

# **Government Reform**

Over the past several years, the City Council has consistently asked staff to review the way departments are structured and make the necessary changes to ensure Long Beach government is a 21<sup>st</sup> century organization.

Long Beach is at an important crossroad. Since FY 04, the City Council has adopted \$188.4 million in General Fund deficit solutions comprising \$141.4 million in expenditure reductions and \$47 million in revenue solutions. Additionally, the City has eliminated 644 positions during the same time period. While these solutions were appropriate, necessary, and the prudent course of action to ensure the City's fiscal solvency, it has taken a toll on our operations and, in some cases, resulted in a less than efficient service delivery structure.

In order to continue to provide efficient and effective services to the community, City government must adapt its structure. These changes are paramount to its ability to provide the best services possible with the resources available. As such, Government Reform is one of the five prongs being utilized to balance the FY 12 Adopted Budget. Without this needed approach, Long Beach will be faced with even larger fiscal problems in the future. While not all of these ideas will generate immediate savings, they are a part of a greater strategy of cost avoidance, improved customer service, and improved efficiency. The general objectives for reform in FY 12 mirror those for FY 11, and they are:

- Consolidate and improve inspections and permitting, wherever possible;
- Strengthen efforts to improve the City's corridors and neighborhoods;
- Maximize all available funding sources and create symbiotic connections between many of the City's enterprise funds and General Fund departments;
- Strengthen and support public safety by streamlining many of the services that support the City's public safety mission; and
- Minimize redundancies, align services with common goals, and reduce administrative overhead.

**GOVERNMENT REFORMS INCLUDED IN THE FY 11 ADOPTED BUDGET**

Before discussing the government reforms for FY 12, it is important to review those that were adopted in FY 11 and identify their implementation status. Two categories of reforms were identified: Reforms for Implementation in FY 11, and Reforms for Development and Future Implementation.

**Reforms for Implementation in FY 11**

The reforms identified for implementation in FY 11 were as follows:

***Realignment of Organizational Functions:*** The most significant of the FY 11 reforms was the realignment of certain organizational functions to maximize the City's resources and to create synergy and efficiencies with like functions elsewhere in the organization. These realignments included:

<b><i>Bureau/Function</i></b>	<b><i>Moved From</i></b>	<b><i>Moved To</i></b>
Workforce Development Bureau	Community Development	Human Resources
Neighborhood Services Bureau	Community Development	Development Services
Housing Services Bureau	Community Development	Development Services

Property Services Division	Community Development	Public Works (New Asset Management Bureau)
Parking Management Division	Development Services	
Housing Authority Bureau	Community Development	Health & Human Services

The above realignments made it possible to eliminate the Community Development Department, which resulted in an annual savings of nearly \$2 million in administrative and ancillary costs. Eight positions were eliminated, five of which were management level. These savings are reflected in the FY 12 Adopted Budget.

Several other organizational realignments were also made to increase organizational efficiency:

<b>Bureau/Function</b>	<b>Moved From</b>	<b>Moved To</b>
Occupational Health & Employee Assistance Programs	Health & Human Services	Human Resources
Special Events & Filming Bureau	Parks, Rec. & Marine	City Manager
Commercial Services Call Center	Financial Management	Long Beach Gas & Oil
ADA Compliance	Human Resources	Public Works

**Consolidate Civil Service and Human Resources:** Long Beach is one of only a handful of cities in California that has a completely separate Civil Service Department. There has been much discussion and study of this issue over the years, demonstrating the City can merge these two functions to both provide cost savings (an estimated \$400,000 annually), and to better serve both its employees and its recruitment and hiring needs. To that end, a Charter Amendment was placed on the November 2010 ballot. Ultimately, the ballot measure failed.

**Centralize Technology Oversight:** Over the past few years, the Technology Services Department consolidated the oversight of technology functions in various departments that previously had their own support functions. In FY 11, Technology Services assumed responsibility for desktop and mobile device support in the Police Department as well as desktop and network support from the Library Services Department. Additionally, Technology Services now reviews all technology-related purchase requests from City Manager departments.

**Technology Contracting Opportunities:** While Long Beach must have centralized technology oversight to support the incredibly complex system of technology that runs the City departments, there are opportunities to privatize certain aspects of those operations. The City should strive for a service model where City employees further partner and utilize contract staff where appropriate to manage the City's technology needs and provide the best customer service to the departments. To that end, in FY 11, the Technology Services Department issued Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for system replacements, including support and operations, and for contracting PC installations. The proposals resulting from the RFPs are currently under review.

**Enhance Web-Based Resources for Self-Service:** Over the past few years, the City has expanded the number of online services available to residents. This has provided residents with more options for conducting business with the City 24-hours a day, and has reduced the overall need for City staff to process applications, mail, phone calls, and payments manually. Providing online options can significantly reduce phone calls, mail processing, and front counter traffic for application and payment processing. In addition to reducing administrative staff, online forms can also reduce field and investigative work by allowing complainants to submit evidence online for non-emergency calls for service. In FY 11, the Technology Services Department implemented

“Go Long Beach,” which allows the public to submit service request for potholes, graffiti, etc, via their smartphone or the web. Additionally, online capabilities were added for garage sale permits, temporary preferential parking permits, animal licensing, and web donations for the animal shelter. Efforts are underway to make selected building related permits available online.

**City Messaging:** Through a realignment of responsibilities in the City Manager’s Office in FY 11, the City now has additional resources to be more proactive in communications with our City Council, the media, City employees, and the community. This realignment increased the number of staff available to assist with citywide communication efforts from one dedicated staff to four shared staff, without adding staff. Among other things, the realignment allows for (1) broader development of social media and other innovative approaches to reach residents, business owners, and other audiences; (2) more direct and immediate contact with media outlets on stories where the City’s side is not being accurately portrayed, or is lacking information or perspective, and (3) more coordinated messaging and public information platform and schedule.

**Ambulance Billing Services:** In FY 11, the Billing and Collections Division of the Department of Financial Management assumed responsibility for the billing services associated with the City’s Basic Life Support (BLS) Program. A private contract firm had provided billing services for the 9,000 annual Basic Life Support (BLS) transports since the service was implemented in 2006. The assumption of this responsibility was based on the Billing and Collections Division’s superior collection rate for the 14,000 transports provided by the City’s Advanced Life Support (ALS) Program, and its knowledge of the insurance industry’s changing policies and procedures.

**Administrative Citations:** Many violations of the Municipal Code can be reduced to infractions handled by the Administrative Citations process, eliminating the taxing efforts associated with criminal prosecution, evidence collection, court hearings, fees and fines. Animal Care Services and Code Enforcement currently utilize the Administrative Citations process. Efforts to extend this process to other departments are ongoing.

**Increase Role of Refuse in Neighborhood Clean Up:** The Environmental Services Bureau (ESB) has been a key component in keeping Long Beach streets and alleys clean with a variety of programs. A major element includes the coordination of neighborhood cleanups. In FY 10, ESB coordinated over 40 neighborhood cleanups, with almost 1,500 volunteers, throughout Long Beach. Other ongoing efforts include dumped item pickups (approximately 600 tons per year) and special item collections (approximately 1,800 tons per year). ESB programs include the Alley Clean Up program, which uses Community Service Workers as litter clean-up crews and clears over 900 tons of debris from alleys annually. Other efforts include the provision of \$700,000 per year to the Police Department for issuing litter citations. In FY 11, ESB will strive to maintain this level of service.

**Pool Department Clerical Support:** Support needs for departments are changing as the organization and its employees are becoming more technologically savvy and have different support needs. The City continues to move toward a model of shared clerical support, wherever possible. The FY 12 Adopted Budget eliminates 35 clerical positions throughout the organization. The large majority of these positions were vacant and were purposely left unfilled in FY 11.

### **Reforms for Development and Future Implementation**

The reforms identified for development and future implementation were as follows:

**Consolidate Temporary Worker Hiring Program:** This proposal has been further developed and is discussed as a reform to be implemented in FY 12.

**Automate Timecards and Modernize Payroll:** An automated timecard system would eliminate the printing, distribution, completion, and collection of individual timecards, as well as reduce the number of staff hours devoted to the manual data entry of hours worked and eliminate the need for timecard filing and storage. Additionally, the City's payroll system has limited functionality and should be replaced. In FY 11, the Technology Services Department issued a Request for Proposals (RFPs) for an automated timecard system as well as a replacement payroll system. The proposals resulting from the RFPs are currently under review.

**Transfer Responsibility for Water Conservation to the Water Department:** This idea has been revised and is identified as a reform for FY 12.

**Return Responsibility for Vector (pest) Control to the County:** Upon further review, it was determined there was actually little to be gained through implementing this proposal.

## **GOVERNMENT REFORMS INCLUDED IN THE FY 12 ADOPTED BUDGET**

The primary focus of the reforms proposed for FY 12 is to improve efficiency, enhance customer service, and where possible provide cost savings. While not all changes will provide direct cost savings, many will result in cost avoidance and allow future dollars to be spent much more efficiently. The proposed reforms are:

**Consolidate Residential and Commercial Plan Check and Inspection Services:** The current City project approval and inspection processes are fragmented, costly, and cumbersome. This consternates our residents and business partners and negatively impacts the City's ability to attract and maintain residential and commercial development. It is proposed that residential and commercial construction plan check and inspection services (i.e., building, health, fire), as well as code enforcement, be placed under the management of a single bureau to exact greater consistency, accountability, and coordination in these processes. This will also reduce the cost of permitting and the redundancy and inconsistency occurring during the permitting and inspection processes. Furthermore, as much as possible, inspectors should be cross-trained to enable them to inspect and approve a wider array of project attributes, thereby reducing the number of inspections and inspectors involved with projects.

**Evaluate the Consolidation of Infrastructure Project Development and Management Under One Department:** Large-scale infrastructure projects are currently being developed and managed by Public Works, Development Services (RDA), and Parks, Recreation and Marine. Oftentimes, multiple departments are involved in a project, which causes the lines of responsibility and accountability to be blurred. This frequently leads to project delays and miscommunication. In light of the downsizing of the City organization over the past decade, it may be prudent to consolidate infrastructure project development and management under one department. Therefore, it is proposed that a review be undertaken to determine the potential for consolidation and/or to identify improvements to current practices.

**Consolidate All Parking Operations:** Several City departments, including Public Works, Parks, Recreation and Marine, and the Airport, currently manage parking operations. It is proposed that all parking operations be consolidated under one office/authority to ensure consistency in policy, to take advantage of new technology and best practices, and to optimize revenues.

**Consolidate Fire and Police Dispatch and Call Centers:** The consolidation of Fire and Police Dispatch and Call Centers has been the subject of discussion for many years. It is time to move

forward. Recognizing that there are technological and organizational complexities associated with a consolidation, a task force of Police and Fire personnel, as well as the Deputy City Manager, will be asked to recommend an organizational structure that is both effective and efficient, and to develop an implementation plan with short- and long-term benchmarks. One of the short-term benchmarks will be to provide cross training between Fire and Police Dispatch Units to familiarize them with the objectives of their counter part. During critical events, this combined workforce can unite to resolve peak call volume and resource ordering requests.

**Identify Efficiencies in Civil Service and Human Resources Operations:** Although the November 2010 ballot measure to consolidate the Human Resources and Civil Service failed, there are still efficiencies to be found in Civil Service and Human Resources operations. These efficiencies may include:

- Improving systems and processes related to hiring and recordkeeping;
- Integrating technology for tracking applicants and employees;
- Eliminating duplication;
- Increasing efficiency and reducing operating costs by utilizing staff appropriately; and
- Create a unified mission, vision, values and processes for guiding all personnel practices in the City.

It is proposed that Human Resources staff work with Civil Service staff and the Civil Service Commission to identify and implement efficiencies as appropriate.

**Transfer Animal Care Services to Parks, Recreation & Marine:** Currently, the Parks, Recreation, and Marine Department (PRM) partners with the Animal Care Services Bureau (ACS) on a number of operational, programmatic, and safety issues. Given the increasing direction of the Animal Care Services Bureau toward a humane organization that promotes responsible pet ownership, recreation, and training programs it seems prudent to streamline the services by consolidating the Bureau under the direction of PRM. Even the current location of the PRM Administration and ACS in El Dorado Park lends itself to collaboration. Additionally, the following benefits are suggested:

- Streamline planning and promotional process for delivery of Low Cost Pet Clinics, Humane Education, and Adoption Events in PRM Community Centers;
- Expand recreational opportunities for pets and owners through further activation of parks, trails, and exercise areas;
- Better coordinate the design, financing, construction, programming, and law enforcement of dog parks citywide;
- Better enforcement of common animal-related violations in parks; and coordination between parks safety and animal control officers; and
- Expanded relationships between Wildlife Watch programs in neighborhoods, parks, Tidelands, and El Dorado Nature Center.

**Evaluate the Human Resources Administrative Model:** In the smaller City Manager departments, it may be possible to adopt a more centralized and standardized model for human resources administration. In particular, it may be possible for these departments to share a Human Resources Officer (Administrative Officer in some departments). Not only would this

provide cost savings to both departments, it would ensure that City policies and procedures (e.g., investigations, discipline, performance, sick leave usage) are being addressed in a consistent and efficient manner.

***Consolidate Temporary Worker (Including Non-Careers) Hiring Program Through Workforce Development:*** It is proposed that all department requests for temporary employees, including City non-careers, be handled through a temporary employment agency within the Pacific Gateway Workforce Investment Network. This program can be integrated with existing grant-related workforce development efforts and provide an array of temporary workforce options (e.g., temporary clerks, accountants, administrative, maintenance, custodial or special project internships). Pacific Gateway's expertise lies in the ability to connect residents of the workforce to opportunities with regional business through outreach, pre-screening and vetting of trained workers; skills upgrading of those out-of-work; and matching to specifications of employers. This would also serve to keep better tabs on non-career hours, so they do not exceed 1,000 hours (requiring enrollment in PERS) or 1,600 hours total. This local hire approach already undertaken by Pacific Gateway has great potential to be used in conjunction with the City's temporary hiring needs. Coordinated management of these functions will increase customer service and streamline the hiring process for internal departments - including pre-screening for internal departments. This will also provide a one-stop shop for high school, college, and Long Beach residents seeking work. Cost savings are estimated at approximately 25 percent of current expenditures for temporary workers citywide. Savings could be higher if grant money is secured for related workforce development strategies that offset administrative costs.

***Evaluate the Potential to Privatize Employee Assistance Services:*** As the size of the City workforce shrinks, it is necessary to make adjustments to those administrative operations that have traditionally supported the workforce. One such operation is the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which provides counseling and referral services for employees and their families. There are a number of potential benefits to contracting with an outside pool of professionals for Employee Assistance. These include: (1) access to a larger pool of highly specialized professionals as needed, (2) paying only for the services needed or used, and (3) increased confidentiality and comfort of the employees utilizing these services. Accordingly, it is proposed that these services be evaluated for privatization.

***Transition of Rancho Los Cerritos to a Non-Profit/Foundation:*** Long Beach is fortunate to have two historic ranchos that are treasured assets. A non-profit foundation has successfully managed Rancho Los Alamitos for many years, and there is interest on the part of the City and the Rancho Los Cerritos Foundation to create a similar operational structure for Rancho Los Cerritos. To that end, City staff will work with the Foundation to formalize a plan for the transfer of operational and maintenance responsibility. Ultimately, the City would provide a set annual contract amount to the Foundation as it does to the Rancho Los Alamitos Foundation.

***Work with Water Department to Convert Public Areas to Drought Tolerant Landscaping and/or to Improve to Irrigation:*** Over the past year, the Water Department has assisted the City to reduce its water usage through funding pilot landscaping projects. This proposal would memorialize the Water Department's commitment to reduce water usage in our City by establishing an ongoing fund to reduce water use through improvements to irrigation infrastructure, replacement of water intensive landscaping, and other ideas to save water. The City would benefit through lower water bills, and the Water Department and the public would benefit from increased water conservation.

