

San Diego and Imperial County Labor Council Event, January 8, 2026 Crowd Size

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Summary

The SDICLC rally is a recurring event at the John Roades Federal Plaza in San Diego to protest the actions of ICE and the shooting death of Renee Nicole Good. Approximately 357 participants gathered to hear speakers.

Stationary photography and crowd density area-based estimations were used to estimate crowd size. Figure 1 illustrates the area measurement using Google Earth Pro. Figure 2 provides stationary images of the rally and the area that the participants occupied.

Crowd Size Estimation

Accurate crowd size estimation is essential for gauging the scale and societal impact of public demonstrations. Recent advancements in the use of UAVs have significantly enhanced the precision of such assessments (Choi-Fitzpatrick et al., 2018). However, the practical deployment of drones is prohibited by cost, required training, and strict regulations—particularly in urban areas or directly above protest crowds.

Fortunately, the widespread availability of mobile phone cameras, combined with social media and online geospatial tools such as Google Earth Pro, has empowered organizers to apply traditional crowd estimation techniques with greater accuracy. These traditional methods involve calculating the total area occupied by a crowd and applying density estimates in addition to use of crowd flow measurements.

The standard crowd density and area-based estimation method used an area occupied (1608 sq ft) and density estimate of 4.5 sq ft per person (DL2, Choi-Fitzpatrick et al 2018), to estimate the crowd size at 357 individuals (Fig 1).

Reference

1. Choi-Fitzpatrick, A, T. Juskauskas and B. Sabur. 2018. All the protestors fit to count: using geospatial affordances to estimate protest event size. *Interface*. 10:297-321. Retrieved 4/7/2025 chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/https://www.interfacejournal.net/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Interface-10-1-2-Choi-Fitzpatrick-et-al.pdf

Figure 1. Google Earth estimate of area that the crowd occupied during the speech portion of the Rally when most people were gathered near the speaker. The area occupied by the participants was estimated to be 1608 sq ft and the average area occupied per individual as 4.5 sq ft(DL2).



Figure 2. Composite image illustrating the density and location of the participants at the event.

