

MEMORANDUM

DATE: Monday, March 4, 2013

TO: Mayor Don Gough
Lynnwood City Council

FROM: Lorenzo Hines Jr., Finance Director

SUBJECT: City Website Design and Replacement Project

1 **Project Background**

2 The infrastructure (software and servers) that previously supported the City's website
3 was over 10 years old which provided a high risk of failure due to its age and lack of
4 vendor support. The last major redesign of the City's website took place in 2001.

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6 In the Fall of 2011, a cross-departmental branding team worked on applying the city
7 brand to a proposed site design. On June 11, 2012, the Lynnwood City Council
8 approved the contract that enabled staff to begin moving forward on the project. On
9 July 11, 2012, the City's Website Advisory Committee had a project kick off meeting that
10 began the planning phase of the project. The new City website went live on February,
11 1, 2013.

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13 The project was a true City-wide collaboration with all departments contributing to the
14 requirements and vision that guided the implementation of the new website. This
15 project would not have been possible without all of their input on the website software
16 requirements, design, and especially their hard work reviewing and migrating their
17 departmental content from the old website to the new website.

18 **New Website Highlights**

19 Along with a new infrastructure and updated design, the new website has several new
20 features that did not exist on the old website. These features facilitate an improved user
21 experience with enhanced delivery and management of website information.

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- 23 • **Mobile friendly version of website content** – mobile device users, who comprise a
24 quarter of the yearly visitors to the City website, now receive a mobile-specific
25 version of the City website specifically designed for use on mobile devices. The new
26 content management system also enables City staff to create mobile specific
27 versions of content to facilitate easier access to key website content for mobile users
28 who are often limited by screen size and bandwidth.
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- **Google Translate services links** – at the top of every website page is are links to Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, and Russian versions of the website which use the free Google Translate website services. There is also a message translated in each of these four languages that lets users know that the service is available.
- **How Do I? links** – at the top of every page is a green How Do I? button that opens a drop down menu system with links to items for Payment, Apply For, Report, Request and Find. The items in the list were determined using website analytics and the feedback of common services that are requested of City staff. The tool is very easy to manage and edit.
- **Interactive main navigation bar** – using a “mega menu” rollover menu system the Website Advisory Committee collaborated on an updated information architecture that supports a services first approach to navigation of the City website. The main menu is organized into the following primary content sections: Things To Do, City Services, Government, Public Safety, and Choose Lynnwood. The content sections were determined through government website comparables research, City vision analysis, City stakeholder requirements, and website analytics. The tool is very flexible and facilitates information architecture adjustments as more services come online, user feedback is received, and is based on website analytics.
- **Syndicated content** – the new website has several tools that enable staff to efficiently manage content while offering it in multiple contexts.
 - **Digital Asset Management** – images and documents are managed in a digital asset manager. Documents can be automatically published to the website upon upload to the digital asset manager without staff having to update the page(s) where the document is referenced.
 - **News** – news items are organized by category and can be published specific to context within the website with links automatically displayed on the News tab on the home page.
 - **Events & Meetings calendar** – items are managed in the main calendar application with the ability to automatically provide links across the website. For example links to upcoming board and commission meetings automatically appear on each specific board page, the homepage of the website, as well as on the main calendar page.
 - **“Pagelet” content blocks** – web page specific content such as contact information, news items, calendar items, and links to other key service can be published across the website.

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- **Versioning / Archiving content** – versioning with management tools for images, documents, and web pages.

Funding

The website replacement was funded by a contract with The Active Network approved by Council on June 11, 2012. The contract provided website design, implementation services, new content management software, and applicable licensing at a cost of \$47,768.75.

Next Steps

The Website Advisory Committee met on February 26, 2013, to provide department stakeholder feedback on any outstanding issues and/or quality assurance items. The committee also discussed future website development improvements including interactive maps, online forms, service area specific branding enhancement, and website navigation adjustments. The city webmaster is also monitoring website analytics and website user feedback to provide ongoing improvements to the website.