

311 Toronto - Update on Progress Related to Centralizing Tier 1 Services

Date: August 27, 2025

To: Service Excellence Committee

From: Executive Director, Customer Experience

Wards: All

SUMMARY

This report provides an update to the Service Excellence Committee on progress regarding the centralization of routine and transactional services, identified as Tier 1 services, into 311.

311 has established a customer service model that puts customers first by connecting the public with the appropriate staff, based on the complexity of their request. Routine and transactional requests, such as providing information about City programs or supporting intake of simple service requests (e.g. reporting a pothole), are designated as Tier 1 services and are supported by 311 Customer Service Representatives. More complex matters are designated as Tier 2 services and are managed by divisional staff with specialized knowledge to address inquiries that may require consultation, be impacted by legislated requirements, or require case management (e.g. client-specific intake for Shelter Services or Human Services, inquiries related to Toronto transit discounts and childcare fee subsidies).

Currently, the Customer Experience Division provides Tier 1 service support on behalf of the five Integrated Service Divisions: Transportation Services, Toronto Water, Solid Waste Management, Municipal Licensing & Standards, and Environment, Climate and Forestry–Urban Forestry. Parks will be integrated with 311 by end of September 2025.

The Customer Experience Division conducted a preliminary review of City services and call centres for eligibility and readiness for integration with 311. The review found that most services, aside from services offered by Parks and Recreation, are better suited for future consideration for integration once 311 has improved its end-to-end experience and other readiness activities have taken place. Additional integrations would require foundational work by future service divisions and their partners, such as process documentation, digitization and back-end system upgrades to meet the operational standards for integration. Further, there are services that are considered Tier 2 services that are not currently considered for integration with 311 due to the complexity of their work and client needs.

Based on this review, beyond Parks and Recreation, there are no integration opportunities being pursued at this time. Instead, the Customer Experience Division is focused on enhancing the end-to-end experience for existing integrated services, as well as integrating Community Recreation by late 2026. This includes improving customer communications through the Closing the Loop initiative and streamlining the self-serve experience to make service request submission faster, easier and simpler.

Looking ahead, the Customer Experience Division remains committed to working collaboratively with service areas to explore future integration opportunities. As divisions advance their readiness and as 311 enhances its current service offerings, the potential for onboarding new services into 311 will be re-evaluated. This focus ensures that 311 is optimizing its existing service experience before integrating additional services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Customer Experience recommends that:

1. The Service Excellence Committee receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact from the adoption of the recommendations in this report.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact statement.

DECISION HISTORY

The Executive Committee, at its April 9, 2024, meeting, directed the Executive Director, Customer Experience to provide an approach for centralizing and consolidating routine Tier 1 services and contact centres across City divisions into 311 Toronto to provide the public a seamless, accessible, and consistent experience for routine City service requests and inquiries, starting with Parks and Recreation, and to provide next steps on the roadmap and implementation plan by the first quarter of 2025.

[Agenda Item History - 2024.SE2.1](#)

City Council, at its February 6 and 7, 2012 meeting, adopted Item 2012.AU5.2, "311 Toronto – Full Potential For Improving Customer Service Has Yet To Be Realized", with 12 recommendations for the Director, 311 Toronto Division, to undertake a series of recommendations to improve the operating effectiveness and efficiency of 311 Toronto, including conducting a review of call centres operated by the Integrated Service Divisions: Transportation Services, Toronto Water, Solid Waste Management, Municipal Licensing & Standards, and Environment, Climate and Forestry–Urban Forestry.

[Agenda Item History - 2011.AU5.2](#)

COMMENTS

The Customer Experience Division, through 311, provides access to non-emergency City services, programs, and information 24/7. 311 offers assistance in over 180 languages over the phone, and 130 languages online through self-service options, using the City's website. Additional channels are also available through the 311 mobile app, email, and social media. In 2024, 311 had approximately 1.3 million interactions with the public, comprising mostly of general inquiries (62%) and service requests (32%).

The intake of simple service requests (e.g. reporting a pothole), are designated as Tier 1 services, with support provided by 311 Customer Service Representatives and more complex requests (Tier 2) being sent to the Divisions directly. 311 provides general information for all City programs and supports intake for routine service requests from five partner divisions: Transportation Services, Toronto Water, Solid Waste Management, Municipal Licensing & Standards, and Environment, Climate and Forestry (Urban Forestry), with Parks being integrated by the end of September 2025 and Community Recreation by late 2026.

Service Model Overview

The City's customer service model uses a tiered approach to ensure customers receive the right level of support for their needs. By matching the complexity of a request with the appropriate expertise, this model streamlines access to information and services while maintaining high-quality, responsive support.

- **Tier 1 service support**, where 311 Customer Service Representatives support customers with routine and transactional inquiries that do not require specialized training or service area expertise. For example, this may include providing information about City programs, or assisting with intake of simple service requests, such as reporting a pothole; and
- **Tier 2 service support**, which is managed by divisional subject matter experts, for inquiries that are more complex or require specialized knowledge and expertise. These services may require consultation with a customer, may have legislated requirements, or require specific case management. Examples include medical/counselling-related inquiries, or approval of a building plan. This approach ensures clients with unique needs receive tailored support.

Assessment of Additional Integration Opportunities

Criteria to identify services that are a good fit for centralization into 311 are guided by two key requirements:

1) Eligibility: Must provide high-volume, low-complexity services, where integration would deliver the greatest benefit for customer experience, efficiency, and consistency; and

2) Readiness: Must have work order management systems and business processes that can be easily integrated with the 311 customer relationship management system.

The Customer Experience Division conducted a preliminary assessment of City services and call centres not yet integrated with 311 to assess their eligibility and readiness for onboarding, against the above criteria. This review included a scan of services across the City, narrowing them to a shortlist of potential candidates. The review found that most services, aside from services offered by Parks and Recreation, are better suited for future consideration for integration once 311 has improved its end-to-end experience and other readiness activities have taken place. These services would require foundational work to be completed to be operationally ready for integration with 311, such as process refinement, digitization and back-end system(s) upgrades. In addition, many call centres serve internal staff, handle Tier 2 inquiries, or operate under provincial mandates (e.g., Provincial Offences Act inquiries, client-specific intake for Shelter Services or Human Services), making them unsuitable for integration with 311 at this time. Tier 2 services requiring specialized support will continue to be delivered by responsible divisions.

Beyond completing the integration of Parks and Recreation respectively, the immediate priority is to optimize the experience for existing integrated services, before planning any further integrations with 311. The Customer Experience Division will continue to work collaboratively with divisions to build readiness and evaluate future integration opportunities as alignment with 311's service delivery model improves.

Looking Ahead

The Customer Experience Division is committed to continuing assessing opportunities for additional Tier 1 integrations as they emerge. Building on recent progress, the Customer Experience Division is also advancing the modernization of Tier 1 service delivery to enhance the customer experience. Priorities include streamlining intake processes, providing the public with an improved end-to-end experience by enhancing the quality and consistency of service request updates through the 'Closing the Loop' initiative, and enhancing digital channels to make them more intuitive and accessible.

For residents, these improvements create a more seamless, transparent, and responsive experience. For the City, it enables better data, stronger reporting, and deeper analytics to support continuous improvement, while freeing divisional staff to focus on delivering services rather than managing intake. Prioritizing these improvements ensures that 311 is optimizing its existing service experience before integrating additional services to its operations.

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SIGNATURE

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