TORONTO

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2010 BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE
Account Set Up and Online Payments With No Charge

Issue/Background:

This briefing note addresses the request made by Budget Committee at its meeting of March 3, 2010 that the Treasurer prepare a briefing note on other business areas where we have accounts and on-line payments with no charge.

Key Points:

There are 5 City Programs that utilize web or telephone based applications or online registration capabilities for program registration and/or online payment for which there is no current charge as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1
List of Account Set Up and Online Payment With No charge

No.	Program	Description of Service
	Online Registration/Payment	
1.	Economic Development & Culture	Registration for Culture camps
2.	Parks, Forestry & Recreation *	Registration for Recreation programs
3.	Municipal Licensing Services	New Licence and Licence renewal payments
4.	Transportation	Parking permit renewal payments
5.	Transportation	Street Allowance Renewal payment
6.	Transportation	Temporary parking permit payments
	Telephone Based Application	
7.	Toronto Building	Inspection scheduling and payment of inspection reports

* Account Set Up fee proposed for 2010

- ***Economic Development & Culture*** offers public access to the CLASS registration system with no charge for March Break and Summer Culture Camps at Scarborough Museum and Cedar Ridge Creative Centre; Culture Arts Workshop/Programs at Cedar Ridge Creative Centre, and Culture Facility Rental Permits at Cedar Ridge Creative Centre, Zion Church and Assembly Hall At the same time bookings for programs/permits registration at Culture sites not listed above are processed manually by staff at each individual site.

- ***Parks, Forestry & Recreation*** offers public access to the CLASS registration system and does not charge for usage of the online system. Currently, users do not require a recreation account to take part in Leisure or Drop-In programs. All users that wish to register for a course or a site permit are required to set up an account in the CLASS registration system.

  A proposal is included in the 2010 Recommended Operating Budget for Parks, Forestry & Recreation for a **one time** new account set up fee of $50 per family.

- ***Municipal Licensing and Standards, Animal Services*** provides the ePet On-Line Licensing System which allows the public to apply for and pay for a new or renewal license for pets on-line. The system allows for the payment of dog and cat licenses on-line, with no transaction costs.

- ***Toronto Building*** provides IVR (interactive Voice Response) or TelePermit. By using TelePermit, the public can schedule an inspection; reschedule an inspection, cancel an inspection, review upcoming inspections, listen to inspection results and purchase an inspection report. TelePermit prompts the user through each step of the call. Whenever the user is prompted for information, he/she can speak or key in their response – a word, number, or date. Multiple functions can be performed during a call. At the end of a function, the user can say Main Menu to start a new process. This service allows users who have paid for a permit fee (building or subdivision) to schedule, reschedule or cancel a building inspection. It also allows for a review of upcoming inspections, to listen to inspection results and to purchase an inspection result. Service costs are 100% cost recovered through permit fees.

- Description of the three services offered by ***Transportation Services*** with access to online application are as follows:

  1. **Renew** Residential On-street Parking Permit.

     This application allows existing permit holders to renew their parking permits online using a payment application on the City's web site. This service launched in April 2003, was the first City application to accept payments over the Internet. Only credit card payments using Visa, MasterCard or American Express are accepted. The credit card information and the purchase amount are validated in real time through Moneris Solutions. Upon a successful payment transaction, the parking permit for the new 6 or 12 month term will be mailed to the client the following day.

     At the time this application was created in the spring of 2003, the main focus of the project was to offer a more convenient way for permit holders to renew their parking permit 24/7. Previously, only payments in person at one of four City locations or by mail were accepted. Another important reason for creating the new payment option was to cut down on the number of NSF cheques, and the associated staff costs for handling such cases. At present, 60% of all renewals are made over the internet, 15% by mail and 25% using counter service. The annual volume is 36,000 internet payments. The average purchase amount is $107.19 (incl. GST).

  2. **Renew** Street Allowance Encroachment Agreements and Off-street Parking Permits (e.g. Boulevard and Front Yard Parking)

     This application, which was started in January 2005, allows existing permit holders to renew and pay for their permits and licenses online. Other payment options are at Cashier's Wickets at Civic Centres, by mail, and at most banks. Currently, about 5,200 payments per year are made using the Internet option. The average purchase amount is $188.70 (includes GST).

It is to be noted, that the main objective for all of the above Internet payment applications was primarily to provide improved service to the public in line with the City's eService policy. Another reason for pursuing the Internet payment option was to seek to reduce the number of residents opting to renew their permits at City counters, thus reducing the traffic at the four public counters. As mentioned above, a reduction in the number of NSF cheques was also a goal.

3. **Purchase** Temporary/Visitor On-street Parking Permit

This application, started in June 2007, allows a person to apply for and pay a temporary/visitor parking permit over the internet 24/7. The permit is purchased for a period of one week. Previously, one had to visit one of four City locations during office hours to be able to purchase a Temporary/Visitor Parking Permit. The permit purchase over the Internet is paid for in the same way as the residential permit above (all applications share a common payment processing module). The permit is printed on a printer at home. Because the information about the vehicle and the parking location is registered and transferred to the Parking Control Officers' hand held ticket issuing machines in the field within one hour of purchase, the paper permit cannot be used on any other vehicle than the one for which the permit was issued. Currently, about 110,000 Temporary/Visitors permits per year are purchased over the Internet. The set purchase amount is $17.57 (includes GST).

It should also be noted that the possible implementation of a service fee for these applications may take up to six months.

Conclusion:

The seven services offered with no charge are found in five programs, namely, Economic Development & Culture (1); Parks, Forestry & Recreation (1); Municipal Licensing Services, Animal Services (1); Toronto Building (1) and Transportation Services (3).

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Date: March 11, 2010