



## CITY OF VANCOUVER

# A6

### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: Dec 19, 2008  
Author: Barbara Pearce  
Phone No.: 871-6519  
RTS No.: 7827  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: January 20, 2008

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Program Director - Access Vancouver

SUBJECT: Authority to create 311 Contact Centre Sustainment positions - Phase Two

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve the creation of twenty-four regular full-time positions and four regular part-time positions for the second phase of the 311 Contact Centre to be funded from the 311 Contact Centre operating budget, subject to classification by Human Resources. All costs associated with the operation of the 311 Contact Centre are fully recovered by internal budget transfers by departments and operational efficiencies. There will be no net cost to the City related to the creation of these positions.

#### CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager supports this recommendation.

#### COUNCIL POLICY

The establishment of regular full time and regular part-time positions requires Council approval.

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to request Council's approval to establish twenty-four new regular full time and four regular part-time positions for the 311 Contact Centre to meet identified staffing needs in the second phase of Contact Centre operations.

## 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.

On November 30, 2006, Council approved the implementation of a consolidated citizen service centre and 311 Service for the City of Vancouver including the source of funding. In addition, Council approved as a policy objective that all citizen services that can be delivered using the 311 model be accessible through the new service centre unless it would lead to a diminished service to citizens.

The 311 Contact Centre is a new service area for the City of Vancouver, and will be placed within the new Business Planning & Services organization.

The 311 Contact Centre is being implemented in three phases. Phase One (February 2009), which is also known as the "Soft Launch", is an internal re-direct of a number of phone lines within the City of Vancouver to the new 311 Contact Centre. The phone calls are primarily informational calls, and constitute approximately one-third of the total volume of citizen calls. The public will continue to use the 10 digit telephone numbers currently in place, and are not aware their call is being answered by a central contact centre. The hours of service will be the current hours of service offered to the public through these phone numbers (Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00). The personnel required for Phase One of the contact centre operations have been previously approved (RTS 7392), and include a Manager, 1 Team Lead, and thirteen Citizen Service Representatives. The positions for Phase One have now been filled.

Phase Two (June 2009) is the public, or "Hard Launch" of the 311 Contact Centre. There will be a communications campaign publicizing the availability of the service, and the hours will be extended to 24/7 at this point in time. A further one-third of phone calls will migrate to the 311 Contact Centre during this phase. Citizen Service Representatives will begin to take service-related phone calls, assisting citizens with requests which will ultimately be actioned by service departments such as Engineering Services.

Phase Three (June 2010) is the last stage of migration of calls to the 311 Contact Centre. The calls that will be taken in this phase are the more complex inquiries and service requests, and require complex integration with departmental legacy systems.

## DISCUSSION

The 311 Contact Centre is carrying out hiring in three phases to match the operational requirements of call volumes, with Phase One personnel hired in December 2008 and commencing work in January 2009. The staffing requirements for Phase Two have been projected and are requested herein. The staffing requirements are based upon estimated call volumes and work effort, and have been projected using call centre workforce management software. Phase Three requirements will be determined by the end of 2009 and will be determined on actual call volumes and operational needs.

The operational requirements for Phase Two (which are in addition to those already approved for Phase One) are as follows:

- o 2 Team Leads
- o 21 Regular Full Time Citizen Service Representatives
- o 4 Regular Part-time Citizen Service Representatives
- o 1 Administrative Assistant

The need for Business and Information Technology Sustainment Teams have been identified and included in the operational plan for the 311 Contact Centre, and will be brought forward for Council's consideration before the close-out of the 311 implementation project.

All new positions will be subject to classification through Human Resources, in accordance with its level of authority and responsibility as well as applicable collective agreement requirements.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

For 2009, the approved budget of \$1.82M is primarily in relation to two phases of position recruiting - Phase I (January 2009, already approved and hired), approximately \$802,000 and Phase II (July 2009), approximately \$714,000. In addition, office, equipment and administrative expenses of approximately \$300,000 will be incurred in 2009. The annual cost for the 28 Phase II positions is \$1,429,200 (2009 salary rates). As these positions are anticipated to begin work in July 2009, the actual cost for 2009 will be approximately half of the annual cost (\$714,400).

These salaries will be added to the 2009 operating budget, with funding sources to be reported back to City Council as part of the 2009 operating budget process. As per Council's decision of November 30, 2006, all costs associated with the operation of the 311 Contact Centre are to be fully recovered by internal budget transfers by departments and operational efficiencies. There will be no net cost to the City related to the creation of these positions.

Table 1:

	2009 Cost	(Annual Cost)
<b>311 Contact Centre Phase Two Positions</b>		
Administrative Assistant - 1 position	\$24,250	\$48,500
Contact Centre Team Lead - 2 positions	81,150	162,500
RFT Citizen Service Representatives - 21 positions	556,500	1,113,000
RPT Citizen Service Representatives - 4 positions	52,500	105,200
	\$714,400	\$1,429,200

## PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

Establishing the positions will provide the 311 Contact Centre with the necessary staff to provide services for Phase Two of the implementation. Further positions required for Phase Three and the Business and IT Sustainment Teams will be finalized in late 2009. Relevant positions will be posted as per collective agreement requirements once the positions are approved.

It is expected that due to the transition of funding and consolidation of services from departments into the 311 Contact Centre that some reduction to departmental staffing complements will occur. Impacted positions will be identified in the 2009 Operating Budget report.

In order to prepare for and limit the impact on affected employees, Human Resource Services, Departments and the Access Vancouver Program have done the following:

- o Filled vacant RFT positions identified as highly impacted by 311 with temporary staff to avoid lay off situations;
- o Offered comprehensive 4.5 days of Citizen Service Skills Training to impacted staff (140 attendees) to orient employee's to call centre functions;
- o Offered two Career Development Workshops to participants of the Citizen Service Skills Training to assist in career planning decisions;
- o Review of opportunities to redesign remaining work and services.

Initial estimates in the 311 Business Case identified up to 155 positions as impacted by the change. As a result of these undertakings, reductions in actual employment are anticipated to be low - approximately 5- regular employees are expected to be impacted. Where a regular (unionized) employee occupies a position deemed redundant and where the employee does not apply for, or does not secure employment in the 311 Contact Centre, they will have access to the layoff and bumping process outlined in the City/CUPE Local 15 collective agreement. Phase 3 (scheduled for 2010) may result in further staff impacts which are estimated to be within a similar range as 2009. A copy of this report has been provided to CUPE Local 15.

## CONCLUSION

Establishing the new positions for the 311 Contact Centre will ensure that the contact centre has the required regular staffing support to provide reliable, consistent citizen service for Phase Two of the implementation.

\* \* \* \* \*