City of St. Louis & Cityworks

Leveraging GIS to Improve Communication and Efficiency
Citizens’ Service Bureau

*The city’s call center*

- Like a “311” center, the CSB answers all citizen questions and routes service requests to the appropriate city departments.
- Answers 120,000 calls, emails, tweets annually.
- Services Health, Animal Control, Building Division, Forestry, Parks, Streets, Traffic, Refuse, and more.
Background

• 1980 – 2009 – Call center used a DOS “green-screen” system to track service requests. All requests entered on generic blank form, no scripting

• 2007 – began to explore newer database options due to growing number of calls, growing complexity of calls, and need to increase call taker’s situational awareness

• Quickly realized the only way to allow call takers to visually see the requests in the system and determine next actions was to have a GIS based system.

• City already had a very robust base map of our streets and parcels – so Cityworks was basically plug and play for us.
2009 – CSB launches Cityworks

Immediate Benefits Realized
Scripting

• Before: Sometimes the call taker remembered to ask if dog loose or contained, sometimes they did not.

• After: Configure Q&A so your call takers get all the details the departments need, every time.

• Questions can be “branched” – for if/then scenerios.
Tasks on Work Orders

- Before: Call taker had to refer citizen to call the departments directly for updates on their concern = interruption to operating departments trying to get work done
- After: Call taker can see the status of the departments work order
GIS = Situational Awareness

• Before – Call taker might not realize 2929 Virginia and 3001 Virginia are actually on the same block and enter 2 pothole requests a day apart, causing 2 crews to respond to same location

• After – With map immediately available and use of AMS layers, they can see a request has already been entered for this pothole and tell caller a crew is already on the way
GIS = Accurate, Up-To-Date Info

- Before – call taker went by memory or looked it up in a binder
- After – Traffic Light layer is always in front of them and up to date
GIS – Does the City own this property?

- Before – call takers had to rely on citizen info or had to switch to a different database to check property ownership.
- After – the parcel is color-coded right in front of them, so they can easily see if parcel is city owned and properly route the complaint = fewer misroutes.
Increased Efficiency

- Before - Traffic Dispatchers and the Call Center used to duplicate each others work
- Now both use Cityworks and can instantly see each others data entries eliminating unnecessary duplicate work
Cityworks - Scalability

- In 2013 the Street Department began using Cityworks to manage their permits (excavations, blockings, etc)
  - Moved out of a MS Access database
  - This has resulted in less permit duplication, no more issuing 2 permits to 2 companies to block the same street.
Cityworks - Scalability

• In 2014 the Office of Special Events began using Cityworks to track various department’s approvals of event applications.
  – Once approved, a shape layer of the event footprint is created and shared with Laclede Gas to ensure they don’t dig up a street one day before a bike ride.
Cityworks – Enterprise

• Water Dept was first to implement Cityworks in 2005.
• CSB came on-line in 2009 through an enterprise license.
  – This was key to our success as we were not limited in number of users. Every department could train as many people as they wanted to on use of Cityworks – whether they were a clerk who entered data or a manager who needed to look up and review data.
Cityworks – Enterprise

- Forestry added work orders in 2011
- Streets added work orders in 2013
- Facilities Maintenance (city building maintenance/custodial work) added work orders in 2014, switching over from a non-GIS asset management system.
- Office of Special events added in 2014
- Airport is now adding work orders
- Information Tech Services (city IT user support) is now adding service requests and work orders to track IT assets.