

## MEMO

From: Mayor Jeff Johnson  
To: City Council  
RE: Proposal: Considering Contract with King County for Court Services  
Date: March 30, 2017

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*Background:* The Lake Forest Park Municipal Court was created by ordinance, codified in LFP MC 2.12.010, and operated in accordance with RCW 3.50.

State Law recognizes an option to contract with another entity. Cities are allowed to contract with other cities or the county for court services. Nearby cities contract with a variety of municipal and county district courts.

District Court facilities are distributed around the county. The nearest is to the west in Shoreline, 3.8 miles from LFP City Hall.

*Why Now:* The current Municipal Judge's appointment expires on December 31, 2017; the long-time Court Administrator is retiring later this spring; the Court also currently has a position vacancy for a 0.5 FTE cashier.

Considering the vacancies in the Court and the upcoming appointment, I determined that a review of the options for continuing court services was in order. I have researched and given careful consideration to our options and concluded that an open discussion with the City Council regarding contracting with the King County District Court would be in the best interests of the City and the community we serve.

Safety of our citizens and employees. The Lake Forest Park facility was designed to be a basic City Hall. At the time it was designed, the needs defined by our current times for a safe and secure building for court purposes were not taken into consideration. We have had increasing use of City Hall by the public for basic services, including passports and permitting.

1. Continuation and enhancement of programs. The program offerings are comparable with regard to electronic infraction mitigation hearings; mail infraction mitigation hearings; warrants; in-custody pre-sentence electronic appearances/video links; camera enforcement processing; credit card payment; jail and jail alternatives program; probation programs

Other programs available with King County are: Single judge to do Kenmore/LFP cases; programs to deal with mental health/ veterans/substance abuse; relicensing

program; computerized services for court staff and citizens that are modern and ahead of JIS (the system currently in use by the LFP Municipal Court).

2. Cost Effective: Charges for contracted court services are generally more cost effective than keeping court services in-house. Our informal calculation based on King County's costing model indicates that LFP would save over 20%, or \$100,000 annually, by contracting with King County.
3. Repurpose City Hall space: The move of the court would allow us to make changes that would be safer and more user friendly for our community.

*Request:*

Council consider contracting with King County for Court Services.

*Next Steps and Timing:*

*This item was brought to you for discussion and consideration. I am looking to you for next steps. This is your opportunity to ask questions and request additional information. What would the Council like its next touch with this item to look like? We could ask King County Court District to give a presentation on April 27<sup>th</sup> and also have our Court Administrator give a presentation.*