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Home | News | Sports | Business | Education | Entertainment | Opinion | Classifieds | Contact Us

Search

October

**Archive Search**

Story Search

**Sections**

A Conversation With

Announcements

Bad News

Business

Classifieds

Education

Entertainment

Get Out

Grapevines

Home & Garden

Local News

On Top of the

Underground

Opinion

Real Estate

Religion

Sports

Valley Sports

Review

Valley Legal

Valley Scene

Valley Voices

**Community**

Business Listings

Churches

Schools

**Information**

About Us

**Quick Links**

The Village News

Fallbrook.org



## Wildomar Cityhood Outlook Is Promising

**By Diane O'Malley**

**2/9/2007 3:25:28 PM**

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A vote for cityhood may be only months away for the unincorporated community of Wildomar, incorporation proponents said at an informational meeting on Feb. 3 at Wildomar Elementary School. With a consultant's assurance of a soon-to-be released report that the new city would be economically viable and self-sustaining once separated from Riverside County, the opportunity for residents to vote on the issue may occur as early as November 6, 2007. If the votes are favorable, Wildomar will become the 25th city in the county effective January 1, 2008. Candidates for the first Wildomar city council will also be on the ballot for the voters to determine who will occupy the five available seats.

Wildomar Incorporation Now(WiN) chairman Bob Cashman observed, "Wildomar is unique and we are trying to keep this together for the community. We stand poised to become the first city (incorporated in the state) in 15 years."

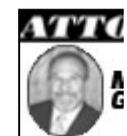
Local control of tax money, land planning, keeping decision-making within the community and halting periodic annexation attempts by neighboring cities were among the reasons for incorporation, according to WiN members and other cityhood supporters.

Approximately \$80,000 was raised by volunteers to finance the costly incorporation process overseen by the Riverside County Local Agency Formation Commission(LAFCO) for the formation of new cities. An estimated \$100,000 is needed to cover filing fees, costs for the comprehensive fiscal analysis; a metes and boundaries map, an environmental study; and other required documents. Monies were also spent to fend off an annexation attempt by the nearby city of Murrieta which was withdrawn in early 2005. Currently, WiN is protesting a developer's request to annex around 250 acres into the boundaries of the city of Lake Elsinore.

A consultant was also hired by Wildomar and other potential new cities to lobby for the successful passage of Assembly Bill 1602. The bill, which was signed by Governor Schwarzenegger in fall 2006, restored vehicle license fee revenues to new cities for seed money worth millions of dollars to pay for initial municipal services.

The figures of the comprehensive fiscal analysis were based upon conservative projections of sales tax revenue, property taxes, franchise taxes and other sources of income at approximately \$12 million annually for the operation of the new city.

"The study is conservative and doesn't assume unlimited growth," said Cashman, "It assumes growth will slow down."



The study proves that there will be adequate funds for police and fire services as well, without adding new taxes into the city's available funds. "No new taxes," he said, "The city is viable without this."

WiN secretary Sheryl Ade explained the 55-day transition period if Wildomar voters decide to incorporate their community. The countdown to the new city's first day of business on January 1, 2008 will involve preparations from setting up a temporary city hall for staff to conduct municipal business to negotiations with the county regarding the transfer of services and decision-making authority. Budgetary considerations will also be the first order of business for the new city leaders. "We have the ability to fund all of these services," said Ade, "You have to pay attention to the bottom line."

WiN Director Bridgette Moore announced the group will schedule a series of community meetings held in different schools throughout Wildomar. LAFCO will also be holding public hearings to inform the residents.

Questions were taken from the audience ranging from the status of the Canyon Hills annexation into Lake Elsinore to the adoption of the county's general plan for Wildomar's land use designation to keep current zoning in place.

The last question introduced several candidates from the WiN committee who plan to run for a seat on the first city council: Sheryl Ade, George Cambero; Bob Cashman; Bridgette Moore; Kami Sabetzadeh; and Tim Underdown.

For more information, contact WiN at (909)330-0355 or go to [www.wildomarwin.org](http://www.wildomarwin.org).

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