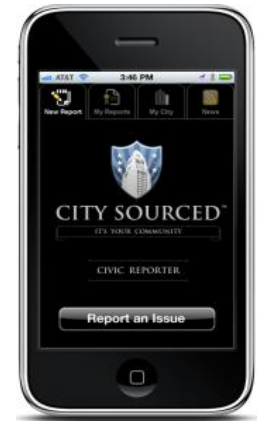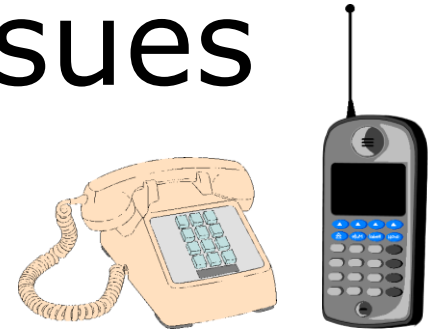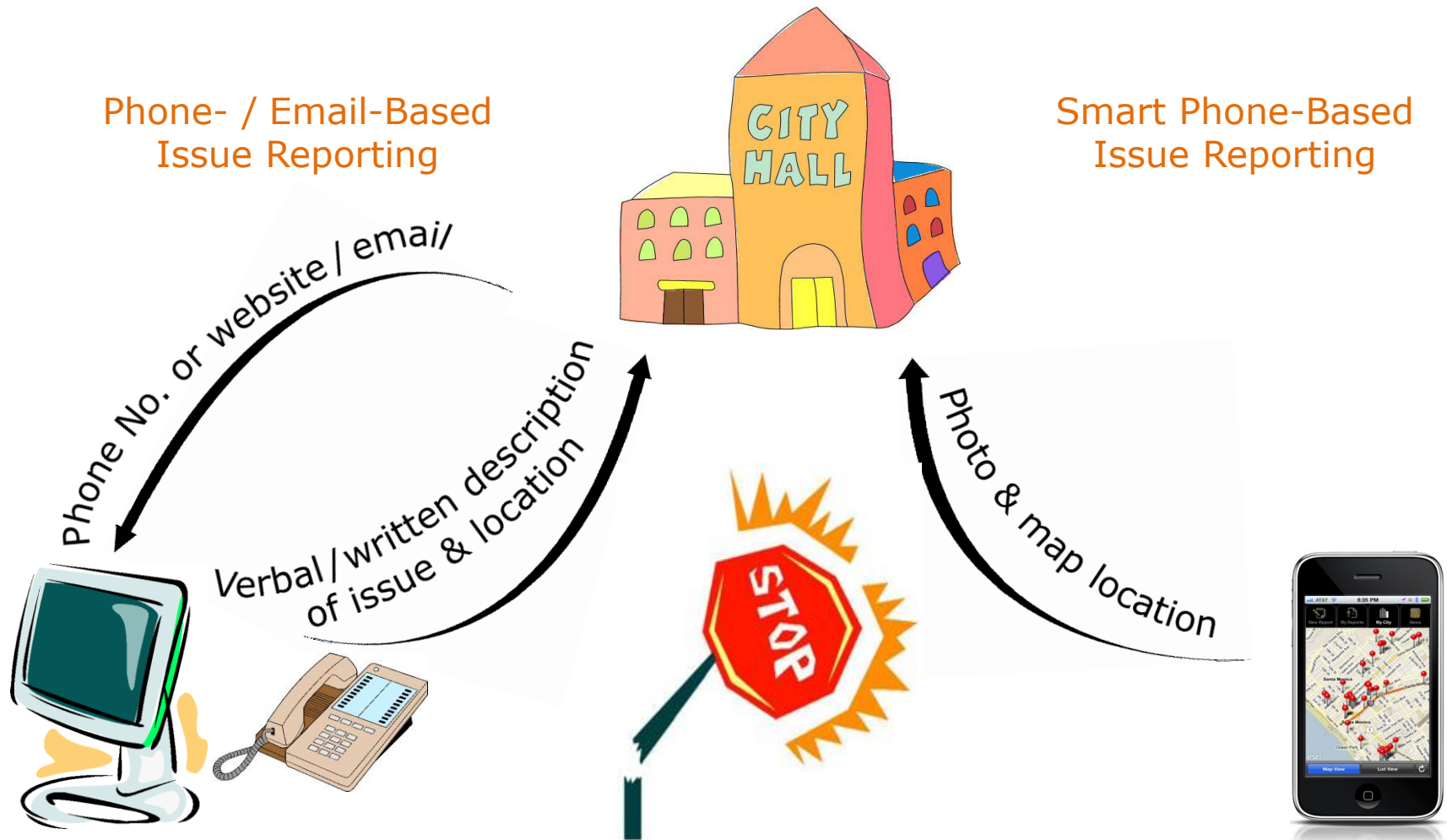# Mobilizing Citizens to Report Civic Issues

Adam Chadwick

GIS Manager

City of Kamloops

Reporting Civic Issues

- Traditional approach:
  - Citizen sees an issue then phones or emails in the problem
- New approach:
  - App used to report issues in the field
  - Adds smart phone capabilities
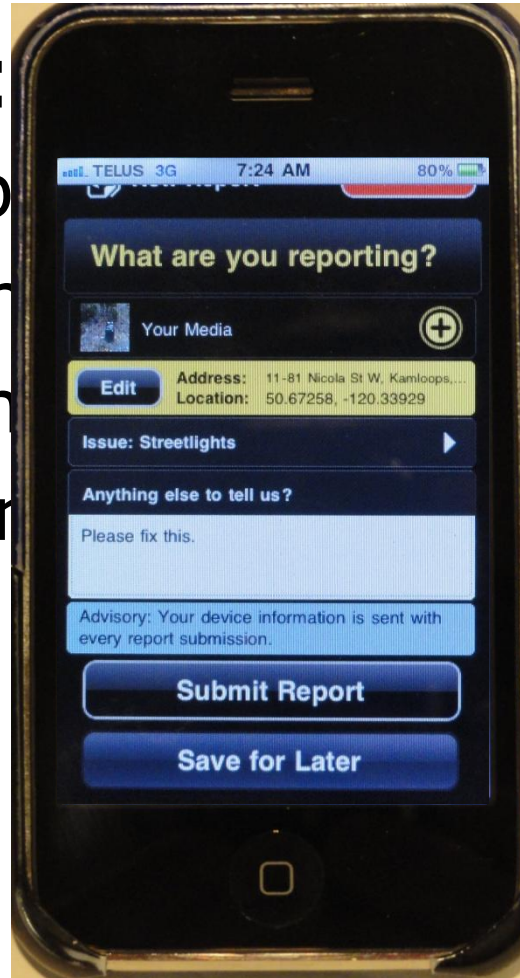   - Photo (or video/audio)
    - Location (GPS/mapping)

Citizen Perspective:
Issue Reporting Options

Phone- / Email-Based
Issue Reporting

Smart Phone-Based
Issue Reporting

CITY HALL

Phone No. or website / email

Verbal / written description of issue & location

Photo & map location

STOP

App Approach

- Submitter:
  - Photograp
  - Identify th
  - Classify th
  - Add option
  - Submit.

- Drainage / Flooding
- Fences / Walls
- Graffiti / Vandalism
- Litter Pickup
- Parks – General
- Potholes Signs
- Snow / Ice
- Sidewalks
- Streetlights
- Streets – General
- Trails / Walkways
- Trees
- Utilities / Infrastructure
- Other

Sample Report

Parks - General - Issue Reported in Kamloops, BC

Reported On: 05/10/2012 @ 07:34 PM PST
Reported By: Citizen28521
Address: 388 Aberdeen Dr, Kamloops, BC V1S, Canada
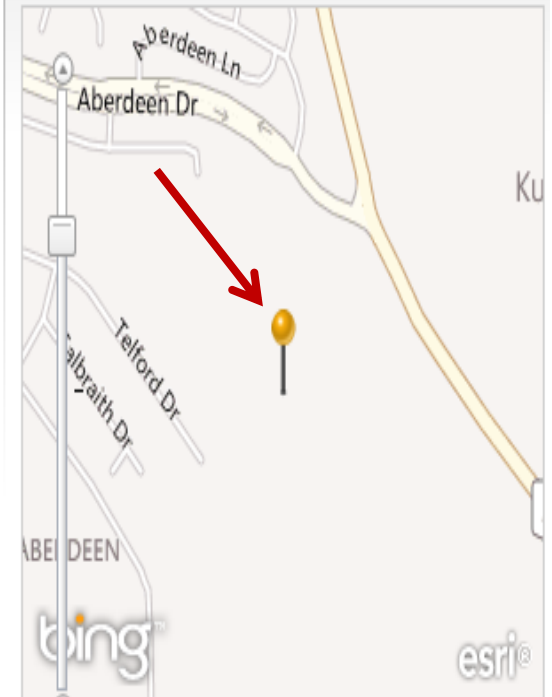Latitude: 50.634827
Longitude: -120.349062
Direction: East
Device: Android Galaxy Nexus
Current Status: In Process

Description: Tree down on trail. Braiding occurring as people detour. Off road vehicle tracks also present.

Where Is This Report?

Handling Issue Reports

- City staff review submitted reports via a web-based console

Handling Issue Reports

- Depts. review issue description, map location and photo used to ensure appropriate crews, materials, equipment, etc., are assigned
  - Often the photo alone identifies location and scope of the problem
  - In theory, location as indicated by the map can be used to dispatch crews more efficiently

Reasons Why We're Doing this

- Customer Satisfaction
  – By simplifying the process of reporting issues it's more likely that issues will be reported (and then fixed)

- Efficiency
  – There are many more citizens that can report issues than the City has staff
    (* approx. 15,000 smart phones in the City)

*Pew Research Center, 2011

Some More Reasons…

- Cost Savings – operations
  - Better issue location (map) and description (photo) enable crews to find issues more easily thereby saving time
  - Fixing an issue sooner is usually less expensive than fixing it later

Some More Reasons...

- Cost Savings - input channel shift

Request for Service Type	Best Handled By:	Call Count
Verbal / high priority	Telephone	80,000
By-law / Development	Telephone	20,000
All others	Email / Self Service	40,000
Total Calls for Service (since 1999):		140,000

Channel	Cost/ Transaction
Walk-in	$9.00
Web Chat	$7:00 - $7:50
Live Phone Agent	$4.50 - $5.30
Email	$2.50 - $3.00
Phone - Self Service	$0.45 - $1.85
Web - Self Service	$0.25 - $0.65

Cost breakdown, Forrester Research report, 2009
Social media and self serve apps are considered to be equivalent
 to the Web - Self Service channel
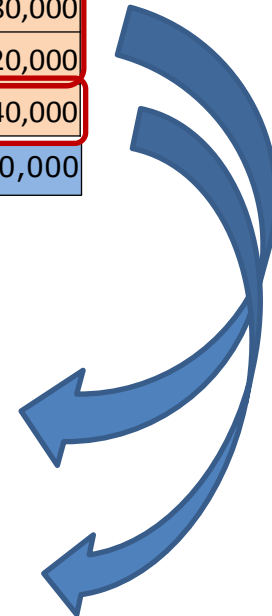
Some More Reasons…

- Citizen Engagement
  - Makes it easier for citizens to interact with the City regarding civic issues
  - Smart phones predominantly used by younger people*

% Use
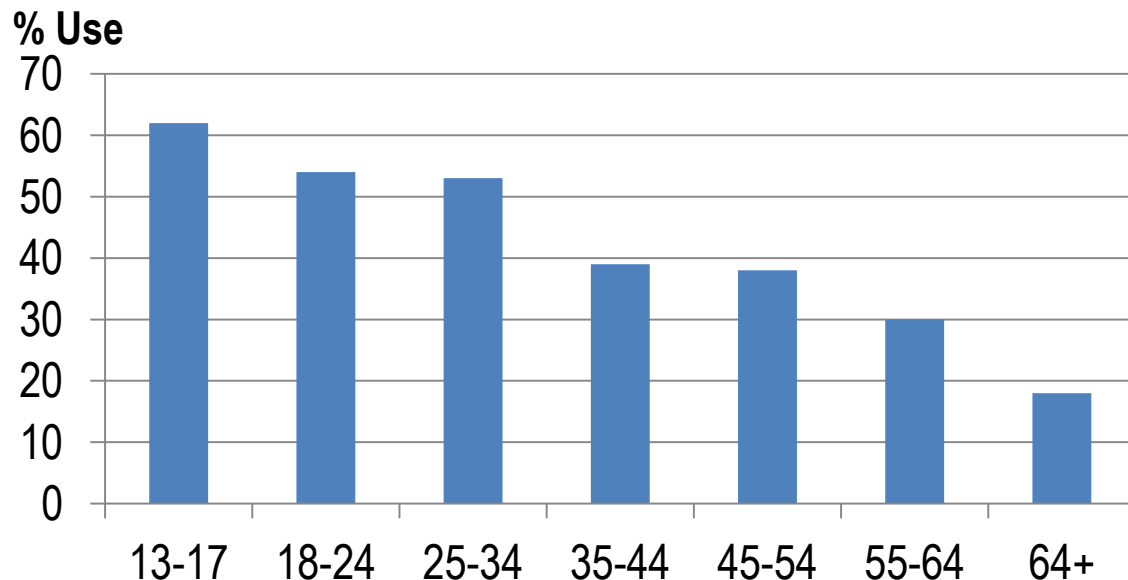
* Neilson, Q3, 2011

Some More Reasons…

- Service Quality
  - Finding out about issues sooner (through easier reporting) can result in them being fixed sooner resulting in better municipal service provision

- Risk & Liability Reduction
  - For the same reason, resulting in less risk and liability to the City

And Even More Reasons…

- New ways of working might be discovered…
  - Could an issue report (with a photo of the issue) <u>emailed</u> to a mobile/field worker assist them in responding better?
  - Can the ability to record issues while a field worker is doing a different task save them time afterwards?

System Interfaces

- Current (Tempest) system is the sole repository for recording all issue reports – currently, the mobile app is an additional <u>input channel only</u> therefore no data silo

- Once Cityworks-Service Requests goes live, then mobile app-sourced issues will be received/entered automatically

Pilot

- 4 month pilot using City staff
- 105 issues submitted
- Training
- Documentation
- Processes
- People issues

Issues Submitted - Pilot

Graffiti / Vandalism

Litter Pickup

Streets - General

Other

Potholes

Trails / Walkways

Signs

Fences / Walls

Trees

Streetlights

Utilities / Infrastructure
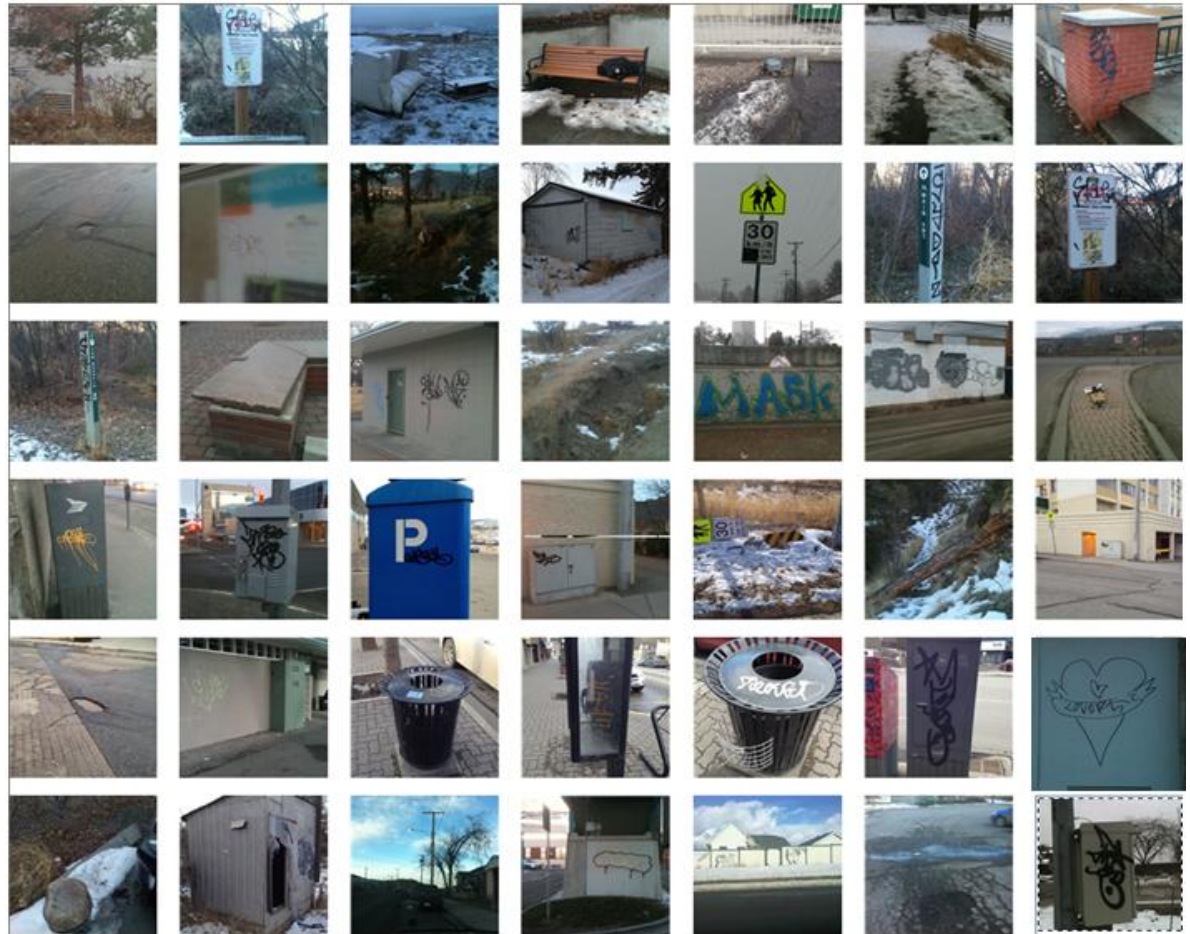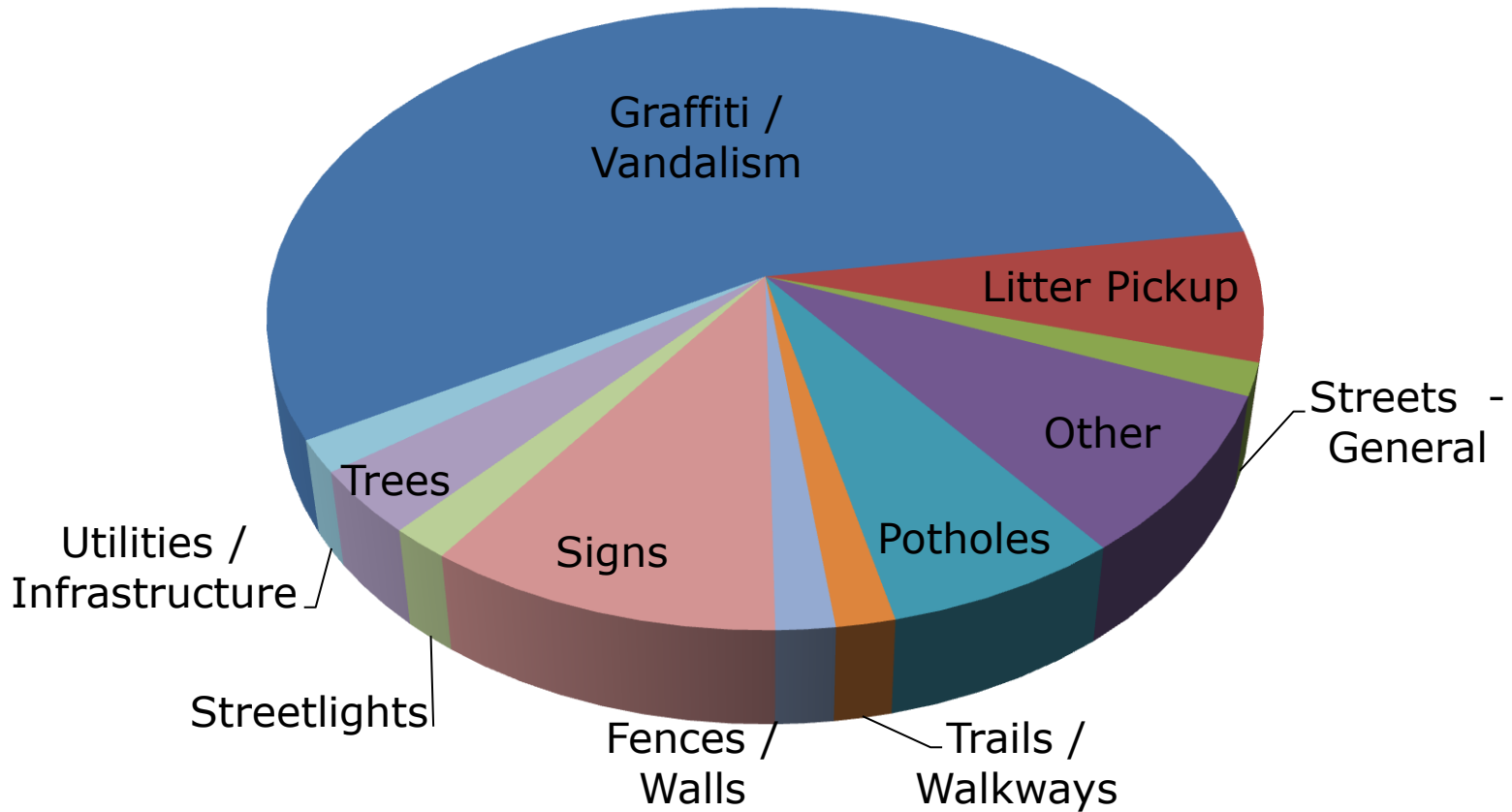
Pilot Concerns/Feedback

1. Ability to handle increased workload
   – Would staff be allowed to extend beyond "48 hrs to respond" service level?
     • Areas of concern:
       – By-Laws (graffiti)
       – Streets (potholes)
       – Parks (litter)

Pilot Concerns/Feedback

2. Coordination of issue <u>closing</u> (in the system) and issue <u>fixing</u> (in the field)

 – Some departments close issues (in Tempest, and therefore the mobile app) before they're fixed in the field

 – The public would become aware of this due to automatic issue Status change push notifications indicating when an issue is closed

   • Options:

   1. Send manual notification indicating predicted fix date for when issues are closed before they're fixed   X

   2. Delay closing of an issue to when an issue is fixed   X

   3. Don't notify submitters when an issue is closed   √

Public Launch

- Media invite – TV, newspaper, radio
  - Discussion & demonstration of the app
- News release, Twitter, facebook, etc.
- Quarterly utility bill insert

Introducing "myKamloops" mobile app

"myKamloops" is the City's first smartphone app, available for iPhones, Blackberrys, Androids, and Windows phones.

Use myKamloops to notify City crews and create a call for service for graffiti, potholes, fallen trees, over flowing garbage cans, obscurred or fallen signs, and other similar incidents. With myKamloops, you can track the status of your request or keep abreast of important news. You can even send a photo, video, or audio clip with your report.

Go to www.kamloops.ca/mobileapp to learn more.

- Parks & Rec brochure
- City calendar distributed to all households
- Great response/public feedback
- 6 months in and all is well

Issues Submitted
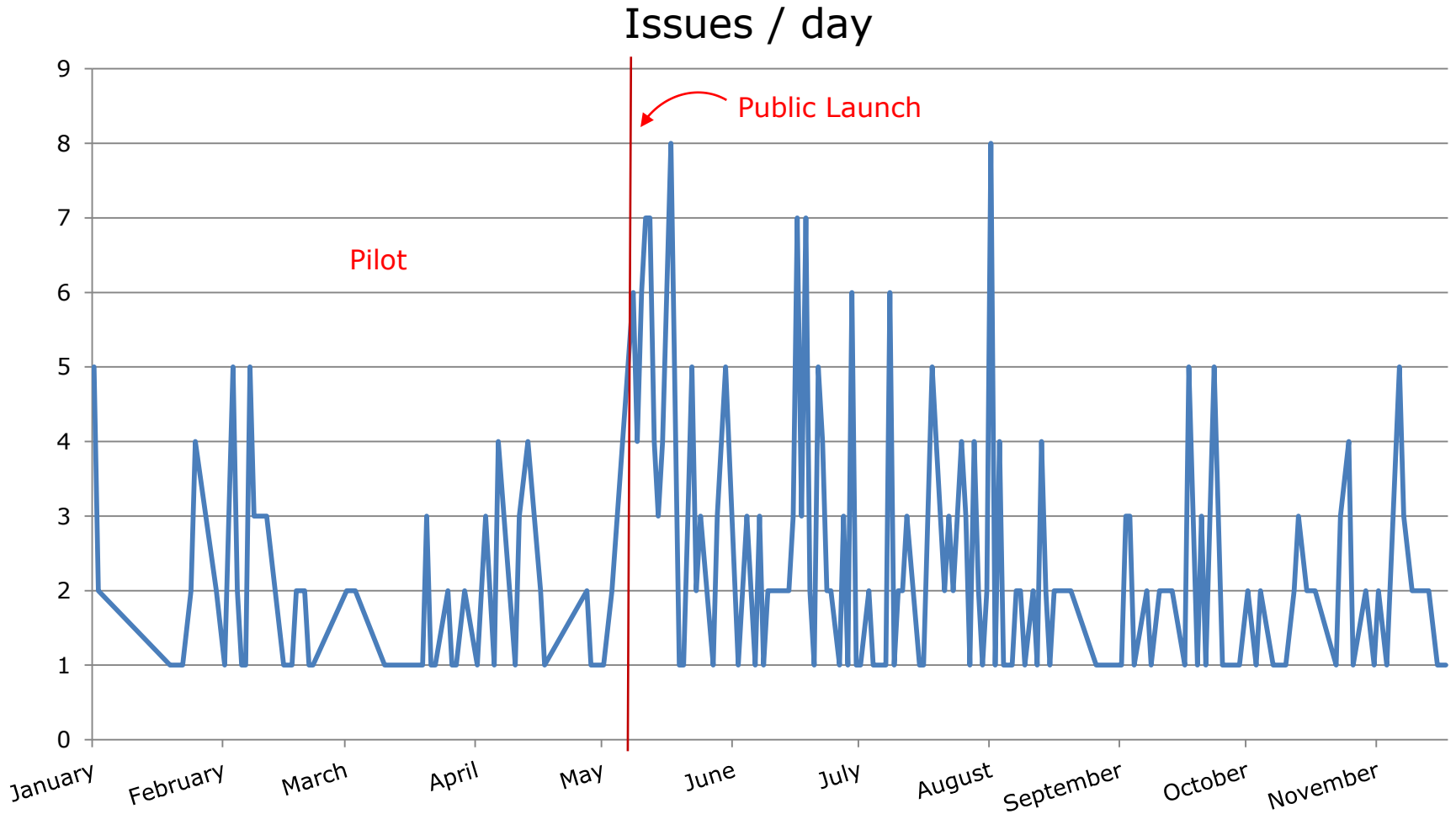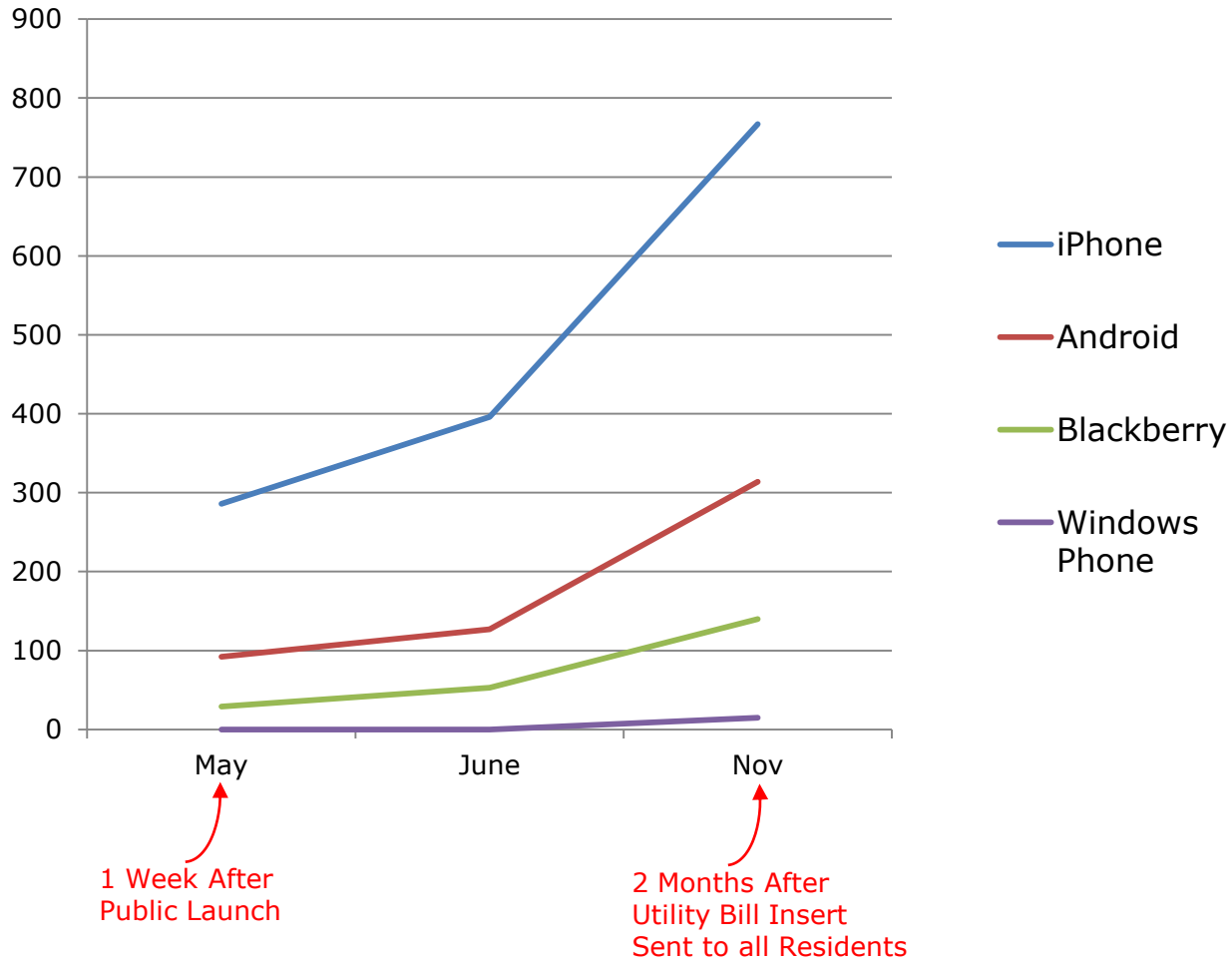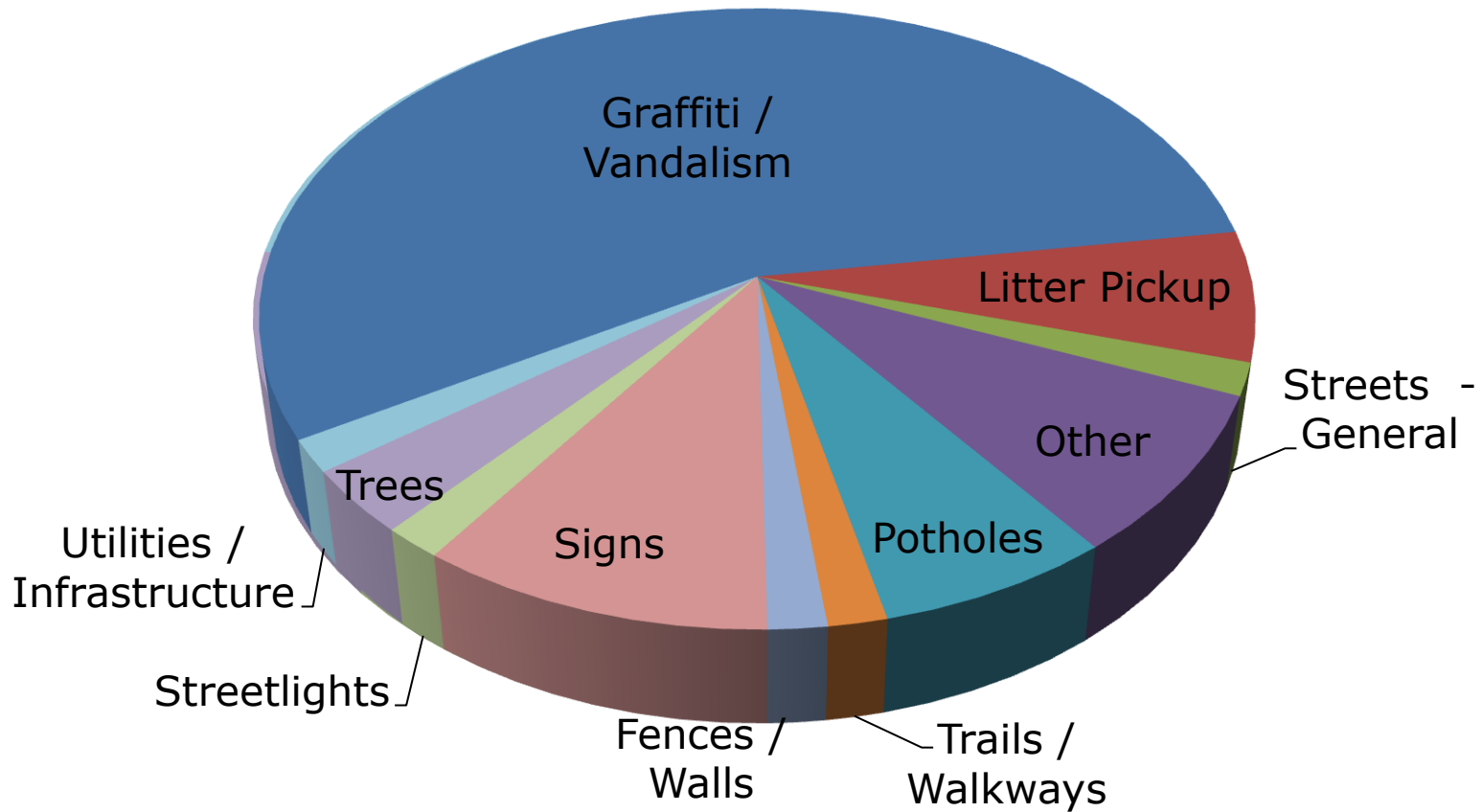

* Average of 2 issues submitted/day, 7 days/week

App Download Counts

* 142 unique submitters/app users

Cost/Benefit

- Are there sufficient benefits for the cost?

To Summarize…

- Helps our citizens by:
  - Simplifying their ability to report issues
- Helps the City by:
  - Improving reportage of civic issues
  - Reducing costs
  - Improving citizen engagement

    "It's a wicked app. I feel like I control the entire Kamloops staff with the touch of a button."