



James Johnson
City of Long Beach
Councilmember, Seventh District

Date: April 2, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Vice-Mayor Robert Garcia, First District *RG*
Councilmember Suja Lowenthal, Second District *SL*
Councilmember Gary DeLong, Third District *GD*
Councilmember James Johnson, Seventh District *J.J.*

Subject: Encouraging E-Government By Eliminating "Convenience Fees"

RECOMMENDATION:

Request the City Manager explore the elimination of convenience fees citywide where feasible to encourage residents to access municipal services over the Internet and report back to the City Council.

DISCUSSION

The City of Long Beach is currently undertaking several initiatives to encourage Long Beach residents to access government services online. This is in addition to the city services that are already available online to residents.

Currently, residents are charged a "convenience fee" for some city services that are paid online with the use of a credit card. Residents are not charged an additional fee for using a credit card if they come to City Hall and pay the fee in person. Thus, for those services that currently charge a convenience fee, residents are incentivized to access services in person versus online.

Residents should be encouraged to access city services online, rather than penalized. Such "e-government" provides better customer service, and may save money over the long run by limiting the need for additional city employees and facilities to service residents in person. Additionally, residents are more likely to comply with the City's regulations (such as getting a permit for park use) the easier we make compliance, and thus e-government can help protect neighborhood quality of life. Thus, it is requested that the City Manager analyze services citywide to determine where it may be feasible to eliminate convenience fees for services currently provided online (such as parking citations, garage sale permits, pet licenses, and parking permits) as well as future online services.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no significant fiscal impact for this item. City management would discuss any fiscal impact of implementation, including potential long-term cost savings associated and enhanced revenue collection, with its report on this item.