

Community Services Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan for Community Services



March 2017

Introduction

The Department of Community Services Strategic Plan for 2017-2022 is the product of an inclusive planning process involving Community Services staff and other city departments.

As part of the City of Dover's Framework for Performance Excellence, each department develops its own strategic plan which works in conjunction with the City's Master Plan to guide the community. This Strategic Plan builds on the accomplishments from earlier strategic planning efforts. It presents a vision, mission, core values, goals and objectives developed in collaboration with staff and management. This plan includes a performance-based management framework that will ensure the continued success and effectiveness of work.

The Community Services Strategic Planning committee was comprised of The Deputy City Manager, Assistant City Engineer and all Community Services Division Supervisors. With the use of the SWOO Analysis, National Employee Survey results, National Citizens Survey results and past experience the committee identified areas in need of improvement. The emerging issues and challenges are identified as follow:

1. External Communication and Public Relations
2. Training, Development and Secession Planning
3. Labor Resource, Policy Review, Organization Structure
4. Technology

The Strategic Plan reviews identified issues and challenges for the Department organized around four major goals:

Goals

- A. **Public Information, Outreach, and Engagement** - Increased public awareness and understanding of issues and ensure public participation is vital to the continued success of all public organizations.
- B. **Workforce Development and Management** - Attracting, developing, and retaining a high-quality, diverse, professional staff with the ability to create innovative, implementable plans and the expertise to facilitate service delivery.
- C. **Organizational Excellence and Customer Service** – By maintaining effective internal systems and processes we enhance overall organizational performance and responsiveness to customer needs and expectations.
- D. **Infrastructure and Technological Assets** – Through the application of efficient and modern use of technology and infrastructure staff is able to accomplish high quality services delivery.

Each of these four Goals has a set of specific objectives, actions and performance measures to assess progress. These have been listed in an Action Plan that serves as a road map for action.

Vision Statement

The Community Services Department's vision statement is a result of the cooperative input of its Strategic Planning Committee and is as follows:

“To enhance the quality of life in the community by utilizing expertise, fostering innovative leadership and evolving technology”

Mission Statement

The Community Services organizational mission statement reflecting the purpose to be served by the existence and ongoing efforts of our municipal operations is as follows:

“To provide continuous, reliable, sustainable, high quality service to the community. To protect community's public health, infrastructure, public assets and environment”

Core Values

The core values representing the beliefs and behaviors by which all members of the City of Dover organization shall conduct ourselves and providing a common basis for making and evaluating all decisions and actions are as follows:

Customer-Focused Service – We engage our customers, with a focus on listening to and supporting their needs, anticipating and delivering high quality services and ensuring their satisfaction.

Integrity – We conduct ourselves at all times in a manner that is ethical, legal and professional, with the highest degree of honesty, respect and fairness.

Innovation – We develop creative solutions and share leading practices that enhance the value of services provided for our customers.

Accountability – We promote openness and transparency in our operations ensuring that we are accountable for our actions at all times.

Stewardship – We serve as trusted stewards of the public's financial, environmental, social and physical resources always seeking to responsibly utilize, conserve and sustain for current and future generations.

Emerging Issues and Challenges

The strategic planning process identified the following issues and challenges:

1) External Communication and Public Relations

Identifying who Community Services (CS) is as a department. The name "Community Services" is misleading to the public; many residents and nonresidents contact the CS Department inquiring about social services. Frequently, residents are frustrated by the time a phone call reaches the department because they are unable to find the specific service they are inquiring about on the City of Dover website. Inquirers do not relate Community Services to Public Works, streets, drains, water, sewer etc..., indicating a weakness in the department's visibility on the City website.

Community Services Department lacks a protocol for standard public notifications, specifically construction projects. Other areas of concern recognized through the SWOO analysis were utilization of all forms of communication available and to continually analyze trending forms of communication such as social media. VueWorks service call logs also touch on the need to improve upon short term/emergency public notifications.

2) Training, Development and Seccession Planning

Senior Management staff has been employed for an average of 26.45 years. Retirement or separation from the city within the next five to seven years is probable for 100% of Senior Management with an average age of 52.89 years. There is potential loss of knowledge due to undocumented data and inadequate training/mentoring programs. Management struggles with training and mentoring programs due to contractual obligations such as the inability to offer a potential candidate with experience higher compensation and union seniority.

An area of concern is the lack of new employee orientation and training at the department level. Community Services is made up of 7 divisions, 16 separate budgets and conducts business at three administrative locations, a Public Works Facility, Fleet Maintenance Garage, Recycling Center, 4 Cemeteries, 24 Sewer Pump Stations, 1 Sewer Treatment Plant and laboratory, 7 Wells, 2 Water Treatment Plants, 2 Water Towers, 1 Water Recharge Station, 20 Public Buildings, 30 Parks, 2 Swimming Pools, 14 Play Grounds and 12 Sports Fields. A formal introduction to the diversity of the department, its operations, policy and procedures, memos of understanding and specific safety requirements is absent.

Another challenge recognized through the analysis is the opposition to change and technology. The average tenure for CS employees with the City of Dover is 14.3 years, with 18 of these employees having been employed 20 or more years. Implementing new procedures and technology is met with resistance and misunderstanding.

3) Labor Resource, Policy Review, Organizational Structure

Community Services employs many leaders in its industry which have been recognized for their dedication and innovation. The Department excels with knowledge and emergency response but without suitable funding and meeting legal requirements the workload demand versus labor resource results in adequate day-to-day customer service. Today's "have it now" society has created additional demands on response time. Current policy, procedures, organizational structure and labor force is not realistic to meet the needs of today's society.

It was recognized that CIP projects are not being managed in a timely manner as projects are approved. Although the City of Dover's CIP program is well funded, the amount of projects and the growing backlog is aggressive for the Department as currently staffed and organized to handle.

Community Services uses the VueWorks system to track service calls and work orders throughout the department. Although training has taken place for all divisions on the VueWorks system the interdepartmental procedures on opening service calls, creating work orders and closing work orders is not uniform throughout the department. In a two year period, January 2015 to December 2016, 2,231 service calls were created, 2,094 of those service calls were closed leaving 6% to remain open. During the same time period 7,572 work orders were created and 7,134 were closed again leaving 6% open. With the high discrepancy between service calls and work orders it is evident that all divisions do not handle the work order system in the same manner.

4) Technology

Community Services Management and staff are continually investigating and educating themselves in the newest technologies. Emerging technology is forever evolving and providing opportunities that have placed divisions of the Community Services Department and the City of Dover as front runners in areas such as waste water treatment, groundwater monitoring, stormwater management, pavement analysis and management, salt brine application and direct read water meters.

Although the technology and data gathering focus tends to be on higher priority items such as utilities and infrastructure the department also wants advocate for other projects that improve efficiencies, cost effectiveness, preserves the past and meets the needs of a technological era.

Action Plan: Goals, Objectives, Actions & Outcome Measures

The issues and challenges identified in section 2 will be addressed as follows:

External Communication and Public Relations

The Community Services Department will work collectively to develop an SOP for public notifications. Community Services employees will use community forums as a way to address current issues and seek out additional grants and SRF funds to increase community outreach and education. Call logs and number of hits to Community Services web page will be analyzed for efficiency. Community Services will produce short videos highlighting the various operations of the department.

With the implementation of the above the department will work to improve day to day customer service, provide a better sense of who Community Services is to the public and reduce the number of customer calls and complaints.

Training, Development and Seccession Planning

The goal is to provide a smooth introduction to our diverse department for new employees by developing an employee orientation program specific to Community Services. We will also offer a clear career path and seccession planning for all levels of employment. Division supervisors will host monthly in-house and quarterly outside sourced training events. Training and utilization of VueWorks, Treeno and all available software programs, as well as digitizing O&M manuals will become mandatory practices.

These practices will increase the number of digitally documented assets, preserve historical data, reduce workers compensation claims and provide for career development of employees into a successful seccession plan.

Labor Resource, Policy Review, Organizational Structure

Community Services employees will continue to take part as members and executives of outside organizational boards. The Deputy City Manager will review the organization structure of the department to be sure the departments organization structure meets todays new "have it now" society. He will also work with direct reports to set clear priorities and expectations. Capital Improvement Project (CIP) managers will be assigned upon the approval/funding of CIP project.

By continuing on as executive board members Community Services employees will continue to be seen as industry leaders. By reviewing and making changes to the organizational structure of the department and assigning project managers, Community Service employees and it's leaders will be able to better meet the needs of today's society.

Technology

The Community Services Department sees it's self as trend setters, implementing cutting edge technology, efficiencies, standards and sustainability into all projects. Part of the expansion of technology will be to create a public searchable map of the city owned cemetery plots and monuments, update publication and modeling software to current versions. Division Managers will also set up training programs and hold staff accountable for timely and accurate inputting into existing software applications as well as scanning and creating digital archives of historical documents.

Community Services Department will support the efforts of the city of Dover to preserve its great history while at the same time being proactive in choosing prototype equipment and processes to move the department into the future.

The Matrix identifies:

- A timeline for implementing each Action
 - Ongoing: Actions which are continuous or are already being carried out
 - Short: Actions which should be undertaken in 1-2 years
 - Medium: Actions which should be undertaken within 3-5 years
 - Long: Actions which will take more than 5 years to be initiated or completed
- The responsible person or people tasked with performing the Action
- Which Issue or Challenge is being addressed by the proposed Action

Action Plan: Goals, Objectives, Actions and Objective Outcome Measures

Goal/Objectives/Actions/Objective Outcome Measures		Timeline	Responsibility	Issue
Goal A	Public Information, Outreach, and Engagement			
Objective A.1	Increase partnerships and foster an engaged, informed community. Improve inconsistent external notifications and communication. Expand opportunities for citizen feedback.			
Action A.1.1	Develop SOP for public notifications utilizing all forms of communication available	Short	Director, SW Supervisor, Asst. City Engineer and Admin Staff	1
Action A.1.2	Seek out grant/SRF funds to increase community outreach and education	Short	PW/Utilities Super, Director, Asst. City Engineer	1
Action A.1.3	Use Community forums and public events to address current issues (ex. drought)	Short	Director, PW/Utilities Super	1
Action A.1.4	Call logs (VueWorks work orders), document increase in call volume during short term changes/emergency events	Short	Admin Staff, Director	1,3
Objective Outcome Measure	Reduction in calls and complaints			
Objective Outcome Measure	National Citizens Survey			

Action Plan: Goals, Objectives, Actions and Objective Outcome Measures

Goal/Objectives/Actions/Objective Outcome Measures		Timeline	Responsibility	Issue
Goal B	Workforce Development and Management			
Objective B.1	To develop a mentoring and employee orientation program. Enhance communication with employees creating a conducive environment for reporting safety concerns and suggesting ideas and solutions. Provide superior CIP delivery.			
Action B.1.1	Training and utilization of VueWorks and Treeno as well as digitizing all O&M manuals.	Short	Supervisors, Admin & Engineering staff	2
Action B.1.2	Set monthly in-house training and quarterly training from outside specialist	Short	Director, Superintendent(s) and WWTF Supervisor	2
Action B.1.3	Divisional orientation check list for new employees signed off by employee and supervisor	Short	Divisional Supervisors, HR	2
Action B.1.4	Provide career path and secession planning for all levels of employment	Short	Divisional Supervisors, DS, HR	2
Action B.1.5	Project assignment upon CIP approval	Medium	Director, Engineering Staff, PW/Utilities Superintendent	3
Objective Outcome Measure	National Employee Survey			
Objective Outcome Measure	Successful secession plan			
Objective Outcome Measure	Reduce Workers Compensation Claims			
Objective Outcome Measure	CIP projects are properly managed, completed on schedule and within projected budget.			

Action Plan: Goals, Objectives, Actions and Objective Outcome Measures

Goal/Objectives/Actions/Objective Outcome Measures		Timeline	Responsibility	Issue
Goal C	Organizational Excellence and Customer Service			
Objective C.1	Continue as leaders in the industry and to improve day to day customer service.			
Action C.1.1	Continue as members and executive council on outside organizational boards	Ongoing	Director, PW/Utilities Super, WWTF Super, Asst. City Engineer	3
Action C.1.2	Continue to seek out new technology and prototypes	Ongoing	Department wide	4
Action C.1.3	Director to review organizational structure and set clear expectations of direct reports.	Short	Director, Admin Staff, HR	2
Action C.1.4	Create a policy and training to respond to service calls more timely and address work order back log.	Short	Director,, CS Superintendents, Admin Staff,	3
Action C.1.5	Redesign web page, get monthly updates as to number of hits on webpage	Medium	Director, PW/Utilities Super, Media	1
Action C.1.6	Short videos highlighting CS various operations to appear on channel 22	Medium	Director, Media	1
Objective Outcome Measure	Improve day to day customer service			
Objective Outcome Measure	Continue to be seen as industry leaders			
Objective Outcome Measure	Internal and external customers will have a better sense of who and what the CS Department is.			

Action Plan: Goals, Objectives, Actions and Objective Outcome Measures

Goal/Objectives/Actions/Objective Outcome Measures		Timeline	Responsibility	Issue
Goal D	Infrastructure and Technological Assets			
Objective D.1	Employ new and existing methods and technologies conducive in providing a broad, efficient and dynamic range of services internally and to the public. Strive to be leaders in the usage and development of cutting edge technology.			
Action D.1.1	Use institutional knowledge to support IT on asset management documentation	Ongoing	PW/Utilities Super, Streets Foreman/ Supervisor, City Engineer	2
Action D.1.2	Implement cutting edge technology, efficiencies, standards and sustainability into all projects.	Ongoing	Director, Division Mangers	4
Action D.1.3	Update publications and modeling software to current versions	Short	Engineering Staff	4
Action D.1.4	Train and hold staff accountable with timely & accurate inputting in existing software programs.	Short	Director, Division Manager	2,4
Action D.1.5	Scan and create digital archives of historical documents	Long	Admin staff	4
Action D.1.6	Create a public searchable map of city owned cemetery plots/monuments	Long	Cemetery staff, IT	4
Objective Outcome Measure	Increased number of assets digitally documented assets			
Objective Outcome Measure	Chosen to implement prototype equipment and processes			
Objective Outcome Measure	Organized, searchable digital location of important/historical documents			