



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAYOR EMANUEL LAUNCHES NEW ONLINE "OPEN311" SYSTEM  
TO IMPROVE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY AND SERVICE DELIVERY**

*"Service Tracker" Helps Public Track Progress of Service Requests to Completion;  
System Accepts Photos, Helps the Development of Applications, and Will Take Text Messages*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today announced the launch of Chicago's new "Open311" service request system, which allows Chicagoans to track service requests from the time they are submitted and receive an email when the issue is resolved through a new "311 Service Tracker." The system also allows residents to submit photos with service requests, encouraging more accurate and detailed reporting of issues to City departments.

Chicagoans can use the new tool by visiting [www.cityofchicago.org/311](http://www.cityofchicago.org/311).

"The new system brings an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability to City government by helping Chicagoans track and submit service requests in real time," said Mayor Emanuel. "The City and its Open311 partners collaborated on a solution that improves the way residents experience government services. It also provides our booming technology sector with another open government information platform upon which to build new applications."

The City's 311 call center receives an average of two million service calls annually, and nearly 40 percent of the most requested service calls into 311 are either duplicates or residents calling to check on the status of a request.

By allowing residents to check service requests online, the City can reduce redundancies and improve wait times for Chicagoans calling 311. Chicago is the only city in the country to include a "Service Tracker" in its Open311 system.

Technology developers will also be allowed to access the technology and develop innovative applications to further revolutionize the user experience in Chicago. The Open311 system also empowers website and smartphone developers to build new applications to submit service requests directly into 311, including location and photo details in the submission.

An informational video on the new technology can be seen [here](#).

**<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AZv3QqFZhPg>**



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"The City's commitment to innovative service delivery, accountability and transparency is fully on display with this new 311 platform," said Code for America Chicago Fellow Angel Kittiyachavalit. "Mayor Emanuel understands the value this online service tracking system has for both city services and residents."

In the initial launch phase of Open311, 14 of the most requested service types are available for submissions, including graffiti; potholes; and non-functioning street lights. Other service types will be added to the system later.

The next phase of the Open311 program will also include an enhanced ChiTEXT tool, which will give Chicagoans the ability to submit and track service requests via smartphone text messaging.

The Open311 technology was developed through a partnership between the City's Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT) and Code for America, and was funded in part by the Smart Chicago Collaborative.

Code for America, a non-profit loosely based on Teach for America, recruits the top talent from the technology industry to give a year of service to build innovative web applications for city governments.

Code for America selected the City of Chicago as one of only eight cities to be a part of its 2012 national fellowship program, thanks to Chicago's demonstration of cutting-edge thinking and its willingness to invest in long-term change through the development of new web-based technology.

Through a competitive process, Code for America chooses cities whose proposals reflected a deep understanding of the power that technology can bring to cities. The 2012 Fellows will build on the success of Code for America's inaugural projects in Boston, Philadelphia, and Seattle. For the 2012 program, more than 20 governments applied, and eight finalists were selected.

Last year, the Chicago City Council approved \$300,000 in grant funding from the Smart Chicago Collaborative to pay for the costs associated with the Code for America fellowship program to develop the open online interface for the 311 system.

Since taking office in May 2011, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel has made significant reforms and investments in information technology and data transparency. Emanuel's Chief Technology Officer John Tolva, DoIT Commissioner Brett Goldstein and their team have been tasked with leveraging technology to ensure that the City delivers better services at a lower cost to taxpayers.

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