



City of Seattle
Office of Economic Development

Memorandum

Date: September 17, 2013

To: Councilmember Sally Clark
Councilmember Tom Rasmussen
Councilmember Richard Conlin
Councilmember Jean Godden
Councilmember Tim Burgess
Councilmember Sally Bagshaw
Councilmember Nick Licata
Councilmember Bruce Harrell
Councilmember Mike O'Brien

CC: Jesse Gilliam, Legislative Assistant to Councilmember Sally Clark
Ben Noble, Director, Council Central Staff
David G. Jones, City Auditor
Jeanette Blankenship, City Budget Office
Jaline Quinto, Mayor's Office

From: Steve Johnson, Office of Economic Development
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Subject: Career Bridge Briefing

BACKGROUND

Career Bridge is a recently formed collective impact strategy partnering the Human Services Department (HSD), the Office of Economic Development (OED), and the local community to create a more aligned system of workforce training investments, social service supports and community networks for low-income individuals seeking economic independence. By intentionally connecting the efforts and resources of these partners, Career Bridge is designed to provide a more coherent and comprehensive approach to facilitate an individual's journey to self-sufficiency.

The initial cohorts (six since October, 2012) have been men of color with criminal histories who have multiple institutional, resource, and personal barriers to move out of poverty. With these cohorts, Career Bridge has focused on providing employment and training readiness, with wrap-around services (e.g. housing, transportation, childcare resources) and stable community/family networks. Participant outcomes to date are highlighted in the following table:

Activity	Numbers	Comments
Enrolled	51	Does not include Monroe Prison Cohort
Currently Working	26	Includes 2 in paid internships
Active Job Search	10	Includes 6 previously placed but lost job
Paid Training	4	
Post-Secondary Education	4	
Completed Training	1	
On Hold – Personal	2	

During 2013, Career Bridge has been primarily managed by HSD & OED staff, with programmatic support from the Seattle Jobs Initiative. As Community Development Block Grant funds become the primary fund source in 2014, along with a proposed increase in funding, a Community Based Development Organization (CBDO) will assume the implementation of Career Bridge. We are currently in the process of selecting a CBDO through a Request for Proposal process.

BRIEFING OVERVIEW

This briefing will focus on the current status of Career Bridge and the plan to build on its strengths and address implementation challenges. Earlier departmental responses to a Council Statement of Legislative Intent provides more detailed information about Career Bridge's origins, program development, early program outcomes and estimated budget. These reports, dated February 1 and July 1, 2013, are attached here to provide you with additional background and context.

OED & HSD's briefing will follow an overview of a preliminary evaluation conducted by MEF & Associates, consultants who have been hired by the Office of the City Auditor, pursuant to Green Sheet 120-2-A-1, to complete an evaluation of the Career Bridge program by July 1, 2014. Concurrently, OED & HSD have developed an evaluation framework and data collection plan to assess the impact of Career Bridge's strategies and provide a mechanism for continuous learning and improvement. In addition to participant outcomes described in the MEF Evaluation, our evaluation framework takes a more comprehensive view of the community and systems changes as equally important dimensions to Career Bridge. The attached memo from OED & HSD to the City Auditor, dated September 11, 2013, describes more fully the distinction between the MEF Evaluation Plan with the departmental approach that addresses the interconnectedness of individual, community, and system changes that characterizes Career Bridge as a model.

OED & HSD will provide a brief orientation to Career Bridge's participatory, relationship-based approach to broadly shared prosperity and healthy communities. The briefing will discuss Career Bridge's initial implementation and areas for continuous improvement, with a primary focus on the work ahead to ensure effective ongoing implementation and transition to a CBDO in 2014.

NEXT STEPS

The briefing will highlight some of the key activities currently in process, including:

- CBDO Selection – A Request for Qualifications was issued on August 22nd, with responses due September 16th. We intend to select a CBDO by the end of September to facilitate transition of program functions.
- Cohort #7 – The last Career Bridge cohort for 2013 is scheduled for November. This cohort will be co-facilitated and managed by the CBDO and City/SJI staff to provide an opportunity for peer learning and mentorship before Career Bridge is transitioned to the CBDO in 2014.
- English Language Learner Career Bridge Design – The Career Bridge program is also intended to serve English language learners who have low levels of education and limited work history. Similar to the men of color strategy, there is a need to connect social service supports with a skill attainment framework to create more meaningful opportunities for living-wage careers. We have completed a scan of employment and training strategies for English language learners, and will be convening a work group of community members and staff this fall.

We will be pleased to provide you with a fuller briefing on any of these items, or on the background, methodology and implementation of Career Bridge.

Attachments

Briefing Materials:

CERRR Presentation Materials

Background Materials:

OED/HSD Response to SLI 120-1-A-1, dated
February 1 and July 1, 2013

OED/HSD Review of MEF Career Bridge Evaluation Plan,
dated September 11, 2013