

2022 September 6

To: Mayor Gondek and Members of Council

From: Chris Arthurs, General Manager, People, Innovation and Collaboration Services
Jennifer McMurtry, Director, Customer Service & Communications

Re: Administrative Response to Council Question Period - City of Calgary 311 Waits and Opportunities

This memo responds to Councillor Chabot's questions that arose during Question Period at the 2022 June 21 Regular Meeting of Council related to 311 and partner processes. The questions centred around three points:

- Service requests being closed when work is not yet complete.
- Other customer service systems offer customers details about how long their call will be in the queue, what the wait time will be, or even offer a call back option. Has this, or could this, be explored for our 311 system?
- Reporting on the volume of abandoned calls.

311 receives over 1.2 million contacts annually and creates approximately 501,000 service requests through our phone channel and digitally through either the 311 app or online. Business units are responsible for actioning, updating and closing service requests, and actions required to close service requests differ in each business unit. The 2022 spring pulse citizen satisfaction survey below highlights what citizens have told The City about their experience with 311:

- 91% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with 311
- 95% believe it is an important service
- 311 is a primary strength for The Corporation (similar to 911, Fire and Police)
- 28% of citizens indicated to invest more in the service (same as fall 2021)

To promote transparency and accountability, 311 dashboards have been posted for use by Council and citizens via calgary.ca/311. Data is refreshed every two hours and is current from today back to 2016 January 1. On an annual basis, 311 experiences their highest call volumes during the month of June primarily due to property tax related inquiries. Specific Ward dashboards, along with enhanced data are also available internally on myCity using a City network account: [311 Ward Dashboard \(mycity\)](#)

311 call centre metrics, including the number of calls abandoned (callers that decide to hang up and not wait) are publicly accessible on The City's open data website (data.calgary.ca). This data is posted daily, and results are available back to 2014 January 1.

Currently, 311 has implemented the following to adapt to increased call volumes and support Calgarians:

- Additions to front end scripting and implementing a press 1 to 9 option have helped redirect and mitigate 515,038 calls from citizens needing to speak to an agent in 2021.
- Hired 10 temporary agents as of July 2022 to backfill vacant positions.

- Worked with business units to digitize services online resulting in 75% of public service request volume having a digital option.
- Developed a work plan to modernize call features to include a call back option and queue estimates, with this work continuing into the next business cycle.
- Service requests are defined as Standard, Urgent or Emergency by the business unit, and 311 configures the workflow per the business unit direction.

Moving forward there is a corporate opportunity to support Calgarians by working towards a consistent user experience regarding service request closure and follow up. Administration will conduct a review into business unit oversight regarding service request maintenance and closure, and support business units by 311 offering consistent training and best practices with an intent to decrease escalations and call complexity.

We trust this information satisfies the inquiry regarding the longer waits, options to mitigate them along with how service requests are closed in the 311 system.

Sincerely,

Chris Arthurs and Jennifer McMurtry