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**Date:** June 2, 2015

**To:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

**From:** Councilwoman Suzie Price, Third District *SP*  
Councilmember Daryl Supernaw, Fourth District *DS*  
Councilmember Dee Andrews, Sixth District *DA*

**Subject:** City-wide Survey on Prioritization of City Services

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**R-14**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

Based on preliminary projections provided by our Financial Management Department, the City of Long Beach is expected to experience significant budget deficits beginning in FY16. In preparation of the upcoming budget process, it would be beneficial to receive data on what City services residents deem necessary. Further, the City should create an ongoing mechanism for collecting citizen satisfaction data as well as employee data regarding existing City services.

In 2002, the City initiated a robust process to gather feedback from the public on resource allocation. The survey called "Voice your Choice Community Survey on City Services," allowed the public to rate the various City services in order of priority. A process similar to this would serve as an opportunity to gather updated information from our residents regarding where they would like to see the City allocate its resources.

In alignment with gathering data for the budgetary process, the City should utilize surveys to determine the satisfaction level with City services. It is well settled that Citizen Satisfaction Surveys provide valuable data for municipalities in assessing their productivity and performance. According to the National Business Research Institute, "Surveys allow you to collect valuable data while simultaneously reinforcing perceptions that your organization genuinely cares about their opinions and welcomes their feedback." Given the City's restricted fiscal budget and the anticipated shortfalls, the City of Long Beach should look at ways to make our services more efficient and fiscally sound, while providing the highest quality service possible given our limited resource.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Through this item, the City Council is requesting a report on the possibility of preparing a City-wide survey on the prioritization of City services and citizen/user satisfaction of existing City services. This survey process would be open to all Long Beach residents and employees and would specifically emailed/mailed to citizens who come into contact with the City through any of our City Departments.

The City of Long Beach currently offers a brief survey following a submittal to the Go Long Beach application, however, it is unknown what other survey mechanisms are currently being utilized. As part of this agenda item, staff should prepare a report on what other City departments currently utilize a survey process to gather data that can

assist in budget allocation decisions. The report should consider all options including on-line surveys for residents who have pulled building permits or obtained a business license or a survey on our community outreach efforts from residents who provide feedback through "Speak Up" Long Beach.

Additionally, the City (1) should explore a City-wide resource on service prioritization and user satisfaction in advance of the FY 16 budgeting process, and (2) review all of our current user survey mechanisms. The report should also explore the possibility of circulating a yearly survey that gauges citizen feedback on the City's core services. Several cities currently conduct this annual process. The City of Calgary, for example, conducts a yearly survey, giving the citizens of Calgary the opportunity to provide input on the City's performance, their satisfaction with civic services, and overall quality of life. The results of the survey are shared with City departments allowing the City to improve its business and services with citizen involvement.

According to Survey Monkey, an online survey development company, "Political surveys can inform elected leadership about shifts in public opinion on major issues, and can motivate correct actions. Well-promoted, thoughtfully designed surveys, delivered with plenty of time to gather input, can help governments better understand and represent the immediate and long-term interests of their citizens." It is important that we use survey data from a large number of citizens who interface with our numerous City departments, in order to better assess our budgetary and personnel needs. The survey feedback we receive will help us define and set goals for short and long term decision making.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no significant fiscal impact for the delivery of the report. The report from the City Manager is required to determine the fiscal impact associated with implementing a one-time City-wide priorities and satisfaction survey, as well as an annual citizen/user and employee satisfaction survey.