

CASE STUDY:

Longview, TX



CREATING A DIGITAL 311 CITIZEN SERVICE PLATFORM

The city of Longview, known for its sweet tea and 'squeeze butter,' is located in East Texas between Dallas and Shreveport, Louisiana, and has an estimated population of 80,500. Looking for ways to increase service to its residents, the Longview City Council initially investigated building-out and deploying a traditional 311 citizen service center. The City hired consultants to analyze the project's feasibility and the resources required. But while the projected outcomes were positive, the council ultimately realized that a traditional citizen service center, based on agents answering live telephone calls, would be too expensive to be feasible.

Not to be discouraged, **Justin Cure, information services manager at the City of Longview**, saw an opportunity to implement a digital 311 service, which would allow citizens to report issues directly to the City from a smartphone or the web. Cure believed he could accomplish many of the same goals of a traditional 311 citizen service center in an innovative manner by using a low-cost civic engagement application.

Longview reduced the cost of each 311 transaction from \$10 per call to less than \$1 per call.

Understanding the Requirements

There were several important requirements for the solution: first, it needed to integrate directly into Rock Solid for service request and work order management platform. Second, it would have to reduce manual data entry and ensure existing processes would be impacted minimally. But while increasing customer service was important, the solution would also need to increase the efficiency of taking in citizen service requests and benefit overall operations financially.

Creating a Platform

Longview contracted with Rock Solid, a real-time civic engagement platform that allows for branding and customizations, to provide a digital 311 service. Longview deployed the application on smartphones and its existing website for staff and citizen services. The 311 application allows users to file service requests from both a native mobile application and the City's website. Residents simply take a picture or video of the issue, enter some basic information, and click submit. Using the Cityworks service request API on the backend, Rock Solid automatically converts the issue into a service request in Cityworks, which is displayed in the appropriate staff member's Cityworks Inbox.



ROCK SOLID





Seeing Results

The solution shares many similarities with a traditional 311 citizen service center: direct, central communication to the City and automated routing to the correct department. However, in this

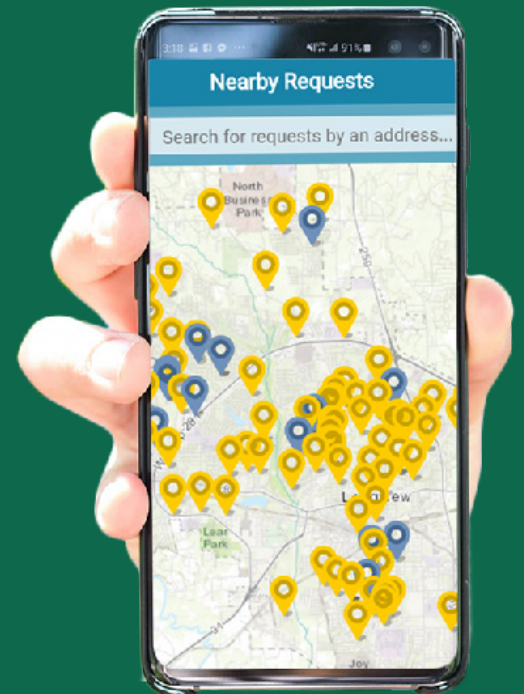
	Service Requests Thru Phone Calls	Service Requests Thru Rock Solid	Total Service Requests
One Year Before Rock Solid	6,091	N/A	6,091
One Year After Rock Solid	5,520	887	6,107

solution the data is received in a structured format without a staff member required to manually enter or the cost of each transaction down from close to \$10 per call for live agents to less than \$1 per call for automated citizen reporting. “Within 12 months of the digital 311 app launch, 15% of the reports were submitted digitally and directly into Cityworks. Additionally, the new methods of communication resulted in no significant increase in total requests. By shifting away from more expensive telephone and in-person service request intake transactions, the City of Longview **saved approximately \$8,000**. This efficiency, coupled with a centralized administration of the application, provides a central hub for citizens and streamlines operations for city administrators. Cure states that “the 311 app was very well received by executive leadership at the City. This helped to drive acceptance from division managers. It has now become a part of how we do business.” The app is also helping unify City departments. Cure says, “Some employees even use the app to report issues they find for other departments while they are out in the city.”

Realizing the Added Benefits of Responsiveness and Transparency

The Cityworks service request API allows for two-way information sharing, and as a result the CitySourced platform automatically notifies users of status updates as staff makes updates

Within 12 months of launching their Rock Solid app, 15% of all reports were submitted digitally.



Ultimate transparency: nearby requests are displayed in the Longview app as map pins. Each color signifies the report’s current status - submitted, in process, or closed.

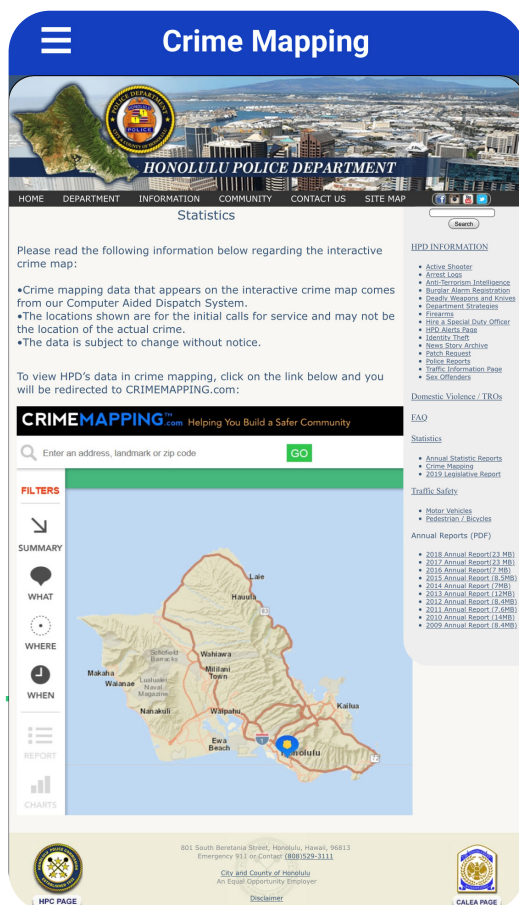
in Cityworks. Once a report is submitted, a notification with the Cityworks service request ID is generated. This automatic communication feedback loop is one way in which the digital 311 customer service app is very different traditional systems; using traditional communication methods, it would

be nearly impossible for the City to pick up the telephone and call back residents each time a status update occurred. The information sharing doesn't end with the one-to-one updates. The mobile and web apps offer the option to broadcast real time information to the community by displaying existing service requests on the City's authoritative Esri GIS maps within the smartphone or web apps. This interactive display increases transparency and allows Longview to offer 24/7 access to information.

Conclusion and Future

Longview's digital 311 citizen service platform provides a one-to-one communication between the government and citizens without additional staff resources, allowing Longview to foster transparency and increase residents' access to information. Additionally, the digital method is streamlined into Cityworks to make it easier on residents and less expensive to the City, which has not experienced an increase in the total

number of requests created. With the success of the initial deployment, the Rock Solid platform has since expanded beyond service requests to become a mobile city hall that includes access to any service for residents on the go. The Longview app now includes the ability to pay water bills and traffic tickets, view trash/recycling pick up times, and register for Parks & Recreation activities, just to name a few. By decreasing the communication gap, the civic engagement application is transforming the way citizens interact with their local governments.



ABOUT ROCK SOLID

Rock Solid's OneView citizen engagement platform allows you and your constituents to work as one. Through our proprietary Microsoft Dynamics based CRM and Mobile Application PaaS, Agencies bring their citizens to one place for all service and information requests while seamlessly bringing the city's departments together to understand how why constituents are making requests through robust reporting and analytics dashboards.

Contact us for more information on how to improve citizen engagement in your community through innovative technology.

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