

SAINT PAUL
INNOVATION TEAM™

2015–2017
Performance Report

Case Studies and Results

November 2017



SAINT PAUL INNOVATION TEAM™

Improving today. Creating tomorrow.



What is an Innovation Team?

We are an internal consulting group that supports City leadership to champion new ideas as they strive to continuously improve results for Saint Paul. We catalyze a culture of innovation and improvement across the city. We partner with city leaders as a trusted advisor to solve their most critical city business issues.

We can help with...

- Cross-functional projects
- Transformation initiatives
- Process performance improvement
- New idea generation
- Talent development
- Change management
- Strategy planning and management
- Goals and measures development
- Service design
- Customer experience insights
- Service performance management
- Data analytics

“Having an in-house consulting team reassures us that we can keep pushing the boundaries of our department’s performance.”
-Jane Eastwood, Director, Saint Paul Public Library





Innovation Team Strategies

The Saint Paul Innovation Team uses the following strategies to advance city success:



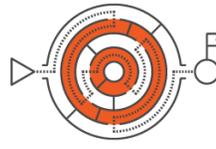
Engage
Diverse Partners



Transform
City Services



Activate
Meaningful Data



Catalyze Strategy and
Performance
Management



Champion
Bold Ideas



Develop
Innovative Talent

Innovation Effort Benefits...

**Increase
capacity and
productivity**

Free up staff time to apply to higher impact work and identify, align and manage effective pro bono expert consulting at no direct cost

**Increase and
create city
revenues**

Enhance current revenue volumes and bring new revenue to city

**Cost
reduction &
avoidance**

Direct cost savings or delayed impact to budget

**Increase city
resident
satisfaction**

Service improvement leads to more satisfied residents

**Advance
racial equity**

Reduce disparities and improving outcomes by applying racial equity lens to innovation work.

\$1.2M

Value generated for Saint Paul by the Innovation Team since 2015



Improving Snow Plow Operations

Public Works



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The Opportunity

In 2014, the Mayor’s office approached Public Works Street Maintenance with citizen reports of dissatisfaction with snow plowing services. Citizens and public officials alike had a perception that snow plow operations were not working as well as they could. The mayor directed Public Works to partner with the Innovation Team and Civic Consulting MN to improve operations. **Together, the teams developed concrete goals and measures for success, strategized to improve performance and results, and made a plan for communication with residents and city leaders.**

Strategies

This project uses key Innovation team strategies to produce results:



Activate
Meaningful Data

Developed clear street maintenance goals, performance metrics, a data collection plan and a public dashboard tool. Identified the fewest number of measures for the most impact.



Engage Diverse
Partners

A former MNDOT commissioner, KLG Engineering, and Civic Consulting MN provided pro bono technical assistance and consulting services managed by the Innovation Team to ensure value delivery.



Transform
City Services

Led process mapping sessions to document and clarify snow plow operations. This map can be used for staff training and continuous improvement efforts.

Results

\$250K

Saved in operations and materials savings



Developed a public facing performance dashboard

40%

Reduction in salt use

“We thought “experts” were going to come in and tell us how to do snow plowing. Really, that wasn’t the case at all. It was [the Innovation Team] listening to what you were thinking about, challenging you, and compiling that all in a format to deliver your message and talk about your operations.”

—Joe Spah, Street Maintenance Division Manager





Growing Small Businesses

Open for Business Initiative



The Opportunity

For years, city departments have been working to make it easier to open a small business while protecting public health and safety. In 2016, the city took a fresh approach with the Open for Business (OFB) initiative. After city leaders hosted listening sessions with over 60 business owners, the Innovation Team came on board to facilitate a cross-functional project team with the goal of improving the business owner experience. Working with the Mayor’s Office, City Council, and three city departments, the Innovation Team helped advance action planning and collaboration efforts to make Saint Paul a great place to do business. Councilmember Rebecca Noecker remarked, **“the Innovation Team crosses seamlessly between multiple departments. They have a reputation for getting things done while paying attention to detail and organization.”**

Strategies

This project uses key Innovation team strategies to produce results:



Champion Bold Ideas

Created a new website and pocket guide that offers a simple end-to-end explanation of how to open a business, tailored to the perspective of potential business owners and in multiple languages.



Engage Diverse Partners

Utilized human centered service design approach to engage small businesses as partners in solution development. Conducted listening sessions and ethnographic interviews with business owners. Fostered collaboration across departments to create pocket guide to opening a business.



Transform City Services

Led process mapping sessions to document and clarify business processes, identify quick win improvements, and facilitate cross-functional alignment.

Results



Improved customer service standard for Business Support Line



Created standardized process across departments to streamline customer intake

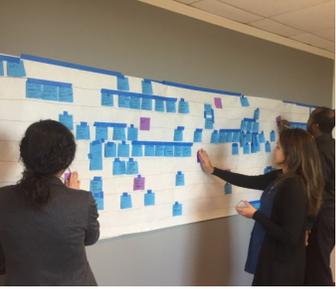
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DSI department staff trained in customer insights and empathy

“The Innovation Team was instrumental in the formation of the Pocket Guide to Opening a Business in Saint Paul. They provided a third party approach to listening and analyzing business customer feedback, asked our team the right questions, and offered ideas that helped us think about new ways to do things.”

— Jonathan Sage-Martinson, Director, PED





Leveraging Data for Racial Equity

City Attorney's Office



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TEAM

The Opportunity

In early 2017, the City Attorney's Office (CAO) Criminal Division took an important step to align their operations with their racial equity goals. With the adoption of a new data system nearing, the team initiated a data exploration project to identify how the CAO could most effectively impact racial disparities in the criminal justice system. Acknowledging a skills gap in data analysis, the team prepared to issue a request for proposals from independent contractors...until one team member suggested approaching the Innovation Team. Attorney Laura Pietan reflects on the Innovation Team as an "amazing in-house resource". **"Its refreshing to work with a savvy team where a racial equity lens is in full effect."**

Strategies

This project uses key Innovation team strategies to produce results:



**Activate
Meaningful Data**

Using a sample of domestic violence cases, this project explores data to help identify opportunities to improve racial disparities in the criminal justice system. New data points were identified to be captured in new data system, enabling future analytics.



**Engage
Diverse Partners**

The Innovation team partners with Metro Lab, a network that pairs university talent with city talent to undertake research projects that improve public services. As a result of this partnership, the University of Minnesota Office of the Vice President for Research collaborated with CAO and Innovation Team to analyze the data using inferential statistics.

The Next Step



**Activate Meaningful
Data**

This project is phase one of a longer term effort to create positive change in the CAO. In late 2017, two specific prosecutorial interventions aimed at changing individual or system behaviors will be implemented.

Results

The working group explored domestic violence case data to develop strategies for disrupting racial bias:



Identified trends that correlate with racial disparities in case outcomes



Developed Equitable Prosecution Interventions to be applied to additional domestic violence cases and other crime areas in the future

"I get energized because now I can instruct my attorney's on these choice points, and I'll have a solid product to take away—this [data analysis] isn't just theoretical."

Laura Pietan, Deputy City Attorney



Catalyzing Strategic Decision Making

Service Performance Management



The Opportunity

For any city service, we should be able to answer a few key questions: *What* are you doing? *How well* are you doing it? *How do you know* how well you are doing it? *How can you demonstrate to others* how well you are doing it? The Innovation Team, with support from Bloomberg Philanthropies' What Works Cities initiative, worked with several early adopter city departments to put in place service performance management processes that allow them to answer those questions. **At the heart of service performance management, leaders and staff work together to set goals, measure performance, and reflect on results to inform future actions. In local government, this results in using data and evidence to improve residents' lives.**

Strategies

This project uses key Innovation team strategies to produce results:



Engage Diverse Partners

Bloomberg What Works Cities (WWC) is a network of city leaders using 21st-century governance strategies based on data and evidence. WWC provides expert technical assistance to cities in pursuit of their goals. Saint Paul was awarded the designation of a Bloomberg Philanthropies "What Works City" in 2017.



Transform City Services

When a new ordinance shifted oversight of 12,000 residential rental properties to the Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI), staff struggled to keep up with the nearly 200 percent workload increase. Applying WWC data-focused strategies, DSI and Innovation identified goals and used data to allocate resources where they are most needed.



Champion Bold Ideas

The Public Library focused on identifying measurable goals for Createch, a technology space for teens. Once SPPL identified a concrete goal, drawing at least 47% teens who identify as female, they look at the data and found that far fewer girls than boys were attending Createch. Because of the data, staff added a successful "Girls' Night."

Results

1 of 100

Mid-size cities nationally to participate in What Works Cities

\$50K

In pro-bono consulting from Johns Hopkins University Center for Government Excellence

4

Early adopter departments identified strategic objectives, goals and measures and reported performance to city leaders

"It was a pleasure to work with the Saint Paul Innovation team as a part of the What Works Cities initiative. They were a strong city partner in helping Saint Paul better leverage their data to drive decision-making. Their work has the opportunity to make a significant difference in the lives of their residents"

- Zach Markovits, Director of City Programs, Bloomberg Philanthropies What Works Cities





Leading Transformative Change

Public Works Leadership Strategy Development



The Opportunity

When Department Director Kathy Lantry joined Public Works in 2015, she began a department reorganization. In the midst of change, she questioned the purpose of a long held Executive meeting. "I started cancelling the meetings because we needed to stop having meetings where we didn't get anything done." Director Lantry didn't stop there. She connected with the Innovation Team to think through what a new leadership approach would look like. Together, they developed a Strategy Map to identify department-wide strategic objectives, ensuring Public Works staff had a thoughtful plan to guide their daily operations. **"The Strategy Map laid the foundation [to communicate] why we're making change. Now people expect change."**

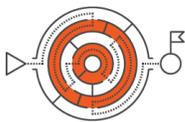
Strategies

This project uses key Innovation team strategies to produce results:



Develop Innovative Talent

The Innovation Team provided executive education on strategic goal setting, performance metric development, service performance management and data-based decision making.



Catalyze Strategy and Performance

Public Works has successfully formulated a strategy map to guide the development of performance goals, measures, targets and work plans.

The Next Step



Activate Meaningful Data

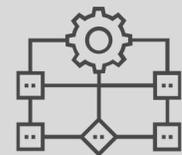
In an ongoing partnership with the Innovation Team, align strategic objectives and operational goals and metrics across department divisions. The Innovation Team will partner with the Office of Technology and Communication and division leaders to collect and analyze data on current performance levels.

Results

Leadership strategy development led to the creation of a **Strategy Map** that helped create clear strategic objectives across 4 arenas:



Customer Perspective: How must we look to our customers to achieve our mission?



Internal Processes: To satisfy customers and succeed at our mission, at which critical processes must we excel?



Learning and Growth: How must we learn and improve to excel at critical processes?



Financial Sustainability: How should we manage and allocate resources to maximize our success in our mission?

Other innovation projects have included ...

- Redesign of the capital improvement budgeting process
- Advanced City's Emerging Leaders Academy through partnership with HR
- Equity analysis and policy recommendations for Parks youth fee-based programs
- Citywide Racial Equity Change Team charter and framework development
- Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity Civilian Police Review Board data analytics project
- Fleet Services transformation
- Mayor's Office and Fire Department run time analytics and service performance
- Address infrastructure finance and implementation challenges for green stormwater infrastructure
- Pop Up Meeting community engagement strategy

Developing Innovative Talent

Emerging Leaders Academy Retreat

Leadership talent development is a critical strategy for building a successful workforce of the future. The identification, preparation and support of the next generation of leaders is essential for the well-being of the city. A partnership between Human Resources and Innovation, the Emerging Leaders Academy (ELA) offers a structured but flexible development opportunity for selected high potential city staff to prepare them for leadership roles. The 8-month program consists of educational and experiential components to foster a broad perspective of the city as an enterprise, as well as develop knowledge, skills and abilities to enhance leadership effectiveness.

25 leaders from departments across the city participated in the 2017 ELA retreat



Valuable Takeaways

From participant reflections

- * We are better together
- * Build a supportive team to ensure future success
- * Focus on building trust to accomplish goals
- * It's okay to express emotion and ask for help when its needed
- * Get outside your comfort zone—it's the best way to grow
- * Share perspectives to gain perspective
- * Develop your leadership to develop the leadership of others



Transferable Skills

- * Valuable knowledge about the functions and responsibilities of other departments
- * Networking skills
- * Goal and measure development
- * Implement continuous feedback to drive improvement
- * Leadership identification and reflection tools

100% of participants recommend the ELA retreat

"We all do our part to make the residents of Saint Paul's lives better, but to give that value and meaning involves understanding the roles of others. It requires willingness to learn [from] and maintain relationships with colleagues beyond our department."

Xenia Hernández, Saint Paul Public Libraries



Innovation Day

Emerging Leaders Academy

60 Emerging leaders have participated in Innovation Day since 2015

Innovation Day!

- * One day event in which emerging leaders deliver innovation for Saint Paul
- * Within this timeframe, participants have total autonomy over the project on which they work. They decide what they're working on, who they work with, and how they will do the work
- * Only one rule: you have to present your project with your team to senior leaders the next morning
- * This day is about **imagination, creativity, motivation, and innovation**

Award Categories

- * Most "out-of-the-box" idea
- * Best presentation
- * Idea you'd most like to see implemented

Results

- * 2017 idea to negotiate lower tuition rates with colleges for city employees has been implemented by Human Resources



Innovation Team

NAME	Cassi Johnson
POSITION	Senior Innovation Consultant

CASSI JOHNSON has more than 15 years of experience tackling complex community and enterprise-wide challenges at the intersection of health, community vitality, diversity and inclusion, and operational effectiveness. As Senior Innovation Consultant, she provides internal consulting, strategy, and project management support to city leaders to drive systems change with a racial equity lens. Cross-functional and multi-sectoral collaboration, transformational change, and integrating diversity, inclusion and innovation into operations are her areas of expertise. Cassi has a master of science degree in sociology and sustainable food systems and B.A. in geography. She is a graduate of the Disparities Leadership Program at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard University and is a Qualified Administrator of the Intercultural Development Inventory.

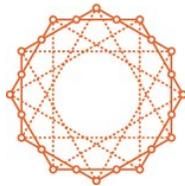
NAME	Catherine Penkert
POSITION	Senior Innovation Consultant

CATHERINE PENKERT has worked at the intersection of systems change and direct service for over 15 years. As Senior Innovation Consultant, she supports city leaders to improve processes and results, as well as represents the City of Saint Paul in several national initiatives. She has held key roles in projects that won Local Government Innovation Awards in 2014, 2015, and 2016. Cross-functional project leadership, innovative idea generation, new initiative implementation, program design and evaluation, and communications planning are her areas of expertise. Catherine has masters degrees in public policy and social work, and a B.A. in psychology and sociology.

NAME	Matt Larson
POSITION	Innovation Manager

MATT LARSON has over 20 years in the public and private sectors designing and directing strategies with executive leadership teams focused on strategic change, innovation, organizational performance improvement, and leadership talent development. Matt has extensive experience working internationally and domestically as a leader, engagement director, instructor, consultant, business owner, coach, and project practitioner with organizations across many industries. He held leadership positions at General Electric Capital, Pricewaterhouse-Coopers Consulting, IBM Global Business Consulting Services, and University of Minnesota. He completed the Innovation Studies program at UMN, certified Black Belt at General Electric, certified Master Black Belt at PwC Consulting, Mini MBA and B.A. in Individual and Organizational Communication and Change.

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Contact us to learn more about how we can support your department:

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