



Inland News

Supervisors give financial boost to Menifee Valley, Wildomar's cityhood hopes



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The Press-Enterprise

Survey: [As a resident of either Menifee Valley or Wildomar, do you support cityhood efforts?](#)

A financial roadblock to cityhood for Menifee Valley and Wildomar has been removed by Riverside County supervisors.

If the communities become cities, the county has agreed to subsidize a portion of city services for a decade. Wildomar would get between \$200,000 and \$300,000 a year. Menifee Valley, which would be formed by combining Menifee, Sun City and Quail Valley, could receive as much as \$1 million a year.

The Board of Supervisors unanimously agreed to the pact Tuesday. A staff report showed that the county would make money if the communities became cities because the county wouldn't need to continue offering services in those areas.

"Voters shouldn't have to worry about whether the city has got enough money to run initially," Supervisor Bob Buster said Wednesday. "By approving this, it eliminates that issue completely from any debate and puts the city in the black beyond any debate."

Cityhood proponents cheered the decision as an important step in putting cityhood to a vote.

"It's just wonderful that the county has decided to support these new cities," said John Denver, a member of the group leading the Menifee Valley cityhood effort.

On Aug. 15, leaders of the Menifee Valley Incorporation Committee expect a financial study on whether cityhood is possible. Riverside County's boundary formation panel is expected to vote Aug. 23 on whether a city of Wildomar would be financially viable.

Both incorporation bids have prompted concerns about whether there would be sufficient money to staff

firefighting positions. Over the past few months, leaders of the Wildomar and Menifee Valley cityhood efforts have talked with county supervisors to work out financial agreements. The parties continue talking about cost-sharing on new fire stations, Buster said.

Wildomar's cityhood hearing before the Riverside County Local Agency Formation Commission was postponed after a resident questioned the validity of the financial report from Wildomar Incorporation Now, the group leading the community's cityhood effort.

On June 30, the Menifee Valley group submitted a financial plan to LAFCO that said the cost of operating several new fire stations would make cityhood financially unfeasible. The new agreement would provide funding for fire operations for the next decade ranging from \$331,000 to \$1.5 million a year.

LAFCO likely will hold an October hearing to decide whether Menifee Valley could survive as a city, said Joe Daugherty, president of the Menifee Valley Incorporation Committee.

With commission approval, cityhood proponents hope for a vote by residents in mid-2008, Daugherty said.

If LAFCO approves Wildomar's incorporation proposal Aug. 23, residents there would also vote on cityhood in 2008.

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