LEXINGTON
Urban County Council

TO: Division and Program Review Process Subcommittee

FROM: Hilary Angelucci, Research Analyst

DATE: September 10, 2021

SUBJECT: Summary of the pilot evaluation of the Division of Streets and Roads

In March 2020, I was asked to conduct a pilot evaluation of the Division of Streets and Roads. The subcommittee approved the pilot evaluation to focus on general information, such as goals and responsibilities, financials, personnel and operations, planning, and a program summary report of each program. I began the pilot evaluation in April 2021 and worked with Rob Allen, Director of the Streets and Roads. We completed the process in June.

This evaluation was completed in two phases. In the first phase, Allen completed the main form of the evaluation; which covered general information, financials, personnel and operations, and planning. A list of all the programs the division is responsible for was provided in the main form. In the second phase, a program summary report (form) was outlined for each program identified in the main form. In the end, Streets and Roads filled out 13 program summary reports (one less than the programs outlined in the main form because it didn't warrant a full report). Collectively, the completed evaluation forms totaled 48 pages of details about Streets and Roads and all it encompasses.

Sections of this memo are as follows:

- A. Outline of the process
- B. Timeline
- C. Specific notes and challenges from the pilot
- D. General takeaways
- E. Conclusion
  Appendix: Changes made to the evaluation

A. Outline of the Process:

1. Hilary Angelucci met with Rob Allen, Director of Streets and Roads, to review the general purpose of the subcommittee and the goals of the pilot evaluation.
   a. The evaluation questions were reviewed with Streets and Roads to address any preliminary questions.
2. The main evaluation form was distributed to Streets and Roads.
   a. The Division of Budgeting was asked to respond to Question 6 (overall summary of funding).
   b. Streets and Roads received a separate form for Question 8 (positions report).

       c.   Question 17 of the main form (program summary report) took place in the second phase of the evaluation.

3. Hilary Angelucci reviewed Streets and Road's response to the main form and asked follow-up/clarification questions to help finalize the completed form.

4. The program summary report form (tied to Question 17 of the main form) was distributed to Streets and Roads. This form was duplicated for each program identified in the division's response to Question 16 on the main form.

5. Hilary Angelucci reviewed Streets and Road's response to the program summary report forms and asked follow-up/clarification questions to help finalize the completed forms.

6. The responses were gathered into one packet to be reviewed by the following:
    a. Chair of the subcommittee
    b. Chair of the subcommittee, administration, and the Division of Streets and Roads
    c. Subcommittee

B. <u>Timeline:</u>

Week 1	April 15, 2021	Met with director to review evaluation questions
Week 2	April 21, 2021	Provided division the main evaluation form
Week 3	April 30, 2020	Provided division the positions report form (Section D.8.)
Week 4	May 3, 2021	Division submitted the completed main form
Week 4	May 5, 2021	Responded with edits and questions to clarify responses to the main form
Week 5	May 10, 2021	Finalized the main form
Week 5	May 10, 2021	Provided division the program summary report form
Week 6	May 20, 2021	Division submitted positions report from (Section D.8.)
Week 7	May 28, 2021	Responded with edits and questions to clarify responses to the positions report
Week 8	June 2, 2021	Division submitted the completed program summary report
Week 10	June 17, 2021	Responded with edits and questions to clarify responses to HALF of the program summary report

C. <u>Specific Notes and Challenges from the Pilot:</u>

1) Main form, Q9, *org. chart* – a question arose about the structure of the org. chart aligning more with the hierarchy of the division's personnel versus the structure of the division and program; something that shows the flow of programs may be more useful but it is also something that likely doesn't exist in most divisions so it would have to be created.

2) Main form, Q15, *budgetary increase/decrease scenarios* – I originally thought the Division of Budgeting was going to respond to this question but the division responded before I could get the framework from Budgeting; it seemed to work out fine.

    a) Q15.c., *list any staff that would be cut as a result of a 25% reduction* – the response was "see above;" this item may not be necessary to ask.

3) Main form, Q18, *additional information that should be shared* – the supporting text caused confusion ("what assumptions have been made, what is the communication plan, public engagement plan, etc.") so I deleted it; however, based on the response it seems it may be appropriate to have two comment boxes, one focused on communication and one for anything we didn't think of that the division wants to add.

4) Main form, Section D.8. – Positions report

    a) This section needs to be revised to make it useful and successful; the original form doesn't align with what was done; the subcommittee needs to determine what is important to the council (i.e. what details would be helpful to review). (See *General Takeaway No.2*.)

    b) If this topic remains a component of the evaluation:

        i) The number of years of data (i.e. five years) needs to be looked at to determine how many years of data are necessary and helpful.

        ii) The section to summarize *approved personnel changes* was very challenging to compile and mostly done by one longstanding employee of the division recalling the changes; there is no way to pull this information from our systems.

        iii) It is recommended the terminology (abolished, created, unfunded, funded, frozen, etc.) be reviewed for consistency.

5) Program summary report

    a) Items e.3 – *management reports prepared* and e.4 – *data collected but not reported or assessed*: might be confusing, or need better instructions and/or examples; the response often mentioned various reports garnered, which the division provided some of those reports separately but they were mostly in a format useful to the division but not as helpful as a reporting mechanism for someone outside the division who is unfamiliar with the work.

    b) Item 3.d.2 – *deliverables* and e. – metrics and management reporting – The response for deliverables didn't match with the responses item e.; from an outside perspective it seems there might be more of an opportunity for these to connect; more specifics were needed (e.g. what does the monthly report include, is there data available to help measure deliverables).

    c) The entire program summary report was not vetted with the same level of detail as the main form was, largely because of the magnitude of the report; this should be considered when making decisions to fully implement an evaluation process.

6) The terms *objectives* and *deliverables* should align with what is most commonly used in LFUCG.

7) The forms should have consistent headers.

8) It would be helpful to develop a model/example of the completed forms that divisions could use as a reference.

D. General Takeaways:

1) Determining how often this evaluation will take place should have a significant impact on the information that is requested. For example, if a division is asked to complete this evaluation every four years, a more extensive form such as the one used in the pilot evaluation is more likely to be considered manageable.

2) The positions report (main form, Section D.8.) is not entirely applicable to LFUCG. This might not be the best venue to evaluate personnel; the subcommittee should consider eliminating this section or revising it significantly.

    a) Human Resources believes the program report is something the divisions could respond to but it ended up being very time-consuming for the division to pull this information. If this evaluation process is implemented, Streets and Roads recommended working with Employment Solutions to develop a query in PeopleSoft to make this easier. After meeting with Employments Solutions, they confirmed a query is likely possible to pull data for authorized strength; it is likely not possible for the other sections of the positions report (i.e. turnover, vacancies, recruitment, and attrition).

3) Now the evaluation forms are complete it seems it is important to think about how the information will be reviewed. How can this information help? What are the short- and long-term desired outcomes the council would like to see from this? Did this evaluation collect the information you were hoping to see or is it missing anything?

E. Conclusion:

In summary, I conclude that there is a lot of value to be gained from this process if it were to be implemented fully. This process would begin a library of detailed information about divisions and programs that could be a helpful resource in the future. The details collected in this pilot evaluation are much more extensive than the information a council member would receive through the budgeting process, therefore providing more context when making policy recommendations. It would also provide the opportunity to implement improvement strategies, for example, tweak the way in which a data set is collected to make it more helpful and useful for LFUCG and the public.

The pilot evaluation, however, was labor-intensive. If the materials collected in the evaluation are not reviewed, analyzed, and discussed with the intention to outline potential areas for improvement or commend best practices, it is possible it is not worth the effort. Analysis of the completed evaluation would be the last step of the evaluation. That step has not been done for Streets and Roads; the subcommittee should consider how they would like this step to occur for Streets and Roads but also more generally if the evaluation program is implemented.

Appendix

Changes made to the evaluation:

This section is for transparency purposes and to help track modifications made along the way. I made several changes to the evaluation questions and structure before conducting the pilot with Streets and Roads. Below is a list of the modifications I made to the evaluation from the draft evaluation last reviewed by the subcommittee in March 2020 to the evaluation forms used for the pilot in April 2021:

- Created a new section to start the evaluation: *idea generation*. This was added because of feedback received from individuals outside of LFUCG who were asked to review the draft evaluation. By starting with this, it prepares the division to think more outside the box and respond to the evaluation with an open mind.

- Modified the staff breakdown under Section D – Personnel & Operations (H in March 2020 draft) to request the division org. chart; the position report is not entirely applicable to LFUCG.

- Moved and modified Section E – Planning (N and O in March 2020 draft) to create a new first section *idea generation*; conferred with Budgeting and determined 25% was a good number for budgeting exercises

- Deleted the description in Section G – Comments that asked for additional information because it was confusing (the text that caused confusion: "*what assumptions have been made, what is the communication plan, public engagement plan, etc.*")

- Changes in the Program Summary Report:

  1) Added a question to feed off the idea generation section of the main form: "Rethink the program: is it still meeting the need it was designed to accomplish, is there a better way (item c.)"

  2) Added a question under *metrics and management reporting* to collect historical data on service levels (item e.1.), which was based on feedback received from individuals outside of LFUCG who were asked to review the draft evaluation

  3) Added a question under *budget/financial data* to collect cost per unit information (item h.1.)