



Date: December 19, 2006
To: Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers
From: Bonnie Lowenthal, Vice Mayor and Councilmember, First District *Bl*
Val Lerch, Councilmember, Ninth District *Val*
Subject: Establishment of Ethics Commission

DISCUSSION:

Many cities in California have established Ethics Commissions whose duties are providing advice; training and educating employees and appointed and elected officials on ethics laws; and oversight and enforcement of existing laws on ethics, campaign finance and lobbying. Some of these cities include: San Jose, Oakland, San Francisco, San Diego and Los Angeles. Although each commission operates differently, they share the goal of enhancing accountability to voters and increasing transparency in order to restore confidence in government.

Most Ethics Commissions also make recommendations to the City Council regarding campaign and ethics regulations and policies. They may also oversee registration and regulation of campaign consultants and lobbyists, as well as analyze disclosure reports.

RECOMMENDATION:

Request that the City Attorney draft an ordinance that establishes an Ethics Commission for the City of Long Beach whose duties would include advice and education: oversight of disclosure reports, lobbying and lobbyist registration; recommendation to the Council regarding new ethics regulations and policies; campaign issues (contribution limits, expenditures, permitted uses of funds, disclosure reports, campaign accounts, loans and time periods), and other issues that may be added at a later date.