

Discussion Topic: Government Access / Communications
4Business – Benchmarking to be the Best for Business – December 9, 2019

	Key Issues Identified	Recent Improvements / Possible Solutions <i>Please Note: Recent Improvements are printed in BLACK, Possible Solutions from Listening Sessions & Survey in BLUE, Possible Solutions from 11/20 Charrette in PURPLE</i>
1	Need better customer service from County staff	<p>Some departments have recently begun or completed Customer Service Training, specifically the Office of Procurement and Department of Permitting Services</p> <p>Need to determine how to measure effectiveness of training; incorporate into performance management</p> <p>Encourage county departments and agencies to consider customer service training for their employees</p>
2	County staff needs to better understand the needs of business	<p>Council Bill 10-19, which was enacted in late July and will be effective 3/1/20, strengthens the Council’s economic impact studies (EIS) and requires that the EIS examine a bill’s potential positive or negative effects, if any, on the County’s workforce, taxation policy, property values, incomes, operating costs to business and non-profits operating in the County, capital investment from the private sector, economic development, and the County’s competitiveness.</p> <p>Include business representatives when considering legislation and/or improvements to the regulatory environment</p> <p>Create a business advisory council to develop mechanisms for ongoing recommendations from the business community for continuous improvement</p> <p>More emphasis on the needs of small, multi-cultural businesses</p>
3	Responses from calls to 311 are not always helpful, or timely	<p>MC311 has been focusing on listening to the customers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted 2 focus groups with customers to better understand concerns • Conducting quarterly surveys to understand ways to improve service • Increased the number of customer service representatives to improve hold times

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 Spanish speaking customer service representatives • Exploring technology enhancements to improve service to customers, including texting, automated email acknowledgement, etc. <p>MC311 team is looking at the concerns that came up related to Permitting questions, and is meeting with the Department of Permitting to discuss business process improvements that would address the customer service concerns that were raised at the November 20 charrette</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase training and performance feedback to customer service representatives to improve service delivery <p>311 Improvements could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very detailed Q & A's for responders and on the 311 website • Improved search engine • A person/group that only responds to business questions and knows specific people in departments to refer the callers to, with emphasis on Permitting & Procurement • Ability to email solution links from department websites to callers • Interpreters for the main languages spoken in the County • Listing of all 21 municipalities & contacts for referral <p>Concern that 311 doesn't understand the urgency of business questions, and suggestion that businesses be given direct numbers to call in each department for a quicker response</p>
4	Inconsistent level of response from different employees – some great, some not very helpful	<p>Need to introduce more customer service training, determine how to measure effectiveness of training, and incorporate into performance management</p> <p>Include random recording of calls to evaluate how well staff is communicating with callers</p>
5	Not enough coordination between departments	To address this issue, we need more specific examples and details

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6	Too hard to find business assistance - Need more small business Navigators, need Spanish speaking Navigator	<p>A comprehensive “Business Portal” has been created on the County website which has tabs containing very specific information and resources. Tabs include: Start a Business, Grow a Business, Manage a Business, Licenses & Permits, Regulations & Laws, Services & Resources, Business Starter Kits, FAQ’s, Contact Info, and the site also has a Calendar of Business Workshops – most that you can sign up for through that link.</p> <p>Recently the staff of the Business Solutions Group has been assigned to various Regional Government Centers, to make them more accessible to businesses. They will also meet with businesses at their location.</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive communications strategy to promote where and how businesses can find information about available programs</p> <p>Identify ways to better communicate with our multi-lingual, multi-cultural business community</p> <p>Consider adding an on-line information/meeting request tool on the Business Portal, identifying the assistance that is needed so that the response can be targeted.</p>
7	County website is too complicated	<p>Need specific suggestions for improvement, and suggestions of how to promote all the information that is currently available on the website</p> <p>Too many “clicks” before getting to answers, confusing menus, no uniformity from department to department</p> <p>Better communication on how to effectively use main Search Bar on County home page</p>
8	County should be more proactive in communicating the services they provide	Currently using Mont Co Govt social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Next Door), County website, news releases, Paperless Airplane newsletter, Spanish radio show, County Report this Week and digital screens throughout the County to communicate business news

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		<p>Greater focus on business related news on these outlets</p> <p>Investigating a business focused newsletter</p> <p>Gain better understanding of where businesses go to get their information and communicate County information through those channels</p> <p>County should toot its own horn more on accomplishments that affect business</p> <p>County should highlight business related news, especially when it could change perception. For example, the cost of office space is going down, and most businesses perceive it as higher than other jurisdictions and going up</p>