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POLK COUNTY

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Measurement and Evaluation of a Waste and Recycling Service Request System

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TCD Tropical Conservation & Development Program

MASTER of SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE

BACKGROUND

Map of Florida with Polk County Highlighted
(Source: US News)

Host Organization: Polk County Waste & Recycling Division (the "Division")

Location: Central Florida

Population: 690,606

- The Division provides waste services to unincorporated Polk County through private waste haulers.

- The Division uses a service called QAlert (made by the company QScend) in order to respond to residents' requests and concerns.

- In order to increase transparency and accountability, QAlert shows both the private haulers and the Division when a service request has been submitted by a resident.

- There is a certain time period written into the contracts with the private haulers by which any issues should be addressed.
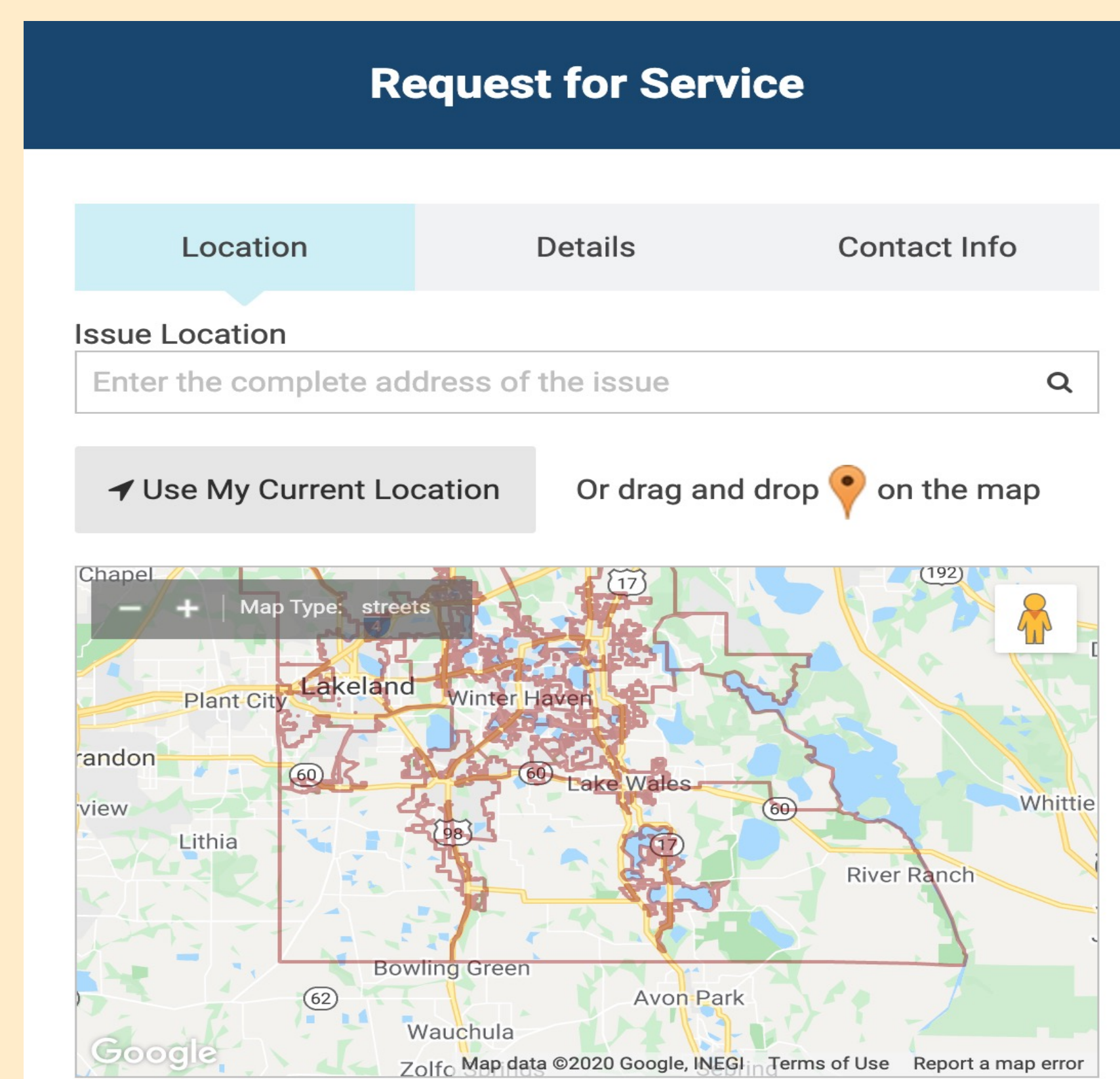

Screenshot of QAlert's Resident Interface

- The Division seeks to measure the average service request processing time and improve the efficiency of the online request system.

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL: Decrease the average processing time of the Division's customer service agents.

OBJECTIVES

- Devise a method to measure average processing time.

- Identify pressure points within the QAlert system that may be negatively affecting processing times.

- Research similar online platforms throughout the state of Florida.

- Suggest specific changes to request for service online form.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the changes in the QAlert system.
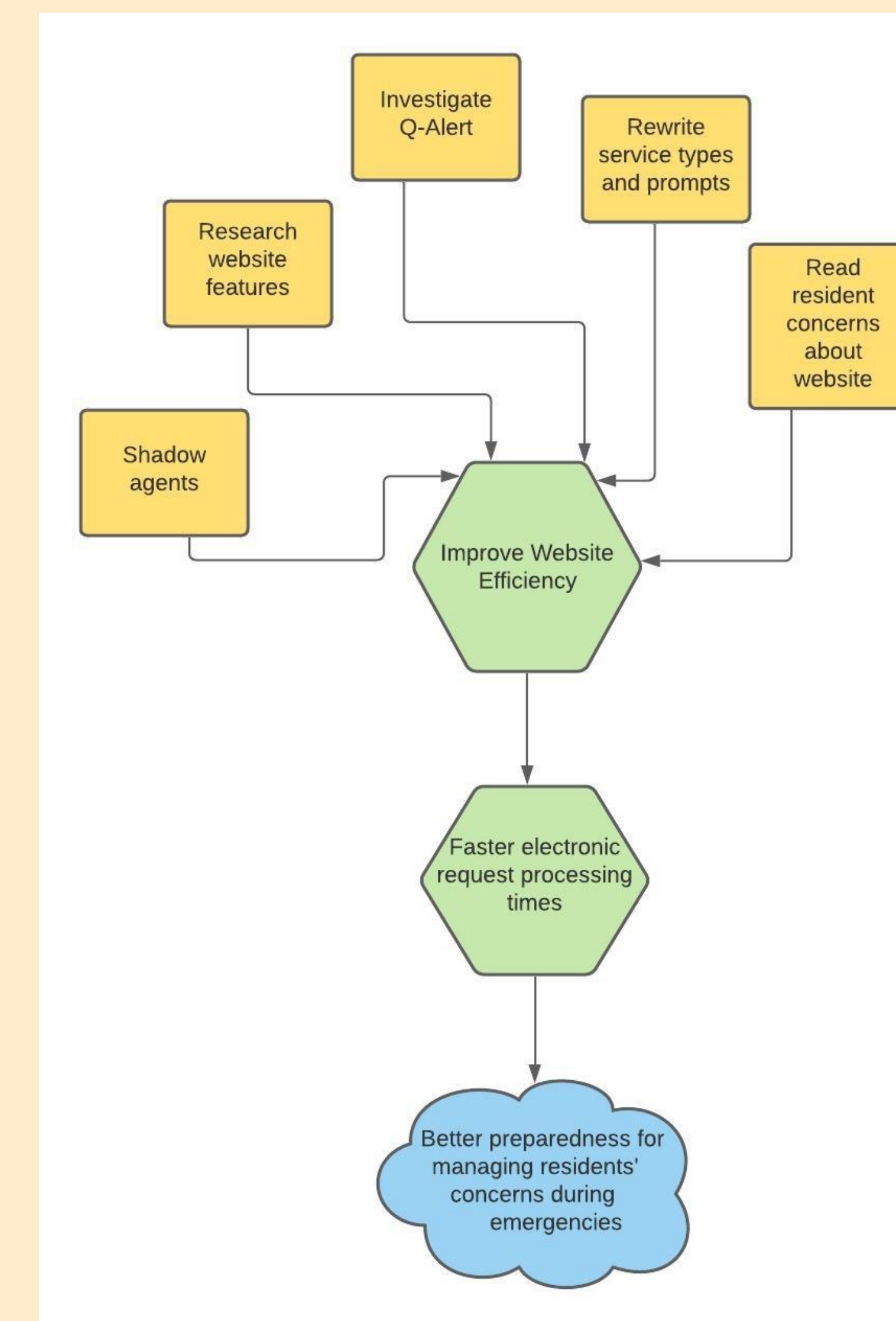
Tasks used to complete goal of the project

METHODS

- Devised a time tracking tool used by the agents to measure their average processing time.

- Used the QAlert system to identify key features about each service request made during the time tracking periods to understand trends.

- Shadowed customer service agents while they worked to understand and learn from the process.

- Systematically researched the websites of all the municipalities and counties in Florida.

- Consulted QScend to ascertain which changes were feasible. Adapted the website to incorporate features to improve processing time.

- Measured the average processing times after changes had been made.

RESULTS AND DICUSSION

Key issues causing delays:

- Address conflicts

- Mobile application interface

- Incorrect service type

- Incomplete information

- Duplicate service requests

- Extraneous service requests

- Differences in agent processing style

Changes in website resulted in 10-second reduction in average processing time.
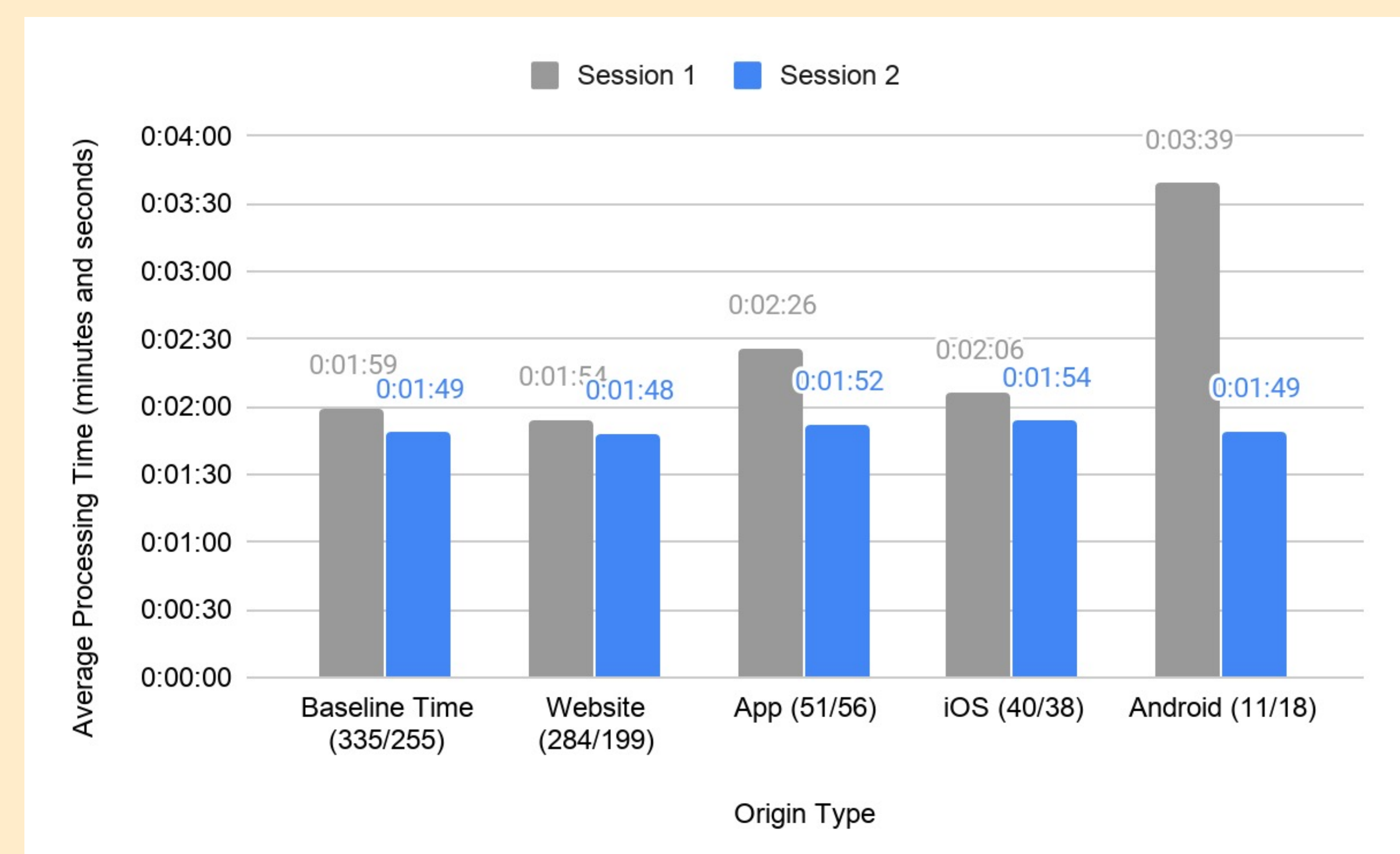
Average Processing Times Before (grey) and After (blue) Separated by Origin

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