

# COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO CALIFORNIA

For the Agenda of:  
September 13, 2007

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Office of Communications and Information Technology  
Municipal Services Agency  
Countywide Services Agency

Subject: Report Back Regarding Status Of Countywide 3-1-1 Customer Contact Center  
And Status Of Sacramento 2-1-1 Program

Contact: Patrick Groff, Chief Information Officer (916) 874-7825  
Penelope Clarke, Countywide Services Agency Administrator (916) 874-5886  
Paul Hahn, Municipal Services Agency Administrator (916) 874-5889  
Steven Pedretti, Municipal Services Agency Deputy Administrator (916) 874-1691

## **BACKGROUND:**

On September 5, 2007, as part of the final budget hearings, the Board requested a report back regarding the status of our Countywide 3-1-1 Customer Contact Center program, additional detail regarding the funding to support it, and an update on the 2-1-1 program operated by the Community Services Planning Council.

## **DISCUSSION:**

Your Board has approved and supported the concept of a single, central point of contact for citizen access to county government information and services. The County's strategic planning initiatives also focus on improved customer service, with the guideline that a central contact center would make it easier for citizens to obtain information and services without having to know which department or program to contact.

During the October 3, 2006, E-Government Annual Report, the Board was presented with the vision of the constituent-focused, 3-1-1 Customer Contact Center that will allow for 24/7 access to online information, and expanded hours for telephone contact. Over the past two years, significant work has taken place to align key county staff to ensure the launch of a central contact center is successful.

In the next few months, we anticipate purchasing the hardware and software that will support the system. This will be funded by newly available one-time monies from the Office of Communications and Information Technology. This funding, estimated to be at a maximum of \$1 million, is included in the Fiscal Year 2007-08 Budget. Along with the hardware and software, this funding will also cover a wide variety of implementation costs, such as licensing,

Report Back Regarding Status Of Countywide 3-1-1 Customer Contact Center And Status Of Sacramento 2-1-1 Program

Page 2

training and technical and project support. Ongoing annual support and maintenance costs for the customer relationship management system and the accompanying knowledge base system are estimated to be approximately \$400,000, and are included in the Fiscal Year 2007-08 Shared Systems Budget. We are also continuing to seek grant opportunities to fund both one time and on-going costs.

The additional \$547,200 funding request from Shared Systems in this Fiscal Year would allow the Municipal Services Agency to add five positions to the contact center staff. The Call Center at CUBS (Consolidated Utilities Billing and Service) is currently the staffing core for the countywide program. CUBS recently extended its weekday hours of operation until 9:00 pm to handle calls for the Customer Assistance and Resource Center (CARC). The additional staff members will be necessary to accommodate the increased number of calls anticipated with the launch of a Countywide 3-1-1 Customer Service Program.

The City of Sacramento is on a parallel track to implement a 3-1-1 Contact Center as well, and we have been meeting with their team for more than a year to ensure a coordinated local government effort. More recently, the opportunity to literally partner with their technology has become possible, and we are exploring a more closely-aligned City/County joint venture. If that is not possible or practical, we have agreed that our systems will be compatible. We have also met with leadership of the other incorporated cities, and will return to them again with more information as to how this will impact them.

Citizens now have access to a wide variety of 3-digit phone numbers that end in "1-1," and a close partnership is also critical between the emergency 9-1-1 system and the 3-1-1 contact center. The Sheriff's Department is represented on the Countywide 3-1-1 Customer Service Steering Committee, and Sheriff John McGinness has offered his support. In the recent performance review for the Sheriff's Department, it was recommended that the County examine a 3-1-1 system to reduce the strain on the 9-1-1 operations.

We have also worked closely with the Community Services Planning Council (CSPC), which recently launched the early phase of its 2-1-1 information and referral system. Attachment A provides an update of the program. The long-established InfoLine program has provided the basis for 2-1-1 Sacramento, which specializes on meeting information and referral needs for people who need to access health, social and community services. 2-1-1 Sacramento operators are trained to assess callers' needs, including underlying life conditions that may affect those needs. CSPC CEO and President Nancy Findeisen is a member of the Countywide 3-1-1 Customer Service Steering Committee, and we continue to work with her organization to make sure our information and services are complementary.

Much like the situation with 9-1-1, we will work closely with 2-1-1 Sacramento to jointly market our efforts to educate the public about the types of calls that are appropriate for each number.

Report Back Regarding Status Of Countywide 3-1-1 Customer Contact Center And Status Of Sacramento 2-1-1 Program

Page 3

**CONCLUSION:**

Sacramento's Countywide 3-1-1 Customer Contact Center and the parallel 2-1-1 Program operated by the Community Services Planning Council will significantly enhance our regional customer service capability. Work continues to determine if a collaborative 3-1-1 system with the City of Sacramento is feasible from a financial, business and technical standpoint, and a preliminary determination of the feasibility is expected within 30 days. The County continues to operate under a planned launch of the 3-1-1 Customer Contact Center in the summer of 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

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PATRICK GROFF  
Chief Information Officer

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PAUL HAHN, Administrator  
Municipal Services Agency

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PENELOPE CLARKE  
Administrator  
Countywide Services Agency

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STEVEN PEDRETTI  
Deputy Administrator  
Municipal Services Agency

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ANN EDWARDS-BUCKLEY  
Deputy Administrator  
Countywide Services Agency

APPROVED:

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TERRY SCHUTTEN  
County Executive

Attachment: 2-1-1 Sacramento Program Update from the Community Services Planning Council



## **2-1-1 Sacramento Status Report**

The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors allocated \$50,000 to the Community Services Planning Council (CSPC) in the Fiscal Year 2006-07 budget to fund in part start-up costs for deploying 2-1-1 in Sacramento County. With the county's grant and funding from the Sacramento Citizen Corps Council (Homeland Security), CSPC was able to finance the activation of 2-1-1 in all AT&T and SureWest Central Offices. CSPC is still attempting to achieve the same service from Frontier Communications that serves the Elk Grove area. The remaining funds from Sacramento County and Homeland Security were used to purchase necessary equipment, including a new Voice Over Internet Protocol telephone system and laptop computers for staff to use especially during emergencies and disaster recovery.

Some additional funding for operational costs has been secured. CSPC is working with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Department of Human Assistance (DHA) to identify specific ways that 2-1-1 can enhance service access and delivery. Currently, more than 20 percent of the callers to InfoLine (soon to be 2-1-1 Sacramento) are DHA clients, and during the coming year, 2-1-1 Sacramento will assist DHA by connecting these and other low-income or unemployed callers with job training and job development programs. 2-1-1 is also a partner in the Family Support Collaborative Family Resource Centers initiative and will be providing information and assistance to Birth and Beyond Family Resource Center staff and families. In addition, CSPC has presented a proposal to the Sacramento County First 5 Commission for funding to connect families with needed resources, especially those that fall into the Commission's priority projects.

The AT&T and SureWest switches were completed in July so that individuals can now dial 2-1-1 in Sacramento County and be connected to an information specialist at InfoLine Sacramento, Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. However, CSPC cannot officially launch 2-1-1 Sacramento until resources are available to provide adequate coverage for the expected increase in calls and to operate the service 24/7. If pending proposals are funded, 2-1-1 Sacramento can begin 24/7 service by the end of 2007.

Approximately 70 percent of California's population has access to 2-1-1 service currently. With 10 other counties scheduled to launch 2-1-1 in 2008, the coverage will extend to more than 80 percent of the state's population. Central Valley counties scheduled for 2-1-1 implementation this fall and in 2008 include: Stanislaus, Kern, Fresno, Tulare and Madera. A statewide 2-1-1 Summit is scheduled for September 28, 2007, in Sacramento hosted by the California Office of Emergency Services. The purpose of the summit is to update the 2-1-1 California Business Plan to meet the goal of 100 percent statewide coverage by 2010. The state Office of Emergency Services considers 2-1-1 a key component of the statewide emergency preparedness plan.