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Date: January 2, 2026

To: **Mayor and Council**

Name and title: Walter Babicz, City Manager

Subject: Continuous Improvement (CI) Program Update

Attachment(s): Continuous Improvement Roadmap Presentation

Recommendation(s):

That Council RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated January 2, 2026, from the City Manager titled “*Continuous Improvement (CI) Program Update*”.

Purpose:
For Council’s information.

Strategic Priorities:

The Continuous Improvement Program supports the City Government and Infrastructure priority of continuously improving processes and practices to support effective and efficient service delivery.

Background:

Fueled by a vision of initiating and establishing a culture of employee-driven continuous improvement, in Fall 2024 the City commenced a 3-Year strategic plan to achieve the vision. The journey was planned in 3 strategic phases:

- **Phase 1 – Show Value:** In Fall 2024, the foundation for the new culture was laid by demonstrating the effectiveness of Continuous Improvement, which generated enthusiasm and buy-in across the organization.
- **Phase 2 – Build Value:** 2025 was the ‘Build Value’ Phase. This phase focused on building value / strengthening the Continuous Improvement foundation by optimizing City processes through a 3-pronged strategy:
 1. Executing divisional transformation projects
 2. Launch of PILOT Continuous Improvement Challenge 2025
 3. Building our personnel’s technical competency through LEAN White Belt Trainings, which saw 78% of our personnel achieve their White Belt competency.
- **Phase 3 – Increase Value:** 2026 is planned to be the ‘Increase Value’ Phase. This phase will be built on the foundation laid in 2024 and strengthened in 2025 and will focus on ‘Increasing Value’ by developing our personnel’s and senior leadership team’s technical competency in LEAN Yellow Belts (2nd stage of competency development out of total 3

stages), by expanding the Continuous Improvement Challenge into a recurring annual program, and by divisional transformation projects.

This strategic phased approach has and will continue to put our organization on the path to an employee-driven continuous improvement culture by ingraining Continuous Improvement at the grassroots level.

This report will be presented to Council by Anurag Gupta (AG), our Manager of Continuous Improvement & Innovation.

Discussion:

- The attached presentation outlines the initiatives that have improved the City's service delivery to our citizens all the while building our in-house technical competency.
- In the spirit of Continuous Improvement and to give our new hires a better on-boarding experience, our Human Resources division automated the old manual process and eliminated the paper-filled back and forth communication between the City and new hires. Replacing the old, slow, and manual process is the fast, online, automatic 'one-stop-shop' where the new hires submit their information online all in one go. The following benefits follow:
 - (a) Zero cost implementation; and
 - (b) Fast, paperless, and seamless onboarding experience for the new hires while positively promoting the City as an exciting employer to build a career with.
- Driven by the spirit of 'there must be a better way to do this!', our Roads & Fleet division reviewed their sweeping and broom maintenance program to do the same job, but better. This resulted in utilizing higher quality sweeping brooms which increased operating efficiency by 17%. Additionally, the following benefits were realized:
 - (a) New equipment is operational for twice the amount of time before requiring service – thus increasing uptime and increased service to citizens;
 - (b) Effective personnel utilization by reducing equipment downtime and 'more time spent on the job';
 - (c) Eliminating administrative tasks enabling administrators to 'do more with less';
 - (d) Reduced back and forth trips between shops for repairs, thus streamlining operations.
- Recognizing the importance of and need for cross-training within our operations, our Utilities division launched an industry-proven and standardized cross-training program for their personnel with the following benefits:
 - (a) A defined and standardized training format established for City operations which provides clear guidelines on operational procedures and hazard controls;
 - (b) Improved operational reliability for City infrastructure and for our own operations;
 - (c) Increased uptime of fire hydrants resulting in prompt service to the citizens in times of emergencies. Turnaround time for malfunctioning hydrants has improved dramatically.
- Continuing with their pursuit of excellence and eliminating manual processes, our Human Resources & Corporate Safety division automated the driver abstract collection process for our personnel. Instead of manually entering data into Excel sheets and then engaging in back and forth communication with insurance providers, our IT Services and Human

Resources & Corporate Safety divisions worked together to effectively utilize our existing software. Driver abstracts are now automatically fed into our JD Edwards software, eliminating manual tracking and redundancy, while giving us the ability to run reports all at the single click of a button. This was achieved at zero cost implementation.

- Why use non-local contractors when we can do the same job (if not better) for a lower cost right here in Prince George? Our Transportation division is utilizing state of the art technology to conduct in-house 3-D scans resulting in \$25,000 cost avoidance, by eliminating the need to outsource services to non-local contractors.
- Our Continuous Improvement division is working closely with our Planning & Development department to develop new processes for the 'Fast Track PG' project approved by Council. This endeavor will enable the City to streamline and 'fast-track' our permitting processes, thus serving our builders' community more effectively.
- City personnel were trained on Lean White Belt Trainings in 2025 as a first step in their competency development in LEAN. 78% of our personnel achieved their White Belts, demonstrating buy in at the grassroot level. This unlocks our personnel to further develop their competency with Yellow Belts in 2026 (50 personnel and senior leadership team signed up) and Green Belts planned for 2027 (strategic 3 step competency development plan).
- Training is incomplete without the opportunity to apply it in the real world. Complementing our personnel's White Belt trainings, we launched the PILOT Continuous Improvement Challenge in 2025 where our Civic Operations divisions came together to optimize their in-house processes. This gave our personnel the opportunity to apply their White Belt training to real world problems all the while increasing our operational efficiency.
- One of the most important intangible contributions of these initiatives is the deepening of Continuous Improvement roots within our organization, especially among our frontline personnel. This is the first step towards establishing an employee-driven Continuous Improvement culture. With planned future training, coupled with the planned expansion of the Continuous Improvement Challenge into a recurring annual program, continuous improvement will soon be an ingrained practice in our daily work at the City.

Summary and Conclusion:

This report provides Council with information about the strategy to grow and develop the Continuous Improvement Program and presents 2025 data measuring the value of a sample of initiatives that divisions have already implemented.

Respectfully submitted:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Prepared By: Anurag Gupta (AG), Manager, Continuous Improvement & Innovation

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