

## Idea for Ojai rebuffed

# Mayor opposes valley-wide city

By Robin Newcomer

A suggestion that the Ojai Valley be consolidated into a single city will be rebuffed by the Ojai City Council, Mayor Jack Fay said Wednesday during an interview.

Fay said he and the majority, if not all, of the other city council members oppose the idea.

The mayor also offered reassurance to property owners in unincorporated valley areas that annexation won't be forced on them by the city council.

Annexation and the valley-wide city proposals are two major issues now before city planning commissioners in Ojai.

"I believe the council is opposed to the concept (of a valley-wide city) primarily because our goals are different from those expressed (by people) in the unincorporated areas (of the Ojai Valley)," said Fay.

"We have different controls in the fields of population density and architectural controls of commercial and subdivision development, as well as sign controls," he added.

Fay's comments were in reaction to a suggestion by members of the Ventura River Valley Municipal Advisory Council that the city of Ojai vastly expand its boundaries to include most of the Ojai Valley.

The plan has received guarded endorsement of two of three Ojai planning commissioners who are now reviewing a map which proposes a formal set of annexation boundaries.

Fay said the valley-wide city plan won't go far at the city council level.

"I've talked to a lot of people about it and most have very little desire for it," he said.

A valley-wide city could present problems the council would just as soon avoid.

"A valley-wide city would, or could, result in a city council dominated by councilmen whose views are not in accord with the people of Ojai," he said.

"Also many leaders and citizens in the unincorporated areas seem to be antagonistic to the city of Ojai," Fay added.

It is the mayor's analysis that the valley-wide city idea "will die a natural



**Jack Fay**  
*No valley-wide city*

death." But, he added, he decided to make his views public before the concept even reaches the council because comment "is long overdue about whether it is a valuable idea."

"It's foolish to spend a lot of time talking about it and worrying about it, because it's simply not going to happen," said Fay.

Despite his opposition to the valley-wide city, Fay said the City of Ojai wants to "maintain friendly relations with all our neighbors."

He reiterated a stand taken by the planning commission that the city would not try to annex any property outside the city's boundaries without the consent of the property owners.

"Ojai has no intentions of engaging in a land grab and in fact has never annexed any property without the consent of the owner," he said.

The mayor said he believes, as has been suggested by the planning commission, that the proposed annexation map is "far too broad. I believe that it (the map) will be greatly reduced in scope," said Fay.