

Lompoc City Council Agenda Item



Date of City Council Meeting: April 5, 2011

TO: LAUREL M. BARCELONA, CITY ADMINISTRATOR

FROM: CAPTAIN LARRY A. RALSTON
lralston@ci.lompoc.ca.us

SUBJECT: CITATION CORRECTION ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGE

Recommendation: That the City Council;

1. hold a public hearing, pursuant to Government Code section 66018, regarding the establishment of a charge for the service of inspection and certification of correctable citations,
2. adopt [Resolution No. 5706\(11\)](#), authorizing the establishment of an administrative charge of \$10.00 per citation for inspection and certification of correctable traffic and/or parking citations issued by law enforcement agencies other than the Lompoc Police Department and provide an exception for City of Lompoc residents and business owners receiving violation notices within the City of Lompoc when issued by Lompoc Police Department officers or volunteers.

Background:

On a regular basis Lompoc Police Officers are asked to respond to the station to inspect vehicles, verify corrections and sign off a notice of violation (traffic citation) primarily for equipment infractions. The inspection and certification citation signed-off, signifies to the Court that the correction has been completed to the satisfaction of the law. The Court Clerk can then dispose the citation and close the case. Staff has found that many citations being verified by the Lompoc Police Department have been issued by other law enforcement agencies. Other jurisdictions charge an administrative fee for the inspection, certification and sign-off. Additionally, staff has found that many individuals choose to come to the Lompoc Police Department for the sign-off because the City of Lompoc, unlike most other local police and sheriff agencies, does not charge a sign-off administrative fee. Those fees range from as low as \$10.00 (Santa Barbara Sheriff Office) to as high as \$31.00 (Arroyo Grande Police Department).

The Lompoc City Council has requested that City departments evaluate their fee structure to insure that Lompoc residents are in an equitable or improved status as compared to other Central Coast residents. In this case, non-residents are taking advantage of free City services and adding to the workload of limited City resources.

Pursuant to Government Code sections 6062a and 66018, notice of the subject public hearing was published in the Lompoc Record on March 25, 2011 and April 1, 2011.

Discussion:

Traffic citations are identified in categories: moving violations and non-moving (correctable) violations (including parking violations). Violations that are considered "correctable" include violations such as expired registration, no registration tabs displayed, no front license plate, etc. They are also referred to as equipment violations. The intent of the citation is to tell the driver of the vehicle in question that a particular issue associated with his/her vehicle is in violation of California State law and is in need of attention. Once the correction is completed the individual may go to a local law enforcement agency and have the vehicle inspected by an employee who certifies that the mechanical or equipment problem has been addressed to the satisfaction of the state or local law. After certification is complete the individual takes the citation (official signature on the back of the citation) to the Court Clerk for disposition and closure.

That sign-off process is estimated to take approximately 10 minutes of a City employee's time. If a Police Officer is asked to respond from the field back to the station, then the time associated with inspection and certification may increase. The cost to the City for either of those time periods would exceed \$10, due to a Police Officer's wages and benefits.

Individuals who reside in Lompoc support City services through various revenue streams, such as property and sales taxes. Therefore, it is appropriate that an exception to the administrative charge be established for Lompoc residents and business owners who receive inspection and certification services provided by the Lompoc Police Department. The Police Department recommends that City residents and business owners be exempt from this fee when issued a correctable citation by a Lompoc Police Officer, Community Services Officer or a Police Volunteer within the Lompoc City's jurisdictional boundaries. All others would be expected to pay this fee at the time of sign-off.

Fiscal Impact

A recent informal survey of Lompoc Police Department staff estimates that there are three requests per day of inspections/certifications at the Police Department or 780 certifications per year. The staff estimates that two out of three of those requests are from persons that live in other jurisdictions than Lompoc or do not own businesses within Lompoc. Therefore, it is estimated that \$5,200 in additional revenue may be generated to cover the cost of delivering those services.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that City Council hold a public hearing, and after reviewing public input consider adoption of Resolution No. 5706(11), establishing an administrative charge of \$10.00 for inspection and certification of correctable citations completed by

the Lompoc Police Department, with an exemption for Lompoc residents and business owners from that fee.

LARRY A. RALSTON, Captain
Support Services Division Commander

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR:

TIMOTHY L. DABNEY
Chief of Police

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL:

LAUREL BARCELONA
City Administrator