



## CITY OF VANCOUVER

### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

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TO: Vancouver City Council  
FROM: General Manager Human Resource Services  
SUBJECT: Civic Image/Marketing Campaign

#### RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive the report for information.

#### PURPOSE

This report introduces Council to the City of Vancouver's Civic Image/Marketing Campaign designed to support the City's future external recruitment efforts.

#### BACKGROUND

The City of Vancouver is one of the largest employers in B.C. The City has approximately 6,200 regular full-time employees, and another 3,000-3,200 auxiliary employees.

However, the City is experiencing a number of trends that will have an impact on its ability to attract and retain staff in the coming years, including:

- **an aging workforce**  
The average age of City of Vancouver employees is 44.  
The average length of service with the City is about 13 years.  
Many City employees are approaching retirement. In 2002, it was estimated that 21 per cent of the workforce could retire by 2007.

- **trend toward early retirement**  
The numbers of people taking early retirement, in all organizations, is increasing. It is estimated that 60 per cent of "baby boomers" will retire early. The rate for early retirement is higher in the public sector.

These two factors -- combined with others such as regular staff turn-over within the organization, a shrinking labour force across North America, and shortages of skilled workers such as engineers, accountants, project managers, and IT workers -- mean that over the next 10 years, the City will have to work hard to attract and recruit unprecedented numbers of full-time staff.

Many of these people will be hired from within the organization. However, the City will have to attract increasing numbers of staff from outside as well, and will be forced to compete with organizations with similar benefits and working conditions.

In 2001, senior management at the City established a working group to focus on staff attraction, retention, recognition and succession planning issues. This working group identified a number of initiatives to improve City performance in these areas.

One initiative that was proposed, "Civic Image/Marketing," was intended to "develop and implement a consistent corporate 'Employer of Choice' web page and coordinated advertising and marketing campaign for an initial five-year period."

Human Resource Services approached the Corporate Communications Division to undertake this project.

## DISCUSSION

The overall goal of the civic image marketing campaign is to maximize the number and quality of applicants for all City of Vancouver jobs that require external recruitment.

### Foundations of the Campaign

While undertaking research for the campaign, it was found that the City and its staff have won numerous awards for innovative programs and services. For example in 2004 the following awards and accolades were presented to the City.

- Vancouver recognized for "Excellence on the Waterfront"
- Judy Rogers named to Top 100 Most Powerful Women list
- City staffer named Public Works Manager of the Year
- City takes Downtown Achievement Award
- VanMap wins Customer Innovation Award
- Works Yard certified LEED Gold
- National Works Yard Wins Steel Design Award
- City councillor and City employee appointed Members of the Order of Canada
- Vancouver Agreement wins gold for Public Service Management
- Non-market housing projects recognized with architectural awards
- MoreSports wins Award of Excellence
- Local golf courses receive Audubon certification
- Three City departments recognized with Rick Hansen Accessibility Awards

Furthermore in 2003, the City was awarded the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, and was recognized internationally with a UN award for innovation for its Neighbourhood Integrated Service Team (NIST) project. Then again in early May 2005, another program in which the City of Vancouver participates, the Vancouver Agreement, was honoured with a UN award.

At the same time, the City of Vancouver is considered to be on the leading edge of policy and program development and service delivery. "Vancouverism" has become a buzzword in North American planning circles. People visit from other jurisdictions to learn about our innovative initiatives such as the Vancouver Agreement and the Four Pillars Drug Strategy.

Corporate Communications proposed that the City capitalize on its reputation for innovation, and use it as a way to separate the organization from others that may offer similar benefits and working conditions.

In developing the Civic Image/Marketing campaign, Corporate Communications also wanted to emphasize the other advantages the City of Vancouver has over many other organizations:

- **livability**  
Vancouver is well-known for being one of the world's most livable cities.
- **geography**  
Vancouver's mild climate and west coast, outdoor lifestyle are attractive provincially, nationally and internationally.
- **public service**  
Working in the public sector gives the intangible benefit of making a personal contribution to one's community. This is increasingly important for young workers, as well as those near the end of their career.

Thus, the Civic Image/Marketing Campaign focuses on three key messages about the City of Vancouver as an organization:

1. It is a dynamic organization that has won awards for innovation.
2. It provides employees with opportunities to do meaningful, interesting work.
3. It gives employees the chance make a personal contribution to their community.

#### **Details of the Civic Image/Marketing Campaign**

The headline for the campaign is "Powered by Innovation," a headline that attempts to summarize the entire branding of the City.

The campaign is structured around colourful, dramatic, original artwork by local artist Reva Diana that features stylized images of City employees and recognizable Vancouver landmarks.

The campaign features occupations that the City is actually seeking: engineers, firefighters, planners/project managers, and park board staff. The campaign can be and will be easily expanded to include other occupations.

The concept highlights the web address for the City's Jobs page. Among young people especially, use of the web is an integral part of a job search. (Note: [vancouver.ca/jobs](http://vancouver.ca/jobs) is the second most popular web page on the City site. It receives more than 1,100 visits per day.)

The Civic Image/Marketing Campaign can be directed at potential employees in Vancouver, BC, Canada, North America, and even internationally.

The Conference Board of Canada indicates the following occupations will be in high demand in coming years (and are applicable to City of Vancouver needs): engineers, accountants; project managers; IT workers; mechanics; heavy equipment operators; welders; and electricians.

However, the Civic Image/Marketing Campaign is not just directed at an external audience. It is also meant to inform and inspire existing City staff, and to influence how the City presents itself as an organization.

#### **Next steps**

The HR Attraction Campaign will be adopted for at least the next five years. The City will use this creative work in many ways. The look and feel of the "Powered by Innovation" campaign will be incorporated into new career ads and revised web pages, rackcards, brochures, fact sheets, transit shelter posters, PowerPoint presentations, video clips, and displays at career fairs or during recruitment drives at post-secondary institutions.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

This initiative is funded from the annual operating budget of Staff and Organization Development in Human Resource Services. No additional funding is requested. Estimated cost of the Campaign is \$20,000 annually for each of the next five years.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

The Campaign has a comprehensive communications strategy that will be rolled out over the next two years.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The Civic Image/Marketing Campaign is designed to present the City of Vancouver in a positive light when we compete in the marketplace for new employees. The campaign focuses on the City as an award-winning, innovative organization, and a place where people can make a difference in the life of a community.

Staff believe this campaign will assist us in recruiting quality candidates by defining us differently from other municipalities that will be competing for the same potential employees.

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