

LAKWOOD COMMITTEE
FOR INCORPORATION

5408 Lakewood Boulevard

Lakewood, California

December 30, 1953

Subventions

Gas Tax + MVT
300 per Capita *\$4,666 per Capita*
3X Reg. Voters
\$510,156.00

Mr. Herbert C. Legg
Supervisor, First District
Board of Supervisors
501 Hall of Records
Los Angeles 12, California

Dear Sir:

Due to many inquiries, we are submitting to you general information concerning the present incorporation movement in the Lakewood area. This same letter is also being forwarded to the other members of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and other heads of many County departments.

The incorporation movement in Lakewood was instituted by a large group of Lakewood residents and civic leaders. They formed the Lakewood Committee for Incorporation. The movement was instituted in order to prevent further piecemeal annexation to Long Beach which was destroying the identity of Lakewood. The movement was also instituted in order to obtain more local control over taxes, services and zoning, and more local representation as well as to obtain additional revenue by means of subventions and grants which are not now received by Lakewood directly, it being unincorporated territory.

Following the formation of the Lakewood Committee for Incorporation, the services of Boyle Engineering in Santa Ana were retained to advise the Committee of the financial and economical aspects of incorporation. J. Lester Boyle of that firm has been performing this service. Mr. Boyle has prepared reports for incorporation for many cities and has furnished consulting services to such communities as Anaheim, El Segundo, Laguna Beach, Redlands, Indio, San Diego and La Mesa. This firm reported that it was both practical and feasible to incorporate Lakewood. Thereafter, on the basis of Mr. Boyle's report and also on the basis of a very strong local sentiment for incorporation, the movement for incorporation was commenced.

The movement consists of two separate incorporation movements. On October 21, 1953, the County Boundary Commission

approved the boundary description for the City of Lakewood which consists roughly of all unincorporated territory North of Carson Street, bounded on the South by Carson Street, on the North by the Ashworth shoe string strip and the boundary of the City of Long Beach, on the West by the Union Pacific Railroad right of way and the boundary of the City of Long Beach, and on the East by the San Gabriel River. On the same day, the Los Angeles County Boundary Commission approved the boundaries of the proposed City of South Lakewood, which is South of Carson Street, which consists roughly of all unincorporated territory South of Carson Street and is bounded generally by Heartwell Park on the North, Wardlow Road on the South, Clark Street on the West and the San Gabriel River on the East.

Because the City of Long Beach has running through the middle of Lakewood an incorporated strip of property known as Heartwell Park, it was necessary for us to incorporate Lakewood by two separate incorporation proceedings. There will, of course, be two separate elections to form the separate cities of Lakewood and South Lakewood, and the cities when formed will technically be separate entities. However, we call our proposed cities "twin cities", and it is our intention, when the two cities have been formed, to have the cities enter into a mutual contract for the joint performance of services. By doing this we will be able to pool the assets of the twin cities and provide the same degree and type of services in both areas on a more economical and practical basis.

Thereafter, in a record breaking time, a little over two weeks, petitions for the incorporation of the proposed city of Lakewood were circulated in the Lakewood area, and during said period 11,323 property owners signed said petition for the incorporation of the proposed City of Lakewood, representing some 5600 parcels of land out of 14,981 parcels in the unincorporated area North of Carson Street. This represented more than 37% of the total parcels in that area. The boundary hearing on the City of Lakewood will be held before the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on January 7, 1954, and the election will probably be set for sometime in early March. In the meantime, the circulation of the petition for the incorporation of South Lakewood has been purposely delayed so that the larger City of Lakewood could be first formed. The Committee for Incorporation contemplates filing the petition for the incorporation of the city of South Lakewood in a very

short time. The election then for the incorporation of the city of South Lakewood will be held after the election for the incorporation of the City of Lakewood.

Mr. Boyle, in his report to the Committee, set forth that the City of Lakewood consists of a population of 51,000 persons and an assessed valuation of thirty million dollars. The city of South Lakewood consists of a population of 20,000 persons and has an assessed valuation of nine million dollars. He pointed out that each of the proposed cities are residential in character and have reached a rather high percentage of development which "is rather unusual for new cities being proposed for incorporation." He further pointed out that the assessed valuation of each of the two proposed cities will increase materially as further development occurs in the commercial and industrial areas. Mr. Boyle further states that ample employment opportunities exist for the population of the proposed cities by reason of the industrial development throughout the Los Angeles County area; that for the most part the streets within the proposed cities have been constructed to good standards and are in good condition which means that street maintenance costs will be relatively low for many years.

Mr. Boyle further points out "that incorporation of the proposed cities of Lakewood and South Lakewood is feasible and practical and that the many advantages of local control of many governmental municipal functions can be obtained by the residents and property owners of the two proposed cities at minimum expense."

As to the form of City Government, Mr. Boyle recommended that no consideration be given for a City Charter or for a City Manager type of government at this time; that the principal staff of the proposed cities be kept to an absolute minimum in order to keep the cost of local government to a minimum; that wherever possible all services be provided through existing County districts or by contract with the respective County departments, thereby keeping the permanent fulltime staff of the cities at a minimum.

On Mr. Boyle's advice, and on our own independent research, and contact with various county departments, the Committee for Incorporation has properly endorsed the proposition of the formation of a model city, new and unique for California, in

which the costs of government in which the usual costly duplication of government and services between the city and county government will be eliminated. We propose, therefore, to contract with the County for the discharge and performance of all functions and activities of the sixth class cities of Lakewood and South Lakewood where said functions and activities will not be supplied by existing districts. The City of Lakewood and the City of South Lakewood would, of course, have to have a City Council, but it would not need a City Hall, a fire department, police department and other costly city facilities. The city would of course reimburse the County for the County's costs for providing such municipal services.

The Lakewood Committee for Incorporation is presently studying the Nassau plan in New York where all County and City functions are being supplied by Nassau County. We firmly believe that we are pioneering a field which will ultimately save the taxpayers a considerable sum of money by the elimination of costly duplications between city and county government, and by obtaining the services of large county departments which already have facilities available for the performance of the functions and activities needed.

There is actually nothing unusual in the proposal of the Lakewood Committee for Incorporation. Already as you undoubtedly know, the County performs many services for cities on contractual and reimbursement agreements. For an excellent discussion concerning this and the legal authority for the foregoing, I would suggest that you refer to the letter of Herbert C. Legg of June 24, 1953, to the editors and other interested persons in the First Supervisorial District. Upon the incorporation of our cities of Lakewood and South Lakewood certain special assessment districts, such as garbage disposal, road maintenance, free library (optional), light maintenance and sewer maintenance, will be automatically dissolved. These services, plus additional services such as health, building inspection and regulation, police, tax assessment and collection, pound, and some others, will have to be performed by special contract with Los Angeles County. Other services such as fire can be continued to be performed by the Consolidated Fire District or by annexation to the existing Consolidated Fire Protection District. Park and recreation services, school services, county flood, mosquito abatement, county sanitation and central basin

municipal water district services will be continued to be supplied by such County Districts.

Dr. Phillip Neff, associate professor, School of Business Administration, U. C. L. A., on July 26, 1953, also prepared a report on municipal government for Lakewood. Dr. Neff pointed out, on page 37, "that there is now no doubt whatsoever that incorporation is economically feasible." He stated, on page 29, "The cost of operation municipal government in Long Beach this year represents 1.8% of the personal income of its residents. In Lakewood the same percentage of income yields a total of 5.6 million, an amount which, if other cities of Lakewood's size are used as a basis of judgment, is sufficient to provide a reasonable level of municipal services."

The people of Lakewood have taken overwhelmingly to our proposal to form a model city. Some persons have been skeptical as to whether or not we can achieve what we have set out to do as outlined in this letter, but they have overlooked one fundamental fact which makes the achievement of the foregoing possible in Lakewood. That is the fact that the City of Lakewood is unique. It was built and constructed over night. It is a brand new, modern and clean city with a minimum of maintenance and a lesser amount of civic and other problems than older communities. Therefore, because of a lack of political ties, local intrigue and other forces, a crusading group of Lakewood leaders coupled with a civic conscious community, can set up a model twin cities which we hope will gain national prominence.

Very truly yours,