



NELSON ANDREU
Chief of Police

August 20th, 2018

Open Letter to Communities Seeking Incorporation

Entering my 38th year in law enforcement I can attest to the importance and manifold benefits of cities having their own police department through incorporation. Having first worked for the City of Miami Police Department for nearly 25 years, I saw how important it was for citizens to have the ability to have a personal interaction with not just the upper echelon of the police department, but to be able to have a one-on-one relationship with the individual officers who patrol their neighborhoods. This relationship was definitely missing in the City of Miami, as officers spend the majority of their duty hours going from call to call, and never having the time to interact with the residents.

More so, as the police chief in a much smaller department, West Miami, I can now see this as being even more important for the safety, security and peace of mind of the residents in our community. I urge our officers to get to know the residents in their areas, something they do cheerfully. I receive countless emails and letters from our residents thanking our individual officers for a job well done, when they have taken it upon themselves to assist a resident in any given situation. They mention the officers by name and praise them for the personal assistance they received, often comparing it to when they lived in other, much larger communities, where they scarcely ever saw an officer.

Additionally, an officer who knows which persons and or vehicles belong at a particular location, gives them the added advantage of recognizing when a strange vehicle, or individual, is in their area or stopped in front of a particular home. Larger police departments in our area often have dozens of calls holding and response times can sometimes be hours long. As an example, our response time, even for non-emergency calls, is under two minutes, many times it is within 30-45 seconds. Having 20-30 officers patrolling just a few square miles versus hundreds patrolling 20 square miles can be the difference between getting to an emergency call and saving a life or apprehending a criminal. I often challenge people to put a price on the

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difference between having an officer respond in one minute or less, as opposed to five or ten minutes when someone is trying to break into their home or business as they cower in a closet dialing 911? Unequivocally, smaller police departments offer the "Community Oriented" policing and citizen satisfaction that is missing in larger cities and police departments.

A city that has its own police department is held more accountable by all of its residents; young, old, commercial and residential, no matter their housing style. I wholeheartedly encourage any area that is considering incorporation to do so; the benefits will be quickly evident to all those who reside and or work within its jurisdictional boundaries.

In addition to being the Chief of Police in West Miami for many years, I recently obtained my Doctoral degree and now teach criminal justice courses at several state and private universities in South Florida. Part of my instruction involves the enhancements and advantages which smaller communities have over larger ones, when it comes to the quality of its police force and their relationship with the residents in their community. If I may be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "N. Andreu", written in a cursive style.

Dr. Nelson Andreu Ed.D.
Chief of Police