



Date: March 22, 2005

To: Honorable Mayor O'Neill and Members of the City Council

From: Frank Colonna, Council Member, Third District *FC*

Subject: **AGENDA ITEM: Wireless City Report**

Background

It is important for Long Beach to be on the forefront of new and creative technologies. Technology, and in particular the Internet, is changing the way people communicate, and how companies do business. Government has also had to adapt to the Internet revolution, and must now be on the forefront of investing resources to enhance a new digital civic life.

Many local businesses and organizations have already begun to capitalize on wireless technology. Many of our coffee houses and some restaurants have already implemented wireless hotspots. Within the last couple of years, the City of Long Beach has also taken steps to provide wireless connectivity. We have introduced wireless hotspots at the Long Beach Airport, and on portions of Pine Ave. in downtown. There is also a plan in place to introduce a new hotspot at the Main Library.

If Long Beach is to remain a competitive location for business and a world-class attraction for visitors, we must look at drastically expanding our wireless network.

Many businesses and organizations are now looking at wireless technology as a new factor when deciding to do business. Moreover, wireless access is fast becoming an indispensable tool for visitors and tourists.

Cities across the country are also looking to wireless technology as a new way to deliver services. Philadelphia for example is pursuing citywide wireless technology to improve service delivery and to reduce costs in many applications from mobile data terminals in police cars to hand held devices that give service delivery workers an office in the field.

We should look at expanding wireless access to all major public centers including our parks, libraries, museums, and the rest of downtown Long Beach and the East Village. In addition, we should look at the possibility of expanding service to our major retail corridors.

Expanding the wireless network will certainly have to be by a public/private partnership. It is an investment that will benefit our citizens, visitors and businesses.

Recommended Council Action

Move to direct staff to prepare a report on the economic and service benefits of expanding wireless connectivity throughout the city.