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Regional 311 System Development Feasibility Study

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MVPC Regional Planning Day
June 20, 2013

MVPC 311 Feasibility Assessment for Merrimack Valley Communities

- review best practices, identifying implementation tasks and potential costs
- assess potential for implementation in one or more MVPC region communities
- consider 'stand-alone' operation or in cooperation with Essex County Regional Emergency Response Center
- budget and local interest/ability to commit to be determined

311 Systems Defined
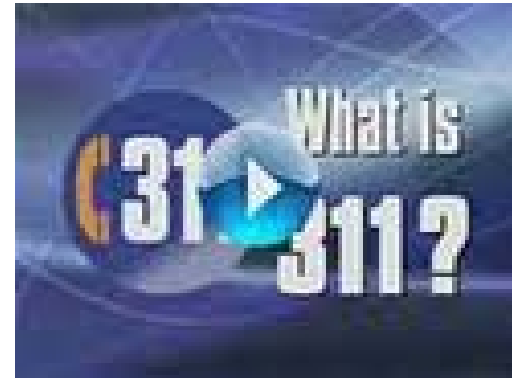
"A single point of entry to local government information and services using an easy number to remember"

Most systems:

• minimize call transfers and forwarding
• are available before and after traditional business hours
• provide non-emergency information as quickly and efficiently as emergency (911) services

impetus for creation of many 311 systems: public dissatisfaction with access to or quality of municipal information

State of 311 Practice

- most 311 systems are established by municipalities, some by counties
- Baltimore, MD 1st dedicated 311 call center for nonemergency government services (1996)*

nationwide: approximately150 systems operating, 2013**

- in Massachusetts: Dukes County, Worcester, Somerville, Newton, Springfield

*Justine Brown, Cities Aim to Slash 311 Costs Without Affecting Services *Government Technology, May 31, 2012*

**Michael Hanley, Open Government Submission Makes Scalable Real-Time Human-Powered 311 Service *Knight Foundation, March 18, 2013*

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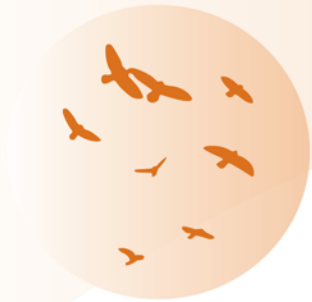# Comparative Operations, 311 Systems, 2008
Source: Pew Charitable Trust

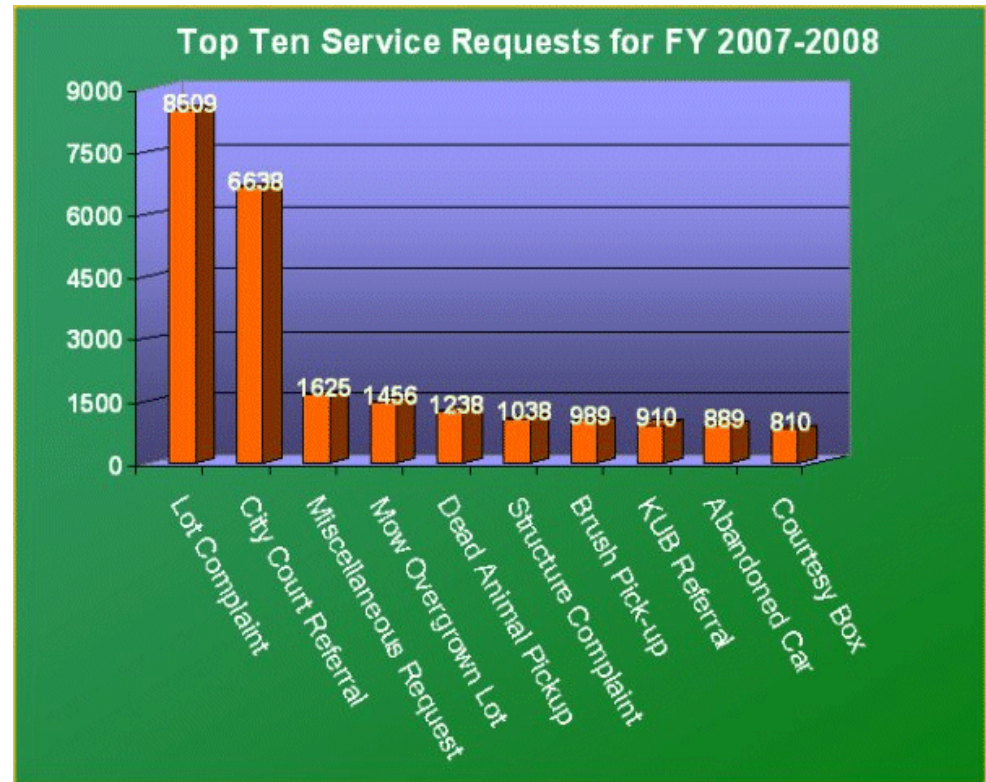| City or County	# Employees at Year End	% Change in Employees From Previous Year	311 Budget, $	% Change in Budget From Previous Year	% of City Budget Spent on 311	Average Cost Per Call, $	First-Year Operating Cost, $	Startup Capital Costs, $
Baltimore, MD	82	-13.7	4,700,000	-19.0	0.35	5.41	4,700,000	n/a
Charlotte, NC	134	0.8	7,278,861	2.3	0.40	4.37	2,500,000	4,600,000
Chicago, IL	81	-12.9	4,965,897	n/a	0.16	1.15	n/a	5,300,000
Columbus, OH	16	-27.3	1,583,158	4.8	0.24	5.49	900,000	n/a
Dallas, TX	89	- 4.3	3,700,000	-17.0	0.36	3.72	n/a	n/a
Denver, CO	27	-6.9	1,500,000	0	0.16	3.39	1,200,000	3,700,000
Detroit, MI	9	-60.9	1,548,421	-28.2	0.10	7.78	n/a	n/a
Houston, TX	92	-2.1	5,000,000	n/a	0.26	2.22	5,300,000	4,500,000
Los Angeles, CA	52	-28.8	3,128,980	-29.3	0.07	2.69	6,800,000	4,900,000
Miami-Dade, FL	133	9.9	10,971,000	- 5.0	0.22	4.30	9,800,000	6,100,000
New York, NY	545	-6.8	46,000,000	- 8.0	0.08	2.57	19,700,000	29,800,000
Philadelphia, PA	63	-10.0	2,830,914	37.5	0.08	2.20	2,100,000	4,000,000
Pittsburgh, PA	6	0	199,951	31.1	0.05	4.08	120,000	(donated)
San Antonio, TX	31	-6.1	1,700,000	-5.3	0.07	1.39	n/a	n/a
San Francisco	95	-15.2	10,952,000	-7.1	0.38	3.15	6,700,000	9,200,000
Median		6.9	$3,700,000	-5.3	0.16	3.39	4,700,000	4,600,000

Comparative Performance, 311 Systems - 2008
Source: Pew Charitable Trust

City or County	2008 Estimated Population	Total Calls	Average Annual Calls Per 100 Residents	Average Annual Call Wait Time (seconds)	Average Wait Time to Speak with Live Agent (seconds)	Average % of Calls Abandoned Before Agent Answers	Average % of Calls Transferred to Another Department	Hours of Operation
Baltimore, MD	636,919	970,937	152	120	5	3.0	6.0	6a-10p M-S
Charlotte, NC	890,515	1,648,087	185	166	17	2.6	33	24/7
Chicago, IL	2,853,114	4,136,505	151	70	61	19	25	24/7
Columbus, OH	754,885	288,527	38	117	24	1.4	21	7a-8p M-F
Dallas, TX	1,279,910	1,196,957	94	120	231	15	n/a	6a-8p M-F
Denver, CO	698,707	443,061	74	189	27	7.7	42.5	7a-8p M-F, 8a-5p S-S
Detroit, MI	912,062	238,123	26	123	33	11.5	12	8a-5:30p M-F
Houston, TX	2,242,193	2,256,511	101	129	32	3.9	n/a	6a-1a /7
Los Angeles, CA	3,833,995	1,402,656	37	90	60	12.7	40.0	24/7
Miami-Dade, FL	2,398,245	2,650,000	110	268	83	16.5	6.7	6a-10p M-F, 8a-5p Sat
New York	8,363,710	18,707,436	224	228	18	3.6	36	24/7
Philadelphia	1,540,351	1,113,159	72	372	105	26.0	18.6	8a-8p M-F, 9a-5p Sat
Pittsburgh	310,037	49,048	16	180	n/a	45.0	.01	8a-4:30p Mon-Sunday
San Antonio	1,351,305	1,293,372	96	100	n/a	8.4	13.0	7a-11p Mon-Sun
San Francisco	808,976	3,608,824	446	88	30	14.4	1.9	24/7
Median			96	123	32	11.5	18.6	

Example: Knoxville, Tennessee 311 Quick Facts, FY 2007-2008

Total Calls	228,877
Average Length	1 minute 27 seconds
Average Answer Time	24 seconds
Calls Transferred	18.5%
Average Calls/Agent	41,614
Answered in < 20 seconds	72%
Calls resulting in Service Requests	9%
Information	74%

Top Ten Service Requests for FY 2007-2008

- Lot Complaint: 8509
- City Court Referral: 6638
- Miscellaneous Request: 1625
- Mow Overgrown Lot: 1456
- Dead Animal Pickup: 1238
- Structure Complaint: 1038
- Brush Pick-up: 989
- KUB Referral: 910
- Abandoned Car: 889
- Courtesy Box: 810

Source: City of Knoxville, TN 311 Program

What does it take to implement 311?

- find out if 311 number is available
- meet with applicable public utilities commission (PUC) to discuss requirements
- apply for 311 status with PUC
- meet with area telecommunications provider(s)
- contact cellular phone service providers
- identify Project stakeholders

What does it take to implement 311?

- determine who will provide short- and long-term system governance
- define 311 system scope to anticipate present and future needs
- analyze 911 call data to isolate #, type and pattern of non-emergency calls received
- anticipate issues (funding sources, personnel, equipment)
- visit active 311 operations

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311 System Challenges

- startup and operation costs
- budget cuts
- administration changes
- agency and department silos
- meeting community expectations
- information maintenance
- performance measurement

311 System Challenges

- employee compensation = 70% to 80% of call center operation costs
- IT software or hardware are typically the next highest center operation costs
- municipalities and counties account for 311 costs differently, making an 'apples-to- apples' cost comparison infeasible*
- encouraging customers to use on-line options

*Justine Brown, Cities Aim to Slash 311 Costs Without Affecting Services *Government Technology, May 31, 2012*
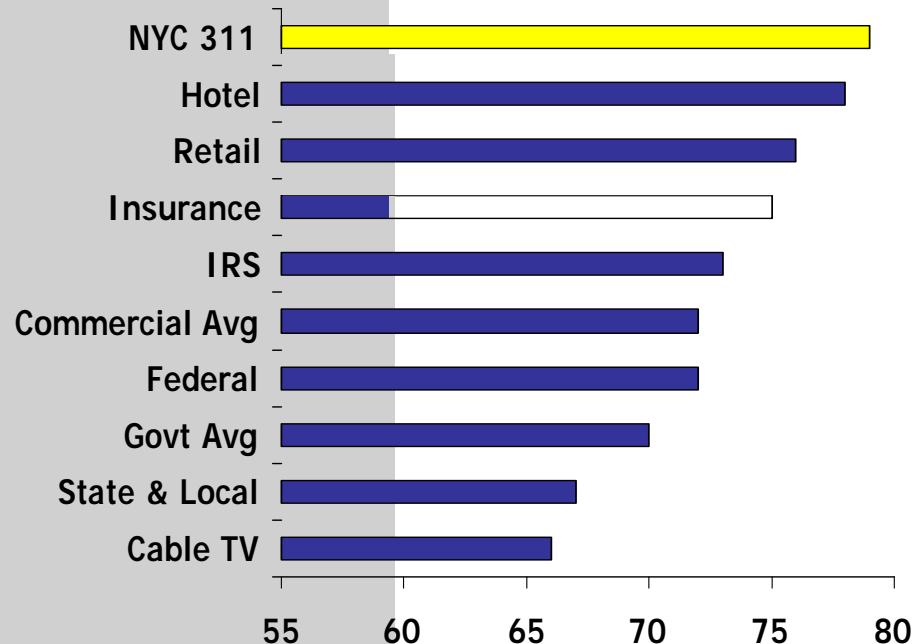
End Goal: Customer Satisfaction

Customer Satisfaction results

NYC 311

- 2008 Customer Satisfaction Survey was designed and compiled by CFI Group, using the national American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) score, a uniform measure of industry/ government customer satisfaction.

- "Baseline satisfaction measure using ACSI methodology shows a high level of satisfaction with 311".

- "Satisfaction with 311 is more on par with higher performing call centers in the private sector and well above scores for typical government call centers".

Chart comparing customer satisfaction scores (horizontal axis 55–80):
- NYC 311 ≈ 79
- Hotel ≈ 78
- Retail ≈ 76
- Insurance ≈ 75
- IRS ≈ 73
- Commercial Avg ≈ 72
- Federal ≈ 72
- Govt Avg ≈ 70
- State & Local ≈ 67
- Cable TV ≈ 66

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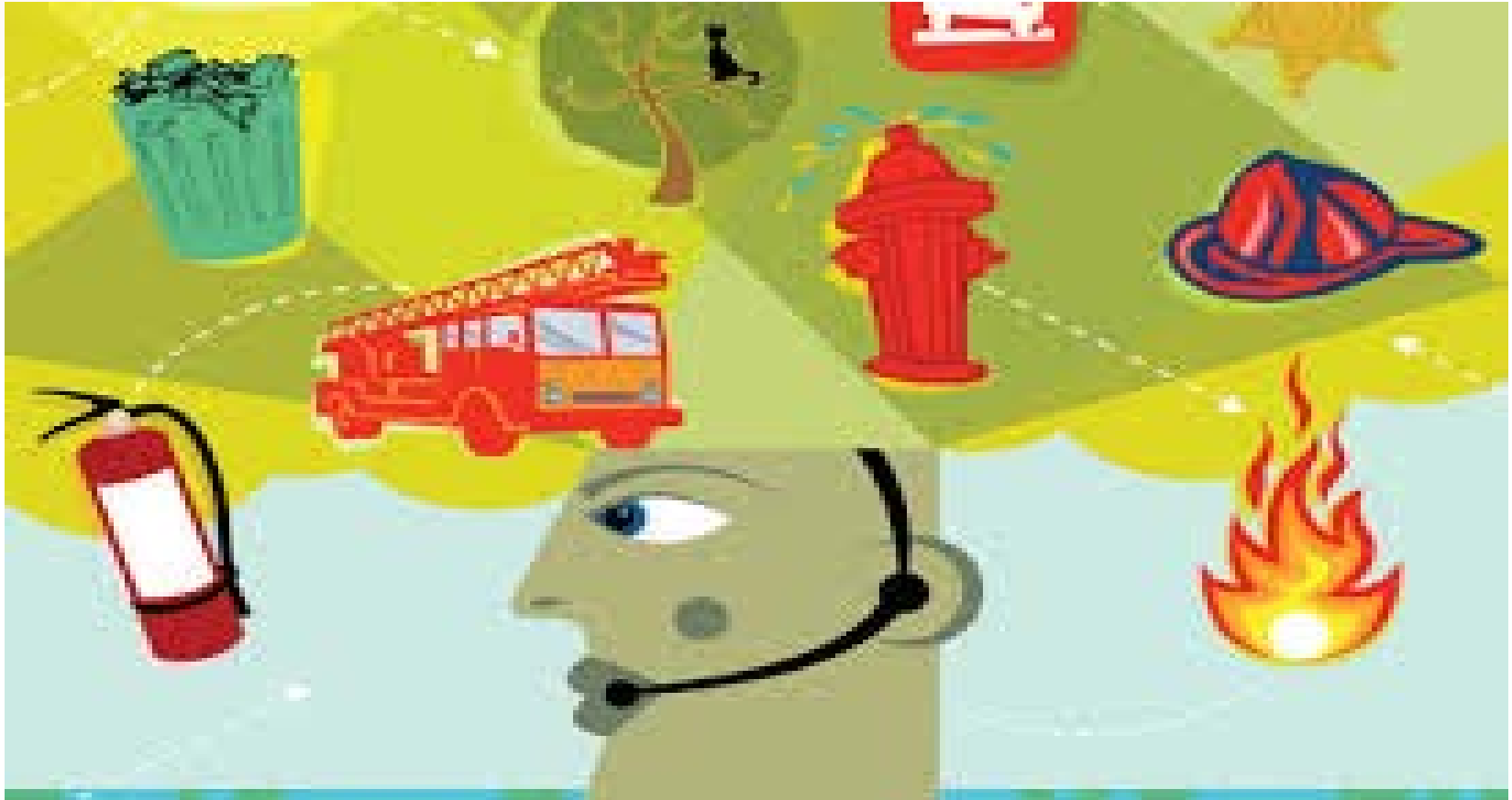*plan ● develop ● promote*

MVPC Study Next Steps

- discussion with Mayors and Managers' Coalition
- presentation of findings to regional stakeholders
- complete Study, 2013

311 Operations: Lessons Learned

- 311 is not a panacea for poor department customer service
- live person contact more important (and utilized) than on-line options, even in 'tech-savvy' communities
- 311 requires creating and maintaining a strong knowledge database
- 311 technology implementation is easier than training staff or changing organizational culture
- 311 and GIS integration essential to tracking service request locations/types

Questions, Comments? For more information, contact Mike Parquette, MVPC Comprehensive Planning Manager at (978) 374-0519 or mparquette@mvpc.org

Source: Government Technology, *March 28, 2013 By* Hilton Collins http://www.govtech.com/public-safety/Integrating-311-and-911-Streamlines-Operations.html

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