
Guide to the Valley Voters Organized Toward Empowerment Collection

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Title: Valley Voters Organized Toward Empowerment Collection

Creator: Valley Voters Organized Toward Empowerment

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Extent: 13.93 linear feet

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Date (inclusive): 1978-2003

Date (bulk): 1997-2002

Abstract: Valley Voters Organized Toward Empowerment (Valley VOTE) is the non-profit organization which led the secession efforts of the San Fernando Valley from 1997-2002. The collection documents their petition drive, the resulting investigation by the Local Agency Formation Commission for the County of Los Angeles (LAFCO), and the Measure F campaign which allowed Los Angeles residents to vote on the issue of secession.

Language of Material: English,Spanish; Castilian

Historical Note:

Valley Voters Organized Toward Empowerment (Valley VOTE) is the non-profit organization which led the secession efforts of the San Fernando Valley from 1997-2002. The group was formed in 1996 under the direction of two San Fernando Valley Residents: commercial real estate broker, Jeff Brain, and attorney, Richard Close.

In 1997, shortly after California Governor Pete Wilson signed a bill removing the veto power of city councils in cases of municipal reorganization and requiring instead a majority community vote, Valley VOTE launched a petition drive to initiate a feasibility study on the detachment of the San Fernando Valley from the City of Los Angeles. The petition drive was ultimately successful and in 1999 the Local Agency Formation Commission for the County of Los Angeles (LAFCO) began an investigation to determine the fiscal self-sufficiency of a new valley city and measure the fiscal impacts of Valley cityhood on the City of Los Angeles. The LAFCO investigation required extensive reports from both Valley VOTE and the City of Los Angeles, as well as public hearings. During this time, other local communities were attempting similar detachment efforts, including Hollywood and L.A.'s Harbor area.

In 2002, LAFCO approved the San Fernando Valley Proposal for Special Reorganization and Ballot Measure F was scheduled for the fall 2002 election, giving Los Angeles residents the opportunity to vote on the issue. In addition to determining Valley secession, the 2002 ballot also gave residents the opportunity to name the new city and elect a mayor and council members. Valley VOTE led the campaigning efforts in support of Measure F, but the measure failed to garner the necessary votes to pass.

Valley VOTE continues to operate as a non-profit organization focused on improving local government.

Scope and Contents

The *Valley Voters Organized Toward Empowerment Collection* documents the efforts of the San Fernando Valley residents who, from 1997-2002, attempted to secede from the city of Los Angeles to form a separate municipality. The collection includes their petition drive, the investigation conducted by the Local Agency Formation Commission for the County of Los Angeles (LAFCO), and the Measure F campaign which allowed Los Angeles residents to vote on the issue.

The collection is divided into four series: **Organizing Files** (1978-2003), **Local Agency Formation Commission of Los Angeles County Investigation** (1998-2003), **City of Los Angeles** (1994-2002), and **Reorganization Efforts of Nearby Communities** (1994-2002).

Series I, **Organizing Files**, documents Valley VOTE's grassroots efforts to create an autonomous municipality in the San Fernando Valley. The series is further divided into four subseries: **Administrative Files** (1992-2003), **Outreach and Events** (1997-2003), **Special Issues** (1987-2002), and **Independent Reports and Publications** (1978-2002). Subseries A, **Administrative Files**, consists of correspondence, Valley VOTE meeting agendas and minutes, research materials such as maps, legislature, and reports, housekeeping files, materials from affiliated organizations, and press coverage related to Valley VOTE's secession efforts beginning just before the initial petition drive in 1997 through the conclusion of the 2002 general election, including an audio recording of KRLA Radio 870's "Legal Challenges." Also included are materials documenting the candidates of local elections, including those running for office in the proposed new valley city. The files are arranged alphabetically according to subject and chronologically within. Subseries B, **Outreach and Events**, documents Valley VOTE's promotional activities and volunteer efforts, including a letter writing campaign to Governor Wilson regarding Assembly Bill 62, the petition drive to initiate the LAFCO investigation, public submissions to rename the new valley city, and the Measure F Campaign. Contact lists, volunteer lists, event fliers and calendars, promotional handouts and forms, press kits, and campaign brochures are also included. The files are arranged alphabetically according to subject and chronologically within. Subseries C, **Special Issues**, consists of those files identified by Valley VOTE as a

special issue to their organizing efforts. The files maintain Valley VOTE's original naming conventions and are arranged alphabetically according to subject and chronologically within. Subseries D, **Independent Reports and Publications**, consists of publications on the topic of valley secession authored by individuals or organizations not directly tied to Valley VOTE's operations. Authors include the League of Women Voters, the Rose Institute of State and Local Government, the Committee Investigating Valley Independent City/County, the Symposium on Rightsizing Local and Regional Government, the Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley, California State University Northridge, California State University Sacramento, University of California Los Angeles, Harvard University, and scholars of political science, public policy, and economics. The files are arranged chronologically. For news publications, see Series I, Subseries A.

Series II, **Local Agency Formation Commission of Los Angeles County Investigation**, documents the formal investigation conducted by LAFCO which was initiated by Valley VOTE's Application for Special Reorganization petition drive. It consists primarily of reports submitted to LAFCO by Valley VOTE and the City of Los Angeles to determine the feasibility of detaching the San Fernando Valley from Los Angeles. Reports cover the reorganization plan and proposal, the initial and comprehensive fiscal analysis, environmental impact, as well as follow-up comments and negotiations of Valley VOTE, city officials, and LAFCO's executive officer. Related meeting materials and correspondence are also included as well as audio recordings of several LAFCO proceedings and an audio recording of a special workshop on reorganization for LAFCO Commissioners. The files are arranged alphabetically according to subject and chronologically within.

Series III, **City of Los Angeles**, documents aspects of the city's involvement in the secession movement and consists primarily of expenditure reports of various municipal departments. Organizational charts and meeting materials of the city's Ad Hoc Committee on Secession are also included, as well as a cost burden analysis conducted by an independent consultant on behalf of the city. The files are arranged alphabetically according to subject and chronologically within.

Series IV, **Reorganization Efforts of Nearby Communities**, documents the secession efforts of other communities in Los Angeles with a predominant focus on Hollywood and the Harbor Area. The series includes promotional materials, maps, and correspondence as well as some of the formal reports submitted to the county for separate investigation. Additional Harbor reports can be found in Series II and are labeled as such for easy identification. The files are arranged alphabetically according to subject and chronologically within.

Arrangement of Materials:

Series I: Organizing Files, 1978-2003

Subseries A: Administrative Files, 1992-2003

Subseries B: Outreach and Events, 1997-2003

Subseries C: Special Issues, 1987-2002

Subseries D: Independent Reports and Publications, 1978-2002

Series II: Local Agency Formation Commission of Los Angeles County Investigation, 1998-2003

Series III: City of Los Angeles, 1994-2002

Series IV: Reorganization Efforts of Nearby Communities, 1994-2002

Electronic Format:

Digital reproductions of selected items in this collection are available electronically as a part of the [San Fernando Valley History Digital Library](#).

Related Material

[Harrison Sheppard Secession Movements Collection, 1961-2002](#)

Conditions Governing Access:

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Immediate Source of Acquisition

Jeff Brain, 05/29/2003

For information about citing items in this collection consult the appropriate style manual, or see the [Citing Archival Materials](#) guide.

Processing Information:

Christine Hertz, Inderdeep Kaur, and Tiffney Sanford, 2015

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Ephemera
Maps
Documents
Photographs
Audiovisual materials

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Box 23, Folder 2	Harbor, Environmental Impact Report, 2002 March
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Box 23, Folder 4	Harbor, Initial Fiscal Analysis, 2001 April 25
Box 23, Folder 5	Harbor, Initial Fiscal Analysis and Applicant's Reorganization Proposal, 2001
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Box 23, Folder 7	Harbor, Initial Fiscal Analysis and Applicant's Reorganization Proposal, 2001
Box 23, Folder 8	Harbor, Initial Study, 2002 January 23
Box 24, Folder 1	Harbor, Presentation to Commission on Local Governance for 21st Century, 1998-1999
Box 24, Folder 2	Harbor, Reorganization Proposal and Local Agency Formation Commission of Los Angeles County Memos, 1999-2001
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Box 24, Folder 4	Harbor Study Foundation, 1999-2000
Box 24, Folder 5	Harbor, Supplemental Reports, 2002 February
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Box 24, Folder 9	Hollywood, Division of Service Cost Burdens, 2002 July 3
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Box 24, Folder 11	Hollywood, Executive Officer's Report, 2002 May-July
Box 25, Folder 1	Hollywood Independence Committee, 2002
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