I’ve been thinking about my proposed “work-around” for island (un-annexed) property in a City to use a covenant to agree to the City’s development/public works plan policies, standards, ordinances, etc...and I realize that it probably would not work for subdivisions. I think the Subdivision Map Act specifically requires that parcel maps and tract maps conform to the adopted ordinances and policies of the jurisdiction.

So, if counties aren’t requiring sidewalks, pedestrian & parking lot shading, consistent drainage & grading, xeriscape, etc.; and if counties’ plan designations and zoning call for island land are for large-lot development, I don’t think there would be a legal way to make island land divisions conform to the surrounding city’s plan designations, zoning, ordinances, or development/public works standards.

Unless the Map Act were also amended by adding a clause that required conformance for “island” properties seeking to use the Infill Exemption for land divisions. As you can see from the attached two maps (if they are small enough to get through our respective email “pipelines”), the County has adopted, and implements, quite different planning and zoning within the unincorporated portions of the City’s Sphere of Influence. (Which may explain how difficult it has been to aggregate property and urbanize...take a look at our corporate boundaries west of Hwy 99, reflected in the attached Council District map which shows the fringe areas. And the islands.)

Not that it matters much here locally...Fresno County considers Parcel Maps to be non-discretionary and exempt from CEQA. In fact, Fresno County considers all site plan review applications to be non-discretionary and exempt from CEQA, leading to the strange situation where quite large industrial buildings get constructed with no CEQA....