

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING ON JULY 24, 2017
FROM:	LYNNE LIVINGSTONE MANAGING DIRECTOR, NEIGHBOURHOOD, CHILDREN AND FIRE SERVICES and MAT DALEY DIRECTOR, INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICES
SUBJECT:	SERVICE LONDON: THE COSTS AND CONSIDERATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH A 311 NUMBER

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director of Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services and the Director, Information and Technology Services the following information **BE RECEIVED** with respect to single number access for the City of London:

- a) the review of costs and considerations associated with a 311 telephone number for non-emergency municipal information and services.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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- Reports to Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee, October 29, 2012, December 4, 2012, December 16, 2013, April 14, 2014, April 3, 2017
- Report to Corporate Services Committee, August 26, 2014, November 3, 2015, January 10, 2017

BACKGROUND

Purpose

At its meeting held on April 4, 2017, City Council resolved that:

the Civic Administration BE REQUESTED to report back on the costs that would be incurred if the City were to utilize 311 as a call option.

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the costing and resource considerations associated with a 311 number for non-emergency municipal services. This is in relation to the launch of the Service London project 661-CITY.

Background

The City of London’s mission is to be “At Your Service: A respected and inspired public service partner, building a better city for all.” This mission statement reflects our commitment to improving the way we deliver customer services.

Council’s Strategic Plan for the City of London, 2015-2019 identifies ‘Leading in Public Service’ as a strategic area of focus. This strategic area of focus includes the strategy ‘excellent service delivery’ under which the Service London Implementation Plan is referenced.

Service London is a transformative initiative supported through the Multi-Year Budget that places the customer at the centre of service planning and delivery. This means enhancing and improving the delivery of customer services through the modernization and integration of our customer service channels (online, telephone, in-person) and working collaboratively to deliver services that are simple, seamless, personalized and accountable.

The telephone experience is a key element of Service London. The City receives between 500,000 and 750,000 phone calls each year from customers seeking information and services. Citizen satisfaction surveys consistently indicate that when contacting the City of London with an inquiry or concern, residents have a strong preference to do this over the telephone.

519-661-CITY

Like all Service London initiatives, the move to single number access has followed a phased approach. When Service London began in 2012, it was assessed that the City had over 200 phone numbers to access City services and that customers were expected to know the internal structure of the organization in order to make a request.

To prepare for the move to single number access, foundational work was completed, including: evaluating and monitoring call patterns and volumes; establishing standards for call routing and call scripting based on Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system best practices; and, determining immediate opportunities to consolidate and/or reduce phone numbers while improving customer experience.

As a result of this work the City's main phone number (661-4500) menu was reconfigured based on call volume. The reconfigured menu allows callers to navigate a menu with our most frequently called services listed first. For example, Social Services, Recreation and Property Tax & Assessment account for over 40% of phone call volume, and are the first three options on the reconfigured menu.

An assessment of single number options was also completed. This included an evaluation of models used by other Canadian cities, as well as the cost, technology and time associated with moving to a single number.

In October, 2016, Civic Administration implemented a soft-launch of the new phone menu for 661-4500. The soft-launch was successful and the reconfigured menu has been effectively implemented. In April, 2017, Civic Administration completed the public launch of 661-CITY.

311

In November, 2004, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) approved the assignment of 311 as the number to access non-emergency municipal information and services ([Decision 2004-71](#)). Implementation of 311 must follow the CRTC's [Canadian N11 Notification and Implementation Guideline](#), which addresses the notification, planning and coordination of N11 numbers in Canada as well as the responsibilities of all entities involved.

In its investigation of the costs that would be incurred if 311 were used as a call option, Civic Administration engaged Bell Canada. Bell Canada has advised that 311 implementation costs are dependent upon the way external calls are routed. There are three options to consider:

1. Routing by wire center boundaries;
2. Routing by postal codes; and,
3. a Hybrid Model (combination of wire center boundaries and postal codes).

1. Routing by wire center boundaries

Wire center boundaries are the basic unit of geography for the telecommunications industry and describe the organization of the local telephone exchange system. Routing by wire center boundary or 'exchange routing' means that all calls originating within identified wire center boundaries are routed to 311. There are nine wire center boundaries for the City of London. As can be seen in [Appendix A](#), several wire center boundaries do not match our municipal boundaries. In these cases, when an

individual from a surrounding municipality dials '311' they would be routed to the City of London. As a result, the City, as the N11 Service Provider, must establish routing arrangements with all impacted municipalities. There are no capital or operating impacts to route by wire center boundary.

2. Routing by postal codes

Postal code routing is a feature that uses the postal code of the originating calling party to determine the routing to 311. This option allows more precision when a telephone exchange is shared with a neighbouring municipality. However, with this option only Bell callers can be routed by postal code. All other non-Bell callers would be routed by wire center boundary. Direct costs include: a one-time set-up fee of \$2,500; \$4,800 in annual operating costs; and, a per-call fee (311 Service Tariff) of \$0.08 for any Bell calls routed by postal code. It is estimated as much as 50% of total call volume to a 311 number could originate from non-Bell callers. Civic Administration estimates that this could result in additional costs up to a maximum of \$30,000 annually.

3. Hybrid Model

The Hybrid Model combines both wire center boundary and postal code routing. For exchange areas located discretely with City limits, wire center boundary routing would be applied. For those areas where there is overlap between City boundaries and neighbouring municipalities, postal code routing would be used for Bell callers.

Direct costs for the Hybrid Model also include: a one-time set-up fee of \$2,500; \$4,800 in annual operating costs; and, a per-call fee (311 Service Tariff) of \$0.08 for any Bell calls routed by postal code (maximum of \$30,000 annually).

It should be noted, there are significant City of London resource requirements associated with each of the options outlined above. In addition to reviewing and establishing new internal phone line documentation and messaging, the City must adhere to the *Canadian N11 Notification and Implementation Guideline*. Requirements include: establishing agreements with all surrounding municipalities prior to proceeding with 311 implementation; notifying and consulting with all Telecommunications Service Providers operating in our 311 service area; providing documentation to the Canadian Numbering Administrator; and, conducting a public awareness campaign. Based on these implementation requirements, Civic Administration estimates that 311 implementation will take approximately 12-18 months.

A summary of the external call routing options, including costs and other considerations is attached as Appendix B.

Summary

Service London is a transformative initiative that places the customer at the centre of service planning and design. Telephone access is a key component of our channel strategy for how Londoners access City information and services. To date, the move to single number access has followed a phased approach, including the launch of 661-CITY in April, 2017. There are three options associated with 311 implementation: (1) routing by wire center boundaries; (2) routing by postal codes; and, (3) a Hybrid Model, which combines both wire center boundary and postal code routing. Each option has distinct cost, labour and time considerations.

Acknowledgements

This report was written with input from Information Technology Services.

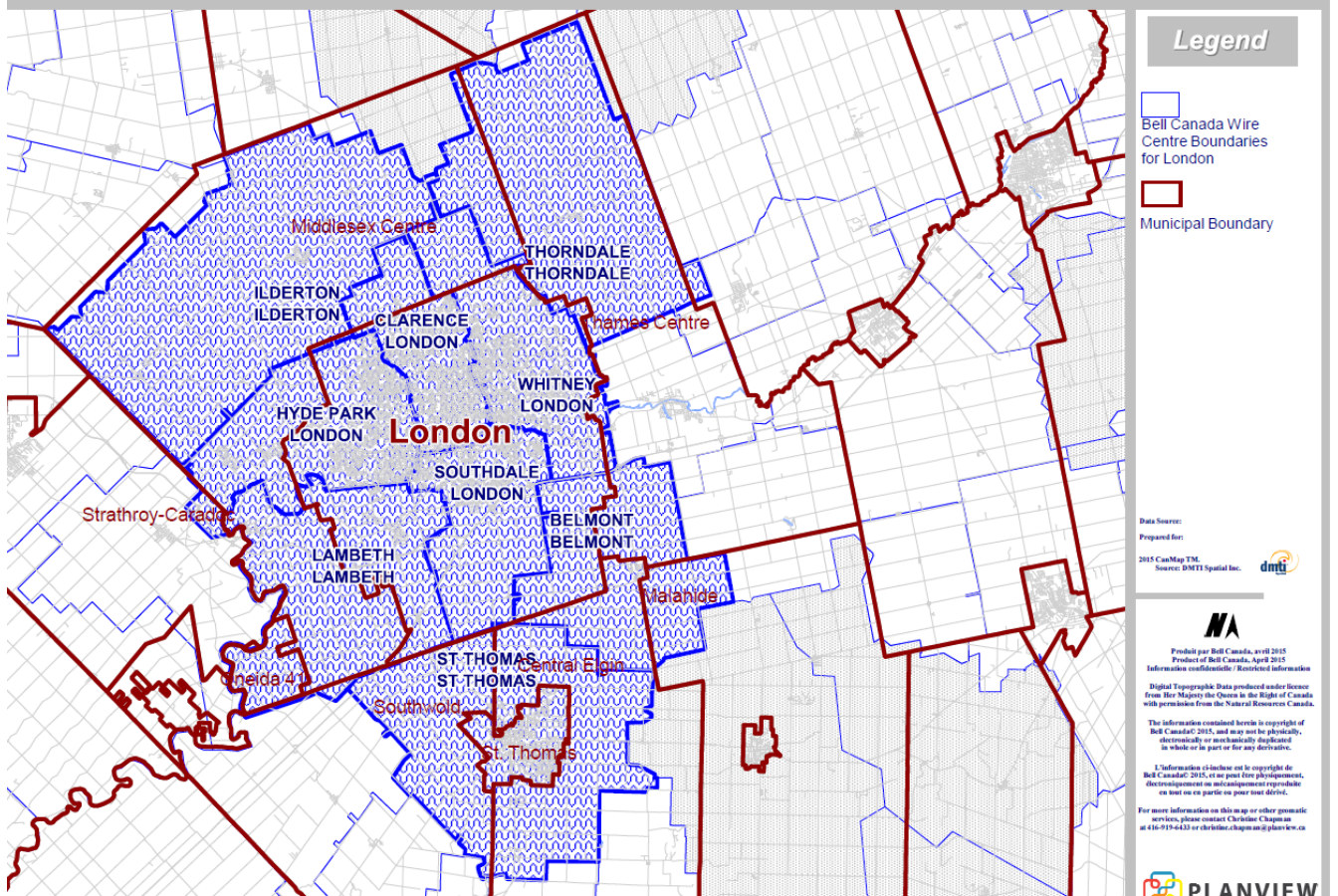
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Bill Coxhead, Managing Director, Parks and Recreation
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Appendix A: Wire Center Boundary Map

311 Service in London



Appendix B: External Call Routing Options Summary

	1. Wire centre boundaries	2. Postal codes	3. Hybrid Model
External call routing	<p>Calls routed based on wire center boundaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All callers routed by wire center boundary, including those located in surrounding municipalities - Cellular calls routed by location of cell tower and dependant on mobile telecommunications provider 	<p>Calls routed based on postal codes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All Bell callers routed by postal code at a fee of \$0.08 per call - All non-Bell callers routed based on wire center boundary, including those located in surrounding municipalities - Cellular calls routed by location of cell tower and dependant on mobile telecommunications provider 	<p>Combination of routing calls by wire center boundary and postal code:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All callers located in wire center boundaries that are within City of London boundary routed by wire center boundary - Callers located in shared wire center boundaries routed by postal code (subject to \$0.08 per call fee for Bell callers) - Cellular calls routed by location of cell tower and dependant on mobile telecommunications provider
Estimated direct costs	<p><u>Capital:</u> \$0</p> <p><u>Operating:</u> Service: \$0 Call Routing: \$0 Advertising: \$10,000-\$15,000</p>	<p><u>Capital:</u> Initial Setup: \$2,500</p> <p><u>Operating:</u> Service: \$4,800 Call Routing: \$30,000* Advertising: \$10,000-\$15,000</p>	<p><u>Capital:</u> Initial Setup: \$2,500</p> <p><u>Operating:</u> Service: \$4,800 Routing: \$30,000* Advertising: \$10,000-\$15,000</p>
City of London resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and establish new internal phone line documentation and messaging - Implement actions outlined in <i>Canadian N11 Notification & Implementation Guideline</i>. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Establish call routing agreements with surrounding municipalities o Notify and consult all Telecommunication Service Providers o Supply documentation to Canadian Numbering Administrator - Cost of labour and project management to be determined upon development of project management plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and establish new internal phone line documentation and messaging - Implement actions outlined in <i>Canadian N11 Notification & Implementation Guideline</i>. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Establish call routing agreements with surrounding municipalities o Notify and consult all Telecommunication Service Providers o Supply documentation to Canadian Numbering Administrator - Cost of labour and project management to be determined upon development of project management plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and establish new internal phone line documentation and messaging - Implement actions outlined in <i>Canadian N11 Notification & Implementation Guideline</i>. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Establish call routing agreements with surrounding municipalities o Notify and consult all Telecommunication Service Providers o Supply documentation to Canadian Numbering Administrator - Cost of labour and project management to be determined upon development of project management plan
Implementation time	12-18 months	12-18 months	12-18 months

*Estimated maximum cost based on per-call routing fee and annual City of London call volume