



To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

June 14, 2011

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SUBJECT: NEW DOMAIN NAME FOR CITY OF FORT WORTH WEBSITE

Several weeks ago, Councilmember Joel Burns asked about the possibility of changing the City's website domain name (fortworthgov.org) to something more user friendly. Many of the Council members responded positively to the suggestion and staff agreed that a new domain would better position the city as it continues to move forward with more digital and Web-based initiatives and services.

The federal government (GSA) regulates the use of .gov domain names, and there are some limitations according to federal policy. One such limitation is that in order to use the .gov domain it must include both the name of the city and the state. According to the policy, staff has received approval and is reserving the following domain names:

- **fortworthtexas.gov (recommended)**
- fortworthtx.gov
- ftworthtx.gov
- fortworth-tx.gov
- fortworth-texas.gov

It should be noted that other cities, (nyc.gov and seattle.gov) use the .gov without the state identified because their domain names were approved prior to GSA's current policy. City staff discussed this issue with GSA, and the city was told that Fort Worth's .gov domain must have Texas identified in some form or fashion.

Based on this policy, it is the staff recommendation the City's domain be changed to fortworthtexas.gov. Although this domain is longer than some listed above, it is easy to explain and would be less likely to be confused with the Fort Worth CVB's domain name of "fortworth.com".

Staff also recommends changing all city email addresses to match. For example: jane.doe@fortworthgov.org would become jane.doe@fortworthtexas.gov.

Associated Costs

A comprehensive review of the costs associated with a change in the city's domain name is underway, and most of those costs will likely be associated with updating the City's security certificates, licensed services and ensuring online services—such as paying water bills—continue without interruption.

Fortunately, after the domain name is changed, the City can continue to use fortworthgov.org and all fortworthgov.org emails indefinitely. This means that after the switch, if someone types in fortworthgov.org or has a website linked to fortworthgov.org, they will still pull up our Webpage. It also means that all emails will continue to work even if the old address is used. This will help

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avoid additional costs as it will allow printed materials such as business cards, flyers, signs, handouts, etc. to be replaced only as needed when supplies are depleted.

In the coming weeks, staff representing various departments will continue to meet about a phased-in transition to a new domain, which will include a comprehensive review of any associated costs. This information will be shared with the City Council as soon as it becomes available and before any changes are made.

Without objections from the City Council, staff will proceed with this planning effort to possibly change the city's domain name to fortworthtexas.gov. by the Fall of this year.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact Steve Streiffert, Acting Director of IT Solutions, at 817-392-2221 or Jason Lamers, Media and Public Affairs Manager at 817-392-6248.

Tom Higgins
Interim City Manager