

City of Edmonds 2011 Preliminary Budget
Frequently Asked Questions
11/29/2010
City Wireless Device Utilization

Blackberry expenditures run about \$3K to \$4K a month with a couple users having bills running around \$500 to \$1K a month. Isn't there a plan that could reduce those excessive amounts and do you have a policy as to who gets Blackberries and who does not?

ANSWER:

The monthly amount that appears on the voucher reports that are forwarded to the Council on a weekly basis show the totals by department, not by user. City policy dictates that assignment of wireless devices (Blackberry/PDAs/Cellular/AirCards) are at the discretion of the mayor and the department directors.

The city currently utilizes (as of October 2010) 47 Blackberrys (down from a high of 52 in June 2008), 24 AirCards, and 59 cellular phones. The average monthly bill (through October 2010) for Blackberry and AirCard service is approximately \$3,863. The city procured the Blackberry and AirCard service through Verizon Government Services Administration plan. The average monthly cellular phone bill for the same period is \$1,226. The city procured the cellular phone service through Verizon's Washington State contract. Given that these services were procured through slightly different mechanisms they appear on two separate bills from Verizon.

Currently, the Blackberry count is anywhere from 1 per department, to the Police Department's (PD) high of 19; AirCard utilization also ranges from a low of 1, held by the Building department to the PD's 12. Cellular usage also varies from the Planning department's 2 to the PD's 22. Please see attached for more detail.

In our centralization of wireless, the metric we strive for is the attainment of the lowest monthly cost per device. For example, for the month of October 2010, the average monthly cost per device is as follows: Blackberry \$56.85 (unlimited data, unlimited text messages); AirCard \$46.97 (unlimited data); Cellular \$19.46 (20,000-pooled minutes citywide).

History

Prior to our current plan (early 2008); the city utilized three vendors for the provision of cellular services. Our inventory consisted of 99 cellular phones (average monthly cost/device was approximately \$40), 2 AirCards (average monthly cost \$65/month), and 3 PDA (Blackberry equivalent), average monthly cost was approximately \$112. The average monthly bill (most of which were cellular phone charges) at that time was \$4,032.

During this time the city’s wireless systems had far less capabilities than our current plan, for example, we did not have Blackberry/PDA capability with our prior plan. In addition, cellular telephone minutes were limited by dept, not pooled across city, which created numerous cost overruns. Lastly, text-messaging capability was limited and more expensive.

2008 – New wireless plan

The current wireless device plan was the result of a citywide effort in 2008 to:

- Provide the lowest cost access to solid technology regarding PDA type devices for City employees.
- Provide cellular phone capabilities at a price point that allows managers to make highest and best use at the lowest cost.
- Allow directors to choose and manage which devices and programs are appropriate for their staff. Information Services manages citywide purchasing and lowest cost support for the technologies.

The features of our current plan include:

For cellular phones:

- Pooled voice minutes across all users
- Two-tiered pricing structure (100 minutes at \$10.99 and 300 minutes at \$19.99 per month) for western regional states calling.

For Blackberrys:

- 300 pooled minutes per Blackberry
- unlimited text messages
- unlimited data

The table below details the comparison between the old plan and our current plan.

Device Type		Average Cost
Blackberry/PDA	\$ 56.85	\$ 112.00
AirCard	46.97	65.00
Cell Phones	19.46	40.00

In conclusion, we believe the current plan is appropriate for city needs. It utilizes one vendor, and provides a major increase in features at price points that are far below our prior plan. Moreover, it allows each city department to utilize wireless technology to further accomplish their mission/function.

VERIZON WIRELESS
Blackberry/Cell Phone/AirCard Analysis
October 2010

DEPT	CELLS	OCT BILL	AVERAGE
BUILDING	5	\$ 120.05	\$ 24.01
ENGINEERING	6	149.88	24.98
FACILITIES	7	115.68	16.53
PARKS	1	14.27	14.27
PARKS MAINT.	2	58.96	29.48
PD	22	475.19	21.60
PLANNING	2	26.54	13.27
PUBLIC WORKS	11	147.78	13.43
WWTP	3	39.81	13.27
TOTAL CELL PHONES	59	\$ 1,148.16	\$ 19.46

	BLACKBERRY	OCT BILL	AVERAGE
BUILDING	1	\$ 56.79	\$ 56.79
CLERK	1	56.79	56.79
COMMUNITY SVCS	1	56.79	56.79
COURT	2	113.58	56.79
DEV SVCS	1	56.79	56.79
ENGINEERING	3	172.41	57.47
FACILITIES	2	119.14	59.57
FINANCE	1	56.79	56.79
HR	1	56.79	56.79
INFO SVCS	3	192.59	64.20
MAYOR	2	113.58	56.79
PARKS	1	58.10	58.10
PD	19	1,026.99	54.05
PLANNING	1	56.79	56.79
PUBLIC WORKS	6	363.14	60.52
WWTP	2	115.03	57.52
SUBTOTAL	47	\$ 2,672.09	\$ 56.85

	AIRCARD	OCT BILL	AVERAGE
BUILDING	1	\$ 43.01	\$ 43.01
ENGINEERING	4	174.92	43.73
INFO SVCS	2	86.16	43.08
MAYOR	1	43.01	43.01
PD	12	607.43	50.62
PUBLIC WORKS	4	172.64	43.16
SUBTOTAL	24	\$ 1,127.17	\$ 46.97

TOTAL BLACKBERRY/AIRCARDS \$ 3,799.26