



The Most Livable
City in America

City of Saint Paul
Department of Public Works
Strategic Plan
July 31, 2009



City of Saint Paul
Department of Public Works
2009 Strategic Plan
Final Draft
June 12, 2009

Executive Summary

The Public Works Department began work on this strategic plan in November 2008. This plan is the result of rigorous work by our management team. We were assisted in this plan by DRI Consulting. We have identified seven strategic goals critical to our future success. They are:

1. Complete best practices

We are currently working through the best practices process according to the American Public Works Association. This is a major effort to review the management of our department through a process established by the American Public Works Association (APWA). Several years ago APWA created the *Public Works Management Practices Manual*, now released in its sixth edition. This manual is a collection of 533 best practices of public works agencies in the United States and Canada. Some of the practices do not apply to us because they relate to facilities like airports or water treatment facilities, but 409 of them are directly related to the work we do.

This review process will not be cursory or brief. Our analysis of the work we do and comparison to the benchmarks of the APWA will likely take two years. This lengthy process will ensure that we completely review and document our current policies; it will allow creation of policies and practices where we previously have had none; and it could lead to accreditation of our department by a site visit team of the APWA at completion. Presently only 57 public works agencies in the United States and Canada are accredited. Saint Paul could be the first public works agency accredited in Minnesota. This is a distinction earned and not bestowed. The value of accreditation will aid in continuing to provide the highest quality services to our customers and it will make it much more likely that we achieve our other strategic goals.

2. Implement and evaluate maintenance standards

Implementing and evaluating maintenance standards is vital to maximize the life of infrastructure. In order to be more proactive, employees will determine appropriate replacement times or life cycles of infrastructure. Increasing efficiency and effectiveness of maintenance standards will assist employees in making informed judgments concerning repair and replacement schedules. This will serve to balance and reduce costs to the City and its residents.

3. Engage in long-term capital planning

Competition is fierce for limited resources. To assist Administration and decision makers in establishing direction and priority for the Department of Public Works, it is important that employees identify and prioritize both short and long-term projects. Securing long-term capital planning is essential to capture more funding opportunities, which will ensure that multi-year, expensive projects are completed.

The benefits of engaging in long-term capital planning include: the ability to balance “new projects” with “reconstruction projects;” provide opportunities for better coordination and planning with Ramsey County, MNDot, the Metropolitan Council and other agencies; assist with decision making about which projects to move to “advance design;” help manage the engineering fund and assist with determining current and future staff needs; balance workloads; and minimize project preparation for the 2-year CIB process.

4. Engage in successful succession planning

Succession planning is having a systematic process in place to identify, assess, and develop staff to ensure they are ready to assume key roles within the Department of Public Works. This process, which provides equal opportunity to all, ensures that the "right" people are in the "right" places at the "right" time. It allows high potential candidates and employees to be selected and trained to give them the skills and competencies they need to develop themselves and the Department. The development of these employees, who will one day take larger roles in leading the organization, must incorporate a broad range of learning opportunities so they gain a good understanding of what is needed of them to maintain the Department of Public Works and the City of Saint Paul's success.

5. Obtain resources for infrastructure needs

Obtaining resources for infrastructure needs is important to implement best practices, maintain maintenance standards, and expand capital planning, all of which will further support our mission to preserve and enhance infrastructure to assure a safe and livable Capital City for all.

6. Get the right equipment, software and systems in place and maximize their use

The acquisition and use of our tools, software and hard assets has always been a major factor in operational success. As budgets become tighter, it becomes more important that we ensure that the equipment and systems purchased are the best fit and that their utilization is maximized.

Since there are many types of equipment and systems, it would be difficult to set exact procedures that would fit all of the varied types of purchases that are regularly made by Public Works. The strategies identified will serve to guide both the purchasing process and in-service implementation. All of the strategies may not apply to all purchases but should be applied as necessary, dependent on the type and complexity of the item being acquired. At a minimum, the end user should have input on the purchase and setup of the equipment/system. This does not mean the end user will make final decisions, just that their concerns will be heard prior to purchase.

7. Improve team building by field, division, department, and across the city.

Find constructive, creative and meaningful ways to connect within our divisions and to our department as a whole. Proposed are a set of initial short-term strategies that will require assistance from around the department. We recognize this is a challenging and very long-term goal. Success is incremental at best and needs sustained and measured commitment.

Mission Statement

To preserve and enhance infrastructure to ensure a safe and livable Capital City for all.

Vision Statement

To be a recognized leader providing public works services through: Responsive Services, Quality Facilities and Employee Pride.

Operating Principles

Within each of the visionary phrases above, we see much more. Responsive service includes a workforce that strives to always be effective at what we do and efficient in the delivery of those services. Quality facilities does not just mean infrastructure that provides our customers trouble-free service but that we are committed to public and personal safety and that our infrastructure design and maintenance will be progressive and forward thinking. Employee pride shall always mean that we are an organization made up of individuals that place the utmost value on our work product, that we are an organization made up of individuals of the highest integrity who take pride in the diversity of our City and our workplace.

Customer Service Statement

Public Works' employees are dedicated to providing our customers professional, courteous and efficient service in a timely and respectful manner.

Alignment with the City's Comprehensive Planning Process

A Comprehensive Plan is required by Minnesota state law and must be approved by the Metropolitan Council. The Comprehensive Plan provides long-term policy guidance on Saint Paul's development.

The City of Saint Paul is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan. Updates are required every ten years. The Metropolitan Council determines the basic information that each city's plan must address in its System Statement.

The work of updating the Comprehensive Plan is directed by the Comprehensive Planning Committee of the Saint Paul Planning Commission.

Comprehensive Plan Drafts - Pending Approval by the Metropolitan Council:

Introduction - approved by City Council February 4, 2009

Land Use Plan - approved by City Council February 18, 2009

Transportation Plan - approved by City Council March 25, 2009

Parks and Recreation Plan - approved by City Council December 17, 2008

Housing Plan - approved by City Council February 18, 2009

Water Resources Management Plan - approved by City Council February 4, 2009
Historic Preservation Plan - approved by City Council February 18, 2009
Implementation - approved by City Council February 4, 2009

Public Works had staff involved in re-writing the Transportation Plan Draft, the Housing Plan Draft and the Water Resources Management Plan Draft. This Public Works Strategic Plan dovetails nicely with the City's comprehensive plan in many ways. Some of the key areas are Long Term Capital Funding and the comprehensive plan goals to fund future transportation and water resource needs to manage well-maintained systems with sound financial management.

Alignment with the Administration's Strategic Plan

The Administration completed a rigorous strategic planning process in late 2006, with minor revisions made in 2008. The core tenets of the City's overall strategic plan are: Ready for School, Ready for Life; Safe Streets, Safe Homes; Expanding Economic Opportunity; and Quality Way of Life.

Public Works strategic plan is an integral part of the overall strategic plan. Some good examples of that connection follow:

Ready for School, Ready for Life: Our Traffic Division works closely with the Saint Paul School District to implement Safe Routes to School studies and funding, transportation safety and excellent access to all of our education facilities.

Safe Streets, Safe Homes: Safety is one of the core values in our Mission Statement. We work to provide and enhance this safety through our work with traffic, signal and lighting systems; our well maintained street and bridge network and the essential public health needs that we meet every day through our AAA rated Sewer Utility.

Expanding Economic Opportunity: Public Works is very involved in every development opportunity with our development partners in the Planning and Economic Development Department and the Department of Safety and Inspections. In addition to those specific instances, our work maintaining, rebuilding and revitalizing Saint Paul's infrastructure establishes a strong foundation for businesses wishing to begin or relocation in Saint Paul because they know their transportation needs will be met well by our services and infrastructure network.

Quality Way of Life: Without the basics of modern infrastructure, quality living is impossible. Traffic delays, disease and lost economic opportunity are all avoided by excellent public works facilities and services. Saint Paul offers those basics and more. Saint Paul has a unique set of public works assets that enhance the City and create the sense of place that is so vital to the feelings people have for their community. Our involvement with the public art community provides a vibrancy and creative vision that many public works departments do not share.

We have strong and involved partners in our neighborhoods, in our business community and with our labor partners that assist us in developing quality infrastructure that endures the test of time.

Public Works Context in 2009

Our Public Works Department operates in an increasingly complex and fast paced world. Customers have higher standards for service and expect that we will meet their needs quickly and efficiently. Infrastructure needs are still not society's number one priority, but they are surely on people's minds after the I-35W bridge collapse and the renewed Federal government emphasis on infrastructure investment. This renewed interest in infrastructure, coupled with the overall "D" grade nationally for infrastructure health given by the American Society of Civil Engineers has placed before us a unique opportunity to work with our residents, businesses, policymakers and stakeholders to improve the backbone systems of Saint Paul as a springboard to new prosperity.

We face a system that in many cases continues to grow and change at the same time maintenance revenues continue to grow more scarce. For example, the Residential Street Vitality Program (RSVP) adds approximately 300 new streetlights every year, yet street light maintenance funding has not grown in ten years.

Overall scarcity of resources causes programs to compete within the city and difficult decisions must be made to balance revenue and spending citywide.

Unfunded regulatory pressures continue to add to Public Work's costs. For example, recent watershed district rules require spending over one million dollars annually for the RSVP.

Regional transportation systems are vitally important for Saint Paul to remain an important part of the regional economy and not just a satellite of our larger twin to the West.

Saint Paul continues to wrestle with ways to more fully diversify our work force and to obtain a well trained and prepared employee base that is reflective of our community.

Public Works has many technological tools in place to manage our business well - but at this point we need to make training for those systems and maximization of those tools a priority.

Lastly, it often seems that we may not have done the best job over the years trying to understand what people expect of us and in return helping them understand our work processes and responsibilities so they know what to expect of us. We must continue to work every day on being good listeners, and in return to clearly communicate our needs and plans.

These are just some of the things that make our work challenging, but far from impossible.

Stakeholders

The Saint Paul Public Works Department, through its many services, touches everyone who lives in, travels through or works in Saint Paul. This means that residents, business people and visitors benefit from the quality services we provide. Residents are provided excellent services at an affordable price; businesses benefit from the efficient transportation of their goods and services throughout the city or onward throughout the metropolitan region; and our visitors have their experience enhanced by trouble free travel to their destination.

In addition to the groups above, elected officials, bargaining unit partners, other city departments, partner organizations and the media are stakeholders in the work that we do or the information that we need to share.

The strategic plan for the City of Saint Paul's Department of Public Works is made up of seven goals, each comprised of a number of strategies. The goals are:

1. Complete Best Practices
2. Implement and Evaluate Maintenance Standards
3. Engage in Long-Term Capital Planning
4. Engage in Successful Succession Planning
5. Obtain Resources for Infrastructure Needs
6. Get the Right Equipment / Software / Systems in Place and Maximize their Use
7. Improve Team Building by Field, Division, and Department

Timeline:

We expect to complete a "Final" walk-through of the Strategic Plan with department leadership by May 22, 2009.

Provide the draft to Public Works Department employees, the Mayor's Office and Council members by May 31, 2009.

Get feedback and incorporate it by June 30, 2009.

Pare down the draft for external use by July 17, 2009.

Meet with DRI for final changes by July 24, 2009.

Publish the draft by July 31, 2009.

Implement it! (Ongoing)

GOAL 1: COMPLETE BEST PRACTICES

Gaining American Public Works Association (APWA) best practices accreditation is essential for the Department of Public Works in order to increase its credibility within the City of Saint Paul and further affirm its reputation as a recognized leader. Best practices will educate and inform employees so they may speak as experts about the Department's mission, vision, goals, and activities. The Department of Public Works values high quality infrastructure and completing best practices will allow employees to take advantage of more opportunities and continue to increase use of innovation.

Implementation of Strategies identified:

Strategy 1: Stay on schedule in following through on the Management Practices Self-Assessment Work Plan (phases I – VI, please refer to Attachment A)

Strategy 2: Create a culture of innovation

Strategy 3: Increase participation in professional activities and training opportunities

Strategy 4: Follow through on operations improvements to meet best practice standards

Strategy 5: Learn how to evaluate best practice procedures

GOAL 2: IMPLEMENT AND EVALUATE MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

Implementing maintenance standards and then continually evaluating them will be vital to maximizing the life of our infrastructure. In order to be more proactive, employees will use industry standard best practice guidelines to determine appropriate replacement times or life cycles of infrastructure. Increasing efficiency and effectiveness of maintenance standards will assist employees in making informed judgments concerning repair and replacement schedules. This will serve to balance and reduce costs to the City and its customers around the following infrastructure needs:

- Street Lighting
- Signals
- Sidewalks
- Streets
- Sewers
- Bridges
- Pavement Marking
- Signs
- Parking Meters
- Boulevard Trees
- Street Furniture
- Fleet

Implementation of Strategies identified:

Short-Term

Strategy 1: Develop simple spread sheets for assets that the Department maintains to show and inform others of the wide range and large number of assets, as well as associated costs.

Practice A. Each Operating Division to develop:

- List and quantity of assets & components which they maintain (use info previously developed as a start)
- Ongoing maintenance costs for each component (electricity, plowing, mowing)
- Best Management Practice repair schedules for preventative maintenance of component(s)
- Best Management Practices for inspection and completing/maintaining condition ratings of component
- How implementation of Best Management Practices will extend life of component and reduce life cycle costs.
- Expected age of asset before it needs replacement based on BMP maintenance vs. lower level of maintenance
- Relate costs to all of above
- All Divisions to complete in similar format
- Please see **Attachment B, Street Lighting Example**

This will provide a means to develop simple cost estimates and scope of level of service we should be providing. For example, if we own 150 miles of Municipal State Aid (MSA) streets, life cycle is 50 years, and best management practice calls for an overlay every 15 years, we should be reconstructing 3 miles and overlaying 10 miles of MSA streets every year. If we determine we should be painting street light poles on a 15 year cycle, we can define how many poles need painting every year and at what cost. This will be starting point that can be further refined as we move forward.

Long term – Take Computerized Maintenance Management Systems (CMMS) to the next level

Strategy 2: Develop Plans/Systems to implement Best Management Practices and Asset Management System

Practice A. Develop a management system using regular condition ratings/inspections, age of asset, detailed inventory, and performance levels as applicable to manage and maintain assets efficiently in order to achieve optimal investment strategies for the assets.

Practice B. Determine what level of service is acceptable to community and decision makers, e.g.. safety, service life, acceptable failure rate in addition to cosmetic features such as the condition/smoothness of pavement, aesthetics (appearance of light poles) etc.

Practice C. Develop and refine maintenance programs to implement BMP (sign refurbishing areas, sealcoat areas, sewer rehabilitation) etc.

Practice D. Use management system for maintenance of assets and tracking of conditions/performance levels over time.

Strategy 3: Evaluate and implement new technology, products, and materials, service delivery methods to reduce overall costs and extend life of components

Practice A. Purchase, install and populate a pavement management system in 2009 and begin to use it to inform maintenance and rehabilitation decisions.

Strategy 4: Use management systems to inform decision makers on tradeoffs between funding levels and short and long term effects on assets during budget time.

Practice A. Use performance measurement systems under development to highlight gaps between funding and goal progress.

Practice B: Tie this goal to goal number three (capital planning). When infrastructure can no longer be maintained to our standard, then replacement funding should be sought.

GOAL 3: ENGAGE IN LONG-TERM CAPITAL PLANNING

Competition is fierce for limited resources. To assist the Administration and decision makers in establishing direction and priority for the Department of Public Works, it is important that employees identify and prioritize both short and long-term projects. Securing long-term capital planning is essential to capture more funding opportunities, which will make certain multi-year, expensive projects are completed.

The benefits of engaging in long-term capital planning include: the ability to balance “New Projects” with “Reconstruction Projects”; Provide opportunities for better coordination and planning with the County; Assist with decision making about which projects to move to “advance design”; Help manage the engineering fund and assist with determining current and future staff needs; Balance workloads; and minimize project preparation for the 2-year CIB process.

According to APWA Best Practices item 4.8 – A financial plan for capital planning and improvement program is detailed and planned over for a specific period

“The capital planning and improvement program identifies how the capital plan fits into the established policies, goals and objectives; and how the capital improvement process incorporates engineering and finance recommendations. A financial analysis may be performed to determine the potential to carry out a capital plan, to identify financing methods and funding sources and to access funding availability and constraints. Input from all governing boards should be included in capital planning and improvement programming.”

Implementation of Strategies identified:

Strategy 1: Use the Work Plan Document

Practice A. There is already a framework in place for a five year and ten year plan for Public Works (see Attachment C). The framework was developed around our Annual Programs and the RSVP project areas to include reconstruction of adjacent MSA streets.

Practice B. The EFAT (Engineering Fund Activity Team) will be the group that keeps the plan document as current and up-to-date as possible. We can reserve time at each monthly meeting to review and revise the document as needed.

Practice C. Need better coordination with the County to combine resources and partner on projects. Need to develop a list of potential County Road or CSAH projects within the City of Saint Paul. Need to establish a work group that meets with the County periodically to discuss short term and long term capital projects.

Practice D. The Transportation Planning Division needs to identify long term projects for inclusion in the work plan document. Identify what the local share of project funding will be for ROW acquisition, design, construction and inspection.

Practice E. Make the work plan document available for all to access. Include it as part of the Public Works Intranet site.

Strategy 2: Engage in Post RSVP Activities (Next Phase of Street Reconstruction)

Practice A. Need to start developing a strategy for post RSVP activities (after 2018). Identify the next phase of street reconstruction and develop a program and schedule to be approved by the decision makers well in advance of the completion of RSVP.

Practice B. The Pavement Management System will help us identify and program the needs for street reconstruction.

Practice C. Establish a group of Senior Managers that can begin discussing and planning for post RSVP activities.

Strategy 3: Continue use of already developed sewer rehabilitation plan documents to guide capital planning and reconstruction processes related to sanitary and storm sewer infrastructure.

Strategy 4: Increase coordination with Ramsey County to talk specifically about long and short term projects and planning.

Strategy 5: Increase coordination with the Minnesota Department of Transportation to talk specifically about long and short term projects and planning.

GOAL 4: SUCCESSFUL SUCCESSION PLANNING

Succession planning is having a systematic process in place to identify, assess, and develop staff assuring they are ready to assume key roles within the Department of Public Works. This process, which provides equal opportunity to all, ensures that the "right" people are in the "right" places at the "right" time. It allows high potential candidates and employees to be selected and trained to give them the skills and competencies they need to develop themselves and the Department. The development of these employees, who will one day take larger roles in leading the organization, must incorporate a broad range of learning opportunities so they gain a good understanding of what is needed of them to maintain the Department of Public Works and the City of Saint Paul's success.

Implementation of Strategies identified:

Strategy 1: Become involved in professional organizations

All employees are required to have some involvement in a professional organization connected to their position. This involvement should be at least commensurate with the individual's role in the Public Works Department. Maintenance employees are expected to participate in training events (e.g. MPWA Fall Expo Driving Rodeo) and may take larger roles in their professional

organization if they desire. Technical, professional and management team members are expected to regularly attend meetings and to take leadership roles as necessary and appropriate.

Some of the professional organizations available to us are:

- American Public Works Association (APWA)
- Minnesota Public Works Association (MPWA)
- Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)
- Engineers Society of Saint Paul (ESSP)
- City Engineers Association of Minnesota (CEAM)
- Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)
- Minnesota Government Finance Officers Association (MNGFOA)
- Association of Government Accountants (AGA)
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)
- Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS)
- Center for Transportation Studies (CTS)
- Local Road Research Board (LRRB)
- Friends of Public Works (FPW)
- Water Environment Federation (WEF)
- Minnesota Storm Water Coalition (MNSWC)
- International City/County Management Association (ICMA)
- Minnesota Association of Government Communicators (MAGC)
- Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA)

This goal in no way minimizes the benefits that can be gained from memberships in organizations that are specifically targeted to personal and professional development such as Toastmasters International and our City Toastmasters club Public Employees Toastmasters.

It is important as well to keep in mind that continuing education at local post secondary institutions should be recognized and encouraged when employees wish to further their career goals through more formal education (tuition reimbursement through the Office of Human Resources is available on a limited basis). If reasonable work arounds can be found for education scheduling needs, divisions should do so for the employee.

Strategy 2: Engage in competent hiring practices that both expedite the process and reflect the community

Practice A. The work force of the City must contract at times in response to funding decisions and work load changes. It is a goal of the City to minimize layoffs that occur as a result of those changes. Layoff reduction is a good goal and Public Works supports it fully. It is important however to make sure that the same critical eye to talent is applied to internal layoff candidates that is applied to new candidates entering our system during good economic times. Before agreeing to accept a transferred lay off hire in a job classification different from their original job classification in the department

experiencing the layoffs, interviews, fitness for duty exams and other forms of due diligence must be performed.

Practice B. Sometimes we experience job markets where overqualified candidates seek entry level positions. For example, a candidate with a Civil Engineering degree may apply for an available Engineering Aide position. When that happens, the hiring manager's decision just became harder, because we do not want to hire an excellent engineering aide that will eventually have promotion rights to a Civil Engineer I title if that person does not have the raw skills to perform adequately as a Civil Engineer I. We certainly cannot turn away a candidate that has the best skill match for the lower level title, but be aware of this concern.

Practice C. Seek best fit between person and organization.

Practice D. Attend to the timing/duration of the hiring process. We have heard from many candidates that you really have to *want* to work for the City to endure the length of the hiring process from application to first day.

Practice E. Communicate needs to Human Resources, including advertising and marketing to potential candidates

Practice F. Objective selection testing for entry-level employees, department screening practices, and use more short-term temporary positions to evaluate employees.

Strategy 3: Review and potentially modify promotion rules

Occasionally promotion rules get in the way of hiring the best person for the position available because inferior candidates have promotion rights while the best candidate does not.

Practice A. Communicate problems with these standards to Mayor's office and HR

Practice B. Promotions based on merit

Practice C. No Two-year promotion rule

Discuss with other departments

Benchmark with cities who have shed these rules

Strategy 4: Develop employees by offering them a variety of training opportunities

Practice A. It is necessary to make sure that all of our employees are maintaining a sound base of knowledge in their field and remaining current in emerging developments. Long term, the Department of Public Works should hire a Training Coordinator to match staff with appropriate training opportunities (*e.g.*, mechanical / technical skills, ability to delegate, etc.), monitor training needs and then to track education attained by staff. This

tracking is very important because it will help candidates and department management alike when future advancement decisions are made.

In the short term, the department should seek a computerized tool to manage training and to record training achieved by staff. This could take the form of a web based function or it could be a part of the City's planned Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.

Practice B. Initiate a system of internal professional development hour (PDH) or continuing professional education (CPE) requirements that may be fulfilled by attendance at professional organization events or formal classroom training opportunities.

Strategy 5: Get to know employees to find out where they see themselves in five years

Practice A. This is primarily the responsibility of the supervisor or manager that is most closely linked with the employee. Have this conversation more often than just during annual performance reviews. Perhaps discussing it more informally over coffee or lunch will help the employee envision his or her future better. Do not give up when you are first met with a shrug and "I don't know." Be persistent and get the employee thinking about their future.

Practice B. Establish a mentorship program. Mandatory for some employees, but voluntary for others willing to provide some of their time as a mentor, and for those employees that would like the benefits of the experiences of others, we will solicit interest and create lists of managers and employees to match. Find out from list members if they have a particular mentor or protégé in mind. Pair people for a specified period – perhaps one to two years at a time. A department work group will define which employee classifications will be required to mentor others.

Strategy 6: Create an individual development plan for each employee

Practice A. This work should be a collaborative effort of both supervisor and employee. Make sure that there is input from both sides to make the document something that accomplishes mutual goals. The document should be reviewed at each performance review – including probationary reviews. This work may need to be facilitated by a Public Works Administration employee that can bring necessary employment, training or supervision experience for the benefit of both the employee and the supervisor.

Practice B. Competency matrices for Public Works positions should be published to our intranet pages so that employees have available and ready access to the things we will be requiring for them to advance. With ready access to them they can seek opportunities to meet those competencies if they are so motivated.

Strategy 7: Motivate employees to stay with the City and continue doing good work to facilitate their retention

Practice A. The standards outlined in this goal section will dramatically increase the professionalism in the department and employees will want to stay with us. Because of our outstanding professionalism new applicants will seek us out. This, coupled with the teamwork strategies outlined in goal seven will definitely enhance our already good retention.

Practice B. For employees who leave the City to do work elsewhere, it is important to implement exit interviews to determine how the Department could have better met their professional needs, if applicable.

Strategy 8: Use probationary procedures as necessary to promote employee development and hold individuals accountable

Practice A. Evaluate the performance review document and revise it, as needed, to include sections on training received, training sought, professional organization participation etc. Use the revised performance review document in determining probationary measures.

Practice B. Make sure that probationary reviews are held. Make sure that you as a manager or supervisor collect and discuss enough relevant examples and details of the employee's work so that coaching or praise can take place as necessary.

Practice C. If the employee is not demonstrating the required competencies by half way through their probationary period, details of the employee's performance must be forwarded to the Director, City Engineer and Personnel Liaison for a conversation on next steps with the supervisor about the employee. There may be no alternative to termination.

Practice D. Create uniform criteria/strategy for terminating employees during and after probationary periods.

GOAL 5: OBTAIN RESOURCES FOR INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

Obtaining resources for infrastructure needs is important to implement best practices, maintain maintenance standards, and expand capital planning, all of which will further support our mission to preserve and enhance infrastructure to assure a safe and livable Capital City for all.

Implementation of Strategies identified:

Within 1-2 Years:

Strategy 1: Seek more grant opportunities

Practice A. Use existing staff to research grant opportunities

Practice B. Train staff on grant writing, etc.

Practice C. Develop relationships with agencies that award grants – e.g. Federal Stimulus

Strategy 2: Get a portion of parking enforcement fine revenue for snow tagging costs

Practice A. Include with 2010 budget as an above base request

Practice B. Increase parking ticket fine for snow tag to cover costs if existing fine can't cover costs

Strategy 3: Worker's compensation budget savings

Practice A. Include with 2010 budget as an above base request to capture budget savings from worker's compensation.

Practice B. Get worker's compensation savings back from Risk Management.

Practice C. Council resolution adopted by City Council establishing a policy/reserve that allows us to use budget savings for safety improvements and training.

Practice D. Budget reserve established or budget amendment completed that allow us to use the savings for safety improvements and training.

Strategy 4: Load and pack equipment for trash pickup

Practice A. Include with 2011 budget as an above base request.

Practice B. Use budget savings from worker's compensation to fund? (See item 3. above)

Strategy 5: Increase County Aid

Practice A. Pursue full reimbursement of our costs.

Practice B. Amend agreement with the county for full reimbursement of our costs.

Strategy 6: Increase MSA

Practice A. Use all of our MSA construction allotment to avoid a penalty and get additional dollars.

Practice B. Determine appropriate construction/maintenance split (currently 65%/35%).

Strategy 7: Increase Trunk Highway funds

Practice A. Pursue full reimbursement of our costs.

Practice B. Amend agreement with the State of Minnesota for full reimbursement of our costs.

Strategy 8: Creatively partner with neighborhoods, arts organizations, City departments and others to obtain funding to increase artistic elements in the public realm

Practice A. Build relationships with organizations or individuals interested in enhancing the vibrancy of the City through incorporating art in the right-of-way.

Practice B. Leverage these partnerships to use art to further our goals for traffic calming, place making and identification of Saint Paul's unique character and qualities.

Strategy 9: Always consider our strategic plan and our core services before committing the department to new work or cost participation. Part of the value of a strategic plan is the ability to say "no" to those things not in alignment with what makes us the best.

Practice A. Consider the ramifications of short-term decisions with regard to our long-term goals, where we want to be and what we want for our customers.

Practice B. Educate the Mayor's Office, City Council, employees, other departments, and the general public on the services we perform and the services we do not perform.

Practice C. Do not agree to take on more work unless there is a formal agreement with all parties involved that outlines the specific services to be performed, cost of the services performed, and payment schedule for the cost.

Strategy 10: Partnerships with agencies outside the City

Practice A. Develop relationships with organizations that have resources.

Practice B. Establish formal agreements with organizations that have resources we can use.

Practice C. Spread work over a larger geographic area

Strategy 11: Consider other items that will reduce costs in the long run:

Practice A. Seek input from staff for ideas

Practice B. Include on comment cards from customers for ideas

In 3-5 Years:

Strategy 12: Seek more grant opportunities

Practice A. Dedicate staff to research grant opportunities

Practice B. Train staff as needed

Strategy 13: Increase bond size

Practice A. Submit request to Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) committee

Strategy 14: Collaboration for research on chemicals to apply to icy roads

Practice A. Develop relationships with organizations that are interested in this research and with organizations that do this research.

Practice B. Establish formal agreements with organizations to research chemical applications to icy roads.

Strategy 15: Salt, and energy budget savings

Practice A. How do we capture budget savings from salt and energy?

Practice B. How do we get these budget savings back to use?

Practice C. Council resolution adopted by City Council establishing a policy/reserve that allows us to use budget savings for efficient equipment and training.

Practice D. Budget reserve established or budget amendment completed that allow us to use the savings for efficient equipment and training.

Strategy 16: Change State of Minnesota Statutes to specifically allow traffic signals, signs, etc. to be assessed under the Right-of-Way Maintenance Assessment.

Practice A. Determine support from other jurisdictions and get support from them as needed

Practice B. Work with League of Minnesota Cities and coordinate with City of Saint Paul legislative staff to pursue change.

In 5 Years+:

Strategy 17: Transportation Utility Legislation

Practice A. Determine legal requirements for transportation utility legislation and continue to support the League of Minnesota Cities initiative to enact through the State of Minnesota.

Practice B. Lobby State of MN legislators as needed. Determine support from other jurisdictions and get support from them as needed.

Practice C. Work with League of Minnesota Cities and coordinate with City of Saint Paul legislative staff to pursue change.

Strategy 18: Adopt a road for trash pickup

Practice A. Seek input from staff for ideas and to assess interest.

Practice B. Include on comment cards from customers for ideas and to assess interest.

Strategy 19: Engage friends of Public Works

Practice A. Seek input from staff for ideas and to assess interest.

Practice B. Include on comment cards from customers for ideas and to assess interest.

Strategy 20: Sentence to serve

Practice A. Meet with labor unions and work out an agreement for use of sentence to serve.

Strategy 21: Engage volunteers

Practice A. Seek input from staff for ideas and to assess interest.

Practice B. Include on comment cards from customers for ideas and to assess interest.

Strategy 22: Summary abatement for leaves swept in street

Practice A. Meet with DSI, Police Dept., and City Attorney's Office to determine viability and interest.

Practice B. Revise City of Saint Paul summary abatement ordinance to include an assessment for leaves illegally swept in streets.

Practice C. Ensure that the assessment will cover all costs to enforce and maintain the ordinance.

Goal 6: GET THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT, SOFTWARE & SYSTEMS IN PLACE AND TO MAXIMIZE THEIR USE

The acquisition and use of our tools, software, hardware and other assets has always been a major factor in our operational success. As budgets become tighter it becomes more important that we ensure that the equipment and systems purchased are the best fit and that their utilization is maximized.

Since there are many types of equipment and systems it would be difficult to set exact procedures that would fit all of the varied types of purchases that are regularly made by Public

Works. The following strategies should help to guide both the purchase process and in-service implementation. All of these strategies may not apply to all purchases but should be applied as necessary, dependent on the type and complexity of the item being acquired. At a minimum, the end user should have input as to the purchase and setup of the equipment/system. This does not mean the end user will make final decisions, just that their concerns will be heard prior to purchase.

Strategy 1: Look at overall systems & encourage new ways of doing business

Examples:

- Record keeping (e.g. Document management, CMMS, asset condition data collection);
- Communications systems (e.g., phones, radio, automatic vehicle location)
- New on-street service delivery methods (e.g. equipping plows with wing blades, load and pack, laptops in trucks etc.)
- Use of field devices (e.g. handheld computing, data collectors)
- Equipment automation (e.g. rate controlled salt spreaders, laser grade controlled paving, remote monitoring)
- New technologies

Strategy 2: Determine the end use for the equipment/system being purchased.

The end use, what service or function will the equipment/system help to perform should be the first step in the purchase or replacement process. The end use of the item should drive the purchase. Consideration should be given to future needs and possible changes in operational practices.

Practice A. Involve the end user in decision making, let the person/persons who use the equipment/system give input as to what they think will work.

Practice B. Consider the input of not only the current users but also potential users.

Practice C. Form committees to review strategies related to certain requests.

Practice D. Look to other jurisdictions to see what processes they use to purchase equipment.

Strategy 3: Research the current equipment/system to determine what works now and what may be beneficial in the new equipment/system

Practice A. Look for what is working now and what needs to be improved. Determine if the equipment/system in use is correct or if changes would increase service or productivity. Since most equipment/systems would have at least a five year life, try to forecast the needs and service requirements for the same period.

Practice B. Ask the question, “Why is the current equipment/system being replaced?”

Practice C. List what works and what does not work.

Practice D. Create a “wish” list of features or options for the new equipment/system.

Practice E. Find out what works for others performing the same task.

Practice F. Consider end uses and users of equipment – have all end users express their needs and compromise as needed.

Strategy 4: Research the potential replacement equipment/systems available

The options available now may be different from those of the past. The information and input gathered from strategies one and two should be compared against the equipment/systems which are available in the market at the present.

Practice A. Explore what equipment/systems are available.

Practice B. Research what other jurisdictions / contractors are using.

Practice C. Research environmental impact of system equipment being purchased, and determine if there is a sustainable solution.

Practice D. Consider whether changes have occurred related to the equipment/system being purchased.

Practice E. Consider whether there are alternative ways to accomplish the task or service.

Practice F. Determine what and how many vendors are able to respond to a bid.

Practice G. Identify what type of purchase is required (bid, RFP, lease...).

Strategy 5: Determine if there are cooperative opportunities related to the equipment/system

Governmental agencies can no longer afford to be “stand-a-lone” operations. When equipment/systems are shared the purchase and operating costs may be distributed over multiple budgets lowering the impact to each individual agency.

Practice A. Consider whether there are others who perform the same service or function who could provide information or may be interested in a joint venture

Practice B. Explore whether there are other agencies using equipment/systems which could be shared to meet the need and avoid a new purchase

Strategy 6: Combine data from strategies 2-5 (above) to purchase the most practical and environmentally sound option

Strategy 7: Ensure effective employee training

One of the best ways to optimize equipment/system functionality is to make sure those using the equipment/system are properly trained. Any new system or piece of equipment will be underutilized if the person using it does not know its full capabilities.

Practice A. Determine who should be trained.

Practice B. Determine who should perform the training (vendor, third party or in-house trainers).

Practice C. Ensure employees are aware of the equipment/system options and functionality.

Practice D. Consider inviting other staff or agencies (those who may not be planning to use the new equipment/systems) to training sessions. They may become interested in using the equipment/system or they may bring up a new point of view.

Strategy 8: Review equipment/system disposal procedures

What may seem like the obvious, last way to maximize the value of a system or piece of equipment is often dismissed. Unless the equipment/system is completely non-functional, the disposal of that equipment/system can create value.

Practice A. Explore whether there are potential users for your surplus equipment/systems (could another division/department gain from your old item).

Practice B. Determine whether there are tax advantages to how you dispose of old items (trade-in equipment lowers the sale price and thus lowers the tax amount).

Practice C. List your disposal options (Trade-in, recycle, scrap-out, auction, sealed bid...)

Goal 7: Improve Team Building by Field, Division, Department, and across the City

Find constructive, creative and meaningful ways to connect within our divisions and to our department as a whole. Proposed are a set of initial short term strategies that will require assistance from around the department. We recognize this is a challenging and very long-term goal. Success is incremental at best and needs sustained and measured commitment.

Short term (six – 12 months)

Strategy 1: Assemble a group of six to 10 people representing our department who are interested in, and will champion the stated goal of improving teamwork.

Practice A. Define what it means to be a team:

- We know our *purpose*, Public Works reason for existence
- Our staff are *interdependent* with each other, and understands the complete interdependency;
- Public Works is *committed* to working together for the common purpose;
- We are all *accountable* for our actions

Practice B. Identify ways to incorporate the above definition into each division and ultimately into each department. (We need to know what it looks like in order for us to get where we are going).

Practice C. Have the committee define the mid-term and long range strategies, including brown-bag sessions and awards program, among others, to implement.

Practice D. Committee meet to mediate potential challenges that may include creating positive strategies in the wake of those suffering from cynicism, crassness and job burnout, as well as issues related to stamina and persistence. Please refer to goal four for ideas on employee motivation.

Interim/Mid Term (one to three years)

Strategy 2: Make performance evaluations meaningful and congruent with this goal.

Practice A. Evaluate the performance review document and revise it, as needed, to include sections on training received, training sought, professional organization participation etc. Use the revised performance review document in determining probationary measures. Collaborate with the champion of goal four.

Practice B. Recognize and follow-thru on group's recommendations.

Long Term (continuous)

Strategy 3: Reinforce and support the group's positive steps.

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