The City of Baltimore's Innovation Program

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What is the Innovation Program?

The Innovation Program is composed of three City initiatives: the Innovation Fund, the Employee Innovation Program, and Baltimore L.I.F.T. (Lean, Innovation, and Forward Thinking). Together, these initiatives encourage City employees to think outside of the box when it comes to improving City services, how they are delivered, and what their outcomes are. The Innovation Program offers City employees the opportunity to present their ideas on how to improve government, both on a small and large scale, offers training in Lean Government, and hosts events where employees can gather to examine a process and improve it by relying on their ideas, input, and experience.

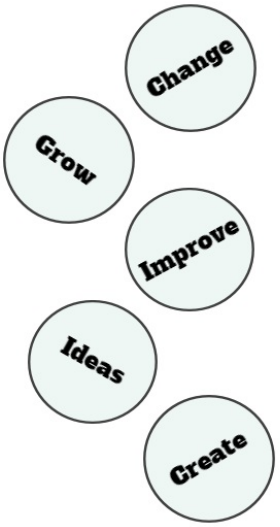
10 The number of Innovation Fund programs that have been funded since Fiscal 2012

Dollars (millions) invested in Innovation Fund projects **4.9m**

322 The number of City employees who have participated in Lean Government training

The number of Lean process improvement events the City has held since September 2014 **8**

The Innovation Lab: A Space to Think, Plan, and Act



Thinking creatively about how to address challenges facing government means a change of approach towards a problem - and sometimes a change of scenery. To that end, the City has created a space that encourages brainstorming, free thought, and mental and physical movement: the Innovation Lab. Equipped with wall-to-wall whiteboards, laptops, a "smart" projector, office supplies, a Lean library, and a kitchenette, the Innovation Lab is a multi-purpose space where employees can gather, discuss challenges, map out solutions, and plan for implementation. The lab has been used for many purposes, including those listed on the right. In Fiscal 2016, the Innovation Lab will continue to host these kinds of meetings as well as be the site of more strategic planning.

- Lean Government events and training
- Budget planning meetings
- Grant management team sessions
- HR training
- Good Government Book Club meetings

The City's Innovation Fund

Born out of the Outcome Budgeting process, the City of Baltimore's Innovation Fund started in Fiscal 2012. The purpose of the fund is to provide seed money for one-time investments that will lead to improved results, increased revenue, and/or reduced ongoing operating costs for City services.

The Innovation Fund is meant to be self-sustaining; savings from the investments are returned to the Fund so that other projects may be funded. Continuing this Fund is one way to keep City agency heads and staff are focusing on innovation and spurring creative solutions on how to use our limited resources.

So far, the City has awarded funding for ten Innovation Fund Projects across eight agencies. Three projects have been completely repaid while the others continue to generate additional revenue and savings for the City. Agencies are awarded Innovation Fund loans on a competitive, year-round application basis.

Did you know?

The City's single space meter program has generated an increase in revenue of 112%

The Baltimore Institute of Training and Innovation offers five forensic training classes with more being added

The Enterprise Energy Management project secured a grant from the Maryland Energy Administration and has been expanded from four buildings to eleven

Innovation Fund Loan Status

Innovation Fund Projects

ePlans - Housing and Community Development

This project modernizes the plans review process for building construction and transitioned it from a paper system to an all-electronic system

Environmental Health - Health Department

This project modernizes the food establishment inspection process and transitioned it from a paper system to an all-electronic system

800 mHz Overbuild - Mayor's Office of Information Technology

This project replaces the old mHz network with new, high speed fiber optic cable to increase connectivity for City agencies, businesses, and residents

Single Space Parking Spaces - Parking Authority of Baltimore City

This project replaces over 1700 mechanical parking meters with "smart" meters that accept credit and debit cards and communicate wirelessly with PABC

Off-Street Parking - Parking Authority of Baltimore City

This project provides improvements, including repaving surfaces, lighting installation, and planting trees and shrubbery, to several off-street parking lots to increase monthly parking contracts

Enterprise Energy Management - Department of Public Works

This project provides the installation of energy meters in several City buildings to identify where and when energy consumption is highest and how it can be reduced through energy-efficient improvements

Video Camera Accident Reduction - Fire Department

This project provides the installation of cameras in Fire Dept. vehicles to monitor driver behavior and reduce accident repair and maintenance costs

Baltimore Forensic Institute of Training and Innovation - Police Department

This project establishes a forensic training center to provide nationally recognized certification training to forensic professionals and provides for the purchase of a new DNA sequencer machine to increase the number of and speed at which DNA samples can be processed

Megapixel Madness - Police Department

This project provides for the purchase of digital cameras, eliminating the need for film cameras and rolls of film, as well as the equipment needed to develop and process film

RESULTS

- Parking revenue from the Single Space Parking Meter project has increased 112% from the original level
- Permits revenue from the ePlans project has increased (blank)% from the original level, has saved $(x) per year, and reduced the time for permits to be approved from (blank) days to (blank) days
- The Environmental Health project has saved over $106,000 thus far as the result of the automated inspection system being implemented
- From October 2014 – March 2015, the amount of money spent on repairing BCFD vehicles as the result of accidents dropped by 86% of what it had been for the same time period of the previous year
- The Baltimore Forensic Institute of Training and Innovation has trained over (blank) forensic professionals and generated revenue of $(blank) thus far
- The Megapixel Madness project has saved $(blank) thus far
- Three Innovation Fund projects – ePlans, Single Space Parking Meters, and Video Camera Accident Reduction – have fully repaid their Innovation Fund loans

Innovation Fund 2016: Camp Small Zero Waste Initiative

Fiscal 2016's first Innovation Fund project is a Rec and Parks initiative to convert Camp Small to a site that not only generates no waste, but creates revenue and savings from previously unrealized sources: compost and lumber.

The project will be implemented in three phases, the first two of which will be funded by the Innovation Fund. Phase 1 involves the removal of compost that has gathered on several acres of Camp Small. Using a screening machine, the raw compost can be turned into more refined compost, which can then either be sold to private entities or used in City projects, such as tree plantings. The removal of the compost from the grounds of Camp Small make it possible for Phase 2 to begin. Logs that are brought to Camp Small as a result of forestry activities by the City are often turned into mulch when they actually have a higher value as lumber, A sorting system will be built at Camp Small so that logs that can be used as lumber are sorted from those that cannot. Lumber logs will then be sold to local sawmills, thus creating a profit stream for the City, as well as saving money by not paying for the grinding and removal of the logs. Phase 3 of the project involves the rental of now available space at Camp Small to an organic composting operation.

The Innovation Fund will assist with the setup of the project by providing funding for the rental of a screening machine, fuel for the machine, and entering into a professional services contract for one year with a yardmaster to oversee the operations of the compost screening and log sorting. The project is expected to generate approximately $300,000 in savings for the City as well as $75,000 in revenue from log sales in its first year.

The Employee Innovations Program

The Employees Innovations Program (EIP) encourages employees to come up with creative improvements to make day-to-day operations in the City better. Improvements need to show a definite savings or revenue increase for the City, as well as improved customer service. An employee may submit an idea for consideration through the BBMR website, and if the idea is selected for by the Innovation Program Committee for implementation, may be awarded up to $5000 in compensation.

Lean Government

In 2014, the City launched its Lean Government initiative, Baltimore L.I.F.T. (Lean, Innovation, and Forward Thinking). Lean is a collection of principles and methods that focus on the identification and elimination of waste in a process. Lean integrates people, process, and technology in order to improve outcomes. Simply put, by engaging in continuous improvement and having a high level of respect for people, government can improve everything about itself.

Baltimore L.I.F.T. consists of two parts: Lean event and Lean training. Lean events are where City processes are examined by the people who perform them to determine where there is waste and how the waste can be eliminated. The result of a Lean event is a newly improved process that serves citizens better and yields better results. The events are run by certified Lean professionals and City employees can submit ideas of Lean events through the BBMR website.

Lean training consists of three levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Beginner training covers the basic concepts and applications of Lean, whereas the intermediate class covers these concepts in greater depth and students complete a small process improvement project for their work environment. Students who participate in the advanced class co-facilitate several Lean events in preparation for the national Lean certification exam, the goal of which is for them to become certified Lean facilitators.

Baltimore L.I.F.T

Lean, Innovation & Forward Thinking

Lean Event Improvements

Retail Business District Licensing Process

- ✓ Process with 93 steps that took nine months to complete reduced to 33 steps that take six months to complete
- ✓ Abatements for businesses that owed the City money dropped from 141 in FY2013 to 41 in FY2014
- ✓ The percentage of businesses paying their fees within 90 days increased from 68% in FY2013 to 73% in FY2014

Fire Permit Inspection Process

- ✓ Time for a customer to get their permit reduced from 35 days to 9.5 days on average
- ✓ Creation of a system to provide a temporary permit to a customer before official permit arrives in the mail
- ✓ Renewal notices for inspections are now being batch printed instead of printed one by one

Liquor Board Inspection Process

- ✓ Creation of a new licensee orientation to take place in the fall to help them become familiar with the inspection process
- ✓ Creation of inspection checklist for licensees so they can gather materials in advance of an announced inspection
- ✓ Liquor Board working with Dept of Transportation to get new placards and stickers for inspector vehicles to avoid towing and tichets

One-Stop Career Center Services

- ✓ Time for customers to attend orientation and register with the center's system reduced from 7 or more days to same day
- ✓ Time for customers to see a business services representative and to be referred for a job reduced from 10-14 days to 4 days
- ✓ Center physically reconfigured and customers routed into the center using different paths according to what they need, leading to line eliminations and reduced wait time