



Office of the City Auditor

**Report to the City Council
City of San José**

**CUSTOMER CALL
HANDLING: RESIDENT
ACCESS TO CITY SERVICES
NEEDS TO BE
MODERNIZED AND
IMPROVED**

**Report 14-06
August 2014**

August 14, 2014

Honorable Mayor and Members
Of the City Council
200 East Santa Clara Street
San José, CA 95113

Customer Call Handling: Resident Access to City Services Needs to be Modernized and Improved

The City of San José (City) provides many services to its residents, businesses, and visitors that require the customer to contact the City – often by phone. We audited the following City call centers for their efficiency and effectiveness: Customer Contact Center (the City’s main phone number at 408-535-3500), Development Services, Animal Care and Services (Dispatch and Licensing), Revenue Management, Transportation Tree/Sidewalk, Code Enforcement, Transportation Dispatch, and Transportation Vehicle Abatement.

Finding 1: It Is Difficult to Know Who to Call, and Self-Service Options Are Limited. The call centers are decentralized and residents have to figure out which City number and department they need to reach with their service or information request. The City’s website lists phone numbers to call, but some contact numbers were inaccurate and outdated. The City provides residents with some online self-service options, and use of these self-service options has been increasing. Self-service options, however, are still limited. Moreover, some self-service options do not link to work order systems and thus require manual data entry by staff. To improve customers’ ease of access, the City needs to ensure phone numbers and website information are accurate and easy to find, and focus and invest **more** on self-service options.

Finding 2: The City Should Monitor Customer Wait Times and Call Volume. During the 12 months preceding our audit, wait times at the City’s Customer Contact Center averaged 8 minutes, with especially long wait times on Mondays and on days after City holidays. One major cause of long wait times was that some phone calls resulted in complex and time-intensive work for staff. Insufficient staffing was another cause for its poor performance. Although the Customer Contact Center has taken steps to improve its performance, we recommend the Customer Contact Center modify staff duties and schedules as needed, and seek short-term staffing relief if it is unable to sustain improved wait times.

It is standard practice in the call center industry to collect detailed performance data regarding the call center’s overall performance as well as each individual call taker. For example, some call takers at the City’s Customer Contact Center answered as many as 60 calls per day, whereas other call takers only answered 20 calls per day. The City’s call centers should use currently available reports to improve their performance measurement and management and also take advantage of improved reports with the

new system. Some of those reports were underused, used infrequently, or not used at all. Detailed performance data also can help call center managers prepare for and manage spikes in call volume.

Finding 3: Improvements Are Needed in Some of the City’s Call Trees. At most of the City’s call centers, customers encounter a call tree (“Press 1 for X, press 2 for Y...”). When call trees are set up well, they channel customers quickly to the right staff member. The City’s call trees are maintained decentrally and some have not been regularly reviewed. The Animal Care and Services’ call tree was too long and complex, creating a poor customer experience. Not following industry best practices, it contained too many options for callers to choose from, including one 4-minute-long announcement, and some information in the call tree was incorrect or unclear. Animal Care and Services had not reviewed the call tree in some time. Other departments’ call trees also needed improvements, such as correcting a mis-translation, improving logical flow, and making information understandable. We recommend the various departments improve their call trees and regularly review them.

Finding 4: Voicemail Boxes – Their Use and Staff’s Responsiveness Needs Review. Some callers reach a voicemail box instead of a staff member. Voicemail can be a useful tool when monitored. For example, Revenue Management had well-functioning practices in place to retrieve voicemail messages regularly and was using an online interface to monitor voicemails. We also found that the Department of Transportation regularly retrieved Tree/Sidewalk and Vehicle Abatement voicemail messages. On the other hand, Animal Care and Services needs to consistently retrieve voicemails or change the voicemail boxes it offers to ensure its callers receive a response. We recommend the City improve its voicemail message practices by requiring departmental call centers to develop and document policies on how frequently voicemail boxes should be reviewed and how timely messages should be returned.

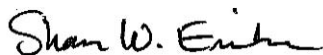
Finding 5: Language Accessibility to Non-English Speakers Should be Enhanced. Nearly 26 percent of San José residents speak English less than very well, according to the 2012 American Community Survey. However, only two of the nine call centers we reviewed in this audit provided a call tree option other than English. Furthermore, although only some of the call centers had bilingual staff, some departments were not aware that the City already had a purchase order for translation services with a vendor, and usage of those translation services was low. We recommend the City develop a language access policy to make City services more accessible to all residents.

Finding 6: Systems Integration and More Centralized Call Handling Would Enhance the Customer Experience. Various call centers in the City handle hundreds of resident calls on a daily basis. City phone numbers are numerous and hard to find. The Customer Contact Center is just one of the multiple call centers spread out across the City. For many calls, it essentially acts as a switchboard. We recommend the Administration develop a knowledge base that enables call takers across departments to provide accurate information to customers and/or to direct customers to appropriate staff when needed.

Integrating service request systems is also crucial. Departments use a variety of software applications, and few of the work order systems in the City are integrated. In addition, resident service requests coming through self-service options rarely feed directly into the various work order systems. Many other cities have found that implementing customer relationship management (CRM) technology to integrate the disparate work order systems and having a centralized call center addresses these issues. In our opinion, the City of San José needs to develop a long-term strategy to improve customer access including consideration of a centralized call center with integrated customer relationship management.

This report includes 13 recommendations. We will present this report at the August 21, 2014 meeting of the Public Safety, Finance, and Strategic Support Committee. We would like to thank the City Manager's Office and the departments of Information Technology, Public Works, Finance, Transportation, and Planning, Building and Code Enforcement for their time and insight during the audit process. The Administration has reviewed the information in this report and its response is shown on the yellow pages.

Respectfully submitted,



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City Auditor

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This report is also available online at www.sanjoseca.gov/audits/

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Introduction

The mission of the City Auditor's Office is to independently assess and report on City operations and services. The audit function is an essential element of San José's public accountability and our audits provide the City Council, City management, and the general public with independent and objective information regarding the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of City operations and services.

In accordance with the City Auditor's Fiscal Year (FY) 2013-14 Work Plan, we have completed an audit of the City of San José's handling of customer telephone calls. We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We limited our work to those areas specified in the "Audit Objective, Scope, and Methodology" section of this report.

We would like to thank the City Manager's Office and the departments of Information Technology, Public Works, Finance, Transportation, and Planning, Building and Code Enforcement for their time and insight during the audit process.

Background

The City of San José (City) provides many services to its residents, businesses, and visitors. These include, for example, managing garbage and recycling pick-up,¹ delivering residential water,² inspecting and permitting buildings, repairing street potholes, providing an animal shelter, and responding to blight complaints.

For many of its services, the City relies on the public to report an issue. Residents can request services and report concerns in most cases by calling various City telephone numbers. The City receives hundreds of these types of calls each day.

The City's main telephone number is 408-535-3500; calls to this number are answered by the Customer Contact Center. Receiving about 1,000 phone calls per day, the Customer Contact Center is a unit in the Information Technology

¹ Garbage and recycling is picked up at more than 300,000 residential households by companies ("haulers") under their franchise agreements with the City. The City handles the billing of customers.

² 26,700 customers in some areas of San José receive retail water from the City's Municipal Water System. Other areas receive water from private companies.

(IT) Department. The mission of the Customer Contact Center is to “process calls related to utility billing and services; [and to] serve as the primary point of City information for residents, businesses, and employees.”

In addition to the Customer Contact Center, the public can call many other call centers throughout the City’s departments. These include Development Services (408-535-3555), Animal Care and Services (408-794-7297), Revenue Management (408-535-7055), Transportation – Tree/Sidewalk (408-794-1901), Transportation – Dispatch (408-794-1900), Transportation – Vehicle Abatement (408-277-5305), and Code Enforcement (408-535-7770).³

The City’s largest call center is Police Communications which answers 9-1-1 emergency calls, 3-1-1 public safety non-emergency calls, as well as the Police Department’s non-emergency 408-277-8900 phone line. Police Communications dispatches more than 2,000 calls each day. This audit, however, focused on the customer call centers listed above.

Call Center Staffing

In general, Senior Office Specialists handle customer telephone calls. However, various other classifications such as Principal Office Specialists and Dispatchers also have call handling duties. The Senior Office Specialist job description, last revised in 2001, lists among their duties:

[P]rovides customer service [...]; answers and screens telephone calls, takes messages, and refers telephone calls to [the] appropriate person; answers questions and provides a variety of information over the telephone that requires knowledge of the organization, applicable procedures, laws, rules, and regulations.

Exhibit I below shows the staffing levels and job classifications used in the City’s call centers.

It is important to note that employees in the call centers have responsibilities in addition to answering telephone calls. To give a few illustrative examples: Customer Contact Center staff also responds to emails and serves walk-in customers at the City Hall lobby; Department of Transportation (DOT) employees take vehicle abatement phone calls in addition to their front desk and other permitting duties; Animal Care and Services staff in Licensing also service the animal shelter front desk. Code Enforcement staff processes administration citations and sends out notices and letters to residents in addition to answering phones.

³ Additional City departments and call centers receive customer phone calls. To give a few illustrative examples: Human Resources may receive phone calls from prospective job applicants or from current employees. Park facilities, like Happy Hollow Park and Zoo or Lake Cunningham, may get calls from visitors. The IT Department also offers a help desk to support employees. Finally, residents may call individual staff members and City Council Offices directly.

Exhibit I: Call Centers' Staffing Levels

Call Center	Authorized Staffing (full-time equivalents)			Vacancies
	Actual Staffing			
Customer Contact Center	5	5		Principal Office Specialist
	21	15	6	Senior Office Specialist
Development Services	6	4	2	Senior Office Specialist
Animal Care and Services – Licensing	1	1		Senior Office Specialist
	4	4		Office Specialist II
	3	3		Part-time Office Specialist II
	1	1		Senior Account Clerk
Animal Care and Services – Dispatch	5	5		Dispatcher
Revenue Management	4	4		Office Specialist II
Transportation – Tree/Sidewalk	2	1		Senior Office Specialist
		1		Office Specialist II
Code Enforcement	1	1		Senior Supervisor, Administration
	1	1		Principal Office Specialist
	3	2	1	Senior Office Specialist
	1	1		Office Specialist II
Transportation – Dispatch	2	2		Senior Office Specialist
Transportation – Vehicle Abatement	1	1		Senior Office Specialist
TOTAL	61	52	9	

Source: Auditor analysis of organization charts and information provided by departments, and budgets as of June 2014.

The 2014-15 budget eliminated 6 vacant Senior Office Specialist positions in the Customer Contact Center.

Excludes management. For example, Development Services has 1 Senior Supervisor, Administration who oversees the group, but does not routinely answer phone calls.

It is important to note that employees have responsibilities in addition to answering telephone calls.

Police Communications and Fire Communications use specialized classifications.

The City Has Offered a Central Customer Call Center Since 2001

In 2001, at the urging of the Mayor and City Manager, the City's first central customer call center opened to answer telephone calls from the public. The call center was then based in the City Manager's Office and its purpose was to be "a central source of information for all customer needs – residents and employees." Its 13 call takers responded to inquiries for information and also took service requests, complaints, and suggestions. For example, it took complaints about abandoned shopping carts and street light outages, and made room reservations at City Hall's public meeting rooms.

In 2006, the Environmental Services Department (ESD) call center, which had been handling utility billing, and the City Manager's call center were consolidated and moved to the IT Department. This merger created the Customer Contact Center which as of 2014 still handled both utility billing and general information phone calls at 408-535-3500.

Costs

We estimate that one staff minute spent on the telephone cost the City between \$0.90 and \$5.33, and that the cost per telephone call ranged from \$2 to \$17, depending on the duration of the call as well as overall call volume in the respective call center.

The Customer Contact Center's budget for fiscal year (FY) 2013-2014 totaled \$3.1 million. Of this, \$2.4 million came from the Integrated Waste Management Fund (Fund 423) and \$439,000 came from the General Fund. The remainder came from various utility funds.⁴

The City's Telephone Systems

Two Network Engineers in the IT Department are responsible for supporting the City's telephone systems. Currently, phone calls to and within City offices are generally routed through on-site servers and switches and the City's Voice-over-Internet Protocol (VoIP) network before reaching desk telephones. Call trees (in the Call Pilot system) and voicemail boxes are also part of the City's telephone systems. These systems were installed in the mid-2000s, and are in the process of being replaced.

In addition, the Customer Contact Center, Development Services, Animal Services Dispatch, Revenue Management, and Transportation Dispatch use Symposium software to manage their call center queues.

Audit Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Our audit objective was to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of customer call handling at the City's Customer Contact Center and eight other customer call centers that have relatively high call volume or service request volume and are housed in various City departments. This included:

- Development Services
- Animal Care and Services – Dispatch
- Animal Care and Services – Licensing
- Revenue Management
- Transportation – Tree/Sidewalk
- Code Enforcement
- Transportation – Dispatch
- Transportation – Vehicle Abatement.

⁴ These budget figures exclude the IT Help Desk which serves City employees.

We did not include Police and Fire Communications (including 911 and 311) as part of this review.

Through interviews, reviews of documentation, and analysis of data from the telephone and service request systems, we sought to understand the call volume, types of calls and services, telephone systems, staff's handling of calls, and relevant management controls. In particular:

- We carried out field observations at the Customer Contact Center, Development Services, Animal Care and Services, Revenue Management, Transportation Tree/Sidewalk, and Transportation Dispatch. During our field observations, we listened to the questions/complaints from callers as well as staff's responses to callers. We also observed staff's work with the telephone and the service request systems.
- We interviewed management and staff at the call centers. We obtained procedures from the Customer Contact Center and others, as needed. We reviewed relevant budget information.
- We interviewed management and staff of the Customer Contact Center and IT Department regarding the telephone systems and planned system changes, and we obtained relevant contracts and purchase orders.
- We documented call volume, types of calls and services, and associated metrics such as wait time and hang-ups from reports out of the telephone systems and/or the service request systems. We performed limited data reliability testing to ensure that the data was sufficiently reliable for our audit objectives.
- We listened to the call trees and pre-recorded messages from the perspective of a caller; we transcribed, flowcharted, and timed them. We reviewed information about the call centers and associated services on the City's website.
- We reviewed staff's retrieval of voicemail messages at Transportation Tree/Sidewalk, Transportation Vehicle Abatement, and Animal Care and Services Licensing. Because Finance retrieved its voicemail through an online interface, we spot-checked its retrieval process for one day.
- We reviewed the staffing levels, scheduling practices, and business hours at all call centers.
- We identified existing and potential self-service options, such as web forms, apps, etc.
- We interviewed management from Police Communications and Fire Communications in San José and management from city government call centers in Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Minneapolis, and San Francisco regarding their services and call center best practices.

- Finally, we reviewed the best-practices literature, including “Call 311: Connecting Citizens to Local Government” by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA)⁵ and “Call Center Metrics: Best Practices in Performance Measurement and Management to Maximize Queue Efficiency and Quality” by the North American Queue Consortium (NAQC).⁶

We should note that our audit scope focused on the handling of telephone calls (for example, a phone call about a street pothole) and not on the actual service (for example, a Department of Transportation crew filling the pothole or the time it took to provide a response).

The City Auditor’s Office previously audited the Customer Contact Center in 2002 and 2003, respectively. The Customer Contact Center no longer uses the telephone and service request systems that had been in use in 2003. In accordance with our 2002 recommendation, it is still using a vendor to answer after-hour telephone calls, as described in more detail in Finding 2. Moreover, in 2013 we audited Code Enforcement and addressed the technology challenges in that division. All of our audit reports are published online at www.sanjoseca.gov/audits/.

⁵ ICMA paper: <http://bookstore.icma.org/freedocs/43547.pdf>

⁶ NAQC paper: http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.naquitline.org/resource/resmgr/issue_papers/callcentermetricspaperbestpr.pdf

Finding I It Is Difficult to Know Who to Call And Self-Service Options Are Limited

Summary

Multiple departments take calls from residents to provide an array of City services. Call handling is decentralized and residents have to figure out which City number and department they need to reach with their service or information request. The City’s website lists phone numbers to call, but some contact numbers were inaccurate and outdated. The City provides residents with some online self-service options, and use of these self-service options has been increasing. Self-service options, however, are still limited. Moreover, some self-service options do not link to work order systems and thus require manual data entry by staff. To improve customers’ ease of access, the City needs to ensure phone numbers and website information are accurate and easy to find, and focus and invest **more** on self-service options.

The City Has Many Telephone Numbers

In addition to its main telephone number (408-535-3500), the City has multiple call centers offering various services to the public. Each has its own phone number, as detailed in Exhibit 2 below.

Exhibit 2: The City Has Many Different Call Centers

Call Center	Telephone Number	Services	Department and Location
Police Communications*	911 (emergency) 311 (non-emergency) 408-277-8900	Police, fire, and medical response	Police (Police and Communications Building)
Customer Contact Center	408-535-3500	Garbage, recycling, water services (including billing); general City information	Information Technology (City Hall 11 th Floor)
Development Services	408-535-3555	Appointments for building inspections and plan review; payment processing	Planning, Building and Code Enforcement (City Hall 2 nd Floor)
Fire Communications*	911 (emergency) 408-277-8991	Fire and medical emergencies	Fire (Police and Communications Building)

Exhibit 2, continued: The City Has Many Different Call Centers

Call Center	Telephone Number	Services	Department and Location
Animal Care and Services – Licensing	408-794-7297 x5 or 408-794-7240	Pet licensing, animal shelter customer service	Public Works (Animal Shelter)
Animal Care and Services – Dispatch	408-794-7297 x1	Response to animal control issues	Public Works (Animal Shelter)
Revenue Management	408-535-7055	Business tax; payments for permits, invoices, administrative citations	Finance (City Hall 13 th Floor)
Transportation – Tree/Sidewalk	408-794-1901	Street tree and sidewalk inspections	Transportation (Mabury Yard)
Code Enforcement	408-535-7770	Inspections of abandoned buildings, waste, blight, building code violations, graffiti	Planning, Building and Code Enforcement (City Hall 4 th Floor)
Transportation – Dispatch	408-794-1900	Response to: sewers, flooding, trash/debris on streets, traffic signals, street signs, potholes, streetlights	Transportation (Mabury Yard)
Transportation – Vehicle Abatement	408-277-5305	Towing abandoned vehicles	Transportation (City Hall 8 th Floor)

Source: Auditor analysis based on interviews, observations, and departmental information.

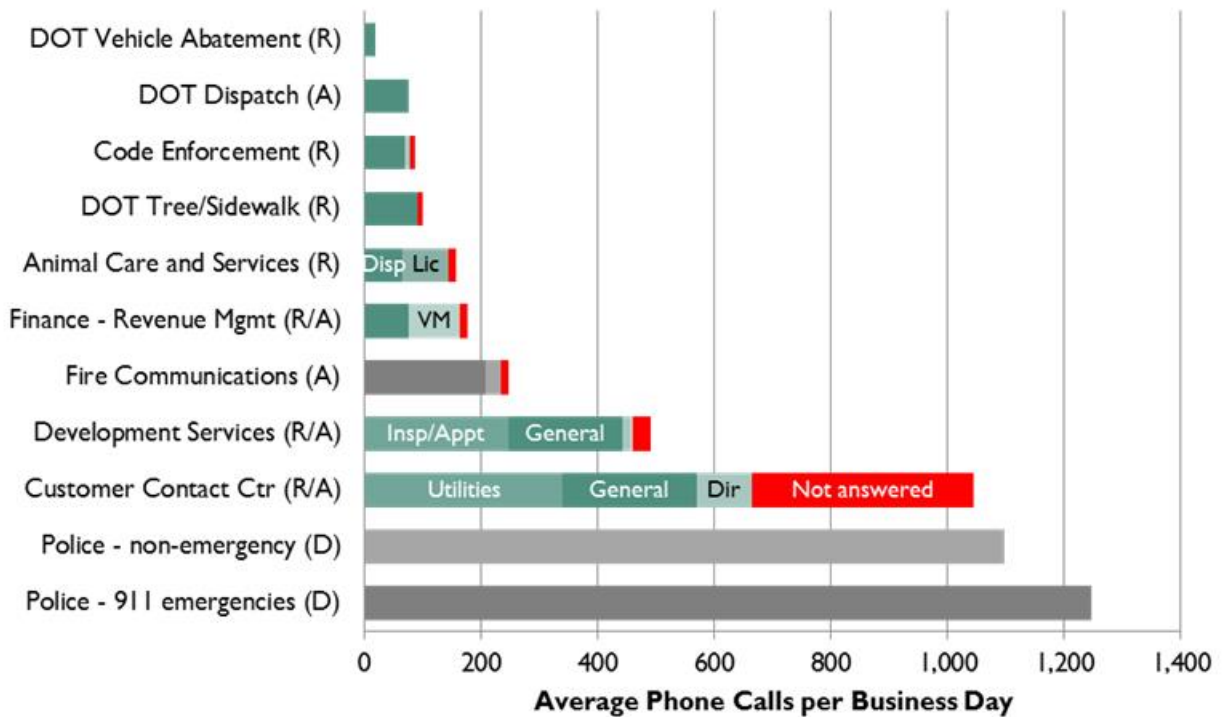
911 calls go to Police Communications which then may or may not forward the call to Fire Communications, depending on need. Fire Communications also answers after-hours Transportation and Public Works calls.

*Not included in this audit.

A High Volume of Resident Requests for City Services Goes Through a Few Call Centers

The City’s call centers vary considerably in size and workload. On the busier side, the Customer Contact Center typically received about 1,000 calls per day, whereas the Department of Transportation’s (DOT) Vehicle Abatement hotline only got 19 calls per day. To put their workloads in perspective, Exhibit 3 shows the average daily call volume for the City’s major call centers. Again, it is important to note that staff in each call center may have duties in addition to responding to phone calls.

Exhibit 3: Call Volume Varied by Call Center



Abbreviations: R: phone calls received, A: phone calls answered, D: calls dispatched, Disp: Dispatch, Lic: Licensing, VM: voicemail, Insp/Appt: inspections/appointments, Dir: City staff directory

Source: Auditor analysis of various reports by the IT Department and other departments (Call Treatment, ACD Performance, Call Pilot, Skillset by Agent), and Service Efforts and Accomplishments Report

Footnotes: Phone calls received may not get answered; for example they may go to a voicemail box, get transferred to another department, or the caller may hang up. Data covers FY 2012-13, calendar year 2013, April 2013-March 2014, Nov 2013-Feb 2014, or Oct 2013-Feb 2014, depending on reports' availability. Some phone calls shown may be duplicated across departments; for example, a caller at Code Enforcement may choose the directory which transfers to the Customer Contact Center. Business days are those days on which City staff answers the phones. For most departments, business days are Mondays through Fridays, excluding City holidays. Police, Fire, and Animal Services dispatch work seven days a week. Business hours vary, for example the Customer Contact Center staff worked from 8 am to 5 pm, whereas Animal Care dispatch was open from 7 am to 9 pm, and DOT Dispatch was open from 7 am to 4 pm. Staff has responsibilities in addition to answering phones, such as serving walk-in customers.

It Is Difficult to Know Who to Call

How do residents know who to call? In addition to the various call centers above, the San José phone book includes multiple pages of phone numbers for the City. Residents use these lists and their web equivalents (often, we presume, with some frustration) to figure out which are the best departments that would respond to their needs. Exhibit 4 below shows seven telephone book columns of City phone numbers from the yellow pages.

Exhibit 4: City Telephone Numbers in the Telephone Book

SAN JOSE CITY OF - (Cont'd)		SAN JOSE CITY OF - (Cont'd)		SAN JOSE CITY OF - (Cont'd)	
CHILDREN SERVICES - (Cont'd)					
Happy Hollow Park & Zoo-School Tours-Summer Camp & Programs - 1300 Senter Rd	408 794-6400	SAN JOSE CITY OF - (Cont'd)		SAN JOSE CITY OF - (Cont'd)	
95112	408 793-4186	COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM RESERVATIONS - (Cont'd)		FIRE - (Cont'd)	
Ranger Interpretive Programs - 150 E San Fernando S J	408 808-2617	City Hall Event Services - 200 E Santa Clara		Fire Prevention	
Smart Start San Jose - 150 E San Fernando S J	408 808-2617	95113		Assembly And Burn Permits - 408 535-7750	
CITY COUNCIL -					
City Council Meetings Held Every Tuesday 1:30 PM And - 1st & 3rd Tuesday-Evening Sessions At 7 PM					
Receptionist - 200 E Santa Clara	408 535-4900	Dr Martin Luther King Jr Main Library - 150 E San Fernando		Fire Suppression-Alarms-Life Safety - 408 535-3555	
95113	408 535-4900	95112		Hazardous Materials - 408 535-7750	
CITY DEPARTMENTS -					
City Council District 1 Pete Constant - 408 535-4901					
City Council District 2 Ash Kalra - 408 535-4902					
City Council District 3 Sam Liccardo - 408 535-4903					
City Council District 4 Kansen Chu - 408 535-4904					
City Council District 5 Xavier Campos - 408 535-4905					
City Council District 6 Pierluigi Oliverio - 408 535-4906					
City Council District 7 Madison P Nguyen - 408 535-4907					
City Council District 8 Rose Herrera - 408 535-4908					
City Council District 9 Donald Roca - 408 535-4909					
City Council District 10 Johnny Khamis - 408 535-4910					
City Council Meetings Agenda - 408 535-1255					
AIRPORT -					
Norman Y Mineta San Jose International Airport 1701-2077 Airport Bl 95110					
For Airline Information Reservation-Flight Schedules Or Employment See Airline Companies In The Business Section Of The White Pages					
Information-General - 408 392-3600					
Customer Service - 408 392-1159					
Lost And Found - 408 392-3559					
Media Relations - 408 392-1199					
Airport Administration - 1701 Airport Bl 95110					
408 392-3600					
ANIMALS -					
Dead Animal Pick-Up - 408 794-7297					
Emergency Calls-Complaints-Strays-Dangerous Animals - 408 794-7297					
95113					
Events - 408 794-7297					
Licensing - 408 794-7240					
Noisy Animals - 408 794-7297					
Permits-Animal Facility Livestock-Small Animals - 408 794-7297					
San Jose Animal Care Center - 2750 Monterey Rd 95111					
408 794-7297					
Soy-Neuter Program - 408 794-7201					
To Adopt-A-Pet - 408 794-7297					
To Report A Bite - 408 794-7297					
To Report Animal Cruelty - 408 794-7297					
Arbors - 408 794-1901					
ARTS & CULTURE-TEAM SAN JOSE					
Center For The Performing Arts					
255 Almaden Bl - 408 295-9600					
CPA Event Hotline - 408 792-4111					
Montgomery Theater - 271 S Market 95113					
408 295-9600					
MT Event Hotline - 408 792-4111					
Office Of Cultural Affairs - 200 E Santa Clara 95113					
408 793-4344					
Outdoor Events & Promotions - 408 793-4343					
AUTOMOBILES -					
Abandoned Vehicles-24 Hour Hotline - 408 277-5305					
Parking Compliance-Enforcement - 408 536-2900					
Parking Enforcement Dispatch - 408 277-8900					
Stolen Vehicle - 408 277-8900					
Theft From Vehicles - 408 277-8900					
Towed Vehicle Information - 408 277-4156					
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS -					
Airport Commission - 408 392-3600					
Appeals Hearing Board - 408 535-7770					
Arts Commission - 408 793-4339					
Civil Service Commission - 408 535-1260					
Council Salary Setting Commission - 408 535-1260					
Downtown Parking Board - 408 975-3246					
Ethics Commission - 408 535-1260					
Historic Landmarks Commission - 408 535-3555					
Housing And Community Development Advisory Commission - 408 975-4442					
Human Rights Commission - 408 535-8119					
Human Services Commission - 408 535-8171					
Library And Early Education Commission - 408 808-2355					
Parks And Recreation Commission - 408 793-5339					
Planning Commission - 408 535-3555					
Traffic Appeals Commission - 408 535-3850					
Youth Commission - 408 793-5559					
BUILDING -					
Appointments And Inspections - 408 535-3555					
Building Code Information - 408 535-3555					
BUSINESS -					
Business Recycling - 200 E Santa Clara 95113					
408 535-8550					
Economic Development - 200 E Santa Clara 95113					
408 535-8181					
Energy Conservation - 200 E Santa Clara 95113					
408 535-8550					
Neighborhood Business District Coordinator - 408 535-8500					
95128					
408 808-3077					
Berrysa Branch Library - 3555 Noble Av 95113					
408 535-7050					
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408 294-1237					
Calestaza Branch Library 12					

Exhibit 4, continued: City Telephone Numbers in the Telephone Book

SAN JOSE CITY OF - (Cont'd)

PARKING - (Cont'd)

Residential Parking Permits - 408 535-3850

PARKS AND RECREATION - 408 535-3570

Administration - 200 E Santa Clara

Reporting Park Concerns And Complaints 408 793-5510

Community Centers - Senior/Youth Programs/Camps/Classes/Rental Spaces

Almaden Community Center 6445 Camden Av 95120 408 268-1133

Bascom Community Center 1000 S Bascom Av 95128 408 794-6289

Berryessa Community Center 3050 Berryessa Rd 95124 408 251-6392

Camden Community Center 3369 Union Av 95124 408 559-8553

Cypress Community Center 403 Cypress Av 95117 408 244-1353

Evergreen Community Center 4860 San Felipe Rd 95135 408 270-2220

Gardner Community Center 520 W Virginia St 95125 408 793-5511

Grace Community Center 484 E San Fernando St 95112 408 293-0422

Leiminger Community Center - 1200 Senter Rd 95112 408 794-7275

Mayfair Community Center - 2039 Kammerer Av 95116 408 794-1060

Roosevelt Community Center - 901 E Santa Clara 95116 408 794-7555

Seven Trees Community Center - 3590 Cas Dr 95111 408 794-1690

Southside Community Center - 5885 Cottle Rd 95123 408 629-3336

Willow Glen Community Center - 2175 Lincoln Av 95125 408 440-6400

Parks - Neighborhood - 408 525-3570

Adopt-A-Park - 408 793-4190

Community Gardens - 408 793-4165

Parks - Regional -

Almaden Lake Park - 6099 Winfield Blvd 95120 408 277-5130

Alum Rock Park - 15350 Penitencia Creek Rd 95129 408 295-5477

Edenvalle Gardens Regional Park 208 208 Senter Rd 95112 408 277-2757

Erma Prusch Farm Park 647 S King Rd 95116 408 794-6262

Guadalupe River Park 438 Coleman Av 95110 408 298-7657

Historic Park 1300 Senter Rd 95112 408 287-2290

Japanese Friendship Garden Regional Park Senter Rd & E Rims Av 95112 408 794-7275

Keyser Park 1300 Senter Rd 95112 408 277-5254

Lake Cunningham Regional Park - 2305 S White Rd 95148 408 794-7577

Lake Cunningham Regional Skate Park - 2305 S White Rd 95148 408 794-7574

Municipal Rose Garden Hogue Ave & Dana Av 95126 408 794-7275

Overfelt Gardens Regional Park 368 Educational Park Dr 95133 408 794-7275

Plaza de Cesar Chavez Park Market St & W San Carlos St 95113 408 794-7275

Reservations -

Happy Hollow Park & Zoo - 1300 Senter Rd 95110 408 794-6400

Park Reservation And Permits - 408 794-7275

Picnic Reservations - 408 794-7275

Reuse Community Centers and Facilities - Services Vary By Site

Rental Inquiries for Any Of The Reuse Sites - 408 793-5537

Operational Inquiries for Any Of The Reuse Sites - 408 793-5511

Alma Community Center 136 W Alma Av 95110

Almaden Winery Community Center

5720 Chabert Dr S J 95118

Almaden Youth Center 6999 Winfield Blvd 95120

Alum Rock Community Center 137 N White Rd 95127

Alviso Community Center 5040 N First St Alviso 95002

Backesto Community Center 95 E Emeline St 95112

Berryessa Youth Center 1070 Merritt Av 95132

Bramhall Neighborhood Center 1320 Willow St 95125

Calabazas Community Center 1207 Stoner Rd 95129

Capitol Park/Goss Community Center

800 Peter Pan Av S J 95116

Edenvalle Community Center 330 Branham Ln 95123

Gardner Community Center 4855 Pearl Av 95136

Gardner Community Center 520 W Virginia St 95125

Hammann Park Neighborhood Center

2750 Westfield Av 95128

Hank Lopez Community Center 1694 Adrian Wy 95122

Hoover Community Center 1677 Park Av 95128

Los Pasos Neighborhood Center 121 Avenida Grand 95139

McKinley Youth Center 651 Mercedes Av 95116

Meadowlark Community Center 2696 S King Rd 95148

Millbrook Community Center 2300 Millbrook Dr 95148

Noble House 14650 Noble Av 95132

Noble Modular 3466 Grossman Dr 95132

Northside Community Center 488 N 5th St 95112

Olinde Community Center 848 E Willson St 95116

Paul Moore Park Neighborhood Center

Nyrie & Zsch Rd 95118

Rainbow Park Neighborhood Center 1295 Johnson Av 95129

River Glen Park Neighborhood Center 855 Pine Av 95125

San Tomas Park Neighborhood Center

4093 Vaiera Dr 95117

Sherman Oaks Community Center 1800A Fruitdale Av 95116

Shirakawa Community Center 2072 Lucetta Av 95122

Starks Community Center 1050 Boynton Av 95117

Vista Park Shelter Building 475 Hyde Park Dr 95136

Washington United Community Center 921 S First St 95110

Weich Park Neighborhood Center Clarice & Venesta 95122

West San Jose Community Center 3707 Williams Rd 95117

Special Use Of The Parks - 408 794-7275

Swim Centers - Citywide Aquatics - 408 440-6400

Weddings - 408 794-7275

PERMITS - LICENSES - CERTIFICATES - 408 535-7055

Amusement Parks - Devices - 408 794-7297

Animal Events - 408 277-4452

Bingo Games - 408 277-4452

Block Party - 408 277-4452

Building Permits - 408 535-3553

Burnings - 408 535-7750

Business Tax Certificates - 408 535-7055

Chambers - 408 277-4452

Card Room Employees - 408 277-4452

Close Out Sale - 408 277-4452

Concealed Weapons - 408 277-4452

Dance - 408 277-4452

Development Services - 408 535-3555

West San Jose Community Center

PERMITS - LICENSES - CERTIFICATES - (Cont'd)

Driveway Approach Repair - 408 794-1414

Fire - 408 535-7750

Architectural - Hazmet - 408 535-7750

Arrestion & Alarm System - 408 535-7750

Clean Air Vehical Program - 408 535-3850

Flower Vendors - 408 277-4452

Groundwater Discharge - 408 945-3630

Industrial Discharge - 408 277-4452

Marriage - Application For Marriage License - 408 277-4452

Massage Business - 408 535-7750

Off-Sale Alcohol - 408 535-7750

One Day Liquor Permit - 408 277-4452

Parks Reservation and Permits - 408 794-7275

Pawbrokers - 408 277-4452

Peddlers Permit - 408 277-4452

Peep Shows - 408 277-4452

Planning Permits - 408 535-3850

Pool-Billiards - 408 277-4452

Press Passes - 408 277-4452

Residential Occupancy Permit - Multiple Housing - 408 535-7750

Residential Parking Permit - 408 535-3850

Secondhand Dealers - 408 277-4452

Sidewalk - Curb - Gutter Replacement - 408 794-1901

Small Business Ambassador - 408 535-3850

Taxi Companies - Drivers - 408 277-4452

Tobacco Retail Licence - 408 535-7750

Construction - 408 535-3850

Equipment Special Events - 408 975-3226

Tow Company - Ramp Requests - 408 277-4452

Tree Trimming - 408 535-3850

Private Property - 408 535-3850

Public Property - 408 277-4452

Weapons Dealers - 408 277-4452

Wide Load Transportation Permits - 408 535-3850

Application & Appointments - 408 535-3850

POLICE DEPARTMENT - 408 277-4341

Crime In Progress - Call - 408 277-4341

Or - 408 277-4341

Non-Emergency Police-Reports-Information - 408 277-4341

Or - 408 277-4341

Chiefs Office -

Administration Deputy Chief - 408 277-4341

Field Operations Deputy Chief - 408 277-4341

Investigations Deputy Chief - 408 277-4341

Technical Services Deputy Chief - 408 277-4341

Communications-Administrative Office - 408 277-4341

Air Support Unit -

Fixed Wing - 408 277-4341

Helicopter - 650 966-0111

Airport Division - 1387 Airport Bl 95110

Assault Unit - 408 277-4341

Auto Theft Unit - 408 277-4341

Reporting A Stolen Vehicle - 408 277-4341

Reporting A Theft From A Vehicle - 408 277-4341

Background Investigations - Police Personnel Unit - 408 277-4341

Bicycles - Found Stolen Or Lost -

Or - 408 277-4341

Warehouse 1588 B Monterey Rd 95110 - 408 277-4341

Burglary -

Checks - Credit Cards & Grand Theft - 408 277-4341

Investigation Unit - 408 277-4341

Community Services Division - 408 277-4341

Concealed Weapons Permit - 408 277-4341

Count Season-Criminal - 408 277-4341

Crim Prevention Unit 1671 The Alameda - 408 277-4341

Delinquency Prevention Challenges & Choices - 408 277-4341

Neighborhood Watch - 408 277-4341

Crossing Guard Requests - 408 277-4341

Sideration - 408 277-4341

Disturbance Of Peace - Machinery Music - 408 277-4341

Driving Under The Influence Cases - 408 277-4341

False Alarm Unit - Citations - 408 277-4341

Family Violence Unit - 125 E Gish Rd 95112 408 277-4341

Field Training Program - 408 277-4341

Fingerprinting Information-Recording Only - 408 277-4341

Fiscal Unit - 408 277-4341

Fraud Unit - 408 277-4341

Gun Registration - 408 277-4341

High Technology Unit - 408 277-4341

Homicide Unit - 408 277-4341

Horse Mounted Unit - 408 277-4341

Intelligence Unit - 408 277-4341

Internal Affairs - 777 N 1st 95112 408 277-4341

Juvenile Unit - 408 277-4341

Child Abuse Detail - 408 277-4341

General Investigations - 408 277-4341

Missing Persons - 408 277-4341

Metro Unit - 408 277-4341

Mobile Emergency Response Group & Equipment - 408 277-4341

Narcotics Unit - 408 277-4341

Operations Support Services Division - 408 277-4341

PAF - Police Amateur Athletic Foundation - 408 277-4341

PAL - Police Activities League - 480 S 34th 95116 408 277-4341

Patrol - Watch - 408 277-4341

Central Division Captain - 408 277-4341

Foothill Division Captain - 408 277-4341

Southern Division Captain - 408 277-4341

Special Operations Captain - 408 277-4341

Western Division Captain - 408 277-4341

Permits Unit - 408 277-4341

Police Cadet Program - PAL - 408 277-4341

Police Personnel - 408 277-4341

Press Information Officer - 408 277-4341

Property Room - 408 277-4341

Records Information - Accident & Criminal - Recording - 408 277-4341

Recruiting Unit - 408 277-4341

Research & Development - 408 277-4341

Reserve Unit - 1671 The Alameda 408 277-4341

Robbery Detail - 408 277-4341

Safe Alternatives To Violence Education - 408 277-4341

School Campus Initiative - 408 794-1900

School Safety Unit - Crossing Guards - 408 277-4341

Sexual Assault Investigation Unit - 408 277-4341

Systems Development Unit - 408 277-4341

TABS Program - Truancy Abatement - 408 251-4452

East Side - 408 277-4341

Towed Vehicle Information - Auto Desk - Recording - 408 277-4341

Tobacco Retail Licence

POLICE DEPARTMENT - (Cont'd)

Traffic Enforcement Unit - Motorcycles & Radar - 408 277-4341

Traffic Investigations - 408 277-4654

Training Unit - 408 501-0640

Vice Unit - 408 277-4322

Volunteer Opportunities & Leadership Training - VOL - 408 794-8658

Warehouse 1588 B Monterey Rd - 408 277-4349

95112 - 408 277-4125

Warning - Recording - 408 277-4125

Police Complaints About San Jose Police - 408 794-6226

Independent Police Auditor - 408 794-6226

PUBLIC WORKS -

Bond Assessments - Special Districts - 408 535-6831

City Facilities Architectural Services - 408 535-6300

Development Services - 408 535-7802

Facilities Maintenance - 408 975-7277

Flood Zone - Maps - Information - 408 535-7803

General Information - 408 535-6300

General Services 1661 Senter Rd - 408 975-7200

95112 - 408 277-4349

Successor Redevelopment Agency - 408 535-8500

Administration - 408 535-8500

Right Rights And Referrals Program - 408 975-4480

SIDEWALKS -

Sidewalk - Curb - Gutter Replacement Permit 408 794-1901

95112 - 408 535-3850

SPORTS - OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES -

Los Lagos Golf Course - 2995 Tuers Rd 408 361-0250

Municipal Golf Course - 1560 Oakland Rd 408 441-4653

Pro Shop - 408 445-1444

Rancho del Pueblo Golf Course - 1649 Hermocillo Wy 95116 408 347-0990

Swartz Ice At San Jose - 1500 S 10th 95112 - 408 279-6000

Rifle Range - 1588 S 10th 408 275-1738

STREETS -

Abandoned Vehicles - 408 277-5305

Crosswalk Requests - 408 535-3850

Flooded - Hazardous Street Conditions - 408 794-1900

Median Landscaping - 408 794-1900

Pothole - Pavement Repairs And Maintenance - 408 794-1900

Sewer Services - 408 535-3850

Signs - 408 794-1902

Requests For New Signs - 408 535-3850

Sorn Drains - Drainage Problems Or Flooded - 408 794-1900

Street Conditions - 408 794-1900

Street Light Repairs - 408 794-1903

Striping & Markings - 408 535-3850

Requests For New Striping's & Markings - 408 535-3850

Sweeping - 408 794-1902

Traffic Signal Repairs - 408 794-1900

Utility Problems - 408 535-3850

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT -

Area Traffic & Parking Information - 408 535-3850

Neighborhood Traffic Concerns - 408 535-3850

Bicycle & Pedestrian Safety - 408 975-3206

Local Projects - 408 535-3850

New Street Light Requests - 408 535-3850

Regional - 408 535-3850

School Safety Education Program - 408 535-3850

Street Smarts Traffic Safety Education Program - 408 535-3850

Timing - 408 975-3206

Transportation Administration - 408 535-3850

Transportation Planning & Projects - 408 535-3850

TREES - STREET -

Hazardous Conditions - 408 794-1900

Removal - Maintenance Trimming Permit - 408 794-1901

Private Property - 408 535-3850

Utility Obstructions - 408 794-1901

VISITOR INFORMATION -

Team San Jose 1-800-San-Jose - 800 726-5673

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES -

Adopt-A-Park - 408 793-4190

Adopt-A-Street - Litter And Debris Removal - 408 808-2361

Adult Literacy Tutors - Partners In Reading - 408 794-7297

Animal Care Center - 408 975-7233

Anti Graffiti & Anti-Litter Program - 408 808-2613

Books About Inc - 408 808-2682

Friends Of The King Library - 408 805-2181

San Jose Prepared - 408 277-4598

Volunteer Opportunities & Leadership Training - VOL - 408 277-4658

Police Department - 408 277-4658

WATER AND WASTEWATER -

Drinking Water - 408 277-4658

San Jose Municipal Water System - 408 277-4658

Services Alviso - North San Jose - Evergreen - Edenvalle - 408 277-4658

Or - 408 277-4658

Administration - 408 277-4218

Willing - Including After Hours Emergencies - 408 535-3500

South Bay Water Recycling - 408 277-3671

Green Oaks Water See Listing In Business Section Of The White Pages

San Jose Water Company See Listing In Business Section Of The White Pages

San Jose Valley Water District See Listing In The Business Section Of The White Pages

Water Conservation - 408 277-3671

Watershed Protection - 408 945-3000

Water Departments And Services Not Listed Above Call Customer Service - 408 535-3500

Some people search the internet to find the right phone number, and they use the City's central website to find phone numbers. The City's program directory website – which is one of the places where a resident is directed to for contact information – lists over 70 potential phone numbers to call.⁷

More prominent display of information on the website would help. Garbage and recycling customers often do not know which hauling company they should call as there are multiple ones serving San José. An easy-to-interpret map of garbage haulers is available on the City's website, but may not be easy to find.⁸ Often, Customer Contact Center calls were transferred to the garbage hauling companies, including complaints about missed garbage pick-ups, requests for bulky item pick-up, and repair requests for damaged carts – the Customer Contact Center is not supposed to handle these types of service requests as they are the haulers' responsibility. An average of 17 calls daily were recorded as transferred to haulers, in addition to many simple calls that were transferred without creating a record.

Some Contact Information Was Inaccurate or Out of Date

Customers expect to be able to find accurate information on the City's website. However, during our review we found that the program list cited above does not include three programs that get a large number of calls – Code Enforcement, Development Services, and Animal Services. In addition, some department websites contain outdated information. For example, the IT Department's website for garbage and recycling payments contained a link to frequently used phone numbers; however, those numbers included staff that had long left the City.⁹

Sometimes the web links did not work. For example, a link to a Department of Transportation maintenance form took the user to the Police Department's vehicle impound page. In another instance, the City services link to "potholes" was broken. Exhibit 5 shows the error page a resident got after they clicked on the pothole link on the City services page. These links have since been fixed.

⁷ Some numbers are duplicated.

⁸ Garbage haulers map: <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/documentcenter/view/11789>. Moreover, customers can use an address look-up tool on the City website: <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=3079>.

⁹ In addition, the information monitors at City Hall displayed an incorrect telephone number for Animal Care and Services.

Exhibit 5: The “City Services” Webpage Contained a Broken Link

We're sorry, but there is not a web page matching your entry.

You entered: www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=1916

[Click here to go to the home page](#)

It is possible that you typed the address incorrectly, or that the page no longer exists.

Please enter information in the comment box below which may help us resolve this issue, such as what page you were trying to access.

You may wish to try another entry or to use the links below, which we hope will help provide you with the information you need.

Source: Auditor screenshot of City website as of June 2014, after clicking on “Potholes” from <http://sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?nid=2541>

Sometimes information about how to contact the City is out of date. For example, the Independent Police Auditor’s 2013 Year End Report¹⁰ pointed out that the San José Police Department’s website stated that noise complaints could be filed anonymously; however, a complainant later found out that this was not the case. Similarly, a victim of a hate incident was unable to find information on the Police website about filing a report of a hate-motivated incident or a hate crime. According to the Police Department, the website had been updated.

It Is Difficult to Know When to Call

Even if a resident knows the “correct” department to reach and attempts to call, they must also know **when** to call. Each call center has different business hours and residents may not necessarily know that. For example, Animal Care and Services Dispatch staff is available from 7 am to 9 pm. However, even within Animal Care and Services, for certain services, some staff is available to answer calls only on certain days. Revenue Management is open from 8 am to 5 pm. Transportation Dispatch is open from 7 am to 4 pm, but calls are transferred to Fire Communication outside of these hours.

¹⁰ Independent Police Auditor’s 2013 Year End Report: <http://sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/29599>

Other Cities Make it Easier to Locate Frequently Requested Services

Cities like San Francisco, Chicago, Minneapolis, New York, and Charlotte use a central, easy to remember phone number for residents to call and request services. Residents have to remember only one easy number – in those cities it is 3-1-1. Generally, call takers at those centers are not only able to provide information from a knowledge base, but also connect to various work order systems within their city government and take resident requests for service. Managers from these cities that offer a centralized call center cite the resident’s “ease of access” for remembering one number and finding services as the most compelling reason for moving to a centralized call center.

Finding different services and contact information is also easier on other cities’ websites. The City of Chicago’s website lists the services in an easy-to-find location and by services requested by residents. These “frequently requested” lists are updated based on data requests that the call center has received over the course of the previous year. Exhibit 6 below shows a snapshot of the Chicago website.

Exhibit 6: Chicago’s Website Makes it Easy to Find Services



Source: Auditor screenshot of <http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en.html>

Continuous Monitoring of Website Information Is Needed

In 2012, the City implemented a new “Content Management System” for its website. The Content Management System was intended to enable City departments and programs to easily and continuously update their webpages and web content. The process is decentralized and each department is responsible for its own content.¹¹ For example, DOT is in the process of developing its own policies to regularly monitor its web content to ensure that information to residents is accurate and up-to-date. The department identified content owners for each webpage and the frequency of checking and updating its web content. The Finance Department explained that one of its staff members’ duties was to review the Finance website for errors on a regular basis. In our opinion, this should be replicated all across the City to ensure that residents do not find outdated information or broken links when searching for City services.

Recommendation #1: To improve access to City services, the Administration should correct erroneous telephone numbers and links on the City website. Further, the Administration should develop policies and procedures to ensure that the City website and departmental webpages remain current and are reviewed on a regular basis by individual departments.

To Improve Customers’ Ease of Access, the City Needs to Focus and Invest More on Self-Service Options

Customers demand modern self-service options. The City needs to put more focus into providing alternative online options such that customers can help themselves at any time and at their own convenience. This can also help ease the workload of staff and help deal with simple requests, which are different from urgent, complex, or time-consuming requests.

Currently, self-service options are limited and not always user-friendly. For example, residents can pay their garbage bill online, but the user interface is so complicated that the Customer Contact Center often responds to callers asking for online help. Development Services customers can schedule inspections online, but cannot schedule plan review appointments online – for this they still have to call the City during business hours.

¹¹ While the City’s “Web-based Communications” policy provides an overall framework for managing the City’s web and social media resources, it was last updated in 2011 and it does not reflect the 2012 implementation. It is our understanding that the City Manager’s Communications Office is in the process of developing a web governance policy to manage web content.

The City's Listing of Self-Service Options Is Incomplete

While the City's website provides a list of online options, it is not complete. Exhibit 7 below shows the City's web listing of online self-service options.

Exhibit 7: The City's Web Listing of Online Options

Online Services

Utility Billing:

- [Water and Garbage Bill Pay](#)
- [Sign up for Automatic Payments](#) Form to fill/print/send for auto pay from bank
- [Cancel your Automatic Payments](#) Form to cancel auto pay (**Note: this does not cancel auto pay if setup on Utility Services Online website**)
- [Problems logging into Utility Billing?](#) Are you experiencing problems when trying to log into our Utility Billing application? If so, it may be something simple like clearing your browsers cache. We have put together a list of helpful tips when accessing the City of San José's Water and Garbage Bill Pay site.
- [Changes on tap for garbage and recycling billing \(FAQs\)](#) The City of San José garbage and recycling billing system will change from bi-monthly to bi-annual billing. Expect to receive your last bi-monthly garbage bill from the City in May/June of 2015. All subsequent bills will be included on your property tax bill.

Planning, Building, Code Enforcement:

- [Building Permits](#) View maps, find permits, retrieve permit reports and look up property related information within city limits
- [Code Enforcement](#) Report a code concern and search for open/closed cases

Transportation:

- [Pticket.com](#) Find or pay your parking citations online

Animal Care & Services:

- [Animal Licensing](#) General Information
- [Purchase or renew pet license online](#)
- [Animal Services Donations](#)

Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Services:

- [Activity Search and Registration](#) Search for classes and register
- [Happy Hollow Tickets](#) Purchase general and group admission tickets
- [Happy Hollow Foundation](#) Support the mission of Happy Hollow Park & Zoo by donating to help fund a special project
- [Happy Hollow Online Store](#) Explore & More Store is the gift shop located at the main entrance to Happy Hollow Park & Zoo

Library:

- [Library Fines and Late Fees](#) Library Account required

Source: Auditor screenshot of <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/Index.aspx?NID=3159> (as of July 10, 2014)

However, the City actually offers **more** online services than are listed on this webpage. These include:

- Reporting graffiti,
- Reporting abandoned vehicles,
- Making online payments for Residential Occupancy Permits (under \$5,000),
- Making building inspection appointments,
- Making pet spay and neuter appointments,

- Making non-emergency animal-related complaints,
- Reporting problems with streetlights and sidewalk issues,
- Filing certain types of crime reports online.

To find those services, a resident would have to know which department webpage to navigate to, or might presume that these services are not offered. In contrast, the City of Boston lists all the online services offered in one easy-to-find place. Residents can use online forms for reporting any kind of problem. Residents have the option of reviewing the service request and attaching photos and/or files. Boston also informs the resident when the service request has been addressed.

Self-Service Options Can Reduce the Need to Answer Phone Calls

The six departments whose call centers we reviewed offer some online options. Some of these online options are well-utilized, and usage for some has been increasing. For example, 79 percent of vehicle abatement requests are now initiated online. Exhibit 8 shows the number of service requests/complaints that residents made using these online options.

Exhibit 8: Online Service Usage, FY 2013-14

Service	Total Transactions	Percent Online
Vehicle Abatement requests	31,800	79%
Parking citations payments	180,100	40%
Development Services inspection appointments	75,600	39%
Animal licensing	56,000	36%
Utility payments	214,900	22%
Animal related complaints	23,800	8%
Residential Occupancy Permit payments	6,600	5%

Source: Auditor compilation of department-provided information.

The more self-service options residents use, the fewer phone calls staff has to answer. Vehicle Abatement phone calls, for example, have dropped significantly since DOT started offering an online web form for residents in 2011. Most complaints are now received through the online form. The DOT website is easy to use and complaints made on this system go directly into DOT's abandoned vehicle work order system. This allows DOT staff in the field to immediately see the complaint and provide a quicker response to resident concerns. Recently, DOT web complaints represented more than two thirds of complaints; before the web form was available, about half of complaints came by phone.¹²

¹² The vehicle abatement service request form is available at: <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=1996>

The City Has Begun Offering Several Mobile Apps

In addition to the various online self-service resources, the City now offers various apps for smartphones. These include:

- San Jose Clean app (graffiti vendor's app),
- District I App (provided by a vendor hired by Council District I),
- San José Police Department City Connect App,
- Mobile Crime Tips App (make anonymous tips to the Police Department),
- San José Public Library App, and
- PulsePoint App¹³ (San José Fire Department)

However, each of these apps is maintained by different departments and vendors, and only two of these apps can be used by residents to submit service requests.

The *San Jose Clean* app (maintained by Graffiti Protective Coatings, Inc.) is a well-used mobile app and is the primary source of graffiti-related complaints. From July 2013 to December 2013, residents used the app to make over 9,000 graffiti complaints. The City received the remaining 3,000 graffiti complaints by email, walk-in, or through the vendor's graffiti telephone hotline.

In addition, residents (from any Council district) can also use the District I app to submit service requests, like complaints about illegal dumping or broken streetlights. For example, in 2013 the District I app received about 1,300 complaints/service requests from all ten Council districts.

The City Needs to Increase the Availability of, Access to, and Usage of Self-Service Options

While the City does offer many online options, it needs to do more to publicize the availability of existing online services by listing and emphasizing them on the City's central webpage. It should also encourage residents who call the City to use online service options in its phone announcements. For example, as shown above in Exhibit 7, customers can pay for residential occupancy permits online, but only those under \$5,000. Similarly, customers can schedule building inspections online, but only 39 percent do and many still call by phone. Finally, in order to ensure optimal usage of the self-service options, the City should not only track the usage, but also develop utilization targets for these options.

¹³ The PulsePoint app allows members of the public that are CPR-certified to be notified on their phone if there is a person in need of CPR within walking distance

The City needs to also focus on offering **more** self-service options. Many frequently-used City services are not accessible through the website, apps, or by other self-service means – customers still call by phone, do business by mail, or appear in person at City Hall. For example, San José residents cannot easily manage their utility accounts online (except for simply paying a bill), cannot yet pay their business taxes and many other City bills online, and cannot schedule plan review appointments online.

Other cities already provide their residents with more online services. For example, the City of Chicago allows residents to pay online their business taxes, water bills, and parking tickets. Furthermore, Chicago residents can report issues such as missed garbage pickups, alley lights out, building violations, dead or damaged trees, missing or damaged stop signs, low water pressure, and much more through the city website. San Francisco residents can tweet problems to their city government and will receive a tweet back with a tracking number. The City of Boston noted that its goal is to offer residents with all options that residents would want to make it easier for them to connect with the city government. This includes mobile apps, online service options, social media, and web chat.

Self-Service Options Benefit Both Customers and the City

Providing self-service options to residents would not only be responsive to customer demand, but would also reduce telephone call volume at City call centers while providing residents the ability to more efficiently complete their tasks at a time that's convenient to them.

Recommendation #2: To improve access to City services and to reduce the City's telephone call handling costs, the Administration should develop a coordinated strategy to

- a. Offer new self-service options for the City's most frequently used services by phone, online, and/or by mobile app, and**
- b. Establish utilization targets for new and existing self-service options, and advertise them accordingly.**

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Finding 2 The City Should Monitor Customer Wait Times and Call Volume

Summary

During the 12 months preceding our audit, wait times at the City's Customer Contact Center averaged 8 minutes, with especially long wait times on Mondays and on days after City holidays. One major cause of long wait times was that some phone calls resulted in complex and time-intensive work for staff. Insufficient staffing was another cause for its poor performance. Although the Customer Contact Center has taken steps to improve its performance, we recommend the Center continue simplifying its processes, continue assigning Principal Office Specialists call-answering duty, modify its staff schedules and assignments as needed, and seek short-term staffing relief if it is unable to sustain improved wait times.

It is standard practice in the call center industry to collect detailed performance data regarding the call center's overall performance as well as each individual call taker. For example, some call takers at the City's Customer Contact Center answered as many as 60 calls per day, whereas other call takers only answered 20 calls per day. The City's call centers should use currently available reports to improve their performance measurement and management and also take advantage of improved reports with the new system. Some of those reports were underused, used infrequently, or not used at all. Detailed performance data also can help call center managers prepare for and manage spikes in call volume.

Call Volumes and Wait Times Vary Across Multiple Call Centers

Call volume at the City's call centers varied widely. At the busy end, the Customer Contact Center received more than 1,000 calls on an average business day. On the other hand, the Vehicle Abatement hotline received about 19 calls on an average business day. Exhibit 9 below shows call volume and average wait times for each of these call centers; more detail is shown in **Appendix A**.

In general, the busier call centers send callers to a "holding queue" to wait until the next staff member becomes available to take a call. Calls are answered in a first-in, first-out order. The caller's wait time in the queue depends on how many callers are already waiting ahead in the queue, how many staff members are working, and how long those calls last. As shown in Exhibit 9, the average wait time at the City call centers we reviewed ranged from 44 seconds to 8 minutes in the 12 months preceding our audit.

Exhibit 9: The Average Wait Time at the Various Call Centers Ranged From 44 Seconds to 8 Minutes Over the Last 12 Months

Call Center	Phone Number	Calls Received (Average per Business Day)	Average Wait Time in Queue
Customer Contact Center	408-535-3500	1,054	8 minutes
Development Services	408-535-3555	474	44 seconds
Animal Care and Services	408-794-7297 and 794-7240	276	65 seconds (dispatch only)
Revenue Management	408-535-7055	177	97 seconds (business tax only)
Transportation – Tree/Sidewalk	408-794-1901	99	Calls are answered or sent to voicemail after a few rings
Code Enforcement	408-535-7770	87	Calls are answered or disconnected after a few rings
Transportation – Dispatch	408-794-1900	75*	Data not available
Transportation – Vehicle Abatement	408-277-5305	19	Calls are answered or sent to voicemail after a few rings

Source: Auditor analysis of Symposium reports and Call Pilot reports. For more detailed data, sources, and footnotes, see **Appendix A**.

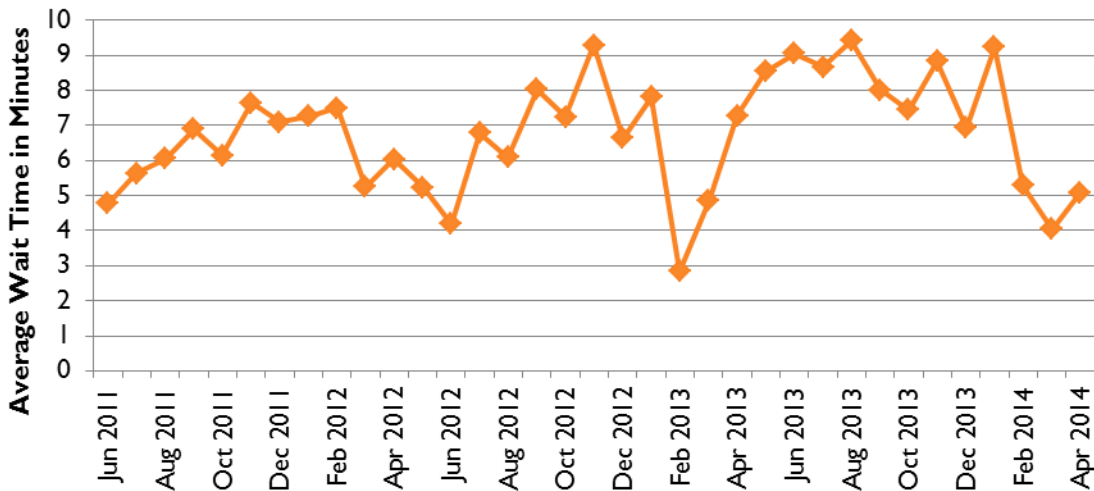
Wait times of callers who hang up are not counted in any of the analyses presented here. See Appendix B for a transcription of the call trees.

* Transportation Dispatch **answered** 75 calls on an average business day.

Wait Times Were Long and Hang-Ups Were Common at the Customer Contact Center

In the past few years, customers and residents who called the City’s main number at 408-535-3500 did not receive timely service. Over the 12 months ending March 2014, the wait time was 8 minutes on average for the 1,054 callers per day. Over the 35 months ending April 2014, callers generally experienced average wait times of 5 minutes or longer. During some particularly bad months, the average wait time exceeded 9 minutes, as shown in Exhibit 10 below.

Exhibit 10: The Average Wait Time at the Customer Contact Center Generally Exceeded 5 Minutes Over the Last 35 Months



Source: Auditor analysis of Symposium “Application Performance” report. Excludes calls to the automated staff directory which have no wait time.

The Customer Contact Center attributed the February 2013 decrease to a revision in break and lunch schedules.

Long wait times also led to callers hanging up in frustration. A third of callers, or 300 on an average day, hung up after calling the Customer Contact Center between April 2013 and March 2014. The Customer Contact Center’s queues announced the anticipated wait time to callers. We found that there was a strong correlation showing that as average wait times grew from 4 minutes to 12 minutes on certain days, the number of unanswered calls jumped from 200 to 600 per day.

Callers who hung up did not receive the service they wanted when they were calling. The Customer Contact Center reported that often these callers called back later and might have become angry. Another result of long wait times, customers might have tried to circumvent the system. For example, they could have called a staff member whose extension they knew or made intentionally wrong selections in the call tree to reach an employee faster.

Wait Times at the Customer Contact Center Were Especially Long on Mondays and After City Holidays

Wait times were particularly long on Mondays and on days after City holidays due to high call volume. Exhibit 11 below shows the 20 days with the longest average wait times from April 2013 to March 2014.

Exhibit 11: The Average Wait Times at the Customer Contact Center Exceeded 10 Minutes on Certain Mondays and Days After City Holidays

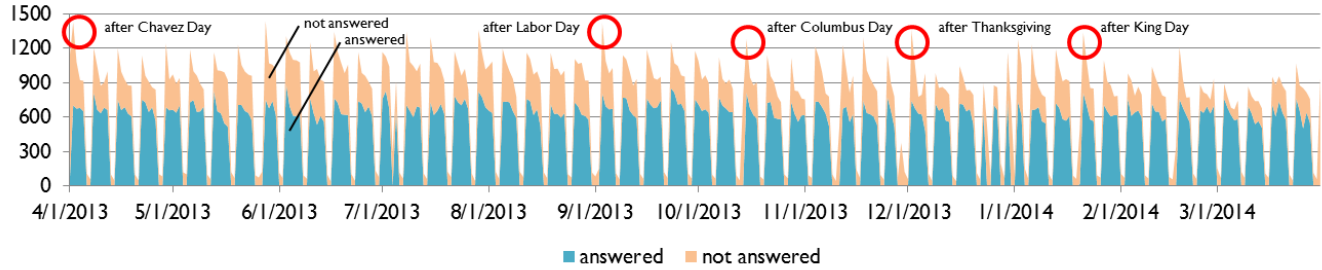
Date	Weekday	Average Wait	Unanswered Calls	Answer Rate
Dec 2, 2013	Monday after Thanksgiving weekend	14.4 min	615	55%
April 2, 2013	Day after Cesar Chavez City holiday	13.9	723	49%
May 28, 2013	Day after Memorial Day	13.8	686	52%
July 8, 2013	Monday after July 4 long weekend	13.0	637	52%
Jan 6, 2014	Monday	12.9	567	54%
Nov 12, 2013	Day after Veterans Day City holiday	12.6	556	55%
Nov 4, 2013	Monday	12.0	480	61%
Jan 2, 2014	Day after New Year's Day	11.9	542	57%
Sept 3, 2013	Day after Labor Day	11.7	610	57%
June 12, 2013	Wednesday	11.7	487	52%
July 15, 2013	Monday	11.5	566	56%
Jun 6, 2013	Thursday	11.5	486	56%
May 17, 2013	Friday	11.5	406	56%
May 20, 2013	Monday	11.2	521	58%
Aug 2, 2013	Friday	11.2	449	59%
Nov 18, 2013	Monday	11.1	551	57%
May 16, 2013	Thursday	11.1	445	55%
Jan 3, 2014	Friday	11.0	440	58%
Jan 21, 2014	Day after Martin Luther King Day	10.9	525	61%
Aug 5, 2013	Monday	10.4	463	61%

Source: Auditor analysis of Symposium "Application Call Treatment" and "Application Performance" reports for April 2013 to March 2014.

The Customer Contact Center is closed on all City holidays. This led to a large volume unanswered phone calls – for example, 1,087 unanswered phone calls on Cesar Chavez Day 2013, 789 on Columbus Day 2013, 503 on Veterans Day 2013, 699 on New Year's Eve 2013, and 941 on Cesar Chavez Day 2014. Many of these callers likely tried to reach the City again on the next day, leading to the high call volume and poor performance on days after City holidays shown above.

In addition, some staff took leave on the days after these holidays in spite of high call volumes. For example, on the day after the Columbus Day holiday in 2013, six Customer Contact Center employees were out for either the whole or part of the day. Similarly, multiple staff members were out the day after Veterans Day 2013. Exhibit 12 shows the call volume over 365 days and highlights certain holidays. On the day after those holidays, the number of callers hanging up spiked up, likely due to long wait times.

Exhibit 12: Call Volume at the Customer Contact Center Was Consistently High on Mondays and Days After Holidays



Source: Auditor analysis of Symposium “Application Call Treatment” reports. The vertical axis shows call volume per day. Callers who experience long wait times may hang up and call again, which means this graph may show multiple calls from the same person.

Staffing in the Customer Contact Center Has Been Reduced

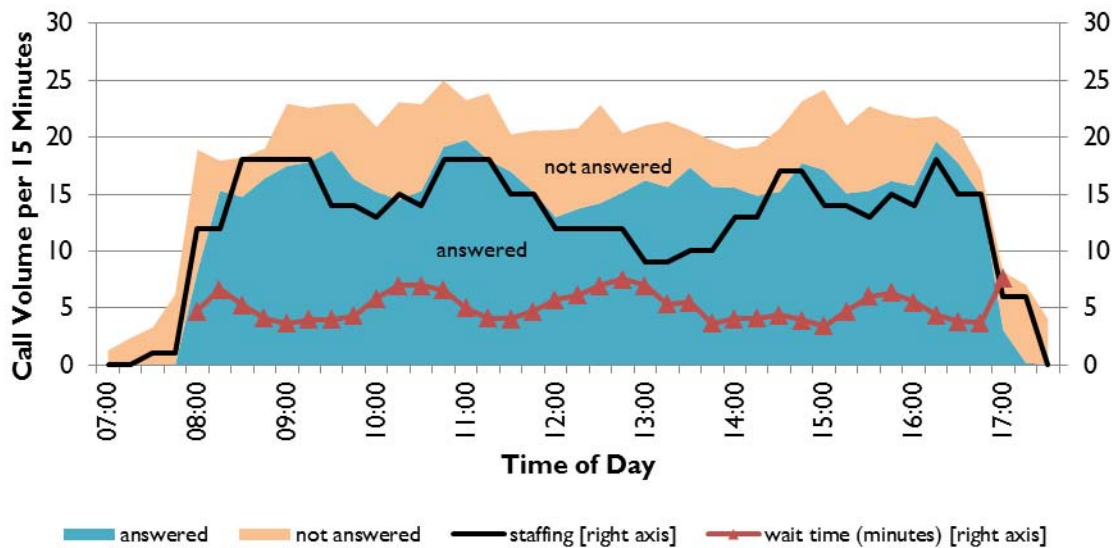
Staffing levels were a major constraint in providing timely service to customers. At the time of our audit, of the Customer Contact Center’s 21 Senior Office Specialist positions, 6 were vacant. These vacant positions were eliminated in the 2014-15 Adopted Budget, in part because the Customer Contact Center anticipated a much smaller garbage and recycling call volume after July 2015 when the utility billing will move to the County property tax bill.¹⁴

This left (at the time of our audit) a total of 18 staff members answering the phones, if nobody was taking vacation or sick leave.¹⁵ When these staff members went on scheduled breaks, call wait times increased significantly as shown in Exhibit 13. Noticeable are the staggered 15-minute morning breaks which reduced the staff available to take calls from 18 to 13 call takers. During the lunch break, staffing sunk as low as 9 employees. As a result, wait times increased to 6 or 7 minutes until all staff returned from break and caught up on the queued phone calls.

¹⁴ About two thirds of the Customer Contact Center’s phone calls were related to utility billing. In our 2012 audit of the Department of Environmental Services (“*Environmental Services: A department at a critical juncture*”), we pointed out the duplication in billing and customer service systems between the City and its garbage haulers. We recommended the City explore alternatives to minimize the costs to ratepayers, for example transferring billing to the garbage hauling companies. The audit report can be found at: <http://sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3131>.

¹⁵ It should be noted that previously some staff members were on long-term leave.

Exhibit 13: Wait Times and Answer Rates Worsened When Staff Went on Scheduled Breaks at the Customer Contact Center



Source: Auditor analysis of Symposium “Application Call Treatment” and “Application Performance” reports, averages for April 2014. Exclude calls to the automated staff directory. Staff schedule provided by IT Department (not showing vacation/sick absences).

At 1 pm, fewer staff members were scheduled to work, yet it appears more calls were answered. This exception, we believe, is explained by the nature of the phone calls: The volume of complex, lengthy phone calls, such as to open a new account, increased in the mornings, but declined mid-day.

Nonetheless, the Customer Contact Center maintained the same staff schedule every day. There was no additional staff on hand to respond to phone calls on predictable peak days. It had no temporary or part-time staff that could have been flexibly deployed.

Some Phone Calls Necessitated Complex and Time-Intensive Staff Work

Another major contributor to long wait times was the complex and time-intensive work required of staff to address certain phone calls. The Customer Contact Center opens accounts for new utility customers. During these phone calls, staff has to obtain and enter into its database more information compared

to a simple payment or account balance inquiry. Not only did these phone calls take longer, but they also often required additional processing or research after the phone call had ended.¹⁶

Because the Customer Contact Center answered phone calls in the same order in which they were received (“first in, first-out”) and prioritized utility and general phone calls equally, the wait times were equally poor for all customers. Even when a caller had a simple request that could be resolved in a few seconds, that caller had to wait the same average wait as anyone else calling at the same time. If the Customer Contact Center had chosen another call-taking order, such as taking shorter calls first, wait times for everyone in aggregate could have been reduced.

The Customer Contact Center Has Taken Steps to Improve Its Performance

In May 2014, the Customer Contact Center responded to the long wait times by requiring its five Principal Office Specialists, who act as team leads to the Senior Office Specialists, to effectively answer more phone calls on a daily basis. Previously, Principal Office Specialists had more relaxed phone duty requirements due to their role as team leads and in handling escalation and exception cases.

Exhibit 14 below shows the average number of calls answered by each staff member; most staff members improved (that is, answered more calls) in June 2014 compared to historical averages. Nevertheless, Exhibit 14 also shows a large spread in call answering productivity. Some staff members averaged nearly 60 calls per day whereas others were significantly below the call center-wide average.¹⁷

¹⁶ Another common category of complex phone calls resulted from customers who do not pay their garbage bills on time. The Customer Contact Center is listed as the primary contact on letters to these garbage customers. The City sends successive letters to collect outstanding bills and assesses a late fee and a delinquent notice fee. Eventually the City places a special assessment on the property tax bill, secured by a lien, and charges a lien administrative fee. The Customer Contact Center explained that these collection mailings trigger phone calls, as some callers call to have the fees and the billing history explained or dispute the charges or make payments. The Customer Contact Center reported a high call volume especially associated with the lien deadlines and explained that a single phone call may result in hours of additional research done by staff. The Customer Contact Center expects a significantly reduced volume of garbage phone calls after the billing transition to the County property tax bill in July 2015. The City will still handle billing and phone calls for water service.

The Customer Contact Center explained that it had already analyzed the complex business processes, but was bound by legal requirements and regulations regarding billing processes. Some customer requests also need to be coordinated with staff in the Finance Department or Environmental Services Department, which adds complexity. The Customer Contact Center had also previously simplified some business processes to reduce after-call work.

¹⁷ The Customer Contact Center set up the telephone system such that incoming calls were routed with equal probability to any available call taker; this ensures that no call taker would accumulate more complex or lengthy phone calls than the other call takers.

**Exhibit I4: Most Customer Contact Center Staff Members
Recently Improved Their Calls Answered
Numbers**

Staff Member	Calls Answered on an Average Work Day		Change
	April 2013 to April 2014	June 2014	
Senior Office Specialist A	49.9	61.1	11.2
Senior Office Specialist B	56.2	59.6	3.4
Principal Office Specialist C	47.6	53.1	5.5
Senior Office Specialist D	24.7	50.3	25.6
Senior Office Specialist E	40.3	49.6	9.3
Senior Office Specialist F	28.3	46.3	18.0
Senior Office Specialist G	41.2	45.5	4.3
Senior Office Specialist H	57.6	45.1	(12.5)
Senior Office Specialist I	40.8	40.8	0.0
Senior Office Specialist J	40.1	40.5	0.4
Principal Office Specialist K	31.0	39.4	8.4
Senior Office Specialist L	44.8	37.9	(6.8)
Senior Office Specialist M	27.4	37.8	10.4
Senior Office Specialist N	31.4	34.7	3.3
Senior Office Specialist O	21.4	24.3	2.9
Principal Office Specialist P	13.1	22.5	9.4
Principal Office Specialist Q	9.6	20.9	11.3
Principal Office Specialist R	10.6	15.1	4.5
<i>Median</i>	38.5	40.6	

Source: Auditor analysis of Symposium "Agent by Skillset" reports for April 2, 2013-April 15, 2014 and June 1-20, 2014.

A phone call lasted 3.2 minutes on average. This table omits two Senior Office Specialists who did not routinely answer telephone calls and one Senior Office Specialist who left the Customer Contact Center in October 2013.

In June 2014, the Customer Contact Center also extended its business hours to 7 am to 6 pm – previously they had been 8 am to 5 pm (Mondays through Fridays, except City holidays). It hoped that this pilot program of a two-hour extension would relieve call volume mid-day. Outside of business hours, callers are forwarded to an answering service that can help with general questions, but cannot carry out any utility transactions – callers with utility questions were told to call again during business hours.

Based on limited data from June 1 through June 20, 2014, it appears that performance has improved. However, we also observed that the call volume for that month was lower than it has been historically. Specifically, over this period, the Customer Contact Center received 768 calls per day, on average, compared to 1,054 on average over a previous 12-month period. The average wait time over these 14 business days in June was 1 minute and 19 seconds, but at certain times it still reached 6 to 10 minutes. Nine percent of calls were not answered by Customer Contact Center staff.

Recommendation #3: To improve wait times during peak demand periods, the Customer Contact Center should:

- a. **Modify its staff members’ duties as needed. This includes continuing call answering duty assignments to Principal Office Specialists as needed.**
- b. **Modify its staff schedules as needed, including start, end, and break times for shifts, and scheduled time off.**
- c. **Seek short-term staffing relief as needed. This could include engaging temporary staff and utilizing the answering service vendor.**

Call Centers Should Improve Their Performance Measurement and Management

It is standard practice in the call center industry to collect detailed performance data regarding overall call center performance as well as each individual call taker. See **Appendix A** for our summary of various metrics for the City’s call centers we reviewed. The City’s call centers – especially the ones with high call volume – can significantly improve their performance measurement and management as currently available reports were underused, used infrequently, or not used at all.¹⁸

Common Call Center Performance Measures

To understand a call center’s overall performance as well as its resource needs, call center managers commonly look at performance measures such as the ones outlined in Exhibit 15.

Exhibit 15: Common Call Center Performance Measures

Workload Measures	Customer Service Measures
1. Number of calls received	6. Hung-up calls
2. Calls answered	
3. Breakdowns by type of call	7. Average wait time
	8. Percentage of calls answered within a certain wait time (the so-called service level)
	9. Longest wait time
4. Duration of a phone call	
5. Duration of after-call work time	10. Percentage of calls resolved during the customer’s first call or without transferring to another department
	11. Percentage of calls escalated to a supervisor
	12. Customer satisfaction or quality measures

Source: Auditor analysis of performance management best practices and interviews with call center managers.

¹⁸ Also see the joint-memorandum “Performance Management and Reporting in San José: A Proposal for Improvement” by the City Manager and the City Auditor, available at: <http://ca-sanjose.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/3232>.

It is important for management to have an understanding of these measures, so it can serve its customers effectively, manage the overall level of service provided, understand the speed of service, and deploy the necessary resources. Knowledge of these measures can also help management identify problems (for example, a technical problem with the call routing or a type of customer question that is complex).

Furthermore, it is call center industry standard to track these measures on a continuous basis – not intermittently. Call centers in other cities and in the private sector display current metrics on monitors on the call center floor, and study daily and weekly trends, in addition to monthly and annual reporting – with the goal to improve and enhance the customer experience.

Some Call Centers Tracked Performance Measures on a Limited Basis, if at All

Some of the City's call centers were tracking performance measures, but they were doing so in a limited fashion that did not take full advantage of the reporting capabilities of the City's phone system.¹⁹ For example, items 1, 2, 4, and 6 through 9 shown in Exhibit 15 were available in the existing Symposium system.

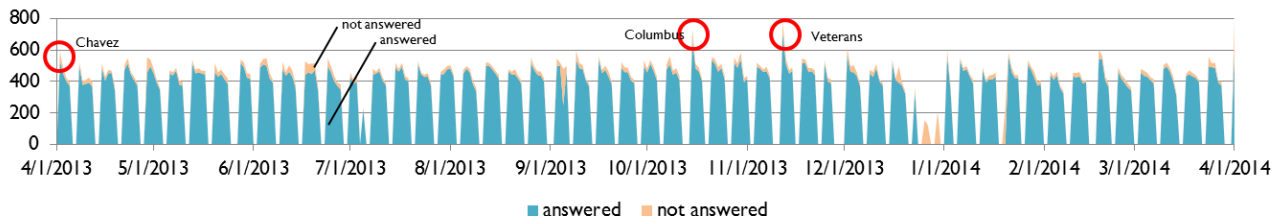
Among the City's call centers, the Customer Contact Center had more proactive and regular performance management practices. Its management used Symposium reports to monitor call volume and wait times. It further took sample counts of the types of calls it received. It reported its number of calls received, answer rate, resolution rate, and average wait time annually in the City's budget. Despite this, long wait times and high hang-up rates were not addressed until May 2014 and it had the longest wait times among the City call centers. And although the Customer Contact Center set staggered breaks,²⁰ these breaks followed a rigid schedule instead of the daily-changing call volume (see Exhibit 13 above).

Development Services used Symposium reports to monitor call volume, wait times and hold times. It also measured its service level, the percentage of calls answered within one minute, for monthly and annual reports to management. It did not track hang-ups or duration of a call. The call center supervisor, however, received little training on using the Symposium system. Exhibit 16 below shows that Development Services answered most of the calls it received throughout the year and highlights certain peak days.

¹⁹ The Call Pilot system can provide data on calls received and, furthermore, certain voicemail reports. The Symposium system provides call center queues, which were used by the Customer Contact Center, Development Services, Revenue Management, Animal Care and Services Dispatch, and Transportation Dispatch, but not the other call centers. The Symposium system has many more reports available.

²⁰ A 15-minute morning break and a 15-minute afternoon break are required by the City's agreement with the bargaining unit, plus a lunch break.

Exhibit I6: Development Services Answered Most Calls Throughout the Year



Source: Auditor analysis of Symposium “Application Call Treatment” report. Excludes calls for the automated staff directory, business hour announcements, and after-hours calls. The vertical axis shows call volume per day.

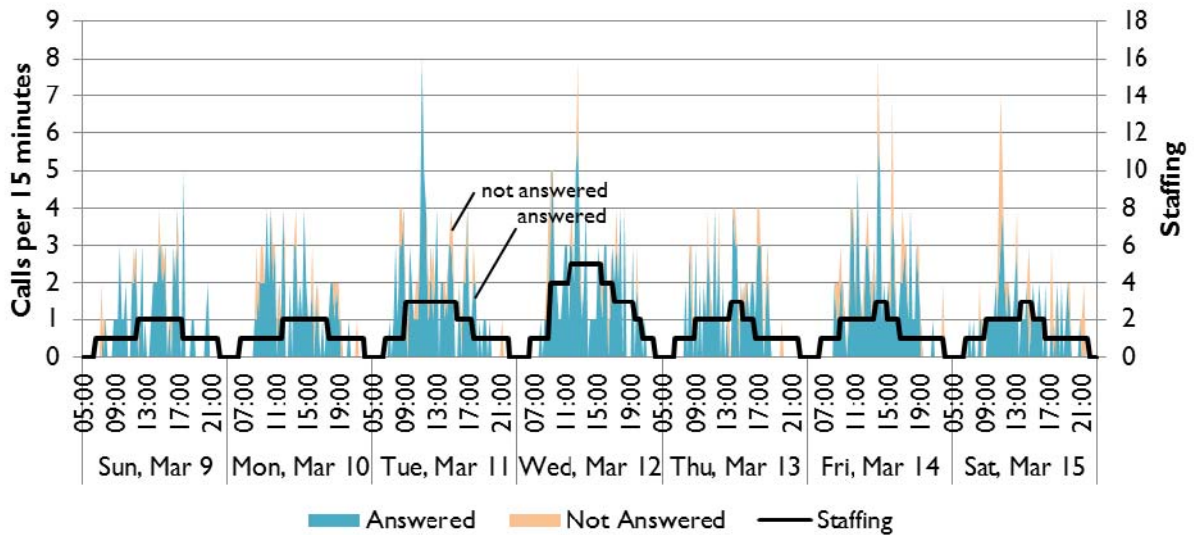
Revenue Management used Symposium reports to monitor call volume and call duration. Staff was looking at reports for periods of a few days only, a couple of times per month, rather than to gain aggregate insights. As shown later in this report (Exhibit 21), Revenue Management’s call center staff usually was on scheduled breaks just as call volume was increasing. In July 2014, Revenue Management began modifying its schedule breaks.

Transportation Dispatch had been monitoring weekly or monthly call volume using a Symposium report; however, recently the report became unavailable due to technical issues and was finally restored during our audit.

Animal Care and Services Dispatch intermittently reviewed Symposium reports for call volume. The supervisor noted that day-to-day operations often took precedence over analyzing reports. The supervisor also did not receive training. While Animal Services does assign fewer staff during early mornings and on weekends – periods with less call volume – it also assigned all staff members Wednesday shifts (the overlap day) in spite of the fact that Wednesday call volume was not significantly different from other weekdays as shown in Exhibit 17 below.²¹

²¹ Animal Care and Services explained its Wednesday shift overlap with the need to hold all-staff briefings.

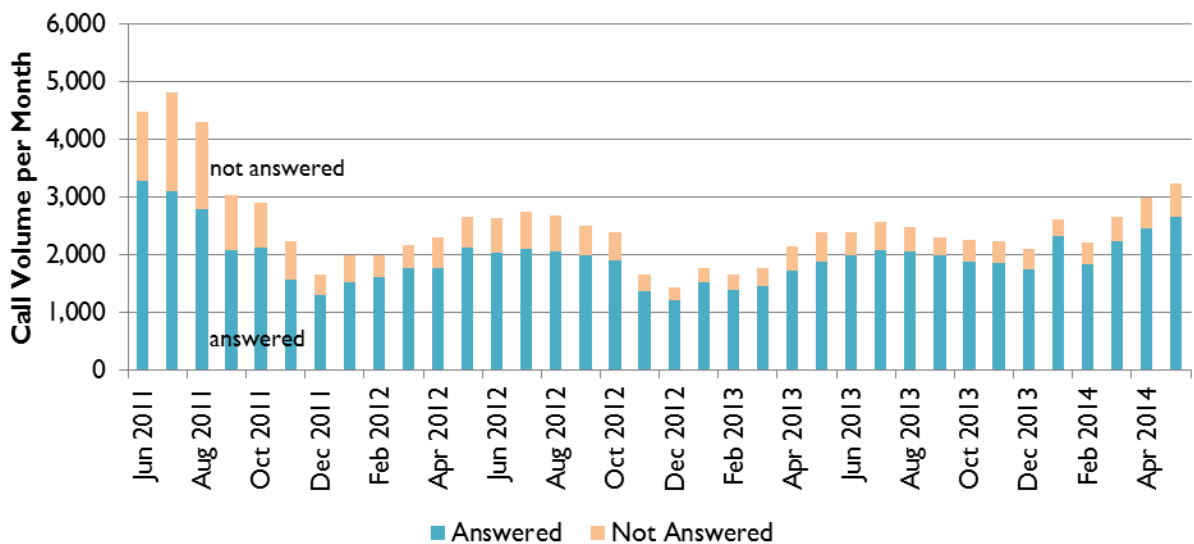
Exhibit 17: Staffing at Animal Services Dispatch Did Not Follow Call Volume Trends



Source: Auditor analysis of Symposium “Application Call Treatment” report and schedule provided by Animal Care and Services. Excludes callers who choose “emergency” in the welcome message.

Furthermore, Exhibit 18 shows the seasonal variations in call volume at Animal Services Dispatch that could lead management to consider redeployment of staff to handle the phones during some months.

Exhibit 18: Animal Services Dispatch Call Volume Varied Seasonally



Source: Auditor analysis of Symposium “Application Performance” report.

Other cities use call center data to manage their staffing. San Francisco and Minneapolis call center managers explained that they adjusted their staffing to provide for more staffing on days when they expected higher call volume. They used both historical call volume data and knowledge of current trends (for

example, a mass mailing of letters with a deadline or a public event) to flexibly staff their call center shifts. Charlotte limited vacation days on those Mondays when it expected high call volume.

Departments Should Make Better Use of Workload and Performance Data to Manage Wait Times

Transportation Tree/Sidewalk, Vehicle Abatement, Code Enforcement, and Animal Care and Services Licensing did not routinely monitor any telephone system performance measures, in part because they did not have access to the Call Pilot system. Even though the IT Department could obtain call volume reports from the Call Pilot system, these were neither provided to nor used by the departments.²² None of the call centers with voicemail boxes received or reviewed any voicemail reports (see discussion in Finding 4 about voicemail boxes).

Other cities have set aggressive targets to manage callers' wait times. For example: Minneapolis aims to answer 65 percent of calls within 20 seconds. Boston's wait time goal was to answer 95 percent of phone calls within 30 seconds and it achieved 97 percent. San Francisco achieved answering 74 percent of calls within 60 seconds.

As a result of tracking frequent categories of phone calls, other cities have also reorganized their services and telephone systems. For example, San Francisco added a new call tree option for transit-related phone calls.

Departments Should Make Better Use of Workload and Performance Data to Manage Staffing

It is common in call center industry to have performance targets and standards for each individual call taker, such as a minimum number of calls answered or a time limit on certain transactions. Management usually provides these performance measures regularly to staff. The Customer Contact Center set standards for each individual call taker: calls should be finished within 10 minutes; after-call processing should take no longer than 10 minutes; and each call taker is expected to meet a weekly average number of phone calls answered. Management and team leads distribute weekly statistics. Individual call taker performance continued to diverge widely as shown in Exhibit 14 above – some call takers answered as many as 60 calls each day, whereas others only answered 20.

²² It should be noted that departments may have been measuring their overall workload (telephone plus non-telephone) in their service request systems.

The Customer Contact Center, Development Services, and Revenue Management used telephone logs to monitor individual call takers' attendance and adherence to the schedule. Development Services further said it was monitoring reports occasionally for excessively long phone calls.

Other cities continuously monitor the time staff spends on the phone, minutes that they are available to take calls, absences, etc. This data is used to provide feedback to call takers, counsel them if necessary, and influence the performance evaluations. The goal is to enhance the customer experience. Other cities have set targets. For example: In Minneapolis, customer service agents are expected to finish their after-call processing in 2 minutes and be at 70 to 75 percent utilization.

Due to the antiquated call center software, the reports available to the City's call center managers were not easy to use. When the IT Department replaces the old software systems, call center managers will be able to take advantage of better reports.

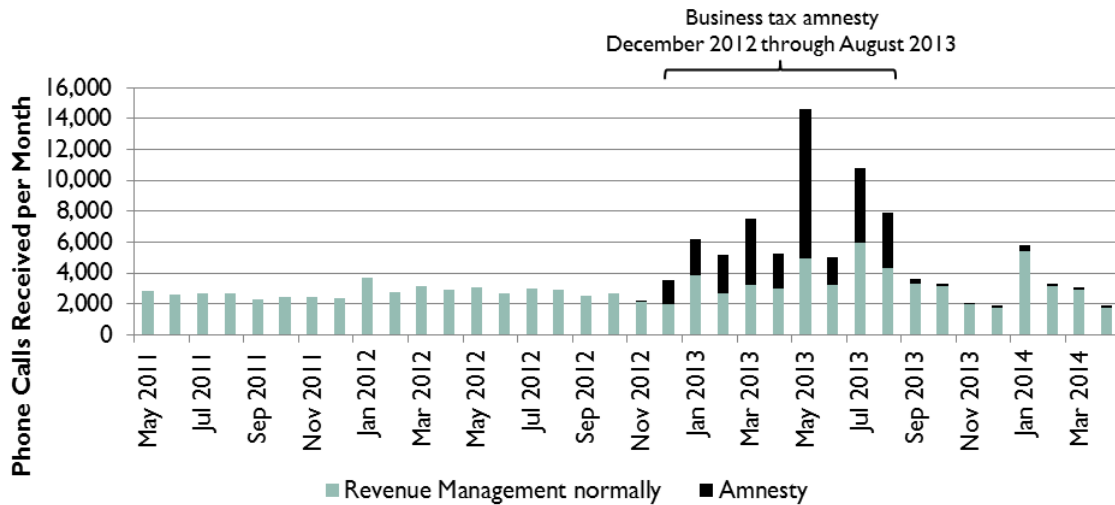
Real-Time Monitors

At the time of our audit, only the Customer Contact Center and Development Services had wall monitors showing in real time the number of callers waiting and their wait time. A monitor in Revenue Management which had been removed after the conclusion of the business tax amnesty was installed again during our audit. A monitor in Transportation Dispatch was re-enabled during our audit after some months of technical difficulties. These types of monitors give call-takers real time information so they can adjust to spikes in call volume.

Departments Should Make Better Use of Workload and Performance Data to Manage Impacts of Programmatic Changes on Call Volume

The 2013 business tax amnesty resulted in a significant, temporary increase in telephone call volume to the City. On some days Revenue Management received more than 1,000 calls, more than five times the normally received call volume. This also caused an increase to voicemail messages. The Finance Department explained that it had responded to this spike in workload by retaining temporary staffing and also changing its call tree. Exhibit 19 shows the spike in call volume.

Exhibit 19: During the Business Tax Amnesty, Revenue Management’s Call Volume Increased Significantly



Source: Auditor analysis of Symposium “Application Call Treatment” report. April 2014 contains incomplete data.

Upcoming Changes to Garbage and Recycling Billing Will Impact Call Volume

As described earlier, the City is currently preparing for a significant change in utility billing. Starting in July 2015, it is anticipated that garbage and recycling billing will be part of the County’s property tax bill for a majority of customers who currently receive bills from the City. This will impact when and why customers call the City with payment or billing questions.²³ Significant programmatic changes can increase call volume and the Administration should be prepared to respond to those increases and make necessary staffing adjustments.

Recommendation #4: To improve their performance management, the City departments should regularly use call center statistics in analyzing past performance, expected programmatic changes, establishing next performance objectives, examining overall performance strategies, and reviewing their staffing needs. Further, call center managers should regularly review and discuss individual call taker statistics with their staffs, and install real-time monitors where needed to provide real-time customer wait time information to call takers. These performance management practices should be documented in departmental policies and procedures.

²³ For more information on garbage and recycling billing, see the staff memo and City Council discussion on September 17, 2013: <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/20983>, item 3.5.

Call Centers Can Enhance Their Customer Satisfaction Monitoring and Staff Training

None of the City's call centers conduct systematic surveys of their customers or of residents in general about their knowledge and satisfaction with call center services or about the quality of customer phone call experiences. Surveys could be appended to all or some phone calls after the City employee hangs up, or they could target more broadly residents instead of callers.²⁴ Development Services, nonetheless, offers a feedback form on its website. Call center managers generally stated that complaints about call handling would be handled by a supervisor and that complaints might have been related to an answer the caller did not like, rather than a true complaint against a call center employee.

Moreover, call centers in the City were unable to record and archive telephone calls. This made quality assurance, individualized training, and follow-up on customer complaints difficult, as there was no record to go back to and review. It is call center industry standard to record telephone calls and some modern call centers even record the customer service agents' actions taken on the computer. A call center manager explained, for example, that the best way to train staff was to review with them a handful of actual phone calls they had handled. Chicago's call center management reviews randomly selected phone calls to see if customer service agents adhered to the protocols, which influences performance evaluations.²⁵

Recommendation #5: To improve performance management at call centers, the IT Department should ensure that the new telephone system enables call centers to record phone calls. The call centers should consider implementing customer surveys and should use recorded phone calls to regularly train their staff and improve customer service.

²⁴ For example, Boston calls back 20 to 30 callers per day, after their service requests have been resolved, and asks them to rate their happiness with the service and their likelihood of referring their friends and family to the Boston government call center.

²⁵ This audit did not include a detailed review of individual phone calls or the content and courtesy of telephone conversations between staff and customers. The National Citizen Survey 2013 found that San José residents are generally satisfied with City employee's courtesy, responsiveness, and knowledge. 63 percent of residents who had some contact with City employees reported their overall impression of City employees as "excellent" or "good." During our field observations at the Customer Contact Center, Development Services, Animal Care and Services Dispatch, Revenue Management, Transportation Tree/Sidewalk, and Transportation Dispatch, we found that staff was courteous in answering customer telephone calls.

Finding 3 Improvements Are Needed in Some of the City’s Call Trees

Summary

At most of the City’s call centers, customers encounter a call tree (“Press 1 for X, press 2 for Y...”). When call trees are set up well, they channel customers quickly to the right staff member. The City’s call trees are maintained decentrally and some have not been regularly reviewed. The Animal Care and Services’ call tree was too long and complex, creating a poor customer experience. Not following industry best practices, it contained too many options for callers to choose from, including one 4-minute-long announcement, and some information in the call tree was incorrect or unclear. Animal Care and Services had not reviewed the call tree in some time. Other departments’ call trees also needed improvements, such as correcting a mis-translation, improving logical flow, and making information understandable. We recommend the various departments improve their call trees and regularly review them.

Call Trees Were Maintained Decentrally and Some Were Not Regularly Reviewed

It is common for callers to encounter a call tree, or a phone menu (“Press 1 for X, press 2 for Y ...”).²⁶ When these call trees are set up well, they can channel customers quickly to the right staff members, thus saving both the customer and staff time on transferring phone calls and enabling prioritization of work. Call trees can also contain recorded announcements for the customer, providing additional helpful information. At their worst, however, call trees are frustrating to callers, as they are forced to listen to lengthy,²⁷ unwanted, confusing, or repeated information, or get stuck in the “wrong” branch of the call tree.

Call tree announcements in the various call centers were maintained decentrally by each department and some were not regularly reviewed, resulting in the issues outlined below. We show all call trees as flowcharts and transcripts in **Appendix B**.

²⁶ The City’s telephone system did not have speech recognition ability in the call trees (“You can say X or Y or say ‘talk to an agent’”) at the time of our audit.

²⁷ We timed the duration of the call tree messages, as shown in **Appendix B**. The wait times in telephone queues described in Finding 2 do **not** include the time it takes callers to listen to and navigate call trees.

Animal Care and Services' Call Tree Was Too Long and Complex, Creating a Poor Customer Experience

Animal Care and Services (Animal Services) promotes the health, safety, and welfare of animals by issuing pet licenses for rabies vaccination compliance; providing low-cost spay/neuter services; responding to animal control issues in the community; and housing and caring for stray animals.

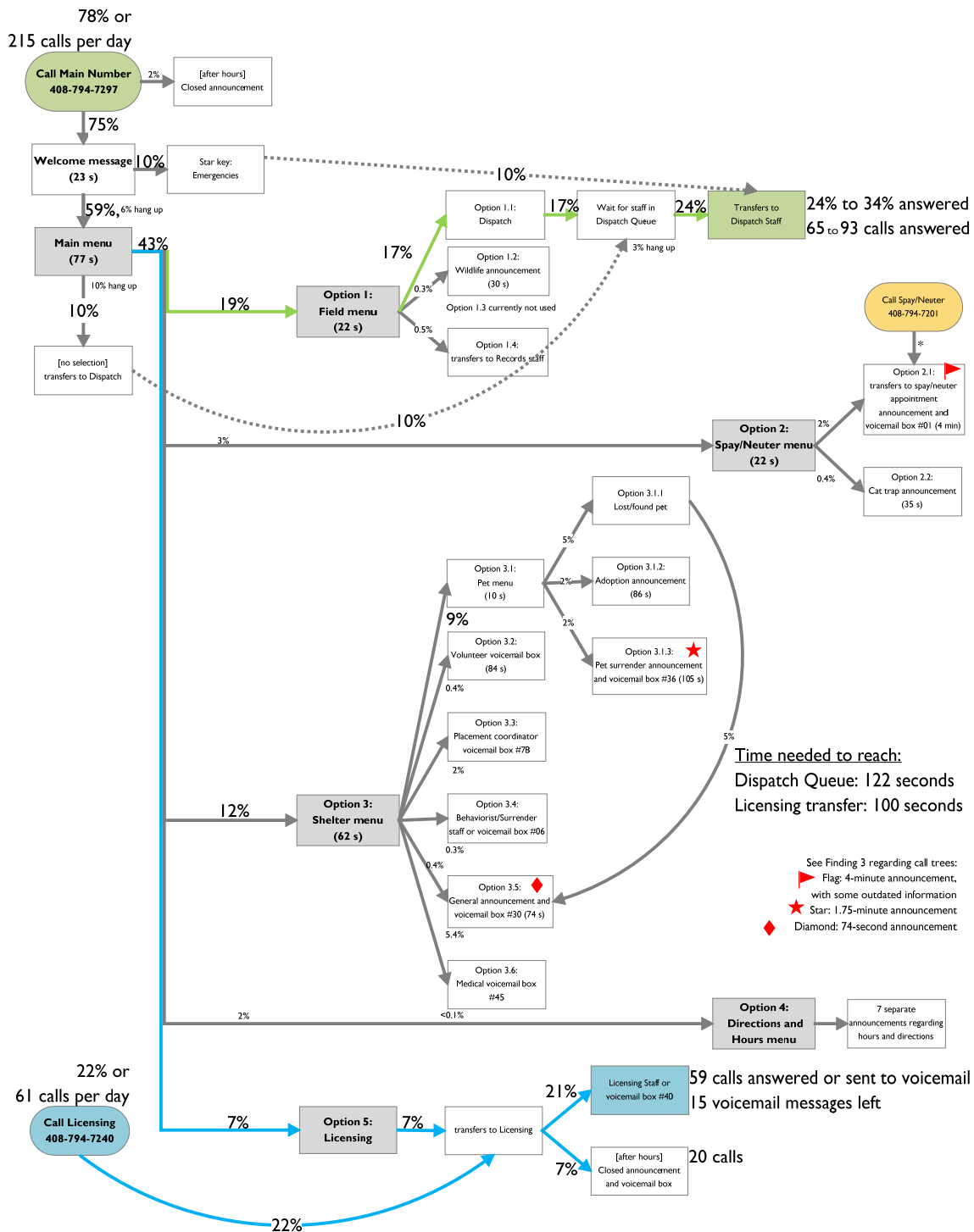
Its main phone number is 408-794-PAWS (408-794-7297). The Animal Services call tree is overly long and too complex, which creates a poor experience for customers who call. Exhibit 20 below shows the Animal Services call tree setup. The call tree has five main menu options (shown in gray), but the sub-menus contain a total of 21 options. Callers are presented, for example, with an option for a wildlife announcement, a cat trap announcement, a volunteer voicemail box, a placement coordinator voicemail box, a general voicemail box, and seven different announcements with driving directions.

Industry best practices strongly emphasize keeping call trees short and simple to not strain callers' patience. For example, best practices recommend limiting the number of menu options to five per menu, making a staff member accessible from the main menu, and keeping messages short.

Most callers to Animal Services wanted to report an animal control issue (for example, a dangerous animal on the loose, at least 24 percent of callers) or they had a question about pet licensing (29 percent of callers). The call tree, however, was not organized by popularity of the options. Many call tree options were used very infrequently; for example only 2 percent of callers accessed the driving directions. Less than 1 percent of callers accessed the volunteer voicemail box or listened to the cat trap announcements. Call volume to each section of the call tree is also shown in Exhibit 20.

Moreover, callers had to listen to a 4-minute-long, 700-word announcement before they reached a voicemail box to request a spay/neuter appointment for their pet. Another announcement in the general voicemail box pleaded with callers to **not** leave voicemail messages for staff before allowing them to leave a message after the tone. These recordings are fully transcribed in **Appendix B**.

Exhibit 20: Animal Care and Services' Call Tree Is Too Complex



Source: Auditor observation of call tree as of May 2014 and auditor analysis of call volume from Call Pilot reports for December 31, 2013 to April 11, 2014.

May not sum because of rounding. 100 percent is 276 calls, the total volume of incoming calls on an average day. No data was available for direct calls to 408-794-7201 for Spay/Neuter appointments (*). For the detailed call tree and a full transcript of all announcements, see **Appendix B**.

The Call Tree at Animal Services Contained Incorrect Information

The Animal Services call tree contained several pieces of incorrect or outdated information:

- The spay/neuter announcement highlighted a grant-funded service expiring December 2013, even though Animal Services continued to provide the service beyond December 2013.
- The spay/neuter message implied that any dog could be spayed or neutered at Animal Services, even though website information limited dog spay/neuter services to Chihuahuas and Chihuahua mixes under 25 pounds only. Staff, however, indicated they would spay/neuter any dog weighing less than 40 pounds. This needs to be clarified.
- The dog adoption fee amounts were understated, as both the website and the call tree announcement referred to \$135, even though adopting some “highly desirable” dogs carries a \$230 fee.

Some Call Tree Announcements Were Unclear

The Animal Services call tree contained several pieces of unclear information:

- The lost/found pet option redirected to a general voicemail box because staff did not have the capacity to respond by phone to such inquiries (Animal Services requires that owners of lost pets come in person to the animal shelter to look for their lost animal). The message provided no information for finders of lost pets, even though it was billed as the “lost/found” option.
- All the driving directions were read too fast. During the course of our audit Animal Services also discovered an error in the driving directions which it corrected.
- The pet surrender message was lengthy and not clear.

Animal Care Did Not Regularly Review Its Call Tree

Animal Services does not maintain up-to-date transcripts or flow charts. Preliminary plans to revise the Animal Services call tree a few years ago stalled when the phone system upgrade got delayed. Animal Services explained that it added more information into its call tree after staffing reductions so that customers could navigate to the information by themselves.

Recommendation #6: To improve the customer experience in its call tree, **Animal Care and Services**, with assistance from the **IT Department**, should review and revise its call tree in accordance with best practices and:

- **Make it shorter and simpler;**
- **Make it responsive to customer needs by removing unneeded options and ordering options meaningfully; and**
- **Correct the inaccurate information.**

Other Departments' Call Trees Also Need Improvements

We also reviewed the call trees at the Customer Contact Center, Development Services, Revenue Management, Transportation Tree/Sidewalk, and Code Enforcement. Those call trees also are shown in detail in **Appendix B**.²⁸ The simplicity and brevity of these call trees varies. Mostly, they were easy to navigate, but the call centers need to make the following improvements.

Inaccurate Messages Need to be Corrected

Code Enforcement's call tree option 2 is supposed to announce its address to callers; however, it inaccurately led to an afternoon office closure announcement and did not mention an address. Code Enforcement has since corrected this error.

The Customer Contact Center offers callers the option to proceed in either English, or Spanish, or Vietnamese. The announcement when callers can choose Vietnamese said at the time of our audit:

*Để tiếp tục bằng tiếng Tây Ban Nha, xin bấm số 3.
(Translation: To continue in Spanish, please press number 3.)*

The Customer Contact Center explained that this was (mis)translated by a vendor and that this recording has been in place since 2007 because no one noticed the error and no caller had ever complained. It has corrected this mis-translation. Furthermore, the word "utilities" was translated into Vietnamese as *điện nước*, meaning "electricity and water," even though the City does not provide electricity services to residents.

²⁸ Transportation Dispatch and Transportation Vehicle Abatement did not have call trees; callers went straight to a staff member's telephone where they were either answered or sent to voicemail.

Some Messages Are Difficult to Understand

Development Services' call tree offered callers an option to make an appointment with plan review staff. After pressing this option, callers had to listen to the following 60-second announcement before they entered the queue to speak with a staff member.

Please be advised that, due to high call volume, you may experience longer than normal hold times. We apologize for any inconvenience. Please be aware that, in – due to staffing availability, currently no walk-in applications for building submittals are allowed at the Development Services center in City Hall. However, please be aware that, in addition to scheduling appointments to submit applications on a limited basis as staffing allows, walk-in application submittals for planning department, fire department, and public works are also allowed at the Development Services center in City Hall on a first-come, first-served basis. The available hours for walk-in application submittals are 9 AM to 11 AM and 1 PM to 3 PM, Monday through Friday. Please note that all plan checks for submittal of counter intake, residential express, commercial express, STI, ITI, and other coordinated review submittals require an appointment. Thank you for your attention. (Emphasis added)

In our opinion, lay customers will struggle to understand the complex sentence underlined above, the distinction between what can and cannot be submitted by walking in at City Hall, as well as the jargon and abbreviations throughout this announcement. The message contains numerous pieces of information – some more detailed than others – but it does not put clear emphasis on anything.²⁹

Finally, some sentences in the Code Enforcement call tree were read too fast to understand.

Logical Flow Can Be Improved

The Customer Contact Center's call tree is the most complex of all, containing three language branches, then three main branches, and several utility-related sub-branches. For example, it can take 61 seconds and 4 menu selections before a caller reaches the utility queue to wait for a staff member. The Customer Contact Center explained the purpose of the call tree to encourage callers with simple questions to use the available self-service account look-up.

Code Enforcement's call tree contained three duplicative menu options: Callers were told to press 3 to file a new complaint or to press 0 for any other issues. In addition, if callers made no selection, they were automatically transferred to staff.

²⁹ Development Services explained that this message has been in place since approximately 2009 and has not been revised since. It is our understanding that department staff can easily change this announcement by rewriting and re-recording it.

Code Enforcement can simplify and shorten its call tree by removing option 3 and option 0 and then automatically transferring all calls to its complaint desk staff. Most callers actually chose option 0 for an operator, while few chose option 3.

Revenue Management's call tree listed various menu options and ended with an option 0 for "all other questions." This option, however, redirected callers to the business tax sub-menu instead of going directly to a staff member, as was intended. The Finance and IT Departments have since corrected this.

Reviewing Call Trees and Messages on a Regular Basis Is Good Practice

Finance makes frequent changes to its Revenue Management call tree and it explained that its goal was to keep it short and simple. To that end, it has continuously revised its messages, striking out unnecessary words and timing the messages. During our audit, it shortened its announcements by 10 seconds, by eliminating unnecessary words. Finance also said it was regularly cold-calling its own call tree to test it. It kept on file current transcripts and flowcharts.

Other departments, however, have not been as proactive in maintaining their call trees. Infrequent review and lack of a customer perspective on behalf of call center management have resulted in the errors we pointed out above, even though they are easy to discover and easy to remedy.³⁰

The call trees are maintained decentrally. The IT Department, even though it has the technical expertise, considers the other departments to be responsible for their business processes. Although departmental staff can change pre-recorded announcements, the current technology does not allow department to make structural changes to their call trees on their own. According to the IT Department, the soon to-be-installed call center software will provide departments with the flexibility to make these types of changes.

In addition to reviewing call trees for best practices, it would be most helpful in our opinion if departments simply reviewed the call trees from a customer perspective. This can be achieved by having a supervisor or a cold caller listen to the finished recordings. That's what we did.

Call Trees Should Steer Callers Towards Self-Service Options

For the caller's convenience and to relieve staff of unnecessary work, call trees can steer callers towards available self-service options. This needs to be done thoughtfully to avoid overly complicated call trees. For example, Revenue Management, Code Enforcement, and Vehicle Abatement already announced to their callers that some forms and service requests were available on their

³⁰ It should be noted that the Customer Contact Center's call tree is on a different system which the IT Department believes is more difficult to change.

websites. While Animal Services does provide many online services, its call tree messages were cumbersome for a customer to navigate and understand those self-service options.

Recommendation #7: To improve the customer experience in their call trees, the call centers with assistance from the IT Department should:

- a. Immediately change the incorrect messages;
- b. Regularly review call trees for accuracy, simplicity, and ease of use, and establish procedures to continue doing so;
- c. Maintain up-to-date transcripts and flowcharts of their call trees, and establish procedures to continue doing so; and
- d. Encourage callers in each call tree to use self-service options (when available).

Finding 4 Voicemail Boxes – Their Use and Staff’s Responsiveness Needs Review

Summary

Some callers reach a voicemail box instead of a staff member. Voicemail can be a useful tool when monitored. For example, Revenue Management had well-functioning practices in place to retrieve voicemail messages regularly, and was using an online interface to monitor voicemails. We also found that the Department of Transportation regularly retrieved Tree/Sidewalk and Vehicle Abatement voicemail messages. On the other hand, Animal Care and Services needs to consistently retrieve voicemails or change the voicemail boxes it offers to ensure its callers receive a response. We recommend the City improve its voicemail message practices by requiring departmental call centers to develop and document policies on how frequently voicemail boxes should be reviewed and how timely messages should be returned.

Revenue Management, Animal Care and Services, and Transportation Had Voicemail Boxes

Some of the call centers we reviewed used voicemail boxes.³¹ Monitoring voicemail boxes and responding to customers is essential. Voicemail boxes in general can become problematic when customers leave a message and either don’t get a call back or when they feel the need to call again – duplicating staff work and increasing customer annoyance.

On the other hand, voicemail boxes can be a useful tool to handle an overflow of calls. However, care needs to be taken to ensure that callers do not encounter a “full” voicemail box that does not accept new messages. For example, during the course of the audit, one voicemail box (#78 – Animal Services’ placement coordinator) was full and could not accept messages. Animal Services and the IT Department have corrected this by rerouting to a different voicemail box.

Revenue Management Had Well-Functioning Practices for Responding to Voicemail Messages

Callers at Revenue Management were sent to voicemail boxes³² whenever their individual wait time in the queue exceeded 2 minutes or 5 minutes (depending on the type of call),³³ or when they called outside of business hours. This setup

³¹ The Customer Contact Center, Development Services, Code Enforcement, and Transportation Dispatch do not use voicemail boxes.

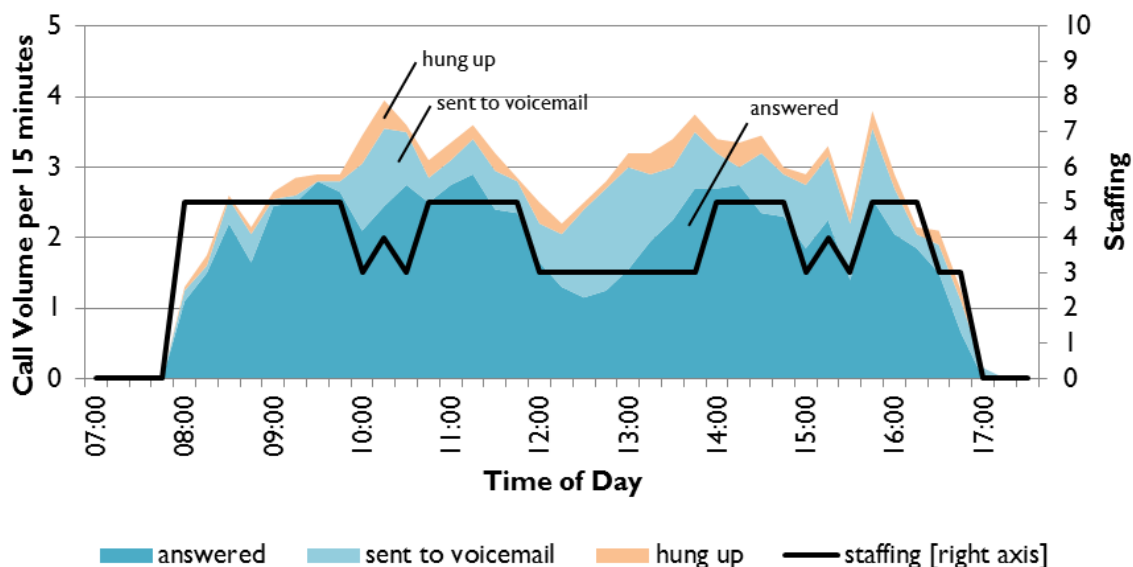
³² The business tax voicemail box at Revenue Management had a capacity of 360 minutes.

³³ 5 minutes for the business tax and the special projects queue, 2 minutes for the other queues that have lower call volume. The average wait time in the business tax queue was 97 seconds from April 2013 to March 2014.

differed from the City’s other call centers: Those other call centers left callers waiting in the queue until the call was picked up (on average after 8 minutes at the Customer Contact Center or after 1 minute at Animal Services Dispatch) and generally did not take after-hours messages. Revenue Management noted that its setup was intended to avoid long wait times for customers.

On an average day, 87 calls were sent to Revenue Management’s various voicemail boxes, which corresponded to 49 percent of the call volume. Because of the automatic forwarding to voicemail, Revenue Management received a much higher voicemail message volume than the other call centers. There was a noticeable uptick in voicemail messages (light blue) and a decline in calls answered (dark blue) by staff associated with staff’s scheduled breaks, as shown in Exhibit 21. In July 2014, Revenue Management began modifying its scheduled breaks.

Exhibit 21: Revenue Management Receives More Voicemail Messages When Staff Goes on Scheduled Breaks



Source: Auditor analysis of Symposium “Application Call Treatment” report, average per day over March 2014; and staff schedule provided by the Finance Department.

An Online Interface to Monitor Voicemail Boxes

Revenue Management uses an online interface to retrieve its voicemail messages. Using this software through their internet browsers, staff viewed the voicemail boxes, listened to voicemail messages, forwarded them to other staff if needed, and deleted messages when done. Checking voicemail messages through this internet interface had advantages, Finance staff noted, such as enabling multiple staff members to work simultaneously in the same voicemail box, assigning entire

segments of messages to staff, and improved/faster workflow for staff. No other call center used this online interface, instead retrieving voicemail messages through their desk phones.³⁴

Based on our observation on one sample day in June 2014, Revenue Management had retrieved voicemail messages such that there were no messages older than one business day in six of its seven voicemail boxes. Revenue Management clearly assigned each voicemail box to a primary staff member, and also designated multiple back-up staff members for most voicemail boxes. Staff is expected to retrieve messages within 24 to 48 hours. In addition, Revenue Management explained that the call center supervisor very frequently checks staff's responsiveness by reviewing the voicemail boxes.

Animal Care and Services Inconsistently Retrieves Voicemail Messages

Animal Services' call tree routed callers, depending on their menu selections, to voicemail boxes that provided them with additional information and then gave them the opportunity to leave a message for staff. Animal Services' voicemail boxes were, among other things, for requesting spay/neuter appointments.

Exhibit 22 below shows how frequently Animal Services staff retrieved messages from most of their voicemail boxes. For example, on March 4 and March 5, 2014, staff listened to messages left on the spay/neuter appointment voicemail box (#01), but no one retrieved messages from March 6 until March 10. This means that customers who had left a message on March 6 would not have gotten a response until March 11 – five days later. In one instance, in the pet surrender voicemail box, ten calendar days went by until voicemail messages were retrieved. The other voicemail boxes also show inconsistent voicemail retrieval, except at the medical voicemail box.

³⁴ The City Attorney's Office, not included in the audit scope, also uses the online interface to retrieve its voicemail messages.

Exhibit 22: Animal Care and Services Inconsistently Retrieved Voicemail Messages

Spay/Neuter (#01)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						I
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Behaviorist (#06)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						I
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Customer Service (#30)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						I
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Licensing (#40)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						I
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Medical (#45)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						I
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Pet Surrender (#36)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						I
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Source: Auditor analysis of Call Pilot “Mailbox Call Session Summary” reports, for March 2014.

- Key:
- 10 : Staff did not retrieve any voicemail messages on this day
 - 11 : Staff retrieved some or all voicemail messages on this day
 - 12 : No customer called or left voicemail messages on this day

Transportation Regularly Retrieved Voicemail Messages

Transportation Tree/Sidewalk maintained two voicemail boxes, one of which was specifically for callers to request an inspection appointment. Based on our analysis of voicemail box reports for March 2014, DOT staff retrieved voicemail messages with daily regularity – see Exhibit 23 below. While the voicemail recording told callers that the voicemail box was checked twice per day by staff, our analysis showed in some instances only a once-daily log-on by staff.

DOT staff also retrieved voicemail messages left on the Vehicle Abatement voicemail box daily.

As a result of our audit, DOT reviewed its voicemail retrieval policy and provided guidance on how often these should be checked. Further, the policy also addresses staff responsibilities when they are expected to be out of the office for over one day.

Exhibit 23: Transportation Tree/Sidewalk Regularly Retrieved Its Voicemail Messages

General Voicemail Box (#44)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Inspection Request (#45)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Source: Auditor analysis of Call Pilot "Mailbox Call Session Summary" reports, for March 2014.

Key: 10 : Staff did not retrieve any voicemail messages on this day
11 : Staff retrieved some or all voicemail messages on this day
12 : No customer called or left voicemail messages on this day

Recommendation #8: To improve customers' voicemail experience, departments that use voicemail boxes should:

- a. **Develop a policy on how frequently voicemail boxes should be reviewed and how timely messages should be returned;**
- b. **Assign their staff members primary and back-up duties to respond to voicemails, and incorporate this into their procedures;**
- c. **Regularly review voicemail retrieval reports to ensure that voicemails are being checked;**
- d. **Remove those voicemail boxes that will not be checked or will not be needed; and**
- e. **Use the online interface to retrieve voicemail messages. The IT Department should ensure that the new phone system has an online voicemail interface.**

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Finding 5 Language Accessibility to Non-English Speakers Should Be Enhanced

Summary

Nearly 26 percent of San José residents speak English less than very well, according to the 2012 American Community Survey. However, only two of the nine call centers we reviewed in this audit provided a call tree option other than English. Furthermore, although only some of the call centers had bilingual staff, some departments were not aware that the City already had a purchase order for translation services with a vendor, and usage of those translation services was low. Finally, we recommend the City develop a language access policy to make City services more accessible to all residents.

Non-English Speakers Face Limited Accessibility to Services

San José has a large non-English speaking population. According to the 2012 American Community Survey by the US Census Bureau, 26 percent of San José residents speak English less than “very well.” Exhibit 24 below shows the different languages spoken in San José.

Exhibit 24: San José Has a Large Non-English Speaking Population

Language Spoken at Home	Ability to Speak English			Grand Total
	Only English	Speak English “Very Well”	Speak English Less Than “Very Well”	
Only English	43%			43%
Spanish		14%	10%	24%
Vietnamese		4%	7%	11%
Chinese		3%	4%	7%
Tagalog		2%	1%	4%
Other		8%	4%	12%
Grand Total	43%	31%	26%	100%

Source: Auditor analysis of US Census Bureau's American Community Survey 2012, 1-year estimates, table B16001, population age 5 and over (914,000 residents). May not add due to rounding.

Despite these large numbers of non-English speakers, only two of the call centers we reviewed provided an option to respond in a language other than English: The Customer Contact Center call tree provided Spanish and Vietnamese options,

with bilingual staff and recorded messages available in the those languages.³⁵ Development Services offers callers the option of speaking to a Spanish-speaking call taker. Code Enforcement has one staff member with bilingual Spanish certification, but does not tell callers in the call tree.

The remaining call centers do not offer a language option and do not have bilingual certified staff **in their call centers**. They may, however, still have bilingual staff on the same floor or in the same building to assist.

The City has a City-wide purchase order with *Language Line Services (Language Line)*, a translation vendor. Its services cost \$0.94 per minute. Since at least 2010-11, the City has used this translation service for Arabic, Burmese, Cambodian, Cantonese, Farsi, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. Spanish and Vietnamese were the most frequently used languages. However, this service was used by only two departments (Customer Contact Center and Animal Care and Services) for only 380 phone calls since 2010-11.

Other departments were not aware that the *Language Line* purchase order was available to them or how it could be used for live translation services in a conference phone call with the customer. As departments have learned of the availability of *Language Line*, its usage has been increasing. DOT reported that it found the service “extremely useful and easy to use.” The City of Minneapolis and almost all other cities we spoke with use this or a similar service for providing translation services. Moreover, Customer Service agents in Minneapolis received diversity training that addresses issues in working with residents from different cultures. This often involves helping people navigate government processes.

Recommendation #9: To ensure accessibility of City services to non-English speakers, the Administration should clarify that the *Language Line* purchase order is available to all line departments and provide assistance to line staff on how it can be used.

³⁵ As described earlier, during the audit we noted an incorrect translation in the Vietnamese call tree. That error has been corrected.

Providing Better Language Options to Residents

The City of San José does not have a language accessibility policy. The Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act (California Government Code, Section 7290-7299.8) requires that:

[A]ny materials explaining services available to the public shall be translated into any non-English language spoken by a substantial number of the public served by the agency.

Further, the act “requires every local public agency, [...] serving a substantial number of non-English-speaking people, [to] employ a sufficient number of qualified bilingual persons in public contact positions or as interpreters to assist those in such positions, to ensure provision of information and services in the language of the non-English-speaking person. The determination of what constitutes a substantial number of non-English-speaking people and a sufficient number of qualified bilingual persons shall be made by the local agency.” The Dymally-Alatorre Bilingual Services Act does not mandate local compliance, and gives local governments discretion in defining the service populations and the extent of services provided. It does not provide funding.

The City and County of San Francisco’s Language Access Ordinance goes further. It commits to improving the accessibility of the city’s services and providing residents equal access to them. Departments are expected to maintain recorded telephone messages in multiple languages if 5 percent or more of the population covered by that service speak limited English.

Recommendation #10: To ensure accessibility of City services to non-English speakers, the Administration should formulate a policy and goals that further language accessibility and provide assistance to line departments implementing this policy.

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Finding 6 Systems Integration and More Centralized Call Handling Would Enhance the Customer Experience

Summary

Various call centers in the City handle hundreds of resident calls on a daily basis. City phone numbers are numerous and hard to find. The Customer Contact Center is just one of the multiple call centers spread out across the City. For many calls, it essentially acts as a switchboard. We recommend the Administration develop a knowledge base that enables call takers to provide accurate information.

Integrating service request systems is also crucial. Departments use a variety of software applications, and few of the work order systems in the City are integrated. In addition, resident service requests coming through self-service options rarely feed directly into the various work order systems. Many other cities have found that implementing customer relationship management (CRM) technology to integrate the disparate work order systems and having a centralized call center addresses these issues. In our opinion, the City of San José needs to develop a long-term strategy to improve customer access including consideration of a centralized call center with integrated customer relationship management.

The City's Call Handling Is Decentralized

As shown in the previous Findings, multiple call centers take hundreds of resident calls every day. As discussed in Finding 1, the City has a multitude of phone numbers that customers must choose from and yet they may be transferred or not reach the right employee. Self-service options, if available, are limited and decentralized. Performance management efforts vary by call center, as discussed in Finding 2. Moreover, the call tree practices and voicemail responses also vary by department, as shown in Findings 3 and 4. Finally, language accessibility was uneven, as described in Finding 5. Each department maintains its own separate systems, business processes, and work order systems.

While the Customer Contact Center's 408-535-3500 number is provided as the central "customer service" number, the staff members in the Center are the front-line customer service representatives for garbage and recycling calls, as well as a few types of general City inquiries. For all other calls, the Customer Contact Center is essentially a switchboard. Specifically, staff can provide answers to simple questions about other City services, and oftentimes has to transfer calls to the appropriate department. Staff at the Customer Contact Center does not have access to most of the work order systems in other departments and thus

cannot take simple pothole repair requests, accept business tax payments, or book building inspection appointments.³⁶ Residents who “know their way around the City” find it quicker and easier to call departments directly.

Calls Often Need to be Transferred

After reaching City staff, customers often need to be transferred to another call center because of the way the City has organized its services. Services are siloed and staff often does not have quick access to the right systems or the right information.

Sometimes this is because call centers act as a switchboard to screen, sort, and then forward telephone calls to specialists. The Development Services call center, for example, screens calls from the public for the on-duty planner because of the planner’s more limited business hours. Likewise, miscellaneous calls at Revenue Management go the business tax group which can then decide which specialist is needed to respond to the customer’s question.

However, many calls are transferred because the call taker does not have access to service request systems beyond their own unit, or the tools and knowledge to respond. For example, the Customer Contact Center reported that on an average day it received 20 callers for the Finance Department (usually for business tax issues), 25 callers for Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, and 28 callers for DOT.³⁷ The Customer Contact Center does not have access to any of these departments’ systems, not even to look up basic information or create simple service requests, so these types of calls are often transferred.

Sometimes, Calls Are Transferred in Error

Some calls were transferred erroneously because services and responsibilities are not clear. Revenue Management noted that it frequently received phone calls which the Customer Contact Center had misdirected upon hearing the caller ask for “business.” In another example, the Customer Contact Center transferred a call to Development Services instead of to Code Enforcement because the staff member did not know the specific permit fell under Code Enforcement’s purview. And, for abandoned vehicles, the City makes a distinction about where they are parked – if on the street, they are DOT’s responsibility; if on private property, they are Code Enforcement’s responsibility. This distinction may not be obvious to the lay person and thus result in a need to transfer phone calls.

³⁶ The Customer Contact Center, however, does take resident complaints for abandoned shopping carts which it can enter directly into its own system.

³⁷ January 2013 data

At one point, DOT Dispatch experienced some temporary technical issues with its phone system such that calls were sent to the Customer Contact Center. That is where the customer may have called initially, since it is the City's main phone number.

A caller may even be transferred multiple times before finally reaching the correct staff member. Trying to reach the right City employee or getting the right information can be a frustrating experience for a resident, in addition to being confused about different jurisdiction boundaries and agencies.

Developing a “Knowledge Base” for Call Takers

The goal of some other city governments is to minimize the number of times that a resident has to be transferred. In other words, residents should be able to get their questions answered right away when they call the city.

When a resident calls the City of San José with a request for information, staff's only resource may be the City's Outlook directory. This directory has been populated by Customer Contact Center staff over many years, but is far from a complete contact list or description of City services.³⁸ Animal Services maintains a list of informally put-together phone numbers based on previous experience.

Other cities have built so-called knowledge bases for their customer service staff and for residents to use. A knowledge base is a type of intelligent database that captures comprehensive information for a wide range of government services. It helps customer service staff find the correct and applicable information, usually by guiding them through refined questions and scripts. Knowledge bases can also be made available online for residents to search.

In the City and County of San Francisco, 3-1-1 customer service agents have a knowledge base which has been reviewed by the relevant departments. It provides customer service agents with department services, and answers to frequently asked questions. It also walks customer service agents through a list of questions that they should ask residents to get them to the correct service or answer their questions.

Having pre-populated scripts makes staff training easier and enables staffing flexibility. For example, the City of Chicago is able to use college interns during busy summer months because they can easily use the pre-populated scripts to take resident service requests.

³⁸ The City's Outlook directory also became unavailable temporarily in the spring of 2014 when the IT Department carried out the Office 365 upgrade.

Most other city government call centers we interviewed have Service Level Agreements with various departments that provide the customer service agents not only information about the services provided, but also a department's expected targets for completion of specific requests. This information can then be relayed to residents.

Recommendation #11: The Administration should coordinate development of an online knowledge base that enables call takers in various departments to provide accurate information to customers and minimize the number of times that a customer's call needs to be transferred.

Improvements Are Needed to Integrate Software Applications and Work Order Databases

Ideally, customers can easily find the department they are trying to reach or they can call the City and reach a customer service representative who can help them with their problem. Alternatively customers should be able to help themselves, using self-service options, even when call centers are closed or too busy, or when they do not reach the right staff member. On the City's side, service request forms and apps should integrate directly with the service request system, bypassing the intermediate steps. The reality is a little different.

Residents have the option of making service requests through a multitude of ways — apps, email, phone, walk-in, etc. As shown below, different departments use different service request systems and databases. Many of them do not link to each other, nor do they link directly to the various ways residents make service requests. For example, the District I app, while used by residents City-wide to make service requests for graffiti removal, illegal dumping, and other complaints, was not set up to feed data directly into the various service request systems. Instead, staff receiving the District I app requests forwards each service request by email to the appropriate departments. Departmental staff must then re-type the information into their work order system.

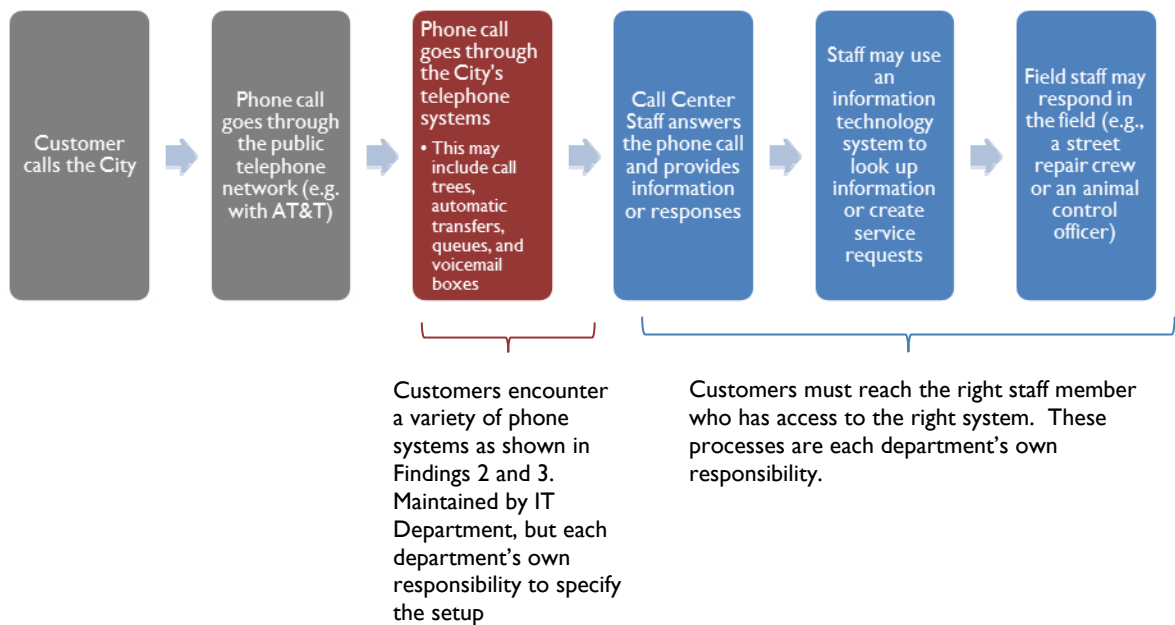
Similarly, other City self-service options can be tedious and time-consuming for City staff to monitor. Staff has to check the email addresses that receive these requests and manually enter the information into their work order systems. For example, Animal Services' online complaint form requires staff to reformat and reorganize the information before it can dispatch field officers.

Linking directly into work order systems not only makes it easier for staff process requests, but also enables a faster response.

Different Departments Use Their Own Work Order Systems

City departments use a variety of software applications and databases to track the services they provide. These may be supported by the IT Department or by the department’s own IT staff. Currently, most customer service requests need to be channeled through call center staff that has access to the right work order systems. Exhibit 25 shows the work and information flow from a customer, who calls the City, to the service being delivered.

Exhibit 25: Call Center Staff Handles Customer Information Before Services Are Provided



Source: Auditor analysis.

Exhibit 26 lists the major information technology systems used by the call centers to manage service requests. For example, DOT uses a dispatch system that tracks service orders. Animal Services has a database to track pet licenses, run shelter operations, and dispatch officers in the field. These systems do not exchange data with each other and generally staff does not have access to systems beyond their own unit.

Exhibit 26: Call Centers Use Many Different Information Technology Systems

Call Center	Information Technology Systems Used
Customer Contact Center	Integrated Billing System (IBS)* for utility accounts; Kubra payment processor; City-wide address book
Development Services	AMANDA Inspection Module, Outlook shared calendars
Animal Care and Services – Licensing	Chameleon
Animal Care and Services – Dispatch	Chameleon, Google Earth
Revenue Management	PeopleSoft Business Tax system*, Revenue Plus*, CyberSource payment processor
Transportation – Tree/Sidewalk	Tree/Sidewalk database
Code Enforcement	Code Enforcement System (CES)
Transportation – Dispatch	Dispatch system, Google Earth
Transportation – Vehicle Abatement	Abandoned Vehicle Abatement Service Authority (AVASA) database

Source: Auditor observations and information provided by the departments.

* Items marked with a star (*) will be replaced soon.

The Benefits of Integrated Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Systems

Customer relationship management (CRM) is a class of computer software that helps organizations to manage their interactions with customers. CRM systems organize, automate, and synchronize interactions with customers, ensuring smooth customer interactions and more efficient service delivery. They focus strongly on the customer service aspect. Tools in a CRM system can include, for example, a full history of the customer’s prior interactions with the agency (letters sent, letters received, phone call notes, complaint history with dates and times), the customer’s contact information, and the status of open service requests.

While some of the City’s work order systems include some features of a CRM system, many do not. For example, none of the City’s systems make the status of an open request easily available to a customer. Currently, the only way for a resident to know if DOT has responded to an abandoned vehicle is to go back to the site of the reported vehicle and look for a citation on that vehicle. A CRM system could make the status available online with a tracking number, showing for example “assigned to an inspector” or “towed,” and it could also give timeliness targets.

Other Cities Have Integrated Disparate Work Order Systems with CRM

The goal of an integrated CRM system is to not only reduce the multi-step process described above, but also to allow a speedier staff response to the actual request. For example, when a resident calls Chicago’s central call center, the customer service agent can directly enter this request in its integrated CRM system which then immediately routes the request to the responding department

to address. San Francisco's central call center exchanges data even with systems outside the city government – it automatically sends service requests to Clear Channel which maintains bus shelters, to PG&E for some street light repair, and to the garbage hauling firm Recology.

San Francisco's mobile app is also integrated into the work order system. It allows for each resident complaint to feed directly into the responsible department's work queue. Residents can use this one mobile app to make service requests for abandoned vehicles, graffiti, illegal postings, street or sidewalk cleaning, streetlight repair, blocked sidewalk or space, damaged public property, litter receptacle, park issue, sign repair, street and sidewalk defect, and tree maintenance. Further, residents can search the knowledge base that 311 customer service representatives use to get information about birth certificates, marriage, tax registration, Healthy San Francisco, department hours/locations, downloadable forms, and much more.

An integrated system also allows for a feedback loop to residents on the status of their complaint. In San Francisco, residents who call 311 are provided a service request number and told the anticipated response time. If the resident calls back to check on the request status, San Francisco's customer service agents are able to look at the responding department's notes, provide the resident with the information, and if necessary, follow up with the department. Finally, Boston informs residents of the amount of time that a service request is expected to take and when it is completed.

The *San Jose Clean* app (described Finding 1) is another example of a successful integration with a work order system. Graffiti service requests flow directly into the work order system allowing for a timely resolution of resident complaints. In addition, the *San Jose Clean* app is able to notify the complainant when a graffiti request has been completed.

Integrating Service Request Systems Is Crucial

According to a report on Customer Service and 311 CRM Technology in local government by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA):

Work-order management systems help manage and organize projects and assignments. Managers use such systems to assign projects to staff members, who use the systems to make notes, report on progress, track hours worked and resources used, and finally close out a project when it is finished. When a link is created between a local government's central CRM system and the work-order management systems that exist in local government departments, the "handshake" between the two systems enables information to be easily shared. When a service request comes in from a citizen, the CRM loads the request into the work-order management system, where a department manager can determine

its priority in relationship to other tasks in the system. Likewise, information from the work-order management system feeds back to the CRM, allowing 311 call center agents to respond to citizens when they ask about the status of a service request.

With customer service as a goal, the Administration should expend more efforts on integrating the various existing systems. This includes setting up data links between the various systems to reduce staff's manual, inefficient data entry and to speed up service delivery to residents and customers. According to the IT Department, funding to implement a new CRM system for the Customer Contact Center is included in its 2014-15 budget and it intends to purchase a CRM system in the next year. In our opinion, the IT Department should work with other departments to review integration opportunities and a broader CRM implementation. Major investments may be needed in the underlying IT infrastructure as both the systems and the ways of doing business are antiquated. The CRM system the IT Department intends to purchase would be a start and could serve as platform to connect the various City systems.

The IT Department Is Upgrading Telephone Systems, but These Upgrades Maintain Current Silos

The IT Department is responsible for maintaining and upgrading the City's phone systems and underlying software for the various call centers. The current telephone systems are outdated as evidenced by occasional technical outages as well as cumbersome performance reports. The IT Department is replacing the old telephone system: in 2012, it signed a contract for telephony technology and in 2013-14 it purchased call center software for \$98,000. Implementation is still in process. According to the IT Department, the new telephony system is expected to save equipment maintenance costs. Further, the new call center software is expected to be more user-friendly and flexible.

Stakeholder departments appeared to be unaware of new systems capability, timelines, or changes to current functionality. Because of this, departments may not use the new systems to their full capability in the various call centers. While call center managers in the various departments are experts in their own business processes, they may not be experts in the telephone systems and call center industry standards and best practices. The IT Department indicated that the call center software contract includes vendor assistance on call tree set-up and other technical services. This should be offered and used by all departments that have call trees. Finally, using vendor know-how, customer-centric departments such as Animal Services should use this opportunity to not only replace the software, but (using best practices) also make improvements in their existing call trees, as we recommended in Finding 3.

Opportunities for Immediate Improvement

While integrating the various existing systems should be the long-term goal, opportunities exist for immediate improvement. For example, user accounts in the various systems (see Exhibit 26 above) can be made available to staff beyond the departmental silos. For example, Customer Contact Center staff could be given access to the DOT systems such that pothole phone calls need not be transferred anymore. This could improve the customer experience for many simple requests, such as a report of a new pothole. While more complex requests may still require the customer to talk to a specialist in another department, systems integration and cross-training on frequently used services can much improve staff's efficiency as well as the customer's experience.

Recommendation #12: The IT Department should work with other departments to set up automated data transfer between online service requests (web forms and mobile apps) and existing departmental work order systems. In addition, the Administration should review whether different service request systems could benefit from integration and CRM implementation.

Other Cities Have Taken a Customer-Centric Approach, Including Offering One Central Phone Number

Other cities have taken a customer-centric approach to call handling by offering one central phone number like 311 and establishing a call center that can handle most customer requests. The goal is to be very responsive to customers by minimizing the need to transfer their calls. They have also created specific Customer Service Representative job classifications to emphasize their focus on the customer. Finally, they have successfully integrated their disparate work order systems and services provided by siloed departments.

San José's 311 Only Handles Non-Emergency Police Calls

In 1997, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ordered that the 311 phone number be set aside nation-wide for "non-emergency police and other government services." In November 1997, San José became the first municipality in California to offer 311 as a phone number to the public, under a pilot with the California Department of General Services. Calls to 311 from within City limits are routed to the Police Communications, which also receives 911 calls. The 311 phone number is currently used for people to report police non-emergencies, such as cold crimes, noise complaints, etc. In 2012-13, San José's Police Department dispatched about 400,000 non-emergency calls which came mainly through 3-1-1 or the non-emergency phone number.

Other Cities Handle All Types of Service Calls at Their Call Centers

Other cities use 311 for all other types of calls for its residents. Ease of access, “one-stop” shop, and easy-to-remember were the reasons stated for using 311. Seven of the ten largest US cities have adopted 311 for general government inquiries. These and other cities with centralized call centers have trained customer service agents who are also able to respond to certain non-emergency police calls, such as taking cold crime reports. 311 can reduce non-emergency calls at 911, especially during large events or severe weather. Other cities are able to provide resident request status and provide service usage data to various departments. In our opinion, having a central, easy-to-remember number enhances the customer experience and allows residents to receive ongoing information about the status of their service request/complaint.

The City of San José needs to be intentional and strategic in organizing its call centers and services and it needs to determine how it wants residents to perceive and access City services.

Having a 311 or centralized call center can be expensive. Operating costs for these centers can range from \$3.5 million per year in Minneapolis to about \$11 million in San Francisco (a call center that handles significant call volume related to public transportation).³⁹

Maintaining individual call centers all across the City that oftentimes are not able to provide a resident with immediate service is not ideal. Cities with 311 call centers have implemented them with a view to enhance customer service and improve performance.

In our opinion, without a coordinated City-wide strategy, the City’s call centers may not be able to take full advantage of new technology upgrades, such as more integration and potential collaboration across departments. The Administration should use this opportunity to look at its current call taking model and review whether other systemic changes are needed.

Recommendation #13: The Administration should develop a long-term strategy to improve customer access including consideration of a centralized call center with integrated CRM.

³⁹ As described in the Background section of this report, the San José’s Customer Contact Center’s budget for FY 2013-14 was \$3.1 million, or about \$17 per phone call. The San José Police Department does not separately budget for its 311 function.

Conclusion

The City of San José receives many resident requests for services by telephone call to the City. We audited the following City call centers for their efficiency and effectiveness: Customer Contact Center (the City's main phone number at 408-535-3500), Development Services, Animal Care and Services (Dispatch and Licensing), Revenue Management, Transportation Tree/Sidewalk, Code Enforcement, Transportation Dispatch, and Transportation Vehicle Abatement.

It is difficult to know who to call, and self-service options are limited, as multiple departments take calls from residents to provide an array of City services. Furthermore, the City should monitor customer wait times and call volume. Callers to the Customer Contact Center had to endure unacceptably long wait times. Moreover, the City's call centers can significantly improve their performance measurement and management. Improvements are also needed in some of the City's call trees and the departments need to review the usage and responsiveness to voicemail boxes. In addition, language accessibility to non-English speakers should be enhanced, by making an already-contracted translation vendor available to all departments and by developing a language access policy. Finally, the City should enhance the customer call experience by integrating its work order systems and by implementing CRM, and by developing a long-term strategy to improve customer access.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1: To improve access to City services, the Administration should correct erroneous telephone numbers and links on the City website. Further, the Administration should develop policies and procedures to ensure that the City website and departmental webpages remain current and are reviewed on a regular basis by individual departments.

Recommendation #2: To improve access to City services and to reduce the City's telephone call handling costs, the Administration should develop a coordinated strategy to

- a. Offer new self-service options for the City's most frequently used services by phone, online, and/or by mobile app, and
- b. Establish utilization targets for new and existing self-service options, and advertise them accordingly.

Recommendation #3: To improve wait times during peak demand periods, the Customer Contact Center should:

- a. Modify its staff members' duties as needed. This includes continuing call answering duty assignments to Principal Office Specialists as needed.
- b. Modify its staff schedules as needed, including start, end, and break times for shifts, and scheduled time off.
- c. Seek short-term staffing relief as needed. This could include engaging temporary staff and utilizing the answering service vendor.

Recommendation #4: To improve their performance management, the City departments should regularly use call center statistics in analyzing past performance, expected programmatic changes, establishing next performance objectives, examining overall performance strategies, and reviewing their staffing needs. Further, call center managers should regularly review and discuss individual call taker statistics with their staffs, and install real-time monitors where needed to provide real-time customer wait time information to call takers. These performance management practices should be documented in departmental policies and procedures.

Recommendation #5: To improve performance management at call centers, the IT Department should ensure that the new telephone system enables call centers to record phone calls. The call centers should consider implementing customer surveys and should use recorded phone calls to regularly train their staff and improve customer service.

Recommendation #6: To improve the customer experience in its call tree, Animal Care and Services, with assistance from the IT Department, should review and revise its call tree in accordance with best practices and:

- Make it shorter and simpler;
- Make it responsive to customer needs by removing unneeded options and ordering options meaningfully; and
- Correct the inaccurate information.

Recommendation #7: To improve the customer experience in their call trees, the call centers with assistance from the IT Department should:

- a. Immediately change the incorrect messages;
- b. Regularly review call trees for accuracy, simplicity, and ease of use, and establish procedures to continue doing so;
- c. Maintain up-to-date transcripts and flowcharts of their call trees, and establish procedures to continue doing so; and
- d. Encourage callers in each call tree to use self-service options (when available).

Recommendation #8: To improve customers' voicemail experience, departments that use voicemail boxes should:

- a. Develop a policy on how frequently voicemail boxes should be reviewed and how timely messages should be returned;
- b. Assign their staff members primary and back-up duties to respond to voicemails, and incorporate this into their procedures;
- c. Regularly review voicemail retrieval reports to ensure that voicemails are being checked;
- d. Remove those voicemail boxes that will not be checked or will not be needed; and
- e. Use the online interface to retrieve voicemail messages. The IT Department should ensure that the new phone system has an online voicemail interface.

Recommendation #9: To ensure accessibility of City services to non-English speakers, the Administration should clarify that the *Language Line* purchase order is available to all line departments and provide assistance to line staff on how it can be used.

Recommendation #10: To ensure accessibility of City services to non-English speakers, the Administration should formulate a policy and goals that further language accessibility and provide assistance to line departments implementing this policy.

Recommendation #11: The Administration should coordinate development of an online knowledge base that enables call takers in various departments to provide accurate information to customers and minimize the number of times that a customer's call needs to be transferred.

Recommendation #12: The IT Department should work with other departments to set up automated data transfer between online service requests (web forms and mobile apps) and existing departmental work order systems. In addition, the Administration should review whether different service request systems could benefit from integration and CRM implementation.

Recommendation #13: The Administration should develop a long-term strategy to improve customer access including consideration of a centralized call center with integrated CRM.

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APPENDIX A
Call Statistics: Details by Call Center

APPENDIX A

Call Statistics: Details by Call Center

	Calls received	Callers' menu selections <small>May not sum because of rounding</small>	Avg. wait time in queue	Calls answered	Avg. duration of calls
Customer Contact Center 408-535-3500	1,054 avg. per day	51% utility services (1)* 32% general inquiries (3) 14% automated directory (2) 2 % Spanish 0.5% Vietnamese	8 min 4 min Spanish/Vietnamese	670 or 64% avg. per day <small>An additional 40 calls per day (4%) were answered after-hours by a vendor. Calls not answered include callers hanging up (200-300) and those routed to garbage haulers.</small>	3.2 min
<small>Callers may choose the "wrong" menu option, for example some utility customers press 3 for general inquiries. Based on calls answered. * 43% general utility + 8% start/stop utility service</small>					
Development Services 408-535-3555	474 avg. per day <small>Excludes calls for the auto staff directory and business hour announcements. Excludes after-hour calls. Includes calls returned to queue.</small>	47% schedule inspections (3) 43% general (5)/misc. (6) 8% schedule appointments (4) 2% Spanish	44 sec 83 sec Spanish	442 or 93% avg. per day <small>Calls answered by an on-duty planner 27 or 74% per day</small>	2.2 min inspect. 1.2-1.5 min gen./misc. 3.1 min appt. 1.8 min Spanish <small>Call duration with an on-duty planner 6.7 min</small>
<small>Of these, 8% were then transferred to an on-duty planner. Calls for an on-duty planner: Additional 13.5 min wait time</small>					
Animal Care and Services 408-794-PAWS (7297) 4-7240 Licensing direct	276 avg. per day <small>Call Pilot Jan-April 2014. Operates 7 days a week. Includes after-hour calls (9%)</small>	37% dispatch^ (1.1) 28% licensing^^ (5) 5% lost/found pet (3.1.1) 13% various other menus/submenus 16% hung up in the various menus	65 sec dispatch <small>Only dispatch has a queue with wait times; the other menu options go directly to a phone or a voicemail box.</small>	<u>Calls answered</u> 65 dispatch avg. per day <small>Symposium April 2013–March 2014. Operates 7 days a week.</small> <u>Voicemail messages left</u> 28 or more over various boxes avg. per day <small>Call Pilot March 2014</small>	2.6 min dispatch <small>Data not available for the other menu options</small> <small>Symposium April 2013–March 2014.</small>
<small>Symposium April 2013–March 2014</small>					
<small>Data not available for other menus</small>					
Finance Dept. – Revenue Mgmt. 408-535-7055	177 avg. per day	82% business tax (2.1, 2.2)** 9% accounts receivable (3.2) 5% utility liens (4)	97 sec business tax*** 43 sec accts. receiv. 25 sec utility liens	<u>Calls answered</u> 77 or 44% avg. per day	2.7 min business tax# 4.8 min utility liens

	Calls received	Callers' menu selections May not sum because of rounding	Avg. wait time in queue	Calls answered	Avg. duration of calls
	Excludes after-hour calls. Excludes business tax amnesty, averaging 230 calls per day from April through August 2013	3% administrative citations (5) 2% marijuana business tax (2.3) 1% fire permits (3.1) ** 72% general business tax + 10% hardship exemption	42 sec admin. citations 47 sec marijuana biz tax 34 sec fire permits 89 sec business tax amnesty (April 2013 through March 2014). *** Separately, 42 sec hardship exemptions Calls waiting in the queue for 2 or 5 minutes get sent to voicemail.	<u>Calls sent to voicemail</u> 87 or 49% avg. per day 169 business tax amnesty calls were answered (73%) and 48 (21%) sent to voicemail, per day (April through August 2013)	3.8 min business tax amnesty (April 2013 through March 2014). # Separately, 2.9 min hardship exemptions
Transportation – Tree/Sidewalk 408-794-1901	99 avg. per day Call Pilot Nov 2013-Feb 2014	81% representative (#) 10% forms/final inspection (2) 5% tree emergency (1) 4% inspector directory (3)	No queue – calls are answered or go to voicemail after a few rings.	<u>Calls answered</u> <90 (upper-bound estimate) avg. per day <u>Calls sent to voicemail</u> 20 or 20% avg. per day Call Pilot voicemail per calendar day, Jan- April 2014	Data not available
Code Enforcement 408-535-7770	87 avg. per day Call Pilot Nov 2013-Feb 2014	56% operator (0) 19% (no selection) 14% new complaint (3) 10% staff directory (1) 1% announcements (2)	No queue – calls are answered or disconnected after a few rings.	<78 (upper-bound estimate) avg. per day	Data not available
Transportation – Dispatch 408-794-1900	Data not available	No call tree		Data not available	75 avg. per day Agent by Skillset Performance report. After hours, calls are answered by the Fire Department.
Transportation – Vehicle Abatement 408-277-5305	19 avg. per day Call Pilot Nov 2013-Feb 2014. Much higher online reporting volume.	No call tree	No queue – calls are answered or go to voicemail after a few rings.	<u>Calls answered</u> data not available <u>Voicemail messages left</u> 5 Avg. per day Call Pilot voicemail per calendar day, June 2014	Data not available
Sources for CCC, DS, ACS, RM: Auditor analysis of Symposium reports generally for April 2013 through March 2014	Application Call Treatment reports. Per City business day.	Application Call Treatment reports. Based on calls received (not calls answered). May not add to 100% due to rounding.	Application Performance reports. Not showing wait time spent in the menu.	Application Call Treatment reports. Per City business day. Unanswered calls include callers hanging up.	Agent by Skillset Performance reports. Not showing after-call processing time.
Sources for DOT, Code: Auditor analysis of Call Pilot reports generally for November 2013- February 2014.	Per City business day.	Based on calls received (not calls answered). May not add to 100% due to rounding.		Per City business day. Unanswered calls include callers hanging up.	

APPENDIX B

Call Trees: Flowcharts and Transcripts

Customer Contact Center	B-2
Development Services	B-6
Animal Care and Services	B-8
Revenue Management	B-16
Transportation: Tree/Sidewalk	B-20
Code Enforcement	B-22
Transportation: Dispatch	B-24
Transportation: Vehicle Abatement	B-24
Police Department: 3-1-1	B-24

Source: Auditor observation as of April, May, or July 2014

Please note that departments have begun making revisions. The call volume statistics may not sum because of rounding.

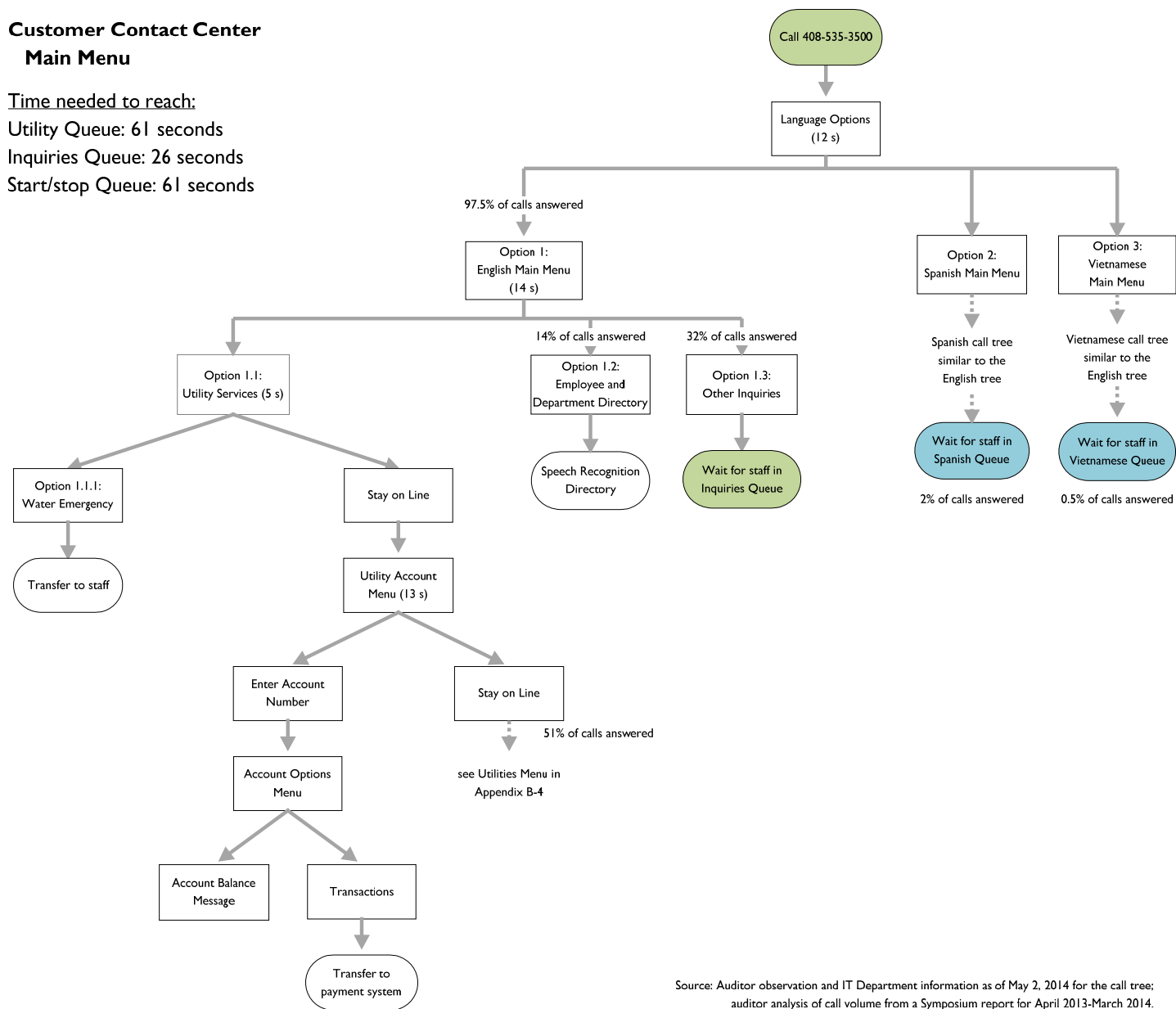
**Customer Contact Center
Main Menu**

Time needed to reach:

Utility Queue: 61 seconds

Inquiries Queue: 26 seconds

Start/stop Queue: 61 seconds



Source: Auditor observation and IT Department information as of May 2, 2014 for the call tree; auditor analysis of call volume from a Symposium report for April 2013-March 2014.

Customer Contact Center, Main Menu

Language Options

Welcome to the City of San José Customer Service Center.

To continue in English, press 1.

Para continuar en español, oprima el dos. (*Translation: To continue in Spanish, press 2.*)

Để tiếp tục bằng tiếng Tây Ban Nha, xin bấm số 3. (*Translation: To continue in Spanish, please press number 3.*)¹

Option 1: English Main Menu

Main Menu. If you are calling about a utility service, including garbage, recycling, yard trimming, street sweeping, or water, press 1.

If you are looking for a City department or employee, press 2.

For assistance with other City inquiries, press 3. (14 seconds)

Option 1.1: Utility Services

If you are calling to report a water emergency, press 1. Otherwise, please stay on the line. (5 s)

Utility Account Menu

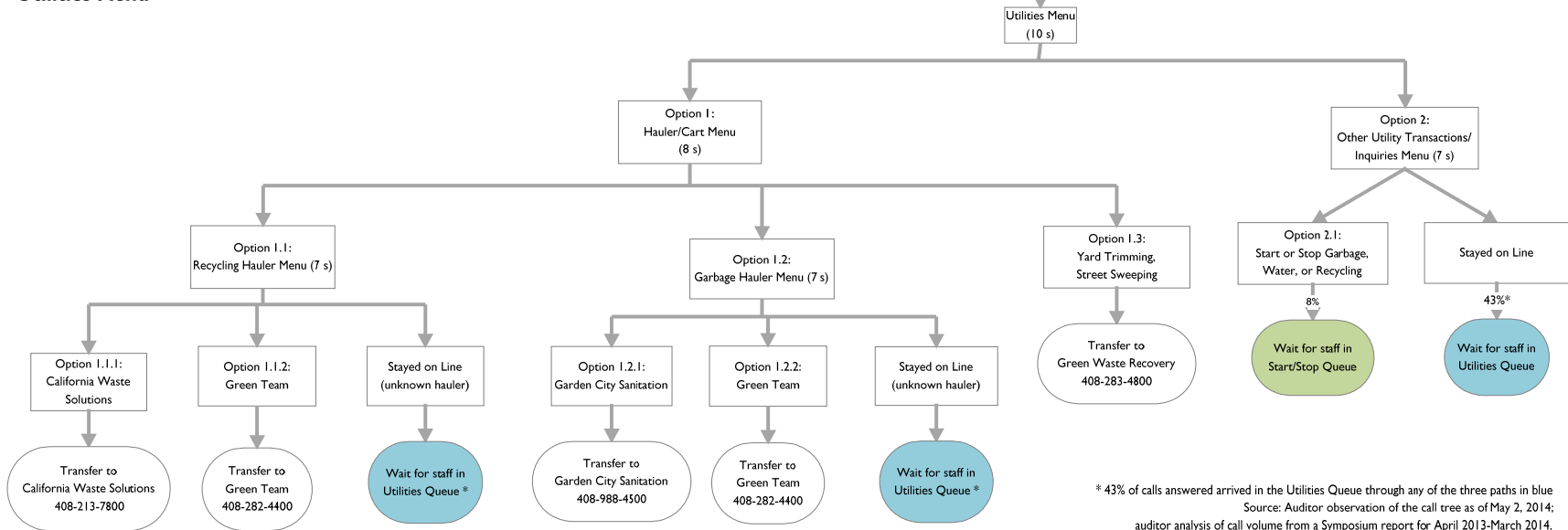
Please enter your 10-digit utility account number, followed by the pound sign. Your account number can be found in the upper left corner of your City of San José utility bill. If you do not know your account number, please hold for more options. (13 s)

Source: Auditor observation as of May 2014.

¹ The Vietnamese announcement referred to “Spanish,” even though Option 3 actually leads to a Vietnamese call tree. See Finding 3 regarding call trees. The Customer Contact Center has corrected this.

**Customer Contact Center
Utilities Menu**

continued from Appendix B-2



* 43% of calls answered arrived in the Utilities Queue through any of the three paths in blue
Source: Auditor observation of the call tree as of May 2, 2014;
auditor analysis of call volume from a Symposium report for April 2013-March 2014.

Customer Contact Center, Utilities

Utilities Menu

To speak to a hauler about your street sweeping service, a missed pickup, a damaged cart, or you want to exchange your cart, press 1. For all other utility transactions and inquiries, press 2. (10 s)

Option 1: Hauler/Cart Menu

For recycling services, press 1. For garbage services, press 2. For yard trimming or street sweeping services, press 3. (8 s)

Option 1.1: Recycling Hauler Menu

For California Waste Solutions, press 1. For Green Team, press 2. If you do not know your hauler, please continue to hold. (7 s)

Option 1.2: Garbage Hauler Menu

For Garden City Sanitation, press 1. For Green Team, press 2. If you do not know your hauler, please continue to hold. (7 s)

Option 2: Other Utility Transactions/Inquiries Menu

To start or stop your garbage, water, or recycling service, press 1. Otherwise, please stay on the line. (7 s)

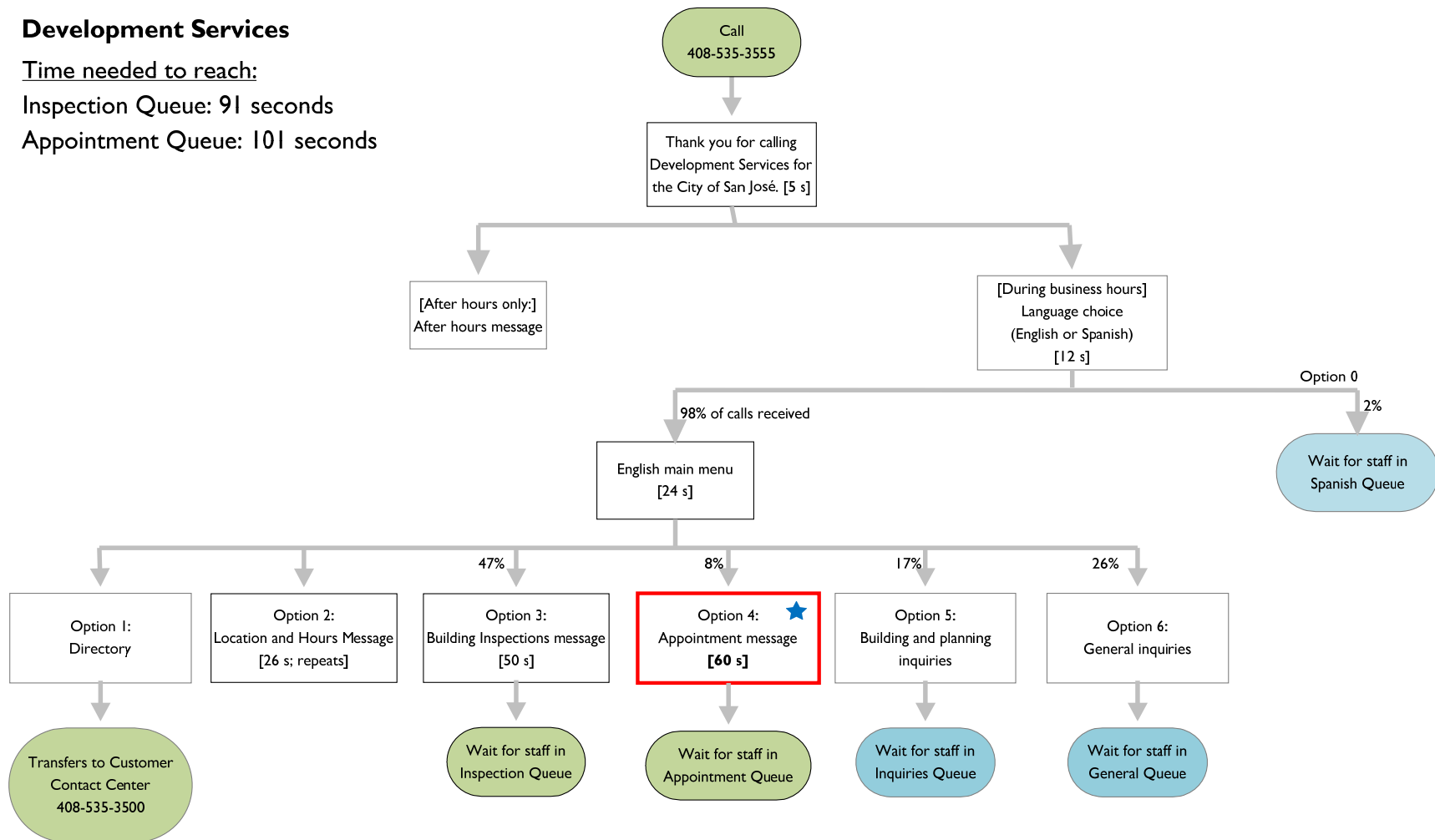
Source: Auditor observation as of May 2014.

Development Services

Time needed to reach:

Inspection Queue: 91 seconds

Appointment Queue: 101 seconds



see Appendix B-2

★: See Finding 3 regarding call trees

Source: Auditor observation of the call tree as of May 2, 2014 and auditor analysis of call volume from a Symposium report for April 2013-March 2014. Call volume for Options 1 and 2 is not shown here.

Development Services

After Hours Message

If you have reached this message, our office is now closed. Please call back during our normal phone business hours, which are from Monday to Friday from 7 AM to 5 PM (*same announcement in Spanish*).

Language Choice

For services in English, please remain on the line.

For Spanish, press 0. Para servicio en español, oprima el cero.

Please be advised that your call may be monitored for quality assurance. [12 s]

English Main Menu

For the corporate directory, please press 1.

For location and business hours, please press 2.

To schedule an inspection, please press 3.

To schedule an appointment to submit a building or planning application, please press 4.

For general building and planning inquiries, please press 5.

For all other inquiries, please press 6 or remain on the line. [24 s]

Option 2: Location and Hours Message

The Development Services Center is located at 200 East Santa Clara Street on the first floor of the Tower building in downtown San José. Our business hours are 7 AM to 5 PM for telephone services, 8 AM to 5 PM for general office hours, and 9 AM to 4 PM for counter services. Please note that we are closed during the lunch hour from 12 to 1 and on all public holidays. [26 s; repeats if one stays on the line]

Option 3: Building Inspections Message

Please be advised that, due to high call volume, you may experience longer-than-normal hold times. We apologize for any inconvenience. However, you can save time by scheduling your building inspections online at www.sjpermits.org. Again, that's www.sjpermits.org. If scheduling online, please be prepared to have your required permit number available. Please note that if a requested inspection must be canceled, it shall be canceled or rescheduled by 2 PM two business days before the scheduled inspection to avoid being charged a scheduled inspection fee. [50 s]

Option 4: Appointment Message

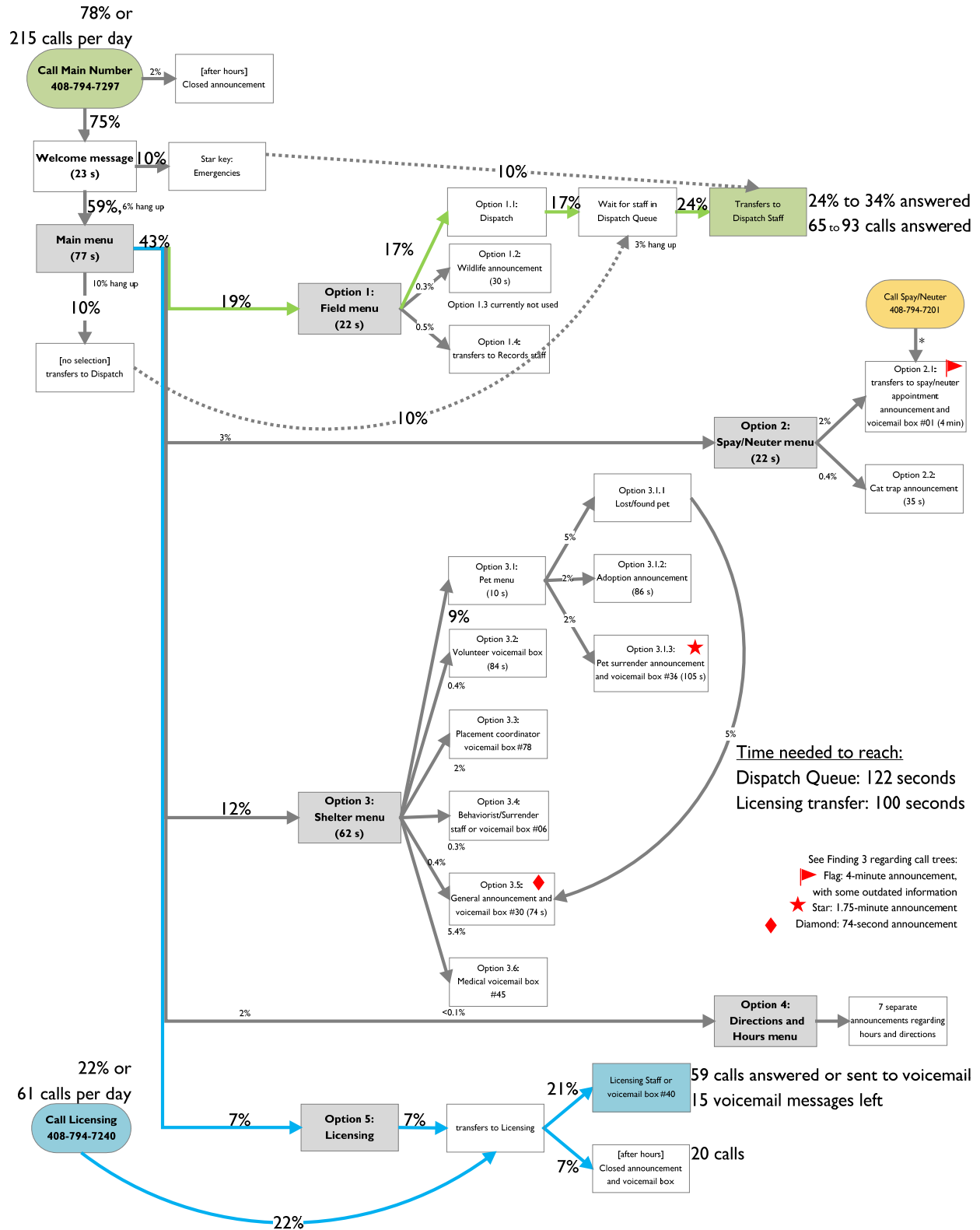
Please be advised that, due to high call volume, you may experience longer-than-normal hold times. We apologize for any inconvenience. Please be aware that, in – due to staffing availability, currently no walk-in applications for building submittals are allowed at the Development Services center in City Hall. However, please be aware that, in addition to scheduling appointments to submit applications, on a limited basis as staffing allows, walk-in application submittals for Planning Department, Fire Department, and Public Works are also allowed at the Development Services center in City Hall on a first-come, first-served basis. The available hours for walk-in application submittals are 9 AM to 11 AM and 1 PM to 3 PM, Monday through Friday. Please note that all plan checks for submittal of counter intake, residential express, commercial express, STI, ITI, and other coordinated review submittals require an appointment. Thank you for your attention. [60 s]

See Finding 3 regarding call trees.

Source: Auditor observation as of May 2014.

Animal Care and Services

All percentages shown are relative to the total number of calls received: 276



Source: Auditor observations of call tree as of May 2014 and auditor analysis of Call Pilot reports for December 31, 2013 to April 11, 2014. May not sum due to rounding. 100% is 276 calls, the total incoming call volume on average day. No data was available for direct calls to 408-794-7201 for Spay/Neuter appointments (*).

Animal Care and Services

Welcome Message

Thank you for calling the City of San José Animal Care Center. We serve the cities of San José, Milpitas, Cupertino, Saratoga, and Los Gatos. If you are calling to report an animal-related emergency, such as an animal attack in progress, a critically sick or injured stray animal or wildlife, please press the star key now. Otherwise please stay on the line to review our various services; thank you. [23 s]

Main Menu

Main Menu. For a menu of our shelter services, please listen carefully to the following options. For general information, you may visit our website at www.sanjoseanimals.com. You may press the star key at any time to repeat the current menu, or to return to the shelter's main menu, please press the pound key.

For non-emergency field services, please press 1.

To make an appointment to have your cat spayed or neutered at our low-cost spay/neuter clinic or for information about borrowing a feral cat trap, please press 2.

For shelter services such as lost and found pets, pet surrender procedures, volunteer opportunities, adoption information, or to leave a message or inquiry on our general customer service voice mailbox, please press 3.

For directions to the shelter, hours of operation, or our website address, please press 4.

For questions regarding dog or cat licensing, providing proof of rabies vaccination, inquiries regarding renewal notices or citations you have received in the mail, or for general customer service questions, please press 5. The phones are staffed Monday to Friday, 9 AM to 4 PM, and after hours you will be able to leave a detailed message. Thank you. [77 s]

Option 1: Field Menu

You've reached the Animal Care Dispatch Center. Please press 1 for non-emergency field services, 2 for a recorded message regarding wildlife, and press 4 if you have an inquiry regarding permits, hearings, or public records. To return to the shelter's main menu, press the pound sign, and to repeat this menu, press the star key. Thank you. [repeats; 22 s]

Option 1.2: Wildlife Announcement

For questions regarding wildlife such as snakes, raccoons, or bats and other small animals, contact the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley at 408-929-9453. For large animals sightings, such as mountain lions, please contact your local police department. For West Nile virus information, contact the Vector Control West Nile hotline at 1-800-314-2427.² [30 s]

Option 2: Spay/Neuter Menu

To make an appointment to have your dog or cat spayed or neutered at the center's low-cost spay/neuter clinic, please press 1. To listen to a recorded message about borrowing a cat trap for T&R, please press 2. Please press the star key to repeat this menu, or please press the pound key to return to the shelter's main menu. Thank you. [22 s]

² Redirects to the mosquito fogging line.

Option 2.1: Spay/Neuter Appointment Announcement

This 4-minute recording was updated on August 7th, 2013. Please listen carefully to this entire message because some information has changed. Please have pen and paper ready to note information you may need later. Thank you for calling the San José Animal Care Center Spay and Neuter Clinic Appointment Line. We're a low-cost, high-volume spay and neuter clinic. Appointments for low-cost services are scheduled only when complete information is left in your message. If information is missing from your message, an appointment will not be scheduled. In order to keep costs low for you, you will not receive a return call. Your appointment notice will be mailed to you. Appointments are scheduled based on the information you provide. Please provide complete information in your message to us so that you will receive an appointment.

For faster service, please go to our website at www.sanjoseanimals.com and schedule your appointment online. You are welcome to walk in without an appointment; however space is limited and walk-ins may be turned away due to full service schedules for the day. Our spay and neuter clinic offers low-cost spay and neuter services for owned, stray, and feral cats belonging to or being cared for by residents in the cities of San José, Milpitas, Cupertino, Los Gatos, and Saratoga. In addition, in cooperation with the Humane Society of Silicon Valley and through a generous grant from the National Animal Welfare Organization, we will provide spay and neuter services for Chihuahua dogs belonging to residents of the following ZIP codes through December 2013: 95111, 95112, 95116, 95122, 95127.

We are currently booked two months out in advance so we thank you for your patience. Surgery days are as follows: Chihuahuas and Chihuahua mixes are seen Tuesday through Friday. Chihuahuas must be under 25 pounds and between the ages of four months and seven years. Owners of dogs that do not appear to be Chihuahuas at the time of the appointment may be declined free surgery or charged regular surgery rates. If your dog is not a Chihuahua or a Chihuahua mix, or you do not live in the ZIP codes we are working with at this time, contact the Humane Society of Silicon Valley at 408-262-2133, or you can visit our spay and neuter clinic website by going to sanjoseanimals.com and selecting Spay and Neuter Information on the left-hand side of the page and select Spay and Neuter Programs for a list of other low-cost clinics in the area.

Owned or friendly stray cats are seen Wednesday through Friday. Cats must weigh at least three pounds. Feral cats are seen on a walk-in basis only Tuesday through Thursday. Feral cats must weigh at least four pounds.

If you are calling to cancel your appointment, you must leave a message with your appointment date and time and the name of the pet owner who has the appointment at least 72 hours in advance of your appointment. Appointments on Tuesday need to be cancelled no later than the Friday before the appointment. All calls are automatically time- and date-stamped in the voicemail system. You will be issued a new appointment notice in the mail. Due to a high no-show rate, failure to cancel your appointment in advance will result in the owner being unable to schedule an appointment in the future.

To schedule an appointment over the phone, you must leave the following information. Missing information will result in no appointment scheduled. Please provide the following information: your phone number, your first and last name spelled out, your address with your apartment number if applicable, including city and ZIP code. Please tell us how many male or female Chihuahuas or cats you are trying to schedule an appointment for, the name of each pet, the color of each pet, the breed of each pet, the sex of each pet, the age of each pet. If the appointment is for a cat and you are unsure of the cat's sex, please tell us that the cat is a female as female cat spay services are more difficult and take longer to perform.

We will send you an appointment notice in the mail with detailed instructions; you will not receive a return call. Please leave a message after the tone, thank you. [3 minutes, 58 seconds]

Option 2.2: Feral Cat Traps

Cat traps are available for loan for the purpose of trapping, neutering, and returning feral cats to their feral colonies. Traps may be borrowed with a refundable cash deposit of \$50 for up to seven days. Traps are available on a first-come first-served basis at the center during normal business hours, which is Tuesday through Saturday 11 AM until 7 PM and on Sunday from 11 AM until 5 PM. We are closed on Mondays and holidays. The center does not loan traps for nuisance cat removal. For all other trapping needs, please call a private trapping service. Thank you. [35 s]

Option 3: Shelter Menu

Animal Care Center Services. For information regarding lost and found pets, pet adoption, and owned animal surrender, please press 1.

To listen to a recorded message regarding volunteer opportunities and upcoming center events, please press 2.

To speak to a placement coordinator about an animal in the center, please call 408-794-7246 or press 3.

To speak with the animal behaviorist about your adopted pet's behavior or to make an appointment to surrender your healthy and friendly pet to the center, please press 4.

To leave a message in the center's general customer service voice mailbox, please press 5.

To discuss medical issues about your pet or pet adopted more than 10 days ago, please contact a private veterinarian. To discuss a medical issue about a pet you adopted from the center within the last 10 days, please press 6.

Please press the star key to repeat the current menu or the pound key to return to the shelter's main menu. Thank you. [repeats; 62 s]

Option 3.1: Pet Menu

For lost and found pet information, press 1, for information about adoptions, press 2, and for information about pet surrender, press 3. Thank you. [10 s]

Option 3.1.2: Adoption Announcement

The San José Animal Care Center has a variety of animals available for adoption. Please visit us online at www.sanjoseanimals.com. You must come into the shelter to start the adoption process and to see if an animal is available; we're sorry we cannot help you over the phone. So please come into the center as soon you can to visit your new best friend. We encourage customers to bring all family members to meet the animal before adopting, and if you are adopting a dog and already have a dog, we advise that you bring other dogs along to make sure they get along. If you are adopting a cat, you do not need to bring existing cats. Adoption hours are from 11 AM to 6 PM Tuesdays through Saturdays and Sundays 11 AM through 4 PM. We're closed on Mondays. Adoption fees include veterinary exam, initial routine vaccines and treatments, spay or neuter surgery, microchip implantation and registration, and a 1-year pet renewable license. The fees vary depending on the age and type of the animal you would like to adopt. Fees for dogs range from 40 to 135 dollars, cats from 25 to 100, and small animals such as hamsters, guinea pigs, rabbits, and rats from 10 to 20 dollars. Thank you so much for your interest in adopting one of our wonderful shelter pets. We hope to see you soon. [86 s]

Option 3.1.3: Pet Surrender Announcement

You have reached the San José Animal Care Center Surrender Line. Please have pen and paper ready to write down information. Some information may be disturbing to sensitive callers; discretion is advised. Please note that all animals surrendered for adoption must be evaluated by the animal behaviorist prior to surrender. The waiting list for evaluation may exceed four weeks. You will have the option to leave a message after this greeting. If your pet is not healthy or your pet is not friendly with other people, you may bring your pet to the shelter for humane destruction or euthanasia. The fee for this service is \$20. Owners are not permitted to remain with their pet during the procedure. If you must surrender your pet immediately and cannot wait to have your pet evaluated by the animal behaviorist, you may surrender your pet to the center Tuesday through Friday, between 11 AM and 2:30 PM. The shelter is located at 2750 Monterey Road in San José. The fee for this service is \$60. You will be required to give the center authorization to immediately euthanize your pet. If your pet is very healthy and very friendly, and would – you would like the center to find a new home for your pet, please leave only your name, phone number, and type of pet. You will be contacted when a space is available for your pet. You will be required to come to the shelter to have your pet evaluated for adoption prior to surrender. Thank you. (tone) [105 s]

Option 3.2: Volunteer Voicemail

If you are over 18 and want to help the homeless animals in your community, you can volunteer at the City of San José Animal Care Center. We're always looking for dedicated animal lovers to tackle a variety of tasks that benefit both our shelter animals and visitors. To get started as a Pet Pal volunteer, we invite you to go to our website at www.sanjoseanimals.com and click on "Volunteer Program" in the left-hand menu to learn more about our program and to apply online. All volunteers are required to commit to a minimum of 5 hours a week for at least 6 months. Volunteers will also be responsible for a \$35 materials fee for materials and for the volunteer uniform. The dates for the next available training session will be emailed to you after we receive your online application. We offer training opportunities every 1 to 2 months for open positions. If you do not have Internet access, please call 408-794-7248 and leave your name and number. One of our volunteer coordinators will call you back and provide you with everything you need to get started. Thank you for your interest. [84 s]

Option 3.5: General Announcement

New message (as of May 23, 2014)

You've reached the City of San José Animal Care customer service voicemail line. We apologize for this inconvenience, but we are unable to answer this line at this time. Please leave a detailed message and we will return your call as soon as possible, and that could be in the next couple of business days. If you have questions about a lost pet, you need to come to the shelter and take a lost pet tour. If you have questions about adoption, a lot of information is available on the web. Both lost pets and adoptable pets are listed on the website at www.sanjoseanimals.com. And if you have another issue, perhaps trying to figure out a license, a citation, or proof of updated rabies, or any other shelter inquiry, please leave a detailed message or consider coming into the shelter to speak with us. So please visit our website at www.sanjoseanimals.com; you can look for lost pets, you can look for adoptable pets, you can get licensing information, you can also license a renewal online using your licensing number, but again, to reclaim your pet or adopt a pet you do need to be here in person. We cannot help you over the phone. Thank you! [74 s]

Old message (before May 2014)

Animal Care and Services Customer Service Line. You've reached the City of San José Animal Care Center Customer Service Line. We apologize for this inconvenience, but it really is not a good idea to leave a message here at this time. We are extremely short-staffed and most of our customer service issues really need to be handled in person. If you have questions about a lost pet, you need to come to the shelter and take a lost pet tour. If you have questions about adopting a pet, a lot of information is on the website. Also both lost pets and adoptable pets are listed on our website, at sanjoseanimals.com, www.sanjoseanimals.com. And if you have other issues, like trying to shore up licensing, a citation, or proof of updated rabies, coming in person is also the best option. If you do leave a message, we will probably not be able to return it until at least your next business day. And again, we apologize for the inconvenience and thank you for so much for understanding. So please visit our website at www.sanjoseanimals.com. You can look for lost pets, you can look for pets to adopt, you get licensing information, but if you want to reclaim a pet or adopt a pet, you have to be here in person; we cannot help you over the phone. Thank you. (tone) [76 s]

Option 4: Directions and Hours Menu

Directions and hours of operation. For our business hours and location, please press 1. For driving directions, please press 2. To return to the main menu, press pound. To repeat this menu, press the star sign. Please press the star key to repeat the current menu or the pound key to return to the shelter's main menu. Thank you. [23 s]

Directions and Hours Announcements (7 separate announcements)

The San José Animal Care Center is currently open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 AM to 7 PM, and Sundays 11 AM to 5 PM for animal adoptions, to look for and reclaim lost pets, to pay license and citations fees, and for other animal inquiries. The shelter's closed on Mondays and holidays. The shelter is open daily to accept stray animals from 7 AM to 9 PM. We are located at 2750 Monterey Avenue, between Lewis and Umbarger roads, on the east side of the street. Thank you. [33 s]

The San José Animal Care Center is located at 2750 Monterey Road, between Lewis Road and Umbarger Road, near the Santa Clara County fairgrounds. For driving directions from highway 280, press 1; highway 680, press 2; highways 880 and 17, press 3; highway 87, press 4; and highway 101, press 5. Thank you. [repeats; 25 s]

Directions from Highway 280. From highway 280, take the highway 87 exit south towards Gilroy. Take the Curtner Exit, then turn left on Curtner going east. Continue on Curtner Avenue to Monterey Road and turn right. The Animal Care Center is on the left side past Umbarger; make a U-turn at Lewis. Thank you. Please press the star key to repeat the current menu or the pound key to return to the shelter's main menu. Thank you. [22 s]

From highway 680, take the highway 101 exit south. Continue on highway 101 south and exit Capitol Expressway West. Continue on Capitol Expressway to Monterey Road. Take the Monterey Road exit from Capitol Expressway and turn right. Go approximately 1.1 miles. The Animal Care Center is on the right side of the road, after Lewis Road. [27 s]

Directions from highway 880. From highway 880, take the highway 101 south exit. Continue on 101 south and exit Capitol Expressway West. Continue on Capitol Expressway to Monterey Road. Take the Monterey Road exit from Capitol Expressway and turn right. Go approximately 1.1 miles. The Animal Care Center is on the right side of the road, after Lewis Road. Directions from highway 17. From highway 17, exit highway 85 south towards Gilroy. Take the highway 87 exit and continue north to the Curtner Avenue exit. Turn right on Curtner Avenue, and continue on Curtner Avenue to Monterey Road and turn right. The Animal Care Center is on the left side past Umbarger Road; take a U-turn at Lewis. Thank you. [53 s]

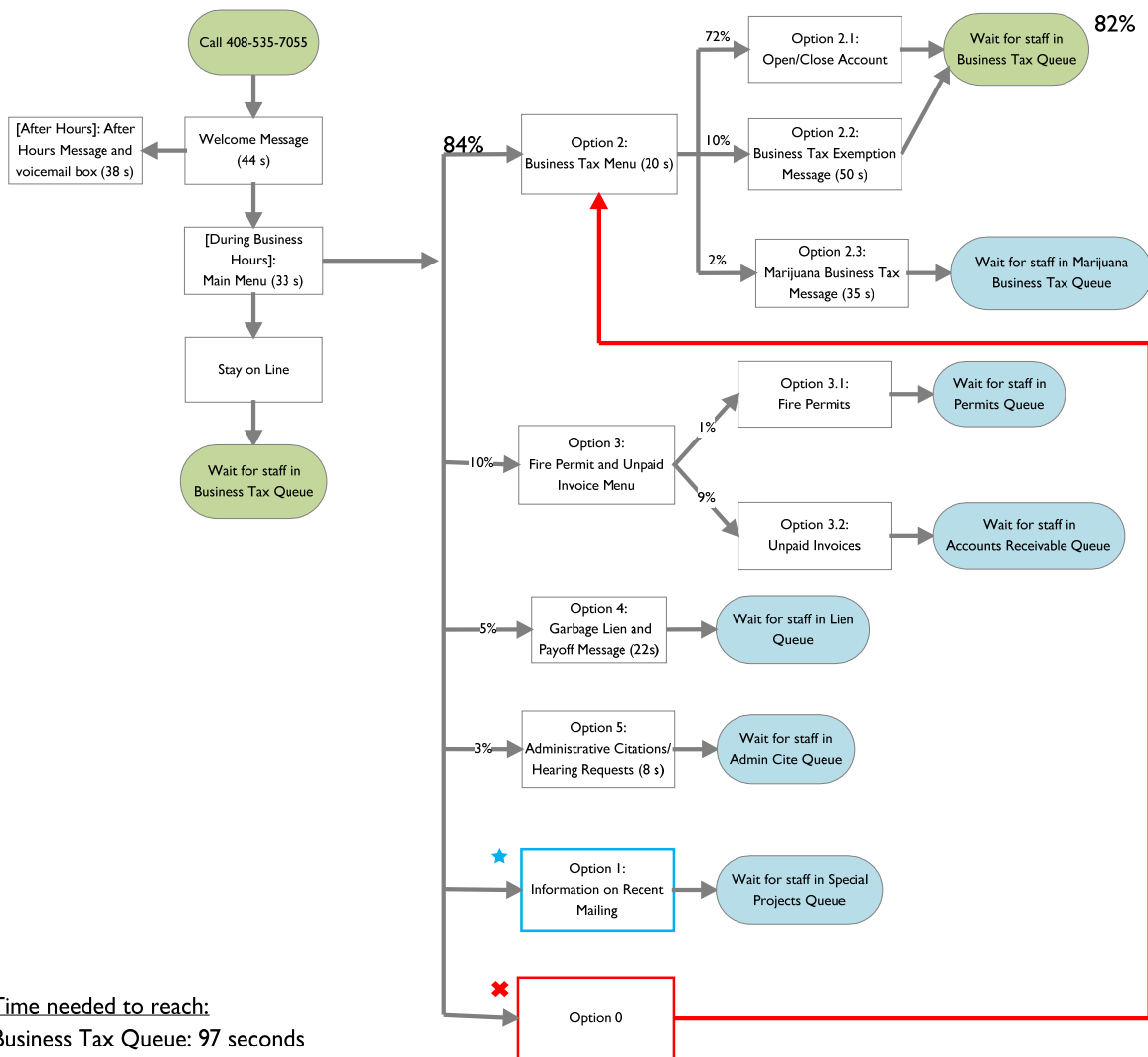
Take highway 87 north. Continue on highway 87 to Curtner Avenue East. Exit Curtner Avenue and turn right. Continue on Curtner Avenue to Monterey Road. Turn right on Monterey Road. The Animal Care Center is on the left side, just past Umbarger Road. [20 s]

From highway 101, exit Capitol Expressway West. Continue on Capitol Expressway to Monterey Road. Take the Monterey Road exit from Capitol Expressway and turn right. Go approximately 1.1 miles. The Animal Care Center is on the right side, just before Umbarger Road. [22 s]

Source: Auditor observation as of May 2014.

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Finance Department: Revenue Management



In the Revenue Management call tree, callers who wait in a queue are transferred to a voicemail box:

- after 5 minutes in the Business Tax Queue and the Special Projects Queue.
- after 2 minutes in all other queues.

★: Option 1 is used for temporary announcements and was last updated in early May 2014.
 ✖: Option 0 for "other questions" redirects to Option 2, the Business Tax menu.
 See Finding 3 regarding call trees.

Source: Auditor observation as of May 2, 2014 and Finance Department information for the call tree and auditor analysis of call volume from a Symposium report for April 2013-March 2014. Call volume for Option 1 (Special Projects) is not shown here.

May not sum because of rounding.

Finance Department: Revenue Management

Welcome Message

Welcome to the City of San José Finance Department, Revenue Management Division. We are located at 200 East Santa Clara Street, San José, CA 95113. Our office is open between the hours of 8 AM to 5 PM and closed on holidays. Please visit our website at www.csjfinance.org for additional information and downloadable forms. Our menu options have recently changed so please listen carefully. If you want to hear this message again, please press the number sign. Please be patient while being connected to the main menu. (44 s)

After Hours Message

Welcome to the City of San José Finance Department. Our normal business hours are 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday and closed on all holidays. Our office is located at 200 East Santa Clara Street, San José, CA 95113. For additional information and downloadable forms, please visit our website at www.csjfinance.org. Our office is now closed. To leave a message, press 1. (38 s)

Main Menu

For general business tax questions, including hardship exemption and Marijuana Business Tax, please press 2.

For unpaid fire permit or fire department invoices or unpaid miscellaneous invoices, please press 3.

For garbage payoff demands or liens, please press 4.

For administrative citations or hearing requests, please press 5.

For individuals or businesses that received a letter wherein the subject line has the business tax number and only the business tax number, please press 1. *[Option 1 is used for temporary projects.]*

For all other questions, press 0.

If you want to hear this message again, please press the number sign. (33 s)

Option 2: Business Tax Menu

Please select from the following three options.

For opening, closing, or verifying a business tax account, press 1.

For business tax financial hardship or the exemption program, press 2.

For Marijuana Business Tax information, press 3. (20 s)

Option 2.2: Business Tax Exemption Message

The business tax hardship exemption program, also known as low-revenue generating business, is designed for sole proprietorships, or S corporations, that make less than \$22,980 for the calendar year 2013. For low revenue generating businesses applying for the financial hardship exemption for the first time, please fill out the Business Tax Exemption Request Form located at www.csjfinance.org, then mail the completed form to City of San José, 200 East Santa Clara Street, 13th Floor, San José, CA 95113. If you need additional assistance, please remain on the phone while being transferred to a customer service agent. (50 s)

Option 2.3: Marijuana Business Tax Message

The Marijuana Business Tax has been effective since March 1, 2011. Taxes on the gross receipts for each month are due on or before the last day of each following month. If the due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, the due date shall be the next business day that City Hall is open to the public. For additional information and downloadable forms, please visit our website at www.csjfinance.org. (35 s)

Option 3: Fire Permit and Unpaid Invoice Menu

If you have questions regarding a fire permit, press 1. If you have questions regarding accounts receivable invoices, press 2. (10 s)

Option 4: Garbage Lien and Payoff Request Message

For payoff demand or garbage lien requests, please fax your detailed request to 408-292-6488. You will receive a response within 7 business days. If you need additional assistance pertaining to a garbage lien, press 1. (22s)

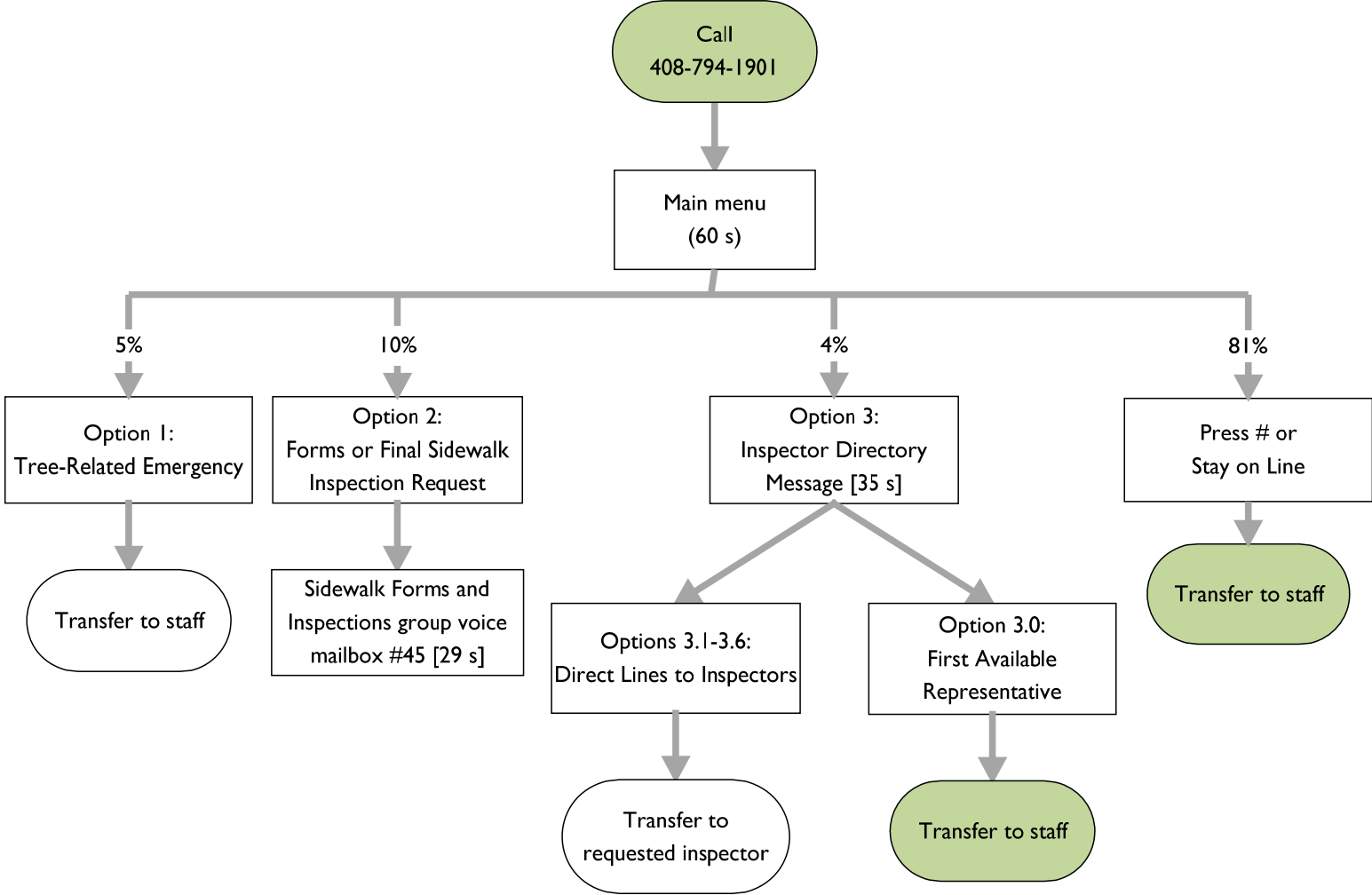
Option 5: Administrative Citations/Hearing Requests

For administrative citation or hearing request, please be patient while being transferred to the customer service agent. (8 s)

Source: Auditor observation as of May 2014.

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Department of Transportation: Tree and Sidewalk



Source: Auditor observations of call tree as of May 2, 2014 and auditor analysis of call volume from Call Pilot reports for January-April 2014.

Department of Transportation: Tree and Sidewalk

Main Menu

You have reached the Tree and Sidewalk Inspection Group for the City of San José.

Per the Municipal Code, property owners are responsible for repairs adjacent to their properties within the public right-of-way.

The Tree and Sidewalk Inspection Group is request-driven, and our office is responsible for inspections and issuance of permits pertaining to street trees, sidewalks, driveways, park strips, and curb and gutter.

If you are reporting a tree-related emergency within the public right-of-way that requires immediate attention, please press 1.

To request a forms or final sidewalk inspection, please press 2.

To access a complete listing of our inspectors, please press 3.

To speak with the first available representative, please press pound or hold on the line. Thank you. [60 s]

Voice Mailbox

Mailbox 88145. You have reached the Sidewalk Forms and Inspections request voice mailbox. Please leave a message after the tone which includes your name, phone number, and the address location where inspections services are required. This mailbox is checked twice daily and requests are typically handled within 24 hours. (tone) [29 s]

Option 3: Inspector Directory Message

You have reached our project inspectors directory.

For Allan Morgenroth III, please press 1.

For Jorge Ibanez, please press 2.

For Phil Cota, please press 3.

For vacant desk, please press 4.

For vacant desk, please press 5.

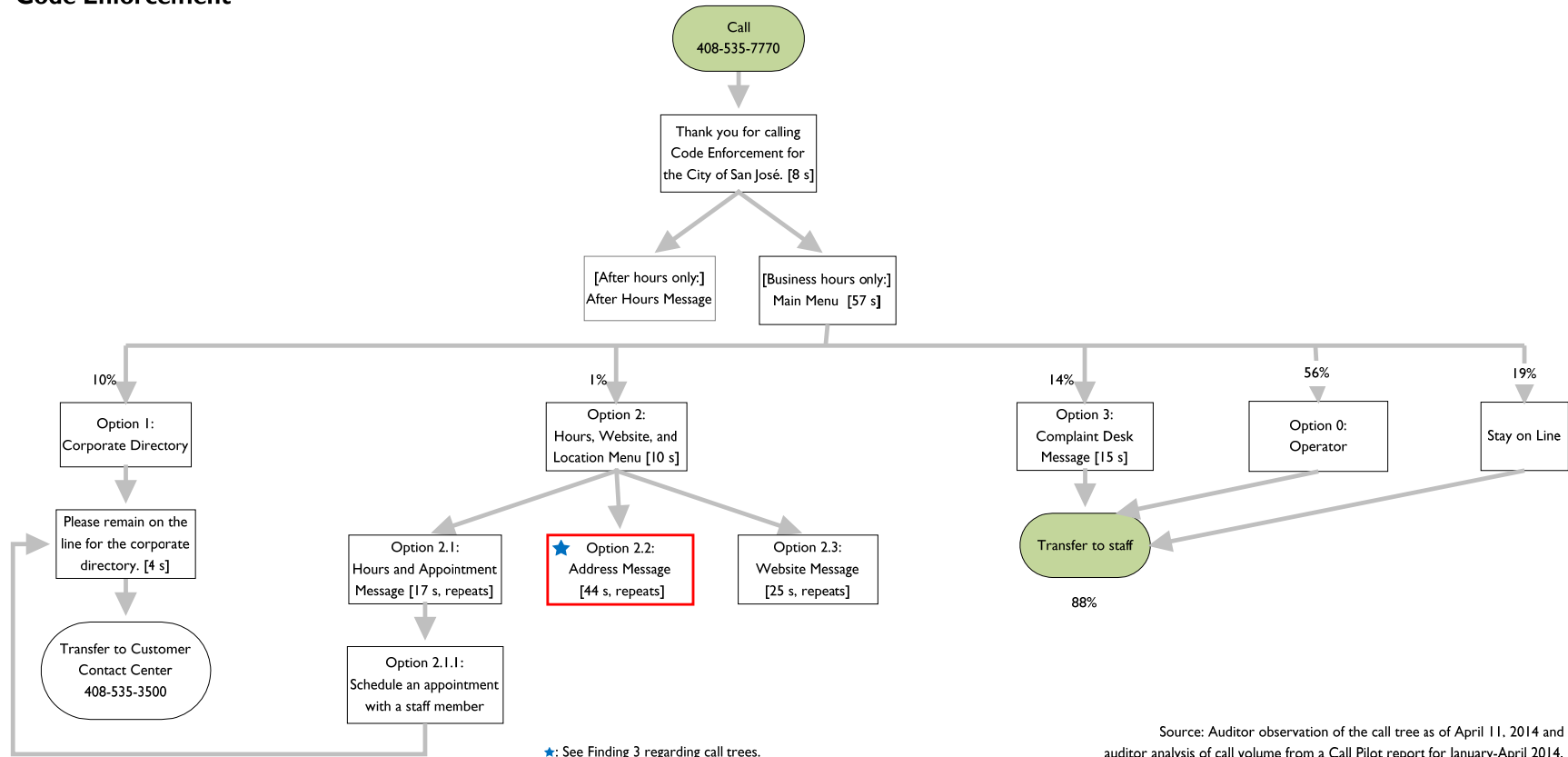
For Russ Hansen, please press 6.

If you would like to speak to the next available representative, please press 0 or hold on the line.

If you would like to return to the previous menu, please press pound. Thank you. [35 s]

Source: Auditor observation as of May 2014.

Code Enforcement



Source: Auditor observation of the call tree as of April 11, 2014 and auditor analysis of call volume from a Call Pilot report for January-April 2014.

Code Enforcement

After Hours Message

Our offices are now closed. Please call us back during normal business hours of 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Online services such as code case status or online complaint filing is available on our website at www.sanjoseca.gov/codeenforcement. That's www.sanjoseca.gov/codeenforcement.

Main Menu

Please select from one of the following three menu choices.

If you are calling about an open Code Enforcement case, please call the assigned inspector directly. If you know the name of the inspector or other staff member you need to speak to, please press 1 to use the corporate directory.

For recorded information, such as hours of operation, our address and website address, please press 2.

For vehicles abandoned on the street in front of property, please hang up and call the Department of Transportation, Vehicle Abatement at 277-5305.

If you have a new complaint to file for blight or an inoperable vehicle parked on private property, please press 3 to speak to the Code Enforcement complaint desk. For any other issues and to speak to an operator, press zero. [57 s]

Option 2: Hours, Website, and Location Menu

For the hours of operation, please press 1. For our address, please press 2. For our website address, please press 3. [10 s]

Option 2.1: Hours and Appointment Message

Our office hours are 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Appointments to meet with specific staff must be made directly with the person you wish to meet with. Press 1 to go to the corporate directory, or hang up and dial the person directly. [17 s, repeats]

Option 2.2: Address Message

Thank you for calling for Code Enforcement for the City of San José. Our offices will be closed today between the hours of 11:30 am and 4 pm. Please call back after 4 pm today or tomorrow during normal business hours of 8 am to 5 pm. Online services such as code case status or online complaint filing is available on our website at www.sanjoseca.gov/codeenforcement. That's www.sanjoseca.gov/codeenforcement. [44 s, repeats]

See Finding 3 regarding call trees. Code Enforcement has corrected this.

Option 2.3: Website Message

Our website address is www.sanjoseca.gov/codeenforcement. That's www.sanjoseca.gov/codeenforcement. You can check the status of code cases or filed blight complaints online. [25 s, repeats]

Option 3: Complaint Desk Message

For complaints of abandoned vehicles parked on the street in front of property, please hang up and call the Department of Transportation, Vehicle Abatement at 277-5305. If you wish to file a new complaint for blight on private property, please remain on the line. [15 s]

Source: Auditor observation as of April 2014.

Department of Transportation: Dispatch

Call 408-794-1900.

There is no call tree; callers wait in the Dispatch Queue for the next available staff member. Outside business hours, calls are transferred to Fire Communications.

Source: Auditor observation as of May 2014.

Department of Transportation: Vehicle Abatement

Call 408-277-5305.

There is no call tree. When staff is not answering the call and also outside business hours, callers receive the following voicemail message:

Thank you for contacting the City of San José Department of Transportation. Our normal business hours are 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday. If you have reached this message during normal business hours, we are currently on another line. Please leave a detailed message regarding your call so we may address your concerns appropriately. If you would like to report an abandoned vehicle using the online service request, visit the City's webpage at www.sanjoseca.gov and search for the Department of Transportation. You will find the link to report an abandoned vehicle on the right-hand side of the page. Thank you.

Source: Auditor observation as of May 2014.

San José Police Department: 3-1-1

Call 311 or 408-277-8900.

You have reached the City of San José Police Department non-emergency number.

If this is a police, fire, or medical emergency or a crime is happening now, please hang up and dial 911.

If you are calling for non-emergency police services, stay on the line.

If you are calling for other City services, not related to police or public safety, please press 9 to be connected to the City call center. (*transfers to 408-535-3500, see Appendix B-2*) All rotary callers, please stay on the line. Do not hang up if you hear tones.

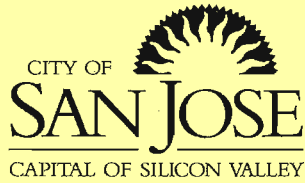
For information in English, press 1.

For information in Spanish, press 2.

For information in Vietnamese, press 3.

[...]

Source: Auditor observation as of July 2014.



Memorandum

TO: SHARON ERICKSON
CITY AUDITOR

FROM: Vijay Sammeta
Chief Information Officer

**SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO THE AUDIT
OF CUSTOMER CALL HANDLING**

DATE: August 14, 2014

Approved

Date

8-14-14

The Administration has reviewed the *Audit of Customer Call Handling* and is in overall agreement with the recommendations identified in the report. The following are the Administration's responses to each recommendation.

BACKGROUND

The Administration agrees with the recommendations contained in the *Audit of Customer Call Handling* report prepared by the City Auditor. Many of the audit findings such as staffing levels and inadequate technology investments are a reflection of the fiscal realities of the last decade. In addition, the City's Customer Contact Center is in transition to a new business model as garbage and recycle billing moves to the property tax roll in 2015. This transition should significantly reduce the complexity of calls and wait times for customers contacting the City's primary call center.

In addition to the Customer Contact Center, many departments staff department-specific call centers including Public Works, Finance, Transportation and Planning, Building, Code Enforcement. To address many of the City Auditor's recommendations, share knowledge and best practices, and develop policies and standards in a consistent manner, the Administration will be forming a Call Handling Steering Committee. This committee, to be formed within the next six months, will include stakeholders from each of the major call centers, the City Manager's Communications Office and the Information Technology Department's technical staff. While the committee will address the long term sustainability of customer call handling performance standards, individual departments are addressing the most immediate issues identified in this audit. For example, incorrect message translations have already been updated, the City's Customer Contact Center modified the duties of team leads to allow for increased call handling time thus reducing customer wait time, and Citywide translation services through Language Line is offered to all City Departments through the Finance website.

Finally, the Information Technology Department (ITD) has procured, and is in the process of testing, a call center telephone system for use in all City call centers. This new technology

investment will address many of the Auditor's recommendations such as improving self-service options and better performance metrics through enhanced reporting capabilities. ITD will be working with the City's call center stakeholders to implement audit recommendations using the new phone system. Testing is expected to be completed and the new phone system deployed to all City call centers by January 2015.

However, it is important to note that telephone call handling represents only a single channel of communication with the City. The policies developed by the Call Handling Steering Committee will consider multi-modal public contact such as email, in-person, and social and mobile applications. These policies are designed to establish consistent standards for customer interaction throughout the organization. The City's recent investment in call center technology enables the organization to utilize contemporary and streamlined solutions to address performance standards for call handling and other methods of customer service.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION'S RESPONSE

Recommendation #1: To improve access to City services, the Administration should correct erroneous telephone numbers and links on the City website. Further, the Administration should develop policies and procedures to ensure that the City website and departmental webpages remain current and are reviewed on a regular basis by individual departments.

Administration Response to Recommendation #1: The Administration agrees with this recommendation. The City Manager's Communications Office will take the lead in developing policies that bring Citywide web content current and require departments to remain current with web content through mandated periodic review. The Citywide Web Content Management System that has been implemented over the past two years has already resulted in significant improvements, and departmental staff can now make corrections to websites when errors are found or reported. Further steps will be taken to ensure that errors are corrected as soon as they are identified.

Recommendation #2: To improve access to City services and to reduce the City's telephone call handling costs, the Administration should develop a coordinated strategy to:

- a. Offer new self-service options for the City's most frequently used services by phone, online, and/or by mobile app; and
- b. Establish utilization targets for new and existing self-service options, and advertise them accordingly.

Administration Response to Recommendation #2: The Administration is in general agreement with this recommendation. The City Manager's Communications Office will take the lead in centralizing the existing self-service options into a single web page to improve access and visibility by the public. A Call Handling Steering Committee with representatives from each of the City's major call centers, the City Manager's Office and the Information Technology

technical staff will be formed to identify and prioritize self-service options. The team will also evaluate the feasibility of self-service options with existing systems or determine if it is more advantageous for a system to be replaced. Utilization targets will be developed as baseline trends are established.

Recommendation #3: To improve wait times during peak demand periods, the Customer Contact Center should:

- a. Modify its staff members' duties as needed. This includes continuing call answering duty assignments to Principal Office Specialists as needed;
- b. Modify its staff schedules as needed, including start, end, and break times for shifts, and scheduled time off;
- c. Seek short-term staffing relief as needed. This could include engaging temporary staff and utilizing the answering service vendor.

Administration Response to Recommendation #3: The Administration is in agreement with this recommendation. The Customer Contact Center has modified the duties of the Principal Office Specialists as recommended in 3a and has reviewed, and will continue to review staff schedules as recommended in 3b above. With respect to 3c, two additional short term staff members have already been funded through the Customer Information System Transition Project and are expected to start in the Customer Contact Center in September 2014.

Recommendation #4: To improve their performance management, the City departments should regularly use call center statistics in analyzing past performance, expected programmatic changes, establishing next performance objectives, examining overall performance strategies, and reviewing their staffing needs. Further, call center managers should regularly review and discuss individual call taker statistics with their staffs, and install real-time monitors where needed to provide real-time customer wait time information to call takers. These performance management practices should be documented in departmental policies and procedures.

Administration Response to Recommendation #4: The Administration agrees with this recommendation. The Call Handling Steering Committee will define performance standards and policies for maintaining customer service standards. ITD is taking the lead on implementation of a new call center telephone system, which has already been purchased and provides many of the capabilities outlined in this recommendation.

Recommendation #5: To improve performance management at call centers, the IT Department should ensure that the new telephone system enables call centers to record phone calls. The call centers should consider implementing customer surveys and should use recorded phone calls to regularly train their staff and improve customer service.

Administration Response to Recommendation #5: The Administration agrees with this recommendation. The new telephone system does have the capability to record phone calls. The Call Handling Steering Committee will identify the best method to integrate customer feedback in the improvement of customer service.

Recommendation #6: To improve the customer experience in its call tree, Animal Care and Services with assistance from the IT Department should review and revise its call tree in accordance with best practices and:

- Make it shorter and simpler,
- Make it responsive to customer needs by removing unneeded options and ordering options meaningfully, and
- Correct the inaccurate information.

Administration Response to Recommendation #6: The Administration agrees with this recommendation. Animal Care and Services has consolidated and simplified options on its call tree. Rarely used options have been eliminated and inaccurate information has been corrected. Further enhancements will be made when the new telephone system is deployed.

Recommendation #7: To improve the customer experience in their call trees, the call centers with assistance from the IT Department should:

- a. Immediately change the incorrect messages
- b. Regularly review call trees for accuracy, simplicity, and ease of use, and establish procedures to continue doing so
- c. Maintain up-to-date transcripts and flowcharts of their call trees, and establish procedures to continue doing do; and
- d. Encourage callers in each call tree to use self-service options (when available)

Administration Response to Recommendation #7: The Administration agrees with this recommendation. The City's call centers are already reviewing their individual call trees and updating incorrect or unclear messages. Recommendations 7b, 7c and 7d will be addressed when the new phone system is implemented for call centers as it allows departments the flexibility to make rapid enhancements without intervention of ITD or contractual services.

Recommendation #8: To improve customers' voicemail experience, departments that use voicemail boxes should:

- a. Develop a policy on how frequently voicemail boxes should be reviewed and how timely messages should be returned
- b. Assign their staff members primary and back-up duties to respond to voicemails, and incorporate this into their procedures
- c. Regularly review voicemail retrieval reports to ensure that voicemails are being checked

- d. Remove those voicemail boxes that will not be checked or will not be needed, and
- e. Use the online interface to retrieve voicemail messages. The IT Department should ensure that the new phone system has an online voicemail interface.

Administration Response to Recommendation #8: The Administration agrees with this recommendation. The Call Handling Steering Committee will develop a policy that sets a Citywide standard for the handling of voicemail messages addressing Recommendations 8a, 8b, 8c and 8d. ITD will work with departments to utilize online voicemail retrieval once the new phone system is implemented for the City's call centers.

Recommendation #9: To ensure accessibility of City services to non-English speakers, the Administration should clarify that the Language Line purchase order is available to all line departments and provide assistance to line staff on how it can be used.

Administration Response to Recommendation #9: The Administration agrees with this recommendation. Finance (Purchasing) has added the Citywide Language Line open purchase order and instructions on how it may be used, to its website. ITD will also introduce this at the Administrative Officers Forum as Language Line has applicability beyond the call centers.

Recommendation #10: To ensure accessibility of City services to non-English speakers, the Administration should formulate a policy and goals that further language accessibility and provide assistance to line departments implementing this policy.

Administration Response to Recommendation #10: The Administration agrees with this recommendation. The City Manager's Communications Office will take the lead in drafting this policy and assisting departments in its implementation.

Recommendation #11: The Administration should coordinate development of an online knowledge base that enables call takers in various departments to provide accurate information to customers and minimize the number of times that a customer's call needs to be transferred.

Administration Response to Recommendation #11: The Administration agrees with this recommendation. ITD will take the lead in developing an online knowledge base through the use of Office 365 and provide training for call center staff.

Recommendation #12: The IT Department should work with other departments to set up automated data transfer between online service requests (web forms and mobile apps) and existing departmental work order systems. In addition, the Administration should review whether different service request systems could benefit from integration and CRM implementation.

Administration Response to Recommendation #12: The Administration agrees with this recommendation. ITD will take the lead in developing specifications for a Citywide CRM, and work with individual departments to ensure integration with high volume work order systems where feasible.

Recommendation #13: The Administration should develop a long-term strategy to improve customer access including consideration of a centralized call center with integrated CRM.

Administration Response to Recommendation #13: The Administration agrees with this recommendation. Call center consolidation can take many forms including business processes, technology and/or staffing and will require investment. The Call Handling Steering Committee will review opportunities to consolidate each of these key areas for improving customer service and leveraging economies of scale.

CONCLUSION

The City's call handling is in a state of transition in both business models and technology. The Administration is committed to establishing a call handling baseline for customer service and developing metrics for measuring performance across all departments.

We would like to thank the City Auditor and her staff in helping to prioritize and shape the customer call handling within the City's call centers. This is often the first contact that residents and businesses have with the City and as a result, the recommendations are an important part of continued efforts to meet the needs of the community.

/s/

Vijay Sammeta
Chief Information Officer

For questions, please contact Vijay Sammeta, Chief Information Officer at 408-535-3566