

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING ON JULY 23, 2013
FROM:	VERONICA MCALEA MAJOR, MANAGING DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SERVICES AND CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER
SUBJECT:	EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Corporate Services & Chief Human Resources Officer, this Report **BE RECEIVED** for information purposes.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER
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None.

BACKGROUND

Previous Corporate Program

The Corporation's previous suggestion program was in place for approximately 24 months from January 1994 through to 1996. The focus of that program was cost reduction and service improvement. Ideas that were implemented were eligible for a monetary award. The awards were decided by the amount of savings or revenues that were generated from the ideas. We contacted the former lead for this program to gain a better understanding of the program's successes and challenges. The information provided included the following:

- Approximately 256 suggestions were submitted with 18 being implemented
- Approximately \$35,000 in savings was realized
- Approximately \$13,000 was paid out in awards
- Employees lost interest in the program and ideas stopped being submitted
- Administering the program involved a lot of time and effort

New Suggestion Program

With the objective to engage our employees to participate in making London a Great Place to Live, Work and Play, Civic Administration initiated a review of best practices related to employee suggestion programs. Input was obtained from all employee groups, the Operations Management Team and the Senior Leadership Team. Civic Administration also reviewed the previous suggestion program that was formerly in place for employees.

Research:

Our best practice research identified several elements for a successful employee suggestion program:

- The program design needs to be linked to the Corporation's strategy;
- The program should help employees to understand how what they do and the effort they provide can make a difference to the strategic plan; and
- The program should be kept fresh and promoted often to employees to ensure continued participation.

Our internal focus groups provided the following feedback:

- On a regular basis keep employees informed of the program and the ideas being implemented;
- Do not provide money as an award;
- Celebrate the best ideas that are implemented;
- Allow employees to vote on the best ideas implemented;
- The committee that selects the ideas for implementation should represent all employee groups from across the Corporation;
- Ideas should not result in job loss or have labour relations implications;
- Ideas must respect existing policies and procedures;
- Ideas can only be considered if they are “owned”. Ideas submitted without a name should not be considered;
- Ideas may apply to other areas outside of an employee’s direct Service Area; and
- Ideas may be submitted by an individual or by a team of employees.

New Program

The new “MyIDEA” program was launched at the Employee Update Event held in May, 2013. Over 1000 employees attended the event. The key focus of the new program is “The Power of TEAM... Building a great City together”. The program invites employees to look at our workplace and our community and suggest ways that can enhance the quality of life for our employees, citizens and visitors.

The purpose of this program is to allow our employees to get involved and share their creative and innovative ideas. They can provide input into something they believe can make a difference and are able to be a part of the team that turns their ideas into action.

The program is designed to create a link between our employee’s suggestions and our five Results as set out in the Corporation’s Strategic Plan;

- A Strong Economy
- A Vibrant and Diverse Community
- A green and Growing City of London
- A Sustainable Infrastructure
- A Caring Community

Submitting ideas: There are three ways to submit an idea. Paper based forms are available at worksites across the City, an electronic submission form is available on the internal intranet and phone calls can be made to a member of the employee recognition area within Human Resources.

Ingredients for ideas submission success: Employees must own their idea by including their name and a contact phone number. The idea should also be reasonable to implement and it should fit with one or more of the Results.

Process for idea submissions: Employees who submit ideas will receive a thank you card signed by our City Manager. Ideas will be considered by our Review Team and employees may be invited to present their idea to the Review Team. As ideas are implemented, employees who submitted the idea will be invited to participate in turning their idea into action.

Celebrating our successes: Idea updates and the stories behind the ideas will be shared with employees on a regular basis. On a yearly basis employees will vote on the top ideas implemented that year. The top ideas will receive an Award of Excellence.

An internal advertisement seeking volunteer members to be a part of the Review Team has been well received with applications being received from employees across the Corporation. The Review Team’s mandate is to help facilitate the implementation of ideas. This will be done by making sure subject matter experts are available to help fully understand the idea submitted and the opportunity for a successful implementation.

To date, employees have submitted approximately 50 ideas and the full launch of the program is still underway with on-site visits planned throughout the summer. The program is also being introduced to new employees by way of the Corporate Orientation Program.

This program will be funded from within Human Resources' existing operating budget. Enclosed in the Agenda package is the employee information brochure "I Have an IDEA".

REVIEWED AND RECOMMENDED BY:	PREPARED BY:
VERONICA MCALEA MAJOR MANAGING DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SERVICES AND CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER	SUSAN MILLER MANAGER III, REWARDS & RECOGNITION