



To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

August 9, 2011

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**SUBJECT: NEW DOMAIN NAME FOR CITY OF FORT WORTH WEBSITE:
FORTWORTHTEXAS.GOV**

In June, City Council received an Informal Report outlining the recommendation to move forward with changing the City's website domain name (fortworthgov.org) to be more user friendly and better meet current standards for government websites (using a .gov address). Based on federal government (GSA) regulations on .gov domain names, a city and state name must be used in addresses to limit confusion with other governmental entities. With this regulation in mind, and with the consideration of a new domain name that would be easy to explain and remember, it was recommended that the new domain name be: **fortworthtexas.gov**.

Staff heard no objection to this recommendation and has reserved this domain name. Since June, staff has been working on a cost analysis and timeline for the change. Based on these discussions, staff is prepared to make the official change to the new domain name effective on October 1. **This change would also be accompanied with a change to all city email accounts to @fortworthtexas.gov.**

Associated Costs

A comprehensive review of the costs associated with a change in the city's domain name was completed in July. Expected costs are primarily staff time that will need to be dedicated to ensuring a smooth, seamless transition for site visitors. But there are some hard costs that will be incurred of approximately \$5,000. Although this effort will require a brief re-direction of current staff to implement the change, the City Manager's Office believes this to be a better approach than adding additional staff. The hard cost estimate includes updates of the City's security certificates, licensed services and updates to billing systems.

The City can continue to use fortworthgov.org and all fortworthgov.org emails indefinitely.

This means that all emails will continue to work even if the old address is used, eliminating transition-related costs for printed materials such as business cards, flyers, signs, handouts, etc. Departments will be instructed not to throw out current stationary and/or other related items, but instead use their existing budget allocations to replace these items as supplies are depleted.

Communication Plan

With a go-live date of October 1, the City's Office of Media and Public Affairs and the City's Neighborhood Office are working in tandem on a Communication Plan to ensure the City's various audiences and stakeholders are aware of the domain name change. The plan includes several public education and technical milestones leading up to October 1. However, it should be noted that anyone not reached by the outreach campaign will still be able to access the city's website using the old domain name.

The residents, businesses and visitors will be reached with the news of the change through several scheduled announcements on:

- The City's website
- The City's internal website (Intranet)



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- City emails
- Letters to all employees/department heads
- Fort Worth Television (FWTV) both TV broadcast and online streaming video
- City News (weekly electronic newsletter to residents)
- City Times (water bill insert)
- Social media accounts
- Media releases
- Neighborhood meetings

We would encourage City Councilmembers and their aides to join City staff by using the new domain name beginning October 1. However, again, because FortWorthGov.org will continue to work indefinitely, there is no need to throw out any current letterhead, stationary, business cards or any other item that includes the city's web address. To reduce the cost of this transition, these items should be replenished only when supplies are depleted.

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.

for **Tom Higgins**
Interim City Manager