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Customer Service Department 2021 Q3 Results

Information Report to Council

Report Number: INFO-2021-34

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In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any member of Council may make a request to the Town Clerk that this Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

Purpose

This report provides Members of Council with the highlights, overall results, and trends for the third quarter of 2021 for the Customer Service Department

Background

The Customer Service Department provides Members of Council with the quarterly results which includes volumes, trends, key project updates, and highlights related to service delivery.

Discussion

The attached graphics represent service requests as captured in our CRM system by either Customer Service staff or by staff in the Mayor and Councillors' offices.

Some of the highlights in the Customer Service department are as follows:

Overall Volumes and Trends

The attached graphics represent service requests as captured in our CRM system by either Customer Service staff or by staff in the Mayor and Councillors' offices.

Some of the highlights in the Customer Service department are as follows:

Overall Volumes and Trends

- The Customer Service Department fielded over 4,400 inquiries related to the COVID-19 Pandemic between July and September 2021
 - The highest volume of inquiries were 'Recreation booking assistance' (1,282) and 'Vaccination Inquiries' (1,189). These were largely a result of summer program offerings (camps, Fitness Centre), residents requiring assistance in how to register online, and residents calling the Ray Twinney Complex regarding the Vaccination Centre located at the site
- The calls offered (24,741) to the Customer Service Centre & Customer Service satellite centres Q3 2021 were higher than Q3 2020 (20,238) by 4,500 calls.
- Over 7,400 phone calls came to the Magna Centre kiosk between July and September, predominantly calls regarding, and questions around, the vaccination clinic located at the Ray Twinney Recreation Complex and online registration assistance.
- The overall volume of emails in the 3rd Quarter has increased substantially, from previous years: 2,290 emails handled in Q3 2021 vs. 1,568 handled in Q3 2020, and almost triple the amount in Q3 2019 (776).
- The length of each call continues to increase each year (3:06 minutes per call in Q3 2020 vs. 3:51 minutes per call now in Q3 2021)
- 'Counters' at the Magna Centre satellite centre and payments through Customer Service remote agents saw 5,110 residents make payments for enhanced services vs. 3,090 in the third quarter of 2021
- Request for Parking Enforcement (363) remains the highest type of service request across the whole Town of Newmarket in Q3, followed by Parking exemption requests (131) and requests related to Bylaw Infractions (219) ('Tall Grass' at 114 & Property Standards at 105);
- Request for Parking Enforcement remains the top service request in every ward.

COVID-19 Pandemic

- Some Customer Service Associates continue to answer calls, emails, and social media requests while working remotely.
- A limited number of staff continue to work in the office, to offer services that require on-site resources. For example, issuing of marriage licences, printing of tax documents, commissioning of oaths, and processing of payments.
- Processes are continuously being evaluated and streamlined to ensure that all services are available in the most efficient manner for our residents. All payments are processed by credit card over the phone and paper-reliant processes have been modified and moved to electronic means where possible.
- A "walk up" window was installed in the fall of 2020 in the Customer Service Centre. This window allows essential services which were previously "in person" to be completed without contact; the Town of Newmarket is one of very few municipalities who continue to offer these important services during lockdown.

Marriage licenses and commissioning of documents are currently offered by appointment only at the Customer Service window.

- 339 marriage licence bookings were made in Q3
- Tax payments continue to be paid on-line, by cheque in our drop box or mailed into the municipal offices for processing.
- Customer Service staff in our satellite facilities have been trained and continue to back up staff in the Customer Service Centre. They are the first line of contact for all payments; as well, they monitor and respond to emails and voicemails as appropriate. Over 5,100 payments were taken by phone and drop box in the third quarter with the majority being processed by staff at the satellite centres.
- Staff who are working in the office have been provided with appropriate materials and protocols to ensure safety; protocols have been adjusted as necessary in accordance with all Provincial guidelines or restrictions.

Conclusion

The Customer Service Department remains committed to providing Council with the most recent trends and statistics by ward and the Town of Newmarket as a whole. Throughout the pandemic we have been able to provide continuous service to our residents and Members of Council in a as safe and as efficient manner as possible.

Business Plan and Strategic Plan Linkages

Tracking and reporting on trends and customer feedback supports the Town's strategic directions of being Well-Equipped and Managed by demonstrating Service Excellence.

Consultation

Not applicable to this report.

Human Resource Considerations

Not applicable to this report.

Budget Impact

None.

Attachments

Q3 Volumes and Trends Graphics (3 Pages)

Contact

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Approval

Hannah Grant, Acting Supervisor, Customer Service Centre

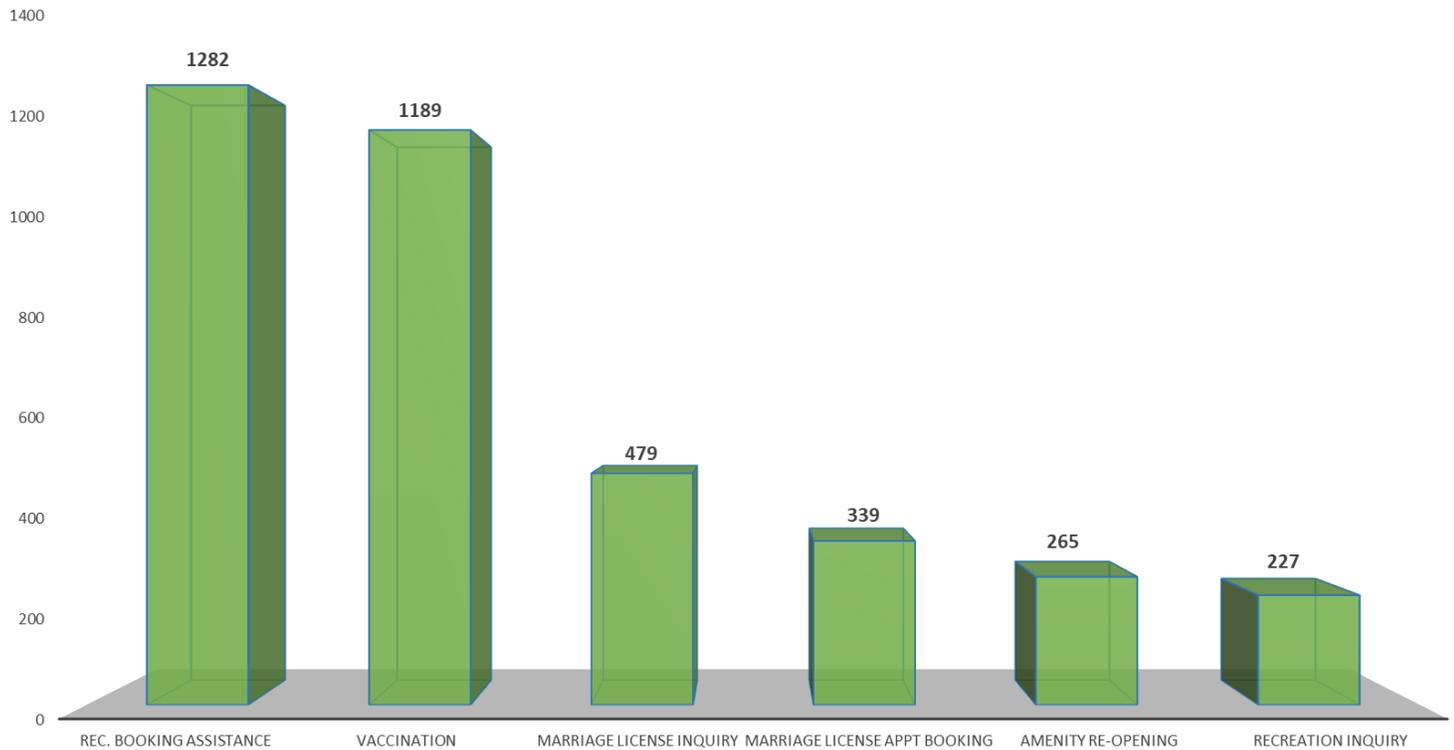
Jamie Boyle, Supervisor, Customer Service Kiosks

Bonnie Munslow, Manager, Corporate Customer Service

Ian McDougall, Chief Administrative Officer

Overall Volumes and Trends

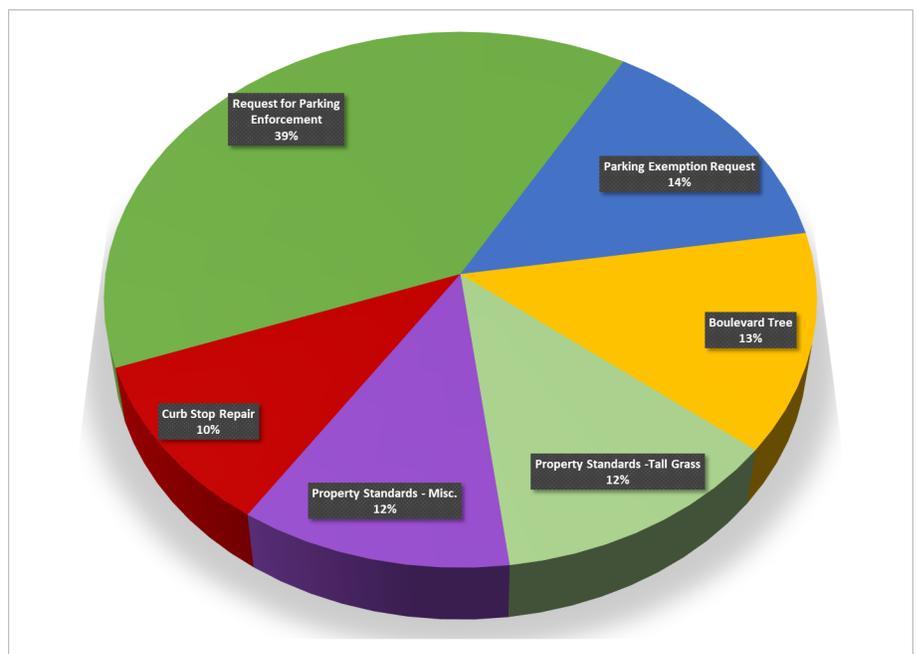
COVID-19 Inquiries, July - September 2021



Over 4,447 calls, emails, and social media inquiries related to the COVID-19 Pandemic were fielded between July and September 2021. The most requested information was related to recreation programming, facilities re-opening status and assistance with new booking procedures, as well as vaccination inquiries. Marriage licensing was also a highly sought after service. At the start of the pandemic, marriage licenses were arranged only based on urgent circumstances, however, Licenses and commissioning are now provided by appointment to all customers. The installation of a “walk up” window at the Customer Service Centre has allowed us to continue to offer this contactless service, even during the lockdowns in the fall and winter. The Town of Newmarket is one of few municipalities that has offered continuous marriage licensing service throughout the pandemic.

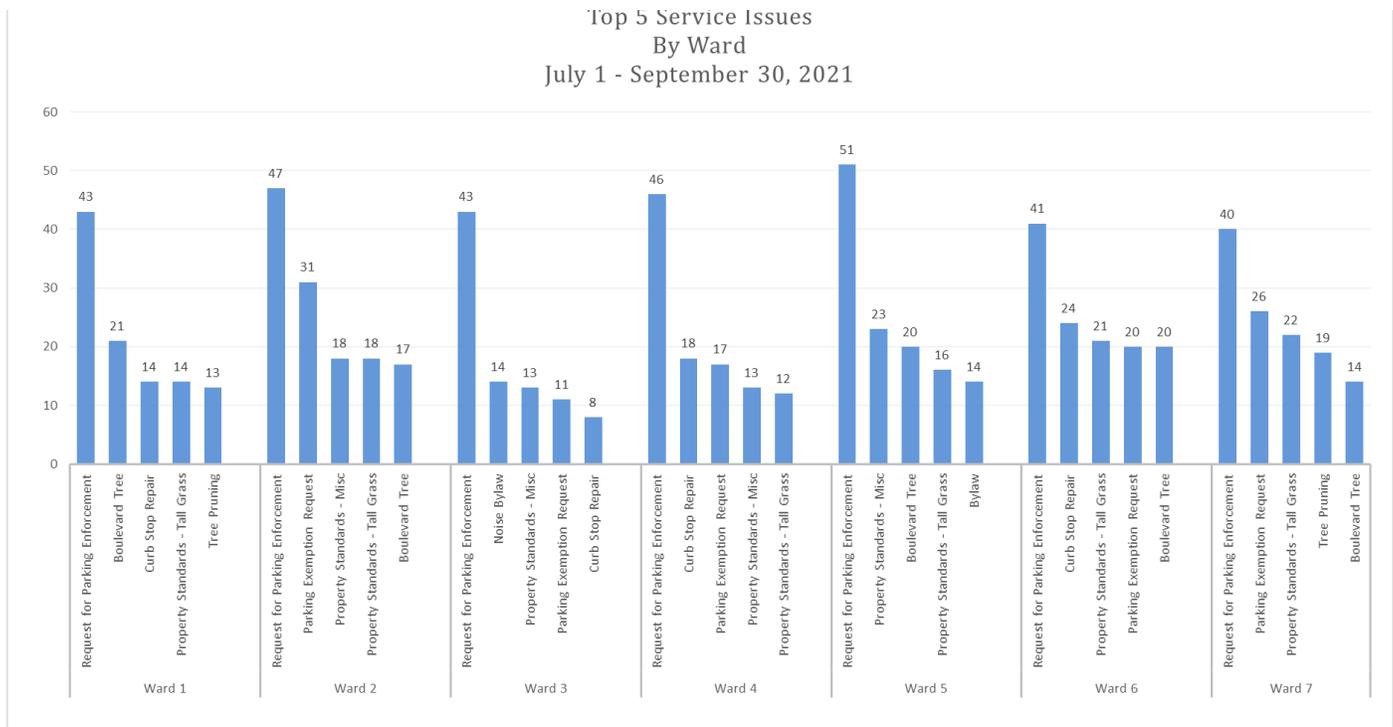
Town Wide Top 5 Service Requests for Q3

Town wide, the top service requests in Q3 2021 were for Parking Enforcement followed by Parking Exemption Requests & Boulevard Tree maintenance. This is consistent with previous years data. Service requests related to routine Curb Stop repairs and Boulevard Tree maintenance were all consistent with previous years data.



Overall Volumes and Trends

Top 5 Service Requests for 2021 by Ward



Requests for Parking Enforcement are prevalent across all wards in the 3rd Quarter of 2021. Covid related calls decreased from previous quarters over the last year. The other service requests are consistent with previous years data. Request for Parking Enforcement remains a top service request in all wards year over year.

Average Length of Call

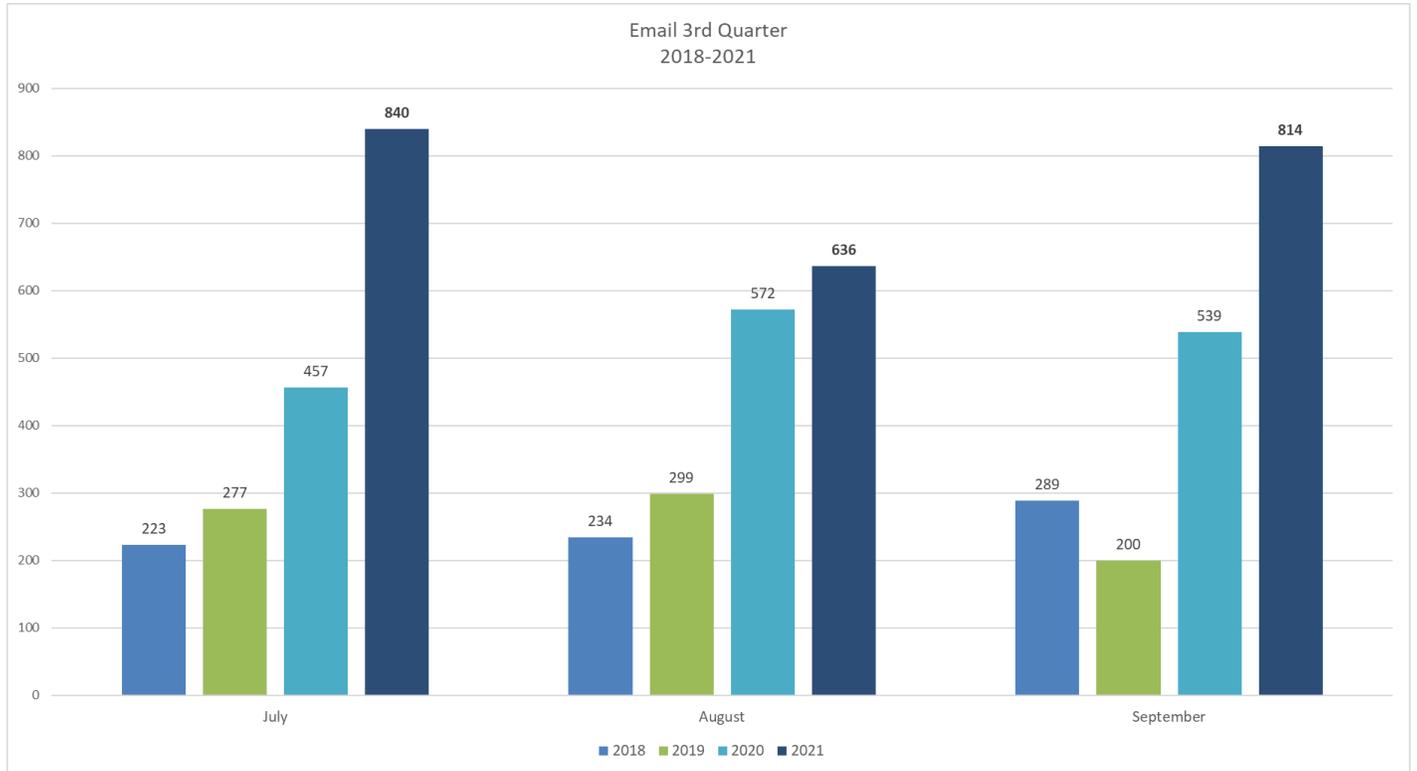
The average time spent on each incoming phone call to the Customer Service Centre increased significantly in Q3 of 2021 from the 3rd quarter of 2020. This is a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and also, the increasing complexity of the subject matter and service requests that associates deal with on a regular basis. The pandemic has increased the length of calls for a variety of reasons including the vast amount of ever changing information that associates are expected to provide.

Verifying information from the Ontario Regulations and local sources has increased talk time. Calls regarding the vaccination clinic at the Ray Twinney complex took a large amount of talk

time. In addition, many processes which were once available in person have been moved to the phone. Examples include Recreation booking assistance and payments for a variety of services including waste bins and stickers.

Overall Volumes and Trends

Email Volumes



As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, email requests to the Customer Service Centre have increased substantially. In July 2021, email volumes almost doubled July 2020, and all three months tripled those from 2019. Customer Service Kiosk staff have been trained to respond to general inquiries and have contributed greatly to the management of these volumes. This has allowed us to maintain our service goal of responding to most email inquiries and service requests within one business day.