
Continuous Improvement Strategy – 2017 Update

Recommendation

1. That the report of the Acting General Manager, Corporate Performance Department dated May 14, 2018, be received as information; and
2. That the report be forwarded to the Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting on May 22, 2018, and linked to Saskatoon Strides: 2017 Report on Service, Savings, and Sustainability.

Topic and Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the partnerships, reviews, and initiatives that took place in 2017 in support of the Continuous Improvement (CI) Strategy.

Report Highlights

1. In 2009, the City began focusing on creating a culture of continuous improvement.
2. The CI Strategy, approved by City Council in 2014, solidified the City's commitment by including a Culture of Continuous Improvement as one of its seven strategic goals.
3. More than 40 reviews, partnerships, and initiatives were completed by the Performance Improvement Coordinators in 2017.
4. 2018 and beyond has planned activities, continuing to build upon the city's culture of continuous improvement.

Strategic Goals

This report supports the strategic goal of a Culture of Continuous Improvement by going beyond conventional approaches to meet changing needs and expectations of citizens and the organization to help the City become the best managed city in Canada.

Background

City Council, at its meeting held on April 24, 2017, considered the Options to Address 2017 Provincial Budget Impact report; and resolved, in part:

“That the Administration report back at the appropriate time regarding opportunities to accelerate the continuous improvement work with a view to identifying ongoing operational savings.”

Report

Continuous Improvement Starts in 2009

In 2009, the City identified that modern cities need to be increasingly creative, innovative, and proactive in planning, problem solving, and decision making if they are to be successful in the new world economy. The pace of change was accelerating and the diversity of issues that the city was facing was becoming more complex. It was clear in cities, including the City of Saskatoon, that thinking had to change in order to remain

competitive and ultimately successful in addressing existing and emerging issues. This remains true today.

Over the past decade, this accelerated and complex change has created an expectation gap with citizens, as expectations changed in such a way that skills and abilities of municipal government and employees were insufficient to meet new demands. In response, the Administration reviewed how the city operated and identified a strategy to become more adaptive and responsive in order to improve service, increase savings, and grow the city in a sustainable way.

In order for the City to achieve its goals, employees needed to be part of the solution. Training was provided to employees at all levels to help think differently about work being performed, improve service to citizens, and take ownership of results.

Strategic Goal – A Culture of Continuous Improvement

In 2012, City Council approved the Strategic Plan, one of the seven strategic goals being A Culture of Continuous Improvement. Since then the City has identified over \$400M in reduced expenditures, deferred costs, savings, and additional revenues.

In 2014, the Continuous Improvement (CI) Strategy was launched as a corporate-wide approach to ensuring effectiveness and improving efficiencies in municipal services and operations.

A Formal Approach to Continuous Improvement

In 2017, four temporary Performance Improvement Coordinators (PICs) were hired through Service Saskatoon, adding to one permanent position who had been supporting the entire organization for two years. This new team of five was integral in employing the CI Strategy; they developed program documents, standards, training modules, and took time to understand the operational environment. Attachment 1, Performance Improvement Coordinator (PIC) Team provides an overview of the training and expertise PICs bring to the organization.

PICs were assigned to Civic Service Reviews (CSRs) and Internal Processes Reviews (IPRs), working with divisions to help analyze the current state, identify opportunities for an improved future state, and achieve their improvement needs. Attachment 2, outlines a 4-Year Plan (2017-2021) for the Continuous Improvement Strategy and aligns this plan with the Internal Audit Plan and Service Saskatoon development.

CSRs are an operational review process to find ways to control expenditures and seek efficiencies in the delivery of programs and services, through identifying redundancies and inefficiencies in the City's operations and improving them. Attachment 3, Utility Cuts Civic Service Review Close Out Report, provides an example of a CSR Summary Report. IPRs are condensed CSRs.

In addition to CSRs and IPRs, the PIC partnership support model was created in 2017. Partnerships are a 6-month commitment where the PIC is embedded in the division for

long-term, daily improvement support. In 2017/18, PICs partnered with the following divisions:

- Roadways & Operations (complete)
- Water & Waste Stream (complete)
- Parks (complete)
- Saskatoon Transit (in progress)
- Construction & Design (in progress)

Building Capacity in the Organization

Building CI awareness and capacity across the organization is integral to the success of a CI program and ensures employees have knowledge to conduct reviews on their own. Three Lunch & Learn series were hosted, each consisting of eight 1-hour sessions held over lunch where employees learn the basics of process mapping, spaghetti diagrams, affinity diagrams, and other continuous improvement tools in a casual environment. To date, over 200 employees have participated.

In addition to the Lunch & Learns, an 8-hour CI course is offered in the spring and fall. This course dives deeper into methodologies in an interactive, classroom environment. The course is a component of the Supervisor 101 course for managers and supervisors. Since its inception in 2015, 120 employees have completed this course.

Hosting learning opportunities allows for cross-divisional relationship building during sessions. Conversations are triggered during the course, resulting in continued conversations back in the workplace. Employees are provided with tools that can be used to implement CI initiatives on their own, and PICs remain available for support. Involving employees in reviews also supports the employee engagement strategy. In 2017:

- Twelve CSRs were conducted involving 12 divisions in cross-divisional meetings and collaboration.
- Twenty-five IPRs were conducted involving dozens of cross-divisional representation, resulting in new relationships and developing relationships between strategic business partners.
- Over 1,000 hours of facilitations and meetings were held with teams in order to improve workplace processes, define success, and identify strategies to support continuous improvement.
- Over 25 process maps were developed which will be used for Service Saskatoon's future Customer Relationship Management (CRM) program.

Working in partnership, Service Saskatoon, PICs, and Information Technology teams work with divisions to define service levels and key performance indicators for core services. Teams also work with divisions to document current state and future state process maps with the goal of having an inventory of services ready to implement into a permanent enterprise CRM system.

Since 2014, every division in the organization has had representation and/or involvement in a CSR, IPR, PIC partnership, Lunch & Learn series, or customized facilitation.

Public and/or Stakeholder Involvement

CSRs and IPRs have typically included only City of Saskatoon employees. However, more recently a private development review involved developers from the business community, representatives from the Downtown Business Improvement District, and Councillor Block. Reviews have support of the appropriate Directors as well as the individuals effected.

Additionally, in early 2017 a public survey and co-design session for the snow and ice winter mobility engagement initiative was hosted by Roadways & Operations with support of a PIC and Communications division. This initiative was widely viewed as a success in gathering new and detailed insights into the challenges citizens face as they move around Saskatoon in the winter. The co-design session included more than 30 members of the public as well as Councillor Dubois, Councillor Iwanchuk, and Mayor Clark. The survey had more than 1,800 responses.

Communication Plan

In 2017, the Performance Improvement Plan's Communication Plan was updated from its original 2014 version. The updated plan was developed to increase awareness of the City's efforts in achieving savings through efficiencies, improving service, and making progress towards the City's strategic goals. The plan focuses on external (public) and internal (City of Saskatoon staff and City Council) communications with increased use of social media, updated webpage content, and a variety of tools and tactics.

Financial Implications

Financial implications related to efficiency gains continue to be quantified with the focus of reallocating resources to other strategic and operational priorities, and/or may contribute to reduction in the base budget. The annual budget will be prepared to reflect approved service levels.

Environmental Implications

Environmental implications can be improved depending on the goal of a particular review or partnership. Sustainability initiatives are highlighted in the annual Saskatoon Strides - 2017: Report on Service, Savings and Sustainability (SSS).

Other Considerations/Implications

There are no policy, privacy, or CPTED implications or considerations.

Due Date for Follow-up and/or Project Completion

This report will be forwarded to the Governance and Priorities meeting on May 22, 2018 and linked with Saskatoon Strides: Report on Service, Savings and Sustainability which provides an overall summary of improvements in each area for 2017.

Public Notice

Public Notice pursuant to Section 3 of Policy No. C01-021, Public Notice Policy, is not required.

Attachments

1. Performance Improvement Coordinator (PIC) Team
2. 4-Year Continuous Improvement Review Plan (2017 – 2021)
3. Utility Cuts Civic Service Review Close Out Report

Report Approval

Written by: Scott Bastian, Performance Improvement Coordinator
Reviewed by: Kim Matheson, Director of Employee Experience and Performance
Approved by: Dan Willems, Acting General Manager, Corporate Performance Department

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