

# Catching Up with Continuous Improvement: 2016 Update

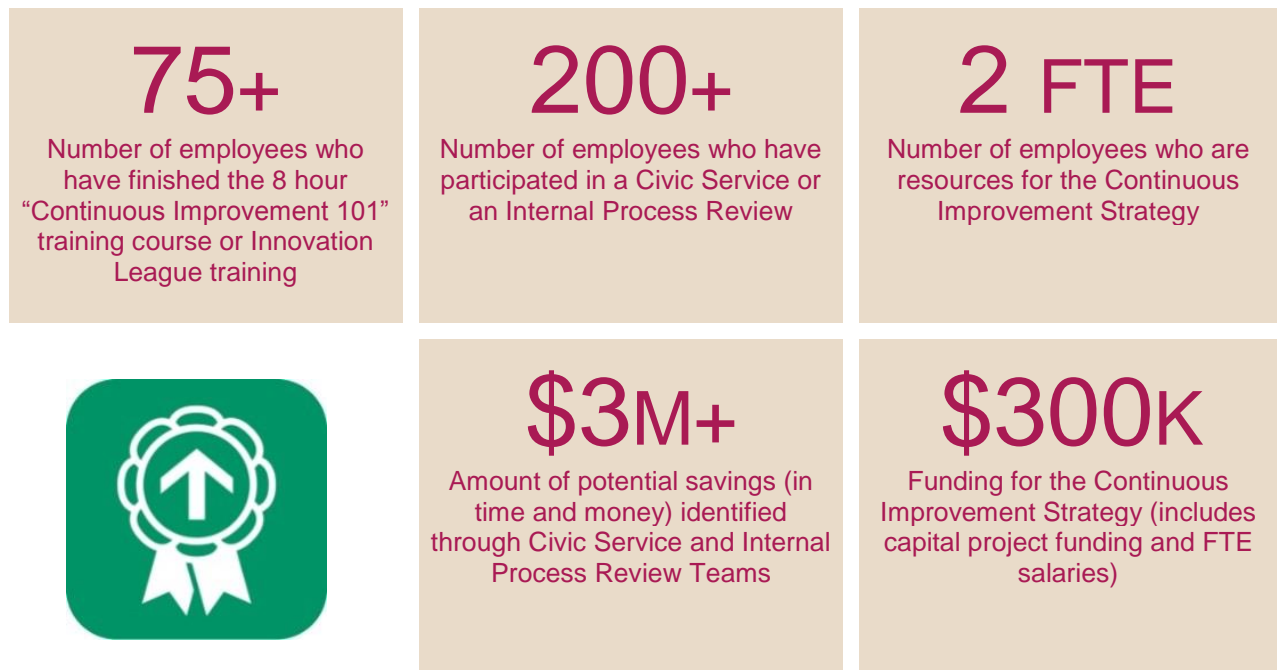
## What's Going On?

### Continuous Improvement and Building Innovation Capacity

Since the launch of the Continuous Improvement (CI) Strategy in late 2013, the corporate-wide approach to ensuring effectiveness and improving efficiencies in municipal services and operations, much has occurred. A few examples of program success include:

- The hiring of a full time resource to support the Continuous Improvement Strategy within Strategic and Business Planning, and
- Partnering with Service Saskatoon to use the Citizen Advisory Panel to help prioritize reviews based on what citizen's value most.

Programs within the strategy include the Civic Service Review (CSR) and Internal Process Review (IPR), Continuous Improvement 101 training, and the Innovation League. The graphic below summarizes the CI Strategy's performance "By the Numbers" as of August 31, 2016<sup>1</sup>.



<sup>1</sup> Funding breaks down into \$200K from the Continuous Improvement Capital Project Budget, approximately \$115K of which has been spent to date. The remaining \$100K relates to partial salary costs for both FTE who are resources for this program.

## Civic Service and Internal Process Reviews

*It has been a busy 2016 so far!*

Four CSRs and three IPRs were underway and two CSRs and eight IPRs had been completed. This equals 100 interdepartmental and interdivision sessions focused on increasing horizontal collaboration, leveraging technology, improving communication, and creating efficiency. On-going reviews include the Corporate Payroll, Engagement, and Fleet Business Model CSRs as well as the New Utility Accounts, Recycling Service New/Changes, and Project Services IPRs.

Current CSR teams are well underway with meetings scheduled every two weeks beginning in mid-August and continuing into the late fall. The Corporate Payroll CSR team is focused on eliminating waste from current processes as well as reducing manual and paper-based processes within the workgroup to ease the transition to the Enterprise Resource Planning system. The Engagement CSR team is focused on providing input and insights on developing the framework for a corporate engagement strategy as well as streamlining administrative processes around “putting on” engagement activities. The Fleet Services Business Model CSR focuses on reviewing the business model for procurement and servicing against alternatives for possible financial savings.

Current IPR teams focus on single process often involving only one or two Divisions, as opposed to the general broad scope of CSR teams. The New Utility Accounts team is looking at streamlining the process for creating new SaskEnergy and SaskPower accounts for civic projects. The team aims to eliminate staff time wasted “chasing down” missing information and late payment fees, as well as increase the use of consolidate billing where appropriate. The Recycling Service New/Changes team is working through process mapping the way new customers are added to recycling service routes in all dwelling types as well as how customer’s initiate changes to their current services in order to ensure streamlined and customer-focused service. The Project Service team is focusing on process mapping the demolition, capital project management, and interior design project processes to capture knowledge bases prior to upcoming retirements. This team will review process maps for efficiency opportunities internally in Phase 2.

*What have we done since late 2013?*

Within the potential \$3M in staff time and hard dollar savings, identified in the graphic above, examples of innovation ideas teams have successfully implemented include the following:

- The Roadways CSR team has initiated contractor prequalification to reduce the amount of time Inspectors spend following up on contractors issues.
  - Saving approximately \$225,000 in staff time.
- The Fleet Services Business Model Review team has worked with vendors to ensure leasing options are provided on all future procurement bids in order to identify potential hard dollar savings.
  - Saving approximately \$1,500 in hard dollars.
- The Waste Stream Management Customer Service phone line was recently integrated into the Customer Service and Operations Support section’s responsibility reducing

service overlap and further moving customer service towards a one-stop-shop for citizens.

- Saving approximately \$8,500 in staff time.
- The Special Events IPR team has successfully redeveloped the special event application form and created service user workshops – where those using the special event process can come get questions answered, hear about process changes, and give feedback. These actions save staff time and customer time as well as improve customer service.
  - Saving approximately \$5,000 in staff time.

### The Innovation League

As of August 31, 2016, six Innovation League meetings have occurred and the team has redeveloped its structure. The team has opted to focus its work in three self-directed streams: the Event Planning team, the Room Design team, and the Brainstorming team.

The Event Planning team is organizing Innovation events on an on-going basis to inspire and build a culture of Innovation at the City of Saskatoon. There are two events taking place in the fall of 2016. The first event is a Lunch and Learn on October 5<sup>th</sup> entitled: Building a Game Plan: From Ideas to Implementation. In this session, Innovation League Members will share their Innovation in a Box training with other City employees to build capacity around the use of the Innovation Tools. The second event, an Innovation Fair, will be held in December. At this event employees will have the opportunity to showcase their innovative projects for interested employees via poster boards. Guests will have the opportunity to ask questions and talk to the creators about how they achieved their results.

The Room Design team is focused on adding utility to the third floor “lunch room” space in Civic Square East. The idea this team is working through is how to increase use of the space through innovative design. Ideas include chalkboard paint or white board walls for people to write on, comfy furniture in strategic locations to promote conversation and collaboration, and artwork, plants, and food to make it more comfortable to stay in the space. . Work here focuses on research that suggests informal meeting spaces with items that inspire creativity can foster innovation in organizations (see the Harvard ManageMentor Topic “Innovation and Creativity” for more information – all topics by the Harvard Business Review).

The purpose of the Brainstorming team is to facilitate sessions for participants from different divisions, disciplines and backgrounds, around a common theme or project using the i5 tools. The purpose of this is to create a richer, more collaborative end product and expose more employees to the i5 tools and process. The sessions will provide an interactive and collaborative space to mind map the progress of an idea and potentially allow access to tools to build prototypes.

### “Walking the Walk” Continuous Improvement of the CI Strategy

This year has also brought positive improvements to some CI Strategy programs including the CSR/IPR session process and the Continuous Improvement 101 training course syllabus.

Examples of these positive improvements include:

- A redevelopment of the introduction/kick-off PowerPoint presentation to focus on logistics and CI tools – giving participants a fuller understanding of what to expect in a review
- A formalization of the knowledge transfer process from CSR/IPRs to Service Saskatoon
- The addition of scope meetings, project charters, and General Manager/Director touch-points to the CSR/IPR process – keeping team members on the same page and stakeholders informed based on their involvement preferences
- The addition of CI tool templates to the Civic Service Review SharePoint site to help to continue to innovate more easily innovate after the formal reviews have ended
- Redevelopment of the CI 101 training course syllabus to reflect CSR/IPR session process improvements and best practices from other CI type programs in other municipalities
- Moving away from the use of a consulting firm to produce Spotlight Stories

## What is Upcoming?

### “Let’s Get Organized” Creating a 4 Year Plan for CSRs/IPRs and a Formal Intake Process

In the last year, we have noticed a general increase in conversations about CI, collaboration, and innovation. Within this increase a specific trend has occurred – more and more Divisions and workgroups are approaching Strategic and Business Planning to help work through tough problems, review service delivery methods, and provide facilitation-type services. This is great to see, however it has highlighted the fact we do not currently have a formal intake process or a long-term CSR/IPR review plan. Both of these issues are on pace to be addressed this year. Our formal intake process will allow us to continue to serve our internal customers well and the development of our 4 year plan will ensure we keep services citizens care about and would like to see reviewed front and centre. Adding additional Performance Improvement Coordinator resources will allow progress on both fronts.

### “Let’s Keep Improving What We Do” Creating Partnerships and Using Best Practices

We want to continue to improve what we do. We are currently developing an exciting partnership with the Denver Peak Academy, a CI focused organization internal to the City of Denver. This fall we will be increasing our use of resources for CI workshops as well as performance tracking created (and proven) by this group and will attend their formal training.