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TO: Information Technology Sub-Committee

DESTINATAIRE : Sous-comité de la technologie de l'information

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**SUBJECT: Open311 WebServices Pilot – Digital Services Update**

**OBJET : Projet pilote de services Web Open311 – Point d'information sur les services numériques**

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Information Technology Sub-Committee (ITSC) with an overview of the Open311 Web Services Pilot.

## BACKGROUND

The City of Ottawa's Strategic Plan for the 2015-2018 Term of Council identified improving access to City services through digital service delivery (e.g., online, mobile, social media) as a Strategic Objective under the Service Excellence Priority (SE-2). The Service Innovation and Performance Department (SIPD) is responsible for delivering on this objective and on a number of strategic initiatives related to digital service enhancements, including the Digital Services Strategy and Implementation (SI-50).

The Open311 Web Services Pilot Project, which provides new ways to interact with City data, supports the strategic objective of digital service enhancement and is implemented under the mandate of the framework for the Digital Services Strategy (DSS). Currently, residents can submit 95 types of service requests online. Open311 will enable direct interaction with 21 of these online service requests.

## DISCUSSION

The intent of the City's Open311 Web Services Pilot is twofold: 1) to open a new mobile service request channel for a select number of service request types; and 2) to explore opportunities to leverage the community as a resource in developing service-related applications that work directly with the City in real-time.

### A new mobile service request channel

Launched in collaboration with Information Technology Services (ITS) in March, the City has utilized the Open311 specification, an industry standard used by municipalities around the world that enables citizens to communicate directly with government in a digital format.

While the City's existing Open Data program also encourages the open and free use, reuse, distribution and analysis of pushed data that is updated monthly, Open311 is distinctly different in that it provides opportunities for third parties not only to consume data regarding service requests, but also to interact with it in near real-time.

This interaction is enabled by an Application Program Interface (API) that was developed internally by the City. The API allows users to connect directly with Lagan, the City's service request system, in order to submit and track service requests. It also

allows developers to build applications that integrate with Lagan, which opens up a new mobile channel for residents to submit service requests.

#### Opportunities to leverage the community

In order to leverage the technical expertise of industry and residents to develop applications that provide more service options to residents, the project team has engaged community groups such as Ottawa Civic Tech and the Open Data Book Club. To date, this engagement has led to the development of two applications that report on service request trends. Developers have also expressed interest in building applications that submit service requests to the City.

Additional findings from this pilot project will be used to inform next steps around Open311 at the City. Based on the immediate uptake and interest from the community, however, it would appear that there is an opportunity to expand the City's Open311 offerings in the future. Enhancements could include additional service request types being made available and changes to the API.

#### CONCLUSION

With the launch of Open311, the City of Ottawa joins only a handful of other Canadian municipalities including Toronto, Quebec City, and Surrey, British Columbia that have adopted this specification.

Moving forward, the Open311 project team will continue to work with the developer community to refine the City's Open311 offering. The City will seek to evaluate the overall success of the Open311 Pilot by the end of Q3 2017, and will look to determine next steps in the development of a mobile application for 311 requests.

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