
MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 13, 2009

SUBJECT: Joint Resolution and Policy on Open Government

STAFF REPORT BY: Jan Aramaki, Council Staff/Analyst
Karen Halladay, Budget and Public Policy Analyst

AFFECTED COUNCIL DISTRICTS: ALL

BUDGET IMPACT: None at this time. If funding is required, specific initiatives will be presented to the Council in future budget amendments.

Recommendation from Administration

The Administration is proposing that the Mayor and Salt Lake City Council adopt a joint resolution and policy on open government. The newly renamed Open Government Initiative was originally announced in January of 2009 as Salt Lake City's Greater Transparency for Collaborative Government Initiative. Since the announcement, the Steering Committee has been gathering input from constituents and City employees, researching the topic, and reflecting on the culture of open and collaborative government. The resolution and policy being proposed represent nearly a year-long effort to improve communication, awareness, and trust among City employees and with those served by the City.

The following basic principles of open government have been identified by the Administration and, according to the policy, should be consistently applied in order to contribute to an open government culture and organization:

- An open government provides the public and its employees easy access to information that educates and informs.
- An open government listens to all the people affected by its actions. No person or group affected by the City's action has a greater right to be heard than anyone else.
- An open government sees the public and City employees as sources of creative ideas and effective solutions.
- An open government follows its stated processes, is truthful, and welcomes accountability.
- Open public officials disclose their conflicts of interest to the public.

Additionally, *Salt Lake City's Policy on Open Government* states that: "The Mayor and City Council believe that City elected officials, employees, and volunteers can affirm, expand, and protect Salt Lake City's culture of open, inclusive, responsive, and accountable government..." The Steering Committee identified actions that can be incorporated into the City's daily decision-making that will contribute to creating an open government. The list of actions is as follows: (See attached policy for more detailed information)

1. Provide complete and understandable information to the public and City employees.
2. Plan for and incorporate public input at the beginning of each major action.
3. Let the public and employees know "why" decisions are made.
4. Go above and beyond the requirements when providing information to the public and employees.
5. Make the information on www.slcgov.com and the employee intranet site easily searchable, accessible, and sortable.
6. Ensure Salt Lake City's public processes are understandable and fair to all parties involved.
7. Encourage candor and protect against retaliation.
8. Practice the principles of an open government in interactions with City employees and departments.

Employee Survey Findings

City employees were provided the opportunity to participate in a survey to rate the City's level of openness in providing information to City employees and the information shared between employees and departments. Two hundred and ninety-one (291) employees responded to the survey. Employees were asked to respond on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing "not transparent/closed" and 5 representing "very open/transparent". Overall responses averaged "3", which is in the middle of the scale.

Employee survey findings provided the Administration with feedback regarding: areas in the City that already excel in openness, the basis for employee's ratings, and areas of improvement. Employee comments that ranked in the average range, and were negative in nature expressed concerns about the organizational culture and lack of information that is shared with employees -- especially with regard to policy decisions that affect them personally such as wages, benefits and policies. Additionally, results of the public and employee surveys indicate that work remains to be done. Some employee survey comments reveal communication issues, including lack of information sharing and inclusion in the decision-making process that exist between management and employees. When asked by the survey what this City already was doing well, employees mentioned the City's website and intranet, SLCTV, and City Council notices and agendas, Mayor's weekly schedule, Mayor's meetings with employees, and Mayor's willingness to listen.

Next Steps

The Administration is proposing the adoption of this policy to support and further develop an organizational culture of openness and collaboration. However, the Steering Committee has indicated that this project is not complete. The Administration and Council Working Group have identified next steps, including searchable and sortable content improvements to the City's website and TV Channel and finding ways to more fully utilize the City's Human Resources.

In addition, the Administration outlined initial action plans to address other areas of the City that could improve. Areas the Administration plans to improve in the future include: 1) sharing of information and 2) encouraging the general public and City employees to engage in constructive dialogue without fear of retaliation. The proposed Policy on Open Government addresses this area of concern. The proposed policy language states that employees shall be free to provide input, feedback, and state their beliefs without the fear of potential repercussions.

The Administration plans to address organizational culture issues at the next Department Director's Retreat with the Mayor. Suggested topics include: 1) inclusion of employees in projects or decision-making processes, 2) encouraging managers/supervisors to provide employees with opportunities to suggest new ideas and provide feedback, and 3) working with Human Resources in developing employee training programs.

Finally, the Administration continues to welcome employee suggestions on the open government initiative.

Questions and Policies the Council May Wish to Consider


1. Employees indicated that they would like the opportunity to provide suggestions on how the City can operate more cost effectively. The Council may wish to ask the Administration if there are current mechanisms in place which allow employees to provide this kind of input.
2. The employee survey revealed that sometimes employees are unclear as to why decisions are being made. For example, a comment was made as to why funding for the Gallivan Center was preferred over funding for employee compensation. The Council may wish to consider working with the Administration to create an informational/presentation tool for City employees that informs them about the different projects, funding sources, and budget policy decisions.
3. One employee comment infers that City employees may not be aware of the City's Accela program.
4. Some employees expressed concern that feedback from employee surveys is never acted upon by management. The transmittal indicates that some areas of concern will be addressed during the next Department Directors Retreat with the Mayor. Other concerns may also be addressed via changes to HR policy and procedures.
5. The City Council may wish to ask the Administration about how information is disseminated to City employees. For example, when the Council adopts new ordinances or revisions to Salt Lake City code how are employees informed.



RALPH BECKER
MAYOR

SALT LAKE CITY CORPORATION

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY COUNCIL TRANSMITTAL


David Everitt, Chief of Staff

Date Received: 09/18/2009
Date sent to Council: 09/23/2009

TO: Salt Lake City Council
Carlton Christensen, Chair

DATE: September 18, 2009

FROM: Salt Lake City Open Government Steering Committee
Ed Rutan Mary De La Mare-Schaefer Wilf Sommerkorn
Michele Straube Debra Alexander Chris Meeker
Matt Lyon Bill Haight Nole Walkingshaw
Jan Aramaki Sylvia Richards Sonya Kintaro
Frank Gray Karen Halladay Cindy Lou-Trishman

SUBJECT: Policy on Open Government

STAFF CONTACT: Ed Rutan, City Attorney, x7628
Michele Straube, Salt Lake Solutions, x7971
Matt Lyon, Assistant to the Chief of Staff, x7931

DOCUMENT TYPE: RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the Resolution

BUDGET IMPACT: None. Work to date has been completed through existing resources. Specific initiatives requiring funding as part of the Open Government Initiative will be submitted for approval through the regular budget process.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION: The attached work represents almost one year of public comment, internal and external outreach, research, and reflection by the Transparency (now termed Open Government) Steering Committee. Beginning on January 6, 2009, Mayor Becker and then Council Chair Jill Remington-Love released a proposed work plan to begin the Greater Transparency for a Collaborative Government Initiative, now called the Open Government Initiative. The work plan specifically called for an overarching policy on transparency to provide guidance to City employees on how to approach particular situations, both internally and externally. Additionally, the policy would serve as a symbol to the City's constituents of Salt Lake City's commitment to open government.

The proposed policy aims to support and further develop an organizational culture of openness and collaboration in Salt Lake City. This culture will benefit both City employees and the many constituencies the City seeks to serve by improving communication, awareness, and trust among all parties. These values will assist the City in making more fully informed and better decisions which serve our community and workplace more effectively.

PUBLIC PROCESS: Prior to the release of the draft policy, the Open Government Steering Committee created online forums, surveys, and discussion boards to begin conversations about transparency, openness and collaboration in City government. Outreach was conducted to numerous professional organizations and Community Councils in the winter and spring of 2009. The Steering Committee also conducted extensive research, including academic literature and comparisons of other cities, during the beginning phases of the project. These initial conversations greatly informed the themes that were placed in the draft policy.

The draft policy was initially released on May 13, 2009, and the public was invited to review and submit comments through www.transparencyslcgov.com and mayor@slcgov.com. While public interest in the draft policy on Open Government has been minimal, public interest appears to be high in circumstances where the City's implementation of transparency and open government principles are at issue. The open government survey responses received from the public, as well as public comment on the Public Safety Complex, reflect that the public generally favors increased transparency and openness in City decision-making. In addition, the Community Council Chairs received a presentation of the draft policy during their monthly breakfast with the Mayor. Finally, City staff met with the editorial boards of the Deseret News and Salt Lake Tribune. The Tribune published an editorial on May 17, 2009 titled, "Open Government."

The draft policy and an opinion survey were also submitted to all City employees for comment via email on June 23, 2009. Department Directors were asked to share the draft and survey with employees who may not have email or internet access. In total, 291 employee responses were received. In general, the comments were similar to the public, ranking Salt Lake City's openness roughly a "3" on a 1 – 5 scale. Organizational culture, including competition between teams, divisions, and departments, and lack of communication between management and employees, were commonly cited points of concern by employees. Additionally, many employees expressed a desire to be provided with more information and to be included earlier in the decision making process.

In response to employee and public input, the proposed policy places a strong emphasis on organizational culture, both internally with employees and externally for constituents. The Steering Committee also worked to ensure the policy focused on Salt Lake City's internal processes as much as it did external processes. Finally, a number of items were added to the policy to create a "safe place" for dialogue, including encouraging candor and protecting employees and the public from retaliation when stating their beliefs and opinions.

ATTACHMENTS

- Joint Resolution No. ____ of 2009
- Salt Lake City Policy on Open Government
- Employee Response Summary

JOINT RESOLUTION NO. _____ OF 2009
(Open and Transparent Government)

A joint resolution adopting the Salt Lake City policy on open government.

WHEREAS, on January 6, 2009, the Mayor and City Council Chair jointly announced Salt Lake City's Greater Transparency for Collaborative Government Initiative, which has since been renamed the Open Government Initiative; and

WHEREAS, an open government facilitates communication and collaboration, both internally with employees and externally with constituents, leading to a more responsive, efficient, and effective government; and

WHEREAS, one of the objectives of the Open Government Initiative was the adoption of a City policy on transparency and open government; and

WHEREAS, a policy on open government will be a significant means of affirming and expanding a culture of open, transparent, and collaborative government in Salt Lake City; and

WHEREAS, the City has received input from both the public and City employees on the current state of openness and transparency in Salt Lake City government; and

WHEREAS, on June 23, 2009, the City released for public and employee comment a draft of a proposed Salt Lake City Policy on Open Government ; and

WHEREAS, the City's Open Government Steering Committee has made improvements to the draft based on public and employee input; and

WHEREAS, the City Council and Mayor find that City government serves the public and City employees best when it operates openly; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council find that the adoption of a City Policy setting forth basic principles to be followed will facilitate greater transparency and openness in City government.

THEREFORE, BE IT JOINTLY RESOLVED by the Salt Lake City Council and Mayor to adopt the following Salt Lake City's Policy on Open Government:

Salt Lake City's Policy on Open Government

One of the principles most cherished by Americans is that our system of democratic government is “of the people, by the people, and for the people.” The Mayor and City Council members are individual citizens as well as the elected representatives of their constituents. The majority of the members of the City’s boards and commissions are individual residents of the City who have been appointed to serve the public interest. Many City employees are also constituents of the City. Thus, Salt Lake City government is conducted by its constituents.

However, the election or appointment of representatives does not end the general public’s interest in how the business of City government is conducted, nor does it end the public’s right to be involved in the City’s decision-making. Communities are strong when residents understand and participate in the civic process, have access to good, clear information, and are able to place confidence in their public officials.

The Mayor and City Council members believe that Salt Lake City government serves the public and City employees best when it operates openly. Openness in government is the basis for accountability, improved decision-making, public and employee trust, and informed participation.

The Mayor and City Council members believe that an open government consistently follows these basic principles:

- An open government provides the public and its employees easy access to information that educates and informs.
- An open government listens to all the people affected by its actions. No person or group affected by the City’s actions has a greater right to be heard than anyone else.
- An open government sees the public and City employees as sources of creative ideas and effective solutions.
- An open government follows its stated processes, is truthful, and welcomes accountability.
- Open public officials disclose their conflicts of interest to the public.

An open government requires that each of these values is embodied in the culture and mindsets of all City elected officials, employees, and volunteers. The Mayor and City Council believe that City elected officials, employees, and volunteers can affirm, expand, and protect Salt Lake City’s culture of open, inclusive, responsive, and accountable government, by doing the following:

1) Provide complete and understandable information to the public and City employees.

Access to information is the foundation for a transparent government. A collaborative government requires that people have complete information in a format which they can understand and use. As the first directive of this policy, all City employees shall aim to provide complete information to the public whenever possible, recognizing that privacy must be respected whenever appropriate. In addition, the City's Department Heads, Division Directors, and employees shall work to ensure the public is able to understand, or reasonably should be able to, the information provided without government or legal expertise.

The same principle applies within City government. Information must be freely shared between and within departments, subject to privacy and other concerns, so that employees can work together efficiently and effectively.

2) Plan for and incorporate public input at the beginning of each major action.

Municipal government clearly and tangibly affects the City's residents, businesses, and visitors' daily life. An open government provides people with an opportunity to share their views and provide input early in the decision making process, at a time when the input can shape the decision. Salt Lake City Department and Division Directors are encouraged to actively seek out and provide for opportunities where broad stakeholder participation is available early in the process to complement the work of City employees. The City's decision documents will also reflect how public input affected the decision.

3) Let the public and employees know "why" decisions are made.

The reasons behind governmental decisions are often as important as the decisions themselves. Letting the public and employees know why decisions are made ensures an honest, reasonable, fair, and open government. It also protects the public from arbitrary government interference. Salt Lake City Department Heads, Division Directors, and employees shall work to document any significant facts and criteria guiding a decision of general public impact and make the justification publically available.

4) Go above and beyond the requirements when providing information to the public and employees.

State law and City code require Salt Lake City government to provide public notice for major decisions that affect constituents' lives. These regulations shall be considered a floor and Salt Lake City shall seek to expand and proactively provide additional information to the public whenever financially and efficiently feasible. In addition, City Officials shall seek to use active noticing measures, such as physical meetings, emails, mailings, and phone calls in addition to passive techniques, such as web pages, agenda posting, etc.

5) Make the information on www.slcgov.com and the employee intranet site easily searchable, accessible, and sortable.

The use of technology and e-government solutions should be commonplace for all Salt Lake City's Departments and Divisions. To the extent feasible, Salt Lake City government shall make its records and decisions available online in an accessible, searchable, and sortable format. Online materials shall also be intuitively organized in a manner someone without government expertise can navigate and search. These principles again hold true for City employees' access to information affecting their employment and/or benefits.

6) Ensure Salt Lake City's public processes are understandable and fair to all parties involved.

Salt Lake City has numerous public processes designed to ensure the public has an opportunity to voice their perspective on decisions that affect their daily lives. However, the members of the public are often only aware of one step of the entire process, meaning they do not participate when their participation would be most valuable. In order to expand the openness and inclusiveness of Salt Lake City government, Department and Division Heads shall seek to develop clear, consistent, and equitable processes, and to make the broader public aware of their existence. The same principles apply to the City's internal processes impacting employees. The employees' need for understandable and fair policies is no less important.

7) Encourage candor and protect against retaliation.

Constructive criticism is vital to an effective and efficient organization. The public and City employees must be able to state their beliefs without fear of retribution. At the same time, beliefs must be honestly stated in a constructive manner, free of personal animosity.

8) Practice the principles of an open government in your interactions with City employees and departments.

The City's employees are affected by the City's decisions just as much as the broader public. Department and Division Directors shall make every attempt to communicate and practice the principals outlined in this policy internally with their employees as they do externally with the public.

Complaints about violations of these principles may be directed to the Mayor's Chief of Staff with respect to Executive Branch matters and to the City Council Chair or Executive Director with respect to Legislative Branch matters.

Passed and Adopted this _____ day of _____, 2009.

SALT LAKE CITY COUNCIL

By: _____
CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST AND COUNTERSIGN:

CITY RECORDER

SALT LAKE CITY MAYOR

By: _____

ATTEST AND COUNTERSIGN:

CITY RECORDER

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

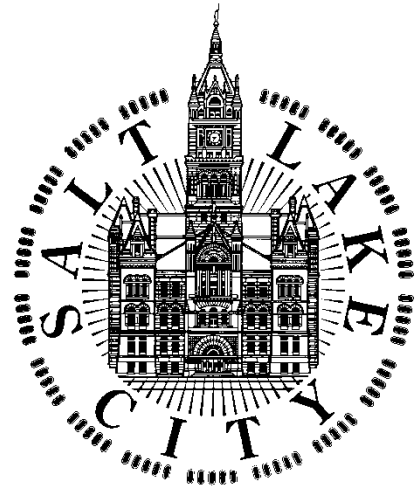

10/14/09

SALT LAKE CITY ATTORNEY

HB_ATTYY-#9941-V2-Joint_Resolution_Adopting_SLC_Policy_On_Open_Government.DOC

Memorandum

To: Salt Lake City Employees
From: Transparency Steering Committee
Date: September 11, 2009
Re: Summary of Responses and Initial Action Plan for
the Employee Open Government Survey



The City's Open Government Steering Committee has prepared the following Summary of Responses and Initial Action Plan to the Salt Lake City Employee Open Government Survey.

Deb Alexander
Jan Aramaki
Mary De La Mare-Schaefer
Frank Gray
Bill Haight
Karen Halladay
Holly Hilton
Sonya Kintaro

Matt Lyon
Chris Meeker
Sylvia Richards
Ed Rutan
Wilf Sommerkorn
Michele Straube
Cindy Lou Trishman
Nole Walkingshaw

I. Summary of Responses

Responses were submitted by 291 employees. We thank them for their willingness to take the time to provide their views.

Employees were asked to answer two questions about openness on a "1 to 5" scale and to provide specific comments about the basis for their "1 to 5" rating. We also asked employees what they thought the City already was doing well and what they would like the City to do to provide greater openness.

We are summarizing those comments here, but we are also making available online the text of all the comments for those who wish to dig deeper. <http://slcnet/transparency.htm> (We have not edited the comments, but we have deleted for personal privacy reasons the names of individual employees who were referred to in the comments.)

Openness of Salt Lake City with Its Employees

The responses broke down as follows on Question 1—On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being very “open” or “transparent” and 1 being “closed” or “not transparent,” where would you place Salt Lake City government today in its openness and transparency with City employees?

1	2	3	4	5	Weighted Average
33	45	105	95	17	3.05

This indicates that overall the respondents basically see the City as being in the middle—neither fully open, nor closed in its openness and transparency with City employees. The average of 3.05 is similar to the public response in the survey on how open or transparent the City is with the public.

Openness of City Employees with Each Other

The responses broke down as follows on Question 3—On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being very “open” or “transparent” and 1 being “closed” or not “transparent,” where would you place City employees today in their dealings with each other?

1	2	3	4	5	Weighted Average
23	68	105	86	10	2.97

Again, overall, the respondents saw employees as being neither fully open nor closed in their dealings with each other.

Specific Comments

The “open-ended” questions were intended to gain an understanding of why the respondents held the views on openness that they do. We gained more insight into the thinking of employees with a negative view of openness than we did for employees with a positive view.

Question 2 asked employees for anything specific that influenced their view of how open the City was with its employees. Roughly 70% of the respondents who viewed the City as not being open with its employees (“1” or “2”) provided specific comments. However, only about 40% of the respondents who viewed the City as being open with its employees (“4” or “5”) provided specific responses.

Question 4 asked employees for anything specific that influenced their view of how open City employees are with each other. Only 25% of employees with a positive view (“4” or “5”) provided specific comments, while 50% of those employees with a negative view provided specific comments.

Question 5 asked employees to identify specific things that Salt Lake City already does well in providing openness in City government. Overall, roughly 40% of respondents identified specific things.

Question 6 asked employees to identify specific ways the City could provide greater transparency within City government. Again, about 40% of the respondents provided specific suggestions.

Basis for Employee’s Ratings/Areas for Improvement

Employee responses to Questions 2, 4 and 6 tended to cover the same general themes, so we are summarizing those responses together.

Those with a middle or more negative view of the existing state of transparency in City government primarily expressed their concern in three general areas – organizational culture, lack of information, and a desire for greater employee participation in decision-making. Themes within those three areas were as follows:

- Organizational culture
 - Competition between and within departments vs. being on the same team
 - “Knowledge is power” style of management (in some departments)
 - “We are the last to know” – lack of communication, especially from upper management
 - Lack of openness and honesty by management – fear of repercussions if someone comes forward with a complaint
- Additional information would be welcome
 - Information about things that affect employees personally, e.g.
 - Pay
 - Benefits (health and retirement)
 - Policies
 - Information about what the City/other departments are doing
 - Timely (before we read about it in the newspaper)
 - What everyone else is working on (to coordinate efforts better)
 - Other department’s policies and procedures
 - **Where** to access desired information?

- Desire for more collaborative decision-making/opportunities for employees to participate in decision-making
 - Ask the employees for suggestions/input **before** decisions are made
 - Comment made about both external and internal decisions, but made most often re: budget/pay cut decisions
 - Ask employees for their ideas and suggestions for ways to save the City money
 - Tell employees **why** decisions are made, especially those that affect them personally

Among the respondents with the most negative assessment of the current state of transparency, the recent 1.5% pay suspension and health insurance increase were frequently mentioned. A number of employees felt that the basis for the decision had never been explained to them and in particular why funding for capital programs such as the Gallivan Center was preferred over funding for employee compensation.

A number of employees viewed the transparency initiative as a distraction or a waste of time.

For employees with a more positive view of the current state of openness (“4” or “5”), dissemination of the Mayor’s schedule and public announcement of major policies by e-mail were frequently cited as examples. Several employees did feel that the pay issues were handled openly. Several employees said that the Mayor and his staff were more accessible than in the past.

However, even in this group there was still some criticism. For example, several employees felt that their immediate supervisor was open with them, but that the higher level supervisors were not open.

What Does the City Already Do Well?

Question 5 asked employees for specific things that the City already does well in providing openness inside City government.

Regardless of whether the respondents had a positive or a negative view of the current state of transparency in City government, they tended to identify the same things that they think the City currently does well:

- Website (intranet and internet)
- SLCTV Channel 17
- City Council notices/agendas, etc.

- Mayor’s weekly schedule and other information from Mayor’s Office
- Mayor’s meetings with employees/willingness to listen
- Disclosure of employee expenses

A number of employees with a negative assessment of transparency acknowledged the value of the transparency initiative, but a similar number also viewed the initiative as a waste of time. Some employees also felt that things like the Mayor’s weekly schedule were too much information and not relevant to their work.

II. Initial Action Plan

A number of employees included this survey as one of the specific things that the City is doing well to promote openness. However, one employee pointed out that doing a survey and finding a problem is not enough—“how about the solution?” The Working Group agrees. We therefore are providing here our initial thoughts on how to address the concerns raised by the employee responses. We emphasize the word “initial” because the concerns that have been raised cannot be effectively addressed with quick, simple solutions. Cultural change is never easy. Multiple, interrelated actions will be required over time to fully address the concerns raised. The following thoughts are on how we think the process should be started.

A. Sharing of Information and Expressing Constructive Criticism Without Fear of Retaliation

As discussed above, many respondents said that employees are afraid to express critical viewpoints because of a fear of retaliation. The Working Group strongly believes that if City employees fear that they cannot tell the truth, City government at best will be ineffective and at worst completely dysfunctional. An effective organization supports candor. Some respondents also expressed concern about a lack of sharing of information between and within departments.

We reviewed the current draft Salt Lake City Policy on Open Government and concluded that it does not adequately address these concerns. Therefore we will recommend the addition of language that makes clear that employees must be free to criticize without fear of retaliation and that information must be shared. We are not so naïve as to expect that these principles will be uniformly followed overnight, but we do believe that a clear statement of policy by the Mayor and City Council is a fundamental first step.

B. The City’s Websites (Internet and Intranet) and SLCTV Channel 17

The City’s websites are a tremendous asset, but we all know that they can be made even better. Independent of this survey, efforts have been underway to improve them. A uniform

format for the various departmental and other sites has recently been introduced for the internet site to make it more user-friendly. The same will be done for the intranet site shortly. We will work with HR to make more accessible and understandable important benefits information.

A Technology Working Group has been created as part of the Open Government Initiative and they already are looking at how more effective use can be made of the websites and SLC Channel 17. Increased searchability and sortability are specific concerns on their list.

We also will work with the department directors to address the needs of those employees who do not have access to e-mail or the City's intranet site.

C. Organizational Culture in General

We recommend this be addressed at multiple, complementary levels. As noted above, we are recommending changes to the draft of the Open Government Policy. Employee suggestions will continue to be welcome. We will recommend that organizational culture issues be discussed at the next Department Directors' Retreat with the Mayor. Within the individual departments, we will recommend that the directors encourage managers/supervisors to identify ways that individual work group or team members can be included in project or task decision-making processes. Similarly, we will recommend that the directors encourage managers/supervisors to provide channels for suggestions/new ideas/feedback, with non-monetary rewards for ideas used. We will also work with HR on appropriate training approaches.

Appendix I: Additional Employee Comments Received after the Survey Deadline

My concern is this. There is a year old software program which has the capability of exposing all the comments which is written between employees or the least notes that we place for reference on the project. In my estimation this is a deterrent to both the employees and any project. Many of the employees do not know that Accela has this capability. And if they knew the work production will not be as efficient if they thought “big brother is lessening and watching”. Many times we inquire from one another to inquire facts which are used to determine our course of action. [...] or requiring road width to be wider, etc. I am of the understanding that this feature on Accela may be turned on and off. I am wondering what other items such as this e-mail can be scrutinized by other eyes? Or after we have trashed it can it be recovered and meet the riggers of the Fourth Amendment. This is as you can tell is a concern.

I reviewed the draft of the Open Government Initiative, and I have a few comments:

The website – I think it’s a great goal for it to be intuitive and user-friendly. I hope there is a major overhaul planned because right now it is awful.

Also, I would like to see some specifics outlined by Department and Division directors as to how this policy is actually going to play out in the departments. What specifically are the directors and employees going to DO differently? What things are going to be disclosed? The reason I ask is language like, “Department and Division Directors shall make every attempt to communicate and practice the principals...” is very vague and sound like absolutely nothing will be done differently.

I predict that nothing in this document is going to change my experience of openness in the City as an employee in any way. I would love to hear SPECIFICS as to what needs to be changed.

Thank you for your consideration of my feedback!

The LeaderWise Tip below seems to tie into the Transparency business. I agree with the sentiment of the quotation but firmly believe that exceptional communication upward from those doing the work, those “following through”, those doing “whatever is needed” must get their messages up to the exceptional leaders so the exceptional leader knows where he/she is going, the pit falls of their planning, the thickness of the crust they are walking on.

The “team” must play together in close enough proximity to know how to communicate, by words, by signals and by custom. The gaps in the playing field are why the City needs a super

communicator, an ombudsman, to knit new fabric over the bureaucratic team gaps. As an example, would you urge attorneys to go visit your clients or invite your clients into your offices if you wanted your attorney to know, in no uncertain terms, what was needed for that division? Thanks.

Greetings. The transparency initiative is a good thing if it is applied. I'd be pleased if you would consider a few insights.

1. Feedback, assurance, to employees that transparency initiative has relevance to them at their level, that it has spine at all levels will be needed. Lack of feedback is the most effective communication possible. It stunts initiative. If this government wants to grow, be healthy and transparent it needs the nutrients from the roots. It is my sense that there is plenty of residual resistance to open communication for fear of reprisal.
2. The initiative needs an ombudsman's monitoring eye, to observe activity and monitor how the transparency initiative is working. That person would suggest general or pinpoint changes and be strong enough to bring truth back to you. The ombudsman must be trusted "safe" enough in all quarters of the City to obtain accurate measure and have no fear of speaking truth to power.
3. The City needs an ombudsman's eye to insure the vertical, horizontal and bidirectional communication is working. It does not appear that the up/down communication works all that well. There is a level of bureaucrats that appear to believe that all communication is downward.

Best regards.