



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee **Date:** July 2, 2019
From: Jason Kita **File:** 01-0005-01/2019-Vol
Director, Corporate Programs Management 01
Group
Re: **Organizational Development Program**

Staff Recommendation

That the report titled "Organizational Development Program" dated July 2, 2019 from the Director, Corporate Programs Management Group, be received for information.

Jason Kita
Director, Corporate Programs Management Group
(604-276-4091)

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
REVIEWED BY SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM	INITIALS:
APPROVED BY CAO 	

Staff Report

Origin

The primary objective of the senior administration with regard to the environment in which the organization will operate has been to establish and sustain a culture of continuous improvement. In order to achieve this objective, new corporate-wide staff engagement programs are introduced through which staff from all areas and levels of authority within the organization work together utilizing purpose designed strategies to achieve specific goals and address areas needing improvement.

Past examples of these types of major programs are the Corporate Renewal Program – Learning from the Past/Shaping the Future, and the Strategic Management Program. Through these programs the organization achieved extraordinary levels of performance during a period that the City experienced significant growth, added many new facilities, created more parks, and introduced new programs and improved service delivery. During this era, the organization also met the unanticipated challenge on which reputations are built or ruined, which was on short notice to take on responsibility for delivering the premier venue and becoming an official Venue City of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games.

Over time, with changes in personnel, increased workloads, and other factors, organizations inevitably experience fallback in organizational performance. This has been the case in our organization and, in order to address and correct this, a new primary program – the Richmond Organizational Development Program (OD Program) and various related sub-programs are presently being introduced.

The OD Program was designed to build on past successes achieved through the Corporate Renewal Program. As these are administrative programs, they would not typically be brought to Council's attention; however, as we are in the first year of a new Council term, with two new elected officials, and have recently adopted the Council Strategic Plan 2018-2022 – Staff concluded that this would be an appropriate opportunity to update Council on this significant administrative initiative.

The OD Program is a corporate-wide collaboration that provides staff with a “Blueprint for Excellence.” Centered on the City's vision, the OD Program outlines eight primary focus areas that each contribute to the City's corporate culture of continuous improvement. Key pillars of our OD Program include: Values, Leadership, Customer Service, People, Structure, Aligned Strategies, Operational Performance and Corporate Performance. The OD Program is a significant program that entails re-training our staff while placing considerable emphasis on the important role of organizational culture in establishing performance standards and achieving desirable results. Sub-programs and various initiatives that support corporate-wide success are created with a specific purpose in mind.

Analysis

Organizational Development Sub-Programs and Initiatives

Though a variety of sub-programs and initiatives support the Organizational Development Program, the Imagine Richmond Program (the Imagine Program) and the Flexible Work Arrangements initiative are highlighted in this Report in order to provide Council with real working, rather than theoretical examples.

The Imagine Richmond Program

The Imagine Program is designed to support culture change and enhance performance throughout the organization. The Imagine Program will help us to achieve results beyond traditional means by harnessing the talent and creativity of our staff for the pursuit of opportunities and challenges that go beyond the mandates of their regular jobs. This program, which was developed following a leadership session where the importance of imagination, as the next level beyond innovation, was identified as part of our corporate strategic program and as a necessary step for Richmond to remain at the forefront of municipal government administrative and organizational leadership.

The Imagine Program is a formal process through which staff are provided opportunities and encouraged to share ideas that could benefit the City and/or the community, for review and potential implementation. Ideas that are feasible, and fit within existing budgets and structures will be implemented immediately at the discretion of the appropriate level of management. More complex ideas will be expanded upon and reviewed for feasibility. From there, ideas that have real potential, align with corporate goals, and/or support Council's Strategic Plan will be further refined and considered for implementation.

The City's workforce is comprised of approximately 2,200 staff who work in sites located all over the city and perform roles as members of numerous different business units. Many staff members have experience and expertise that goes beyond the scope of their regular roles. By harnessing the collective expertise, ideas, and creativity of City staff, the Imagine Program will generate the opportunity to create and implement something really exciting and new for the community in Richmond.

Flexible Work Arrangements

It is essential that as an organization, the City continues to evolve and to keep up with progressive practices in how we conduct business and provide back-of-house support. The OD Program provides staff with areas of focus to further our corporate culture and strengthen how we perform as an organization. One of the initiatives that has supported the ability of staff to be increasingly responsive and productive with their time has been the formalization of a program that allows for flexible work arrangements where appropriate for the specific role. This program provides the opportunity for staff to adjust their working hours when operationally feasible and equips the three most senior levels of staff with remote access to the City's network, data and other pertinent information, which enables staff to work offsite or at home both during regular working hours and on personal time. For example, the amount of emails is significant and having remote access to the City's system allows staff to obtain additional needed information at their convenience instead of having to wait to access their workspace. With increased requests for

information, staff referrals, and in order to be as responsive to organizational needs as possible, this program allows staff to adjust priorities and areas of focus as needed to keep up with demand. This is one example of an initiative that supports the OD Program's goal to deliver on our vision through continuous improvement and adopting practices that enhance overall operational and corporate performance and increase productivity.

Program Integration and Training

To be sustainable as a corporate program, and be effective in achieving the outcomes of enhancing the City's corporate culture and developing new ideas to achieve corporate goals, it is important that all staff understand the OD Program and related sub-programs and initiatives, and how they can be involved. The OD Program has been integrated and communicated throughout the organization through a phased implementation plan. This has allowed for greater understanding and for staff to ingrain principles of the OD Program into daily work in a meaningful way through incremental adjustments and learning opportunities without creating undue strain on staff resources. This phased approach will continue through individual, departmental, and corporate-wide engagements and initiatives as needed. The OD Program is the foundation on which the sub-programs are able to achieve success and increase organizational performance.

The Imagine Program goes well beyond a traditional "idea suggestion box" program. Ideation conversations will be built into regular team meetings, will be encouraged individually, and will be supported through staff training and ideation workshop opportunities. Staff mindsets, already familiar with, and ingrained in continuous improvement, will be challenged to think in new ways. Innovation, one of the City's Core Values, highlights the importance of finding new ways to improve on efficiency, and the outcomes generated for the community. Innovation is an important part of how staff perform in their roles within the City. The Imagine Program goes beyond innovation, looking at brand new concepts, lines of business, activities, and so on that is not traditional to municipal government but will lead to stronger community outcomes either through the potential for revenue generation or through delivery of new opportunities to the community.

Staff have expressed great interest in learning more about how to effectively integrate ideation into operational roles. It is essential that staff are using effective techniques, so that idea generation sessions are fruitful in producing real, tangible ideas that result in significant, beneficial impacts. Proper communication and training around the Imagine Program is needed to ensure it remains focused on delivering results, is firmly situated within best practices in the field, and is strategically aligned with corporate priorities, plans, and strategies such as the Organizational Development Program.

Effective corporate-wide training, implementation, and communication of these programs are essential to meeting program goals. Training is usually focused on individual staff members; however, periodically it is more cost-effective to conduct group training programs for the collective body of staff. These training programs do not add new costs to the organization and are more efficient and effective because all staff that attend receive the same training and hear the same messages at the same time.

Imagine Program Training

The most effective way to communicate and train staff in this type of program is by providing a collective training program. By hosting a one-day training session for approximately 300 key staff from all levels and departments of the organization, selected for their creativity, several key program outcomes will be delivered that will have lasting organizational impact.

The Imagine Program Training Session (the Session) outcomes and benefits include:

- Inclusiveness through facilitating common training for a broad range of employee groups at all levels of the organization.
- The shared understanding of how the Imagine Program aligns with corporate priorities and strategic programs such as Organizational Development.
- The shared understanding of the Imagine Program, how it presents a unique and exciting opportunity to make an impact in the organization and community, and why ideation is important (and prudent) in all lines of business.
- Education on the importance of creative thinking and imagination as a business strategy.
- Dialogue and a question-and-answer session with creativity and ideation experts in various fields of business.
- Hands-on training in facilitating ideation workshops and sessions including sharing effective techniques and utilizing tools and resources that will be brought back to the workplace.
- Idea generation itself, through the hands-on experiential learning, will also result in initial evaluations for feasibility, alignment with corporate goals and implementation potential.
- Inspire and empower staff to be leaders and demonstrate the City of Richmond culture and brand of continuous improvement and future thinking.

The Session is being planned for Fall 2019 and will likely be held in a City facility or a local hotel conference room venue. Every effort has been made to practice ideation and creativity concepts through the planning of this session, particularly with regard to creating the greatest value through intentional session components at the lowest possible impact to training dollars. The estimated cost for this session is approximately \$230 to \$250 per person based on offering a full day of training for 300 staff. If this training session proves to be successful, a second session may be offered to another 300 staff. The more staff that can hear the message first-hand and experience the training for themselves instead of hearing about the program through their supervisor, the more engaged and committed staff will become to the program.

The cost of this training is already accounted for in the training budget, an amount that would be spent on individual staff training regardless of this training opportunity. By hosting the training for staff in this manner, as a one-day customized session, we are able to provide a number of benefits to the City. The per-person cost remains very low while the efficiency and effectiveness of the training will be high. To provide an order of magnitude for the cost effectiveness, similar training sessions can range from \$1,500 to \$2,000 per person if attended on an individual basis through external training options. The training will be inclusive of all areas of the organization,

reach a broad audience, and be customized for Richmond-specific needs and program goals. Because staff will participate in the training at the same time, departments and teams will participate in the same discussions and be able to move forward with applying their learning across the organization without gaps in knowledge. The training will be completely customized to meet Richmond's desired outcomes and will provide the ability to make adjustments as necessary to the day in order to meet our needs.

Post-Session Integration

Following the Session, staff that attended will return to their business units and share information on the Imagine Program. Attendees will be trained in the workshop facilitation method used in the Imagine Program and understand the foundational aspects of why this approach is taken and how to apply it to their work areas. They will be supported as needed to apply these new tools and skills through departmental meetings and sessions, reinforcing the learning, and providing the opportunity for the entire workforce to be trained in the following months.

Financial Impact

No additional costs as this training will be funded from existing budgets that would otherwise be spent on other types of training.

Conclusion

The Richmond Organizational Development Program is a strategic initiative that will help to achieve corporate goals through furthering our corporate culture of continuous improvement. The Imagine Richmond Program, as one of the sub-programs of the OD Program is designed to generate opportunities to further improve our City and organizational performance through harnessing the collective talents, ideas and expertise of City of Richmond staff members. The Imagine Program Training Session will launch this new Imagine Program most effectively by communicating with staff and engaging in Program training through one day of collective training for approximately 300 staff representing each department and level of the organization. Many of the staff who attend will become ambassadors for the program and will return to the workplace to share their insights with their fellow employees.



Claire Adamson
Manager, Corporate Strategic Initiatives
(604-247-4482)

CA:ca