



CUSTOMER SERVICE EVALUATION - RESULTS

June 21, 2023



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Introduction and Purpose

A process evaluation is a type of evaluation that focuses on the processes and procedures used by an organization to achieve its goals. The City of Rochester conducted a process evaluation to gain a better understanding of how incoming phone calls are handled, as well as the delivery of customer service through email and digital platforms.

By conducting a process evaluation, the City of Rochester aimed to gain insights into their current state of customer service and identify opportunities to improve its processes and procedures. This evaluation will inform the development of a 311 system tailored to the needs of the community, improving the overall customer service experience.

Background

The City of Rochester currently has a decentralized and department specific approach to customer service, resulting in inconsistent handling of incoming inquiries through various channels such as phone, email, and online platforms. Depending on the City teammate and department answering the inquiry, different answers to the same question may be provided. According to Rochester's most recent community survey, conducted in April 2022, only 46% of users were happy with services received over the phone, while 54% were dissatisfied (**Image A** on page 4).

Understanding how requests are currently handled will allow the City of Rochester to innovate and improve this process in the future. The evaluation results will help the City create a tracking mechanism to ensure resolution and follow-through on those issues. This tracking mechanism will allow the creation of baseline metrics, establishment of re-occurring issues, identification of trends and inequities, to ultimately lead to greater satisfaction and more informed customers, including residents and businesses.

Evaluation Details

Theory of Change

A theory of change is a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It outlines the steps or interventions required to achieve the change, the assumptions behind these steps, and the potential outcomes or impact that will result. A Theory of Change document, also known as a Logic Model, provides a summary of a program's:

- Resources
- Activities or strategies
- Outputs (product)
- Outcomes (result)
- Desired long-term impact

The City of Rochester Customer Service Theory of Change for the City of Rochester customer service is located in **Appendix A**.

Evaluation Questions and Data

Evaluation Question	Data Source
1. What is the current state of customer service for the City of Rochester? (FTEs responsible for responding to incoming inquiries, process for answering calls within each department).	Internal COR survey (Appendix B & C)
2. What does each department utilize, if anything, to track calls, emails, applications, etc.?	Internal COR survey (Appendix B & C)
3. What is the satisfaction level of customers (residents or businesses) interacting with the City?	2022 Rochester National Community Survey
4. What is the current call volume by department?	8x8 Call data

Scope

The scope of this evaluation includes incoming-inquiries, primarily over the phone; in-person interactions were out of scope. Additionally, we excluded phone data for Rochester Public Library, Golf reservations, and 911 phone call data, as those operations will continue to be housed by their respective departments.

Overall Summary of Findings

Highlights

- The City of Rochester receives approximately 109,000 calls annually, roughly 9,000 monthly, that could be answered by a 311 system.
- Seventy percent (70%) of incoming calls were directed to four of the thirteen departments in the City of Rochester (Community Development, Parks and Recreation, City Clerk, and Public Works).
- The average call time is 2 minutes 11 seconds.

Limitations

The City of Rochester switched phone providers in spring of 2022, going from a landline service to a soft phone service. We do not have the historical data from the previous

phone provider. As such, the data we were able to review, April 2022-October 2022, did not include typical “winter weather” months in Rochester, MN, which may impact the call volume for various departments (e.g. Public Works).

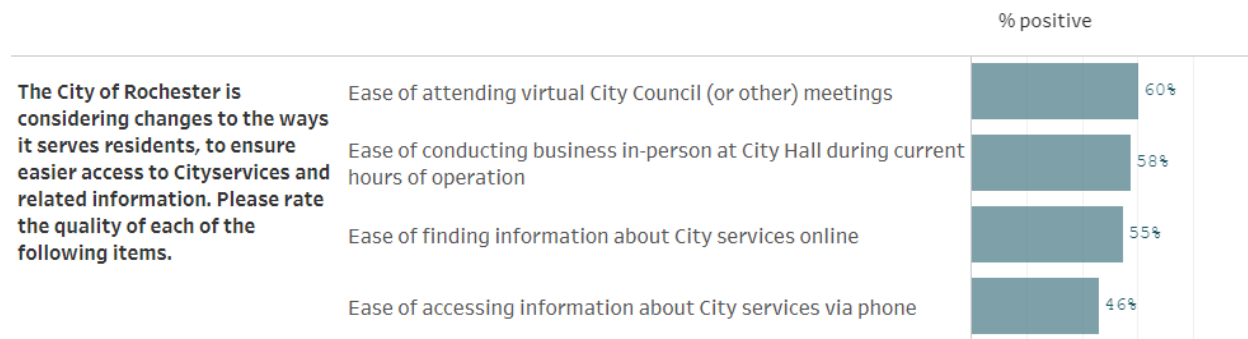
Evaluation Question 1 and 2

The first two evaluation questions are: 1) What is the current state of customer service for the City of Rochester and 2) What does each department utilize, if anything, to track calls, emails, applications, etc. To answer these two questions, we developed and deployed an internal survey for departments throughout the City of Rochester. The survey itself is in **Appendix B**, and the responses are in **Appendix C**.

Evaluation Question 3

The third evaluation question is: What is the satisfaction level of customers (residents or businesses) interacting with the City? This question is answered through our community survey question.

Image A: 2022 National Community Survey Question and response



Evaluation Question 4

The fourth evaluation question is: What is the current call volume by department? This question is answered through analysis of the phone data downloaded for 7 months of time.

- Includes calls to a general City of Rochester/department based phone number and does not include calls directly to individual teammates or unanswered phone calls.
- Unanswered calls during business hours (Monday-Friday, 8 am - 5 pm) to a department based phone (includes voicemails and abandoned calls).
- Parks and Recreation calls do not include calls to any of the four municipal golf courses.
- Doesn't include phone calls to the Rochester Public Library, Rochester Public Utility, or 911 calls.

Chart A: Total Number of phone calls per month by department

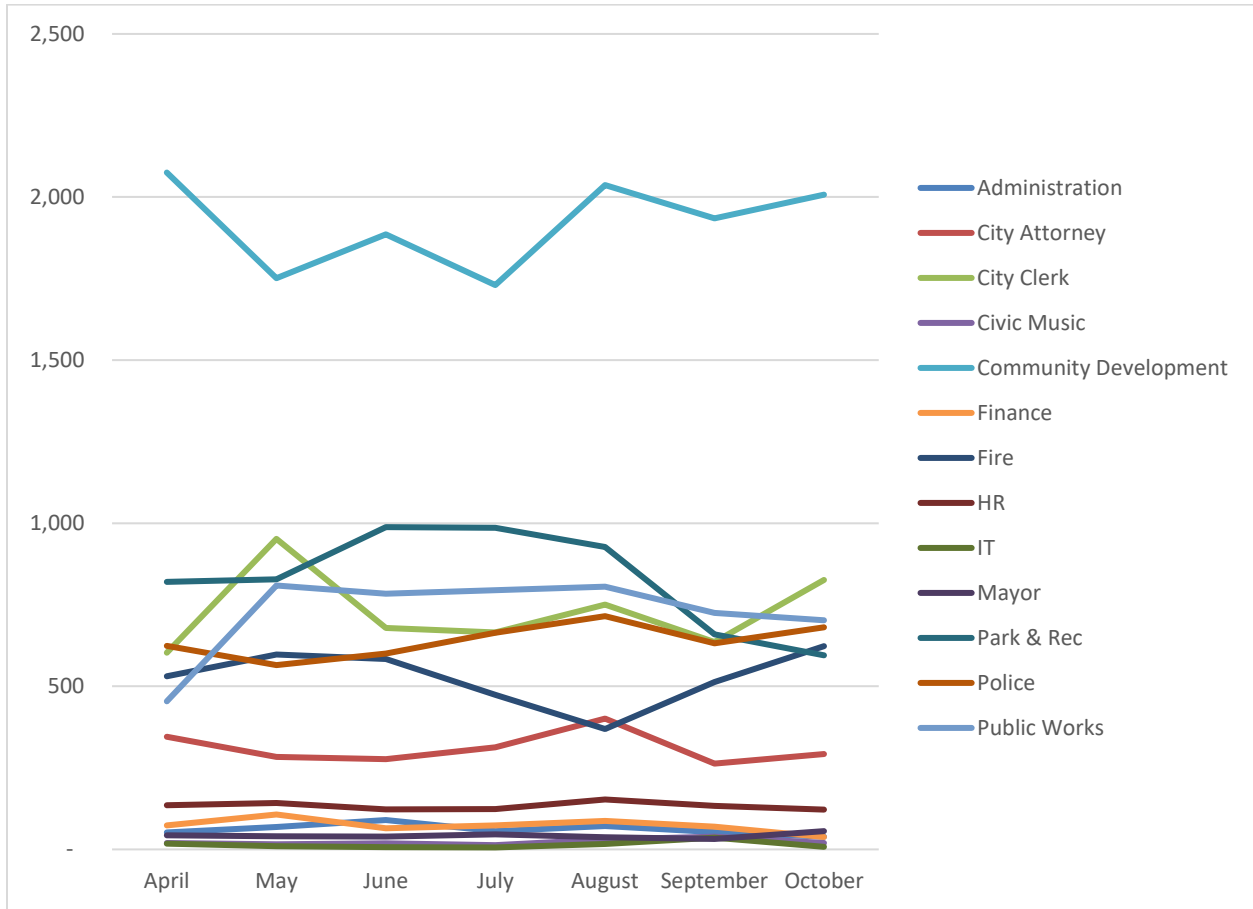


Chart B: Monthly Unanswered calls (Business Hours, Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm)

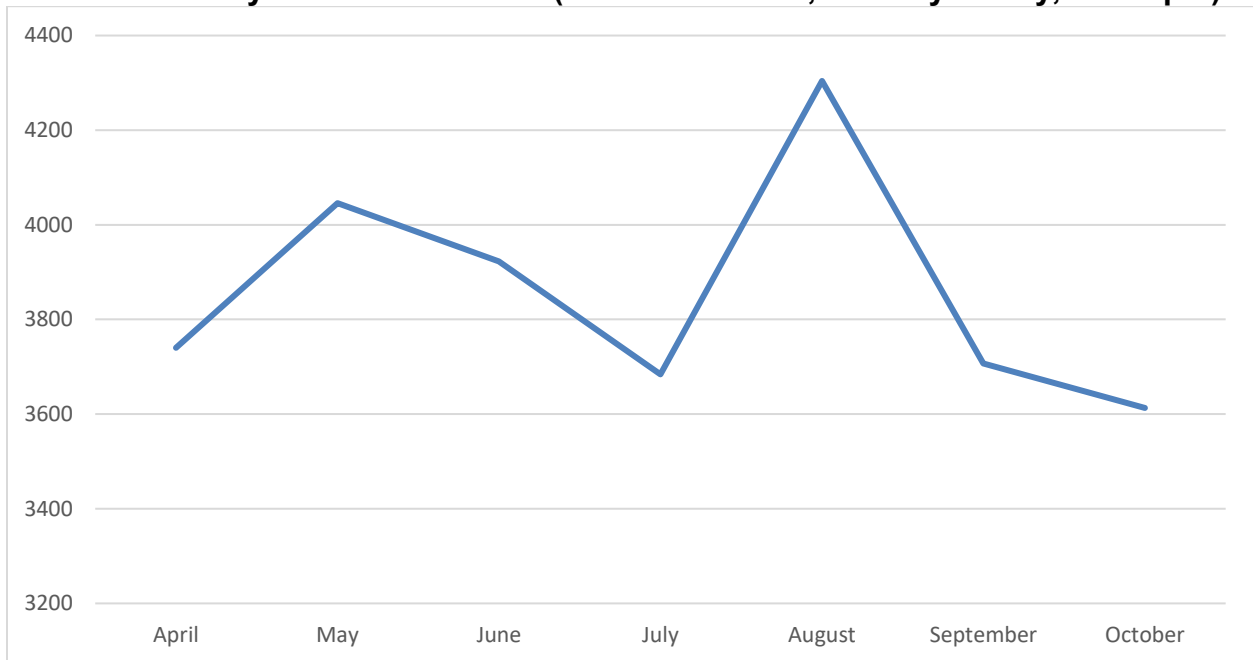


Table A: Average Monthly Calls by Department

Department	Average Monthly Calls
Community Development	1917
Park & Rec	829
City Clerk	730
Public Works	725
Police	640
Fire	527
City Attorney	311
HR	133
Finance	74
Administration	62
Mayor	42
Civic Music	22
IT	15

Table B: Average/Median Number of phone calls per month by department

Does not include calls directly to individual teammates or unanswered phone calls

	Average	Median
Administration	62	56
City Attorney	311	292
City Clerk	730	679
Civic Music	22	20
Community Development	1917	1935
Finance	74	74
Fire	527	531
HR	133	133
IT	15	10
Mayor	42	40
Park & Rec	829	828
Police	640	632
Public Works	725	784
Grand Total	6027	6009

Future State: Staffing Projections and Considerations

311 is a non-emergency telephone number that can integrate with an online/digital platform that residents can utilize to report a problem or issue or get information regarding municipal services. On the backend of the 311 system, is a Customer Relation Management (CRM tool) that will allow the City to collect data on calls and track tickets from inception to resolution.

Benefits of a 311 system include:

- Providing quality consistent customer service Citywide.
- Facilitating greater citizen engagement.
- Tracking responsiveness by departments and creating key performance metrics/indicators.
- Providing comprehensive information to make data driven decisions.
- Enabling the City to analyze call drivers to directly inform our strategic communications, engagement, and equity efforts.
- Enhancing constituent services and resources to reduce call traffic to Council Members regarding City operations issues and inquiries.

Staffing Projections

Annually, the City of Rochester receives and answers just over 72,000 phone calls to a department based phone number (not directly to an individual). Over the time period studied (April 2022-October 2022), the City had 36,000 unanswered phone calls (some may be abandoned phone calls, some leave voicemails), during business hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. This equates to nearly 109,000 phone calls annually that could be answered by a customer service agent in a 311 system.

Combining the current call volume data with the average phone call length (2 minutes and 11 seconds or 131 seconds total), provides a projection for the staffing needs (full time equivalency, or FTE) for a future call center (**Table C**, below). In Table C, the 0.5 FTE represents a working supervisor/manager position that answers phones half of the time.

Table C: Current Call Volume and Projection for FTE Needs

Current Call Volume Data	
Total Annual Calls (answered and unanswered)	108,751
Annual Calls (answered, not to individual)	72,319
Annual Calls (unanswered, not to an individual, during business hours)	36,432
Average Monthly Calls	6,027
Average Weekly Calls	1,507
Average Hourly Calls	38
Average Call Length (in seconds)	131
Amount of Call Time per Hour (in minutes)	82
Projections for FTE Needs	
Amount of Time (in minutes) on Phone per Hour with 2.5 FTEs	33
Amount of Time (in minutes) on Phone per Hour with 3.5 FTEs	23

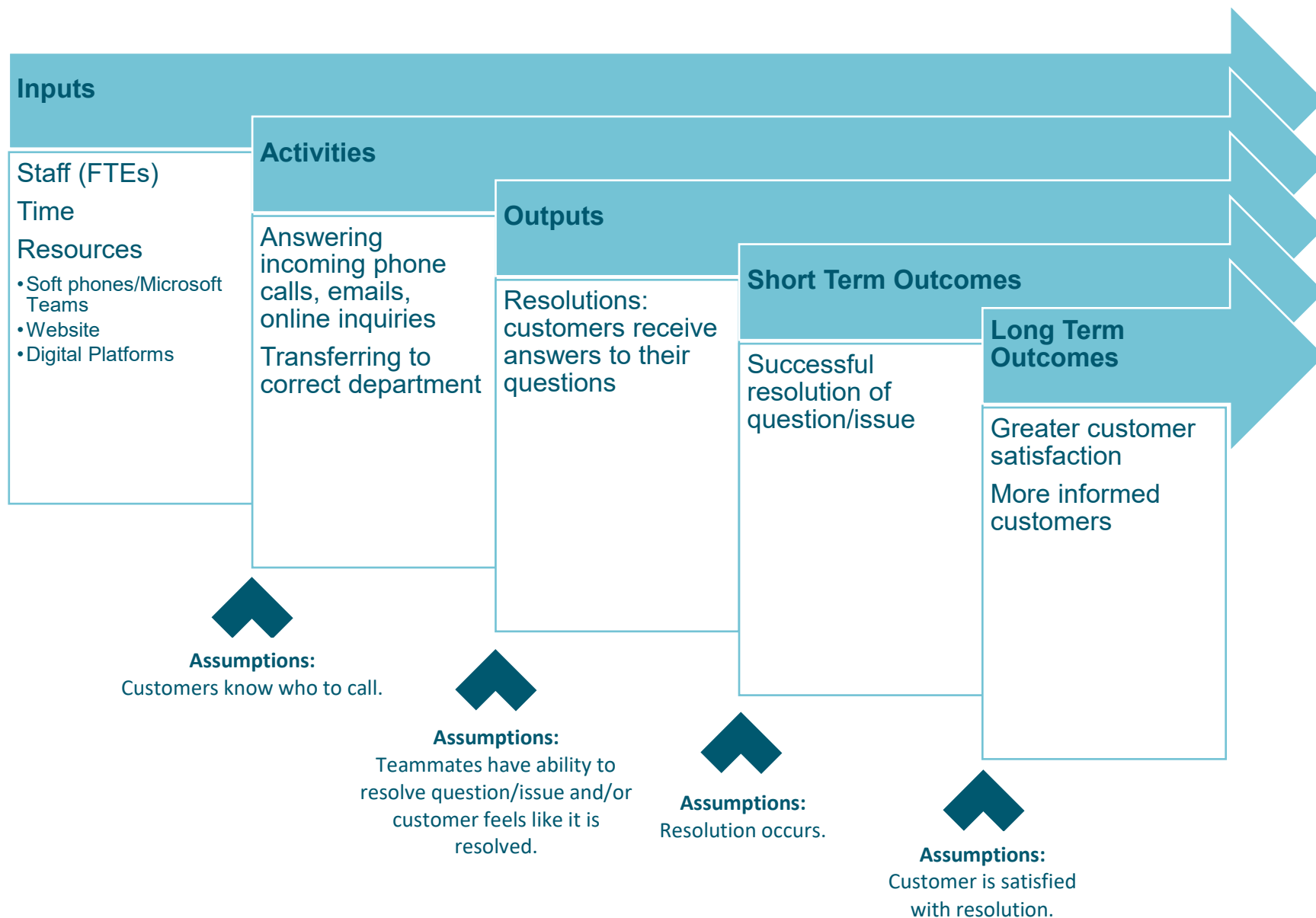
Staffing Considerations

A handful of unknown factors should be contemplated as the future state is designed.

- If an omnichannel (phone, online/digital and, sms/text) call center is selected for the future state, we don't have strong data on our current online/digital inquiries (or SMS) and would be difficult to project how much time will be spent responding to these inquiries.
- An increase in online/digital inquiries may lead to a decrease in phone calls.
- Translation services and secondary languages may be needed to provide service over the phone or through digital communications.

The City of Rochester acknowledges the continual requirement for enhancing customer service communication within our community. Through the National Community Survey, we have obtained quantitative data that highlights the dissatisfaction among community members. This evaluation can help identify a solution to resolve and improve customer service by creating consistent communication channels across all departments.

Customer Service Evaluation: Theory of Change



Appendix B: Internal COR Survey

Customer Service

We are evaluating the City of Rochester's approach to Customer Service.

* Required

* This form will record your name, please fill your name.

1. How does your department handle incoming calls from the public?

- Phone Tree (select an option from a menu to reach a specific area/person)
- Ring Group (call rings to one phone, then another)
- Queue (places a caller in an ordered "queue" or line until the next available agent or employee can help them)
- Combination of above options
- Unsure
- Other

2. Does your department track incoming phone calls?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

3. Do you track calls manually or some other way?

- Manual
- Some other way

4. How many FTE's in your department are responsible for answering incoming public phone calls? (Answer with a whole number, i.e. 1, or 2, etc).

The value must be a number

5. For those in your department that answer incoming public phone calls, what percentage of their job is for this duty? (Answer as a percent, i.e. 5%, 25%, etc., for each FTE that is answering calls.)

6. Do the people answering the incoming phones primarily provide an answer or transfer to the correct person/specific area?

7. How does you department handle emails from the public? (check all that apply)

- A general email address that several people have access to respond
- Divisional email address that several people have access too
- Form based email (i.e. "contact us" on the website)
- Other

8. Does your department track incoming emails?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

9. Do you track emails manually or some other way?

Manual

Some other way

10. Does your department interact or answer public inquiries online with a digital platform other than email? (i.e. Accela for Planning/Zoning Applications; Facebook messenger, other social media platformsetc)

Yes

No

Unsure

11. Please list all digital platforms your department utilizes. (i.e. Accela for Planning/Zoning Applications; Facebook messenger)

12. Does your department track incoming inquiries from digital platforms?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

13. Does your department utilize SMS (text messages) to interact with the public?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

14. Would your department be interested in utilizing SMS in the future?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

15. Are there other ways you interact with the public that has not been asked? (excluding outgoing/proactive communications with the public) *

16. What Department do you work in? *

- City Clerk
- HR
- Finance
- Administration
- IT
- Communications/Engagement
- Parks and Recreation
- Civic Music
- Rochester Public Library
- City Attorney's Office
- Community Development
- Public Works @ DSIC
- Public Works @ PWTOC - Fleet
- Public Works @ PWTOC - Street Maintenance
- Public Works @ PWTOC - Transit
- Public Works @ WRP - Waste Water
- Public Works @ WRP - Sewer

Public Works @ WRP - Storm Water

Public Works @ TOB

RPU

Other

Appendix C: Internal COR Survey Results

Name	What Department do you work in?	How does your department handle incoming calls from the public?	Does your department track incoming phone calls?	Do you track calls manually or some other way?	How many FTE's in your department are responsible for answering incoming public phone calls? (Answer with a whole number, i.e. 1, or 2, etc).	For those in your department that answer incoming public phone calls, what percentage of their job is for this duty? (Answer as a percent, i.e. 5%, 25%, etc., for each FTE that is answering calls.)
Mary Fuhrmeister	Civic Music	Currently we use a single - call rings to one phone; if line is busy caller goes to voicemail. Working with Dave K. to adjust system to a queue.	No		1	Administrative line - 5% Ticket Information Line -varies; when we go on sale with a concert and/or series volume increases. Ticketed event on sale for example takes up approx. 75% of time otherwise it's approx. 5%
Heather Peterson	Public Works @ DSIC	Combination of above options	Yes	Some other way	7	40%
Monty Meyer	Public Works @ PWTOC - Fleet	Phone Tree (select an option from a menu to reach a specific area/person)	Unsure		2	25
Sam Budzyna	Public Works @ TOB	Ring everyone's phone at same time	No		10	5%
Krista Boston	RPU	We have an ACD that routes calls. We have an advanced system because of the secure nature of our business both with PCI and grid level security (the phone systems are connected)	Yes	Some other way	15	100 % for some and for others 25 to 50%. We handle both inbound and outbound calls, emails and walk in's in the contact center. We handle phone payments in our IVR as well as outage call taking. It is an advanced system.
Ma Yang	City Clerk	Phone Tree (select an option from a menu to reach a specific area/person)	No		7	25

Name	What Department do you work in?	How does your department handle incoming calls from the public?	Does your department track incoming phone calls?	Do you track calls manually or some other way?	How many FTE's in your department are responsible for answering incoming public phone calls? (Answer with a whole number, i.e. 1, or 2, etc).	For those in your department that answer incoming public phone calls, what percentage of their job is for this duty? (Answer as a percent, i.e. 5%, 25%, etc., for each FTE that is answering calls.)
Marissa Carlson	City Clerk	Phone Tree (select an option from a menu to reach a specific area/person)	Unsure		2	17%
Vorleak Sin	City Clerk	Phone Tree (select an option from a menu to reach a specific area/person)	Yes	Manual	5	50%
Heather Reyna	City Clerk	Phone Tree (select an option from a menu to reach a specific area/person)	Yes	Manual	3	25%
Heidi Jordan	City Clerk	Combination of above options	Yes	Manual	2	50
Travis Mueller	City Clerk	Unsure	Yes	Manual	4	50%
Lisa Mullenbach	Administration	Ring Group (call rings to one phone, then another)	No		2	10
Sandy Fenton	City Clerk	Combination of above options	Yes	Manual	2	45%
Troy Erickson	Public Works @ WRP - Storm Water	Phone calls are directed to specific teammates based on guidance from City website.	Yes	Manual	1	50% to 75% - approximately. This includes time spent by RPU and PW teammates that are funded through the SWU.
Karen Lemke	Rochester Public Library	Combination of above options	No		60	Every person who staffs a public service desk is responsible for taking phone calls when they are staffing their respective desks. Varies widely, depending on role and depending on whether staffing a public desk. 2% for most teammates (varies by division)

Name	What Department do you work in?	How does your department handle incoming calls from the public?	Does your department track incoming phone calls?	Do you track calls manually or some other way?	How many FTE's in your department are responsible for answering incoming public phone calls? (Answer with a whole number, i.e. 1, or 2, etc).	For those in your department that answer incoming public phone calls, what percentage of their job is for this duty? (Answer as a percent, i.e. 5%, 25%, etc., for each FTE that is answering calls.)
Dylan Christopherson	Public Works @ WRP - Waste Water	Phone Tree (select an option from a menu to reach a specific area/person)	No		1	10%
Jenna Bowman	Communications/Engagement	Unsure	No			
Josh Roy	Finance	Ring Group (call rings to one phone, then another)	Unsure		5	10% for first FTE in ring group, 5% for second, negligible for rest.
Jody Houghton	City Attorney's Office	Queue (places a caller in an ordered "queue" or line until the next available agent or employee can help them)	No		3	Based on phone queue system: Jody (primary) - 25% Rob (second) - 15% Barb (third) - 5%
Tim Comstock	HR	Ring Group (call rings to one phone, then another)	No		3	10%
Ben Boldt	Parks and Recreation	queue & phone tree after hours	Yes	Some other way	3	varies; 30% for city hall office, perhaps 20-25% for other areas (forestry, Rec Center, etc.)

Name	Do the people answering the incoming phones primarily provide an answer or transfer to the correct person/specific area?	How does you department handle emails from the public? (check all that apply)	Does your department track incoming emails?	Do you track emails manually or some other way?	Does your department interact or answer public inquiries online with a digital platform other than email? (i.e. Accela for Planning/Zoning Applications; Facebook messenger, other social media pla...
Mary Fuhrmeister	majority of calls are handled without transferring	departmental email address that one person has access to;	No		Yes
Heather Peterson	They do both.	A general email address that several people have access to respond;Form based email (i.e. "contact us" on the website);GovDelivery;	No		No
Monty Meyer	Provide answer	Divisional email address that several people have access too;	Unsure		Unsure
Sam Budzyna	Provide an answer	Divisional email address that several people have access too;Form based email (i.e. "contact us" on the website);	No		No
Krista Boston	Both.	A general email address that several people have access to respond;We are moving toward chat and potentially outbound emails handled out of our payment processing vendor due to the secure nature of the payments.;	Yes	Some other way	Yes
Ma Yang	provide answer	A general email address that several people have access to respond;	No		Unsure

Name	Do the people answering the incoming phones primarily provide an answer or transfer to the correct person/specific area?	How does you department handle emails from the public? (check all that apply)	Does your department track incoming emails?	Do you track emails manually or some other way?	Does your department interact or answer public inquiries online with a digital platform other than email? (i.e. Accela for Planning/Zoning Applications; Facebook messenger, other social media pla...
Marissa Carlson	Yes and it is a lot of transfers.	Divisional email address that several people have access too;	Unsure		No
Vorleak Sin	70% Transfer	Divisional email address that several people have access too;	No		Yes
Heather Reyna	Yes	A general email address that several people have access to respond;Divisional email address that several people have access too;	No		No
Heidi Jordan	Provide an answer otherwise transfer to appropriate person	Divisional email address that several people have access too;	No		Yes
Travis Mueller	yes 100 %	NA;	No		No
Lisa Mullenbach	transfer	emails to one person ;	No		No
Sandy Fenton	They do both.	Divisional email address that several people have access too;	No		Yes
Troy Erickson	RPU teammates primarily answer questions; PW teammates will generally transfer phone calls to specific people.	A general email address that several people have access to respond;Form based email (i.e. "contact us" on the website);Individual contacts within Stormwater Group;	Yes	Manual	No
Karen Lemke	No one has the sole responsibility of just answering phones. For those on desk, they are most often answering the question. If they are unable to answer question, they will transfer to the appropriate person or division.	A general email address that several people have access to respond;Divisional email address that several people have access too;Form based email (i.e. "contact us" on the website);	No		Yes

Name	Do the people answering the incoming phones primarily provide an answer or transfer to the correct person/specific area?	How does you department handle emails from the public? (check all that apply)	Does your department track incoming emails?	Do you track emails manually or some other way?	Does your department interact or answer public inquiries online with a digital platform other than email? (i.e. Accela for Planning/Zoning Applications; Facebook messenger, other social media pla...
Dylan Christopherson	Roughly 50% are able to be answered directly. The rest are transferred.	no generic e-mail for wastewater, just phone.;	No		No
Jenna Bowman		Form based email (i.e. "contact us" on the website);	No		Yes
Josh Roy	Incoming calls for Finance are primarily answered, Incoming calls related to IT are primarily transferred.	Form based email (i.e. "contact us" on the website);	Unsure		No
Jody Houghton	We do both depending on the nature of the call and question posed.	A general email address that several people have access to respond;Form based email (i.e. "contact us" on the website);	No		No
Tim Comstock	They do a combination of providing an answer and transferring to the correct person.	A general email address that several people have access to respond;	No		Yes
Ben Boldt	50/50. handle whatever calls they can, but transfer when needed. The only call tracking we do is for forestry related calls and is tracked through Elements.	A general email address that several people have access to respond;Form based email (i.e. "contact us" on the website);	No		Yes

Name	Please list all digital platforms your department utilizes. (i.e. Accela for Planning/Zoning Applications; Facebook messenger)	Does your department track incoming inquiries from digital platforms?	Does your department utilize SMS (text messages) to interact with the public?	Would your department be interested in utilizing SMS in the future?	Are there other ways you interact with the public that has not been asked? (excluding outgoing/proactive communications with the public)
Mary Fuhrmeister	Facebook	No	No	Maybe	not that I can think of at this time
Heather Peterson			No	Yes	N/A
Monty Meyer			Unsure	Maybe	Unsure
Sam Budzyna			No	No	No
Krista Boston	Twitter, Facebook, Next Door and Linked in (not very active). We also respond to Google Reviews.	Yes	No	Maybe	Chat is our next foray. Bottom line for us whatever we use whether in house or not - has to have a high level of integration with outage management processes because outages have a life or death safety component to them. People have to be able to get through because electricity has a life support component and we have people who have doctor ordered life support waivers. So that also means we have a public safety component to think through with any change we make.
Ma Yang			Unsure	Maybe	no

Name	Please list all digital platforms your department utilizes. (i.e. Accela for Planning/Zoning Applications; Facebook messenger)	Does your department track incoming inquiries from digital platforms?	Does your department utilize SMS (text messages) to interact with the public?	Would your department be interested in utilizing SMS in the future?	Are there other ways you interact with the public that has not been asked? (excluding outgoing/proactive communications with the public)
Marissa Carlson			No	Maybe	No
Vorleak Sin	Accela for Licening	No	No	Yes	N/A
Heather Reyna			No	No	Face to face/in person
Heidi Jordan	Accela for Licensing, Logis for special assessments	Unsure	No	No	In person
Travis Mueller			No	No	face to face at the front window
Lisa Mullenbach				Maybe	no
Sandy Fenton	Accela, laserfische, logis	Unsure	No	No	in person
Troy Erickson			No	Yes	Facebook, Twitter, etc.
Karen Lemke	Facebook messenger, Twitter, IG, Chat box on website (Pidgin), selected SMS/text messaging through website widget and through ILS system	No	Yes	Yes	The majority of our interaction happens with in-person visits, at various public service desks.

Name	Please list all digital platforms your department utilizes. (i.e. Accela for Planning/Zoning Applications; Facebook messenger)	Does your department track incoming inquiries from digital platforms?	Does your department utilize SMS (text messages) to interact with the public?	Would your department be interested in utilizing SMS in the future?	Are there other ways you interact with the public that has not been asked? (excluding outgoing/proactive communications with the public)
Dylan Christopherson			No	No	We have an agreement with RPU that their customer service group is the first point of contact for utility customers. I am not aware of how much volume they receive that can be attributed to the wastewater utility. Batt Baker would be the best contact to provide more information about this.
Jenna Bowman	Facebook, Twitter and Instagram	No		No	Press releases and website
Josh Roy			No	No	Mail
Jody Houghton			No	Maybe	In person
Tim Comstock	We have limited questions come through LinkedIn.	No	No	Maybe	N/A
Ben Boldt	Facebook messenger	No	Yes	Yes	SMS for programming alerts; Rainout Line app for program weather cancelations