

CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



Report Date: November 8, 2006  
Author: Marg Coulson  
Barb Pearce  
Phone No.: 604.871.6421  
RTS No.: 06357  
VanRIMS No.: 04-4400-50  
Meeting Date: November 30, 2006

TO: Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets  
FROM: Corporate Management Team  
SUBJECT: Implementation of 311 Service in Vancouver

RECOMMENDATION

- A. *THAT Council approve the implementation of a consolidated citizen service centre and 311 service for the City of Vancouver based on the 311 Access Vancouver model described in this report.*
- B. *THAT Council approve as a policy objective that all citizen services that can be delivered using the 311 model be accessible through the new service centre unless transitioning the process to 311 would result in diminished service to citizens; and Council request the Park Board, Library Board and Police Board to endorse this initiative.*
- C. *THAT Council approve one-time implementation costs of \$12.3 million as described in the Financial Implications section of this report:*
- i. \$10.5 million for the implementation project, software, facility and related costs; and*
  - ii. \$1.83 million for an Enhancement Fund to support departments while business and staff issues are resolved;*

*source of funding to be the Utility Rate Reserves (i) and reallocations in the 2006 - 2008 Capital Plan (ii - v) as follows:*

- i) Water, Solid Waste and Sewer Rate Reserves \$2.0 million*
- ii) Hastings Park Entrance Improvements \$2.0 million*

<i>iii)</i>	<i>Cultural Reinvestment/ Olympic Legacies</i>	<i>\$3.3 million</i>
<i>iv)</i>	<i>Electronic Records Management System</i>	<i>\$3.0 million</i>
<i>v)</i>	<i>Street Lighting Program</i>	<i>\$2.0 million</i>

*AND THAT all capital funding (items ii to v) be approved in advance of the 2007 Capital Budget.*

- D. THAT Council approve an annual base operating budget for the citizen service centre of \$2.85 million to be added to the Operating Budget in 2008 without offset AND THAT future growth in operating costs (to an anticipated \$5.7 million) as the service is enhanced be provided by transfer of at least equivalent funding from existing departmental budgets such that the service is self-funded.*

#### CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The Corporate Management Team, along with staff representatives from all departments and Boards have been involved in the 311 feasibility study and the development of the business proposal contained in this report. The following comments are submitted on behalf of the Corporate Management Team.

The establishment of a 311 centre as presented in this report enables the City of Vancouver to provide a substantially increased level of service to citizens through a central contact point. It will address citizens' general inquiries, and will eliminate misdirected calls. Following the initial implementation of this service in early 2008, the 311 business unit will continue to grow through the transition of further processes to the 311 centre, thereby leveraging the capacity of the consolidated contact centre.

To begin implementation, 311 requires an investment of \$12.3 million in Capital and beginning in 2008, ongoing annual operating costs of \$2.85 million.

The strategy to fund the Capital cost from the 2006-2008 Capital Plan is appropriate since it is possible to replace most of the funding from other sources. The 311 project was considered in the 2006-2008 Capital Plan submission and, like other projects, it was not fully funded. To go forward the project requires revising capital priorities or delaying.

If Council wishes to achieve the full benefits of a 311 call centre the following steps will be necessary:

1. Approve the project as outlined in Option 3 of the business proposal (Appendix A to this report) along with allocation of \$10.3 million from the 2006-2008 Capital Plan and \$2 million from the Utility Rate Reserve.
2. Approve funding (of \$2.85 million plus inflation) in advance of the 2008 operating budget, from a general tax increase, to fund the new 311 service operations.
3. Establish as a civic policy that Departments and Boards make available to citizens all possible processes through the 311 centre unless the transfer would result in diminished service to citizens.
4. That all possible work be transferred from Departments and Boards to the 311 operations by 2013, along with the corresponding budgetary funding.

Past experience demonstrates that the establishment of a call centre initially increases call volumes as citizens begin to utilize the service, and then the service levels stabilize (but at a higher level), over time as the initial demand is satisfied. A 311 call centre would be advantageous also in an emergency to ease call volumes to 911.

The implementation of a call centre is important for citizen service delivery. The Corporate Management Team endorses moving forward with the capital funding sources identified and the ongoing operating costs.

The Corporate Management Team recommends approval of Recommendations A-D.

## **COUNCIL POLICY**

Council approves major new initiatives in the organization, including approval of funding sources.

Council approves the allocation and reallocation of funding identified in the Capital Plan.

## **PURPOSE**

This report seeks Council's approval to implement a consolidated citizen service centre and 311 service for the City of Vancouver based on the 311 Access Vancouver model described in this report and in Appendix A. To ensure the greatest benefit is leveraged from the consolidated 311 service centre, the report also recommends that Council establish as a policy objective that Departments and Boards make available to citizens all possible processes through 311 unless the transfer would result in diminished service to citizens.

## **BACKGROUND**

"311" is a single-point-of-access phone number for non-emergency municipal government services. Like its companion numbers such as 911 for emergency services and 411 for directory information services, it is a short, easy-to-remember number intended to facilitate citizen access. Also like its companion numbers, it represents a convenient gateway into a single-point-of-access citizen service model.

The United States commenced use of the 311 number in 1997. Numerous U.S. cities, from small counties to major urban areas such as Chicago, Los Angeles and New York, now provide access to municipal information and services through the 311 number. In November, 2004, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) approved 311 for use in Canada. Calgary was the first Canadian city to offer 311 in May, 2005, followed by Ottawa, Windsor and Gatineau. Many Canadian cities are in the process of planning and implementing 311 services, including Edmonton, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Halton, Peel, Sudbury, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax.

Following successful 311 service implementations across the United States and Canada, and observing the resultant benefits to both the citizens and local government organizations, the City Manager asked staff to assess the feasibility of a 311 service for Vancouver. The 311 project was considered in the 2006-2008 Capital Plan submission but, as with other projects, it was not fully funded.

Staff have worked with business units across the organization to map and collect observations and metrics about the City's current service model. A review of established 311 best practices was also undertaken. As part of that review members of the City's Corporate Management Team (CMT) and representatives of Council visited Calgary's 311 operations and met with Calgary officials in March, 2006. The City Manager provided a written update to Council on April 10, 2006, describing the feasibility study progress, planned activities and timeframe before a formal report to Council, and feedback from the Calgary visit attendees.

The business proposal, implementation strategy and cost estimates have been developed based on best practices of established 311 operations, current state research, input from the 311 Feasibility Study Steering Committee, the CMT, City subject matter experts, and feedback from City attendees of the Calgary 311 tour and orientation.

On September 28, 2006, Council approved *in principle* proceeding with development of a consolidated call centre and 311 service, including an interim budget of \$200,000, pending a report-back with a complete business proposal, implementation strategy and funding plan by November 30, 2006.

The Library, Police and Park Boards have been briefed on the 311 feasibility study activities and the intent to recommend a consolidated service model to Council.

A copy of this report has been provided to the applicable unions and staff associations.

## DISCUSSION

### 1. The 311 Access Vancouver Model

Adoption of a consolidated service model, accessible by dialling "311"<sup>1</sup>, represents an opportunity for the City of Vancouver to transform how citizens obtain services from the City. The vision for this model, called 311 Access Vancouver, is to offer Vancouver citizens single-point-of-access to most City information and services. A 24/7 call centre would be designed to allow efficiency, quality, and consistency in responding to the 1.4 million citizen requests received by phone annually. Emails that flow through the City's general inquiry mailboxes would also be processed by 311 staff.

The centre would be staffed by up to 54 highly trained City employees in a new classification called Citizen Service Representative (CSRs). CSR's would accept calls on all City issues. The 311 software proposed to manage the intake of calls includes a "knowledge base", allowing all CSRs to quickly respond to questions and service requests for a wide variety of city matters. The 311 service standard would be to answer 80% of the calls within 30 seconds.

When the Implementation Phase of the 311 project is complete and the centre first opens in spring of 2008, CSR's will answer general inquiries for all City departments and boards and reliably transfer all other calls to the appropriate individual or service area. In the Enhancement Phase between 2009 and the 2013 business processes will transition from

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<sup>1</sup> Access to the service centre from land lines will be by dialling "311": Access from some cellular phone providers may be through a 10 digit number like XXX.XXX.X311.

departments to 311, and CSR's will process complaints, service requests and billing/payment requests.

When 311 Access Vancouver is fully implemented in 2012, it is estimated that 70% of calls will be closed at the completion of the citizen call to a CSR. Calls that cannot be closed by a CSR would either be "warm transferred" (CSR stays on the line until a departmental employee is reached), or the citizen would be provided a tracking number and an estimated completion time for their request. The file would then be referred for departmental action and, on completion of the request, closing of the tracking number.

Target performance goals, set by departments, and corresponding performance measures captured by the 311 software would be produced. This reporting has proven invaluable to other implemented 311 cities, and significant savings have been achieved by using the data to allocate resources more effectively.

To better serve our diverse population, the 311 call centre would employ CSR's fluent in Vancouver's predominant languages (such as Mandarin and Cantonese, as it is the first-tongue of over 27% of our citizens). The centre would also have available through a third-party service over-the-phone interpretation services in over 150 languages.

311 might also provide critical back-up to 911, especially in emergencies and disaster response. Currently, 911 lines are frequently utilized for non-emergency issues such as road closures and general information requests. A communication campaign such as those used in other 311 cities (one 311 slogan used is "Burning building, call 911. Burning question, call 311") would encourage citizens to call 311 for anything not considered "life and limb".

## **2. Business proposal and implementation strategy**

The report presented to Council on September 26, 2006 provided a high-level overview of the 311 feasibility study conducted between September, 2005 and August, 2006. The study showed that Vancouver's decentralized model for citizen service offered significant opportunity for improvement. The study team, in conjunction with departmental and board staff and subject matter experts, completed a business proposal that is attached as Appendix A to this report. The team is recommending a consolidated service model as a platform for 311, providing the best value to citizens and the City.

311 Access Vancouver represents a significant increase in service to our citizens and our staff. The process of developing and analysing the business proposal considered a number of issues, including the opportunities to produce savings in departmental operations that could assist in funding the 311 centre; the value of improving the quality, accessibility and accountability of our citizen service; the value of service standards; and, the value of timely, relevant performance data were weighed in making the recommendation to adopt a consolidated service model and 311 service.

The study of 311 systems implemented in other cities suggests that the adoption of the 311 consolidated model will avoid future costs related to:

- maintaining the organizational duplication associated with a decentralized model

- the capture of electronic data and creation of a knowledge data base for 311 may avoid future costs associated with web site renewal;
- identification of procedural inefficiencies and possible re-allocation of resources from the examination of 311 data trends

These kinds of “soft” benefits, though reported by most implemented 311’s, are difficult to quantify in the context of a traditional business case. And while the proposal before Council will result in an increase in costs over the current model, even after transferring service related funding from departments, the 311 business model will result in increased service to the public in terms of quality and consistency and in availability.

An implementation strategy has been compiled to guide the development of the project plan and subsequent build-out of the 311 business unit. The following high-level summary of the implementation strategy is offered.

Should Council provide approval for implementation, project staff position descriptions will be developed and a project team will be recruited or services acquired. A 311 Project Charter will be developed, including a detailed description of the project, deliverables, timeline, scope, stakeholders, risks and assumptions, a governance model, and guidelines for use of the proposed enhancement funding.

Using data collected and candidate 311 process recommendations made during the Feasibility Study as a starting point, departments and the 311 project team will finalize the list of processes for migration. Each process will be scheduled for migration, based on a variety of factors including the requirement for technology in 311 to handle the calls and the complexity of capturing the call data in the knowledge base. The phasing of the calls will take place as shown in the following table:

PHASE	Citizen Contact	Service Migration Priority
Implementation Phase (completed by spring, 2008)	General telephone inquiries and requests for transfer to a specific employee. Processing of citizen e-mail.	1 <sup>st</sup> priority: base level of service at 311 Access Vancouver implementation.
Enhancement Phases (2009 - 2013)	Complaints and requests for a basic service (e.g. garbage collection, pot hole or street lamp repair)	2 <sup>nd</sup> priority: first level of enhancement after 2009
	Requests for licenses, permits, booking facilities, course registration, billing inquiries or payment requests	3 <sup>rd</sup> priority: - second level of enhancement, likely after 2010

During the implementation phase, the project team will work with departments to validate processes that are candidate to transfer to the new 311 centre at go live (2008) and during subsequent enhancement phases. Further analysis will look at the costs of providing these

processes at the centre (essentially validating the anticipated operating model in the business plan) and at the associated funding that can be transferred from departments to offset these costs. In some cases, process and funding transfers will be easily accomplished. In other cases, process redesign may be required within departments resulting in delays in transferring funding. In each case, General Managers will be expected to sign off on the process and funding plan for their departments. By the end of the enhancement phase (2012) it is anticipated that departments will, at a minimum, fully fund the value of existing services transferred to the 311 centre. Further discussion of the full funding proposal is included in the Financial Implications Section.

The preparation for migration of processes from departments to 311 includes the collection of knowledge base data required to enable 311 CSR's to handle inquiries, determination of target service levels, the re-engineering of any fragmented processes or job descriptions left in departments, and the application of strategies to migrate staff where necessary.

Specific inquiries associated with each process identified for migration to 311 will be documented by the 311 project team. Departmental staff will advise the team of the appropriate information, response or action, and that information will be captured for loading into the knowledge base. In the knowledge base, the information will be retrievable through search keys, decision trees and questions and scripted information.

Where the process for migration to 311 will result in the CSR starting a work request for the department, the knowledge base information will include an expected response time from the department. Departments will set service levels, and then use 311 software reports to evaluate their actual performance to targets.

A number of the process migrations to 311 will result in departmental processes being split, leaving gaps in existing position descriptions. A 311 team member specializing in process review and re-engineering will be available to departments. The re-engineering specialist will review processes with departmental supervisors and managers and make recommendations for streamlining and, if necessary, re-bundling of position duties to reflect the refined processes. The protocols for transitioning processes and staff in these situations is discussed further in the Personnel Implications section below.

As with any major change initiative, communication is a fundamental element in ensuring a smooth transition. Resources have been planned within the scope of the project to assist departments in continuously updating staff on changes, and sharing information that would assist in meeting individual or departmental change goals. A 311 web site on the City's intranet will keep the organization up to date on project goals and progress.

Training programs will be developed for existing staff members wishing to upgrade their skills in preparation for competing for CSR positions, and a comprehensive training program will be developed and provided to staff hired into CSR positions.

The technical implementation will be centred around acquisition and installation of a call centre suite, and "customer relationship management" software including a knowledge management system and a case management system.

Development of the physical site for the citizen service centre will include renovations to an existing City building and establishment of work stations for staff.

### 3. Participation in the 311 Initiative: Corporate Policy

In order to leverage full benefit from the corporate investment in a consolidated 311 citizen service centre, sustained organizational commitment to the model is necessary. Should the organization invest in a consolidated citizen service model, and then only nominally utilize the system by failing to migrate all suitable processes into the model, inefficiency through duplication of effort and cost will result.

Because it is important to use the model as fully as possible to achieve the greatest benefits, it is proposed that Council establish as a policy objective the accessibility of all suitable citizen service processes to 311 Access Vancouver unless transferring the process would result in diminished service to citizens.

General Managers have agreed *in principle* to such an objective.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

##### 1. One-Time and Ongoing Costs

The September 26, 2006 report to Council provided a detailed table indicating the one-time and ongoing costs associated with the 311 Access Vancouver initiative. These costs are updated in the following table:

**311: One Time Implementation Costs**

Project Component	One Time Costs
Hardware / Software	\$ 3,918,300
Technical Support, Consulting & Training	1,042,800
Project Team / Change Management	3,202,400
Call Centre Facility	1,270,000
Contingency	1,043,100
<b>Total One Time Implementation Costs</b>	<b>\$10,476,600</b>
<b>Proposed Enhancement Fund</b>	<b>\$1,830,000</b>

One-time cost for the 311 Access Vancouver project is estimated at \$12.3 million. Acquiring, configuring and implementing the hardware and software and providing for a facility is estimated to cost \$10.47 million.

Following the implementation phase which will be completed in 2008 with the opening of the centre, the project will commence an enhancement phase during which the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> priority processes identified in the implementation phase (see the table on page 6 of this report) will be transitioned to the 311 centre. At the same time associated operating costs savings in the departments will be confirmed and transferred to at least offset incremental centre operating costs. It is anticipated that there will be a timing mismatch between



transfer of processes and freeing departmental funding. As a result, the project has made provision for an Enhancement Fund that will provide backfill funding and/or funding for departments to undertake redesign of their processes and deal with human resources issues. It is proposed that the Enhancement Fund be funded at \$1.83 million.

Once in full operation (2010), the ongoing operating costs of the fully enhanced 311 model are estimated to be \$5.63 million annually, generally as follows:

### 311: Ongoing Operating Costs

Cost Component	Operating Costs <sup>1</sup>
Hardware and Software Maintenance	\$ 630,200
Sustainment Team	321,400
Call Centre Staffing and Administration	3,995,100
Training	215,400
Telephone and Translation Services	151,300
Facility Costs	316,900
<b>Annual Operating Costs</b>	<b>\$5,630,300</b>

1. Operating Costs would be phased in between 2008 and 2011 as call centre functions are shifted from departments to the 311 centre.

The following table shows the anticipated cash flow for the implementation and enhancement phases of the project through 2013 (all costs show in \$2007).

	Notes	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
(\$2007 millions)								
Project Phasing	1.	Implementation Phase		Enhancement Phases				Full Operation
Expenditures								
One Time Costs	2.	10.47						
Base Ongoing Operating Costs	3.		2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50
Enhanced Operating Costs	4.			1.50	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.20
		10.47	2.50	4.00	5.70	5.70	5.70	5.70
Funding								
One Time Funding	2.	(12.30)						
Proposed Tax Increase	3.		(2.85)	(2.85)	(2.85)	(2.85)	(2.85)	(2.85)
Transfers from Departments	4.			(1.30)	(1.69)	(2.08)	(2.45)	(2.85)
		(12.30)	(2.85)	(4.15)	(4.54)	(4.93)	(5.30)	(5.70)
Annual (Surplus) / Shortfall		(1.83)	(0.35)	(0.15)	1.16	0.77	0.40	0.00
Enhancement Fund Balance	5.	(1.83)	(2.18)	(2.33)	(1.17)	(0.40)	(0.00)	(0.00)

#### Project Implementation Plan and Funding Requirements

- The 311 project will begin implementation in 2007 and go live in 2008 at base service levels.
- The one-time costs associated with establishing the call centre and purchasing and configuring software are estimated at \$10.47 million and will be mostly incurred in 2007 and 2008. Council is requested to fund these one-time costs by reallocating existing capital funds.
- Base ongoing operating costs will begin in 2008 at \$2.5 million. Council is being asked to fund the base operating costs at \$2.85 million through an increase in the Operating Budget beginning in 2008. This is equivalent to a tax increase of 0.5%.
- Enhancement Phase will begin immediately after implementation in 2008 and will continue through 2011. New operating costs will be added to the base as citizen service processes are transferred from departments. This cashflow utilizes the scheduling from the project implementation plan. Departments will be expected to fund the full impact of cost increases at the 311 Centre beyond the base operating scenario.
- Based on the cashflow in the 311 Business Plan, \$1.83 million of one-time funding (referred to as the Enhancement Fund) will be required to balance the timing difference between operating cost increases in the Enhancement Phase and the funding available for transfer from departments during 2010 to 2012. After 2012, 311 Access Vancouver will be self funding from the property tax increase and departmental funding transfers.

Note that by 2013, the Enhancement Fund balance will be fully utilized and the citizen service and 311 centre will be self funding.

## 2. Project Funding

### One Time Implementation Costs

The one time funding for the establishment 311 Access Vancouver was not specifically provided in the 2006 - 2008 Capital Plan. However, the plan does provide a \$5.0 million allocation for three projects being championed by the City Clerk: a 311 call centre project, the Electronic Records Management System (ERDMS) project and upgrading of the City's electronic voting equipment. The voting equipment upgrade will not be proceeding during this capital plan and the funding is not necessary. Initial work on the ERDMS project is underway and Council will receive a report in early 2007 updating the full project scope and funding needs. While this project is a priority of the Corporate Management Team, it can be phased, freeing some funding for the 311 Access Vancouver project.

As noted above, the one-time costs to implement 311 Access Vancouver are estimated at \$12.3 million. As the Water, Solid Waste and Sewer Utilities account for much of the citizen service contacts at the City, it is appropriate that they contribute to the one-time and ongoing costs. It is recommended that \$2.0 million be funded from the respective rate stabilization reserves. Initially the project will be funded equally by the reserves with the final allocations based on the proportion of calls identified for each utility in the implementation phase.

The Capital Plan Staff Review Group was asked to consider how the \$10.3 million balance of the funding could be provided by reallocating existing funding in the 2006-2008 Capital Plan. Because of the difficulties associated with reallocating debenture authority, the group concentrated on those programs/projects funded from capital from revenue. The following summarizes their recommendations and comments:

<i>Source of Funding</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Hastings Park: Renfrew Street Entrance Plaza Improvements	\$2.0 million	These funds were provided to ensure that the Renfrew Street entrance to Hastings Park would be improved by 2010. However, there is sufficient funding in the Hastings Park Reserve (\$3.3 million) to complete this work in a manner consistent with the longer term redevelopment plans.
Cultural Reinvestment / Olympic Legacies	\$3.3 million	The Capital Plan includes \$10 million as leverage funds for the development of the Cultural Precinct and Olympic Legacy projects. Council has approved the allocation of \$1.0 million for miscellaneous Olympic Legacy projects and \$4.0 million to the redevelopment of the Civic Theatres. Reallocation of the balance of these funds in advance of the 2007 Capital Budget will ensure the 311 centre is completed by 2010.
Electronic Records Management System	\$3.0 million	The ERDMS implementation is a necessary but significant systems project that can be phased over two Capital Plans if the 311 project proceeds. The remaining funding of \$2 million will be used to begin the project subject to a report to Council.
Street Lighting Program	\$2.0 million	This reallocation will require the City Engineer to review the Engineering Capital Plan and establish priority work to be completed in 2007 and 2008. If additional funding is required, one option would be to access funding allocated for the Expo Deck adjacent to Science World. Staff are pursuing a replacement of this infrastructure to secure it for the long term rather than a short term repair and may access DCL or future capital funding.
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10.3 million</b>	

The recommended capital plan funding has not yet been approved as part of the capital budget. Approval of Recommendation C will commit Council to \$10.3 million of capital from revenue in the 2007 Capital Budget to fully fund the 311 project. The 2007 Operating Budget currently proposes capital from revenue of \$18.0 million. In the interim, the Director of Finance will provide interim financing from internal sources.

Taken together with the funding from the Utilities, these sources provide the \$12.3 million one-time funding for the 311 Access Vancouver implementation.

### **Base Operating Costs**

311 Access Vancouver represents a significant improvement to citizen service by providing single number access on a 24 hour, seven day a week basis compared to the current decentralized services offered during normal business hours. As service improvements are normally funded by additional funding in the Operating Budget, it is proposed that the base operating cost be funded from an increase to the Operating Budget of \$2.85 million starting in 2008 and ongoing. This incremental funding is anticipated to be equivalent to a 0.5% property tax increase.

### **Enhanced Operating Funds**

Once the 311 business unit has been established in 2008, the enhancement phase will begin. During this phase which extends out to 2012, the citizen service processes identified in the implementation phase will be transitioned into the new centre. General Managers have agreed that as processes are transferred, offsetting departmental budget reductions will at least fund the remainder of the centre's annual operating requirements. Based on the processes identified for transfer to the 311 centre during the business planning phase it is anticipated that ongoing centre operating costs will increase by approximately \$2.85 million to be at least offset by departmental funding transfers. Enhancement to the 311 centre and the transfer of departmental funding will be managed by the Corporate Management Team and reported to Council as part of the annual Operating Budget process so that any associated service impacts are transparent.

### **Enhancement Fund**

The project funding plan considers the potential for there to be mismatches between the transfer of process from departments and the transfer of funding. It is proposed that an Enhancement Fund be available to ensure that 311 centre operating costs can be funded while departments put in place redesigned processes to accommodate the funding transfers. The Enhancement Fund will be funded by a combination of the one-time funding identified above and surplus funding from the proposed operating budget increase to fund the base operating costs.

## **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

### **1. Staff Opportunities:**

The implementation of the 311 citizen service centre will result in the establishment of up to 54 new Citizen Service Representative (CSR) positions, and two new training programs.

There are two categories of CSRs who will comprise the total anticipated staff complement of up to 54 CSRs - existing staff from all boards, service groups and departments, and new hires from outside of the organization. While some of the current staff may possess some of the knowledge and skills, it is anticipated that there will be significant new knowledge and skill requirements.

To prepare existing staff for the CSR job competitions, existing CityLearn programs will be augmented with modules focusing on bridging the gap between the typical skill-set of existing front-line staff and the skill-set which will be required of CSR's. It is anticipated that this training will be offered starting in 2007.

The formal CSR training will span numerous weeks and include a blend of classroom delivery, hands-on experiential learning and formal ongoing coaching. The training program will include an orientation to the City, comprehensive citizen service skills, technology skills (including use of 311 equipment and software) and targeted information on City programs and services.

## 2. Staff And Positions Changes

Where the process migration to 311 will result in splits in departmental processes and related gaps in existing position descriptions, a 311 team member specializing in process review and re-engineering will be available to departments. The re-engineering specialist will review processes with departmental supervisors and managers and make recommendations for streamlining and, if necessary, re-bundling of position duties to reflect the refined processes.

Wherever individual positions and/or incumbent employees will be impacted, the departmental Human Resource Consultant (HRC) will be involved to ensure that consistent HR policies and are applied and collective agreements are adhered to. HRC's will determine, in consultation with departmental managers, when position descriptions have changed such that a classification validation is warranted.

Where the process migration to 311 and subsequent re-engineering will result in whole or partial position redundancy, departmental supervisors and managers, in consultation with the HRC and the employee, will explore a number of options:

- o priority consideration for alternate available positions
- o rebundling of work to create viable continuing positions
- o transition of employee to an existing vacant position
- o offer the employee CityLearn courses or "311 gap" training (bridging the knowledge/skill gap between many existing front line positions and 311 CSR positions) to better position employees for upcoming general and 311 CSR competitions
- o explore other options of interest to the employee and assist in coaching towards those goals

As employees are transitioned into alternative duties and positions become vacant, wherever possible capturing the savings will be done through attrition and/or vacancy management in order to avoid layoffs of regular full time positions.

## CONCLUSION

In considering 311, the City can take the next step in evolving to superior public service delivery and accountability. 311 is a significant step toward a single front door to City Hall. It enables the City to adapt to the complexity of its demographics by making language

response economically feasible. 311 provides the infrastructure that, over time, will enable public programs and services to be changed and adapted to public needs based on evidence.

Adoption of 311 Access Vancouver represents an opportunity and an investment in our commitment to citizen service. It will demonstrate Vancouver's commitment to quality, accessibility, inclusivity, and accountability, and our commitment to be an employer of choice. The "excellence in citizen service" model will affirm Vancouver's position as a leader in local government improvement initiatives.

\* \* \* \* \*

311 Access Vancouver -  
Proposal for a City of Vancouver  
Consolidated Citizen Service Contact Centre

November 17, 2006

Draft 4.4

## Table of Contents

<b>1 Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2 Background</b> .....	<b>5</b>
2.1 Business Need for a Citizen Service Model .....	5
2.2 Rationale .....	5
2.3 Scope .....	6
2.3.1 Citizens' Expectations .....	6
(1) External Research .....	6
(2) City of Vancouver Citizen Access Survey .....	7
2.3.2 Introduction of 311 .....	9
2.3.3 N11 Environment .....	12
2.4 Current State - City of Vancouver .....	13
2.4.1 Current Citizen Service Model .....	13
2.4.2 Process Mapping Project Findings .....	13
2.4.3 Customer Experience Program .....	15
2.4.4 Assessment of Current Model .....	15
<b>3 Options</b> .....	<b>17</b>
3.1 Option 1 - Status Quo .....	17
3.2 Option 2 - Take & Transfer .....	18
3.3 Option 3 - Consolidated Contact Centre .....	19
3.4 Other Options Considered .....	22
<b>4 Analysis of Options</b> .....	<b>23</b>
4.1 Impact on Citizens - Addressing Business Need .....	23
4.2 Human Resource Implications .....	24
4.3 Financial Implications .....	25
4.4 Strategic Risk Assessment .....	25
<b>5 Recommendations</b> .....	<b>27</b>
5.1 Define Scope .....	27
5.2 Approve Option .....	27
5.2.1 Financial Impacts .....	27
5.2.2 Risk Assessment .....	28
5.3 Approve Critical Success Factors .....	29
5.4 Approve Implementation Strategy .....	30
5.4.1 Timeline .....	30
5.4.2 Stakeholders .....	31
5.4.3 Risks .....	31



## **1 Executive Summary**

The City of Vancouver currently serves a population of approximately 600,000 people and provides service to the public through eleven departments, service groups and boards. Citizens access the City of Vancouver in a number of ways, but research indicates that telephone access continues to be the preferred channel. Across Canada, citizen demands for service are increasing. They expect accessibility, consistency, quality, and accountability, and judge public sector organizations on timeliness, fairness, knowledge, courtesy and outcome.

Citizen service via telephone at the City is currently offered through a highly decentralized model. Each service area is responsible for its own citizen telephone contact, which enables each service area to be specialists in what they do, and maintain direct contact with citizens. While this decentralized model has some benefits, it also has substantial limitations. When citizens need services from the City of Vancouver, they are faced with over 40 "Frequently Called Numbers" and 550 phone listings in the Blue Pages. Of the approximately 1.4 million telephone calls made to the City by citizens annually, nine percent are misdirected, resulting in frustration for citizens and a loss in productivity for departments. The current system does not have the capacity to track citizen requests and does not enable sharing of information across departments.

Many alternatives for citizen service were examined, and three viable options were identified. The first option, which would result in no improvement in service, would be to take no action and leave services as they are currently delivered. The second option would establish a central number to act as City of Vancouver contact centre, known as a Take and Transfer centre, and citizen information and service requests would continue to be fulfilled in departments. This option would eliminate the need for citizens to identify who to call, but would not provide any further benefits to citizens. The third option would be to adopt a centralized citizen service model, utilizing a 311 telephone number, and supporting technology. The model enables a "one stop shop" for the majority of information and basic service needs for citizens twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. This business proposal recommends adoption of the third option.

Full operation will be achieved in two major phases. Phase one would commence with project approval and be complete in the spring of 2008, as the 311 centre opens for service to citizens. The new 311 centre will start by offering direct responses to general inquiries for all City departments and Boards (approximately 400,000 annually or 29% of all requests). During this start-up period, Citizen Service Representatives would also reliably transfer all other calls to the appropriate individual or business areas, thereby eliminating misdirected calls. The second phase would involve the transition of further processes, such as complaints, service requests, facility booking and payment/billing requests from Departments and Boards to the 311 centre. The implementation of this model would necessitate a one-time investment of \$12.3 million, and \$5.63 million in annual operating costs once the business unit was fully functional (approximately 2012).

## Appendix A to Council Report

There are significant benefits delivered by the 311 model. Citizens will either have their request responded to immediately or be provided with a case number from which to track their request, if necessary. As the 311 software tracks requests over time, substantial data will be available to departments regarding the demand for services and departmental performance. This management information data will enable managers to enact program changes to improve efficiency and further align resources to citizen demand. The consolidated model provides an opportunity to employ Citizen Service Representatives with predominant languages spoken in Vancouver, such as Mandarin and Cantonese. The model further provides the capacity to access third-party over-the-phone interpretation services in over 150 languages. A consolidated contact centre would play a central role in response to emergencies and critical events by acting as central information provider for all city services. The presence of a backup to 911 would increase the capacity of the city to respond to emergencies and critical incidents. In sum, the consolidated option increases accessibility for citizens, improves operating efficiency and performance management, enhances corporate knowledge, and increased accountability to citizens.

Establishment of a consolidated citizen service centre and 311 dialling option has the potential to fundamentally change the way in which the City interacts with the citizens of Vancouver while improving accessibility and service delivery. The drivers for change are numerous - the CRTC approval of 311 as a contact number for municipal non-emergency services, demonstrable evidence of success with 311 in the U.S., increasing emergency response capacity, numerous Canadian cities proceeding to implement such systems - but it is the identified need for change and potentially significant benefits for the City of Vancouver and its citizens that make the most powerful case for transforming the City's approach to public accessibility and service delivery.

## Appendix A to Council Report

### **2 Background**

#### **2.1 Business Need for a Citizen Service Model**

The City of Vancouver is an organization known for its innovation and award-winning service delivery. The City has been moving towards increased accountability and accessibility and has been recognized as a leader in public consultation and interaction with citizens.

The City of Vancouver currently serves a population of approximately 600,000 people and provides service to the public through eleven departments, service groups and boards. These departments, boards and service groups together employ over 9,000 people. It is a large and complex public sector organization that offers numerous services and programs, and the public can find over 550 phone numbers in the Blue Pages, including 40 frequently called numbers, to call in addition to numerous walk-in/counter, email and web access points.

Most citizen service processes are decentralized, and there is no central telephone information or service entry point for citizens. 911 remains citizens' contact point for emergencies and critical incidents, but there is no central contact number for information regarding non-life and limb calls such as flooding or city emergency support services. While some individual service processes may have service standards, most do not, and there is no corporate service standard for citizen service transactions. The City does not utilize a process to track the status of service or information requests for internal or citizen use, and there are limited performance measures for service delivery and quality throughout the organization. In sum, the accessibility, accountability, consistency and quality of city services are increasingly difficult to manage with the City's existing systems and processes.

In order to maintain and support its reputation as a superior public sector organization, the City of Vancouver needs to address the challenges with the current citizen service systems. Citizen service is an organization-wide issue and the development of a citizen-centred service model will benefit the City of Vancouver and its' stakeholders.

#### **2.2 Rationale**

There are a number of drivers behind the business need to develop a citizen centred service model. First, citizen expectations regarding government service delivery have risen. Citizens have become more knowledgeable and more involved in their governments and are demanding more information, more access and more accountability. The second primary driver behind the need for a citizen centred service is the introduction of 311 to Canada. While 311 in its most simplistic definition is just a phone number, it has been used as the catalyst to transform municipal governments into citizen-centred organizations across North America and has been demonstrated to increase local governments' capacity to respond to emergencies and critical events.

## Appendix A to Council Report

### **2.3 Scope**

A full spectrum citizen centred service model would include all elements of citizen contact with the City of Vancouver. The scope of this initiative has been defined as contact with citizens via telephone. The rationale for the scope limitation is two-fold. First, telephone contacts remain citizens' primary method of communication with the City of Vancouver and with government in Canada in general, and second, a section of the City's population does not have internet access. These two factors drive the business need for change in telephone services first.

The development of a complete Citizen Service Strategy, building on the capacity of the consolidated contact centre model, would guide development of future initiatives which would focus on other communication channels with citizens, such as enhanced web and counter services. It is recommended that other aspects of a Citizen Service Strategy be investigated to further develop the City of Vancouver into a Centre for Citizen Service Excellence.

#### **2.3.1 Citizens' Expectations**

##### **(1) External Research**

What are citizen expectations regarding government service delivery? Research by the Citizen Centred Service Network of the Canadian Centre for Management Development (CCMD)<sup>1</sup> outlines citizen experiences with the delivery of public services and indicate the public's priorities for improvement. This research was published in *Citizens First 3*.

*Citizens First 3*, provides insight into the relationship between government services and public perceptions and expectations. The main findings from this report indicate that:

- "Service quality shapes citizens' confidence in their governments" and although confidence in government has been falling, improving service quality and access can reverse this trend;
- "Multiple channels of access are now the norm" and service consistency across multiple channels is critical to service quality;
- "Solutions for the telephone are pinpointed" and although the telephone is the preferred channel of access, its satisfaction level had the lowest ratings due to continued problems with directory listings, busy telephone lines, difficulties with voicemail and multiple transfers;
- "Electronic service delivery can increase satisfaction ratings in some cases;" and
- "Access remains an important challenge."

Based on these observations, public service expectations generally fall into one of four categories - accessibility, consistency, quality, and accountability.

The most recent of the Citizens First reports (*Citizens First 4*) provides recommendations for increasing public confidence in public service organizations:

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<sup>1</sup> Published by the Institute of Public Administration on a biannual basis. Based on the results of national surveys of nine thousand Canadians

## Appendix A to Council Report

- o *Stay close to citizens*
- o *Improve the drivers to improve satisfaction even further*
- o *Manage and align service channels*
- o *Continue to build confidence through service improvements*
- o *Celebrate service achievements*

In regard to channels into government information and services, Citizens First 4 results indicate a primary preference for access via telephone service. The Internet is primarily used in support of other channels and to find information. For the services rated and described in Citizens First (government services), the Internet is rarely the only channel used, and most often when 3 or more channels are used.

Number of Channels used in recent experience	% who used internet
One Channel	8%
Two Channels	20%
Three or more	62%

The *Citizens First 4 Summary Report* concludes with the acknowledgement that service quality and service satisfaction is good and is continually improving. The public sector in Canada is moving towards more citizen-centric service, and the results are improving public confidence in government.

The Pew Internet and American Life Project reports results which support the Citizens First surveys. The 2004 survey "How Americans Get in Touch with Government" reports that while internet users say e-government improves their relationship with government, there are a number of limitations to this channel. Citizens' technological assets, preferences, and the range of problems people bring to government limits internet usage as a means of communications. Survey results indicate the following:

- o 42% of respondents used telephone last time they contacted government;
- o 29% used a government website to contact government
- o 20% visited in person

When respondents were asked what way they would most prefer to contact government, telephone topped the list:

- o 40% preferred telephone as primary means to contact government;
- o 24% preferred website contact
- o 13% indicated in-person contact

### **(2) City of Vancouver Citizen Access Survey**

In order to determine the current satisfaction levels and expectations of City of Vancouver citizens regarding service standards and access to city information and services, a public opinion survey of 604 citizens was conducted by telephone in July 2006 by Synovate, Inc, a professional market research firm. The survey objectives were to evaluate citizen satisfaction and expectations regarding access to information and services, determine actual and preferred communication channels, and identify priorities for improvement.

## Appendix A to Council Report

### *Survey Findings*

The survey findings identify a number of areas for improvement in citizen service at the City of Vancouver. While citizens are reasonably satisfied with overall quality of service, the results indicate a disconnect between citizen satisfaction with current service and their expectations with regard to that service. This disconnect will affect the City of Vancouver's ability to maintain and increase satisfaction levels of citizens.

Citizens indicated their service delivery expectations are not being met to their satisfaction in a number of service areas. These included the following: "I waited a reasonable amount of time.", "Hours of service", "Staff went the extra mile" and "I was able to get through without difficulty". These then are the areas in which the City of Vancouver could make the greatest impact. By reducing waiting time, increasing hours of access, enabling staff, and ensuring citizens have access to staff without difficulty, satisfaction with service will be maintained and increased.

One of the objectives of the survey was to determine how citizens currently access city information and services, and their preferences for future access. The most preferred method of accessing information or service is by telephone (39%), followed closely by Internet (36%). Although many contacts last year were in person, this is not the preferred method (only 15%). Citizens were also asked about access to Internet/web-sites. Survey results indicate 15% of COV citizens do not have access to internet. Those who do not have internet access are more heavily weighted in the Northeast and southeast quadrants of city, are older than 65, and identified themselves as Chinese.

Citizens were also asked to comment on hours of operation and language access. Three-quarters of residents feel that the current regular office hours are convenient, but a number of citizens did indicate increased access would be preferred. The importance of access in other languages was strongly supported by citizens. Seven in ten residents feel that it is important that the City of Vancouver provide information and services in languages other than English, with one-half indicating it is very important.

Finally, six in ten Vancouver residents believe having a centralized centre with one telephone number for citizens to call to access all city information and services would be effective. Residents' main reasons for believing a centralized contact centre would be effective is that it would replace the need to call different departments and that a single number would be easier to remember.

### *Comparative Results*

The core of the Citizen Access Survey was based upon a series of questions that focus on citizen service delivery and citizen satisfaction developed by the Institute for Citizen Centred Services (ICCS). These questions form the foundation for the ICCS's Citizens First Surveys, and are being increasingly used by all levels of government in Canada to determine citizen satisfaction and expectations regarding service delivery. By using these questions, the City of Vancouver gained access to the ICCS database to benchmark its performance to other similar organizations across the country.

The results of the City of Vancouver survey were compared with three groups: 1) other local/municipal governments, 2) other public sector organizations, and 3) all other



## Appendix A to Council Report

organizations in the ICCS databank (public, private, not for profit, and non-governmental). It is necessary to note that the comparative group for municipal/local governments is limited, so comparisons with public sector organizations are more valid and will be the primary comparative utilized in this analysis.

Overall, benchmarking indicates that the citizens of the City of Vancouver are less satisfied with service than those surveyed in all three comparison groups. In terms of citizen satisfaction with overall service delivery, the City of Vancouver is ranked 43<sup>rd</sup> of 63 public sector organizations. Average satisfaction with this group is over 80%, while the City of Vancouver is at 73%. Other comparatives included accessibility of service (ranked 25 out of 33), timeliness (31 of 50), fair treatment (17 of 31), reasonable wait (14 of 18), and the convenience of hours of service (13 of 14). In summary, the results of the benchmarking indicate, on average, the citizens of Vancouver are less satisfied with service delivery than with other public sector service delivery.

### **2.3.2 Introduction of 311**

311 is a three digit contact number for access to non-emergency municipal government services. This contact number was approved for use in the United States in February 1997 and in Canada in November 2004. The comparable is 911, which is for emergency services.

311 is more than a telephone number to access municipal services. The 311 service delivery model represents an opportunity for municipalities to move from operationally-focussed service provision to provision that is citizen-centric and focuses on accessibility, consistency, quality and accountability.

The heart of the 311 system is the contact centre which utilizes highly trained and professional staff together with technology to provide superior service to citizens. 311 systems are typically characterized by consistent, integrated service delivery ("No wrong door/number"), the capacity to track service requests and complaints to point of resolution, the development of service level agreements between citizens, departments and 311, and the improved allocation of resources to address issues.

### **311 systems in North America**

#### United States

In the US, the primary purpose of the implementation of 311 systems was to relieve congestion on 911 emergency systems. As municipal governments began to develop their 311 initiatives, however, it became apparent that 311 also afforded them the opportunity to make significant improvements to their approaches to public access, information management and service delivery.

U.S. 311 systems vary in the types of non-emergency calls handled, as designated by each individual municipality. While some cities have limited their 311 service to police and fire non-emergency, many US cities have implemented full-scale 311 implementations which aim to answer and resolve 70-90% of all citizen calls or requests at first contact.

## Appendix A to Council Report

311 has been credited in the U.S. with meeting their original objective to reduce non-emergency calls to 911 and to enable separate non-emergency call response. 311 cities have utilized their consolidated contact centres as their primary contact for citizens for non-life and limb issues during recent emergencies. Houston utilized 311 as the means to provide information to citizens to facilitate evacuation of the city during Hurricane Rita in October 2005. 311 in Chicago was used as the contact point for citizens to access information regarding cooling centres during recent heat waves. The use of 311 as critical incident support has resulted in significantly faster response times for true emergencies in US cities. Further, the implementation of 311 in US cities has allowed for improved public access to municipal services and has demonstrably improved the effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of municipal service delivery.

### Canada

The primary purpose of 311 implementations in Canada has been to improve public access and service delivery. 911 may benefit from reduced non-emergency calls to 911 once 311 service models are implemented, but rather than being the primary driver to moving forward, this is a desirable benefit of the introduction of this service.

Four Canadian cities have implemented 311 systems (Calgary, Gatineau, Ottawa and Windsor), and many others are at various stages in planning their 311 initiatives. The scope of services accessed by dialling 311 will vary according to each municipality based on the suitability of 311 to the services they provide, available resources, corporate structures, and on their own assessment of operational readiness.

The City of Calgary is the first Canadian city to implement 311. Their contact centre went "live" in May 2005 with a 24/7 contact centre involving approximately 60% of municipal departments. The remaining civic departments will be integrated into the 311 system over Calgary's three year implementation period. The 311 system enables business units to track individual information and service requests from intake to resolution. The City of Calgary has reduced average handle time by 30 seconds since the implementation of 311 technology. This is a substantial reduction when the volumes are considered.

The emergency and critical response capability of 311 was validated during the floods of May-June 2005 in Calgary. Citizens were able to contact 311 for information regarding flooding, municipal services, and support services. In addition, staff were able to utilize data collected by the 311 system to identify operational issues such as particular areas hard-hit by flooding, and were then able to target resources to those areas. The links between the 311 system and the City of Calgary's GIS system enable powerful reporting capabilities. Many 311 cities utilize their 311 systems in this manner.

The cities of Toronto, Edmonton and Sudbury have approved moving forward with the implementation of 311 systems. Other cities are in advanced planning or business case preparation, including Halifax, Hamilton, Montreal, and Winnipeg.



## Appendix A to Council Report

### Benefits of 311

Benefits of 311 include Accountability, Accessibility, Quality & Consistency:

- Improvement to citizen satisfaction, accessibility and engagement
- Development of a centre for citizen service excellence
- Opportunities for cost improvement
- Improved operating efficiency and performance management, including better data (for performance measurement and 'first indicator' alerts)
- An ability to resource more effectively and establish the City as a single voice to the community
- Improved capacity to service language needs and a grow population base
- The ability to more effectively address "peaks and valleys" City-wide
- An ability to manage growing service demands without additional staff
- Improved public accountability
- Secondary emergency response system

#### *To the Citizen:*

##### Accessibility

- "One stop, no wrong door" service for all questions, requests and concerns, with referral in a limited number of cases
- Backup to 911 for emergencies and critical events
- Extended service hours
- Support for multiple languages
- Access to information databases and FAQ's

##### Consistency

- Timely service levels regardless of the service channel
- A corporate knowledge base and standardized answers and scripts for common inquiries

##### Quality

- Quality, accurate, consistent and up to date information for all service channels
- Service quality controls including performance evaluations that consider response time, citizen satisfaction, referrals, call length, wait time, and abandoned calls
- Operating standards around service levels; and

##### Accountability

- The ability to track service requests from point of inquiry through to resolution
- Opportunities for ongoing feedback.

#### *To Employees*

- Creation of new role within civic structure - highly skilled and valued customer service representative
- Provision of tools to deliver high quality service
- Creation of career paths for customer service professionals
- Access to training and coaching

#### *To the Organization*

## Appendix A to Council Report

### Accountability

- Service Level Agreements set operating standards - Increased accountability for service
- Better decision making information/data e.g. for budget reviews, future policy decisions, impact of current decisions
- Improved availability of information on how to service these calls e.g. once volume and types of calls are known, an analysis can be made as to which services can be moved to an automated line (with self serve being encouraged, a reduction in reliance on staff occurs resulting in cost savings or increased capacity to service more clients/customers without increased costs)
- Preserves corporate memory
- Status of requests - easily tracked and available across channels

### Accessibility

- Increased accessibility, simplifies the government phone book
- Increased access - entire organization shares the same information
- Improved capacity to service language needs and a grow population base

### Quality

- Streamlined service provision
- Increased satisfaction of workforce (staff respond to being supported in their jobs, having the right tools and being able to provide quality service)
- Improved accuracy/completeness and consistency in responses, projects a professional well managed public image for the public (this also reduces costs)
- Integration with work order management allows for increased efficiency in dispatch
- Increased public confidence in municipal government.
- City-wide technologies provide timely, quality data for internal and external use - Centralizing information will shorten time required to answer and resolve issues for our staff and citizens.
- Effectively manage peaks and valleys of call volumes
- Increase quality of call resolution (fewer transfers resulting in lower costs to City)

### Consistency

- One citizen service strategy city-wide
- Improved information management through central repository
- Contact centre frees up front-line staff, thereby increasing productivity
- Central repository allows for quick, consistent responses; and
- Well defined processes for creating, updating, and publishing
- The ability to more effectively address "peaks and valleys" City-wide

### **2.3.3 N11 Environment**

"N11" numbers are becomingly recognized as effective communication tools with citizens. 911 is widely used throughout Canada and the US to access emergency services, 411 is commonly used as directory assistance, 611 is reserved for use by telecommunications providers, and 711 is utilized for Telecommunications Relay Service (service for the hearing impaired). Other N11 numbers are being implemented throughout Canada. 211 has been assigned for community and social services, and 811

## **Appendix A to Council Report**

has been assigned for health services. 211 service is currently available in Calgary, Edmonton and Toronto. There is an initiative underway in British Columbia within government and non-profit organizations to deliver access to citizens province-wide via a 211 system. An application has recently been approved by the CRTC to assign 511 as the three-digit contact number for information regarding traffic and weather.

### **2.4 Current State - City of Vancouver**

A detailed examination of the City of Vancouver's current model is necessary in order to determine the state of our current citizen service. The following sections will describe the results of the current state assessment conducted as part of the 311 Feasibility Study. It is important to note that the scope of the study was limited to citizen service via telephone only. Internet and walk-in/counter service was out of scope for the purposes of this study.

#### **2.4.1 Current Citizen Service Model**

As previously stated, the City of Vancouver provides service to the public through eleven departments, service groups and boards. These departments, boards and service groups together employ over 9,000 people. The organization currently operates with a decentralized citizen service model that includes many contact points for access to City services. Each department operates independently and each has a different procedure and control for phone, walk-in, fax, email, web access and e-commerce contacts with citizens. There are approximately 57 areas within the city that act as contact centres for a variety of information and services for citizens. In addition, community centres, recreation centres and libraries act as citizen contact centres.

As many staff carry out a variety of duties as part of their position, it is difficult to determine the exact number of FTE's assigned to telephone citizen service. There are instances throughout the organization of positions dedicated to telephone contact, but these are not the norm in the city's decentralized citizen service model. Based upon the feasibility study research, it has been determined that approximately 155 city staff play a direct role in citizen service via telephone (this number does not include community centre or library branch staff), however this number cannot be used to calculate costs of service as only a portion of each staff's daily workload is for telephone service.

Each department has a different approach to providing customer service, and many have embarked on citizen-service improvement initiatives in the past. All departments have an interest in providing a high level of customer service to the citizen. However, departments have identified available resources, information challenges, and communication issues as their key concerns when reflecting on their service to citizens.

#### **2.4.2 Process Mapping Project Findings**

From May to July 2006, further research into the City's current state was conducted through the process mapping project. The objective of this work was to document all telephone citizen contact processes (e.g. a citizen calling to report a need for service,

## Appendix A to Council Report

such as a pothole, or to make an inquiry, such as hours of operation for a library or community centre) at the City of Vancouver and collect relevant details regarding those contacts.

The process mapping project included a comprehensive data collection phase. Meetings were held with the supervisors and staff involved in citizen service delivery in all departments (57 locations total) to identify processes. These included site visits, face to face interviews, a web survey, and telephone calls. Findings were reported back to each of the original contacts and validated until departments were satisfied with results and the final maps. The details collected include (for each process) volume, frequency, average handle time (during and after call), seasonality, risks, resource requirements, technologies, and escalations (if service representative escalates issue to a subject matter expert or specialist).

The service request maps not only demonstrate how the city responds to citizen telephone calls, they provide a complete picture of the resources required to fulfill each information or service request, any seasonality or variations, risks associated with processes, and identification of the systems and technologies utilized by staff.

Data collected during this exercise yielded the following information regarding the current state of the City of Vancouver's citizen service:

- Approximate 1.4 million calls per year;
- Average Call Handle time is 238 seconds;
- 57 contact points (not including library branches, community centres or recreation centres);
- Over 400 processes.

The most significant finding of the service request mapping project is the degree of decentralization at the City of Vancouver that was evident by the volume of the service request maps themselves. Similar projects at comparable Canadian cities have resulted in between 250-325 service process maps. The project at the City of Vancouver has documented over 400 different citizen service request processes. The number is significantly higher than comparable cities, and indicates the complexity of this organization in regard to citizen service and the resulting challenge in navigating the bureaucracy for our citizens. There may be similar processes (which might otherwise be identified as one process, such as complaints or general inquiries), but as they are handled in different ways with different technologies or systems, the processes must be identified separately. The complexity increases the number of access points, staff time, system/technology requirements, and results in a complex bureaucracy for citizens.

A second significant finding from the service request mapping project is the volume of misdirected calls at the City of Vancouver. Misdirected calls are generally defined as reaching the wrong department or the wrong person. All areas reported receiving misdirected calls, and over half identified the numbers of misdirected calls as significant enough to be identified as a separate service request. The total of misdirected calls city-wide is over 120,000 - almost 9% of overall phone calls. This is a considerable burden for city staff, a loss of productivity to the City of Vancouver, and an inconvenience for citizens.

## Appendix A to Council Report

Other findings regarding the current state indicate inefficiencies in the current model. In many instances, specialists are the main resource for call handling, regardless of the complexity. The project also noted a higher than average use of voicemail, due to the use of specialists as direct contacts. These specialists are often in the field, and unable to be available for citizens at all times. The lack of call data was also noted as an issue. With only minimal information available regarding call statistics and service requests, departments are unable to accurately track resource requirements and unable to optimize workflow. Different centres are currently handling service requests related to similar issues. For example, three different departments handle service requests related to trees and two handle service requests related to street cleaning. Finally, approximately 400,000 (29% of service requests) are for general inquiries. As previously noted, in many centres it is subject matter experts or specialists who are responsible for telephone contacts and are answering this considerable volume of public calls, resulting in decreased capacity to focus on complex issues.

### ***2.4.3 Customer Experience Program***

As part of the City of Vancouver 311 feasibility study, a Customer Experience Program (CEP) was undertaken to help assess the services provided through the current model. The CEP focuses solely on the current level of service provided over the phone, with a view to identifying the possible improvements that may be identified in a citizen service strategy. To assess the service currently provided, actual calls from the public were recorded and monitored to determine their ranking against industry standards and leading practices.

The results of the CEP indicate that the level of service provided by the City could be greatly improved. In many cases this amounts to ensuring staff have a proper understanding of the service that is expected of them as established through organizational policies and effective agent training. The CEP also observed that in many cases there were long gaps between calls. This may also represent an opportunity to improve organizational efficiency, if fill-in work is not being performed during these calls, through consolidating operations through a citizen service centre to create higher call volumes and shorter gaps between calls. A consolidated citizen service centre can also offer advantages in ensuring good customer service is consistently achieved by reducing the complexity of managing service through a decentralized service delivery model and creating a single vision of service for the City. Economies of scale offered by a citizen service centre would also help ensure an effective agent training program is established, including customer service training.

### ***2.4.4 Assessment of Current Model***

Citizens are faced with an organization that can be difficult to navigate, evident by the volume of misdirected incoming calls and the complexity of service processes. There is limited coordination between departments, limited tools to support citizen service staff, limited performance standards, varying technologies and an overall sense of disconnect when considering the City entity.

## Appendix A to Council Report

At the present time, the decentralized model utilized for citizen service supports the following issues:

- High rate of mis-directed calls;
- Similar but separate service processes. Can lead to duplication, does not allow integrated response;
- Decentralized approach to handling telephone peaks and valleys.
- Effective use of time. There are a number of areas in which specialists have primary responsibility for telephone service. Due to volume of misdirected and general inquiries, there is a direct impact on the ability to carry out more complex work;
- Technological Issues. Each department currently utilizes a wide variety of systems to provide service;
- Information/Knowledge Management. Time and effort is spent gathering information from a number of sources.

In addition to the above quantitative considerations, the current state assessment identified the following qualitative challenges which affect public accessibility and the provision of services:

- No consistent level of service - service quality depends on the point of contact reached;
- No comprehensive public access strategy or standards for citizen service delivery;
- Little interaction or coordination between access points for the public;
- Lack of backup to 911 system in cases of emergencies or critical events;
- Significant challenges for staff because of a lack of integration between current work order systems, dispatch operations, and information systems;
- No system in place for staff reference that provides reliable, accurate, current information, including a strong search engine that provides quick, relevant responses; and
- Lack of procedure, processes to determine/find "right" person to talk to;
- Limited capacity for the City to efficiently track service outcomes on behalf of the public and a consequent lack of accountability for service delivery.

Vancouver is currently at the low end of the effectiveness and efficiency afforded by best practices contact centres. This is not surprising given the current highly decentralized approach. The lack of a consolidated contact centre, supporting technologies and management processes places the City of Vancouver at the low end of an effectiveness and efficiency scale.

## Appendix A to Council Report

### **3 Options**

The results of the current state assessment indicate that there are significant issues affecting the City of Vancouver's service delivery in regard to telephone access. There are two options available to increase citizen service, and the option to retain status quo is also described for comparative purposes.

#### **3.1 Option 1 – Status Quo**

##### *Option Overview*

This option retains the current approach to citizen service and assumes no corporate improvements to citizen service. No doubt, if nothing else were done, departments would use the data collected in this study to make whatever changes they could to improve service. Citizens would continue to access the city through multiple channels, in a number of locations and through multiple telephone numbers, and departments would retain their current decentralized, department/branch specific approach. There would be a few established call centers that handle calls primarily as a switchboard function, but these would not be expanded. Departments may opt to reduce the number of telephone numbers advertised to citizens to reduce confusion, and other minor changes to improve efficiency of processes may take place.

##### Advantages

- No change management required
- Telephone & counter service remain integrated in many locations
- Knowledge/expertise remains within departments

##### Disadvantages

- No improvements to the citizen in terms of accessibility, quality, consistency, satisfaction.
- No change in accountability/performance measures for departments

##### *Addressing the Business Need*

As there are no improvements to the citizen in terms of accessibility, quality, consistency, accountability, and no change in accountability/performance measures for departments, this option does not fulfill the Business Need identified in Section 2.1.

##### *Human Resource Implications*

There are no staff resource implications relevant to this option.

##### *Financial Implications*

There would be no financial impact on the City of Vancouver's operating or capital budget as there would be no change to the current model.

##### *Risks*

The risks with the continuation of the current model of citizen service are:

- Decreased citizen satisfaction with service;
- Higher costs for service delivery initiatives if conducted independently by departments;
- Limited response to emergencies or critical events;



## Appendix A to Council Report

- o Loss of opportunity to better manage civic resources through performance management and information sharing.

### **3.2 Option 2 – Take & Transfer**

#### *Option Overview*

The Take and Transfer option would provide a central access point to citizens into the City of Vancouver information and services. All citizen calls would come through a central number into one reception point. The Take and Transfer centre would then determine the citizen's requirements in order to transfer the citizen to the appropriate existing call centre, specific person or location. There would be no re-engineering to the current call handling procedures within the Departments, but the centre would require documentation regarding service processes from the departments in order to establish transfer processes.

Minimal technology enhancements are required. Specifically, technology would be required to enable transfers across the entire City from the T&T Centre, provide queue capability, and call management capabilities. This last requirement would support the ability to provide a front end "call treatment" to allow for recorded announcements e.g. "the City is closed", "Music on Hold" and a simple knowledge base/mechanized directory to transfer calls.

The site requirement for this model is minimal. Adequate space for seven FTE's, suitable network bandwidth and security would be required.

#### Advantages

- o Improved citizen accessibility into the City. Citizen experiences a faster initial answer and transfer to appropriate person
- o Minimal disruption to current service and minimal change management requirements
- o Improved statistics regarding call volumes, number of calls by Department, and "top ten" call issues

#### Disadvantages

- Adds an additional layer to the customer wait time
- Citizen service will not be consistent after initial T&T
- Service gaps during the day when absence or when peak loads occur
- No ability to provide feedback to Citizens on multiple work orders & cross-departmental issue resolution
- Difficult to determine "bird's eye" view of the City and to establish a "managed call" environment
- Cannot take full advantage of "economies of scale" resulting in higher costs, higher incidents of calls blocked or deflected due to staff shortages
- Expensive model for improving service delivery. Upgrade/ enhancements to technology may be done individually by departments



## Appendix A to Council Report

### *Addressing the Business Need*

Apart from removing the need for citizens to identify who to call, this option would not provide increased level of citizen service as all contacts would require a transfer outside the reception point. It provides partial fulfilment of the Business Need identified in Section 2.1.

### *Human Resource Implications*

As citizen service functions would remain within departments, there would be no changes to current staffing requirements in departments. There would be an increase to overall FTE's in order to staff the Take and Transfer reception centre. In order to field the current volume of incoming calls, the Take and Transfer centre would require 7 FTE's. T&T staff would require call handling, basic telephony and knowledge/universal training.

### *Financial Implications*

This option would require some telecommunications upgrades, but no investment in other technologies and no process reengineering. This option would also result in an annual increase to the City of Vancouver's operating budget to staff the central reception function.

### *Risks*

The risks relevant to this options for citizen service include:

- Reliance upon departments to provide service levels after transfer from central reception;
- Decreased citizen satisfaction due to additional transfer;
- Higher costs for service delivery initiatives if conducted independently by departments;
- Loss of opportunity to better manage civic resources through performance management and information sharing.

## **3.3 Option 3 – Consolidated Contact Centre**

### *Option Overview*

In this option, citizen contacts would be directed via 311 into a contact centre which is consolidated in one physical site. This contact centre would handle all incoming phone calls and emails, Citizen Service Representatives (CSR's) would be "universal", i.e. able to take all calls, and if a departmental specialist/subject matter expert is required, the contact would be 'warm'<sup>2</sup> transferred to a specialist in the required department. The goal would be that 70-80% of callers may obtain service at the first stop, i.e. 311. It is assumed all processes identified in the Process Mapping Project will be delivered via the contact centre (assuming proposed designations as Full, Partial, Take & Transfer are confirmed).

A one-time investment in call centre and call management technologies would be required. These would include a Citizen Management System and a Call Centre Suite,

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<sup>2</sup> Citizen Service Representatives remain on the call until connection with Subject Matter Expert/Specialist is made and handoff occurs.

## Appendix A to Council Report

including Quality Monitoring and Workforce Management systems. The Citizen Management System would include a Citizen Case/Call Management system which would provide the service representative with the ability to initiate, track and complete service requests. It would also enable CSR's to create and assign work tickets, set appointments for city staff, etc. The Citizen Management System would also include the Knowledge Management System, would provide CSR's the ability to search and locate information related to City services and provide the CSR with scripts or flex questions to ensure processes are followed.

A dedicated site would be required for a consolidated contact centre. There are a number of physical and technical requirements for a contact centre. These specifications have been taken into consideration in the estimated costs for a physical site.

A consolidated contact centre requires the development of service level agreements with departments, the development of detailed process maps to support knowledge management, and a significant investment in training. All contact centre staff would be provided both content and systems training.

### Advantages

- Citizen experience is significantly enhanced through improved accessibility, first call resolution, consistency of service across the City
- Consistent service delivery
- Maximizes HR efficiencies through the integration of all call takers' responsibilities (workload mgt, training)
- Improved management capability across the City e.g. creating a "bird's eye" view of all service requests, responses, complaints, citizen service
- Support to Emergency Response Plan and ability to respond to critical incidents;
- Improved quality of information through central repository Well defined processes for creating, updating, and publishing; Status of requests - easily tracked and available across channels)
- Presence of corporate knowledge database will enable consistency of responses.

### Disadvantages

- Major change management required (departmental processes and staffing)
- Financial investment;
- Raised citizen expectations for departmental response/service delivery;
- In certain cases, transfer will still be required when the issue is complex or requires specialist knowledge.

### *Addressing the Business Need*

A consolidated contact centre with highly trained staff with supporting technology would provide significantly higher citizen service than currently offered by the City of Vancouver. Citizens would have increased accessibility (via language, hours of

## Appendix A to Council Report

operation, and end-to-end service), consistency, and quality. In addition, the presence of a consolidated contact centre would improve the City of Vancouver's emergency response capabilities.<sup>3</sup> A consolidated contact centre would play a central role in response to critical events by acting as central information provider for all city services. The presence of this non-emergency number would provide citizens with an alternative to 911. 911 would remain the contact number for life and limb emergencies, but 311 would be the contact for any other citizen concerns such as flooding, street closures and other city operations. General information regarding emergencies and critical events could be effectively handled through the 311 centre, and has the potential to reduce the volume of calls to 911 during critical incidents. This option fulfills the Business Need identified in Section 2.1.

### *Human Resource Implications*

The centralization of phone services will decrease the need for staffing resources in departments, but the need for staff resources would shift to the consolidated contact centre. In a fully implemented model, a consolidated contact centre would require 54 Citizen Service Representatives and 9 support staff (including Management/Supervisory staff). Given the possible impact on positions and staff, the consolidated model may require consultation with the unions involved. The development of a comprehensive training program would be required in the implementation of this option.

### *Financial Implications*

The implementation of contact centre technology will have a one-time investment required. In addition, provision for basic on-going costs related to a contact centre would be necessary. As departmental processes are transferred to the consolidated contact centre, there would be a corresponding transfer of on-going funding from departments to the contact centre.

There are a number of unidentified financial impacts related to this option. Departmental citizen service initiatives will not be required in the future, and so departmental investments in these projects will be avoided. Estimates of cost avoidance are not available as departmental service initiatives are not in place at this time. A second unidentified financial impact related to this model is the potential for departmental efficiencies to be found through performance metrics. A number of US municipalities have also observed significant improvements in operational efficiencies and other cost savings through revisions to their service delivery processes and procedures.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> 311 cities have utilized their consolidated contact centres as their primary contact for citizens for non-life and limb issues during recent emergencies. Houston utilized 311 as the means to provide information to citizens to facilitate evacuation of the city during Hurricane Rita in October 2005. The City of Calgary utilized 311 as primary contact for citizens to report flooding during May 2005 floods, and to provide information regarding locations of flooding and assisting citizens in aftermath.

<sup>4</sup> Chicago reduced street light maintenance costs by \$6.9 million USD annually by scheduling maintenance geographically. Baltimore's solid waste department reduced overtime costs by over 10,000 hours resulting in a savings of over \$300,000 USD by increasing the crew's efficiency in chasing duplicate complaints, determining the validity of the complaint prior to making a site visit, and reducing call-taking errors from 50% to 5%. Houston's 3-1-1 information reference system enables call-takers to satisfy 78%-80% of calls without further research, a second contact, or hand-off. It has significantly reduced call volume away from departments, and increased revenue from more efficient operations of approximately \$100,000 USD/month.

## Appendix A to Council Report

### Risks

The risks relevant to this model of citizen service include:

- Higher cost of service if departments are unable to migrate resources to consolidated contact centre;
- No change in service to citizens if processes are not transferred to consolidated contact centre;
- Potential demand for increased service via other channels (walk-in, web).

### **3.4 Other Options Considered**

Three options for citizen service have been presented. Two other options were investigated as part of the feasibility study, but not determined as viable.

Independent Consolidation would be characterized by the centralization of citizen service telephone services within individual departments. These independently consolidated centres could use consistent technology or opt for department-specific technology to maintain current systems. While this option would present fewer change management challenges, the benefits to citizens are limited and the costs associated with implementation and operating such an option are higher than a centralized model.

A second option investigated but not pursued is Virtual Consolidation. Due to advances in technology, contact centre technologies can be accessible from multiple locations. In this option, Citizen Service Representatives would work from existing service points throughout the City of Vancouver, but answer calls from a central queue. While this again presents fewer challenges in regard to change management, the on-going management challenges with decentralized staffing are considerable.

## Appendix A to Council Report

### **4 Analysis of Options**

The three options outlined in this business case provide three different approaches to citizen service. The selection of Option One - Status Quo - will continue the decentralized approach to citizen service. Option Two - the implementation of a Take & Transfer centre - will partially address the challenges presented by the current model, but will not present any significant change to citizen service. Option 3 - the establishment of a consolidated contact centre - will significantly change the way the City of Vancouver communicates with its citizens.

#### **4.1 Impact on Citizens - Addressing Business Need**

As the primary driver behind the business case is citizen service, it is necessary to determine the impact each of the three options will have on the citizens of Vancouver.

Option 1 - Status Quo

Option 2 - Take & Transfer Centre

Option 3 - Consolidated Contact Centre

In terms of accessibility, Option 1 provides limited accessibility to the citizens of Vancouver. Hours of service are in general limited to Monday to Friday, 8.30-5, language remains a challenge, and the number of access points is daunting. Option 2 and 3 provide an increase in accessibility into the City of Vancouver over the current model. Citizens would have one central number available, and would no longer be required to search through 550 Blue Page listings. Option 3 provides enhanced accessibility in terms of increased language and available hours over the other options. A consolidated contact centre, due to a higher staff complement, could provide increased hours of access and language capacity. Citizens would have access to a higher level of service (end to end call handling) than in Options 1 or 2.

The quality of service offered through the different options ranges considerably. The current state assessment indicates that city staff responsible for citizen service provide service to the best of their abilities, but the number of service processes and lack of corporate standards or information results in an inability to provide consistent, quality service. Staff are unable to report on service requests, identify duplicate requests, or provide information pertaining to other departments.

The quality of service would improve marginally with Option 2. The Take and Transfer centre would provide the capacity to answer all calls without voice trees or voice mail. However, as service requests would continue to flow through current decentralized processes, there would be no increase in quality of service past the initial contact. Option 3 provides the greatest capacity to increase the quality of service to citizens. The consolidated contact centre approach contemplates a considerable investment in technology and training to enable citizen service representatives to respond to 70-90% of all calls at first contact. This training results in highly skilled and professional workforce. In addition, the consolidated approach would create a centre for citizen service excellence. The primary function of all staff would be to fulfill citizen service functions, as compared to the current model in which staff perform multiple functions and are focused on other tasks in addition to citizen service.

## Appendix A to Council Report

The quality of service provided by the City of Vancouver during emergency situations would be dramatically increased. A consolidated contact centre would play a central role in response to critical events by acting as central information provider for all city services. The presence of this non-emergency number would provide citizens with an alternative to 911. 911 would remain the contact number for life and limb emergencies, but 311 would be the contact for any other citizen concerns such as flooding, street closures and other city operations. General information regarding emergencies and critical events could be effectively handled through the 311 centre, and has the potential to reduce the volume of calls to 911 during critical incidents.

The consistency of citizen service provided by the three options also varies significantly. The current model of service inhibits consistency city-wide. There is no corporate knowledge database to enable information sharing across departments. The number of process maps identified in the process mapping exercise demonstrated the different approaches to handling similar issues. Option 2 would not increase consistency of citizen service. Citizens, once transferred from the Take & Transfer centre, would encounter the same challenges currently presented by the current model. Option 3 would provide increased consistency to service levels. A foundation element of the consolidated contact centre is the presence of a corporate knowledge base and standardized answers and scripts for common inquiries. The establishment of this knowledge base will eliminate the inefficiencies demonstrated by the service maps. In addition, the development of service level agreements with departments will provide further information to citizens, such as estimated length of time to respond to particular requests.

The greatest difference in citizen service is to be found in the level of accountability presented by each option. The current model of service, without service level agreements or performance metrics, provides no accountability to the organization or citizens. Citizens have limited ability to check on the status of requests and the organization has not made commitments to the citizens regarding expected completion or response times. Option 2 would provide no further accountability to citizens or the organization, as only the front-end of each contact is affected by this model.

The greatest increase to accountability to both citizens and the organization is offered by Option 3, consolidated citizen service. The establishment of performance measures (for both citizen service and departmental service delivery) would enable the City of Vancouver to deliver on its values of Excellence, Responsiveness and Learning. The organization would be in a position to be more accountable in times of emergency. The presence of a consolidated contact centre would improve the capacity of the City of Vancouver to respond to citizens needs and assess results post-emergency.

### **4.2 Human Resource Implications**

The three options present significantly different implications. The current 155 positions currently utilized to provide citizen service via telephone would be impacted by both Option 2 and 3. Option 2 would present a positive change in that current citizen service representatives would experience a decrease in mis-directed calls - an identified disadvantage of the current system. Almost 9% of all calls are mis-directed,

## **Appendix A to Council Report**

and the elimination of these calls would reduce overall volume city-wide and would provide a net increase in staff time available for other tasks. There would also be an increase of 7 FTE's overall to staff the Take & Transfer centre.

The centralization of phone services presented in Option 3 will result in substantial change to the staff participating in citizen service functions. There will be a decrease in the work effort relevant to phone services in departments, and that work effort will shift to the consolidated contact centre. The impact felt on the staff currently fulfilling that citizen service role will vary. In a number of instances, the primary function of staff is to respond to incoming calls. In those instances, the need for that staff resource in the department will be eliminated, but the need for that staff resource will shift to the consolidated contact centre. However, there are a number of areas within the City of Vancouver in which citizen service is conducted as part of a position that conducts multiple tasks throughout the workday. In those instances, careful study of remaining tasks is required in order to determine department staff resource needs.

### **4.3 Financial Implications**

There are significant differences between the options in regard to one-time and on-going investments, technology changes, and business process changes.

Option 1 would result in no change to the current on-going costs and would result in no one-time costs.

Option 2 results in an increase of \$547K to on-going costs. There would be a one-time investment of \$422K to start-up a Take & Transfer model for citizen service.

The increased level of citizen service provided by the third option results in a significant one-time investment (\$10.47 million) and increased on-going costs (\$5.63 million in 2010 if fully operational). The basic operating costs of the new service and staffing sufficient to respond to general inquiries result in an increase in on-going costs of \$2.85 million annually to the City of Vancouver. Additional on-going costs will be offset by departmental budget transfers, in recognition that departmental processes are being transferred to the consolidated centre and as such reduces departmental work effort. Further financial investment of \$1.83 million in one-time funding would support the transition of departmental processes to the 311 centre.

This analysis does not identify potential savings to be realized from the consolidated service model achievable through departmental efficiencies over time, as evident if 311 implementations in other cities. With the establishment of performance indicators, departments will have information regarding service delivery that would assist in identifying efficiencies.

### **4.4 Strategic Risk Assessment**

Each option presents risks to the City of Vancouver. Risks pertaining to the current service model have focused primarily on service to the citizen, however there are significant risks to the organization. Citizen service is a high priority for all departments, and as such, investments will be made independently in order to provide enhanced citizen service. The current model also presents a loss of opportunity to



## Appendix A to Council Report

better manage civic resources through performance management and information sharing. Without performance metrics or service request tracking, the organization is unable to adequately respond to current and future demands for service.

The enhancement of current service through a Take and Transfer centre would present a number of risks. The success of this model is dependent upon the departments to provide service levels after transfer from central reception. In addition, citizen satisfaction could decrease as a result of the implementation of this model. An additional transfer would increase each contact, and increasing citizen expectations will demand increased response times. As in the current service model, there is a loss of opportunity to better manage civic resources with a Take and Transfer centre.

Finally, the risks associated with a consolidated service centre focus primarily on the ability of the organization to implement the change necessary to migrate services and resources to the centre. A change of this magnitude involves a culture change within the organization and an adoption of the strategy. If departments are unable to migrate resources or service processes to the consolidated service centre, the costs to the organization will be higher than projected and the consolidated contact centre will be under-utilized. Other risks include confusion between other N11 numbers, and potential demand for citizen service via alternate channels such as the web.



## **5 Recommendations**

The City of Vancouver has been recognized internationally as an innovative organization in regard to citizen service. The City has developed numerous ways to communicate with our citizens, such as Neighbourhood Integrated Service Teams, Community WebPages, Community Visions, and many others. A City of Vancouver citizen centred service model would build on the success of these programs, and would achieve the vision:

*to provide equitable public access to services and information, and will strive for responsive, citizen-centred service excellence and uphold a commitment to quality, current, and accurate information.*

### **5.1 Define Scope**

A full spectrum citizen centred service model would include all elements of citizen contact with the City of Vancouver. The scope of this initiative has been defined as contact with citizens via telephone. The rationale for scope limitation is that the telephone remains the preferred channel of choice by citizens, evident in Citizens First research as well as City of Vancouver survey results. Telephone contacts remain citizens' primary method of communication with the City of Vancouver, and by focusing the citizen service model on this channel, the greatest impact on service will be delivered.

The development of a complete Citizen Service Strategy, building on the capacity of the consolidated contact centre model, would guide development of future initiatives which would focus on other communication channels with citizens. It is recommended that other aspects of a Citizen Service Strategy be investigated to further develop the City of Vancouver into a Centre for Citizen Service Excellence.

### **5.2 Approve Option**

The option which would provide the most significant benefits to citizens is Option 3 - the consolidated contact centre. The move from a decentralized unsupported citizen contact system to a fully integrated consolidated system would provide the greatest benefit to citizens, and fulfills the business need as identified in 2.1. This option would provide increased accessibility and service for citizens, and the organization would experience improved operating efficiency and performance management, enhanced corporate knowledge, increase capacity to respond to emergencies and critical incidents, and increased accountability.

#### **5.2.1 Financial Impacts**

The attached cost-benefit analysis identifies all of the variables involved in implementing and supporting 311 Access Vancouver. The key requirements are summarized below:

## Appendix A to Council Report

### Funding Requirements

#### One-Time Costs

- Hardware/Software	\$3,918,300
- Project Team/Change Management	\$3,202,400
- Technical Support, Consulting & Training	\$1,042,800
- Facility	\$1,270,000
- Contingency	\$1,043,100
- Total	\$10,476,600

Enhancement/Attrition Fund \$1,830,000

#### On-going Operating Costs (2010 \$)

##### IT Support

- Sustainment Team	\$321,400
- IT hardware/software maintenance	\$630,200

##### 311 Operations

- Training	\$215,400
- Telephone and Translation	\$151,300
- Facility	\$316,900
- Staffing & Administration	\$3,995,100
- Total	\$5,630,300

The one-time costs required to implement this model will be \$10.47 million. In addition, one time funding of \$1.83 million will be required to fund operating costs through the enhancement phases until departments are able to adjust their operations and transfer funding to the centre. The ongoing costs of the citizen service model are expected to be \$5.63 million annually once the enhancement phases are completed. These costs will be partially offset by the transfer of process related funding from departments (in recognition that departmental processes are being transferred to the consolidated centre and as such reduces departmental work effort) and the remaining costs are proposed to be funded through an increase to the annual operating budget.

A complete discussion of funding 311 Access Vancouver is presented in the relevant Council Report.

### **5.2.2 Risk Assessment**

Risk	Mitigation Strategy
Ability to migrate processes to Consolidated Contact Centre	All department processes identified for transition to 311 will be reviewed by Departments and 311 Project Team as the first phase of implementation. Purpose is to identify all issues relating to transition and phase-in schedule
Ability to migrate resources from Departments to support Consolidated Contact Centre Operating	Resources available to assist Departments in reengineering efforts to minimize impact of resource transfer
Ability to integrate technologies	On-going communications between project leads and Information Technology

## Appendix A to Council Report

	Division will identify synergies and obstacles
Acceptance/Use of consolidated service model (311) from citizens	Regular communications with citizens regarding services provided by all N11's
Increase of N11 contact numbers (Confusion between 211/311/511/811/911)	
Demand for citizen access via channels other than telephone	Development of comprehensive Citizen Service Strategy (out of scope for consolidated contact centre initiative)

### 5.3 Approve Critical Success Factors

In order to determine the impact of implementing a consolidated citizen service centre, it is necessary to identify the critical success factors. These measures will enable the organization to report on the success of the initiative post-implementation.

#### Citizen Satisfaction

- Objective: Increase satisfaction levels to 80%, close gap between City of Vancouver satisfaction and benchmark groups, and eliminate performance gaps
- Measured By: Annual Phone survey - Repeat Citizen Access Survey on annual basis, and utilize benchmarking service to compare results to other public sector organizations. Periodic Callbacks - Carry out periodic callbacks to determine satisfaction levels with contact centre experience.

#### Level of Consolidation

- Objective: Optimize Consolidated Contact Centre capacity
- Measured By: Number of services/processes delivered via 311 Contact Centre. 333 of 411 service processes identified as potential "Full" transfers. Target transfer of 80% by end of 2010.

#### Information Management

- Objective: Increase the quality and consistency of information at the City of Vancouver
- Measured By: Level of integration of systems. Ability to monitor information.

#### Service Levels

- Objective: Increase Accessibility for Citizens
- Measured By: Response Time (80% of all calls will be responded to within 30 seconds). Average handle times (average handle time will be reduced by 30 seconds). Misdirected calls (Mis-directed calls will be eliminated).
- Objective: Increase Accountability for Citizens and City of Vancouver
- Measured By: Development of Service Level Agreements for all services delivered through Consolidated Contact Centre. Development of Performance Reports on all service requests.

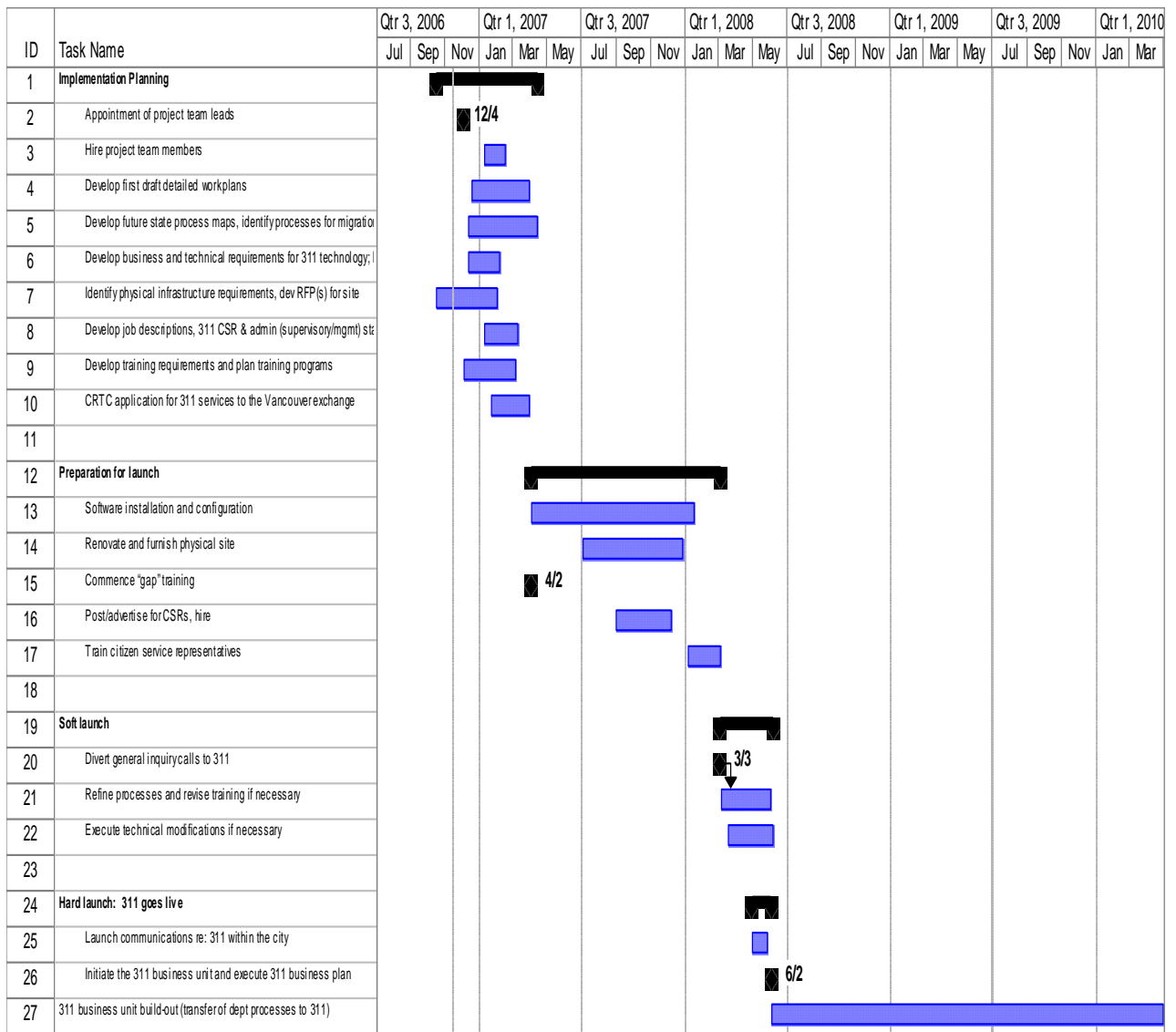
# Appendix A to Council Report

## 5.4 Approve Implementation Strategy

### 5.4.1 Timeline

If project approval is obtained in the fall of 2006, a spring, 2008 “soft launch” (internal re-routing of test calls) and a summer, 2008 go-live are estimated (based on implemented 311’s experience of approximately 18 months implementation start to soft launch). The 311 business unit build-out, including transitioning of citizen processes from departments and boards to the 311 centre, would take place from 2009 to approximately 2013.

A very high level timeline is shown below. Detailed timelines would be developed by the project team in conjunction with detailed work plans, following Council approval of the project.



## Appendix A to Council Report

### **5.4.2 Stakeholders**

Primary stakeholders will be involved and/or consulted on issues impacting their respective areas:

- o City of Vancouver departments and employees in areas where processes will migrate to 311
- o Employee unions
- o Library Board, Park Board and Police Boards
- o Neighbouring districts to the Vancouver telephone exchange (Burnaby, Richmond, University Endowment Lands)
- o Other N11 service providers

### **5.4.3 Risks**

(Risks specific to the implementation and enhancement phases)

A table detailing risks and risk mitigation strategies follows.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Threat</b>	<b>Mitigation Strategy</b>
Specialist and internal resources may be unavailable due to competing demands and timelines	Moderate; High risk to timeline	Seek external (private and consulting) as well as internal resources; contract for implementation partner including specialist resources
Effort required to build knowledge base will not be fully known until processes are identified and project is underway	Moderate	Though not desirable, phasing of migration could be slowed and 311 resource estimates reduced to allow additional time
Ability to migrate processes and transition positions may be impaired due to numerous factors (e.g. departmental physical site decentralization, HR challenges, previous re-engineering)	Moderate	Departments may have to find efficiencies in other areas where 311 efforts to re-engineer fail (risk to operating budget recovery); recovery has been set at a reasonable effort-for-effort ratio (i.e. 50% of operating)
Departments may fail to utilize 311 to the greatest extent possible	Moderate	General Managers have agreed to committing to the shared model in the 311 Project Charter
311 advertising may result in an increased demand for City services which cannot be met by departments.	Moderate	Manage citizen expectations during start-up; utilize 311 reporting to reallocate resources to high service request areas; controlled phasing of processes to 311.
Duplication of effort may exist between several corporate initiatives (IMS, ERDMS, other technical initiatives)	Low	A high level of communication between the project directors and possible co-location of some projects may be considered
Notice to telecom orgs re: 311 service provision may trigger obstacles related to overlapping telephone exchange boundaries	Low	Telecom organizations are required to provide service within six months of application; some negotiation issues could be worked on concurrent to basic service provision
May be challenges in integration of technologies	Low	On-going communications between project leads and Information Technology Division will identify synergies and obstacles; CSR's can be designated as users of required applications; contingency allowed for licenses
Citizens confused between e.g. 211, 311, 511, 811, and 911	Low	All "N11's" committed or required to extensively advertise distinctions between numbers; strategy to have high-profile table of n11's in Vancouver phone books and on-line look-up tools
Citizens dissatisfied with 311 offering phone and email channels before integrated web, counter, etc.	Low	311 business area plan will include strategic planning toward development of a comprehensive Citizen Service Strategy (out of scope for 311 project); 311 project and business area will work with I.T. to further accessibility of other service channels