



CITY OF KIRKLAND
City Manager's Office
123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3001
www.ci.kirkland.wa.us

MEMORANDUM

To: Marilynne Beard, Interim City Manager

From: Judge Michael Lambo
Aimee Vance, Court Administrator

Date: June 2, 2010

Subject: MUNICIPAL COURT STAFFING

RECOMMENDATION

City Council authorizes additional staffing in 2010 for the Municipal Court based on additional workload and funded by projected revenue above budget.

BACKGROUND

Caseload Growth

The overall case filings for Kirkland Municipal Court have increased 15.33% since 2005. The criminal caseload has increased 58.89% and the infraction caseload (including parking) has increased 11.77%. The case filings for the first 5 months of 2010 show an increase of 19% from 2009 and the criminal filings are holding steady for the same period in 2010 compared to 2009. The only increase in Judicial Support Associate (JSA) staff in the last 5 years was increasing an hourly position (16 hrs/week) to a .5 FTE (20 hrs/week) JSA I in 2007. This position is located in the probation department. There are currently 8.24 JSA staff members.

In 2010 the Court added an additional hour per week of judicial time to accommodate the increase in infraction hearing requests. In addition to the increase in cases filed there has also been a greater increase in requests for mitigation and contested hearings. In other words, more people who might have in the past just paid the citation are now requesting a hearing in hopes of a fine reduction.

Another impact to court staff due to the increased case filings is the telephone call volume and US post office mail processing. Court staff answers an average of 100 calls per day and over 2,000 calls per month. They process over 75 payments by mail each day in addition to opening and distributing correspondence.

The following tables summarize the increases in caseloads experienced over the past five years.

	Criminal Total	Infraction Total	Parking Total	TOTAL CASELOAD
2005	1,985	9,799	14,476	26,260
2006	2,530	8,248	14,319	25,097
2007	2,602	8,916	13,317	24,835
2008	2,723	9,691	15,458	27,872
2009	3,154	10,652	16,479	30,285

	Criminal caseload growth	Infraction caseload growth	Parking caseload growth	TOTAL caseload growth	Cases per FTE
2005					3187
2006	27.46%	-15.83%	-1.08%	-4.43%	3046
2007	2.85%	8.10%	-7.00%	-1.04%	3014
2008	4.65%	8.69%	16.08%	12.23%	3383
2009	15.83%	9.92%	6.60%	8.66%	3675
Growth between 2005-2009	58.89%	8.70%	13.84%	15.33%	

In 2008, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) did a court clerk ratio to total case filings. They recommended that courts with over 12,000 filings per year should have approximately 1 FTE for every 2,080 cases filed. Currently Kirkland Municipal Court has 3,675 cases per FTE. The additional 1.26 FTE would bring our current case per FTE to 3,188.

Revenue Growth

The increase in case filings has also led to an increase in Court revenue. In 2009, revenue for adult probation charges and fines and forfeits ended the year above budget by over \$193,000. 2010 revenue is on track for similar performance. Adult probation revenue will likely be about \$100,000 over budget and fines and forfeits about \$100,000. The increase in revenue is a direct reflection of the increased workload. The following tables summarize changes in actual and projected revenue for the Court.

Fines & Forfeits	2009 Budget	2009 Actual	2009 Difference	2010 Budget	2010 Projected	2010 Projected Difference
Infraction Fines	\$ 573,000	\$ 672,817	\$ 99,816	\$ 573,000	\$ 708,500	\$ 135,500
Parking Fines	\$ 411,948	\$ 402,018	\$ (9,930)	\$ 550,000	\$ 475,000	\$ (75,000)
Criminal Fines	\$ 376,000	\$ 388,540	\$ 12,540	\$ 376,000	\$ 415,000	\$ 39,000
TOTAL	\$ 1,360,948	\$ 1,463,374	\$ 102,426	\$ 1,499,000	\$ 1,598,500	\$ 99,500

Fees	2009 Budget	2009 Actual	2009 Difference	2010 Budget	2010 Projected	2010 Projected Difference
Probation	\$ 525,000	\$ 611,000	\$ 86,000	\$ 525,000	\$ 615,500	\$ 90,500
Miscellaneous	\$ 31,250	\$ 36,778	\$ 5,530	\$ 31,250	\$ 47,500	\$ 16,250
TOTAL	\$ 556,250	\$ 647,780	\$ 91,530	\$ 556,250	\$ 663,000	\$ 106,750

In order to meet the growing caseload volume and workload, the Municipal Court is requesting authorization to hire additional staff to address 2010 workload issues. An additional judicial support position and an increase to an existing judicial support position are being requested to provide assistance in probation and in Court customer and courtroom support. A current part-time position would be increased from 0.74 FTE to 1.0 FTE. The incumbent in this position is retiring, so changing this position to full-time will not only provide workload relief, but also improve the ability to attract qualified candidates. This increase is requested as an ongoing increase.

A second temporary increase of 1.0 FTE for the balance of 2010 is also requested to provide relief for the increase in phone and mail volume as well as handling courtroom coverage. A service package will be submitted with the 2011-2012 Budget to convert this to a regular position.

The incremental increase in cost for 2010 is \$28,000 for the probation portion and \$14,000 for the increase to the existing FTE. These costs would be covered by the expected additional revenue. The additional 1.26 FTE's is a staff increase of 15%, an equal percentage to our case filing increase since 2005.

Municipal Court caseload trends and staffing requests were discussed with the Public Safety Committee at their June 17 meeting. The Committee recommended that the request be forwarded to the City Council for consideration.

FISCAL NOTE

CITY OF KIRKLAND

Source of Request							
Judge Michael Lambo and Aimee Vance, Court Administrator							
Description of Request							
Request for funding for additional Court staffing from anticipated additional Court-related revenue in 2010 to address workload issues, including probation and Court customer/courtroom support. This includes an ongoing increase to 1.0 for the currently budgeted 0.74 FTE Judicial Support Associate and a temporary additional 1.0 FTE Judicial Support Associate. The incremental increase in cost for 2010 is \$28,000 for the temporary position and \$14,000 for the increase to the existing FTE. The temporary 1.0 position will be requested as an ongoing position during the 2011-12 budget process.							
Legality/City Policy Basis							
State statute requires that probation revenue be used for probation services.							
Fiscal Impact							
Use of \$42,000 from anticipated additional probation and fines and forfeits revenue in 2010. The estimated revenues will be able to fully fund this request.							
Recommended Funding Source(s)							
<i>Reserve</i>	Description	2010 Est End Balance	Prior Auth. 2009-10 Uses	Prior Auth. 2009-10 Additions	Amount This Request	Revised 2010 End Balance	2010 Target
<i>Revenue/Exp Savings</i>	The anticipated additional Court revenue in 2010 will fully support the additional staffing request.						
<i>Other Source</i>							
Other Information							
The Public Safety Committee reviewed the Courts' request for an increase in probation staffing at their June 17th meeting and recommended that the request go to Council as soon as possible. A formal budget adjustment will be presented to Council with the year-end budget adjustments in December. Approval of this request now will allow the positions to be filled as soon as possible.							

Prepared By	Neil Kruse, Senior Financial Analyst	Date	June 23, 2010
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