

April 26, 2021

Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager  
795 Massachusetts Ave., 1st Floor  
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Louis:

It is our honor to submit the Working IDEAL RHP Trend Analysis Report to you, reflecting our work for the City of Cambridge to build opportunity and equity in recruitment, hiring and promotion. The report contains our findings after an independent, external multi-method assessment of recruitment, hiring and promotion in the City of Cambridge through a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) lens. (*Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: A Workforce Plan for Recruitment, Hiring, and Promotion (RHP) Project.*) We evaluated the City of Cambridge's structure, practices, policies, and culture as they relate to recruitment, hiring and promotion of a diverse workforce, and made detailed recommendations on where the City has opportunities for improvement.

We have five observations to share with you, your team, and the City's employees. We offer these observations based on decades of experience working with other organizations across many sectors of society.

**First, the decision to embark on this engagement shows leadership by the City.** It is not easy to commission outside independent experts, and provide them with full access to personnel, documents, and data to conduct an in-depth review. It is also not easy to agree to a process with transparency, integrity, and independence. We commend your courage in taking these actions.

It also takes foresight. The decision to move forward on this project occurred in 2018, and it reflected your commitment to take proactive action -- as opposed to acting reflectively to a local or national crisis. This puts the City of Cambridge ahead of most organizations in this country who have only begun to consider similar undertakings after the George Floyd murder and in response to the growing movement for racial equity.

**Second, this endeavor shows perseverance.** When we started this project, no one could have imagined that a worldwide pandemic and public health crisis would engulf all citizens on our planet. Many organizations would have suspended this project. Instead, the City of Cambridge

Cover letter, RHP Trend Analysis Report (April 26, 2021)

decided that improving its systems with respect to equity in recruitment, hiring and promotion was simply too big an imperative to be put off. While this project was not immune to the impact of Covid-19, we stayed on track under the direction of City leadership and with full cooperation by City employees.

**Third, this project demonstrates the City of Cambridge's long term and ongoing commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.** As noted in the report, there were many strengths to build on as well as many opportunities for improvement. Importantly, the City of Cambridge is humble enough to know that it does not have all the answers, and that diversity, equity and inclusion is a journey that takes thoughtful interventions and ongoing dedication. The Trend Analysis Report provides a strategic roadmap for the City of Cambridge to move forward deliberately, thoughtfully -- and effectively.

**Fourth, the City of Cambridge undertook this effort comprehensively, tackling recruitment, hiring and promotion holistically as one ecosystem.** This may seem like common sense, but too often organizations only want to address one piece of a system and then fall short because they took a piecemeal approach. The comprehensive approach will pay dividends to the City of Cambridge over the long term if the City follows up with the same level of commitment it has made to this project to date.

**Finally, releasing this report is an example of the City of Cambridge government staying true to its community.** Members of the community care deeply about equity and inclusion -- especially when inequities in our country seem not only to persist but to worsen over the years. Members of the community worry about inequities locally, nationally and globally and want the City of Cambridge to lead by example. Sharing the findings and the vision for the path forward is an open and transparent attempt to lead by example and to reflect the City of Cambridge's values as a community.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with you, your leadership team, and the City workforce to gather the information and develop the recommendations. We hope this project is an inspiration to other local governments across the nation.

Best Regards,

*Pam & Cyrus*

Pamela Coukos and Cyrus Mehri, Working IDEAL, on behalf of the assessment team (Rene Redwood, Ellen Eardley, Greg McCaffrey, Doris Quintanilla, Andy Tarsy, Ahmmad Brown, and Sarah Crawford)