To:     Mayor Miro Weinberger

From:  Beth Anderson, Chief Innovation Officer

Date:   June 1, 2016

Re:      Request to hire a data analyst in FY17

As you know, I have requested funding in the Innovation and Technology FY17 budget to hire an analyst to help implement and support the CitiStat data-driven performance program you have initiated within the City of Burlington.  I have prepared this memo to summarize, and provide additional detail to, our discussions about the intended job responsibilities for the position.

The new CitiStat initiative is a strategy that will be used to improve the operational performance of City departments and the quality of services we provide to our community.  It will combine a program of goal-setting and data analysis to evaluate our performance against those goals with a lean improvement program to provide staff with the tools to identify and implement means to make sustainable, substantive improvements to our work. As we discussed, the goal is to implement this program across all departments over the 2017 and 2018 fiscal years with the intent of creating meaningful, long-term change.  Hiring an analyst will be important to ensure meeting that goal.

The analyst's primary responsibility will be to assist with the implementation of the program and provide ongoing support to the continuous improvement efforts that will take place within all City departments.  My hope is for the analyst to begin in late November.  The FY17 budget includes $40k in salary (estimated annual salary of $65k).  The analyst will report directly to me, but her/his work will be to support the efforts of all City departments.

Initially upon hire, the analyst's work will be largely focused on implementation of the new performance measurement and continuous improvement program across departments.  S/he will work with leaders from each department to understand their goals, their work, and their challenges.  From that understanding, s/he will help departments to identify metrics that measure how well they are delivering their most important work, and the best means for regularly collecting and analyzing data in support of those metrics.  In addition, the analyst will help with setting performance targets, by looking at current performance, understanding customer expectations, identifying external benchmarks, and researching best practices.

As departments are onboarded and grow more comfortable with the ongoing use of data and metrics, the analyst will transition to working with departments to assist them with identifying improvement opportunities and leading improvement projects.  Opportunities for improvement will be generated through a variety of channels, including analysis of data, reviewing feedback from residents, and soliciting ideas from staff.

As opportunities are identified, the analyst will work with department staff to identify and perform the appropriate lean improvement method for finding ways to improve their work. Examples of the methods to be used include value stream mapping, process mapping, problem solving analysis, and kaizen events. In addition to leading improvement efforts, the analyst will participate in lean training programs, and will serve in a trainer role, teaching City staff lean methodologies they can use to facilitate their improvement efforts.

The goal of the lean improvement activities is to help teams to explore and understand their challenges, to find waste, and to design opportunities to work differently. Once the steps required for improvement are identified and agreed upon, the analyst will assist department staff with implementing the identified changes, measuring their effectiveness, and ensuring that the improvements are continued.

On an ongoing basis, the analyst will continue to support departments in selecting, measuring and refining their metrics. S/he will also support them in their efforts to use data for decision-making and operations. This will be important to help ensure the impacts of improvement efforts that are undertaken are meaningful and sustained. It will also ensure that we continue identifying new opportunities for improvement.

Although the hiring of an analyst will be an investment in the beginning, as the analyst learns about the departments and their work and receives lean training his/her work will quickly lead to the realization of significant cost savings, which should quickly surpass the analyst's salary. Once the analyst is in place and the improvement program is established across a few departments, we will set specific metrics for the analyst's annual performance. Goals will include delivery of a set number of projects, as well as targets for identification and realization of specific cost savings and improvements each year. This position is being hired as Limited Service. At 12 months, and on an ongoing basis, we will assess whether this position has resulted in, or demonstrates reasonably expected near-term, savings that equal or exceed the full cost of the position. Though harder to assess, improvements to customer service and service quality will also be evaluated, and we will work to set a fair measure of that success.

I look forward to talking more about the CitiStat plan, and answering any questions you may have about the position.