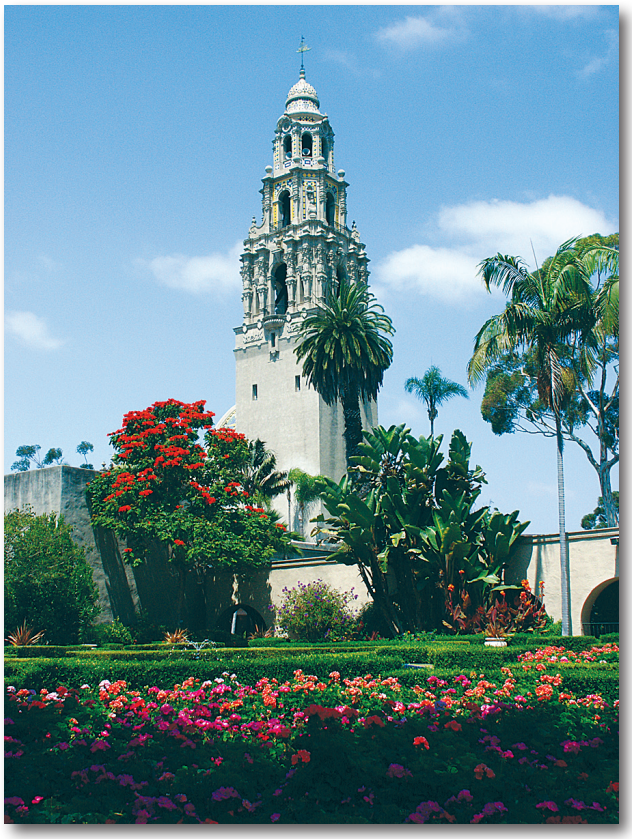
Reengineering

The Reengineering Program oversees the City's Business Process Reengineering (BPR) studies, conducts efficiency studies, and provides support for management reforms and effectiveness improvements. In this time of decreasing revenues, the Reengineering Program helps identify efficiency gains that can permit "smart" budget reduction proposals and works to improve efficiency to support organizational success, even in an environment of fewer resources.

BPR is the redesign of work processes (activities, services, or functions) for substantial improvement. In the City of San Diego, these work processes occur within or between divisions and departments. BPR focuses on rethinking from the ground up and finding more efficient ways of working including eliminating work that is unnecessary. Efficiency studies include, for instance, reviewing the City's training practices and policies to determine the most efficient way to invest our training dollars, developing a 'one stop shop' web site for training information for City employees, and understanding whether training dollars are invested in a manner to adhere to regulations, avert risk, and offer equity among personnel to the extent possible.



Accomplishments

An organization creates value through its processes. BPR provides a method for work groups to identify and prioritize issues and concerns in work processes. It also provides a structure for employees in all levels in the organization to have an open dialogue regarding those issues and concerns. BPR encourages an organization to become introspective in assessing how it does its business and utilizes its staff.

The City has completed or is in the process of completing 25 BPR studies and three efficiency studies. From Fiscal Year 2007 to the present, BPRs have resulted in reductions of over 400 full-time-equivalent (FTE) positions and has produced savings of over $32.0 million in personnel expenditures. In addition, BPRs have resulted in millions of dollars in non-personnel savings and nearly $4.6 million in cost avoidance (effectiveness savings), which—while not actual budget reductions—are efficiencies that permit staff to focus on other productive work.

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The following are a few of the significant accomplishments resulting from BPR.

Grants and Gifts BPR
The Grants and Gifts BPR study addressed a highly decentralized function with personnel in 15 departments. Benchmarking revealed that other public entities realized an increase in competitive grant awards with the establishment of a strong, centralized resource center. The BPR study made a number of recommendations to streamline, coordinate, standardize, simplify, and accelerate the Grants and Gifts processes related to grant and gift identification, proposal preparation, interdepartmental coordination/ collaboration, management, and award success.

Library BPR
The Library BPR study focused on standardizing core processes across the department. The BPR resulted in staff hours saved in a number of areas which can avoid the cost of adding additional staff as demand for library services grows. This staff savings allows existing staff to focus on more complex reference questions and provide enhanced customer service. The cost avoidance also allows the Library to provide better tools to serve the public. One example, which was featured in *Governing* magazine, demonstrates an outcome that of the Library BPR study. The Library Department has experienced an 18 percent decrease in fines collected for overdue books and other library materials from. Library officials attribute the decrease in some part to email notices, including a link to renew online, that the system now sends patrons three days ahead of due dates. The email notices were a BPR recommendation intended to save staff time and mailing expense, but the additional benefit has been to improve utilization of the collection by reducing overdue materials.

Police Department BPR
The Police Department's initial phase of its BPR study resulted in approximately $2.4 million in cost savings for Fiscal Year 2008. Approved in May 2008, a second phase of the Police BPR study continued the evaluation of the Department's core and non-core functions. The BPR team focused on improving the efficiency of processes that take officers away from core functions. The BPR recommendations are now being implemented and are reaping significant rewards for the Department as they are expected to result in many hours of time savings, primarily for sworn line employees, allowing these employees to spend more of their time responding to high priority calls for service, engaging in proactive or targeted enforcement efforts, problem solving, or investigating crime cases.

Future Expectations

In fiscal year 2010, the Reengineering group will continue to assist the City in developing efficient processes and organizational structures to deliver services in the most efficient and effective manner in accordance with the City's strategic goals and adopted budget. This is expected to realize additional cost savings and improve the services that the City provides to its residents in fiscal year 2010 and beyond.