



February 21, 2013

Chair and Members,
Government Management Committee

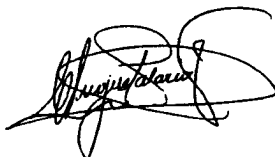
Dear Members,

Please accept the attached communication in my absence as I had previous commitments in my ward that could not be rescheduled. Therefore, I would appreciate it if one of the members or the Chair could take carriage of my motion.

Enhanced mobile apps will become a powerful tool that will greatly increase resident's ability to communicate with the City in a convenient and efficient manner.

Please support my recommendations as the increased use of mobile apps would be a great benefit to 311 and the City as they are more efficient due to the fact that they do not require staff resources to record the information. I have had many discussions with staff and the administration and they are in full support of my motion.

Thank you,



Councillor Palacio
Davenport- Ward 17



February 21, 2013

Councillor Paul Ainslie
Chair, Government Management Committee
100 Queen St. West, Suite C52
Toronto On M5H 2N2

Dear Chair and Members,

RE: Enhancements to Mobile App(s) to Improve Customer Service

In April, 2012, 311 Toronto improved its customer service by introducing an option for the public to use a mobile application ("mobile apps") on their smart phone to report graffiti vandalism and potholes. The mobile application option saw steady use by the public throughout 2012. The use of mobile apps to initiate service requests has several benefits. Mobile apps are more efficient for 311 Toronto as they do not require staff resources to record the information. Mobile apps also offer the service divisions the ability to view an image of the problem area if a resident takes a picture to send along with the service request.

Currently, the mobile apps offered to the public are developed by third-party developers and are offered free to users who choose to download them to their phones. While effective, the apps are not owned by the City of Toronto and therefore cannot be customized to meet our precise needs. Many cities are electing to introduce their own mobile app which can be branded as an official City app and can be customized to ensure that information captured by the public exactly meets the requirements of the division to effectively respond to each service request.

SeeClickFix is an application that originated in the United States, and has proven to have helped many residents across North America. However, when an application requests too much information from its users, then it can become too overbearing and counter intuitive; it defeats its own purpose to be a quick and easy fix to local issues. It is time for the City to take the initiative to adapt this model for our own purposes and to make it more user-friendly for the residents of Toronto. This will become a powerful tool that will promote transparency and efficiency within our City, while giving residents the ability to have a direct line of communication to report local issues.



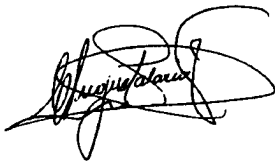
311 Toronto staff and the service divisions are also exploring ways to further enhance the use of smart phones and mobile applications to make it easier for the public to report problems to the City. Given that Licensing and Standards Committee has identified Animal Services as a priority, especially those that are injured or in distress; the mobile app should be explored as a way to expedite the reporting of selected animal service issues by the public.

I am confident that a made in Toronto solution will lead to an overall improvement in how issues are reported to the City by the public, and in turn, how our staff can ensure an appropriate and prompt response.

I would encourage the committee to move the following motions:

1. That the Director, 311 Toronto, report back to the Government Management or appropriate committee on the timeline for introducing a customized 311 Toronto smart phone mobile app.
2. That the Director, 311 Toronto, and the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards, research best practices in other jurisdictions and report back to the appropriate committee on the feasibility of enabling the public to report animal issues in a streamlined, user friendly way, using a mobile app on a smart phone.

Sincerely,



Cesar Palacio
Toronto City Councillor
Ward 17 – Davenport