

ITEM NO: 1

ROLL CALL

JOINT  
NEIGHBORHOOD AND PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES COUNCIL COMMITTEE  
AND  
CITY COUNCIL WORK GROUP COMMITTEE

MOVED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ SECONDED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: 1-6-94

MOTION: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

		AYE	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
FARGO	D1				
KERTH	D2				
PANNELL	D8				✓
ORTIZ	D5				
STEINBERG	D6				

NOTES: Information received and discussed.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SEQUENCE ORDER: 1



①

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT

CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
CALIFORNIA

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January 6, 1994

Neighborhood Services and Public Safety Issues Committee  
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

**SUBJECT:** Public Response Coordination Project

**LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT:** City wide

**RECOMMENDATION** Informational

**CONTACT PERSON:** Toba Goddard, Technical Services Manager, Ext. 5081

**FOR COMMITTEE MEETING OF:** January 6, 1994

### **SUMMARY**

In April, 1993, as a pilot re-engineering project, the City began a process to develop common, city-wide, complaint tracking processes and an automated system to be used by all City departments. Departments have participated and have been represented on a Task Force and Focus Group. Meetings have also been held with City Council Administrative Assistants to obtain their perspective on responding to citizen issues. Through these efforts commonalities in responding to public requests have been identified and draft policy guidelines established.

### **BACKGROUND**

Pursuant to input from the public and the City Council, senior managers within the City perceived that the City does not always respond to the complaints and requests for service it receives from the public as quickly, thoroughly, or reliably as it should. Additionally, citizens often don't know who to call to resolve a problem or complaint and become frustrated by the lack of a central number for information. Additionally, some community members expressed frustration over the fact that they are uncertain as to the status of the resolution of a problem or the time frame under which a problem will be resolved. In other words, a feedback mechanism

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is not always in place. Each City department has its own processes and procedures for handling complaints and requests for service from the public. Currently customer service is uneven and it is not always easy for a constituent to maneuver through the City's process.

It was well known that few departments had computer systems supporting tracking of public complaints and requests for service; the existing systems are all different from one another.

In order to improve constituent access to government, and the City's responsiveness to resolving citizens' complaints, and to provide a method of tracking the status of constituent requests, the City Manager sponsored the pilot project to re-engineer the City's responses to requests of the public.

To accomplish these objectives, a task force made up of representatives from all city departments was created to investigate the need for a centralized focal point for administering and tracking public inquiries and to develop the requirements for new procedures and systems to support a more responsive and consistent customer service. Additionally, a focus group consisting of key front line employees, which included City Council Administrative Assistants, was involved in drafting policy recommendations. The efforts of both groups is outlined in Attachment B.

The next major steps in continuing this process include:

- Develop Public Response procedures. The primary objective here is to develop a procedure and instill a practice that requires a person receiving a call to take responsibility for resolving the call or finding the right person in the City to resolve the call.
- Continue to "market" program to all departments.
- Identify an entity in the City to be the "lead" in public response and a focal point for Public Response to maintain the system once developed.
- Identify personnel with multi-lingual skills throughout the City and continue developing ways for the City to respond to non-English speaking callers.
- Identify departmental Public Response Coordinators who would be responsible for assisting citizens and staff resolve and route inquiries to the appropriate staff.

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- Identify external and internal telephone lines and TDD lines and equipment where needed.
- Develop ways to "market" City phone numbers so that citizens have a better understanding who to call for service needs.
- Investigate ways to accept citizen calls beyond the traditional 8:00 to 5:00 office hour day.
- Investigate the feasibility of a "central number" to assist citizens who don't know who to call and how such a number could be staffed within current resources.
- Develop/coordinate a training plan with Human Resources staff to extend to all employees who serve the public.

Staff will be updating the City Council regularly on this project. A tentative timeline for implementing improved procedures is shown in Attachment A.

#### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Both the Task Force and the Focus Group feel strongly that this project should be implemented with as little expenditure as possible. New positions or positions that take on new responsibility should be accomplished through re-definition and reorganization rather than adding staff.

Equipment, printing costs, and training program funding sources will need to be identified.

#### POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

This project is in keeping with the criteria and principles for reorganization as follows:


- There is a compelling reason for making change...to provide better customer service and improve the flow of information about improved service on a City-wide basis
- The project provides a reasonable and workable organizational structure as part of the City's overall reorganization...with the implementation of the new Neighborhood Services department, centralizing some of the functions necessary for implementation may fall directly within the purview of the new department.

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- The project is directly aimed at improving service to customers.
- The ultimate measurable objectives will be found in the results of customer surveys.
- The project has been so far been successful at taking the time to obtain consensus to ensure viability of implementation; it is not being "rushed" at the expense of lack of involvement; "manual" implementation should be accomplished in the first half of 1994.
- The project may not be entirely cost neutral as it may require additional expenditures from departmental operating budgets or other funding still to be identified.
- This project serves to directly advance the City's Mission Statement by treating the people of Sacramento as our customers and giving them the utmost in courtesy, respect and quality services. It ensures that each employee be responsible and accountable for his/her interaction with the public.

MBE/WBE

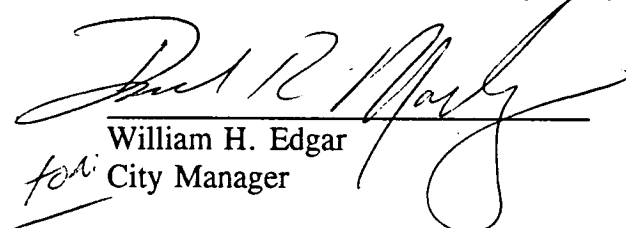
Not applicable at this time.

  
Barbara Weaver  
Director, Information  
Communication Services

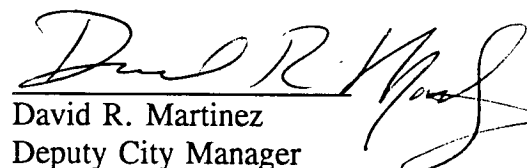
Respectfully Submitted,

  
Bina Lefkowitz  
Interim Director, Neighborhood  
Services Department

RECOMMENDATION APPROVED:

  
for William H. Edgar  
City Manager

Approval Recommended:

  
David R. Martinez  
Deputy City Manager

December 17, 1993

Attachment A

City of Sacramento  
Public Response Coordination Project  
Phase 2 Work Plan

<u>Task</u>	<u>Resp</u>	<u>Start</u>	<u>End</u>	<u>Actual End</u>
1. Identify Policy Issues	GL/TG	06/25	06/28	07/06
2. Develop and recommend policies	PT	08/15	01/01	
A. Functional Phone Direc. input	Group	09/29	10/28	10/28
Feedback FG	FG	10/28	11/05	11/05
Policy recomm.	Group	11/05	11/20	12/02
B. Category/Priority input and Policy Devel.	Group	10/28	01/01/94	
Feedback FG	FG	12/02	12/10	
Meet with Sub-comm	TG	12/10	12/13	
Project Team meeting	TG	12/17		
Feedback from Proj. Team	PT	12/17	12/22	
Review Policies		12/22	12/27	
Bina Lefkovitz				
Gary Little				
Barbara Weaver				
Policies to City Mgr.	TG	12/27	01/01/94	
Staffing analysis/N. Svcs.	NS	12/02	01/15	
C. Presentation to N. Services and Safety Issues Committee	TG		01/06/94	
3. Develop Procedures	PT/FG	01/01	02/25	
4. Review Procedures	CM	02/25	03/10	
5. Meet with Dept. Heads for final comments	PT	03/10	04/05	
6. Begin training for key personnel	GB	04/01		
7. Initiate Policies and distribute Procedures	PT	05/10		

LEGEND

CM City Manager's Office  
 GB George Buckingham  
 GL Gary Little, City Mgr's Office  
 PT Project Team  
 TG Toba Goddard/Info./Comm.  
 FG Focus Group

01

PHASE 1

To accomplish these objectives, a task force was created to:

- Investigate the need for creating a centralized focal point for administering and tracking complaints and requests for service
- Develop the requirements for new procedures and systems to support more responsive and consistent Public Response on a City-wide basis

In June of 1993, the Task Force reached consensus and came to the following conclusions:

- City staff at all levels should be responsive to the citizens and be empowered to respond; problems should be resolved at the lowest level possible
- City staff should be well-trained in customer service goals, techniques, policies, practices, procedures, and computer systems support
- Requests for service should be ranked in a consistent manner both within and between departments
- It would be desirable to standardize the activities related to receiving and routing of requests, request inquiries and the closing of requests City-wide
- Only activities needing unique departmental skills, knowledge, and procedures, such as taking corrective action on complaints, should not be standardized
- The City culture will need to change embodying a City-wide team view rather than narrower job, division or department views

Goals, activities and business cycle models were created to aid with achieving consensus and describing requirements for successful implementation of the Public Response Coordination project.

## PHASE 2

In keeping with the tenets of Phase 1, the Task Force visited several departments in order to familiarize department management with the project. The Task Force also asked for the assistance of a Focus Group which is comprised of key, front-line employees. To date, this group numbers approximately fifty employees. This Focus Group set goals for Phase 2 as follows:

- Identify major policy issues; obtain consensus on, define and recommend policies as groundwork for Public Response procedures
- Obtain approval on Public Response policies
- Develop the procedures for implementing the policies
- Publish the policies and implement procedures including a training program for staff

The first goal is being met with the Focus Group and the Task Force drafting policy recommendations. The recommendations have been submitted to the City Manager's office for review and approval. A new, more "user friendly" Functional Telephone Directory that will be available to all City employees is being developed as a by-product of this effort. It was developed as it was deemed a mandatory tool in carrying out Public Response coordination policies and procedures.

## PHASE 3

Phase 3 represents automating the manual process described in Public Response procedures developed in Phase 2. During Phase 1, and in the hopes of discovering an automated system already in place, a survey of local governments was conducted. The conclusions reached at that time were:

- No clearly superior system alternative exists. Three alternatives identified are:
  - Modify the current Neighborhood Services system resident on the City's IBM mainframe making the system more friendly and easier to use as well as adding more information
  - Acquire and implement a software package solution
  - Develop an in-house custom software solution