

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: August 18, 2021

To: The Mayor  
The City Council

From:   
Matthew W. Szabo, City Administrative Officer

Subject: **INNOVATION FUND RECOMMENDATION – ENGINEERING RECRUITMENT PILOT: CREATING AN EQUAL ACCESS AND INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT PATH**

### RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:

1. Establish and appropriate a new appropriation account entitled Board of Public Works – Engineering Recruitment Pilot: Creating an Equal Access and Inclusive Employment Path in the amount of \$150,000 within the Innovation Fund No. 105/10 from the available cash balance of the Innovation Fund.
2. Transfer \$150,000 from the Innovation Fund No. 105/10, Account to be Established, Board of Public Works – Engineering Recruitment Pilot: Creating an Equal Access and Inclusive Employment Path to Fund No. 100/74 as follows:

<u>Fund/Dept.</u>	<u>Account No.</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>
100/74	001070	As-Needed Salaries	\$ 19,660
100/74	002130	Travel	\$ 28,660
100/74	003040	Contractual Services	\$ 95,100
100/74	006010	Office and Administrative	\$ 6,580
Total:			\$150,000

3. Instruct the Board of Public Works to:
  - a. Separately track all encumbrances and expenditures of Innovation Fund monies so that unspent funds can be returned to the Innovation Fund at the end of the fiscal year;
  - b. Report to the Innovation and Performance Commission with an accounting of the funds, the lessons learned, and any obstacles faced; and,
  - c. Report to the Innovation and Performance Commission if, after the receipt of funds, the scope of the funded item differs from the scope approved for funding by the Mayor and the City Council.
4. Authorize the City Administrative Officer to make technical corrections as necessary to those transactions included in this report to implement Mayor and Council intentions.

## SUMMARY

The City Administrative Officer herewith transmits the recommendation of the Innovation and Performance Commission (IPC) to approve funding in the amount of \$150,000 from the Innovation Fund (IF) for the Board of Public Works – Engineering Recruitment Pilot: Creating an Equal Access and Inclusive Employment Path. Please note, as with all IPC recommendations, this report presents the idea as submitted by the Department and approved by the IPC along with the necessary recommendations to implement the idea as presented. If the scope of the Innovation Fund item changes after the Department receives funding, the Department must return to the IPC to present the revised scope to the Commission to determine whether alternative recommendations are required.

The Performance Management Committee, a subcommittee of the IPC, invited Commissioner Mike Davis, President Pro Tem of the Board of Public Works (BPW), to discuss ways the IPC could help BPW address performance management. Commissioner Davis shared that he is president of the Los Angeles Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Engineering Recruitment Committee (Committee). The Committee was established within the City of Los Angeles to address the underrepresentation of Black engineers in various departments within the City. This Committee conducted a review of Black students in the Los Angeles area and found that there was not only an underrepresentation of Black engineering students matriculating into regional engineering programs, but that many Black Angeleno students matriculate to HBCUs and other universities outside of Los Angeles County. In addition, Mayor Eric Garcetti's Executive Order No. 27 highlights the need to cultivate a City where individuals from every community, including the Black community, are welcome to participate as employees and work on the various publicly funded engineering projects the City of Los Angeles executes with federal, state, and local funds.

According to BPW, as of June 2019, the City offered approximately 101 engineering-related classifications. As of June 2019, Black engineers made up only three percent of the City's workforce while the City's Black population at-large is 9.8 percent, based on demographics provided by BPW. Commissioner Davis submitted a proposal to the Performance Management Committee, and the Innovation Fund, for the Engineering Recruitment Pilot: Creating an Equal Access and Inclusive Employment Path. Through this pilot, BPW will recruit qualified Black engineering candidates at HBCUs as well as California students who have studied at various colleges and universities throughout the country. The Committee will work with the Deans of Engineering from the country's leading HBCU engineering schools to train students who are competitive, productive, and prepared to lead the next generation of innovation in the field of engineering in the nation's second largest city. BPW states that this pilot will not only increase the City's vision for quality projects but will also increase the City's multiculturalism and ethnic diversity, making City employees more representative of the communities they service.

In order to increase the number of Black engineers employed in the City and create a "pipeline" for future engineering talent, this pilot re-envisioned targeted recruitment by utilizing five untapped programs. Those programs are as follows:

- Black Engineering of the Year Awards (BEYA) Recruitment and Workshops;

- American Association for the Advancement in Science (AAAS) and HBCU Making and Innovation Team Winners Internship Program with the City of Los Angeles;
- City of Los Angeles' Engineering Day with HBCUs;
- Engineering Informational Exchange (LATalks); and,
- Science and Technology Awareness Day (Tech Day).

Through this pilot, the funds will be used to increase information, enhance recruitment, promote the City, and provide education and training on the role and responsibilities of engineers in the public service sector. BPW will work with the Personnel Department with the goal of:

- Increasing the number of Black engineering applicants, which would then increase likelihood that an application will lead to an exam, interview, and job offer; and,
- Hire 30 to 40 Black Engineers through all City Departments as a direct result of these targeted and innovative efforts. Anticipated hires by department are listed below but may change throughout pilot recruitment:
  - Department of Water and Power: seven to nine
  - Los Angeles World Airports: two to three
  - Port of Los Angeles: two to three
  - Department of Public Works: seven to nine (Includes BPW and all Bureaus)
  - Department of Transportation: six to nine
  - Building and Safety: six to seven

The pilot aims to achieve the following deliverables:

- Participate and actively recruit through a workshop in Washington D.C. at the BEYA conference and present a panel discussion with Los Angeles City Engineers from various Departments;
- Develop a strategy to increase supplier diversity by recruiting vendors interested in providing personal services as well as construction services to the City;
- Develop information exchange videos that will feature City of Los Angeles engineers explaining the City's major programs and priorities for Los Angeles engineering. Opportunities in Civil engineering, Architectural Engineering, and Environmental Engineering are among the priorities;
- Promote life in Los Angeles to entice Black engineering applicants by sharing information on cultural attractions, sports attractions, educational resources, demographics, housing opportunities and costs, restaurants, religious institutions, geographical terrain, recreational opportunities, and core industries; and,
- Integrate the importance and significance of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields and emphasize the cultural work the City is doing to build a culture of inclusion and belonging of all genders to increase the presence of women engineers.

The IPC recommends \$150,000 for the Board of Public Works – Engineering Recruitment Pilot: Creating an Equal Access and Inclusive Employment Path. The IPC is funding this pilot with \$75,000 from monies set aside for performance management activities and \$75,000 of Innovation Fund monies that were prioritized for submissions focused on racial equity within the City. The pilot has a projected 14-month timeline. Following is breakdown of the pilot

cost. BPW stated that it is cognizant of the City's financial circumstances and has limited travel and conference attendance costs to specific recruitment and goal-oriented needs.

BEYA Recruitment and Workshops	\$ 65,000
○ Registration, Gold/Platinum Sponsor, Advertisement, and three additional booths	
AAAS and HBCU Making and Innovation Team Winners Internships	\$ 42,000
○ Salary, Lodging, Transportation/Travel, Stipend	
City of Los Angeles Engineering Day with HBCUs	\$ 15,000
Engineering Informational Exchange (LATalks)	\$ 15,000
○ Series of videos, Brown Bag Seminars, Social Media, Virtual Reality	
Science and Technology Awareness Day (Tech Day)	<u>\$ 13,000</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 150,000</b>

BPW states that the proposed pilot program provides cost savings for the City as pooling resources allows the City to make a grand stage presence that is competitive with the private sector and most importantly reduces competition among City departments who are recruiting from the same candidate pool for similar engineering jobs. Without this pilot, each City department would need to undergo its own recruitment strategy at a higher cost per participant compared to sharing resources creating an internal economy of scale in recruitment.

## **FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

Approval of these recommendations will allocate \$150,000 of the remaining \$1,416,112 Innovation Fund 2021-22 available balance. The \$150,000 will be transferred to the Board of Public Works to begin implementation of the pilot project that has been approved by the Innovation and Performance Commission. In some cases, departments will incur ongoing costs.

## **FINANCIAL POLICIES STATEMENT**

The recommendations of this report are in compliance with the City's Financial Policies as Innovation Fund monies are being utilized for an eligible project which will improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of City service through innovation, productivity, and performance measurement.