Mayor Richardson and Honorable City Council,

We are writing this public comment to address item 26, the Technology and Innovation strategic roadmap item. Once again TI is showing its inability to analyze the problems that abound within the department and instead recommend doing things that will only compound the issues within the department. Here are our major concerns.

First the department once again is not recommending anywhere in the report to fix the broken classifications. The department is hovering at a 40% vacancy rate that is directly attributable to the classifications being a quarter of a century old. With the current classifications being so broad and undefined, potential employees have no idea what they are applying for and how it relates to the job they will be expected to accomplish. Instead of addressing this directly the department is once again asking for a position to deal with a "Strategic plan for hiring". A strategic plan isn't needed, all that is needed is the adoption of accurate classifications that explain the job requirements for the employees and proper compensation. As a group we have been asking for things to be done for years to no avail because management has shown no interest in fixing the problems. The result of not fixing the classifications coupled with the demise of Civil Service will be the continued degradation of merit-based hiring and the increase of hiring unqualified or underqualified candidates. We have no doubt that the conclusion of the "strategic plan" will only benefit management in hiring their friends. They can NOT be trusted.

Second, the fact that the city itself has a 30 million bigger budget than the next comparably sized city, yet we are working on over double the number of apps and doing over double the amount of trouble tickets is deeply troubling. Beyond that, when graded by our client departments, as a department TI gets the equivalent of a D grade. As a group staff often talk about how overworked many of us are, yet here is objective data that no one should be that overworked, it is a conscious choice made by management to not address the issues. Yet this lack of leadership has only led to other departments not valuing the contributions of TI. All technology has a maintenance need attached. Unfortunately, it has been the constant practice of TI management (including past management) to ignore that need. The result of that becomes having to do double the amount of trouble tickets and work on double the number of total apps as the comparable cities. But once again the response of management in this plan is not to hire the needed staff, it's to add more project management placed in the executive office. For comparison's sake, the city of Sacramento seems to have a grand total of 7 Managers in their TI department which includes the CIO. The City of Long Beach has 24 managers including the CIO and with a 40% vacancy rate have a Manager to Employee ratio of 1:4. This misguided, top-

heavy approach is the root cause of why this department is seen so negatively and why the staff is so hopelessly overworked.

Finally, the plan itself once again makes no mention of either wireless or LBTV in any shape or form. Police and fire radios are of the utmost importance in the city, as is the infrastructure for them, yet nowhere in the report is there any recommendation to add staff to support them or focus on the PD/Fire infrastructure. Staffing has declined at wireless from a radio shop of 20+ working techs to the level today of a supervisor and 4 comm specs. Similarly, LBTV is also completely ignored with no staffing increases even considered. The demand for events within the city increases year by year yet TI management has once again turned a blind eye to the need. Whether it is hybrid or virtual meetings, the technological complexity of events is ever increasing, which increases the need for proper staffing exponentially. Sadly, management has in the past referred to event support as not being a core service of the TI department. This thought process is shown directly by not having one reference at all to LBTV. The world is coming to Long Beach in 2028 for the Olympics. The need for a dialed in Event Support Group is pivotal for the success of the city's participation in that event. Management continuing to ignore this core need will result in a similar result to the grade of the department as a whole reference in this report.

If the TI department continues to ignore the drastic need to reform the classifications, disregard its overworked and under supported staff and ignore whole division's needs within its ranks the TI department of 2028 will be worse off than it is currently. Problems are not solved with more project managers or management overall; they are solved by the workers who know how to fix them. If the Council is fine with D grades overall and 40% vacancy rates, then continue to keep doing what has been done over the last 7 years. If the Council wants to have a happy and healthy TI workforce that performs at a high level for the city, hard questions need to be asked. The TI rank and file are more than just numbers on an excel spreadsheet, it sure would be nice to be treated as such. We ask for someone out there to see us that way.

Thank You,

Erik Maitland   Christopher Stuart   Angel Garcia

PS: We would be making verbal comments in person if we didn't know there would be direct retaliation from management for doing so.