CITY OF BERKELEY

Office of the City Manager

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Submitted by: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Subject: The City of Berkeley Employer of Choice Initiative

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution to support and endorse the City Manager's workplan to implement the City of Berkeley's Employer of Choice initiative. The workplan provides actionable recommendations by Municipal Resource Group (MRG), an independent consultant firm specializing in providing cities, counties, and government agencies with professional strategic services.

Consistent with MRG's 90-day Action Plan recommendations, the City Manager is currently requesting authorization to 1) hire two Associate HR Analysts and one Assistant HR Analyst, 2) contract with a branding and marketing agency in an amount not to exceed $250,000 to help attract, outreach and recruit talent for the City workforce in support of the Human Resources Department; and 3) enhance communications and social media content planning and strategy including support for department communications in a combined amount not to exceed $200,000.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Costs associated with the resources identified within this initial 90-day workplan are offset by unanticipated salary savings within the General Fund, resulting in no net increase to the Fiscal Year 2023 Adopted Budget. The ongoing cost of increased personnel, as well as other potential resources required to effectively implement the Roadmap, will be presented as part of the Fiscal Year 2024 Mid-Biennial Budget Update.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The City of Berkeley provides a portfolio of services to the community that is unparalleled in California for a city of its size. The quality of this broad array of services to residents, business, students and visitors is directly impacted by the ability of the City to retain and recruit talented and committed staff. Ensuring budgeted positions are filled with motivated employees is key. Fully staffing an organization that functions efficiently helps limit turnover, retain institutional knowledge and effectively implement the City's programs and policy initiatives.

In September 2022, the City engaged MRG to provide a Roadmap to help the City become an Employer of Choice. A team of three MRG consultants was selected for this project based on their broad experience managing public organizations at the executive level. The goal of the project was to assess the organization's needs and craft an actionable plan titled the "Employer of Choice Roadmap" to retain and attract employees. This Roadmap creates six thematic areas of focus with a total of forty-eight (48) initiative areas. MRG was also asked to prepare a Hybrid Best Practices Guide which will be shared with Human Resources, labor unions, and employees through a separate process.

The MRG team conducted meetings and focus groups with employees, department heads, and bargaining units from all departments to identify Employer of Choice issues and strategies. Interviews and focus groups were confidential. Participants were assured that no specific quotes would be assigned to any one individual; rather, input would be integrated into general themes and recommendations.

After review of the Roadmap, the City Manager is recommending a Phase 1 focused workplan to address key 90-day deliverables in three defined areas. These recommendations are in alignment with the priority areas recommended by MRG.

Focus area	Resources Needed	Cost
Invest in HR and fill vacancies	Hire two Associate HR Analysts	$131,312 (FY 23) $448,468 (beginning in FY 24)
Invest in HR and fill vacancies	Hire one Assistant HR analyst	$53,515 (FY 23) $182,762 (beginning in FY 24)
Invest in HR and fill vacancies	Contract with a branding/marketing consultant to assist HR in attracting and recruiting top talent through effective outreach methods	$250,000 (one-time funding)

| Launch updated communication efforts | Enhance communications and social media content planning and strategy including support for departmental communications | $200,000 (one-time funding) |
| Elevate and update internal systems and administrative services | Initial 90-day plan will be absorbed within the Office of Special Projects | No financial support requested at this time. |

The attached report identifies three focus areas for the City to address immediately. They are 1) invest in HR and fill vacancies, 2) launch updated communications efforts and 3) elevate and update internal systems.

The Human Resources Department is requesting investment in two areas. The first is to build internal capacity with more staff with the addition of two Associate HR Analysts and one Assistant HR Analyst to be more agile in responding to the hiring demands of the organization. Increased capacity will be essential to hiring above attrition for several successive years in order to bridge the vacancy gaps hampering operations across City departments. The addition of analysts will increase the number of exams administered, will shorten the time required to establish eligible lists, will speed up hiring and onboarding processes, and will furnish adequate support to new employees through orientation, training, and benefits.

In order to expand the applicant pool and attract top talent, the Human Resources Department needs a communications consultant to support branding, marketing and recruitment presence on digital platforms, including social media. A full-service agency will be integral to developing recruitment campaign themes and visuals (including promotional videos) and launching them on digital platforms through strategic ads.

To update communication efforts and determine how best to open access to the website and social media use for departmental ease in community engagement, the plan also includes additional consulting resources to work with the City Manager's Office.

To elevate and update internal systems, the City Manager's Special Projects Division will work with the Organization to determine business processes and develop a plan using strike teams and/or business process teams to revamp internal and administrative systems for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

The second deliverable is a hybrid workplace best practices guide. This guide is in development incorporating the information from focus groups, what local and other government organizations are doing, and outlining evolving practices. The report will be delivered directly to Human Resources upon completion.

BACKGROUND
There are a number of national issues facing government sector workplaces with an unusually high vacancy rate. The Great Resignation is a term used to describe a recently developed and ongoing trend of employees voluntarily leaving their places of employment. There is a need for defining new norms in the COVID realignment and remote work assessment process, which reflects the demand for more flexible workplace and hybrid options, and the demand for work/life balance and employers being more focused on employee wellbeing.

Traditional means of recruiting, retaining, and engaging employees are proving insufficient to address this trend. Jurisdictions around the country, including the City of Berkeley, need to understand these trends and associated changes, identify and tailor methods of retaining, recruiting and engaging employees for future workforce development. Employers that are not responding to this trend by quickly adapting may be in danger of losing excellent employees and being unable to compete for top talent.

In September 2022, the City engaged MRG to provide a Roadmap to help the City become an Employer of Choice. A team of three MRG consultants was selected for this project based on their broad experience managing public organizations at the executive level. (See Attachment 2 of the Roadmap for information on MRG.) The goal of the project was to assess the organization's needs and craft an actionable plan titled the "Employer of Choice Roadmap" to retain and attract employees. This Roadmap creates six thematic areas of focus with a total of forty-eight (48) initiative areas.

The City Manager provided a presentation to Council on October 11, 2022 that highlighted why this work was important to address our needs and provided a workplan with timelines to research best practices, engage in employee focus groups, including time set aside to engage management and labor. The City Manager also provided a "Workforce Analysis" presentation to the City Council on December 13, 2022 highlighting the current status of recruitment challenges and resulting organizational impacts. With launch of the Employer of Choice report, the City Manager committed to return to the Council with a presentation in February 2023.

The City Manager, MRG and the Senior Executive Team met to review the Roadmap recommendations in late January. The consensus for immediate action and effort were: (1) invest in Human Resources with the goal of filling vacant positions and improving the City's branding and recruitment outreach, (2) enhance communication internally with employees and externally with the public including providing more department access and agility with use of social media and website information; and (3) improve internal and administrative business processes and practices to improve efficiency, effectiveness and customer service. Based on this, the City Manager is recommending the following initial investment to jump start these efforts:

1) Hire two Associate HR Analysts and one Assistant HR Analyst;

2) Contract with a branding and marketing agency in an amount not to exceed $250,000 to help attract, outreach and recruit talent for the City workforce in support of the Human Resources Department; and

3) Enhance communications and social media content planning and strategy including support for department communications in a combined amount not to exceed $200,000.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS
Several of the recommendations focus on streamlining business processes, creating efficiencies, and greater adoption of technological solutions which will reduce paper and other waste associated with less-than-optimally efficient business practices.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION
The City of Berkeley is at a crucial point in its need to both retain our valued staff and attract the best candidates for positions within the organization. To this end, we must transform our processes and implement new tools to be an Employer of Choice. It is imperative that we move with speed and agility to implement key activities defined within the proposed Roadmap. These actions are the key establishing a strong and stable Berkeley workforce to meet the demands and growth of the community. The City of Berkeley has been a leader in many initiatives, and we are looking to become a leader in workforce development.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED
The City moved swiftly to gather this pertinent information to develop the action plan. It was clear that a third-party was needed to conduct the assessment. No other action was considered.

CONTACT PERSON
Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager, City Manager's Office, 510-981-7000

Attachments:

1. Resolution
2. Employer of Choice Roadmap Report from Municipal Resource Group

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

THE EMPLOYER OF CHOICE INITIATIVE

WHEREAS, it is critical for the City of Berkeley to implement an initiative to respond to the major changes in employee attraction, retention and engagement due to COVID-19 and the resulting Great Resignation; and

WHEREAS, The Great Resignation is a term used to describe a recently developed and ongoing trend of employees voluntarily leaving their places of employment; and

WHEREAS, Municipal Resource Group (MRG) is an independent consultant firm specializing in providing cities, counties and government agencies with professional strategic services.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley to adopt a resolution to support and endorse the City Manager's workplan to implement the Employer of Choice initiative, which will establish and make actionable the recommendations provided in the Roadmap by Municipal Resource Group (MRG), an independent consultant firm specializing in providing cities, counties and government agencies with professional strategic services.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley authorizes the City Manager to proceed with the following actions in the first phase of implementation of the Employer of Choice initiative: 1) hire two Associate HR Analysts and one Assistant HR Analyst, 2) contract with a branding and marketing agency in an amount not to exceed $250,000 to help attract, outreach and recruit talent for the City workforce in support of the Human Resources Department; and 3) enhance communications and social media content planning and strategy including support for department communications in a combined amount not to exceed $200,000.
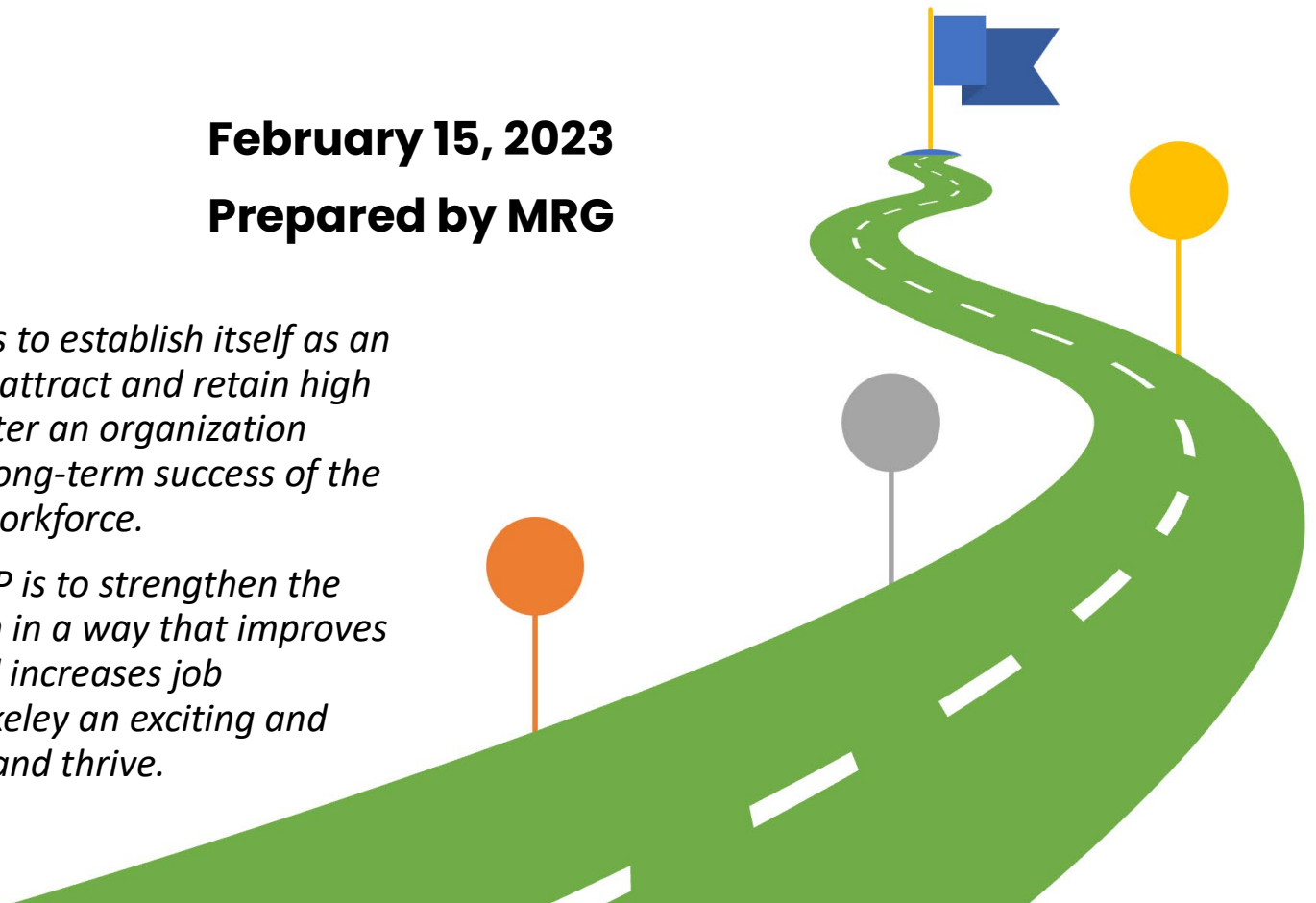
CITY OF BERKELEY
Employer of Choice Roadmap

February 15, 2023
Prepared by MRG

The City of Berkeley wishes to establish itself as an "Employer of Choice" -- to attract and retain high quality employees and foster an organization committed to health and long-term success of the city organization and its workforce.

The goal of this ROADMAP is to strengthen the culture of the organization in a way that improves the work environment and increases job satisfaction -- making Berkeley an exciting and supportive place to work and thrive.

INTRODUCTION

Project Overview

In September 2022, the City of Berkeley ("City") engaged Municipal Recource Group ("MRG") to provide a Roadmap to help the City become an *Employer of Choice* to support the City's Strategic Plan goal to attract and retain a talented and diverse City government workfoce. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have myriad impacts on our community and the world—including the phenomenon known as the Great Resignation. The Great Resignation is a term used to describe a recently developed and ongoing trend of employees voluntarily leaving their places of employment.

Today, Berkeley is facing significant vacancies across the organization and is experiencing challenges recruiting and retaining employees. Jurisdictions around the country, including the City of Berkeley, need to identify and tailor new methods of recruiting, retaining and engaging employees, and to plan for future workforce development. Employers that are not adapting and advancing their organizations are at danger of losing excellent employees and being unable to retain or compete for top talent.

"Berkeley is in a staffing emergency! All the great work that the Council and community is used to seeing accomplished is being profoundly impacted. The level of work is not going to be as great and the Berkeley performance will be reduced until we can stabilize and rebuild the organization."

-Berkeley Employee Voice

A team of three MRG consultants were selected for this project based on their broad experience managing public organizations at the executive level. See Appendix B for information on MRG. The goal of the project was to assess the organization's needs and craft an actionable plan to retain and attract employees titled the "Employer of Choice Roadmap". This Roadmap creates six thematic areas of focus with a total of forty-eight (48) initiative areas. MRG was also asked to prepare a Hybrid Best Practices Guide which will be shared with Human Resources, labor and employees through a separate process.

The City of Berkeley provides a portfolio of services to the community that is unparalleled in California for a city of its size. The quality of this broad array of services to residents, business, students and visitors is directly impacted by the ability of the City to retain and recruit talented and committed staff. Ensuring budgeted positions are filled with motivated employees is key. Fully staffing an organization that functions efficiently helps limit turnover, retain institutional knowledge and effectively implements the City's programs and policy initiatives.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE …

Once the City of Berkeley implements the Roadmap and is established as an "Employer of Choice", the organization will:

✓ *Attract and retain high performing employees, who demonstrate a commitment to the long-term success of the city organization;*

✓ *Secure engaged employees that feel valued and see the purpose and impact of their work;*

✓ *Communicate regularly within the organization to build culture and employee engagement and to the public to build awareness and*

✓ *Enhance investment in training, career development, safety and health of staff; and*

✓ *Deliver efficient administrative service functions that support employees and enhanced delivery of programs to Berkeley residents.*

HOW WAS THE ROADMAP DEVELOPED?

MRG believes that most good ideas regarding improving customer service and organizational performance come from within the organization. The MRG team conducted meetings and focus groups with employees anddepartment heads labor groups from all departments in addition to labor groups to identify Employer of Choice issues and strategies. Interviews and focus groups were confidential. Participants were assured that no specific quotes would be assigned to any one individual; rather, input would be integrated into general themes and recommendations. These meetings were very productive with active engagement from all participants. The City Council and community should be proud of its workforce and its employees' commitment to improve the organization.

WHAT ARE EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION TRENDS?

Hiring and retaining high performing public agency employees in 2023 is extremely challenging especially in the hyper-competitive Bay Area job market. The "Great Resignation" of the pandemic was actually a "great re-evaluation" of work which has forever changed how we work and how we think about our careers and life. The Pulse of the American Worker Survey Fact Sheet from March 2022 states that nearly a quarter of workers (22%) have switched employers since the start of the pandemic – up from 13% in April 2021. In addition, half of workers are actively searching or are considering looking for a new job. Demographic trends, the changing dynamic of in-person vs. remote work, retirements and an increased competition from the private sector in many job classifications are key drivers. Faced with this, many public employers are struggling to retain and hire key staff for important positions. The City of Berkeley is no exception. The most comprehensive data on the challenges facing the public sector's hiring is NEOGOV's recent report, *"The Quiet Crisis in the Public Sector"*. By utilizing its GovernmentJobs.com site and its expertise as the provider of HR management solutions for the public sector, NEOGOV offers the following findings.

✓ **Key Drivers** -- Based on insights from public sector HR professionals, the biggest drivers for the increase in recent job openings are shown below with voluntary turnover (83%) as the largest contributor.

✓ *Lack of Qualified Candidates* – 79% of agencies cannot currently find qualified candidates for open positions.

> **Candidates want higher pay, flexible work options, and more meaningful work, and they aren't afraid to leave for better opportunities elsewhere.**
>
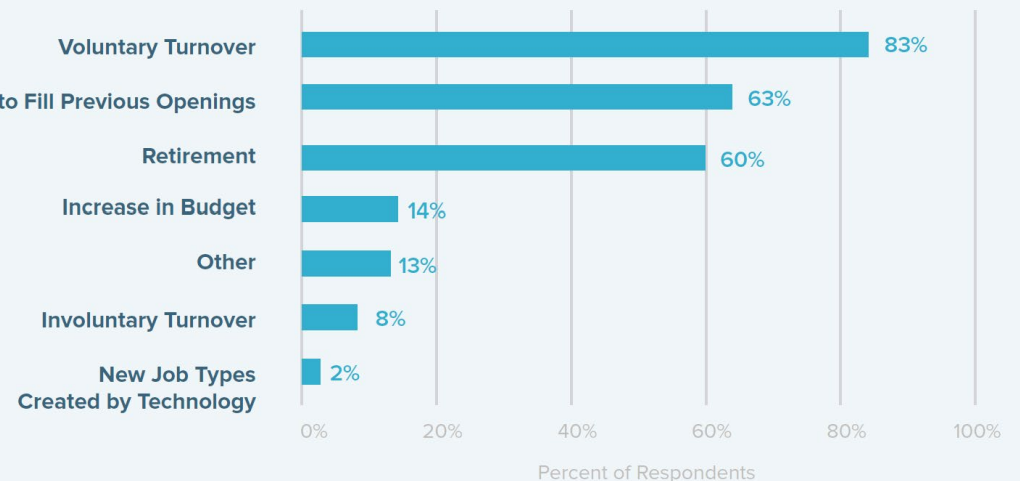> **Candidates also want clear and concise recruitment process, active communication and timeliness.**
>
> *-NEOGOV, The Quiet Crisis in the Public Sector*

✓ *Lower Number of Applicants* -- The number of applicants is dramatically declining in the public sector while at the same time there are more job openings/vacancies.

Chart #1 – NEOGOV Drivers of Job Openings

What are the biggest drivers for the increase in recent job openings? (Select all that apply.)
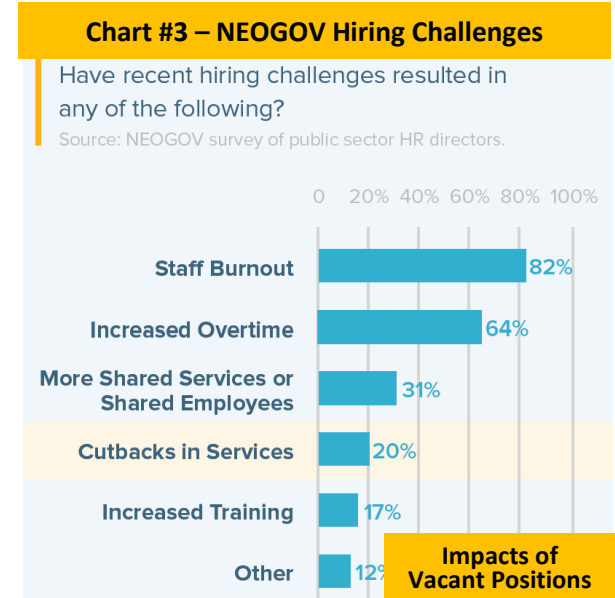Source: NEOGOV survey of 299 public sector HR directors.

Driver	Percent
Voluntary Turnover	83%
Unable to Fill Previous Openings	63%
Retirement	60%
Increase in Budget	14%
Other	13%
Involuntary Turnover	8%
New Job Types Created by Technology	2%

Percent of Respondents

- o Since 2021, there has been a 45% increase in public sector job openings. At the same time, there was a 56% decrease in applicants per job. Another way to think about this is that 50% of jobs are getting fewer than 10 applicants – which doesn't take into account that the applicants may not meet basic requirements of the job.

- o This change becomes even more alarming when this trend is reviewed over the past six years. NEOGOV found that applicants per job in the public sector have decreased by 74%.
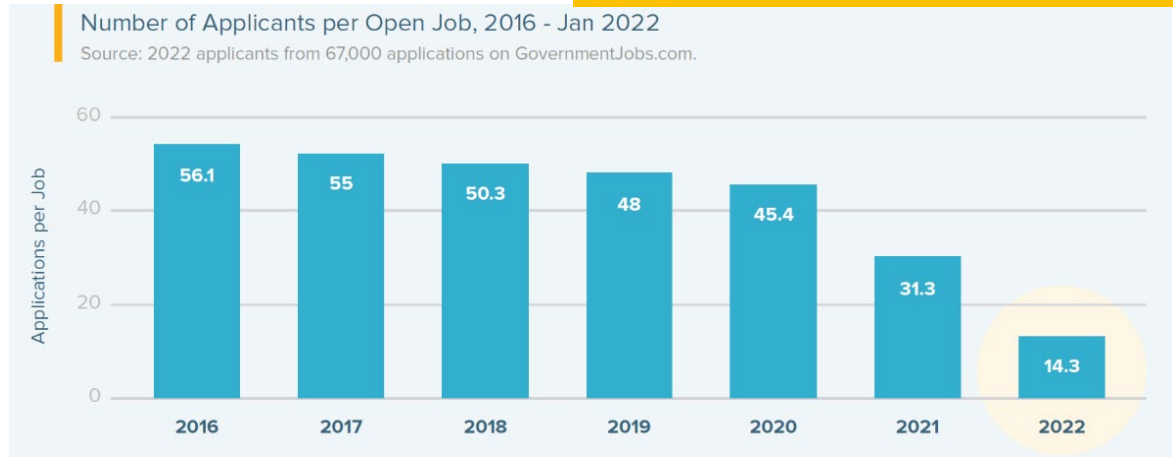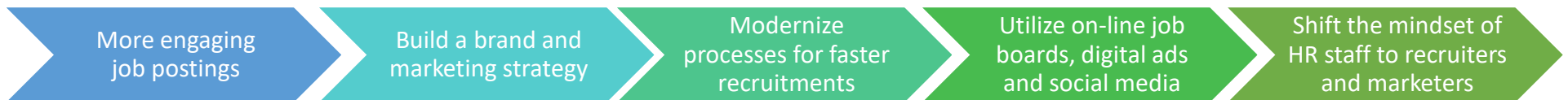
✓ *Impact of Unfilled Recruitments* – The impact of not filling positions dramatically affects the remaining workforce and public services. Chart #3 from the NEOGOV report illustrates the challenges of not being able to hire. Locally, the Berkeley City Manager presented a Workforce Analysis overview to the City Council on December 13, 2022 which outlined key causes for the national labor shortage, recruitment and workforce challenges, and impacts of vacancies on services in a number of departments. Similar to national issues, Berkeley is facing these impacts:

- o Reduction in services and programs-- Increase in caseloads, reduction in service hours, reduction in programs, reduction in service quality, delays in service delivery.

- o Temporary closure of facilities on certain days or during certain shifts.

- o Prioritization of violent crimes over lower-priority property crimes and diminished ability for extra patrols.

- o Decreased capacity to manage existing programs and projects.

- o Reduction in maintenance standards and services for community amenities, parks and streets.

- o Challenges meeting grant requirements and deliverables.

- o Backlog of service requests, maintenance, infrastructure projects.

- o Staff burnout, increased stress and frustrations; forced overtime; denial of time-off requests.

Chart #2 – NEOGOV # of Applicants

Number of Applicants per Open Job, 2016 - Jan 2022
Source: 2022 applicants from 67,000 applications on GovernmentJobs.com.

Applications per Job
- 2016: 56.1
- 2017: 55
- 2018: 50.3
- 2019: 48
- 2020: 45.4
- 2021: 31.3
- 2022: 14.3

Chart #3 – NEOGOV Hiring Challenges

Have recent hiring challenges resulted in any of the following?
Source: NEOGOV survey of public sector HR directors.

- Staff Burnout: 82%
- Increased Overtime: 64%
- More Shared Services or Shared Employees: 31%
- Cutbacks in Services: 20%
- Increased Training: 17%
- Other: 12%

Impacts of Vacant Positions

NEOGOV Recommendations:
To improve public sector recruitments, NEOGOV recommends the following actions:

More engaging job postings → Build a brand and marketing strategy → Modernize processes for faster recruitments → Utilize on-line job boards, digital ads and social media → Shift the mindset of HR staff to recruiters and marketers
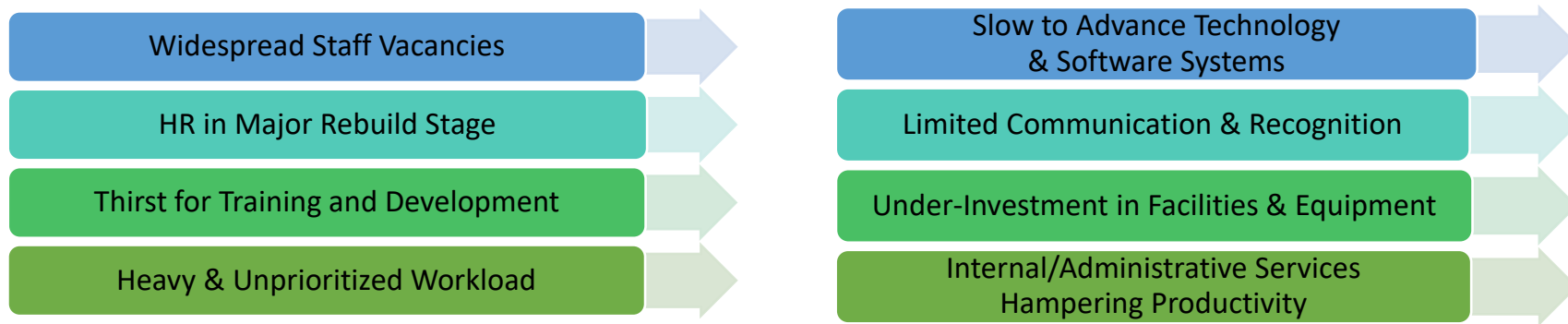
KEY COMPONENTS FOR EMPLOYEE RETENTION

From MRG's research and best practices, it is important to recognize that employee retention has multiple layers. Key components for employee retention include the following.

- ✓ Competitive compensation and benefits.

- ✓ Purpose and meaning in the work being performed by employees.

- ✓ Flexiblity and a desire for life balance which is requiring employers to embace alternative work schedules and remote work.

- ✓ High desire to work for organizations that are committed to growth, training, and career development in their employees – which is especially true for Millenials.

- ✓ Recognition and appreciation for work efforts and accomplishments with an overall positive organizational culture.

- ✓ Competent and capable supervisors and managers committed to good communication, teamwork and active employee engagement.

- ✓ Organizations that invest in tools, technology, and business systems that let employees complete their work with ease and effectiveness.

- ✓ Comprehensive onboarding process that helps new employees find their footing, launch into their new role, and delivers a clear vision of the organization's values, culture and expectations.

- ✓ Prioritized and organized work that allows thorough and strategic work delivery.

When these conditions are met together as a package, the organization's culture and organizational operations all improve and move toward optimal. The Roadmap evaluates these layers and creates a work plan for the City to retain and attract a strong, talented and agile workforce.

KEY FINDINGS

Below are the key findings that are impacting the City's ability to attract and retain employees. The impact of these issues results in City employees feeling tired, overworked, frustrated and underappreciated. The number one priority expressed by staff was to fill vacant positions first in order to improve customer service, reduce overtime, increase capacity, and reduce the level of work for current employees.

Widespread Staff Vacancies	Slow to Advance Technology & Software Systems
HR in Major Rebuild Stage	Limited Communication & Recognition
Thirst for Training and Development	Under-Investment in Facilities & Equipment
Heavy & Unprioritized Workload	Internal/Administrative Services Hampering Productivity

KEY ROLE OF THE CITY COUNCIL IN EMPLOYEE RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

The City Council's leadership is a key ingredient in the success of the Employer of Choice Roadmap. Initially, MRG sees three important roles for the City Council.

1. *Financial Support and Resources* – As outlined later in the report, the Roadmap will require one-time and ongoing financial resources for staff, tools, technology and equipment. Without secured financial support and investment, the Roadmap will not be successful. MRG recommends that the City Manager bring forward an initial list of resources for the first 90 Day Action Plan to then be supplemented with a more comprehensive multi-year budget.

2. *Compensation & Benefits* – While the Roadmap does not make specific recommendations regarding salary and benefits, compensation is critical in the recruitment and retention of employees. Appenix A outlines organization feedback that MRG received regarding compensation and benefits. A strategic assessment of the City's compensation system ahead of labor negotiations is important.

3. *Priority Setting and Workload* -- The City's latest Strategic Plan was created in 2017/2018 for work in FY 2018-2019 and has nine (9) long term goals. New initiatives creating workload enter the City various ways including State/Federal requirements, annual budget process, staff recommendations, and the City's legislative and agnda process. The City of Berkeley legislative process accepts proposals from the Mayor, City Councilmembers, the Auditor, Commissions, and the City Manager. This process of direct legislation results in a high volume of agenda items, usually in the range of 850 – 950 total items annually. For legislative proposals from the Mayor and Council, there are multiple avenues through the legislative process. Items submitted for the agenda process may go directly to the full Council, or they may be referred to a policy subcommittee for review and amendment before being considered by the full Council. (There are additional City Council work items that are not captured in Chart #5 below.) As of January 2023, there are 351 Long Term Referrals and 149 Short Term Referrals.

City staff appreciates the City Council's ideas for creative and entrepreneurial projects and initiatives to improve and serve the community, yet the volume of referrals impacts the delivery of core services to the community. New Council initiatives are regularly added and become staff's priority. This results in City staff shifting resources to new initiatives and consequently, some prior projects are left partially completed or stalled. The high workload and shifting of priorities are impacting employee retention and project completion.

Chart #5 – CURRENT CITY COUNCIL REFERRALS (as of Jan. 2023)				
REFERRALS	Long Term	Short Term	Total	Total (%)
Not Active	162	13	175	35%
Completed	100	129	229	46%
In Process	89	7	96	19%
Sub-Total	351	149	500	100%
Rescinded	51			
TOTAL	402			

It is a best practice in cities to create an annual City Council approved work plan built on multi-year strategic goals with periodic opportunities for additions throughout the year. For each organization, it is a balancing act to find a process that retains the ability for individual City Council Members to bring forward ideas and initiatives, while at the same time having a procedure where the full Council defines the priorities and work of the organization. MRG understands that Agenda & Rules Policy Committee is beginning a discussion on enhancements to the City's legislative process, including referrals. MRG supports this review of the legislative process and recommends developing a more integrated system for goal and priority setting to establish an achievable work plan for the organization.

EMPLOYER OF CHOICE ROADMAP

Organization of Recommendations

Becoming an Employer of Choice requires culture change and organizational development. The Employer of Choice Road Map in this document provides specific recommendations in the following themed areas (lanes) as shown in this diagram.
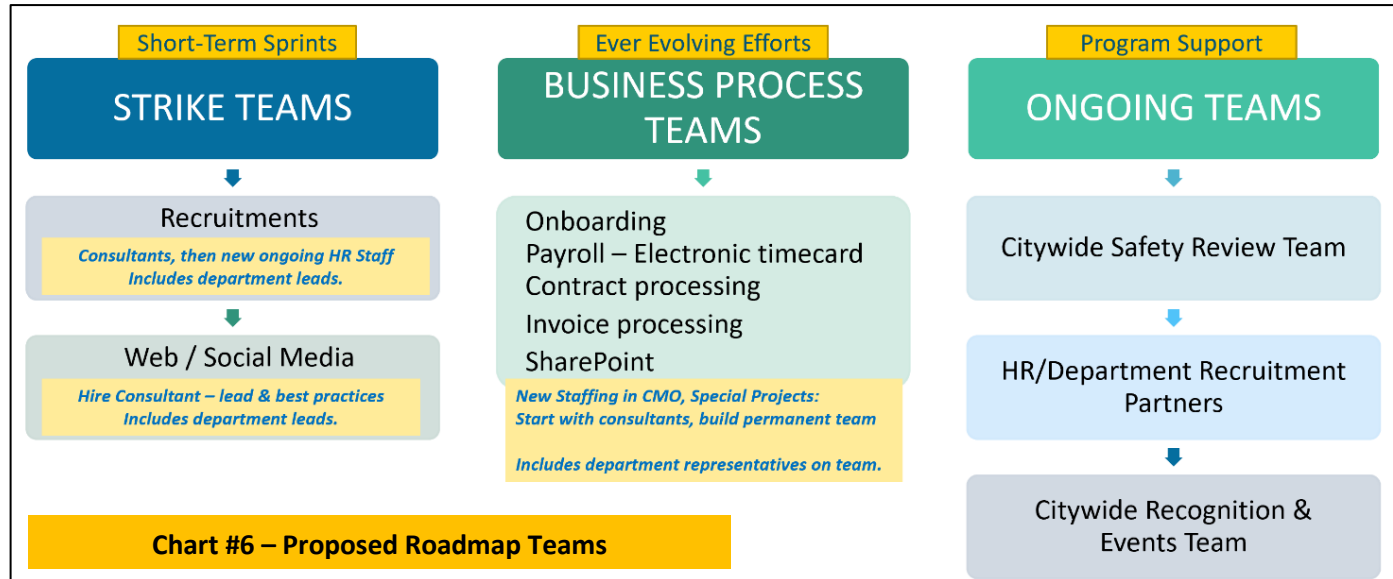

| RECRUITING FOR TALENT | RETAINING OUR EMPLOYEES | CULTURE, COMMUNICATION & EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT | TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLNESS | ELEVATE INTERNAL PROCESSES |

EMPLOYER OF CHOICE ROADMAP

IMPLEMENTATION

The Need to Move Quickly

The City should implement certain changes quickly to move towards becoming an Employer of Choice. While a complete implementation of the Roadmap is estimated to take three years, immediate action and resolve is required. Quick action will demonstrate to staff and the community that the City is committed to retaining and attracting employees and enhancing community services. The following implementation methodologies are recommended:

1. *Executive Leadership & Project Champion* – This initiative crosses all departments and is foundational for how the organization will operate in the future. Committed executive leadership is required to ensure organizational change occurs and the Roadmap is implemented.

2. *Seasoned Project Manager* – The Employer of Choice Roadmap will require a seasoned manager to lead these interdepartmental efforts with the full support of the executive champion.

3. *Department Commitment* – Each Department Head needs to be committed to the Roadmap including supporting their staff to work on various project teams.

4. *1X & Ongoing Financial Resources* – New investments in the organization for staff, consultants, technology, equipment, supplies, etc. are all required to implement the Roadmap. The funding needs should be identified and set aside for upcoming three years to ensure this organizational effort has the resources to complete its projected outcomes.

5. *Rolling 90-Day Action Plans* – Large organizational initiatives like this often get stalled over time by the size of the recommendations and overall projected work. From the time the Roadmap is accepted by the City Council, it will take the City staff a few months to organize the implementation of the full Roadmap. By taking strategic and targeted 90-day Action Plans, Berkeley can weave this project in with other city priorities and ensure solutions move forward with proactive results. After a relatively short start-up period (no more than 60 days), the first 90-Day Action Plan should be created, launched and communicated to the organization.

6. *Transparency & Reporting Out* – Communication, reports, and current dashboards should be created. Celebrations of successes and recognition internally and externally is critical for maintaining momentum and honoring the work.

7. *Empowered Teams* – Many of the recommendations in the Roadmap require City staff from different departments or work units to collaborate, analyze, and execute phases of implementation. New ways of working and an investment in "strike teams" and "business process teams" will require new staffing and some consultant assistance. MRG recommends three different types of "teams" as shown in Chart #6.

8. *Prioritization* – There are 48 individual recommendations outlined in the Roadmap. While all are important, there are three key areas for initial focus and priority investment.

Short-Term Sprints	Ever Evolving Efforts	Program Support
STRIKE TEAMS	**BUSINESS PROCESS TEAMS**	**ONGOING TEAMS**
Recruitments	Onboarding	Citywide Safety Review Team
Consultants, then new ongoing HR Staff Includes department leads.	Payroll – Electronic timecard	
	Contract processing	
Web / Social Media	Invoice processing	HR/Department Recruitment Partners
Hire Consultant – lead & best practices Includes department leads.	SharePoint	
	New Staffing in CMO, Special Projects: Start with consultants, build permanent team	
		Citywide Recognition & Events Team
	Includes department representatives on team.	

Chart #6 – Proposed Roadmap Teams

- *Invest in HR / Fill Vacancies* – Invest in staffing and consultant support to bring immediate additional resources to HR, streamline processes, work with line departments as business partners, leverage software and technology, and activate social media tools in recruitments.

- *Launch Communication* – Jump start internal communication from the City Manager's Office and departments to employees, including open access to the website and social media for active use by departments in their community information and engagement efforts.

- *Elevate & Update Internal Systems* – Create Strike Teams and Business Process Teams to review and revamp internal and administrative systems for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

Implementation of these recommendations will require City Council support, executive leadership, staff resolve and significant changed behaviors. There is a lot to do. The City has the talent and resources to do it!

CITY OF BERKELEY -- Employer of Choice Roadmap

1 Recruiting for Talent	**2** Retaining Our Employees	**3** Culture, Communication & Employee Engagement	**4** Training & Professional Development	**5** Health, Safety & Wellness	**6** Elevate Internal Processes

Staffing & HR Role
1.1 Invest in Human Resources Department (HR) Staffing Levels
1.2 Streamline Recruitment Process – Strike Team
1.3 Act as Business Partners with Departments

Marketing & Branding
1.4 Create Recruitment Brand & Marketing Strategy
1.5 Upgrade Jobs/Career Web Presence
1.6 Utilize Social Media
1.7 Hire Graphic Design & Social Media Expertise
1.8 Referral Bonus for Current Employees

HR Systems & Data
1.9 Resources & Tools on Day 1
1.10 HR Performance Metrics & Reporting
1.11 Workforce Analysis Report
1.12 Training & User Guides For ERMA & NEOGOV
1.13 Update Key Job Classifications

HR Systems
2.1 Overhaul Onboarding Program
2.2 Reform Eligibility List Process
2.3 Continue to Improve HR Communications (*Berkeley Matters*)
2.4 Performance Evaluation and Feedback
2.5 Upgrade Exit Interview Process

Recognition & Appreciation
2.6 Create a Comprehensive City Recognition Program
2.7 Restart Longevity Awards Program

Organizational Priority Setting & Workload
2.8 Focus Priorities & Initiatives by City Council

Communication
3.1 Invest in Internal Communication
3.2 Foster Cross Department Collaboration
3.3 Open Department Access to Website and Social Media Use

Team Building & Culture
3.4 Invest in Cross Department Relationship Building
3.5 Link to new DEI Program

Training Strategy & Program
4.1 Develop Training Strategy & Plan for Learning Culture
4.2 Invest in Learning Academies & Specialized Training
4.3 Invest in Coaching
4.4 Invest in Learning Management Software
4.5 Invest in Technology Training
4.6 Develop Hybrid Management Training

Systems & Financial Support
4.7 Use Credit Cards to Ease Training Procurement
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1.0 - RECRUITING FOR TALENT

*Recruiting for employees requires proactive marketing/branding and the development of a talent pipeline. Strong recruitment operations regularly build their employer's brand, treat candidates as customers/future employees throughout the process, and have streamlined systems that work in partnership with line departments. At this time, for Berkeley, **the single most important action is to fill vacant positions** throughout the organization. Filling budgeted, vacant positions will demonstrate a commitment to existing employees resulting in rebalanced workloads and reduction in stress over time. Community services will be enhanced by a more fully staffed organization able to attract the highest quality talent possible.*

Enhanced HR staffing and full utilization of modernized recruitment tools are critical to improve recruitments. By actively deploying social media sites in the recruitment process and creating a hiring campaign, an overall intentional and aligned marketing program can be launched. The first day and first few months of an employee's time as an employee set the stage for their overall satisfaction and retention.

	Staffing & HR Role	
1.1	Invest In Human Resources Department (HR) Staffing Levels	Immediately expand authorized HR staffing in key functions: ▪ Recruitment operations (initially 3 additional FTE) ▪ Labor Relations & Training (initially up to 3 additional FTE) Continue to use consultant resources on a short-term basis as needed to augment staff resources until additional HR staff can be hired. Direct City Manager and HR Director to bring forward recommendations for right sized staffing of Human Resources Department in AAO and FY 2023/24 Proposed Budget.
1.2	Streamline Recruitment Process – Strike Team	Create a small and agile Recruitment Strike Team comprised of HR, labor representatives and department staff that meets for four months. Issues to solve: ▪ Use department ideas on how to improve recruitment process and practices;Establish responsibility checklist - Department and HR roles in new recruitments; and ▪ Authorize initiation of recruitments ahead of actual vacancies.
1.3	Act as Business Partners with Departments	Reposition HR recruitment staff as business partners with departments. Reinstitute assignment of individual HR staff to work with each department's designated point of contact. Two-person team should discuss and agree on responsibilities for: ▪ Outreach plan for each recruitment including overall timeline and assigned responsibilities; ▪ Review of minimum qualifications; and, ▪ Interview and examination process.
	Marketing & Branding	
1.4	Create Recruitment Brand & Marketing Strategy	Develop a clear brand for the City of Berkeley's recruitment efforts. "Recruitment Brand" should communicate Berkeley's values, work culture, opportunities, and strengths as an organization. Create clear and consistent messages in all recruitments to denote Berkeley as an Employer of Choice including: ▪ Color, information, style, graphics;

		- Modern design and formatting for consistent look and feel for recruitment brochures and flyers; - Compelling description of Berkeley as world class City including descriptions of the organization and departments; - Clear, compelling and articulated description of the role of the position being recruited including key upcoming opportunities and projects (this is not just language from the job description). - Create a marketing program to highlight Berkeley's hiring efforts (e.g., add branded hiring tag lines to employee's email signatures, purchase advertising on buses, banners and other visual, high impact locations.
1.5	Upgrade Jobs/Career Web Presence	Upgrade the current Human Resources web site with a consistent "Recruitment Brand" Job Opportunities launch page. Create a launch page with more information and context regarding working for the City of Berkeley and then direct candidates to the NEOGOV site. The following agencies can be used as examples: - City of Roseville – Strong primary "Job Opportunities" page with visuals, video, employee profile, approachable and culture themed message from the City Manager, helpful tips for applying. [Link] - City of Palo Alto – First job page links to "Careers with the City of Palo Alto" with information about the community, city team, benefits, leave, remote and flexible work, commuter programs, wellness & counseling services. [Link] Support departments to create their own dedicated recruitment and career web pages or website within the parameters of the City's "Recruitment Brand". Particularly important for police and fire where this is a standard approach among agencies competing for talent.
1.6	Utilize Social Media	Modernize, expand and decentralize the City's approach to social media. Create LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook pages and use City's Twitter account for recruitment marketing. Allow departments to create and deploy targeted recruitment outreach and marketing efforts. Ensure department efforts align with City "Recruitment Brand", but provide more specialized department information. Department program initiatives, accomplishments, videos, employee profiles and operational updates should be marketed via social media. Additional information and recommendations for outreach and social media include: - Leverage NEOGOV -- NEOGOV offers external advertising on other internet sites from selected partners, which can be purchased via Insight as needed by utilizing the "Advertise Job" link on the Insight Dashboard. Target use of Recruitics, Glassdoor and other sites depending on specific position. - CareersinGovernment.com – With a nominal annual agreement, the City can publish all recruitments listings on CareersinGovernment.com which then pushes the recruitment through to their social media partners (LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter). - Use #Hashtags – Include hashtags on the job posting. Web crawlers will find the hashtag, so an agencies' job posting will appear in searches initiated by job seekers. Example hashtag inserted at the bottom of a recent job announcement: #Engineer, #PublicWorks, #Transportation.
1.7	Hire Graphic Design & Social Media Expertise	Add funding for graphic artist and social media expertise in HR budget. Funding would be used to enhance: - Marketing (Presentation of City to prospective applicants). - Advertising (Targeted outreach for individual job openings).

1.8	Referral Bonus for Current Employees	Develop an employee referral bonus program.
		Provide $1,000 referral bonus for current employees who help attract a new employee.
		Examples of other agencies with employee referral bonus programs include: UC Berkeley, San Mateo County, City of Torrance.
1.9	Local Outreach & Targeted Programs	Develop additional Community Technical Education (CTE) pathway programs in collaboration with the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) that begin to expose students and prepare them for good paying, benefited careers within the City. Support CTE pathways with a variety of volunteer and paid internships, explorer programs and other opportunities to develop these potential future employees of the City.
		Develop robust internship program with UC Berkeley to bring on students into a variety of local government positions. Create a program that results in an annual "graduating" class of 10-15 interns across the organization who can be streamlined into the application process.

HR Systems & Data		
1.9	Resources & Tools Ready on Day 1	Provide new employees with the tools, equipment, and workspace ready for them to begin work on their first day of employment. Create on-line checklist for workspace readiness with department responsibilities outlined.
		Document roles of HR and Information Technology Department to ensure new employees have computer, login access, phone and any other necessary equipment ready to go on Day 1.
		Document roles of Public Works maintenance staff and the hiring Department to ensure a clean fully equipped workspace is available upon arrival.
		Deliver welcome letter from City Manager/Department Head and/or scheduling meet and greet on new employees first day of work.
1.10	HR Performance Metrics & Reporting	Once HR staffing is stabilized, update and further develop department performance metrics, procedures for accurate data collections, and a high-level dashboard for monthly reporting to City Manager and Department Heads. Information to include the following minimum data: - Current vacancies by department, - Resignations by month by department including reasons for employee's departure, - Number of active recruitments in process, - Time to hire from department request for recruitment to hiring, - Number of candidates for positions sorted by meeting MQs and not meeting MQs, and - Number and why candidates decline Berkeley job offer. Once Recruitment Backlog is Eliminated – Establish the following performance metrics for time it takes to fill positions: - From budget authority/vacancy to job posting (30 days). - Filling positions from Day 0 (the time from budget authority/vacancy) to Day 45 (Job posting) to Day 100 (First day of work for new employee). Different metrics will be required for specialty recruitments (i.e. Police Officers. - Target vacancy rate of 5% of all budgeted positions in the organization.

		Produce a vacancy report card with recruitment, hiring and current vacancy information and post on-line every three months beginning on 7/1/23.
	Workforce Analysis Report - Annual	Build data and systems in order to create an annual Workforce Analysis Report for annual reporting to departments and the City Council. It will take a number of years before HR is positioned to prepare this document as they building capacity, systems and data. See example from San Mateo County [Link].
1.11	Training & User Guides for ERMA & NEOGOV	Enhance training and user guides for ERMA, City's financial and HRIS system, and NEOGOV, the City's recruitment and applicant tracking software. Provide target deployment dates for full deployment of system capabilities to increase efficiencies and reduce staff workload.
1.12	Update Key Job Classifications	Create and maintain (in collaboration with department reps and labor) targeted list of key job classifications to be reviewed and updated with target timeframes. Prioritize hard to fill positions (e.g. Information Technology classifications) that provide essential internal administrative services.

2.0 - RETAINING OUR EMPLOYEES

The impact of employee turnover is high – for the organization, community and employee – those that leave and more so for those that remain. There are eight key benefits to having programs and a clear strategy to retain employees: (1) reduced costs, (2) improved morale, (3) retained experienced employees, (4) efficacy in recruitment and training, (5) increased productivity, (6) elevated customer experience, (7) improved culture, and (8) improved employee satisfaction. It is more efficient to retain a quality employee than to recruit, train and orient a replacement employee of the same quality.

A comprehensive employee retention program can play a vital role in both attracting and retaining key employees, as well as in reducing turnover and its related costs. Retaining employees starts during the onboarding and socialization process to the organization. Recognition, appreciation, and employee engagement are central to building culture and having employees feel seen, heard, and valued. Employees also want to feel productive and see that their work is valued and impactful. A balanced workload with clear priorities allows employees to complete initiatives/tasks with pride and to align their accomplishments with the organization's overall strategic priorities.

From MRG's interviews and focus groups, there is significant work necessary by the City in this area.

HR Systems

2.1	Overhaul Onboarding Program	Recreate HR Onboarding Program for new employees to include the following elements: ▪ Brand the Onboarding Program with a unique title and tag line. [Example – BERKELEY ONBOARD, "Welcome to Our Team"] ▪ Overview and training on City internal services processes and software (e.g. agenda, timesheets, travel reimbursements, communication, NEOGOV, ERMA, Microsoft Teams, contracts, invoices, etc.). ▪ Meet the City Manager and respective Department Head for welcome, expectations and culture briefing. ▪ Tour City facilities to connect the new employee to the broader organization's efforts and locations. ▪ Schedule mandatory training requirements needed during the first 6 months of employment. ▪ Create separate orientation for first line supervisors and management in terms of their role, resources and processes for supervision and management duties. ▪ Invest in personal touches such as welcome cards, coffee mug or other small treats to help welcome the new employee. ▪ Assign a peer employee "buddy" within the hiring department to each new hire. This staffer is available to answer questions, explain culture and practices that may not be in rules and serve as a mentor for the first 3-6 months of employment. Use NEOGOV module to maximize use of on-line information for HR program. Gather feedback via a survey to all new employees after the 6-month orientation to gain feedback on how to continue to improve the Onboarding Program. Develop template for all Departments to create their own Department Onboarding Program, modeled off successful department programs currently in place. See sample Onboarding site [Link].

2.2	Reform Eligibility List Process	Establish a Labor / HR working group to develop modifications to the Eligibility List process by 9/1/23.
2.3	Continue to Improve HR Communications (*Berkeley Matters*)	Major improvements to *Berkeley Matters (*HR's E-Newsletter and Job Opportunities Internal Promotion Listings) were completed in December 2022 with streamlining of relevant information, enhanced graphics, and weekly publishing of recruitment/promotional lists. Continue to refocus and upgrade *Berkeley Matters* and develop other HR communications to all employees. Ensure easy access for all employees whether office or field staff.
2.4	Performance Evaluation and Feedback	Implement comprehensive review and update for the City's performance management system including all evaluation forms. Review length of documents, timing, and inclusion of career development and training plans as a component. Ensure that all employees receive regular feedback and accountability. Support regular communication and coaching by management with increased training and support. Develop and implement a standard "stay interview" processes with current employees to ascertain specific needs and desires to maintain their employment with the City. Explore a 360-evaluation system for supervisors and managers to receive feedback from employees. Use Gallup employee survey tool as a means to gain feedback from employees regarding the performance of supervisors and managers.
2.5	Upgrade Exit Interview Process	Develop clear and robust exit interview process with confidential survey and 1x1 phone/in-person interview. Produce annual citywide and department report with summary information regarding reasons for employee departures.
Recognition & Appreciation		
2.6	Create a Comprehensive City Recognition Program	Create an inter-departmental team to enhance the City's Recognition Program. Consider the following ideas: ▪ Annual employee recognition event. ▪ Employee award programs are important tools to show appreciation and celebrate excellence and the way employees demonstrate the organization's values. There are many samples of general employee award programs. Some organizations have an "Employee of the Quarter" program to recognize high performing employees that embody the values of the City's and demonstrate their good work and talents. ▪ Flexible and immediate recognition program where managers can recognize employee's efforts with cards, notes and gift cards. ▪ Program where employees can also show appreciation to their colleagues. ▪ Ways to award extra hard work or key accomplishments of staff such as performance bonuses.
2.7	Restart Longevity Awards Program	Reinstitute and revitalize a recognition program to honor employees at key benchmarks (every 5 years of service) for their length of service. Consider the following components: ▪ Include employee's names and years of service at 5-year benchmarks in a report to the City Council that is distributed to all employees.

		- Hold quarterly recognition event sponsored by the City Manager's Office with attendance by Department Heads. Employees would receive a certificate or other form of recognition and their supervisor/Department Head would talk about the employee's work and accomplishments. - Review and upgrade recognition gifts for employees. Employees with 20, 25 and more years of service should receive special recognition. - Provide 5-year pins for employees to add to their lanyards or display in other ways. - Explore opportunity for leave cash-out at key service increments as a way to provide additional monetary compensation.
Organization Priority Setting and Workload		
2.8	Focus Priorities & Initiatives by City Council	Review and redesign the legislative process to ensure Council priorities are accomplished while balancing the capacity of the organization. An updated legislative process needs to ensure Council initiatives are accomplished within a framework of enhanced planning and priority setting to allow the organization to better budget, deploy resources and align implementation.

3.0 - CULTURE, COMMUNICATION & EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Authentic communication is the connectivity fuel needed to build trust, culture, and relationships. An organization requires strong relationships and people that know and respect each other to deliver excellence with efficiency and effectiveness. With good communication, managers can gain understanding and commitment from employees, achieve organizational goals and develop rapport with the people on their team. High performing organizations have various ways that employees can voice their ideas and concerns while being engaged in helping improve the organization.

Communication externally is also critical to building relationships and trust with the community. City departments need to be able to communicate with greater agility and timeliness with the public. While transactional information is important to the public, the City also needs to tell its own story of its work – to communicate the "why" and the "what". In today's world, the public is used to watching videos, reading blogs, and watching podcasts. A City's external communication tools need to allow for creativity and voices by departments.

Communication

3.1	Invest in Internal Communication	The following actions are recommended: - City Manager Monthly E-Newsletter -- Develop and deliver a monthly newsletter to all employees from the City Manager with updates on key City projects, highlights of key accomplishments, recognition of employees, and other items. A focus would include building the City's culture around values and mission. Ensure newsletter is delivered in a timely manner to staff without regular access to computers or email in the course of their daily work. This initial work can likely be absorbed initially within the City Manager's Office, but over time will require additional staffing resources focused on employee engagement and support. - Department Communication – Provide email update and other communication to all department employees at least monthly. Department heads should also conduct in person meetings with each division no less than two times per year and hold an in person all department meeting no less than two times per year. Build in time for information sharing, department strategic updates and relationship building in these meetings. - Management Team Meetings – Facilitate mid-managers half day in person meeting with Senior Executive Team (SET) + division managers three times per year. Purpose is strategic planning, training, special initiatives, and cross-department relationship building.
3.2	Foster Cross Department Collaboration	Facilitate events in which staff from different departments interact and understand other dept. priorities (e.g., three times per year Senior Executive Team + mid-manager meeting). Utilize cross-department task forces to gain employee input on ideas and projects.
3.3	Open Department Access to Website & Social Media Use	Create parameters for outgoing content and authorize designated contacts in City Departments to communicate via social media and email. Allow designated department staff to add content to their department web pages and issue press releases.

		Hire an expert public agency public information consultant to quickly develop a game plan and work with departments and Public Information to allow more access and flexibility with the City's website and social media within standards that can be operationalized.
Team Building & Culture		
3.4	Invest in Cross Department Relationship Building	Create a team of staff from different levels and different departments to create events, fun and activities. Ideas: ▪ Reimagine Department Open Houses -- Create rotating Open House where each department would host a gathering time and sharing about their department with the rest of the City staff. ▪ Potlucks, Coffees & Ice Cream Socials – Hold monthly or quarterly coffees, potlucks or ice cream socials to bring people together with some fun activities both within departments and across departments. Provide some city funding for these activities. ▪ "Volunteering" for Community Improvement Projects – Support staff to volunteers to join teams (department and inter-departmental) on important community activities such as cleaning a community garden, working on a Habitat for Humanity project, or doing a project for a local school or non-profit. Employees would be paid for the time and allowed to use 1-2 works days per year for these community activities. This type of program connects employees together and also connects employees to the community in ways that they may not be able to in their day-to-day public service.
3.5	Link to New DEI Program	The City is hiring a dedicated DEI Coordinator. For the first 90 days, the newly appointed DEI Coordinator will be to reviewing Berkeley's current status and needs with an eye towards best practices to create a DEI Work Plan. While many DEI efforts may be focused around hiring and promotion, consider investments in how the City organization can be culturally inclusive including training, communication, learning and collaboration.

4.0 - TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

New and future employees are looking for organizations that will invest and support their growth and career development. Employees were clear in their desire for more growth and development opportunities – formally and informally. Providing various forms of professional development will build loyalty to the organization and develop employee's individual talents to support internal advancement. A well-trained workforce supports innovation and a higher level of customer service to the community, plus employees have the opportunity to grow and progress within the organization as they promote.

Training Strategy & Programs

4.1	Develop Training Strategy & Plan for Learning Culture	Invest in a learning culture and professional development for all employees as a key driver for employee retention. Review training program and determine which training should be done in-house and what to outsource or send employees to external training. Develop an initial Training and Professional Development Strategy for the City. Consider the following elements: ▪ Utilize NEOGOV for monitoring and mandatory training. ▪ Provide training opportunities for all level of employees. ▪ Develop and deploy an annual survey for employees to gain ideas for the types of training and areas of interest. ▪ Incorporate training discussion into regular 1:1 supervisor/employee meetings and annual performance reviews. ▪ Include and track required department training on shared tracking department file (e.g., SharePoint) in common format across organization. Establish standards for training (e.g. # hours per employee per year). Ensure sufficient department training budgets are developed and discussed with the City Manager's Office in the preparation of the City's annual budget and line item allocations are included in proposed budgets.
4.2	Invest In Learning Academies & Specialized Training	Employees and management across the organization see the need for modern, effective and strategic investments in training and professional development. Employee Academies -- Implement the following Employee Academies robust learning programs: ▪ Academy for Managers ▪ Supervisory Academy for First Line supervisors ▪ Seasoned Supervisors Academy for supervisors who want or need a refresher course in managing employees and/or updates and new information that needs to be communicated to sitting supervisors. ▪ Skilled Worker Academy -- The City has just launched its first Skilled Worker Academy. After its beta year, a thorough evaluation should occur for continued refinement. ▪ Administrative Assistant Academy ▪ Analytical & Project Management Academy Employee Relations Training – The City is a member of an Employer Relations Consortium comprised of a number of local public agencies in the Bay Area. The Consortium and services are provided by Liebert Cassidy Whitmore. To fully take advantage of this resource: ▪ Create a curriculum of courses to be taken by a First-time Supervisors and Managers over 2-3 years.

		▪ Require all supervisors and managers to take a minimum of two courses per year. Recognize this learning and investment with the City's own certificate programs using LCW curriculum.
4.3	Invest in Coaching	Develop internal (trained HR staff) and/or external (consultant) resources with management coaching experience and make coaches available to managers. Coaching can be done individually or in groups. Provide specialized training for public safety supervisors.
4.4	Invest in Learning Management Software	Implement learning management system software (e.g. NEOGOV Learn) for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, automation, and delivery of educational courses, training programs, materials or learning and development programs across the organization.
4.5	Invest In Technology Training	Specialized training in the areas of software and technology is needed throughout the organization including Microsoft Office and other software systems. Encourage departments to authorize on site, off site or on-line training to maximize staff proficiency in relevant technology. Utilize assessment tools to help employees understand their current competency and which technology classes to take to learn and grow.
4.6	Develop Hybrid Management Training	Develop specialized training for supervisors and managers to augment skills and approaches for managing in a hybrid work environment.
Systems & Financial Support		
4.7	Use Credit Cards to Ease Training Procurement	Assign credit cards to management employees and supervisors for various expenditures including signing up for training and any associated travel costs. This will expedite current 4-8 week turnaround on check requests for training.
4.8	Upgrade Financial Support for Training & Education	Implement the following programs to support enhanced staff skills and customer service: ▪ Tuition Reimbursement -- Review existing protocols for tuition reimbursement for greater flexibility and ease of approval. Explore creating financial consistency across all labor groups. ▪ Professional Association Memberships – Authorize and create consistency across the organization for City payment of membership in professional associations to take advantage of training and best practices resources. Municipal professional associations include organizations such as American Planning Association, Municipal Management Assistants of Northern California, California Code Enforcement Association, etc. Develop list of authorized City sponsored memberships that are affiliated with position duties and include funding for memberships in department budgets. ▪ Conferences – Support attendance at professional conferences. Many professional associations hold annual conferences with extensive training and learning opportunities. Broaden the organization's philosophy regarding the City's sponsorship (financial and time) of employee professional development to support general training and educational advancement even if the subject is not directly related to current work or classification. Align with individual professional goals and career advancement.

5.0 - HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLNESS

In today's world, employers need to ensure their workforce is – and feels – safe. Employers need to strengthen their safety cultures like never before plus include a broader view of health and wellness. COVID has stretched organizations to breaking points as we learned and adjusted to a worldwide pandemic. Increasing violence and reductions in civility put employees in difficult circumstances. Without proper investment and maintenance, our facilities are tired and lacking in many features. Wellness today includes physical and mental health, plus opportunities for flexibility and life balance including hybrid and alternative work schedules. Investing in and caring for the health, safety and wellness of employees is a critical element for employee retention.

Employee Health

5.1	Clear & Consistent COVID Safety Protocols & Practices	Clarify vaccination and masking requirements across organization and communicate current policy to all employees.
		Send monthly updates regarding the policy, even if it has not changed since the previous month.
		Ensure safety requirements across the organization and within departments are clear, up to date and reviewed with all employees on a regular basis. Include current status on COVID safety protocols and practices on enhanced Intranet site or post in locations visible to field employees.
5.2	Invest in Mental & Physical Health Services for Employees	Explore current and potential mental and physical health services for employees. Review internal programs for areas to expand and mirror (Berkeley Fire has a strong peer counseling internal program; Berkeley Police has a strong fitness program). Research best practices of other public agencies regarding strong mental and physical health programs and services.
		Review resources available with all employees on a regular basis.
		Develop programs and activities to support physical health (e.g. ergonomic, lunch walk programs, gym membership partial reimbursements).
		Explore fun ways to incorporate healthy activities into training, culture and internal community-building events and activities.

Employee Safety

5.3	Create a Citywide Safety Team	Create a multi-disciplinary, multi-department Citywide Safety Review Team: ▪ Assess and review workplace safety or potentially threatening situations that employees might be facing. ▪ Bring forward recommendations for training, building changes, and other suggestions to improve the safety of staff and customers. Create system for employee input and feedback. ▪ Review accidents and provide recommendations to implement additional safety measures as needed.
5.4	De-Escalation And High Conflict Training	Provide training and tools to prioritize employee safety and deescalate work with high conflict individuals in order to improve safety for employees and the public.

Work Schedules & Flexibility

5.5	Explore Expanding Alternative Work Schedules	Review and update the City's policies and practices regarding alternative work schedules as a means to providing more employee work flexibility while ensuring service delivery to customers. Consider 9/80 and 4/10 schedules if customer service can be maintained.

		Alternative Work Schedules provide employees with flexibility and additional time for life balance. While a Hybrid Work Schedule may not be possible for field staff or direct customer serving staff, an Alternative Work Schedule can be provided to these employees and provide them with some of the same benefits.
5.6	Formalize Hybrid Work Program	Hybrid work is a critical tool to attract and retain employees. Support the use of Hybrid Work Schedules on a permanent basis throughout the organization while balancing flexibility for the employee and customer service / organizational connectivity for the departments. Provide clear guidelines to support departments in implementing Hybrid Work. Provide training to management to learn to manage in this new environment.
Facilities & Equipment		
5.7	Adequately Fund Capital Improvement Program & Replacement Reserves	Ensure Capital Improvement Program prioritizes deficiencies in City facilities with annual budget allocation. Establish budgeted replacement reserves for building and equipment replacement. Contract out more maintenance as needed to address current critical deficiencies.
5.8	Prioritize Investments in Buildings, Vehicles, & Equipment	Ensure health and safety of staff and customers is prioritized within City facilities. Ensure functional, safe and clean systems: ▪ HVAC with appropriate filters; ▪ Windows; ▪ Carpeting / flooring; and, ▪ Physical security of sites. Provide security for staff and customers as needed. Ensure public safety and public works facilities are regularly maintained and replaced to professional standards. Ensure Equipment & Vehicle Safety is prioritized to ensure safety of employees and the public. Use outside resources (e.g. Fire Department equipment) if needed to ensure proper maintenance and repair.

6.0 - ELEVATE INTERNAL PROCESSES

Elevating the importance and effectiveness of the City's administrative functions is necessary if the City of Berkeley is to become an Employer of Choice. Berkeley is known for its community innovation and willingness to try new approaches to community problems. The same innovation should be encouraged and rewarded for internal process improvements. Innovation applied to internal processes will support organizational effectiveness, relationship building, and efficiency. By reducing inefficiencies and improving processes and use of technology, employees can reduce their frustration and focus their time and expertise on customer service and public improvements.

Structure & Programs

6.1	Restructure Reporting of Administrative Services (HR, IT, Finance, Contracts) to One Deputy City Manager	Realign the management reporting structure so that the Human Resources, Information Technology, Finance and Contracts report to the same executive (Deputy City Manager). Encourage collaboration and coordination among the three departments to problem solve, share staff resources and innovate.
6.2	Elevate Importance of Service-Oriented Administrative Services & Customer Connectivity	Ensure administrative services departments deliver elevated level of customer service to departments and function as true business partners with line departments. Schedule regular bi-monthly meetings with Finance and IT department representatives to provide feedback, ideas, advise and help improve systems for each function. These meetings will facilitate to provide input on the most critical short- and long-term internal service needs of the departments. Develop service level metrics and provide regular reports on status of work orders and key initiatives.
6.3	Create An Innovation Program	Create an Innovation Program that reviews and rewards employees for creative and innovative ideas that save the organization time and money. Explore other ideas such as Innovation Labs, etc.

Business Improvements

6.4	Empower Strike Teams / Interdepartmental Work Groups	Create a Strike Team Model to accelerate implementation of improvements to internal processes across the organization. Empower the Strike Team with the authority to review systems, processes and technology and make improvements. Hire a Business Process Team (under Special Projects in CMO) to lead Strike Teams, document and realign key business processes (e.g., payroll, onboarding, staff report writing, technology acquisition) to affect efficiency and effectiveness of technology and practices/systems. Provide and coordinate staff training on processes.
6.5	Provide Training on Common Administrative Practices & Procedures	Employees and managers need to know how to process a contract, pay an invoice, start a recruitment, utilize an eligibility list, or prepare an evaluation. Create user guides, screen shots, and training manuals to help staff navigate the processes and procedures that are required for HR, IT, Contracts and Finance. Videos and training sessions should also be explored.
6.6	Maximize Intranet as an Employee Resource	Review and revamp as necessary, the City's Intranet (i.e. SharePoint and Microsoft Suite of services), to create a vibrant, well organized, and content rich system for employees and managers to access and utilize.

		Identify an owner of these systems and complete buildout and deployment. Provide departments access to update within guidelines and naming conventions. Examples of content include training videos, communication templates, access to employee benefit resources, documentation of common processes.
6.7	Implement Business Practice Improvements in Finance, Information Technology, Payroll, HR and Contracts	Prioritize implementation of these services to support efficient operations across the organization: Finance / Payroll -- Establish implementation deadlines for: 1. On-line electronic timesheets for Payroll integrated with the City's financial management system. 2. ERMA modules implementation Information Technology -- Prioritize implementation of basic services to support efficient operations across the organization: 1. File sharing - Consistency software and retention conventions across the organization. 2. TEAMs - Deployment of full capabilities with access when working on-site or remotely. 3. Cell phones - Consider change in cell phone policy that allows for reimbursement v. City issued cell phones. 4. Work Order System – Enhance transparency to provide departments with estimated time of service delivery and status on IT service requests. Contracts -- Enhance common processes with modern templates and software. 1. Request for Proposals / Purchasing solicitations – Deploy standard templates for various types of RFPs and solicitations. Ensure vendor quality and performance is integrated into consistent purchasing solicitation processes throughout organization. 2. Vendor performance standards – Establish basic standards to ensure satisfactory service from City vendors. Signature Authority – Update levels of signing authority for City Manager and City Attorney to levels similar to other organizations of Berkeley's complexity. Allows for greater efficiency and effectiveness in business processing. A quarterly report can be provided to Council to ensure transparency. 1. City Manager Signing Authority -- Increase City Manager's signature authority from $50,000 to a minimum for $100,000. Conduct a study of other similar size municipalities to learn about the practices of other agencies in this authority for additional increase. 2. City Attorney Settlement Authority – Increase City Attorney's signature Authority from $15,000 for an individual liability claim to $50,000. Conduct a study of other similar size municipalities to learn about the practices of other agencies in this authority for additional increase.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS – ORGANIZATIONAL FEEDBACK

Compensation and benefits are key ingredients in the attraction and retention of employees. There was a range of feedback provided to MRG regarding Berkeley's competitive position in the marketplace and compensation. Many employees and managers participating in interviews and focus groups raised concerns about aspects of the City's compensation portfolio. During MRG's interviews and focus groups, comments and suggestions were collected, and themes developed regarding compensation and benefits.

These items are subject to bargaining with labor unions and require negotiations and/or a meet and confer process. In addition, many compensation concerns require additional research and analysis before recommendations could be developed which was beyond the scope of this study. For these reasons, MRG did not include compensation and benefits recommendations within the formal Roadmap. However, these items should be reviewed by the City and labor as negotiations are initiated.

The City does not have a formal compensation policy or philosophy for the City as a whole that supports benefit structure and continuity across all labor groups. Many non-salary benefits have been negotiated over time by each individual labor group creating inconsistencies among labor groups. These different levels create perceptions of unfairness. In addition, these individual differences create added administrative complexity for the Human Resources Department, Auditor's Office and Finance Departments. It takes time to align core benefits across all labor groups, but the gains are worth the work for the employee and the organization. Below are comments and themes provided to MRG during interviews and focus groups.

SALARY

- Many concerns from employees, labor groups, and management regarding base salary levels for all levels of employees and compaction issues. Very difficult to recruit and retain specialized technical positions such as engineers, information technology staff, public safety, and electricians. MRG was told of numerous instances where prospective candidates chose to not accept employment offers from Berkeley based on the salary and benefits offered.
- Employees that worked in the office during COVID versus remotely feel that there should be some financial appreciation for their work.
- Explore mechanisms to allow an employee to be moved to a higher step based on equity, retention, or performance. Review longevity pay or retention differentials as tools to retain employees at key intervals.

BENEFITS

Benefits – Comprehensive Review
- Consider a comprehensive review of benefits looking forward to what employees value now versus when the current benefit system was developed decades ago. Employees are generally seeking more value now versus the value for a future retirement (which will be less for PEPRA employees).
- Consider making benefit levels that same for all employees for as many basic health and wellbeing benefits as possible. This would simplify benefit administration and remove equity concerns.

Retirement – PERS
- Concerns remain regarding the ramp down and equalization of Classic and PEPRA for existing and prospective employees.

Health Related Benefits
- Medical Benefits – Deep appreciation for the rich health benefit with limited co-pays.
- Vision -- No vision plan offered by City except to IBEW Local 1245. Relatively inexpensive benefit. High interest from employees.

Leave Benefits

- Vacation Leave – Various ideas offered for vacation leave.

    - Leave Accrual Rates – Concerns about the rate of accruals at various years of service.

    - Lateral Hires -- Interest in being able to offer seasoned public employees coming from other agencies with higher level of vacation leave as a starting point. Want to attract seasoned lateral talent without starting over with only 2 weeks of vacation leave.   Explore way to provide years of service credit from other public agencies into Berkeley's leave accrual rates. (Ability to hire lateral police and fire personnel is critical.)

    - Desire for vacation cash out with management of leave caps.

- Administrative Leave – Administrative Leave is low (50 hours/year) compared to other agencies. Most Bay Area agencies provide higher hours of Administrative Leave to recognize the additional hours of work provided by management and professional staff including commission, committees and other night meetings while being exempt from overtime.

- Family / Elder Care Leave – No City paid Family Leave and Elder Care leave in place. Current practice allows for 1 year of leave with no pay and City provided medical benefits.

Commuter Subsidy and Employee Parking Benefits

- Transit / Parking Benefits -- Extensive frustration and comments regarding the Commuter Subsidy and employee parking. A review and update of parking and transit programs and benefits would be well received by employees.

    - While the City wants to encourage public transit for environmental sustainability, it's not convenient nor usable by many employees based on where they live.

    - Parking is cumbersome and costly for employees working downtown. Many employees park many blocks away from City Hall to ensure free parking. When it is dark outside, staff doesn't always feel safe walking to and from their vehicle. Employees stated that the convenient City Center lot frequently has capacity that is underutilized, but the cost is too high for employees without some City subsidy.

    - Enhancements to the parking and transit benefits can be seen as a way to recognize the efforts of employees who are coming into the office every day and have extra costs associated with their work for the City of Berkeley.

Miscellaneous Benefits

- Gym / Health Membership – The City pays for YMCA membership located in Berkeley. Consider providing benefit to employees using gyms outside of Berkeley.

- Employee Assistance Program – Provide additional mental health visits under base contract.

Management Benefits

- Interest in exploring car allowance, performance bonus, additional Administrative or Management Leave, enhanced wellness program, a sabbatical after determined term of service.

JOB CLASSIFICATION

- Many job classifications are outdated in terms of titles, requirements and descriptions of duties with affects on recruitment and promotional opportunities. Specifically, MRG heard concerns raised regarding Information Technology and Public Health.

APPENDIX B: MRG CONSULTANT FIRM / TEAM

Municipal Resource Group, LLC is an experienced, full-service consulting firm dedicated to assisting client agencies in attaining their strategic goals. MRG was founded in 2009 by highly skilled and broadly experienced professionals. MRG has a team of professionals who work to address challenges for both public and private sector clients. Our consultants have extensive experience in all aspects of Organizational Assessment & Development, Human Resources, including staffing and effectiveness analyses. Our team is experienced in working with elected officials, agency executives, managers, and staff.

- ✓ Full-service professional management consulting firm with over 60 affiliated consultants.

- ✓ Offices in Sacramento and Southern California.

- ✓ Deep HR and organizational development expertise.

- ✓ Deliver transformational solutions to leadership, governance, human resource, financial management and other complex organizational challenges.

- ✓ Help agencies rethink historic practices and review what is possible within agency-specific rules and standards.

Trusted Advisor

Commitment to Public Service

Partnership for Impact

Management Practitioners + Leadership Coach Team

Strategic Organizational Development

Project Team:

MARY EGAN
Managing Partner/CEO
- Executive Coaching, Workplace Investigation, & Crisis Navigation
- Delivering truth to governing boards/leaders to solve complex problems

CATHY CAPRIOLA
Project Manager
- 30 years – local government
- Retired City Manager
- Organization Development, Leadership & Team Coaching
- Developer of people & organizations to the next tier

CRAIG WHITTOM
Consultant
- 31 years - local government
- Retired DH & Assistant City Manager
- Driver of actionable service delivery improvements

MARCIE SCOTT
Consultant
- 20 years as HR Director & Manager in cities
- Seasoned guide for personnel management & employee relations