# Inclusion & Diversity Council

# Strategic Plan

## 2014-2016

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# Acknowledgements

The original Strategic Plan for the Inclusion and Diversity Council was initiated in 2008 by members of the Diversity Advisory Team (DAT).  The DAT provided guidance and research in the development of the Charter plan.  The current IDC plan is a "living and ever evolving document" that guides the City of Virginia Beach's efforts in creating a workplace of choice and a Community for a lifetime.  The modification and enhancement of the Inclusion and Diversity Council (IDC) Strategic Plan would not have been possible without the dedication, commitment and hard work of the 2013-14 members of the IDC.  The current members of the IDC and the departments they represent are as follows:

# INTRODUCTION

### *The Past is Prologue*

In 2010, the City of Virginia Beach, based on recommendations from the Inclusion and Diversity Council (hereinafter referred to as IDC), modified the organizational values to reflect/include the following:

**INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY: Members value and respect our similarities and differences to encourage and fully utilize our human potential, and to foster a culture of openness, engagement and respect for all.**

- Member diversity helps ensure quality service delivery.
- An inclusive environment allows all members to contribute to the success of our organization and to express ourselves openly and with respect.
- Members understand and appreciate varying perspectives, experiences and cultures.
- Members listen to understand each other.
- Member feedback is sought and valued.

Diversity and inclusion are integral indicators of our organizational effectiveness, as specified in the above organizational values. In addition, the statement that, "We Value and Actively Promote Diversity" is a Core Strategy in our Strategic Plan, and is one method for achieving our goals and desired outcomes for a "Community for a Lifetime". All members are responsible for learning, thinking and working in accordance with this Core Strategy.

Embracing diversity and creating an environment of inclusion is important for many reasons. First, adherence to these concepts allows an organization to develop the full potential of all its employees and results in a more productive workforce and an organization that is more competitive in the global economy and the diverse marketplace (Carlton, Hawkey, Watson, Donahue, Garcia & Johnson, 1997). Second, diversity also includes the provision of public services. In other words, a diverse and inclusive workforce is required to work towards equitable distribution of public services and to work with increasingly diverse clients and communities.

The IDC's primary goal is to build, maintain, and enhance member loyalty and productivity, which in turn directly impacts customer service. Because we are service driven, our members' levels of satisfaction have a direct impact on their continued performance.

Some of the initiatives that have been completed since the IDC's inception are:

- Clearly defined the words "inclusion" and "diversity" for a Statement of Understanding
- Consulted with a Fortune 300 company headquartered in Hampton Roads and nationally recognized for its diversity efforts
- Identified best practices and compiled a business case for inclusion and diversity

- Created and presented a strategic plan to Executive, Director and Department leadership
- Launched three sub committees of the Inclusion and Diversity Council (Communications, Education & Awareness and Strategic Development)
- Joined the Association of Diversity Councils, a national non-profit organization that champions diversity as a business imperative
- Collaborated with the Quality Organization Strategic Issue Team to update the City's Organizational Values to include Inclusion and Diversity
- Successfully received Executive leadership approval of new City Organizational Values
- Published a quarterly newsletter, Inclusively Speaking - Insight into Diversity
- Developed an "Inclusion and Diversity Dialogue Toolkit" that will offer a variety of tools for executives, directors and supervisors to use with their staff
- Moving forward to develop a website to further enhance the council's communication goals

### *Connecting to the Council's Vision for the Community*

As is obvious from the discussion above, we have connected our efforts directly to those underlined in the City's values and its Strategic Plan. Consequently, our initiatives are intended, in large measure, to increase the awareness of and respect for diversity within the organization. Additionally, our focus connects, quite deliberately, to Council's vision for the City, as a whole. The importance of inclusion and diversity, within the community, was promulgated, by Council, with the Envision VB 2040 Final Report (the relevant portion of which is reproduced below).

## *In 2040*

*What we have achieved, what people might experience and what the region, nation and world will say about us.*

> • *The community is a recognized international leader for being inclusive and celebrating diversity in all of its forms.*
> • *We have the largest number of successful minority and women owned businesses in the State and in the Region.*
> • *City policies, procedures, and results reflect a zero tolerance approach to actions or efforts that stereotype, profile or denigrate any particular segment of the community.*
> • *Minority student performance leads the nation.*
> • *Business, civic, and educational leadership reflects the diversity of the community.*
> • *The City has negligible gaps in earning potential, unemployment, and overall economic vitality.*
> • *Face to face and electronic forums are prevalent throughout the City where citizens from various backgrounds meet and have courageous conversations.*

### *Continuing to Build the Business Case*

Embracing diversity requires the development of strategies, programs and policies by city leaders to accommodate the diversity within their employees as well as, among the citizens they serve. As our world becomes more diverse, the homogeneity of our workplace, education and training becomes more obsolete. As this happens, workplaces can often become the breeding ground for misunderstandings and discrimination when differences are misunderstood or communication is hindered. Services can also be designed that are inappropriate or ineffective if organizations are not able to relate to the diversity of their workplace and community.

When diversity becomes a key goal and is fused into the overall goals of the organization by top management, the commitment will generally follow down through the rest of the organizational hierarchy (Riccucci, 2002). If diversity and inclusion as goals are treated with the same vigor and commitment as achieving other strategic goals, then resources and time should be spent ensuring that these goals are reached.

Leveraging diversity involves effectively employing the differences among employees to accomplish organizational goals. Embracing diversity or showing a "commitment to diversity" emphasizes building skills that allow organizations to get the best out of every employee (based upon their unique differences). It involves increasing productivity by employing diverse employees (Rice, 2005). Diversity of the workplace also allows citizens to feel as though they are being represented within their public agencies and therefore have someone who can relate to their needs.

Therefore, we welcome the contributions of divergent voices as we seek to foster a shared sense of purpose. A diversity of human experiences and viewpoints strengthens the experience of all members of the organization. We seek to promote diversity that respects and resonates with our core organizational values and contributes to the overall effectiveness of service delivery. **The overarching philosophical themes of the "business case" continue to inform, drive and undergird the goals, activities and intended outcomes for the Inclusion and Diversity Council.**

The current IDC Strategic Plan seeks to, ultimately, enhance the nature and effectiveness of the organization, while implementing a system of continuous evaluation of the relative level of success of the IDC's initiatives. We consider the recent Cultural Assessment, which was administered in August of 2012 (see the History of the IDC, in the Appendices, for additional information), a foundation for our work, over the next three years. Consequently, we shall base our fundamental goals on the lessons learned from the Assessment. In particular, we now recognize that, in order to positively impact the organization, we need to achieve the following:
1) The IDC will develop itself as the subject matter expert, in inclusion and diversity, for the organization;

2) The IDC will significantly enhance the level of knowledge of inclusion and diversity issues and benefits amongst all organizational members; and,
3) The IDC will, through targeted training and staff development opportunities, enhance the effectiveness of the organization.

# FOUNDATIONS OF THE 2014-2016 IDC STRATEGIC PLAN:

## *RESPONDING TO THE BROAD-BASED ASSESSMENT OF OUR ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE*
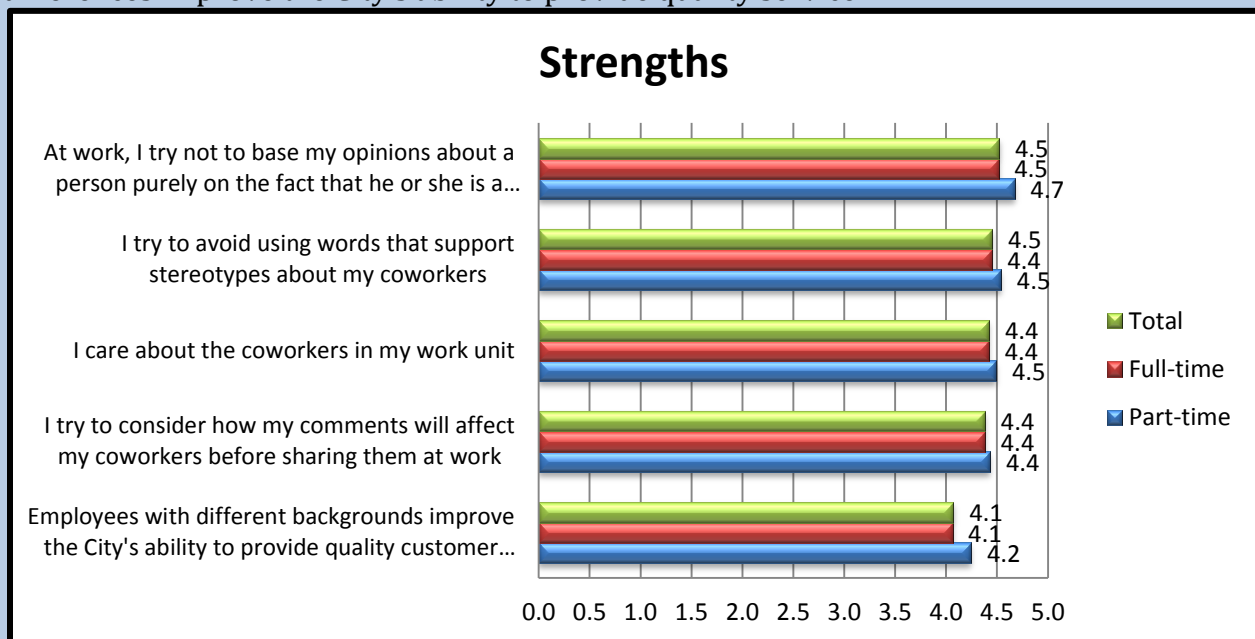
## Introduction to/Overview of the Cultural Assessment

The City's workforce of approximately 7,000 members provides a service to a population of over 433,000 citizens.  Resulting, in part, from the increasing diversity of the city's population is an increasing expectation to see not only a more diverse workforce but also a workforce that embraces diversity and inclusion.  Commitment and support of the City's Core Strategy of "Value and Promote Diversity" is critical to the vitality of our City.

In July 2012 the City conducted its first ever Cultural Assessment (survey). Over 3,000 employees participated – 344 via paper copy and 2,719 online (a total of 2,755 submitted complete surveys).  There were 26 questions on the survey, two of which were open-ended. Using a 5-point rating scale, PRISM, who conducted the assessment, considers scores of 3.5 and above as high, 3.0 to 3.5 as moderate, and 3.0 and below as low. If you add together the Citywide scores of the 24 questions, you get a Citywide average score of 3.6 (3.58).
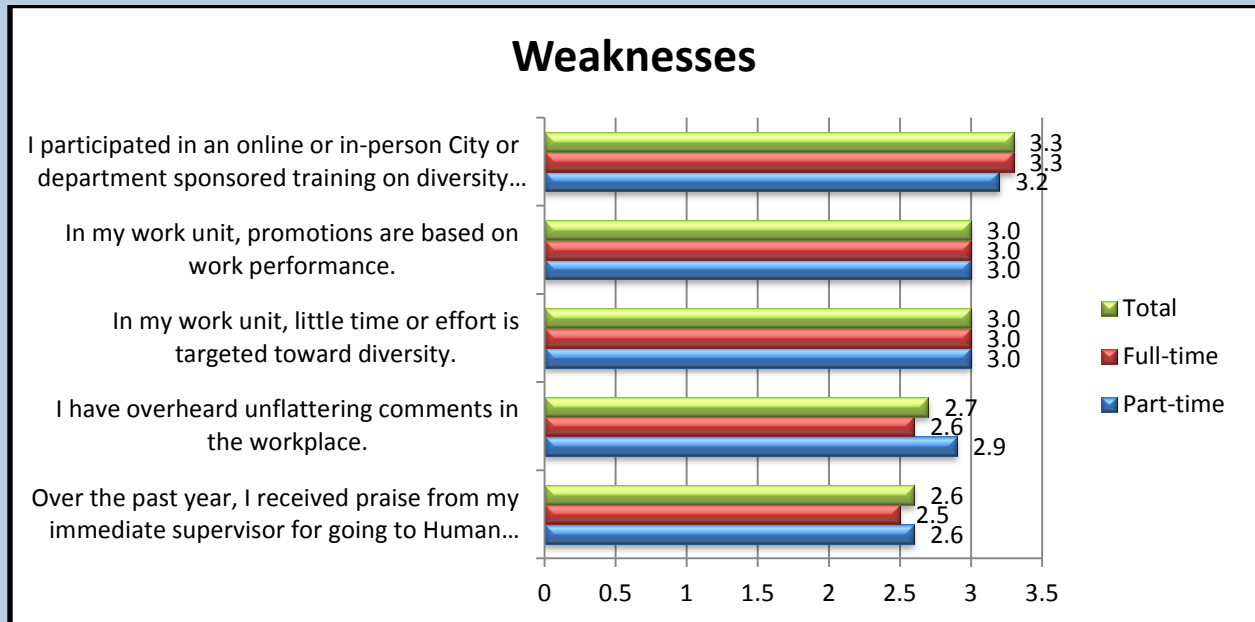
Below are two charts that highlight our areas of strengths and weaknesses.

Our highest "strength" (4.5) is: "At work, I try not to base my opinions about a person purely on the fact that he or she is a member of a particular minority group." These results highlight the following trends: we have a strong effort to suspend judgment, we avoid using stereotypes, we have concern about coworkers, we think before speaking and believe that differences improve the City's ability to provide quality service.

### Strengths

| Question | Total | Full-time | Part-time |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| At work, I try not to base my opinions about a person purely on the fact that he or she is a… | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.7 |
| I try to avoid using words that support stereotypes about my coworkers | 4.5 | 4.4 | 4.5 |
| I care about the coworkers in my work unit | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.5 |
| I try to consider how my comments will affect my coworkers before sharing them at work | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.4 |
| Employees with different backgrounds improve the City's ability to provide quality customer… | 4.1 | 4.1 | 4.2 |

Our lowest score (2.6) under "weaknesses" is: "Over the past year, I received praise from my immediate supervisor for going to Human Resources about a concern." These results highlight the following trends: lower levels of participation and effort into diversity

initiatives, unflattering comments are overheard, perceptions that promotions are not based on work performance, and desired behaviors among employees are not reinforced.

## Weaknesses

| Statement | Total | Full-time | Part-time |
|---|---|---|---|
| I participated in an online or in-person City or department sponsored training on diversity… | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.2 |
| In my work unit, promotions are based on work performance. | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| In my work unit, little time or effort is targeted toward diversity. | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| I have overheard unflattering comments in the workplace. | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.9 |
| Over the past year, I received praise from my immediate supervisor for going to Human… | 2.6 | 2.5 | 2.6 |

Employees were asked to **choose three of 12 adjectives that they would use to describe their department's culture**. In general, "team-focused," "stressful," "respectful," "encouraging," and "accepting," were chosen most frequently. Other choices were "difficult," "rewarding," "misplaced blame," "status quo," "controlling," "close minded," and "trusting". Two open-ended questions were asked where employees could include comments. The following are the <u>themes</u> from those questions. To qualify as a category, a theme needed a minimum number of 100 responses.

**#1 "How well does your immediate supervisor reflect the City's values of diversity and inclusion? Please explain."**
- o **Unfair practices**
- o **Supervisors valuing diversity**
- o **Quality of leadership/leadership behaviors**
- o **Poor leadership quality**
- o **Behaviors supervisors engage in to promote diversity**
- o **Supervisors not valuing diversity/valuing other**

**#2 "Please share what you believe is the value of diversity and inclusion in your work unit."**
- o **Better environment**
- o **Performance outcomes**
- o **Team benefits**
- o **Personal Value**
- o **Fairness**
- o **Perspectives and opinions**

- o **No value in diversity**
- o **Poor work environment**

<u>Cultural Assessment Key Findings/Themes</u>

- It appears that a considerable number of employees resent (**or, simply, do not fully understand the nature of**) the diversity and inclusion efforts the City has established.
- Similarly, many employees feel that while diversity and inclusion are invaluable, certain policies and/or practices of hiring and promoting employees are not appropriately based on performance. Many feel that work quality has declined as a result of this.
- Many chose not to address #2 above. Instead, they provided detailed narratives about negativity experienced in their work unit.

The Cultural Assessment maintained that those items following below a score of 3.5, with exceptions identified below (with an asterisk), would require attention.  Of the 24 items reviewed, the following 14 were identified as having the lowest scores.  The Inclusion and Diversity Council placed the lowest scoring items in four categories to include: (1) Career Progression, (2) Training/Education, (3) Reporting Concerns and (4) Environment/Culture.

*Theme:  Career Progression*
I get the same career opportunities as those with similar qualifications.  3.3
In my work unit, promotions are based on work performance. 3.0
Over the past year, I feel I have advanced in my job because of my skill set.  3.2

*Theme:  Training/Education Needed*
My immediate supervisor encourages employees to take part in diversity-related training and education opportunities.  3.4
Past diversity-related training and education in my work unit have been a good use of my time.  3.3
I participated in an online or in-person City or department sponsored training on diversity within the past year.  3.3
Diversity related events (for example, diversity training, diversity themed luncheons, etc.) in my work unit are valued.  3.3
I enjoy sharing inappropriate jokes with coworkers who are like me.  3.8*
I have overheard unflattering comments in the workplace.  2.7

*Theme:  Reporting Concerns*
Over the past year, I received praise from my immediate supervisor for speaking with him/her about a concern.  3.4
Over the past year, I received praise from my immediate supervisor for going to HR about a concern.  2.6

*Theme: Environment/Culture*
In my work unit, little time or effort is targeted toward diversity.  3.0

Over the past year, I have personally witnessed favoritism by a supervisor toward another coworker.  2.9
Over the past year, my supervisor has treated me differently than a peer.  3.5*

<u>Cultural Assessment Actions</u>

Based on the results of the Assessment, the Council devised the following actions, with the intention being to increase awareness of inclusion and diversity issues AND increase opportunities for vocational advancement for ALL members of the organization.

- Immediately communicate with all staff when vacant positions in your department are posted on W.A.V.E. (HR to revise hiring process).  LEAD:  Directors & HR
- Hiring managers to offer to meet individually with candidates from their department who interviewed and were not chosen for a position – to explain why and to give tips for future.  LEAD:  Directors
- Implement a department leadership development and mentorship program that all Members would be eligible to participate in (using Parks & Recreation's existing program as a model).  LEAD: QO SIT
- Develop a diversity and inclusion course mandatory for all employees to complete (over a five-year timeframe).  Course will focus more on diversity and inclusion while existing courses focus on EEO and Workplace Harassment.

<u>Infusing the Cultural Assessment Result Themes in the Current Strategic Plan Goals</u>

It is evident from the above Assessment results that the organization is still in a nascent (i.e. developmental) stage in terms of its general knowledge and recognition of the importance and benefits of inclusion and diversity issues and actions.  Consequently, we have devised the IDC Goals (discussed in the next section) to address the following underlying themes of the assessment:

1) The IDC needs to augment its ability to facilitate change within the organization. This will be achieved, in part, through further, purposeful development of the capacity of the IDC, in terms of both fundamental I & D knowledge and leadership capability.
2) The knowledge base of the organization, in terms of I & D issues and benefits, needs to be broadened and deepened.
3) Departmental and organizational opportunities for member development and, ultimately, organizational success must be enhanced and augmented through a variety of I & D-related trainings and knowledge-building activities.

# INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY COUNCIL GOALS (2014-2016)

As part of the revision process, the Strategic Plan Revision Committee (an ad hoc body created solely for the purpose of updating the Plan) reviewed the previous iteration's goals (established, in large part, by the IDC's predecessor, the Diversity Advisory Team) and, after considerable discussion, updated them to align the IDC's strategic intentions with the current and foreseeable needs of both the IDC and the organization, as discerned through the Cultural Assessment process.  It was determined that the following three goals represent the most salient and fundamental directions the Council needs to take, in the next three years, in order to sufficiently augment its impact on the organization and its diverse membership.  In essence, the three goals build upon one another in the following fashion (i.e. this is our "program theory"):

- **The IDC develops its capacity to serve as a knowledge and training resource for I & D topics, concepts and competence, which leads to**
- **Greater knowledge and awareness, amongst the organization's members, of inclusion and diversity topics and issues, which leads to increased interest and participation in trainings, events, and staff development opportunities and which, ultimately, will transform the City into**
- **A highly culturally competent organization that is adept at actively, consciously and conscientiously recruiting and retaining skilled and talented applicants of various cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds.**

*Please note:  The finite activities that will be undertaken, pursuant to the following goals, are outlined in the full logic models, which may be found in the appendices/attachments.*

## Goals for 2013-2016

1. **To develop the knowledge and skill capacities of the IDC through Council member research, education, training and, whenever feasible, certification.**
2. **To establish and/or increase awareness of inclusion and diversity concepts and issues through targeted education, communications, and evaluation activities.**
3. **To enhance individual, workgroup and organizational success through inclusion and diversity training and staff development.**

# GOAL ONE-CAPACITY OF THE IDC

Intended Outcome:  Increased capacity of the IDC to lead and act as the principal resource for inclusion and diversity initiatives within the organization

Goal Statement:  **To develop the knowledge and skill capacities of the IDC through member research, education, training and, whenever feasible, certification**.

***This is, admittedly, an inward-looking goal.  Nonetheless, the further development of the IDC, as a resource body, is fundamental to our success in the other two goal areas.***

**Principal Activities** (with committee/individual reporting and completion responsibilities):

1) **Develop and implement a New IDC Member Orientation** (Education and Awareness Committee)
2) **Develop and implement an IDC New Member Mentoring Program** (Education and Awareness Committee)
3) **Attend area trainings, seminars and consortia meetings** (All Council members)
4) **Set aside meeting time for IDC trainings, issue discussion and member development** (Council Co-Chairs)
5) **Working with our collaborative partners, develop a regional diversity consortium to establish/review/keep current on best practices** (Strategic Development Committee)
6) **Develop a credentialing /training wish list and select items from said list that will be offered to all IDC members** (Education and Awareness Committee)

# GOAL TWO-AWARENESS OF INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY CONCEPTS AND ISSUES

Intended Outcome:  Increase knowledge and awareness of inclusion and diversity within and amongst the membership of the organization

Goal Statement:  **To establish and/or increase awareness of inclusion and diversity concepts and issues through targeted education, communications**

***Impact analysis, typically speaking, begins with an evaluation of short-term outcomes (increased knowledge and awareness).  It is from awareness and knowledge that program recipients develop skills that, ultimately, may lead to a broad-scale change in conditions.***

Activities (with committee/individual reporting and completion responsibilities):

1) **In collaboration with Learning and Development, include information on inclusion and diversity in new member orientations** (Education and Awareness Committee)
2) **Conduct on-going/in-house cultural assessments** (Measurement and Evaluation Committee)
3) **Create and continuously update the information on the IDC's web presence** (Communications Committee)
4) **Utilize the IDC newsletter to keep diversity and inclusion in the forefront** (Communications Committee)
5) **Continuously update and utilize the Inclusion and Diversity Toolkit** (Education and Awareness Committee)
6) **Host facilitated groups or City members regarding reported areas of concern around inclusion and diversity** (Education and Awareness Committee)
7) **Assist departments with the creation of forums for staff to dialogue about inclusion and diversity issues in work units** (Education and Awareness Committee)
8) **Develop instructor-led diversity training (which incorporates courses from the existing Learning and Development catalog** (Education and Awareness)

## GOAL THREE-ENHANCING INDIVIDUAL, WORKGROUP AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS

Intended Outcome:  Enhanced organization success through inclusion and diversity-related trainings and staff development opportunities

Goal Statement:  **To enhance individual, workgroup and organizational success through inclusion and diversity training and staff development**

Activities (with committee/individual reporting and completion responsibilities):

1) **In collaboration with Learning and Development, include information on inclusion and diversity in new member orientations** (Education and Awareness Committee)
2) **Conduct on-going/in-house cultural assessments** (Measurement and Evaluation Committee)
3) **Create and continuously update the information on our Council's web presence** (Communications Committee)
4) **Utilize the Council newsletter to keep diversity and inclusion in the forefront** (Communications Committee)
5) **Continuously update and utilize the I & D Toolkit** (Education and Awareness Committee)

6) **Host facilitated groups or City members regarding reported areas of concern around I & D** (Education and Awareness Committee)
7) **Assist departments with the creation of forums for staff to dialogue about inclusion and diversity issues in work units** (Education and Awareness Committee)
8) **Develop instructor-led diversity training (which incorporates courses from the existing L & D catalog** (Education and Awareness)

*Please note:  Although the principal activities undertaken for both Goals 2 and 3 are, fundamentally, the same, the impact of said activities (i.e. the outcome) will be measured and evaluated differently.  Admittedly, they are part of an outcomes continuum (IDC capacity leads to greater organizational awareness, which leads to organizational capacity).  Nonetheless, it is important to measure success for each portion of the continuum.*

# MEASURING SUCCESS:

# EVALUATION PLAN

Goals, in and of themselves, are merely roadmaps to an intended destination. It is the measurement of the relative level of achievement of goals that allows an organization to determine its success. Hence, in addition to revising our Plan goals, we are, also, creating a plan of evaluation that will allow us to demonstrate how successful we are/have been. In addition, a system of valid measurement will allow us to track the continued salience of our goals. The manner in which we will be measuring success on each goal is introduced below. (For additional information, please see the complete logic models in the appendices). The important point that must be made is that this strategic plan will be treated as a living document, the fundamental facets of which, consequently, require continuous assessment and evaluation. **The committees responsible for implementation of the individual goal activities shall report their outputs (workload results) to both the Measurement and Evaluation Committee AND the greater Council on a semiannual basis (i.e. every six months). The method of reporting (e.g. standardized spreadsheet) shall be determined by the Council leadership, in collaboration with MEC.**

## GOAL ONE: DEVELOPING THE CAPACITY OF THE IDC

The capacity of the IDC will be measured, primarily inferentially, through the perceptions of the membership of the greater organization. The members of the Council will, also, be undertaking continual self-assessments, in order to determine our own perceptions of our capabilities and levels of knowledge. Accordingly, we shall utilize the following measures to determine how successful we are being/have been in developing our own capacity:

1) Surveying training and program participants regarding the knowledge and expertise of the IDC facilitators;
2) Surveying the general membership regarding their perception of the IDC (as it pertains to our status as an SME);
3) Undertaking Pre- and Post-Test evaluations of IDC member knowledge, subsequent to completion of key trainings and/or certifications; and,
4) Inferring IDC capacity through increased participation in IDC-sponsored events, programs and trainings.

## GOAL TWO: INCREASED ORGANIZATIONAL AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE

This goal shall, principally, be evaluated through the following:

1) Program/class evaluation surveys and pre- and post-test "knowledge inventories" and

2) Inclusion, in the Member Survey, of a question relating to increased knowledge of inclusion & diversity resulting from IDC-driven initiatives, programming and communication efforts.

In addition to the above, a subsequent cultural assessment administration could be used to evaluate the extent to which inclusion and diversity principles are pervasive throughout the organization.

## GOAL THREE: ENHANCING INDIVIDUAL, WORKGROUP AND ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS

Attainment of this goal assumes broad-based organizational development and change, a large portion of which the Council cannot directly impact or actuate. For instance, aside from offering trainings and toolkit-related (i.e. staff development) opportunities, much of the organizational change will need to come from within the departments themselves (through unit-based activities, etc.). Nonetheless, some inferential analyses may be completed that demonstrate the relative level of influence of the IDC in change in the organization. For instance, we could measure the following (within a stand-alone or existing survey instrument):

1) Correlation of IDC-sponsored events, communication efforts and programming to the following:
    a. Increase in the number of departments taking responsibility for inclusion and diversity trainings, forums, etc.;
    b. Increase in perception of organization as an "employer of choice" for diverse applicants (increase in minority applicants for higher-level positions, for instance);
    c. Increase in staff/leadership development courses offered that infuse inclusion and diversity principles; and,
    d. Increase in the infusion of inclusion and diversity principles throughout the wide variety of Learning and Development offerings.

# APPENDICES

# History of the IDC

## *The Evolution of the City of Virginia Beach's Inclusion and Diversity Council*

The City of Virginia Beach strives to ensure that employees and applicants are provided equal employment opportunities and recognizes the importance of creating a diverse workforce that can recognize, develop and provide needed services for our multifaceted citizenry.

The City has operated an established EEO and Diversity management program with coordination and oversight staffed and managed by the Department of Human Resources. To augment this effort and provide a means for broader organizational input, a city-wide EEO Committee was created to provide recommendations regarding diversity and EEO initiatives to the Human Resources Director and the City Manager. The EEO Committee, composed of members from various city departments and all position levels, developed key policy and program initiatives including the current EEO Policy and Sexual Harassment Policy. The Committee developed and conducted a number of employee EEO surveys. The Committee also developed several celebrations related to diversity, the most notable of which was the City's Heritage Day Celebration, a multicultural event that recognized the importance of many of the various cultures and ethnic backgrounds represented in our workforce.

In 2005, the Department of Human Resources (HR) developed an EEO/Diversity Strategy for the FY05/06 budget year and as a result, three new HR Analyst positions were created over the next two fiscal years to staff and support the strategy. One position was assigned to assist in recruitment and community outreach and was assigned to Staffing and Compensation. The other two positions were assigned to the Director's Office. The second position was created to work with departments to develop EEOP/Diversity Programs and to conduct and respond to EEOC charges and internal complaints. The third position was responsible for EEO/Diversity training, providing guidance in ADA administration and developing selection and assessment processes.

In an effort to provide greater focus and identity to EEO and diversity management, in 2006 the Department of Human Resources formed the Diversity Management Group (DMG). The DMG was comprised of all the HR staff positions with shared responsibilities for EEO and diversity-related work. In addition to the three analyst positions, the DMG included the Diversity and Special Programs Manager, an additional Analyst (Workforce Planning and Development), the Administrative Specialist for the Human Rights Commission and an Administrative Assistant.

The DMG's Mission was "to effectively assist the City of Virginia Beach in meeting its strategic and operational objectives as an Equal Opportunity Employer (EOE)," and to create a positive work environment that values diversity and encourages inclusion.

One of the City's Core Strategies, "We Value and Promote Diversity," has been acknowledged as equally vital to our citizens as well as our members. In 2006, a number of staff met to discuss ways to improve the cultural relationships in our City. This Community Relationships Task Force came to strong agreement on this belief: to make a positive difference for our Community, we need to first "get our own house in order." That is, work from the inside out.

The Task Force recognized that to truly be a Quality Organization we must reflect, engage and value the diversity of our members through mutual understanding, trust, respect and opportunity for all. The group acknowledged that it would take a strong, long-term commitment, and that we had relationships and initiatives to build on, such as the Human Rights Commission, our Equal Employment Opportunity Plan and the Minority Business Council. They agreed that the outcome of a successful strategy would leave a legacy for our organization.

Based on the current reality at the time, best practices in other organizations, and some historic perspectives, the Community Relationships Task Force recommended forming a Diversity Council. A Diversity Council was designed to help the organization move the diversity and inclusion strategy forward by developing initiatives and guiding implementation. Virginia Beach's Diversity Council was created to develop and monitor diversity strategies, successes and opportunities.

In January 2008 the Management Leadership Team proposed that a Diversity Advisory Team (DAT) be established to focus specifically on the aspects of diversity and inclusion related to the organization culture. The DAT was chartered by Executive Sponsors Susie Walston and Fagan Stackhouse to create a diversity strategic plan emphasizing inclusiveness, as well as recommendations for the formation of a Diversity Council. Team members were selected to include representation from a variety of Departments and from a diversity of backgrounds and experience. The team's charter was finalized in May 2008 and the team's kickoff meeting was held May 5, 2008.

Diversity Advisory Team

In preparing this report the Diversity Advisory Team (DAT) devoted significant time and effort to gaining a greater understanding of the relationship between perceptions of diversity and inclusion. In large part diversity was viewed to be more closely associated with EEO and its statistical representations. Inclusion was considered to be more individualized as a sense or perception of belonging and feeling of being respected and valued. Inclusion is about attitudes and behaviors. In assessing the City's history and

efforts with EEO and Diversity management, the team concluded that generally there was a much greater emphasis on the issue of diversity than on inclusion.

Based on a review of current literature and work in the area of diversity and inclusion, the team adopted a model that demonstrates more definitively the relationship between diversity and inclusion. The Model for Diversity and Inclusion Outcomes hypothesizes that there is a symbiotic relationship between diversity and inclusion; and, the greater the strength of that relationship, then the stronger and more positive the outcomes may be for an organization.

With this model serving as a basis of mutual understanding, the DAT assessed the organization's current reality and identified gaps that impact the symbiotic relationship between diversity and inclusion. Key information was obtained from informal departmental interviews, the DMG and the Member Survey.

The DAT began its work by crafting a Mission Statement for the City's Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan:

> The City of Virginia Beach is committed to the principles of equal employment opportunity and being a world class leader in advancing diversity and inclusion.

The team also articulated this Vision:

The City of Virginia Beach is recognized as a preferred employer in the Hampton Roads region. We are committed to a work place where every individual adds to the quality of the organization and works cooperatively and effectively with one another to achieve the organization's mission. Diversity is a strength that is critical to our organizational effectiveness and excellent customer service. We have created an inclusive environment where all of the organization's employees, programs and services are responsive to the citizens it serves. The City of Virginia Beach implements positive changes in its workplace to ensure equity of opportunity for all employees and an environment free from discrimination, harassment and hate. Appreciation for diversity is embraced and, in turn, strengthens our community.

In addition to the Goals and Strategies in the plan, the Diversity Advisory Team offered the following five recommendations.

1.  Establish an Inclusion and Diversity Council

The Inclusion and Diversity Council would comprise of a cross section of no more than 15 members from our workforce to address and expand a shared understanding of diversity and inclusion, as well as institutionalize resulting implementation within the organization.

The Virginia Beach Inclusion and Diversity Council (IDC) would be responsible for creating and overseeing initiatives/events/programs designed to integrate the principles of diversity and inclusion within the organization. It was further recommended that, to demonstrate deep commitment and value for this effort, the VBDC be championed by the City Manager. This would include endorsing, kicking-off and leading efforts on behalf of the City and the IDC. The DAT also recommended that two co-chairs be elected by the Inclusion and Diversity Council for two year terms.

2. Update Core Values

Add "Diversity and Inclusion" to the Core Values for the City. The City's Organizational Values were developed in 1999 to define our desired organizational culture and this Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan indicates that the desired organizational culture be one that is diverse and inclusive. We believe this change will serve as an indicator to members that City leadership views diversity and inclusion as prerequisites for organizational success. This will provide equal significance to diversity and inclusion as is given to the current City values.

3. Update Performance Management System

Add diversity and inclusion expectations in the performance management plans for all members and executive management. This will help focus members on the importance of diversity and inclusion in practical ways that relate to the workplace and their job performance.

4. Develop an Administrative Directive

Develop an Administrative Directive in an effort to provide policies and procedures to serve as the foundation for addressing diversity and inclusion throughout the hiring process. It should include the requirement of diversity in the composition of hiring panels.

5. Conduct a Diversity and Inclusion Survey

Contract with an external firm, with substantial subject matter expertise, to conduct a "cultural audit" for the City in the form of a Diversity and Inclusion Survey. The need to assess the status of our organization's current reality relative to diversity and inclusion needs to go beyond the Member Survey, though several questions from the survey provide general data points. The Inclusion and Diversity Council's initial purpose will be to coordinate internal efforts to make our organizational culture inclusive and our City, as an employer, attractive to and supportive of diverse people and talents. A Diversity and Inclusion Survey is the best first step in making this process work. The team believed that

acting on these recommendations would significantly advance the City's efforts to increase diversity and promote inclusion throughout the organization.

The Inclusion and Diversity Council (IDC) was formed in 2009. The purpose of the City of Virginia Beach Inclusion and Diversity Council (IDC) is to address and expand a shared understanding of diversity and inclusion within the organization. The IDC is responsible for educating, researching, and informing employees on the role of diversity and inclusion and how it works in helping the organization and its members become more productive. This includes developing strategies and programs that enhance the understanding of these goals within the organization. The IDC is providing input on the development and implementation of the organization's diversity and inclusion initiatives through ownership of the Diversity Strategic Plan, and is proactive in serving as change agents to improve the organization's culture. As well, the IDC serves as a link between employees and management to help communicate and express ideas that relate to diversity and inclusion.

In April 2011, the IDC was approved to get $35,000 funding for a cultural assessment to get a baseline where the organization is on inclusion and diversity. A Request for Quote (RFQ) was submitted and an intensive interview process of vendors took place. In February 2012 Prism International was selected to conduct this historical assessment for the organization.

The IDC spearheaded the creation of Regional Roundtable Symposium of public and private sector organizations to meet quarterly to discuss business case for Inclusion and Diversity and best practices. The first two symposiums held in May and September 2011 were led and hosted by the City of Virginia Beach. The most recent event in February 2012 was hosted by Norfolk Southern.

In May 2011, the IDC started a series of assessments for the Police Department using the Inclusion and Diversity Dialogue Toolkit. The assessments were administered to groups from each level of the Police Department. The first group to receive the assessment was the command staff, followed by the front line supervisors which included lieutenants and sergeants, and ending in January 2012 with the assessment of the officers. On average, thirty Police Department staff members attended each level.

In February 2012 the City selected, Prism International to conduct this historical cultural assessment for the organization and the survey was administered in July 2012. Over 3,000 employees participated in the cultural assessment, three hundred and forty-four (344) via paper copy and two thousand seven hundred nineteen (2,719) online submissions (2,755 submitted complete surveys). There were 26 questions on the survey, two of which were open-ended.

In 2012, the City of Virginia Beach's Inclusion and Diversity Council (IDC) was honored by two national organizations for its efforts to ensure that the city organization embraces

diversity, creates, and sustains an environment of inclusion for all employees.  The IDC was awarded the Champion of Diversity Award by the American Association for Affirmative Action (AAAA); this award is given to an organization that demonstrates a dedication to fostering equal opportunity and exceptional commitment to diversity. In addition, The Association of Diversity Councils has named the IDC one of 25 winners of the 2012 Diversity Council Honors Award.

*(Glossary of Terms)*

*Throughout this strategic plan, several key terms will arise continually and it is therefore important to define them and explain their relationship to each other. In addition, as we move towards the goals set forth in this plan, it is important we have shared understanding of the terminology used in developing it.*

***Workplace Diversity*** *refers to the variety of differences between people in an organization. It is a value that unites people of all ethnicities, genders, socioeconomic classes, religions, abilities and ages, and empowers them as individuals and as groups to achieve high standards of performance. Diversity advances the organization's mission to provide high quality services, meet changing community needs, and enhance staff competence.*

***Inclusion*** *is a positive sense of belonging. Inclusive work environments yield members who feel respected and valued for who they are, and feel a high level of support and commitment from others so they can achieve their best work.*

***Discrimination*** *is the unfavorable or unfair treatment of a person or class of persons in comparison to others who are not members of the protected class because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicapping condition or in reprisal for opposition to discriminatory practices or participation in the EEO process.*

***Equal Opportunity*** *is the principle of non-discrimination which emphasizes that opportunities in education, employment, advancement, benefits and resource distribution, and other areas should be freely available to all citizens irrespective of their age, race, sex, religion, political association, ethnic origin, or any other individual or group characteristic unrelated to ability, performance, and qualification.*