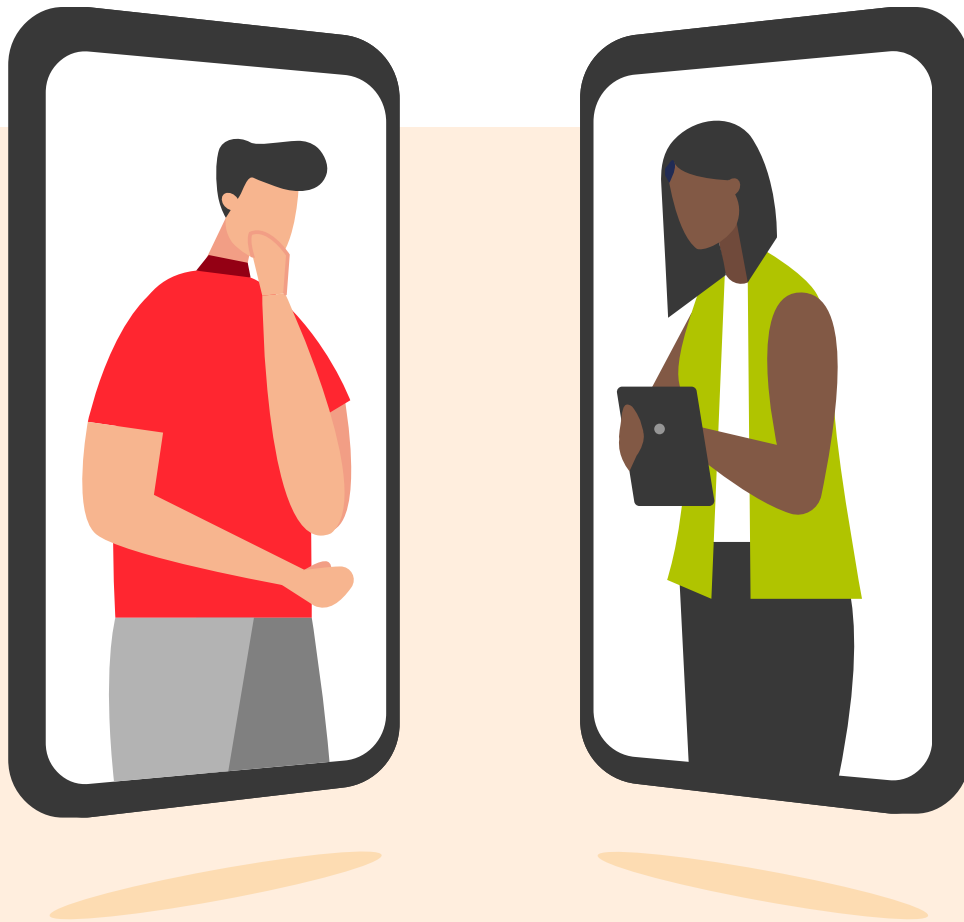


WHITE PAPER

The ROI of 311 CRM Technology





Abstract

Today's local governments are under increasing pressure to cut costs, stretch budgets, find and eliminate inefficiencies, and essentially do more with less. More than ever, they need tools and solutions that can enable them to deliver quality customer service interactions more efficiently. This white paper discusses how 311 CRM technology can help municipalities streamline administrative and field worker efficiency, optimize resources, and strengthen resident satisfaction and trust.



Introduction

The single most effective way for municipalities to boost resident engagement, trust, and satisfaction is to offer exceptional customer service experiences at every interaction and government touchpoint. The reality that quality service improves gratification and contentment should be no surprise. It's been proven repeatedly in the private sector by the biggest brands that those with the strongest reputations for delivering an extraordinary (or even simply attentive and responsive) customer service experience achieve the highest rates of customer retention and ultimately long-term growth. In the private sector, customer experience has become a core metric of business stability and financial performance. According to [McKinsey & Company](#), brand leaders outperformed laggards in the S&P 500 by more than 200% in the past decade.

Brands like Trader Joe's, Chick-fil-A, the Ritz-Carlton, Amazon, and JetBlue have earned national recognition for fostering customer experiences that delight and have earned the revenue to fuel solid operational programs to ensure ongoing success. How can public sector entities mirror such Goliath-like customer service strategies and achieve similar success in the form of community health and endurance?

The first and most impactful strategy they can employ is implementing a 311 CRM software and efficient processes to leverage its automations. Doing so will return powerful types of positive ROI including: time-and cost-savings for administrative and field staff, predictable resource investment, and the intangible but critical power of resident satisfaction.





The Time-Saving Administrative Staff Benefits of 311 CRM Technology

The request acknowledgment time in the town of Gilbert, Arizona, is really fast. In 2018, the town cut its 311 request acknowledgment time in half — dropping from 1.2 days to 0.6 days. Its time to close a request also dropped dramatically — falling from 9.6 to seven days.

Before implementing the SeeClickFix 311 CRM software to file a request, residents would call customer service, who would then call the police, who would call public works. The process was inefficient, indirect, and required the intervention of two administrative staff members from two different departments, before reaching the desk of someone who could take action.

With the 311 CRM software, resident requests instantly go to public works and are managed via automated workflows. Residents can then follow the progress of their request and receive a notification when the work is complete.

As a result of this workflow:



Administrative staff's time for request intervention is collectively reduced by the need for fewer redirects of initial submissions and fewer inquiries to follow-up on the status of the request.

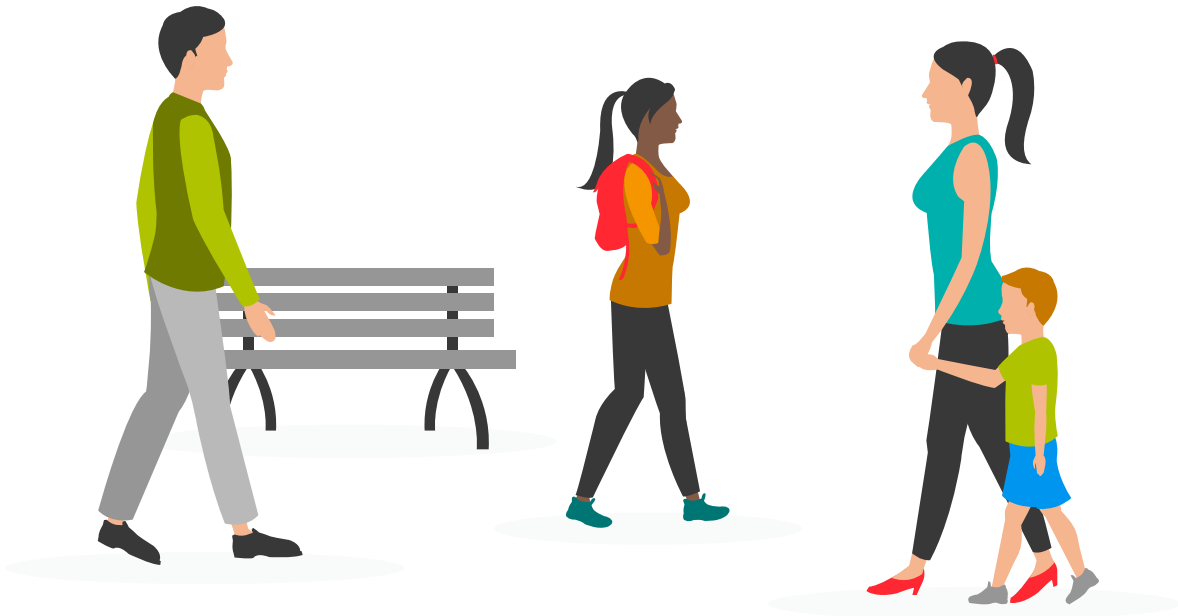


Resident satisfaction with their local government is improved.



Community issues are resolved more quickly to the delight of all impacted residents.

Gilbert's model represents a successful illustration of the first ROI benefit of a 311 CRM: reduced administrative staff's time to respond to every resident inquiry and request.



Suppose a Resident Notices a Broken Piece of Sidewalk Pavement in Their Neighborhood and Is Worried It Could Cause a Trip and Fall Hazard

Without a 311 CRM solution, to report an issue, the concerned resident would need to research the correct department phone number or go directly to the public works office. A staff member would need to pause from other work to file the complaint, contact another staff member about the repair, remember to follow-up until the work is completed, and then contact the resident to let him know when the repair is complete.

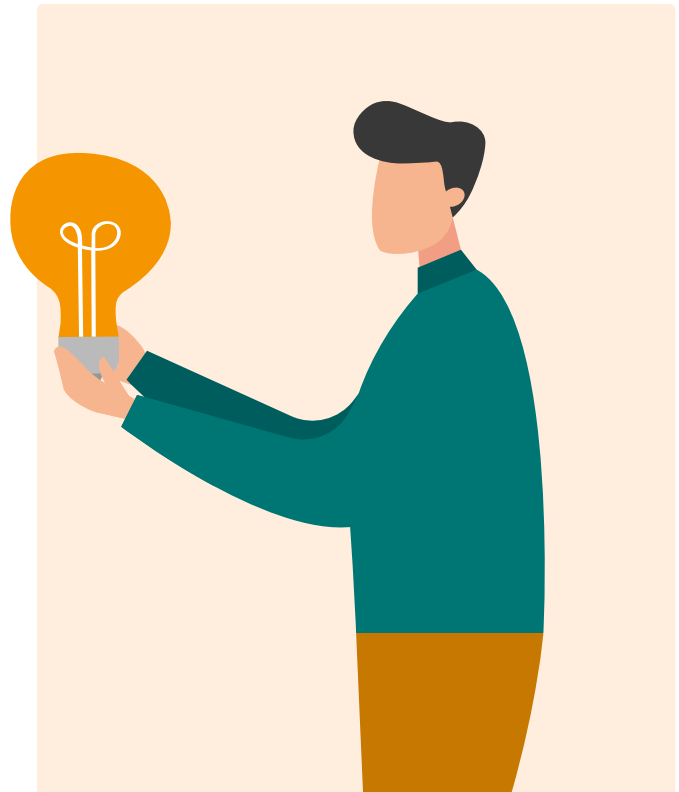
Most likely, the resident is going to call back several times to check on the status of the request, which will cause the administrator to call the assigned staff member to check in again. When the work is done, the road crew will quickly be on to the next project and may not have a chance to report back right away that the work is done, and even if they did, it might take some time for the administrator to find time to call the resident back to report that the work is complete.



This Model Is Completely Reliant Upon Manual Follow-Ups and Offers the Resident Zero, On-Demand Visibility Into Their Request Status

With a 311 CRM, the resident can report the issue from a computer or mobile device. Once they have submitted the request, it is routed directly to the correct department or employee, based on pre-set request categories. Additionally, administrators can be notified whenever new tickets are submitted to their department and assign tasks as they see fit. Some 311 CRM tools can also be configured to send automated reminders to staff and administrators if an action has not been taken within a predetermined amount of time, ensuring the request is addressed promptly. The resident can monitor the request's progress every step of the way until completion, without any phone calls, walk-ins, or manual follow-ups.

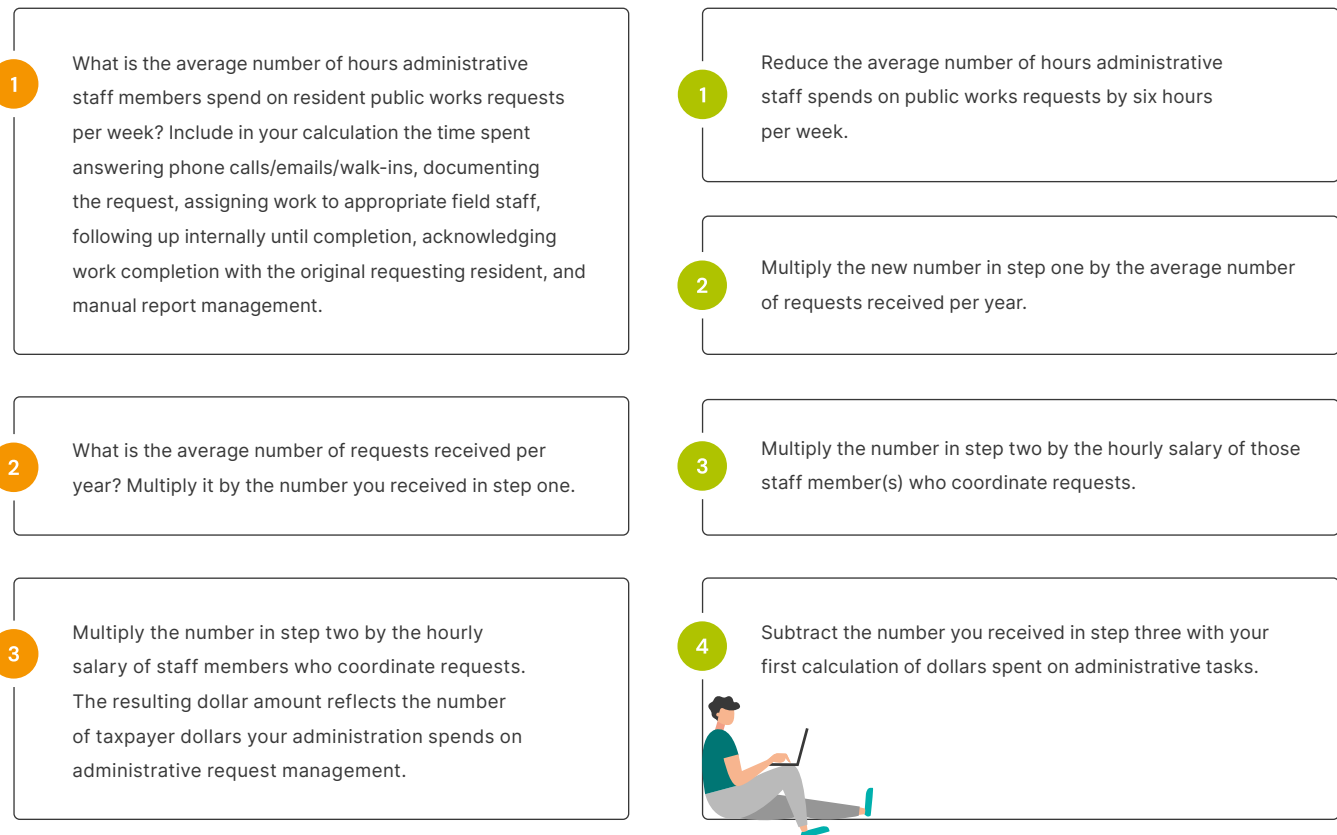
Further reinforcing the value in automated resident request management, data from McKinsey & Company notes that satisfied residents require less administrative interventions. Their research shows that dissatisfied customers are twice as likely to contact agency hotlines at least three times for help.





Calculating the Potential ROI of Administrative Efficiency With a 311 CRM

To calculate the financial ROI of 311 CRM technology, start by estimating your administrative staff's time addressing resident requests.



Now, calculate how much time you could save with an automated solution. The [McKinseyGlobal Institute](#) found that office workers report being able to save six or more hours per week by automating repetitive manual tasks. Based on this data:

The difference is the number of taxpayer dollars you could save by automating your administrative staff's tasks associated with resident requests, but it's only the first metric that demonstrates the ROI of 311 CRM technology.

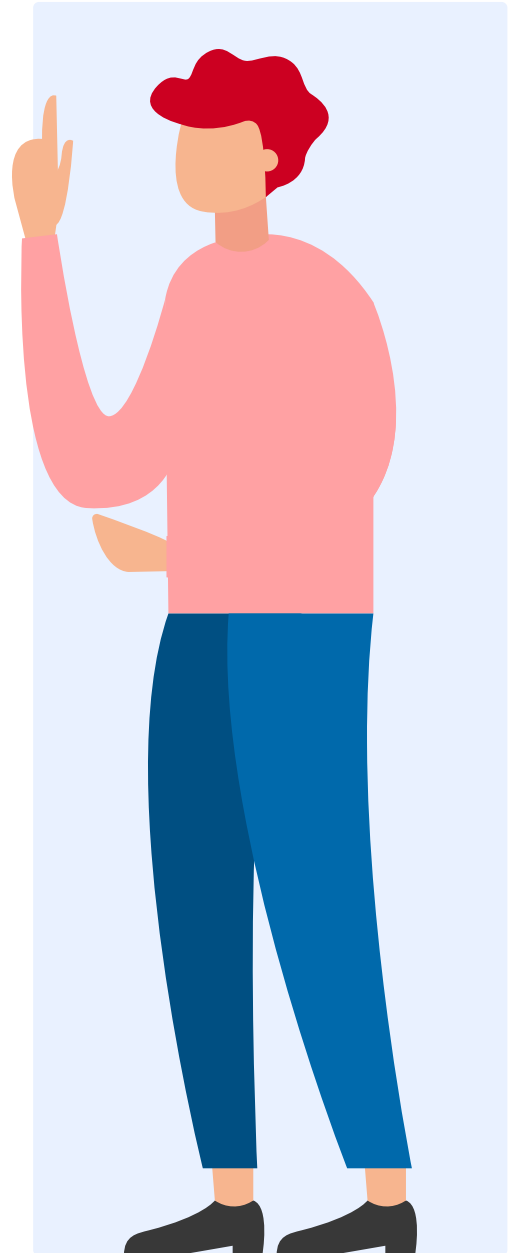


Streamlined and Coordinated Task Management

Using 311 CRM technology, when a resident, emergency responder, or municipal staff member reports an issue that requires intervention by public works field staff, the team receives all the information they need to prepare a response and track their efforts through to completion. Using a system reliant upon paper, spreadsheets, tickets in disparate tracking systems, phone calls, and even post-it notes, field staff's responses are less organized and less efficient.

Suppose three residents on the same street report a broken streetlamp. On Monday, the field team receives these and a dozen other requests for work around the community. The fourth task it addresses, as it crisscrosses the region responding to tickets in a semi-organized chronological order based on submission, is the streetlamp.

The next day, they reach the second round of the same requests. They travel to the reported neighborhood and realize they already addressed the issue the day prior. Through no fault of their own, this disordered project management style, reliant on incomplete and inconsistent data, results in redundant actions, inefficiencies, and lost time.





With an Automated System That Consolidates Duplicate Requests Into the Same Tasks and Allows Staff To Respond to Non-Emergency Requests Based on Geographical Groupings, Work Is Completed Expeditiously and Productively

This organized approach to resident requests is a significant part of how Kitsap County has decreased its average response time to critical requests by 196%. In Kitsap County, residents submit a request via SeeClickFix, which explains the issue to an administrative staff member who can also ask the requester or reporter for more critical details. The data input into SeeClickFix, including user-submitted photos and location data, is then fed to Cartegraph, automatically creating a service request for tracking and response purposes. The requests are then vetted in Cartegraph, where staff uses the data to create work orders as necessary. When the issue has been resolved, administrative staff can provide feedback in Cartegraph, which is routed back to the original requester, enabling bi-directional communications.

This financial ROI component begs the question, how can 311 CRM systems help municipalities better allocate personnel and supply resources? In Kitsap County, the integration of SeeClickFix and Cartegraph allows staff to document their response and any financial or environmental damage that occurred to meet the Department of Ecology's latest reporting requirements. It also tracks the labor, equipment, and materials used for the spill cleanup. Such quantifiable, cost-impact data allows the County to seek reimbursement from the violator and estimate budget, staff, and equipment needs each year.

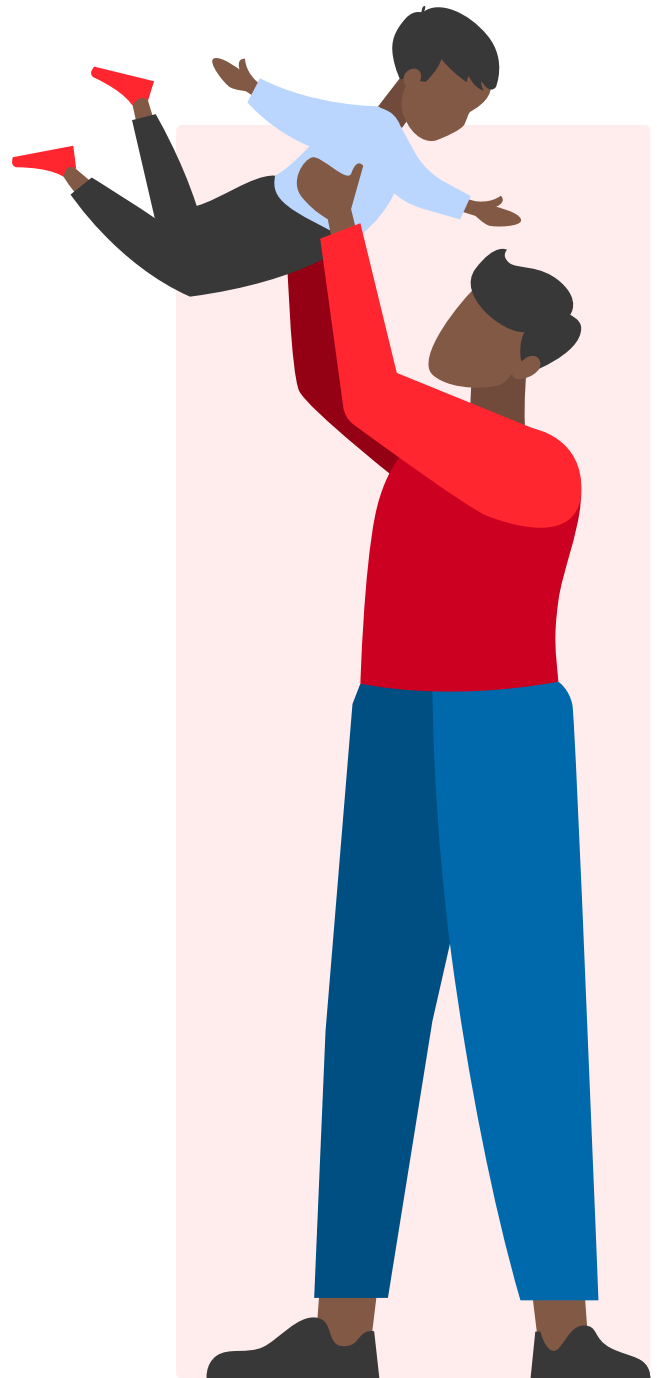




The Unquantifiable Benefits of Improving Resident Trust

Reflecting on the successes of private sector brands that have fully engaged dedicated customer service models, how can the public sector respond to customers' expectations for public sector interactions that more closely align with those of their favorite brands?

As we've discussed, those municipalities that are delighting their residents and delivering positive, efficient experiences are embracing the digital transformation of services, creating digital twins of workflows to streamline administrative tasks and field worker efficiency. They are also making a quantifiable impact on such vital outcomes as achieving their mission, managing their budget, reducing staff attrition, and strengthening public trust.





Improving Customer Experience Can Drive Better Critical Outcomes for Government Agencies Around the World

 Increase trust	 Achieve stated missions	 Meet or exceed budgetary goals	 Reduce risk	 Boost employee morale
Satisfied customers are 9x more likely to trust the agency providing the service	Satisfied customers are 9x more likely to agree an agency is delivering on its mission	Dissatisfied customers are 2x more likely to reach out for help 3+ times	Dissatisfied customers are 2x more likely to publicly express dissatisfaction	Long-term organizational success is 50% driven by organizational health and is mutually reinforced by customer experience

Source: Global results from Canada, France, Germany, Mexico, United Kingdom, and United States, McKinsey Public Sector Journey Benchmark Survey, 2018

The data in this infographic from McKinsey & Company found that government customers are, on average, nine times more likely to trust a government agency if they are satisfied with its service, and that satisfied customers are nine times more likely to agree that an agency is delivering on its mission. Further, they identified that dissatisfied customers are twice as likely to publicly express their unhappiness through social media and other external channels.

How, though, can a municipality quantify such factors as trust and satisfaction? Measure resident engagement.



Quantifying the ROI on Resident Engagement

Anne Arundel County, MD, measured an 89% increase in resident engagement through its implementation of SeeClickFix. Its goal in implementing the 311 CRM software was to have residents and County officials work together to improve their shared quality of life.

In its first year post-launch, the County documented nearly 7,750 submitted requests. In the second year, county officials received over 14,600 requests for services, increasing nearly 89%. The County also found that resident requests increased due to the system's ease of use and accessibility. By elevating community issue awareness, all residents benefit from a safer, cleaner, and more cared for community.

After two years, Anne Arundel County received nearly 29,000 requests across over 40 public service request categories. Today SeeClickFix helps dispatchers and field staff acknowledge requests quickly, alert requesters when their issue is resolved, prioritize requests, and manage resources. As a result, residents feel heard, their concerns are validated, and they appreciate their leaders.

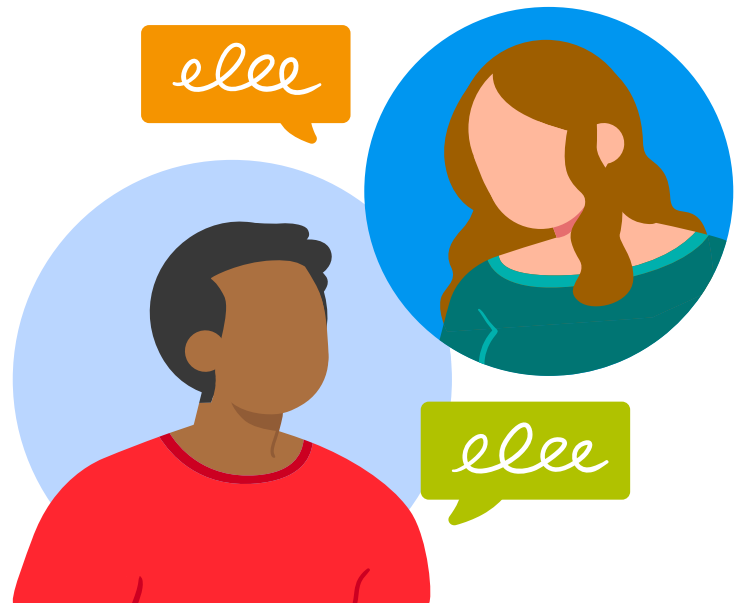
Similarly, the Improve Detroit program aims to enable Detroit residents and city agencies to collaborate and effectively address issues that impact day-to-day life. From broken streetlights to illegal dumping, residents provide real-time information and requests for city intervention. In its first four years, Detroit fixed 97% of the nearly 190,000 submitted requests, and most residents received a same-day acknowledgment. Building on initial success, the city expanded the number of services provided through the Improve Detroit 311 CRM tool from 16 to 29. These figures reaffirm that Detroit residents are invested in improving their city, and their officials are responsive and concerned about residents' needs. In other words, engaged communities are better communities.





Conclusion

With more efficient administrative request management and more responsive service completion, municipalities save time, money and delight their residents, strengthening trust and solidifying their position as the type of community that earns their residents' long-term commitment and community satisfaction.



About the Author

CivicPlus® is a technology company focused on building trust in government by fostering consistently positive digital experiences for residents and staff. With over 12,000 global customers, CivicPlus solutions are used daily by over 100,000 administrative staff members and over 340 million people in the U.S. and Canada alone. For more information, visit civicplus.com.

About the SeeClickFix 311 CRM Solution

CivicPlus offers a comprehensive and robust 311, request management, and resident engagement solution that empowers governments to demonstrate their positive community impact, accountability, and responsiveness, resulting in greater resident appreciation and trust.

Our industry-leading request management system is easily integrable with the most widely used Esri and asset management systems to help governments receive, respond, and report on community issues and repairs.

Our solution also allows residents to submit feedback, questions, inquiries, and requests using the most common digital communication tools they already use daily—text, email, and phone. All messages are aggregated in a single system and associated with individual resident profiles for historical reference and administrative triage, assignment, resource management, and resolution.