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Board Matter
Improving Customer Service
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An informed and engaged constituency is a well-served constituency. Today, a convergence of websites, mobile devices, public information, online services, technology tools and social media focuses on how to best serve the customer – which for us means Fairfax County residents and businesses.

We already have some options for the public to engage with us to get things done, fixed or reported. Last year, the Office of Public Affairs unveiled a new, single phone number, email address and Twitter account that's easy to remember -- 703-FAIRFAX. Residents can call, email or tweet 703-FAIRFAX.

Many county agencies have implemented policies and practices meant to improve customer service. Land Development Services created a new Customer and Technical Support Center. The Fairfax County Library has made access to ebooks easier for tablet devices. Fairfax Connector actively responds to riders on social media to answer concerns and allay confusion. Neighborhood and Community Services allows the community to apply for field or gym space online, as well as manage schedules, submit rosters and pay fees.

However, these efforts only begin to tackle what many in our region and across the country are accomplishing. Many jurisdictions already have or will

soon boast dedicated call centers, tracking numbers, mobile apps and intuitive websites focused on a more unified approach to customer service. Our current online phone directory for the public has more than 500 entries. We should not expect busy parents or tired commuters to navigate our organizational chart to determine the best contact for a county service. Additionally, many of our services overlap departments or even levels of government.

We need to make the customer service experience of our government more intuitive and easy for our more than 1 million residents. A more coordinated approach would allow us to track trends and act quickly to meet the needs of Fairfax County residents and businesses.

Therefore, I request the Office of Public Affairs lead a countywide, cross-agency study as to how to improve the customer service experience, covering all platforms – mobile apps, texting, email, websites, phone and other new options that may deliver services better, more efficiently and more cost effectively. I ask OPA to investigate best practices from across the country, especially the use of new technological tools like Open311. Finally, I ask that OPA provide recommendations to the Board before the FY2013 Carryover Review to move forward in providing a cohesive, consistent and integrated customer service approach so we can better serve our constituents.