

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 11, 2008

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 81: CODE ACTIVITY MEASURES RELATING TO THE COMPLAINT PROCESSING AND PHONE CALL PROCESSING ACTIVITIES

This is in response to a request from Council Member Smedberg for additional information regarding measures relating to the Complaint Processing and Phone Call Processing activities in Code Enforcement. Currently, measures relating to the two activities are marked as "To Be Determined" in the budget document. The request for additional information was made at the Development related work session on Monday, March 10.

At present, due to the very high volume of contacts (hundreds per day), Code Enforcement does not measure manually the number of phone calls answered, the percentage of dropped calls, or the number of complaints received. Neither does Code measure the costs associated with complaints or calls answered. Code realizes the value of such information and for that reason has proposed tracking complaints and phone calls. But it believes the current volume of activity makes a manual system of tracking too cumbersome.

To measure the number of complaints, Code Enforcement in conjunction with the ITS department is implementing a report which will identify complaints processed through the front office. The report is expected to become available in the first quarter of FY 2009. To gather statistics regarding the number of phone calls answered and the percentage of dropped calls, the City is in the process of procuring an enhanced phone system which will be installed in Code Enforcement and in the Personnel Department. The enhanced system, which is part of the multi-year process to convert the City's outdated phone system into a digital VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) system, will allow Code to measure the number of phone calls answered and the number of phone calls dropped. The enhanced phone system is projected to be implemented in FY 2009. Once these two systems are available, it will be possible to cost out the activities.

Both the number of complaints received and the number of phone calls answered are slated to be included in an annual report which will go out to Council and the public. Council can also request to see interim, quarterly reports if a member wishes to do so.

