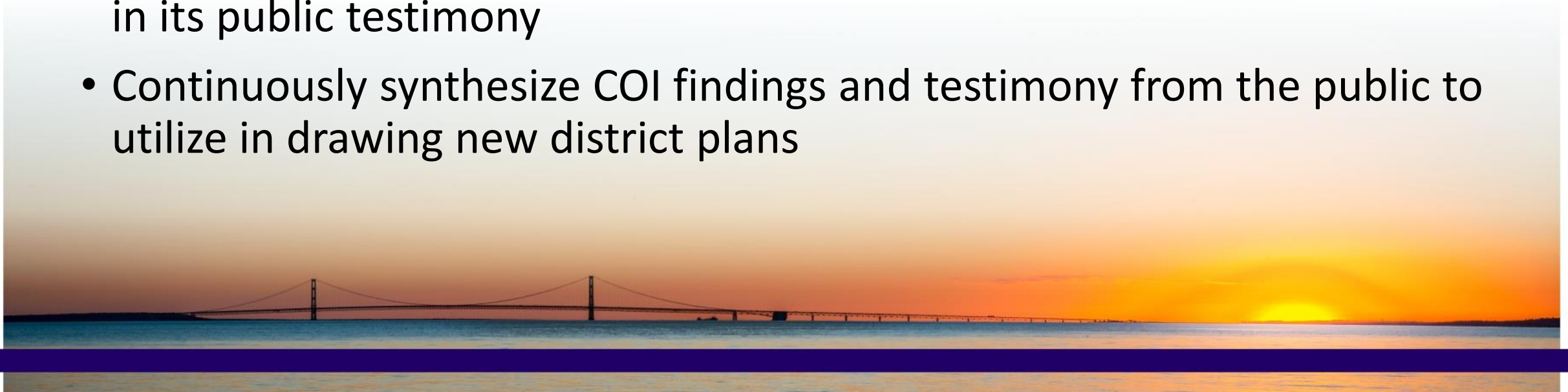
<b>Ethnic or Racial Group</b>	<b>School District</b>
<b>Agricultural Group</b>	<b>Arts Organization</b>
<b>Native American Tribe</b>	<b>Neighborhood Association</b>
<b>Religious Community</b>	<b>Economic Zone</b>
<b>Tourism Area</b>	<b>Outdoor Recreation Area</b>
<b>Historical Group</b>	<b>Health System Area</b>
<b>Communities Defined by Natural Features</b>	<b>Shared Watershed or Lakeshore</b>





# Key Issues

- Explaining the concept of a COI so citizens can understand the concept and advocate for the COI which they are part of or interact with in their communities
- Identify key questions the MICRC wants to ask and learn about a COIs in its public testimony
- Continuously synthesize COI findings and testimony from the public to utilize in drawing new district plans



# Recommendations

- Shared explanation of Communities of Interest to provide to the public.
- Identify key questions the MICRC would like to hear about COIs in public testimony
- Considerations for group presentations
- Consider efforts to discern between better-resourced groups and others

