

# City of Houston Picks Unisys for New Call Center Project

The City of Houston is the fourth largest city in the United States, with an estimated population of two million. The city government provides the citizens of Houston with a multitude of services including police, fire, airports, libraries, water, sewage, garbage, maintenance and health resources. City offices receive hundreds of thousands of calls from citizens each year.

Currently, City of Houston call-taking functions are decentralized. Each city department has established multiple telephone numbers that citizens must use to relay specific inquiries and complaints and each handles non-emergency requests from citizens in various ways.

## Premium, Consistent Level of Customer Service

The city knew that it wanted to provide a premium, consistent level of customer service to city residents. In January 1999, Mayor Lee P. Brown appointed a task force coordinated by Donald K. Hollingsworth, director of the Mayor's Office for Public Safety and Drug Policy to study the feasibility of activating the abbreviated telephone number 3-1-1 for citizens to access non-emergency municipal services.

The task force determined that citizens of the City of Houston would benefit from one easily remembered number, in contrast to more than 700 telephone numbers published in the local telephone directory "government" pages.

When operational, the newly created 3-1-1-call center will house more than 100 call takers. These telecommunicators will handle customer inquiries and concerns via voice, fax, Internet, e-mail and Web chat. The goal is for the telecommunicators to provide resolution to citizen concerns in the first call, using a knowledge database and work order management system that Unisys will integrate and deliver.

The City of Houston chose Unisys Corporation as its systems integrator for the 3-1-1 project.

## Unisys has Proven History

"The City of Houston evaluation committee unanimously scored Unisys the most qualified candidate to deliver a solution for the complex tasks specified in a Request for Proposal," says Michael J. Antash, 3-1-1 Core Implementation Team project manager.

"Unisys possesses a proven history in developing customer call centers for a variety of industries, and is a world leader in delivering system integration solutions."

The 3-1-1 center will be responsible for handling all non-emergency requests from citizens, reducing the strain on the emergency phone system, improving overall service to City of Houston residents, and enhancing the relationship between citizens and government.