



# City of Sacramento City Council

915 I Street, Sacramento, CA, 95814

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**Meeting Date:** 8/28/2012

**Report Type:** Staff/Discussion

**Title:** New Mobile Application for 311 City Service and Information

**Report ID:** 2012-00705

**Location:** Citywide

**Recommendation:** Receive and file.

**Contact:** Maria MacGunigal, IT Manager, (916) 808-7998; Gary S. Cook, Chief Information Officer, (916) 808-8600, Information Technology Department

**Presenter:** Maria MacGunigal, IT Manager, (916) 808-7998, Information Technology Department

**Department:** Information Technology

**Division:** Technology Administration

**Dept ID:** 07001011

## **Attachments:**

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1-Description/Analysis

2-Background

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### **City Attorney Review**

Approved as to Form  
Janeth D. San Pedro  
8/20/2012 9:26:30 AM

### **City Treasurer Review**

Reviewed for Impact on Cash and Debt  
Russell Fehr  
8/13/2012 2:59:34 PM

### **Approvals/Acknowledgements**

Department Director or Designee: Gary Cook - 8/16/2012 3:29:04 PM



## Description/Analysis

**Issue:** The City loses approximately 100,000 calls to the 311 center per year due to hang-ups. This is primarily attributed to limited call center staff resources resulting in long wait times for callers. The development of web and mobile applications is focused on leveraging technology to reduce the number of hang-ups. This is accomplished through the creation of more self-service options for residents to report issues and better integration ties between the City's Work Management Systems and the 311 system.

Providing easy to use self-service web and mobile applications for common issues will reduce the number of calls that come into the call center freeing up staff to answer other calls. The combined approach of more self-serve access tools and better integration of systems will:

- Reduce the number of hang-ups
- Improve citizen service experience
- Decrease call handling times
- Increase response and reporting effectiveness
- Provide multiple self-service channels for citizens to do business with the City
- Increase efficiency of departments by providing prompt and accurate information

**Policy Considerations:** This report outlines the self-service web and mobile application for the City's 311 system, consistent with the goal of increasing the ease of doing business with the City.

## Environmental Considerations:

**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA):** This report concerns administrative activities that will not have a significant effect on the environment, and that do not constitute a "project" as defined by the CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 Cal. Code Reg. § 15000 et seq.) Sections 15601(b)(3) and 15378(b)(2).

**Sustainability Considerations:** None.

**Commission/Committee Action:** Not applicable.

**Rationale for Recommendation** This report is intended to provide Council information on more self-serve access tools for citizens and better integration of systems to reduce the number of calls coming directly into the call center, improve customer service, provide for a more transparent and accessible government, improve accountability, and save the City money.

**Financial Considerations:** Existing staff resources were used where possible for enhancements and development efforts. Additional technical staff resources were needed to develop software. The total cost was \$74,000.

**Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD):** Not applicable.



## Background

The City of Sacramento has a long history of providing excellent high quality customer service. In an environment of increasingly limited resources and ever increasing demands, the City must find ways to operate smarter, leaner, and faster. Expanding access and making it faster and easier for citizens to request City services is one of the many ways to do just that.

In 2008, the City of Sacramento implemented the first phase of the 311 customer service call center. The center established a central point of contact for all non-law enforcement related City services. The associated customer service improvements allowed the City to achieve many of the goals and ideals that the City had for the program. The City's call center now handles approximately 1,300 calls each day on a variety of issues. In addition to calls handled, an average of 1,400 emails are processed monthly.

Due to ever increasing resource constraints, staffing for the center has been very limited, and the number of dropped calls has dramatically increased. The City loses approximately 100,000 calls to the 311 center each year due to hang-ups. This is primarily attributed to limited call center staff resources resulting in long wait times for callers. Improvements in technology are needed to reduce the number of hang-ups. This can be accomplished through the development of more self-service options for residents to report issues to the City and better integration ties between the City's Work Management Systems and the 311 system.

Most calls from customers related to utilities and animal care services. The biggest efficiency gain without adding staff is in the integration of the 311 system with the City's work management systems. This reduces the need for duplicate entry of information. In addition, providing easy-to-use self-service web and mobile applications for common requests will free up staff resources.

The combined approach of more self-serve access tools and better integration of systems will reduce the number of calls coming directly into the call center, improve customer service, provide for a more transparent and accessible government, improve accountability, and save the City money.

Years of economic stress have made innovation and finding better ways to deliver services essential to any local government doing business today. This mobile 311 citizen self-service and system integration solution does just that. The City of Sacramento takes one large step forward toward our goal of becoming "The Best Managed City in California" by:

- Increasing our capacity to serve
- Reducing number of hang-ups
- Improving citizen service experience

- Decreasing call handling times
- Increasing response and reporting effectiveness
- Providing multiple self-service tools for citizens to do business with the City
- Increasing efficiency by providing prompt and accurate information