Facts about an Independent San Fernando Valley

Despite what the mayor and downtown power brokers want residents and businesspeople to believe, San Fernando Valley Independence and cityhood will benefit all area residents. As you listen to the debate and consider your vote, we hope you will keep in mind the following facts:

• The San Fernando Valley has been ignored by City Hall for years.
  
  City Hall has deprived the Valley of their fair share: police and fire protection, traffic, social services, parks and libraries have all suffered under the neglect of downtown power brokers. Fed up with false promises and Band-Aid™ solutions, Valley residents and businesses now want to become an independent city; together, we can control our own destiny and improve our communities.

• The creation of an independent San Fernando Valley will finally provide residents with local representation and accountability.
  
  Currently, each Los Angeles city council member represents nearly 250,000 residents. If the Valley were to become its own city, each council member would represent approximately 96,000 residents, be closer to the neighborhoods they serve, and be accountable to voters. Residents of Los Angeles will also enjoy smaller council districts that provide more local representation and accountability.

• San Fernando Valley residents’ water and power rates would remain the same as Los Angeles.
  
  The mayor is trying to maintain the status quo and keep power within City Hall by scaring residents. The fact is that the final LAFCO resolution on the San Fernando Valley mandates that Valley residents’ water and power rates stay the same as what the DWP charges the rest of the city of Los Angeles. A vote in favor of Valley Cityhood by Los Angeles residents will make the LAFCO resolution binding on Los Angeles.

• An independent agency found that neither the San Fernando Valley nor Los Angeles would be harmed if the Valley achieves independence.
  
  The Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) studied the San Fernando Valley independence proposal for two years and concluded in May 2002 that the San Fernando Valley would be a financially viable city and that reorganization would not harm the remaining city of Los Angeles. State Controller Kathleen Connell independently reviewed this study and concurred with the conclusion stating, “The state Controller’s office concludes that the comprehensive fiscal analysis [prepared by LAFCO] adequately considers the financial impact to the remaining City.”

• A San Fernando Valley City will lead to better Valley Schools.
  
  As an independent City, the Valley will be in a stronger position to form our own school district. The new Valley city will be able to exert far more influence over its own schools. But as long as the Valley is part of Los Angeles, City Hall will not support the creation of a Valley School District. First a Valley City, then a new Valley School District!
• An independent Valley city would be able to provide better police protection and safety services.

The Valley residents receive about half the police coverage per person that residents in the remaining portion of Los Angeles. Furthermore, the Valley currently pays for 2,062 police but only receives 1,455 police. Once out from under the bureaucracy and waste of City Hall, the Valley will enjoy much better police protection and decisions about law enforcement will be much closer to the communities they serve.

• Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley will be better able to support important social services when they become smaller and more manageable cities.

According to LAFCO, the city of Los Angeles with a budget of over $4 billion only spends one percent on housing and economic development. Clearly, Los Angeles is not meeting the needs of the elderly, poor and the disabled. Smaller cities, such as neighboring Burbank and Glendale, spend approximately 13 to 20 percent of their budgets on these programs and do not suffer from the homeless and jobless rates found in Los Angeles. If the Valley became its own city, it could ensure that local housing and employment needs are made a budget priority, not an afterthought.

• Creating a Valley city and a smaller Los Angeles will be more economically efficient and effective.

City Hall wastes a fortune in taxpayer dollars each year. Cities like Phoenix, Dallas, San Diego, Houston and San Antonio spend, on average, $250 less per capita to provide what most would argue are better services to citizens. Smaller cities spend on average half as much as Los Angeles. By comparison, Los Angeles spends approximately $1350 per person to provide basic city services that residents have long complained are inadequate. Clearly, smaller cities are better able to manage their budgets and expenditures. If the Valley becomes its own city, it could provide residents with improved services for substantially less than what it now costs and the Los Angeles City Council would finally be forced to spend taxpayer dollars more efficiently in a smaller L.A.

• The reorganization movement is about improving our quality of life. The opposition is about controlling power.

If the San Fernando Valley were to become its own city, both the Valley and the City of Los Angeles will be able to operate more effectively and ensure that tax dollars are spent on their local priorities, such as public safety, social services, parks and libraries. City Hall and downtown power brokers apparently don’t want to look at their bloated bureaucracy and poor management. They oppose secession so they can retain power without accountability. Cityhood is about taking control of our City government and giving it back to the people.

For more information, please contact:

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