DowntownDC BID

INNOVATION

The purpose of the Salesforce–311 integration project was to increase the efficiency, organization, and efficacy of the DowntownDC BID's efforts to monitor and manage public space defects within BID boundaries. The project was intended as a tool for the BID to improve its workflows. As far as the DowntownDC BID or Cube84 is aware this is the first project able to integrate an independent Salesforce database directly with a city's 311 system.

This allows the BID to use the tools Salesforce has to offer to manage and report more effectively on public space defects. The BID can track all the interactions it has with the city under the case details page and all interactions are tied to the BID's internal contacts and buildings. It also allows for the information to be viewed organization wide. This has truly integrated case management with the rest of the BID's Salesforce universe.

The project allows for a unique look at case management that isn't available to other BID's trying to manage public space. The BID can also use custom list views in Salesforce to segment cases by type, requestor, urgency level, or location.The project also allows for the BID to easily make custom, compelling dashboards to view case data. There is even a custom dashboard that allows staff to see the distribution of cases by any number of groupable criteria, all in one spot. This gives the BID access to powerful analytics and organizational capacity that it never would have had without an integration.

OUTCOME

The impact of the project was improved efficiency and capacity in managing cases. The project also provides the BID with a more structured approach to case management, keeping the BID more organized and saving a great deal of time in managing an often-cumbersome process.

Outcomes include:

- First, the BID no longer has to report cases to 311 and record the details of the case in an excel spreadsheet to track. This already increased efficiency by 100 percent.

- It also allowed the BID to keep a time stamped log of all the interactions it had with the different players involved with the case directly on the case details page. The BID can send emails to its Salesforce contacts from Salesforce and tie them to the case in an instant.

- It saves the BID a lot time in its monthly reports on public space defects. The reporting dashboards can be refreshed to show the most up to date information in seconds providing the BID with data visualizations to push out on demand.

- The additional structure and process has made the BID much more effective in managing its cases. There are countdowns to tell the BID when a case is overdue and requires follow ups with the city. It also allows the BID to set reminders and tasks for future dates and pushes them to staff emails.

- The number of cases that go overdue has significantly dropped since the project was implemented.

EXECUTION

The project was completed with a standard project model.

- The first step was exploration and requirements gathering. Cube84 sat down with the DowntownDC BID to figure out what the project needed to achieve and all the functionalities it required.

- The next step was for Cube84 to build the Salesforce-based, public-space defect tracking database. There were weekly check-ins to track the progress of the project. Once the project was completed the DowntownDC BID performed user acceptance testing. Every aspect of the program was tested to see if there were any bugs. Once a few rounds of this occured the project was ready to go live. There were fixes along the way as the project started to be used on an everyday basis. Cube84

and the BID were in close contact through during this time and Cube84 was incredibly responsive with bug patches.

- The entire project from exploration to going live took approximately three months. The project adhered to the timeline Cube84 gave at the beginning of the project. The quality of work by Cube84 exceeded all the BID's expectations; any minor mistakes that were made were quickly remedied.

REPRESENTATION
The project was inclusive of DowntownDC BID's partners. The BID was very mindful to include all stakeholders on this project form the beginning. DC's Office of Unified Communication (OUC) who manages the city's 311 system was looped in from day one. Cube84 worked extensively with OUC to make sure that they weren't just okay with the BID connecting to their API, but that they were supporters and advocates of it. The BID wanted to make sure that OUC was able to see the benefit of the project and wanted them to get excited about it rather than feel like it was an obligation. This was purposeful from the beginning. The BID had no interest in doing this project if it couldn't get its partners excited about it first. The project did not include the community, but it does directly benefit them by improving the public space around them.

REPLICATION
The project has stoked intrigue across the nation. BIDs from all over the country can implement the same concept with their own city's 311 system. BIDs in the District of Columiba are uniquely positioned to take advantage of this idea since their city's 311 system also runs on Salesforce. However, this can be replicated in any city with a similar 311 system. The DowntownDC BID has already received calls from several BIDs asking about the project with the intent of replication in their own cities. Cube84 has also been advertising this project to a lot of other BIDs that take an interest in managing public space defects. The concept has a lot to offer in the way of organization, efficiency, and reporting capability; it would make a lot of sense for other organizations to try to introduce this level of structure to management of public space.

COMPLEXITY/SIMPLICITY
The real beauty of this project is how it took a really complicated build out and made it incredibly simple and intuitive to the end user. The biggest challenge of this project, and the most complex element, was successfully connecting to the city's 311 API. There was a degree of uncertainty surrounding this element, because Cube84 didn't have experience with this specific API. However, once Cube84 successfully connected to the API, the project became much more straightforward.

Cube84 was able to use a lot of pre-built functionality in Salesforce. It looks like the rest of DowntownDC's Salesforce interface; it's intuitive to anyone who regularly uses the program. Reports and dashboards work the same as they would with any other piece of information the BID collects and reports on. The project was able to take something complex and seamlessly blend it to the rest of Salesforce. The new functionality is easy to use and easy to learn.