

Unified Call Center/311 Questions for Elected Officials

Barbara Johnson (Council President, Minneapolis @612-673-2205) 10-16-09 12:30 p.m.

1. Do you believe your central call center or 311 system has improved or worsened response to constituent calls for service? *The 311 system has definitely improved customer services in Minneapolis. Overall, I'm very pleased with the system. The citizens like it and have responded favorably to 311.*
2. Did the unified call center deliver all of the benefits that were originally promised? *A part of the funding plan for 311 was originally to fund it by decreasing positions in City Departments. However, that has not played out at all. The City has continued to maintain the current staffing levels. Although we have had to identify other resources in some instances because the staffing changes did not play out, the City has not experienced any cost overruns with 311 implementation otherwise such as facilities and IT software and hardware.*
3. What's the biggest benefit you see in having a 311 system? *The biggest benefit has been simplicity. As a Council Member, I can report problems immediately when driving around my district without having to think about who I need to call. The 311 operator can immediately direct me to the right people for problems that need to be addressed promptly (i.e., pot holes, junk cars, etc.). We have seen much quicker responses with easy to answer requests that don't need to be transferred to other people as a result of 311.*
4. What's the biggest drawback in having a 311 system? *The expectations were heightened that citizens would get a quicker answer to all service calls including calls on complicated issues. Even though citizens has easier and quicker access to government and get easy calls answered right away, response times for calls on complicated matters have not changed much.*
5. Do you generally view the call center consolidation as a success or failure? *The program has been a big success.*
6. Do you spend less time taking constituent complaints relative to community conditions (ie potholes, litter, etc) since the 311 system was implemented? *There may be slight decreases in call volumes, but overall the number of calls to*

Council members has remained about the same because most of the calls we get are related to more complex issues where citizens will still want to talk to their representative on the Council. Although the call volume has increased overall due to 311, it has not decreased the calls of Council offices.

7. How has your relationship with constituents changed since implementing the system? *The relationship has improved because citizens like it and see it as a easy way to get quick access to City government.*

8. Do the administrators of the system regularly report to you, both during project implementation and afterward? *Yes. The administrators report weekly. I actually get a weekly list of all the calls coming from my district by type and volume. I also get all the names and addresses of citizens which is useful in case I want to do additional follow up or make contact with the citizen myself.*

9. Do you believe departmental responses to constituent complaints are more transparent to you after 311 implementation? *Yes. Definitely.*

10. What would you have done differently if you were implementing a system today? *I would not change anything. I think the program has been a huge success.*