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May 23, 2012

Ms. Kathleen Rollings-McDonald  
Executive Director  
San Bernardino LAFCO  
215 North "D" Street  
San Bernardino, CA 92415

Dear Ms. Rollings-McDonald:

The City would like to express its appreciation to the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) for postponing its consideration of LAFCO Item #3101 on May 16, 2012 regarding the Sphere of Influence Update for the City of Twentynine Palms. In response to the opportunity afforded the City Council of the City of Twentynine Palms, at its regularly scheduled meeting of May 22, 2012 the Council considered the LAFCO Executive Director's report and information that was provided by City staff.

During the May 22<sup>nd</sup> review and discussion, open to the public, of the above noted LAFCO Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update the Council raised several questions, expressed some concerns and noted advantages to the community for expanding the Sphere of Influence. At the conclusion of the Council's discussion, the consensus was to support the recommendation of the LAFCO Executive Director, but to also relay the specific comments voiced by the Council. To that end, the following is provided.

During the May 22, 2012 discussion, a Council member stated that it was his opinion that the LAFCO report did not present a specific compelling argument for the Sphere expansion, but that he could see a benefit to the City in having more opportunity to be informed of projects proposed within the County (but in the City's Sphere). Another Council member noted that the proposed change to the Sphere did not directly cost the City, but gives the Council a "voice" in requests being considered by the County, which is to our advantage.

Two Council members stated their favor for expanding the City's Sphere of Influence to be consistent with the Water District's boundaries with regard to the provision of future services. The fifth Council member, following an expression of concern over the possible requirement that the City may be forced to accept additional area (defined by LAFCO as "disadvantaged") with any annexation request that the City may initiate, and following a further explanation by City staff of the annexation process, noted his favor of the expansion proposal. As a final comment, the fifth Council member questioned why some areas south and east of the City were proposed to be removed from the City's current Sphere of Influence. City staff explained that the inclusion of these specific areas was not consistent with some of LAFCO's criteria for inclusion within a City's Sphere and so they were proposed to be removed.

Following the above discussion, one Council member then expressed a possible disadvantage to the expansion proposal; that being the fact that annexing residentially zoned properties generally do not generate tax revenue sufficient to offset the cost to the City to provide City services. This could be a future problem if the City is forced to annex land (possibly land designated by LAFCO as "disadvantaged") simply because it's within the City's Sphere of Influence. While noting this is correct, it was also noted that there are no current annexation requests pending that may trigger this inclusion. The issue being considered by LAFCO is only a change to the City's Sphere of Influence.

Restating the comment from above, at the conclusion of the Council's discussion, the consensus was to support the recommendation of the LAFCO Executive Director as expressed within the report presented to the Commission. Please let me know if you need any additional information or clarification with regards to the action of the City Council on May 23, 2012.

Respectfully,

Charles K. LaClaire  
City of Twentynine Palms  
Community Development Department

c: File