

# Closing Fiscal Gaps with Blackboard Connect

## BLACKBOARD CONNECT FOR GOVERNMENT™ PROVIDES A SIMPLE AND EFFECTIVE WAY TO GENERATE REVENUE AND CUT COSTS.

As a city manager, you have many responsibilities – including public safety and keeping your community engaged and informed. The Blackboard Connect mass notification service gives you the ability to reach your population quickly, efficiently and consistently. While you may already know the power mass notification can have for public safety and community outreach, you may not realize its utility for generating revenue in today's challenging fiscal environment. Cities and counties around the country are using Blackboard Connect to collect unpaid tickets, utility bills and licensing fees.

### **Santa Maria, California:**

#### **Generated \$600,000 in cost savings**

The City of Santa Maria Utilities Department uses their Connect system to automate notification of overdue bills and pending service shut-offs. They've improved department efficiencies, reducing the costs associated with manually distributing tags and freeing employees to perform other tasks like reducing unaccounted water usage for an additional \$600,000 work of revenue.

### **La Porte, Texas:**

#### **Recouped \$364,000 in revenue**

The City of La Porte uses Blackboard Connect to send targeted messages to individuals for minor infractions like missed payments, failure to appear in court and misdemeanor warrants recouping \$364,000 in revenue in the last two years. These activities have also saved the city over 2,000 labor hours to date, cleared over 650 warrants and they have reduced failure to appear incidents by 50 percent.

*"Looking at the results of the calls that we are making and the return rate of payment for warrants and tickets is amazing. This process alone most definitely pays for our annual subscription to Blackboard Connect."*

*– Jeff Suggs, Emergency Management Coordinator*

“

*Using Blackboard Connect, we've been able to reduce the distribution of door tags from 100 per day to just 20. We not only lowered our labor, vehicle, and printing costs, but we took the staff dedicated to distributing the door tags and reallocated that resource to tasks that actually increase revenue.*

*Shannon Sweeney  
Water Resources Manager  
Santa Maria Utility Department*

”

“  
Using Blackboard Connect, we were able to clear hundreds of warrants and bring in a lot of money that would otherwise be considered uncollectable.

Jeff Pynes  
Freeport City Manager

## Freeport, Texas:

### Collected \$30,000 in revenue

Once a year, the city of Freeport offers an amnesty program to citizens with outstanding warrants for misdemeanors like traffic infractions. Freeport officials use the Blackboard Connect service to send a targeted message to affected citizens, and the program has been a dramatic success: in its first year, the program netted approximately \$30,000, and more than 100 people have taken care of their outstanding warrants.

## Selma, California:

### Increased license revenue 11 percent

To provide for both the safety of residents and to ensure funding for city resources, the city of Selma must enforce dog licensing requirements. When city officials realized that many new pet owners—unaware of the city’s licensing laws—were not licensing their dogs, Selma began using the Blackboard Connect service to deliver both vaccination and licensing reminders. Reminders resulted in an increase in vaccination clinic attendance and an 11% increase in dog licensing revenue.

*“We rate Blackboard Connect a ten in its effectiveness. It’s been very beneficial for us, and we’re really happy with it”*

*- Jeffrey Kestly, Selma Fire Chief*

## Jefferson County, Texas:

### Collected \$60,000 in unpaid fines

The Jefferson County Justice of the Peace Court uses Blackboard Connect to contact people with docket reminders, actual warrants, missed payments and outstanding citations over 30 days. Jefferson County has collected over \$60,000 to date and saved on man-hours and bulk mailings. In addition, they have avoided the costs associated with apprehension and incarceration.

*“We never expected to see this kind of return - we were only hoping to recoup the annual cost. We haven’t even used the system to its full potential yet - I hope to be able to report our continued success.”*

*- Greg Fountain, Jefferson County Emergency Management*

To learn more about how Blackboard Connect clients are using the service to increase revenue and maintain critical city operations, call (800) 424-9299 X4.