# Recruitment Strategic Plan

# CITY OF PALO ALTO

## *Navigating Talent Streams to Reel In Excellence*

*The City of Palo Alto has long committed itself to being an "Employer of Choice" -- to attract and retain high quality employees to foster a culture committed to health and long-term success of the city organization, its workforce, and the Palo Alto community. In recent years, fishing for talent has become increasingly challenging in all sectors. Recruiting best practices have shifted and the workforce has changed dramatically post COVID. This report outlines the current conditions for recruiting in Palo Alto and creates a Recruitment Strategic Plan that builds on current strengths and outlines opportunities for new strategies and tactics in order reel in excellent talent to join Palo Alto's team.*

**MRG**  **ALL-STAR TALENT**  **Prepared by MRG & All Star Talent -- April 2024**

> *"The charm of fishing is that it is the pursuit of what is elusive but attainable,*
> *a perpetual series of occasions of hope."* **- John Buchan, Scottish novelist & politician**
>
> **Fishing is like recruiting … the hopeful search … and the excitement of reeling in excellence.**

Just as fishing requires patience to wait for the right moment to catch a fish, recruiting often demands patience and persistence in finding the right candidate for a job. Both activities may involve periods of waiting and uncertainty before achieving success. Both activities involve a combination of skill, strategy, and a willingness to adapt to changing conditions. Fishing and recruiting for employees share several similarities in their processes and outcomes as noted below.

1. **Understanding the Environment**: Successful fishing requires an understanding of the fishing environment, including knowledge of the water, weather conditions, and fish behavior. Similarly, effective recruiting involves understanding the job market, industry trends, and the characteristics of potential candidates.

2. **Skill and Strategy**: Both fishing and recruiting require skill and strategic thinking. Anglers use different techniques, bait, and equipment to attract fish, while recruiters use various methods, such as job postings, networking, digital advertising, and headhunting, to attract and assess candidates.

3. **Adaptability & Agility**: In fishing, anglers must adapt their strategies based on changing conditions, such as weather, water clarity, and fish activity. Similarly, recruiters need to adapt their approaches based on factors like market demand, candidate availability, new technology, and hiring trends.

4. **Setting the Right Expectations**: Just as a fisherman sets realistic expectations about the type and size of fish they hope to catch, recruiters must set realistic expectations about the qualifications and fit of potential candidates for a job.

5. **Celebrating Successes**: Landing a prized catch in fishing can be a cause for celebration, just as successfully hiring a talented candidate to be a new Palo Alto employee is a significant achievement for recruiters and hiring managers.
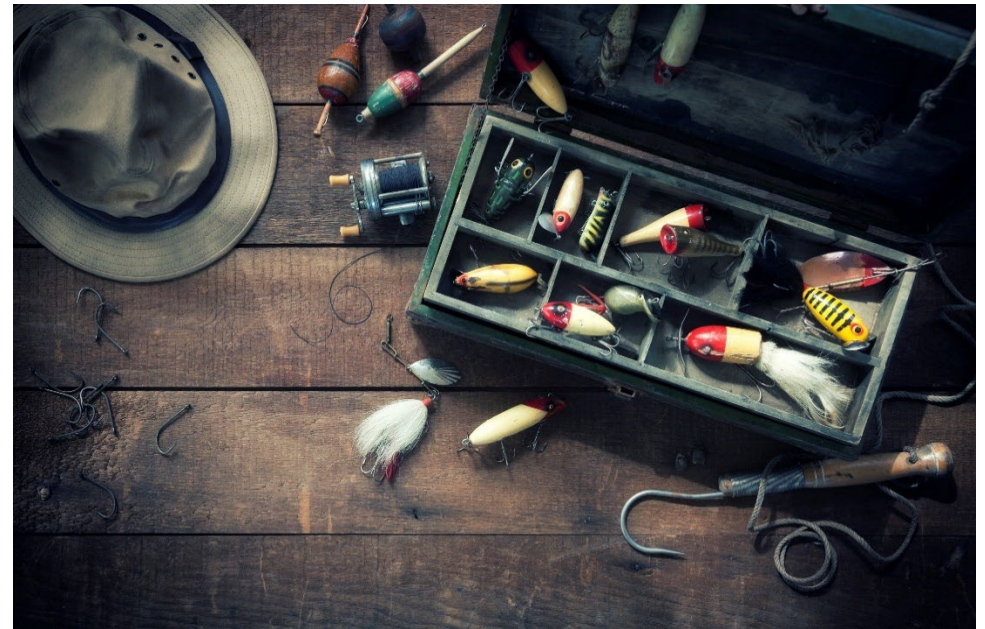
Overall, both fishing and recruiting require a combination of patience, skill, adaptability, and strategic thinking to achieve success. Recognizing and embracing these similarities can help recruiters approach their work with a fresh perspective and enhance their effectiveness in finding the right talent for their organizations.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Similar to other employers, the City of Palo Alto is facing vacancies across the organization and is experiencing challenges recruiting employees. Jurisdictions around the country are seeking ways to improve the hiring of staff – 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 in danger of losing excellent employees and being unable to retain or compete for top talent. The importance of strong and effective recruitment operations cannot be understated.
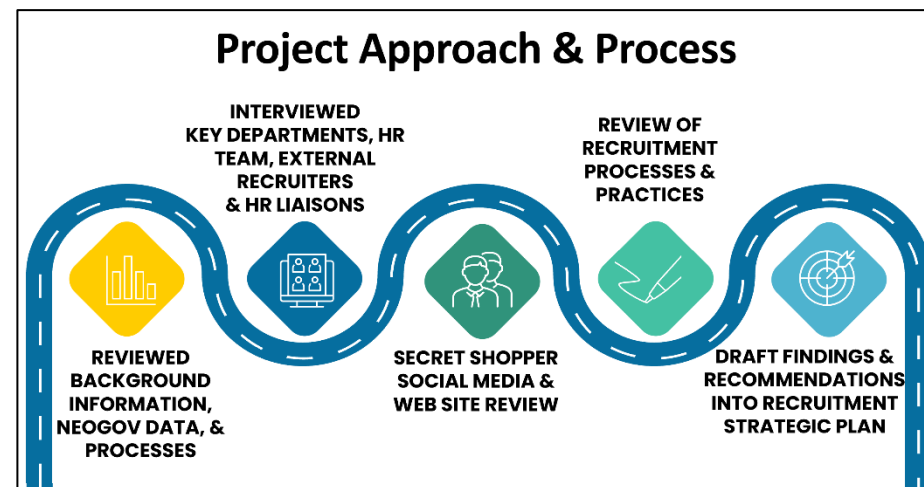
| Why filling vacancies is so critical to the success and sustainability of an organization … | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **SUPPORT MORALE – REDUCE STRESS & BURNOUT** Vacancies can lead to decreased productivity as existing employees may need to take on additional responsibilities to compensate for the unfilled roles. This can result in burnout, reduced morale, and decreased overall output. | **MEET OBJECTIVES & PRODUCTIVITY** Vacancies hinder an organization's ability to achieve its strategic goals and objectives. Unfilled positions may delay projects, disrupt workflow, and impede progress toward key milestones. | **DELIVER CUSTOMER SATISFACTION** Vacancies in customer-facing roles can directly impact satisfaction levels. Long wait times, reduced service quality, and unmet needs due to understaffing can lead to dissatisfaction and quality of life impacts on the community. | **RETAIN & DEVELOP TALENT** High levels of vacancies can contribute to employee dissatisfaction and turnover as existing staff become frustrated with increased workloads, increased training of newly onboarded staff, and overall increased responsibilities. | **BUILD ORGANIZATIONAL REPUTATION** Prolonged vacancies can negatively impact an organization's reputation as an Employer of Choice. A high turnover rate or difficulty in filling positions may signal underlying issues within the organization, deterring potential candidates from applying and damaging the employer's brand. |

In mid-August 2023, the City of Palo Alto ("City") engaged the Municipal Resource Group ("MRG") to provide an assessment to help the City review and enhance the City's recruitment operations, processes, and marketing. Information on each consulting firm and team members is included in Appendix E. For this assignment, MRG conducted a thorough assessment including interviews, data review and analysis, detailed process review, and marketing analysis. The scope of this project is outlined in the graphic to the right.

The goal of this assessment was to review the organization's recruitment program and craft an actionable strategic plan to attract employees titled the "Recruitment Strategic Plan". This Strategic Plan creates four themed areas of focus with a total of thirty-one (31) action items. This report is organized in the following sections:

- Section 1 – Executive Summary
- Section 2 -- Trends & Current Landscape
- Section 3 – Findings & Recommendations
- Section 4 -- Recruitment Strategic Plan
- Section 5 -- Implementation
- Section 6 -- Appendices (A - Detailed Recruitment Process Recommendations; B - Marketing Strategy Summary & Best Practices; C - Social Media SWOT Review; D - Secret Shopper Analysis; E - Consultant Firm / Team Information)



**Project Approach & Process**

- REVIEWED BACKGROUND INFORMATION, NEOGOV DATA, & PROCESSES
- INTERVIEWED KEY DEPARTMENTS, HR TEAM, EXTERNAL RECRUITERS & HR LIAISONS
- SECRET SHOPPER SOCIAL MEDIA & WEB SITE REVIEW
- REVIEW OF RECRUITMENT PROCESSES & PRACTICES
- DRAFT FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS INTO RECRUITMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

# SECTION 1 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prompted by the imperative to streamline and enhance talent acquisition amidst evolving dynamics, the City Council directed the City Manager to initiate an assessment of the City's recruitment operations in mid-2023. The aim was to speed up the recruitment processes, improve customer service with departments, attract top talent, and ensure greater efficiency and effectiveness.

## Recruiting Landscape

Recruiting today presents challenges characterized by a decrease in qualified candidates juxtaposed with a surge in job openings, particularly evident in the public sector. Nationally, local governments are experiencing the following:

- 55% decrease in the number of applicants per public sector job (2019).
- 78% increase in the number of public sector job openings (2020).

This translates into fewer applications per public sector job recruitment. To add to the dilemma, it is important to realize that many of the applications received are not qualified to perform the advertised job. In 2023, Palo Alto received 8,045 applications for full-time vacant positions, and after vetting, 3,515 applications (43%) were considered qualified with others being screened out (incomplete applications, not meeting minimum qualifications, not the best qualified). When reviewing 2023 recruitments, we found 47% of the recruitments received less than 10 "qualified" applicants and 63% of the recruitments received less than 15 "qualified" applicants.

This dynamic was compounded by increased peak recruitment workload plus resource constraints within the Human Resources Department and the Recruitment/Selection Division. Following the freezing of positions and a reduction in force from pandemic revenue loss, the City Council restored a total of 140 FTE positions between 2022 and today which necessitated new recruiting activity. During a similar timeframe, the HR Recruitment/Selection team experienced a complete turnover in late 2021 and is only now nearing full staffing capacity in February 2024. Furthermore, management capacity was impacted by the vacancy of the Assistant HR Director role for a significant period in 2022-2023.

As of January 2024, the City of Palo Alto faces a vacancy rate of 13.7%, with 20% of these vacancies stemming from newly created positions in the FY 23/24 budget. Of concern, 43% of departments struggle with vacancy rates surpassing 15%, impacting service delivery, employee morale, and overall productivity. While recruitment efforts are actively addressing 44% of vacant positions, 49% await initiation of the recruitment process by respective departments. HR has been triaging these recruitments with departments to the best of their abilities, but no overall strategic work program exists to create a proactive plan for how, when, and who will be leading the recruitments to move through this peak workload with prioritization.

Addressing these challenges demands strategic interventions aimed at enhancing candidate quality, streamlining recruitment processes, and optimizing resource allocation to effectively meet the organization's staffing needs. These measures are crucial for maintaining operational efficiency and ensuring the continued provision of high-quality services to the community.

## Uniqueness of Palo Alto's Scope of Services

While each local government is individualized, unique attributes of Palo Alto's organization and services dramatically impact recruiting. First, Palo Alto is a full-service municipality with extensive sophisticated utilities (including a water treatment plant and electric utility competing with PG&E), a museum, a zoo, libraries plus numerous other city departments typically found in most municipalities. This breadth and depth of the City's services adds complexity to recruiting. Each functional area of the City requires a recruiting team that fully understands the operations/work of the vacant position and targeted avenues for marketing effectively.

## Current Status

Compared to other municipalities, Palo Alto stands at a favorable juncture to enhance and modernize its recruitment practices and processes. The organization has already taken strides by making substantial investments in cutting-edge recruitment software and tools, laying the groundwork for improved efficiency and effectiveness. These systems harbor a wealth of data and insights that can be harnessed for metrics and operational monitoring purposes.

Moreover, the Human Resource Liaison Program, although still in its early stages, represents a structured initiative to collaborate closely with departments in recruitment processing and management. The HR Team is

actively bolstering this program through the development of new training modules, a formal certification program, and the expansion of department staff trained to serve as HR Liaisons, all with a keen focus on enhancing recruitment efforts.

Financial investments approved by the City Council have also been significant, with major enhancements to base salary and benefits aimed at bolstering competitiveness within the region. Additionally, Palo Alto boasts a compelling employer brand, characterized by high name recognition and a reputation for creativity and high standards among local agencies. And yet, the high price of housing and living on the peninsula continues to be a constraint in hiring staff.

### Key Findings & Recommendations

*While acknowledging that there is still considerable work ahead to refine the recruiting system within the City, Palo Alto possesses substantial foundational elements upon which to build. With a commitment to continuous improvement and leveraging its existing strengths, Palo Alto is well-positioned to elevate its recruitment practices and attract top talent to fuel its continued success.*

*Overall, the key findings show a need to increase strategic management of the recruitment program, build awareness of the City's job opportunities with the outcome of gaining more qualified applicants, improve communication and information sharing, streamline recruitment processes to gain speed and efficiency, and invest in a talent pipeline. Below are the key findings and high-level recommendations within the following categories. A more detailed Recruitment Strategic Plan further outlines these themes.*

1. *Strategic Management*
2. *Data/Dashboard for Decision Making*
3. *Candidate Awareness, Sourcing & Applications*
4. *Telling Palo Alto's Story with Compelling Story Telling*
5. *Recruitment Process*
6. *Candidate Experience*
7. *Build a Talent Pipeline*

## #1 - Strategic Management
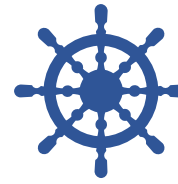
To effectively address the recruitment challenges faced by the City of Palo Alto, active strategic management of recruitments is imperative. This involves investing in new management capacity and shifting from triage to strategy to develop a master plan for recruitment roll-out and any additional resource needs. The feedback from department stakeholders is critical to discuss priorities, yet an overall city prioritization is also required with perspectives and direction from Human Resources and the City Manager's Office. More active strategic oversight will allow Human Resources to leverage expertise to streamline recruitment processes, bundle recruitments for efficiency, and actively manage the recruitment processes upfront. Continued support and commitment from the City Council and City Manager as champions for recruitment initiatives is also paramount.

## #2 -- Data/Dashboard for Decision Making

The City of Palo Alto faces significant challenges with data management in its recruitment processes. The data from NEOGOV's three modules (the City's applicant tracking software) and SAP (the City's financial systems tracking employee data such as position control, start dates, etc.), though extensive, are not integrated. To create a regular baseline vacancy status report, HR staff are required to perform extensive manual integration and quality control reviews. This manual review and generation of data and reports not only consumes valuable time but also increases the likelihood of errors and decreases the regularity of reporting. Furthermore, the absence of a Human Resource Information System (HRIS) exacerbates the situation, making it difficult to centralize and streamline data management tasks.

Additionally, data inconsistencies and irregularities are quite common due to the high volume of data, staff turnover, and how various departments utilize the applicant tracking software (NEOGOV). Efforts are underway to implement consistent practices and clean up the data; these initiatives are a work in progress. Moreover, the absence of consistent phases and metrics for monitoring progress hampers strategic decision-making by recruitment staff. The lack of available data makes it difficult to monitor progress and see areas where improvement is needed. Limited availability of critical information also contributes to frustration between HR and departments, hindering communication and effective collaboration.

The creation of a real-time data Recruitment/Vacancy dashboard for decision-making and communication is crucial. In the long run, this entails addressing integration issues between software systems, and in the short run, an integrated spreadsheet or the implementation of an umbrella Candidate Relationship Manager (CRM) for centralized recruitment management is necessary. Addressing these challenges is essential to improve data integrity, activate data-enabled decision-making, provide regular, real-time communication, and streamline recruitment processes for enhanced efficiency and effectiveness.

## #3 -- Candidate Awareness, Sourcing & Applications

Candidate awareness and application rates are crucial components of a successful recruitment strategy. Currently, Palo Alto advertises positions through public sector job boards, local government professional associations, and the City's social media platforms, with limited funding available for job advertising. However, in today's competitive recruiting landscape, investing in active digital and social media marketing is essential for effectively sourcing and targeting candidates.

Finding qualified candidates for open positions presents a significant challenge in public sector recruitment. A recent analysis by NEOGOV, examining 67,000 job applications on GovernmentJobs.com, revealed an average of only 14.3 applicants per job opening. Moreover, among these applicants, only a few possess the necessary qualifications for the role. To address this challenge, recruiters employ two sourcing strategies: active candidate sourcing and passive candidate sourcing. Active sourcing involves engaging with individuals actively seeking employment, while passive sourcing targets those who may not be actively looking but could be open to new opportunities. Utilizing both active and passive candidate sourcing strategies is vital to attract a diverse pool of qualified candidates.

Expanding the candidate pool can be achieved by updating minimum qualifications in job postings to focus more on skills rather than specific degree requirements or prior local government experience. Leveraging alternative candidate pools, such as past applicants, retirees, and veterans, further enhances recruitment success. Palo Alto has found success in creating apprenticeship and internship programs to grow its staff, which should be encouraged to broaden the talent pool and grow top talent.

Lastly, transitioning HR staff from "processors" to empowered "recruiters" is imperative. Providing them with the necessary knowledge and tools to actively market, communicate, and target candidates enhances their effectiveness in attracting top talent.

## #4 -- Tell Palo Alto's Story with Compelling Marketing

Palo Alto has a recognized employer brand of high expectations and driving for excellence. Yet, the City's current marketing needs to be crafted with more compelling content to narrate the "Team Palo Alto" story. Going forward, there is an opportunity to create captivating City job webpages and produce multimedia marketing materials that highlight the advantages and prospects of being a part of the City of Palo Alto workforce.

Palo Alto has a full array of services with a breadth of corresponding jobs that could be better profiled to build interest. Currently, the City's career web pages are informative, but don't paint an impactful picture and meaningful connection of working for Palo Alto. Developing a recruitment marketing strategy centered on employment branding, including active storytelling extolling Palo Alto's "why" on the City's social media sites highlighting employee work and department accomplishments, will support the targeted advertising and candidate sourcing.

## #5 -- Recruitment Process
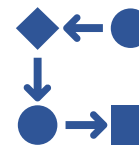
Streamlining and refining the recruitment process is crucial for the City. This involves re-engineering the process to enhance efficiency and accelerate the time-to-hire. One key metric in this endeavor is the "Time to Fill," which measures the duration from the creation of a job requisition to the signing of an offer letter. Palo Alto's "Time to Fill" metric (125 days) is slightly better than the national public sector average of 130 days, but there is room for improvement. Moving with speed to hire is critical to being able to keep candidates through the hiring process in this highly competitive time.

Departments also seek better communication and more speed in processing recruitments. Departments expressed significant frustration with the time elapsed between the selection of a final candidate and the completion of the offer letter process, impacting the determination of start dates. In response to feedback received during the assessment, the Human Resources staff has already implemented some improvements. Specific recommendations for process enhancements are detailed in Appendix A of this report. Capturing data about the different "gates" in the recruitment process to monitor the efficiency of the recruitment process will also be critical including the ability

to review this data by department.  The ultimate goal of these efforts is to optimize the recruitment process, providing a smoother, faster, and more effective experience for HR, hiring managers, and candidates.

## #6 -- Candidate Experience

Presently, due to the workload and available tools, active communication with candidates is not consistently delivered. A "Secret Shopper" test conducted during the study revealed that after receiving an initial email acknowledging receipt of the application, no further communication to the candidate occurred over the next six weeks. In today's competitive job market, candidates expect active communication and engagement throughout the recruitment process. Without it, they may assume they were not selected and move on to other opportunities.

To attract and retain top talent, it is imperative to treat candidates as valued future employees and provide transparent and supportive interactions throughout the recruitment process. This includes regular updates on the status of their application, timely responses to inquiries, and clear communication about the next steps in the hiring process. By prioritizing the candidate experience, Palo Alto can enhance its reputation as an employer of choice and strengthen its ability to attract and retain top talent.

## #7 – Build a Pipeline of Talent
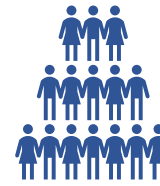
Nurturing talent within local government is essential for the sustainable development and effectiveness of municipalities. Professional development and growth for current staff is key. Externally, building awareness of the opportunities available in local government is crucial, as many individuals may not be aware of the diverse range of fulfilling careers that exist within cities. Palo Alo has a strong foundation in place for continued investments in internships, apprenticeships, and partnerships with educational institutions and community organizations.  These programs are an excellent way to expose students and professionals to the inner workings of local government and provide them with valuable hands-on experience, especially for Police, Fire, Public Works, and Utilities. This not only benefits the individuals involved but also fosters a continuous pipeline of skilled individuals who are knowledgeable about the specific needs and challenges of their community.  Moreover, investing in programs to develop and grow talent locally ensures that municipalities have a pool of skilled professionals who understand the unique dynamics of the area.

### *Conclusion*
This assessment of Palo Alto's recruitment program provides findings, data, and thirty-one recommendations for a Recruitment Strategic Plan.  With additional investment and expertise, Palo Alto can upgrade its recruitment operation in the short run and transform it, in the long run, to reel in excellent employees to support high-quality services to its community.

# SECTION 2 - TRENDS AND CURRENT LANDSCAPE

## RECRUITMENT 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 lives. Faced with this, many public employers are struggling to retain and hire key staff for important positions. The City of Palo Alto is no exception.  Below are key data points with the majority from NEOGOV's report, "2023 *The Quiet Crisis in the Public Sector*".

### RECRUITMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

✓ Long-term trends, including aging populations, the increasing participation of Gen Z in the workforce, greater workforce diversity, and the rise of hybrid and remote work, are transforming recruiting needs and labor pools for government services. (McKinsey & Company)

✓ **55%** decrease in the number of applicants per public sector job since 2019.

✓ **78%** increase in the number of public sector job openings since 2020.

✓ On average nationally, local government recruitments are receiving an average of 14.3 applications per job opening.

✓ Most difficult public sector jobs to fill nationally:  law enforcement, engineering & planning, trades/utilities, information technology.

## PUBLIC SECTOR JOB MARKET
### More openings, less applications

SINCE 2019 the number of **APPLICATIONS** per job has decreased by **55%**

SINCE 2020 the number of **JOB OPENINGS** has increased by **78%**

SINCE 2020 the number of **APPLICANTS** has remained *STAGNANT*

### CANDIDATES' VIEWS

✓ 80% of job seekers expect the application process to take no more than 30 minutes.

✓ Candidates want career development and flexible career pathways.

✓ By the day after a candidate submits an application, 60% expect to receive an automated email, 27% expect a personal email, and 11% a phone call.

✓ A total of 73% said they assume they have been rejected (and will look elsewhere) if they don't receive an update within two weeks after they apply.

✓ Candidates are seeking flexible work schedules and the ability to work hybrid.

Metrics and consistent measurements of phases of the recruitment process are important to be able to track Palo Alto's progress over time and for potential comparison to other organizations as well. There are two key metrics that Palo Alto currently tracks: (1) Time to Fill and (2) Time to Hire. As outlined below, these metrics need review and refinement. More information and recommendations regarding metrics are found later in the report.
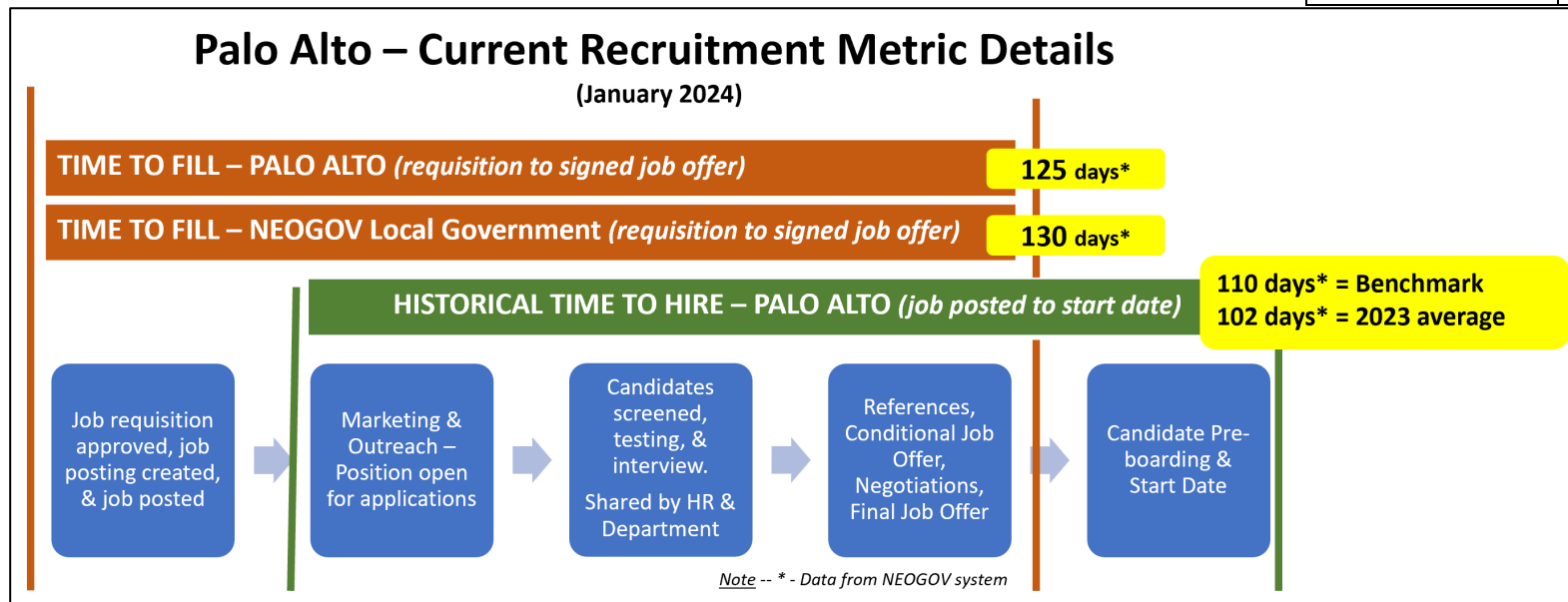
**TIME TO FILL METRIC** -- The **"Time to Fill"** metric starts from the moment an agency decides to hire for a position — that is, the moment a job requisition is created and approved for a recruitment to begin and is completed at the time that an offer letter is signed. It tells an organization of the amount of time that it takes to fill a position from beginning to job offer. NEOGOV and Palo Alto measure this time frame the same (see chart on next page). Table A shows NEOGOV's 2020 national data of *Time to Fill* averages for different sectors. Palo Alto's *Time to Fill* metric is slightly better at 125 days than the national public sector average of 130 days. However, the hiring speed of the private sector is substantially less at 36 days on average nationally. Hiring speed is a critical area of improvement for all local agencies including Palo Alto.

| TABLE A - TIME TO FILL METRIC | |
|---|---|
| *2020 NEOGOV Industry Averages* | |
| *Source: NEOGOV Time to Hire Report 2020 [Link]* | |
| Local Governments | 130 days |
| **PALO ALTO - CURRENT** | **125 days** |
| Educational institutions | 119 days |
| State Governments | 96 days |
| Private Sector | 36 days |

**TIME TO HIRE METRIC** -- The **"Time to Hire"** measurement is slightly narrower than the "Time to Fill". The Time to Hire" focuses on from the time the job is publicly opened with some variations. For Palo Alto, the HR Department tracks "Time to Hire" from the time that the job is posted to the actual start date.

Table B shows the City's historical performance of "Time to Hire" as outlined as "Key Performance Measurements" in the annual budget. Not surprisingly, the *Time to Hire* metric for Palo Alto has increased since 2021 as the City has experienced higher turnover, new positions, and restoration of positions in response to the pandemic's economic and societal shifts.

| TABLE B - TIME TO HIRE METRIC | |
|---|---|
| *Palo Alto Budget - History Key Performance Measurements* | |
| 2018 - Actuals | 103 days |
| 2019 - Actuals | 98 days |
| 2020 - Actuals | 99 days |
| 2021 - Actuals | 85 days |
| 2022 - Actual | 101 days |
| **2023 - Benchmark** | **110 days** |



Palo Alto – Current Recruitment Metric Details (January 2024)

TIME TO FILL – PALO ALTO (requisition to signed job offer)  **125 days***

TIME TO FILL – NEOGOV Local Government (requisition to signed job offer)  **130 days***

HISTORICAL TIME TO HIRE – PALO ALTO (job posted to start date)

**110 days* = Benchmark**
**102 days* = 2023 average**

Job requisition approved, job posting created, & job posted → Marketing & Outreach – Position open for applications → Candidates screened, testing, & interview. Shared by HR & Department → References, Conditional Job Offer, Negotiations, Final Job Offer → Candidate Pre-boarding & Start Date

*Note -- * - Data from NEOGOV system*

## Citywide Staffing History

The City's staffing levels have fluctuated greatly during the last four years while the organization navigated the economic changes brought on by the pandemic. The chart below provides a summary of key events and staffing changes over the past 5 years and how these implications have impacted new positions and recruitment workload for HR. It is important to note that the work for HR in public agencies dramatically increased with the arrival of COVID-19 and the implementation of various pandemic impacts. This created a perfect storm for HR. Palo Alto HR leadership and staff focused on responding to COVID safety protocols and remote work for employees, concession bargaining, position freezes, and layoffs. As the City emerged from the height of the pandemic, new negotiations were completed that focused on major retention investments in salary and benefits, plus the scoping and hiring of new employees as the organization began to rebuild services and associated staffing levels.

✓ Recruiting is still impacted by peak workloads of new positions due to the City's restoration budgets of the last two years. While positions have been approved, the new positions have not all been filled at this time.

✓ With the separation of employees and new positions approved, there are also internal promotions occurring which fills one position and then creates a new vacancy. This is the domino effect that happens in recruiting.

✓ From the four years of FY 19/20 to FY 22/23, the City was also experiencing significant employee separations, retirements, or layoffs. Currently, the separations for full-time staff are stabilizing lower which is probably partly due to new contracts and compensation approved in June 2023.
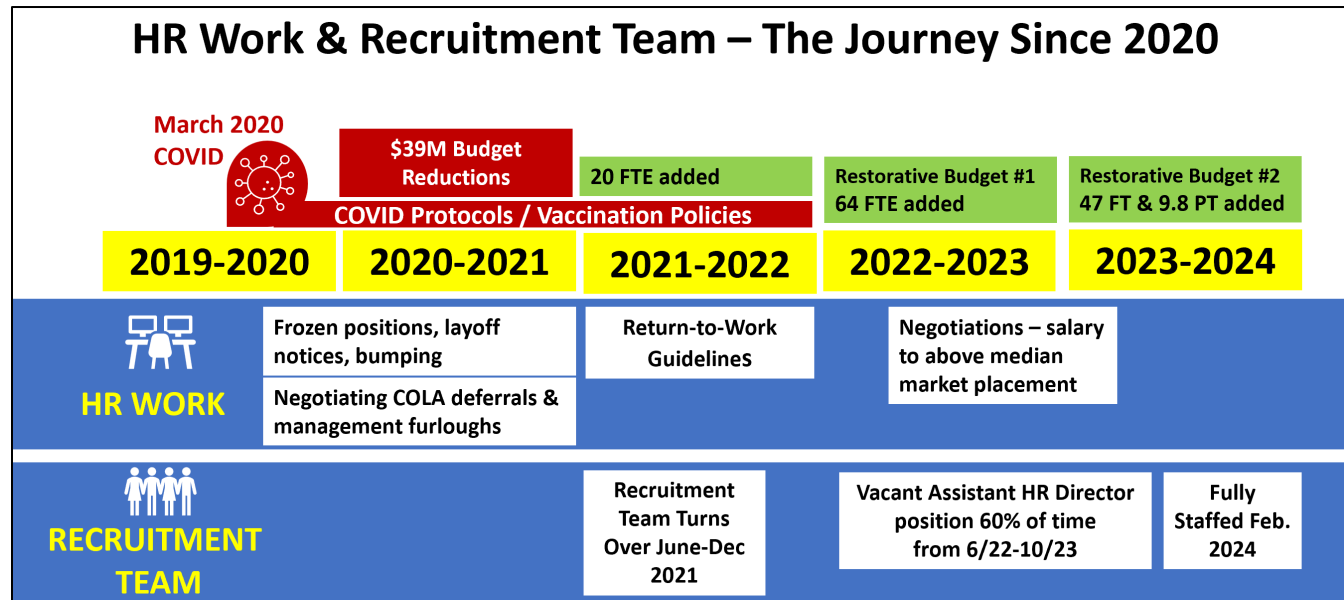
| | FY 19/20 | FY 20/21 | FY 21/22 | FY 22/23 | FY 23/24 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Key Milestones / Events** | ▪ *March 2020 Pandemic Hits* <br>▪ *HR implements health orders* | ▪ *$39M General Fund reduction* <br>▪ *Froze positions; HR led layoff notices & bumping* <br>▪ *HR negotiated COLA deferrals & furlough for management* | ▪ *Eliminated vacant frozen positions; layoffs continued.* <br>▪ *HR enforcing COVID & vaccination rules.* <br>▪ *HR develops return-to-work guidelines* <br>▪ *Entire Recruitment Team turns over.* | ▪ *First restorative budget for the City.* <br>▪ *Added back positions.* | ▪ *Reinvestment in services continues; add back positions.* <br>▪ *Negotiations to above median market placement.* <br>▪ *HR Recruitment Team nearly fully staffed – 02/2024.* |
| # of City Staff (FTE) | 1,034 | 1,034 | 956 | 1,018 | 1,063 |
| Reductions in Staff | 0 | Froze 76 positions | 78.85 | 2 | 2 |
| New Positions | 0 | 0 | 20 | 63.85 | 47.25 FT 9.84 PT |
| Employee Separations (Full-time Staff) | 82 | 98 | 113 | 90 | 33 |
| Employee Separations (Part-time Staff) | 120 | 64 | 86 | 85 | 70 |
| Overall New Hires | 169 | 78 | 228 | 227 | 126 |

*Source: Data provided by HR Staff*

## HR & Recruitment Staffing

While facing increased recruitment needs, the HR Department experienced loss of its recruitment staff.  (From our work with other public agencies, turnover in HR and specifically in recruitment divisions has been trying, but sadly a common situation in the last few years.)

- The City's Chief People Officer retired in June 2022 and the Assistant HR Director was promoted.   The Assistant Director position was vacant 60% of the time from June 2022 to October 2023.  This loss of management capacity created overall workload impacts and time delays.

- In the last 5 years, 63% of HR Department employees that separated from City service were from the Recruitment/Selection Division.

- The entire Recruitment/Selection Division turned over between June 2021 and December 2021.  Today, the Recruitment Division is almost completely staffed.  To augment staffing, the department has brought on outside recruiters and part-time staff to add capacity and assist with the workload.

- A key recruitment position has been vacant since July 2021 (after numerous failed recruitments) and was just filled in February 2024.

- While the new team is characterized by positivity and hard work, they lack extensive and seasoned experience in recruitments. To enhance the credibility and validity of the division's efforts, there is a pressing need for increased high-level HR recruitment expertise and management oversight.

### HR Work & Recruitment Team – The Journey Since 2020

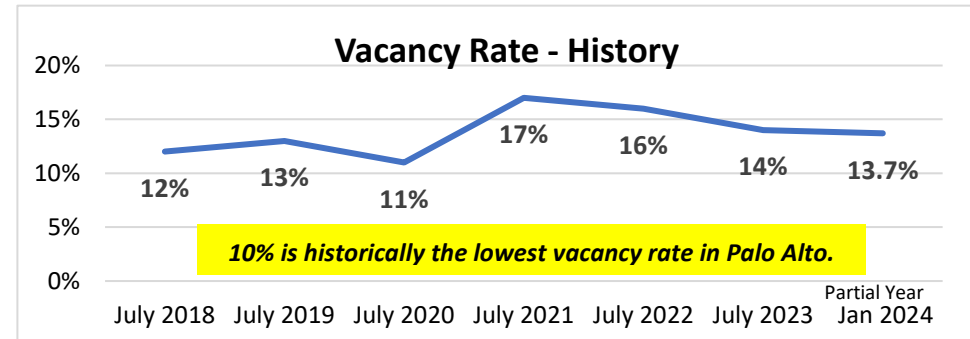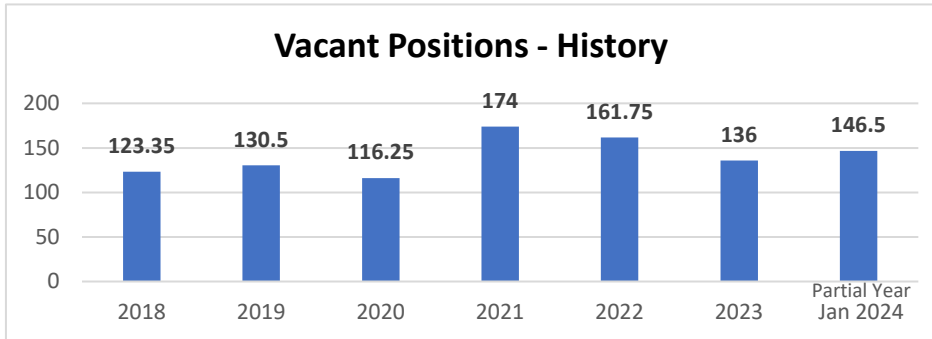| | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 | 2021-2022 | 2022-2023 | 2023-2024 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **March 2020 COVID** | | **$39M Budget Reductions** | **20 FTE added** | **Restorative Budget #1 64 FTE added** | **Restorative Budget #2 47 FT & 9.8 PT added** |
| | | **COVID Protocols / Vaccination Policies** | | | |
| **HR WORK** | | Frozen positions, layoff notices, bumping | Return-to-Work Guidelines | Negotiations – salary to above median market placement | |
| | | Negotiating COLA deferrals & management furloughs | | | |
| **RECRUITMENT TEAM** | | | Recruitment Team Turns Over June-Dec 2021 | Vacant Assistant HR Director position 60% of time from 6/22-10/23 | Fully Staffed Feb. 2024 |

## Human Resource Liaison Program

In the Fall of 2021, HR created a Human Resources Liaison (HRL) program to expedite hiring by formally utilizing/partnering with department staff to work on recruitments in conjunction with HR. The pilot program was from November 2021 to March 2022 and the full citywide rollout from March 2022 to December 2022. The initial program with eleven (11) HRLs helped reduce recruitment process time by about 30%.  Since that time, the HRL program has suffered due to the loss of recruitment management staff to provide oversight, direction, and management plus staff turnover in departments.

The HRL program, while developed as the right concept and approach to recruitment services, continues to operate in its infancy and building stage. It is also important to note that the HRL program takes management oversight, training, and active partnership and engagement from centralized senior recruitment staff.  A new certification program underway by HR will provide different levels of trained HRLs to provide greater empowerment to departments and better clarity for the sharing of roles and responsibilities related to recruitments between central HR and the departmental HRLs.

The City's vacancy rate and vacant number of positions have not returned to pre-pandemic patterns at this time.  This is not surprising since the City has added significant new positions in the last two fiscal years to rebuild service levels and staffing while employees were still exiting the workforce.  Below are charts showing the history of vacancies, vacancy rate, and employee separations.
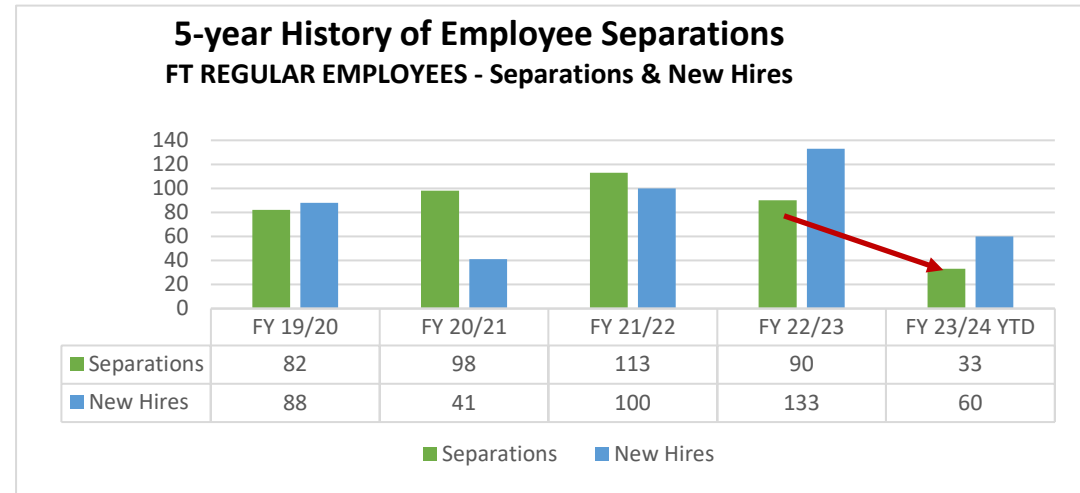
**Vacant Positions - History**

| Year | Value |
|------|-------|
| 2018 | 123.35 |
| 2019 | 130.5 |
| 2020 | 116.25 |
| 2021 | 174 |
| 2022 | 161.75 |
| 2023 | 136 |
| Partial Year Jan 2024 | 146.5 |

**Vacancy Rate - History**

| Month | Rate |
|-------|------|
| July 2018 | 12% |
| July 2019 | 13% |
| July 2020 | 11% |
| July 2021 | 17% |
| July 2022 | 16% |
| July 2023 | 14% |
| Partial Year Jan 2024 | 13.7% |

*10% is historically the lowest vacancy rate in Palo Alto.*

### Key Points from Vacancy Charts

✓ Vacancy rates are beginning to recover from the high years of 2021 and 2022; however, Palo Alto has not returned to pre-pandemic vacancy or recruitment times.

✓ HR staff reported that the lowest historical vacancy rate for Palo Alto was 10%.

✓ Employee retention rates are higher; for the first six months of FY 23/24, there have only been 33 separations, a trending reduction for the year.

**5-year History of Employee Separations**
**FT REGULAR EMPLOYEES - Separations & New Hires**

| | FY 19/20 | FY 20/21 | FY 21/22 | FY 22/23 | FY 23/24 YTD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Separations | 82 | 98 | 113 | 90 | 33 |
| New Hires | 88 | 41 | 100 | 133 | 60 |

### Part-time Employees

The City currently has 506 part-time positions totaling 99.58 FTEs.

During the 2021 reduction in force, a large portion of the City's part-time positions were eliminated.  As the City has built back operations (reopening libraries and recreational facilities), this part-time workforce is being brought back.  This also represents a significant impact on recruitment operations.  While the departments with large part-time staff (Community Services and Library Services), assist with these recruitments, this rebuild plus routine seasonal hiring creates additional work for the HR Recruitment Team.  HR staff reported that hiring seasonal staff in 2023 was particularly challenging.

*Partial Year*

## January 2024 Data -- Vacant Positions By Departments

As of January 2024, the vacancy rate for the City was 13.7% with 146.5 vacant positions. Yet, the overall City vacancy rate can hide vacancy impacts being faced by individual departments.  While generally the focus for recruitment priorities should be placed on those departments with higher vacancy rates, it is also important to understand the deeper operational needs of specific positions that may also need to be reviewed.  Clear and regular recruitment strategy sessions need to be held to determine which positions are important to departments to fill and which positions are important to the City overall rather than "first in and first out".

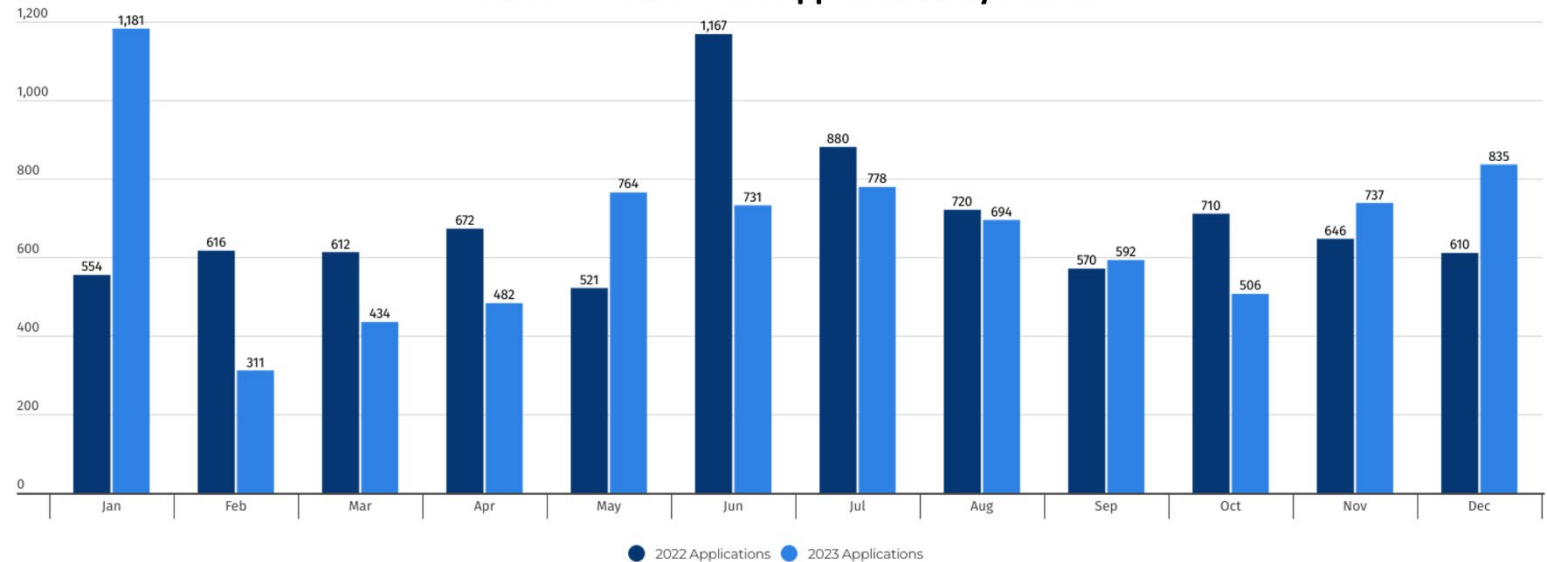| VACANCY INFORMATION  BY DEPARTMENT – FULL-TIME POSITIONS (January 2024 data)*pending final review | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | FTE COUNT & VACANCY RATE | | VACANT POSITION PROFILE | | | RECRUITMENT STATUS OF VACANT POSITIONS | | |
| Department | Total FTE (FY 23/24 Budget) | Vacancy Rate Full-Time | New FT Positions FY 23/24 | Current FT Vacant Positions | Total FT Vacant Positions | Requisition In Progress/Open Recruitment | Position Filled | Requisition Not Submitted* |
| Administrative Services | 57.5 | 12% | 1 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| City Attorney's Office | 13.0 | 8% | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| City Clerk's Office | 5.0 | 40% | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| City Manager's Office | 13.8 | 13% | 0 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1 | 0 | 0.75 |
| Community Services | 79.9 | 4% | 2.75 | 0 | 2.75 | 1 | 0 | 1.75 |
| Fire | 110.0 | 13% | 2 | 12 | 14 | 4 | 0 | 10 |
| Human Resources | 19.0 | 16% | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Information Technology | 34.0 | 9% | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Library Services | 49.0 | 16% | 4 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 5 |
| Office of Transportation | 15.0 | 27% | 2 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Planning & Development | 59.0 | 14% | 3 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| Police | 144.0 | 13% | 5 | 13 | 18 | 15 | 0 | 3 |
| Public Works | 206.0 | 17% | 4 | 30 | 34 | 19 | 0 | 15 |
| Utilities | 258.0 | 16% | 2 | 38 | 40 | 15 | 2 | 23 |
| TOTAL | 1063.2 | 13.7% | 29.75 20% | 116.5 80% | 146.5 100% | 65 44% | 10 7% | 71.5 49% |

- **13.7%** is the City Vacancy Rate as of January 2024.

- **20%** of vacant positions are new positions added to the budget in July (FY 23/24 budget).  The restoration of positions is adding to the recruitment workload.

- **43%** of Departments are experiencing a vacancy rate of over 15% which creates larger impacts on services, morale, and productivity.

- **44%** of the vacant positions are currently being recruited for by the HR Team and HRLs.

- **49%** of the vacant positions are in a stage of "No Requisition Submitted" which means that departments have not been requested to start the recruitment process.  There are a variety of reasons why the requisition has not been submitted.  For example, a department may be underfilling a position, analyzing whether to restructure a vacant position, engaging in meet and confer with labor, utilizing part-time workers on an interim basis to perform the work, or re-purposing labor costs for other alternative staffing strategies such as the use of temporary employees or consulting services.  Also, a department may be keeping a position vacant for salary savings.   Through this assessment and report creation, the HR team found data inconsistencies which are currently being resolved.  This report shows the current state of data prior to implementation of go-forward fixes.
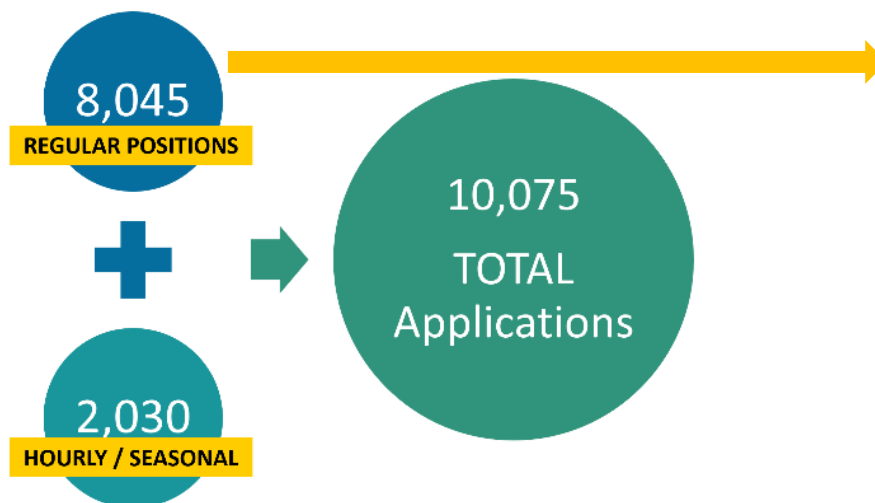
January of 2023 started very strong with the highest number of applications due to the annual recruitment for the Firefighter/EMT resulting in 522 applications. The application numbers for February through June of 2023 were lower than in 2022 but became stronger in the second half of the calendar year. For 2022, the City had 8,278 total applications for regular positions, and in 2023, the number decreased slightly to 8,045 - a 3% reduction.

A more detailed look at applications in 2023 shows a total of 10,075 applications comprised of 8,045 applications for regular/full-time positions and 2,030 applications for part-time and seasonal recruitments. Yet, as staff reviews applications for completeness, meeting minimum qualifications, and sorting to those that are most qualified, the application pool shrinks dramatically from 8,045 to 3,515 (43%). This is a natural vetting process, yet it means that more applications are required to find qualified candidates.

**2022 and 2023 Total Applications by Month**



Legend: ● 2022 Applications ● 2023 Applications

| Month | 2022 Applications | 2023 Applications |
|-------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Jan | 554 | 1,181 |
| Feb | 616 | 311 |
| Mar | 612 | 434 |
| Apr | 672 | 482 |
| May | 521 | 764 |
| Jun | 1,167 | 731 |
| Jul | 880 | 778 |
| Aug | 720 | 694 |
| Sep | 570 | 592 |
| Oct | 710 | 506 |
| Nov | 646 | 737 |
| Dec | 610 | 835 |

## 2023 Application Profile



8,045 REGULAR POSITIONS
+
2,030 HOURLY / SEASONAL
= 10,075 TOTAL Applications

## Total Application ≠ Qualified Applicants

*Regular Positions Only; Calendar Year*



**8,045** - 2023 Total Applications (Regular)

Less 604: Incomplete / Duplicate Applications

Less 1,464: Not Meeting Minimum Qualifications

Less 2,462: Not Best Qualified; Not Interviewed

**3,515** – 2023 Qualified Applications

Only **43%** of applications were qualified for consideration
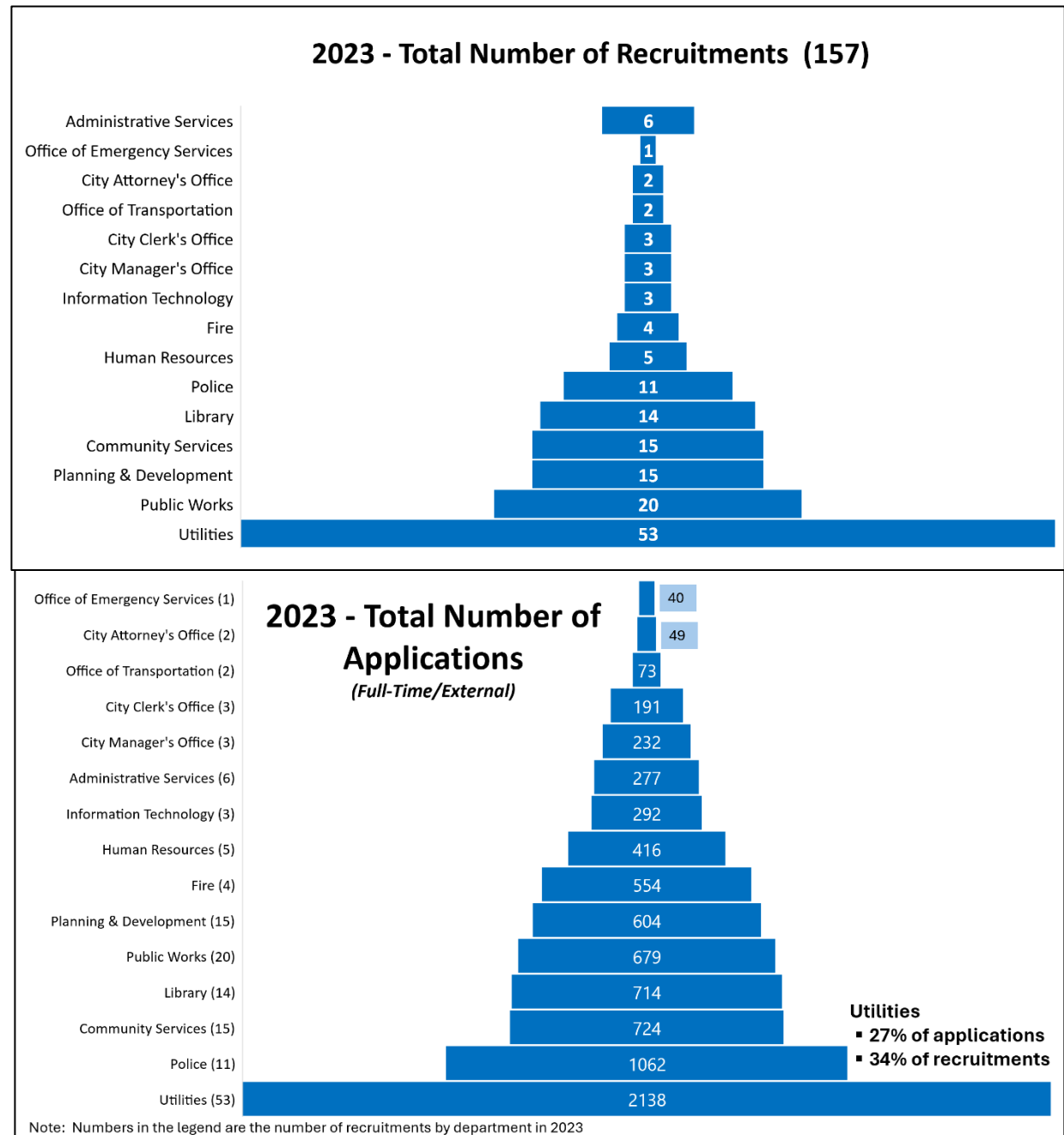
## Positions Recruited For

In the year 2023, there were 157 full-time positions filled through recruitments. However, this number is underrepresented. Multiple postings of the same position (including unsuccessful recruitments) are not listed separately and are therefore invisible. With frequency, a position is posted and then reopened when not enough qualified candidates are secured. This creates double work for Human Resources and the departments and extends the timeline and vacancy impacts in the City. The data for multiple postings is not present at this time. (The City also does not utilize eligibility lists so each vacant position requires a new recruitment.)

Utilities is the largest recruitment customer with 53 recruitments (34%).

## Applications Received by Department

In the year 2023, there were 8,045 applications submitted for full-time positions. Utilities received 2,138 applications representing 27% of the City's total applications.

**2023 - Total Number of Recruitments (157)**

| Department | Recruitments |
|---|---|
| Administrative Services | 6 |
| Office of Emergency Services | 1 |
| City Attorney's Office | 2 |
| Office of Transportation | 2 |
| City Clerk's Office | 3 |
| City Manager's Office | 3 |
| Information Technology | 3 |
| Fire | 4 |
| Human Resources | 5 |
| Police | 11 |
| Library | 14 |
| Community Services | 15 |
| Planning & Development | 15 |
| Public Works | 20 |
| Utilities | 53 |

**2023 - Total Number of Applications**
*(Full-Time/External)*

| Department | Applications |
|---|---|
| Office of Emergency Services (1) | 40 |
| City Attorney's Office (2) | 49 |
| Office of Transportation (2) | 73 |
| City Clerk's Office (3) | 191 |
| City Manager's Office (3) | 232 |
| Administrative Services (6) | 277 |
| Information Technology (3) | 292 |
| Human Resources (5) | 416 |
| Fire (4) | 554 |
| Planning & Development (15) | 604 |
| Public Works (20) | 679 |
| Library (14) | 714 |
| Community Services (15) | 724 |
| Police (11) | 1062 |
| Utilities (53) | 2138 |

**Utilities**
- 27% of applications
- 34% of recruitments

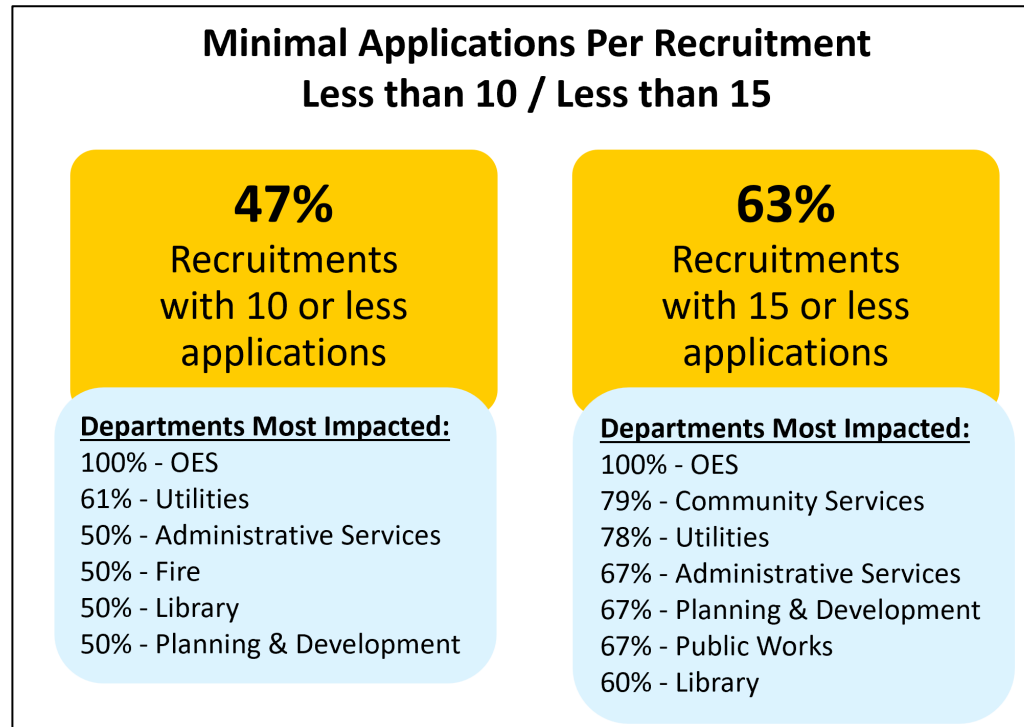Note: Numbers in the legend are the number of recruitments by department in 2023

## Minimal Applications Received by Departments

The overall number of applications received is an initial lens to review recruitment activity, but the most important question is how many of the applications were deemed qualified for consideration and inclusion in an assessment/interview process.   How much choice did the hiring departments have?  The numbers become more revealing with this analysis.

- 47% of the recruitment had less than 10 "qualified" applications.

- 63% of the recruitments had less than 15 "qualified" applications.

All City departments could use more qualified applications to choose from for future employees.  The chart below shows the most impacted departments.  Overall, there is a need for greater marketing and advertising to help locate more qualified candidates for consideration by departments to join Team Palo Alto.

**Minimal Applications Per Recruitment**
**Less than 10 / Less than 15**

**47%**
Recruitments
with 10 or less
applications

**Departments Most Impacted:**
100% - OES
61% - Utilities
50% - Administrative Services
50% - Fire
50% - Library
50% - Planning & Development

**63%**
Recruitments
with 15 or less
applications

**Departments Most Impacted:**
100% - OES
79% - Community Services
78% - Utilities
67% - Administrative Services
67% - Planning & Development
67% - Public Works
60% - Library

# SECTION 3 – FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Recruitment processes have evolved significantly in the last 15 years, leveraging technology to streamline operations and enhance candidate experiences. Automated applicant tracking systems reduce the manual workload for recruiters. Moreover, the proliferation of online platforms and social media networks enables recruiters to reach a broader pool of candidates, fostering diversity and inclusion. Additionally, the adoption of video interviewing tools facilitates remote assessments, enabling recruiters to evaluate candidates regardless of geographical and timing constraints. These advancements not only expedite the hiring process but also promote transparency and accessibility, and ultimately result in better matches between candidates and employers.

Efficient and effective recruitment processes are crucial because filling vacancies promptly is essential. Through MRG's analysis and from discussions with HR and various departments, examples of success and areas for enhancements were identified. Prolonged timelines and communication disconnections between HR and line departments are causing frustration and inefficiencies. Overall, prioritizing strategy, efficiency, flexibility, active management, and empowerment within the recruitment process can address these concerns.

## WORKING WELL

**Recruitment Staff**
- New HR recruitment staff brings fresh perspectives, dedication, and positive energy to the recruitment arena. Central HR staff and HR Liaison recruiters take genuine pleasure in meeting candidates, investing time to truly understand them and support their application process.

- The HR Liaison program is invaluable, though additional staffing would optimize its effectiveness. Departments are seeking more training, support, and empowerment for the Liaisons. Currently, Departments are adding more HRLs and HR has launched a more comprehensive training program with different levels of differentiation and expertise which will then be linked with greater authority and responsibility.

- The Recruitment/Selection team has fostered a culture of creative innovation. They experiment with new ideas and tools, like HireVue, which have proven successful. Occasionally, trial programs may be less successful, as seen with the LinkedIn advertising pilot in 2017, which yielded few candidates and no hires. This culture of experimentation and entrepreneurship is vital in the ever-changing recruitment landscape.

**Technology & Tools**
- Tools like HireVue (on-demand candidate interviews) streamline the interview process by allowing candidates to record their answers to questions and then individual assessors can review the interview asynchronously.

- Palo Alto has embraced a digital cloud application tracking system with best practice components through NEOGOV which facilitates administrative tasks and recruitment processing. This digital system automatically posts jobs on numerous job boards. The City has creatively leveraged NEOGOV's modules to create digital interview packets. Through NEOGOV's *OnBoard* module, E-offers and paper requirements are gathered and processed digitally. Palo Alto has completely shifted to a paperless recruitment process.

**Marketing & Branding**
- Many public agencies continue to post complete job descriptions as their "advertisement" for open jobs. Public agency job descriptions are quite lengthy and not inviting to candidates. Several years ago, Palo Alto moved to creating more enticing job postings. Departments help create a summary of the key aspects of the position including ideal candidate descriptions and the "why" of what makes the position enticing. The job postings are branded with Palo Alto's colors and themes as well.

- Communications staff has supported the recruitment team in various ways including creating graphics and posting information about jobs on the City's social media sites, pushing career information and jobs through a Motivation Monday series on LinkedIn, and highlighting jobs in the City's weekly Uplift Local newsletter to promote new postings or listings that are closing soon.

**Investment in Compensation & Benefits**

- The City strengthened its pay by shifting the compensation structure to above-median market placement for salaries. Based on this shift, a number of classifications received a 10-20% shift in pay. Approved 4% COLAs for FY 23/24 and FY 24/25.

- Investments have been made in enhancing benefits (both flexibility and value) including (1) allowing employees to take compensation increases for healthcare to decrease their premium contributions or to increase their monthly pay, (2) implementing paid parental leave for 6 weeks; (3) piloting a childcare subsidy program with City contribution of $5,000 per year, and (4) piloting opportunity for Palo Alto employees to enroll their children in Palo Alto Unified School District.

- By recognizing the shift to a more mobile workforce, the City now offers (1) remote work offered for 3 days/week as standard if applicable for the position; (2) alternative work schedules with 9/80 as a norm, and (3) 4/10 schedule available for maintenance and other staff through a review process.

| *Above median market for salaries* | *Flexible Benefits* |
|---|---|
| *Remote Work Options* | *9/80 & 4/10 Work Schedules* |

## KEY FINDINGS - OVERALL

| KEY FINDING #1 | KEY FINDING #2 | KEY FINDING #3 | KEY FINDING #4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Need to boost the new HR Team's management support, capacity & capabilities.* | *Shift from general marketing to active advertising & candidate sourcing.* | *Streamline processes and improve data/reporting for greater efficiency & effectiveness.* | *Continue strategic initiatives to build employee pipeline & opportunities.* |
| Need more strategy and management for leadership of the recruitment program. Add Recruitment Division Manager. | Using City social media feeds and standard job board posting. Need more qualified and interested candidates to apply for positions. | Need more communication with departments as business partners and engagement with candidates for improved hiring experience. | Review hiring requirements; shift to more skills based hiring versus degree and local government experience. |
| HR Recruitment Team is just returning to full capacity. Committed and caring HR Team; growing in their experience. | Minimal direct advertising for positions and minimal active candidate sourcing. Customer communication & experience can be improved. | Streamline recruitment process; front load critical path decisions; re-engineer with cross-functional Talent Strike Teams. Constantly evaluate, iterate, and improve. | Continue to foster internship and fellowship programs to build a pipeline for students to enter a local government career. |
| HR Liaison Program is the right concept; still in its infancy & rebuilding. | Need more compelling sites and content to tell Palo Alto's story as an Employer of Choice. | Strong software platforms in place; need better integration & data for management decision-making. | Build additional apprenticeship programs and partner with junior colleges and universities. |
| Add active marketing expertise to the HR Team; add data analytical support in HR. | No systems or infrastructure in place for active advertising and candidate sourcing. Will need to build systems and content. | Limited metrics and key performance indicators to monitor progress and adjust for improvements. | Build local outreach programs for positions requiring more career technical backgrounds. |

After a comprehensive review of the City's recruitment processes and systems, the following overall areas of improvement are recommended:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Candidate Experience | 7. Recruitment Management Expertise |
| 2. Hiring Manager/Department Communication & Partnership | 8. Recruitment Metrics |
| 3. Branding as Employer of Choice | 9. Internships, Apprenticeships & Partnerships |
| 4. Software & Tools | 10. Screen for Skills not Requirements |
| 5. Recruitment Dashboards & Data Integration | 11. MOU Process Constraints |
| 6. Human Resources Liaison Program | 12. Recruitment Process Improvements |

1. **Candidate Experience:** Today's candidates have high expectations for active and authentic communication. Too long of a wait with no communication and the candidate assumes that the position isn't available or there isn't interest in their application … and they move on. The consultant team submitted a "secret shopper" applicant in two recruitments (*Equipment Maintenance Serviceperson* in Public Works and *Water Quality Plant Operator I / Operator Trainee* in Utilities) to gain an understanding of a candidate's experience. Below are the results with more information in Appendix D.

### Secret Shopper Analysis

| Positive Aspects of the Application Process: | Recommendations for Improvement: |
|---|---|
| <ul><li>Easy job discovery on the website.</li><li>Seamless website navigation.</li><li>Clear and accessible HR contact information.</li><li>Transparent salary information is presented prominently at the top.</li><li>Well-defined expectations for the job outlined.</li><li>Receipt of a well-structured confirmation email of application received.</li><li>Appreciation for the immediate follow-up in the application process.</li></ul> | <ul><li>Improve active communication with candidates. Since the first email stating receipt of the application on 12/19/2023, no additional emails have been received as of the end of January.</li><li>Enhance the prominence of the benefits section on the website.</li><li>Include links in the job posting for additional information and explanations.</li><li>Provide further clarification on items that require more explanation, such as work schedule and PERS retirement.</li><li>Add specific guidance for out-of-state applicants or those who need to travel for the position.</li><li>Ensure consistent placement of contact information on every page for easy access to inquiries.</li><li>Integrate a more detailed timeline of the hiring process for applicants' better understanding.</li></ul> |

Providing a high level of candidate communication and engagement requires dedicated time and a strategic approach from recruiters. Traditionally, local government agencies focused solely on selected candidates, neglecting communication with those not chosen to save time and mitigate liability. Unfortunately, this approach misses valuable opportunities. Viewing each applicant as a potential future employee, regardless of selection for a specific role, allows the city to cultivate interest in future opportunities and establish a following of candidates interested in working for Palo Alto. As Maya Angelou's quote emphasizes, it's about how you make people feel and this is a critical component for successful employee recruiting. This marks the initial step in transforming candidates into future employees.

> *"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."*
> -Maya Angelou

2. **Hiring Manager / Department Communication & Partnership:** Departments expressed a strong desire for improved communication and engagement, particularly with the Hiring Manager, at earlier stages and throughout the recruitment process. Some management personnel are accustomed to regular recruitment and comprehend the process well. Conversely, other hiring managers may only recruit sporadically, perhaps once a year. A best practice involves involving the hiring manager early in the process to discuss the procedure, roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Strategic discussions upfront regarding outreach strategies, targeted marketing ideas, panel composition, timeline, and desired candidate profile are all essential components. More consistent updates and an easy to review recruitment dashboard with details by departments is needed to improve communication and the partnership between HR and the departments.

3. **Branding as Employer of Choice:** Establishing a robust employer brand is crucial for attracting top talent. Palo Alto possesses distinct and compelling assets that can be actively marketed to potential employees. While the City enjoys name recognition and a strong reputation, it remains vital to convey why Palo Alto stands out as an Employer of Choice in a captivating, contemporary, and compelling manner. Additional focus and marketing efforts are necessary to articulate why candidates should aspire to join the Palo Alto team.

4. **Software & Tools**: The HR Team utilizes three main modules within NEOGOV, a comprehensive cloud-based software, for recruitment processes. Firstly, "Insight" serves as NEOGOV's applicant tracking system, enabling HR staff to efficiently screen candidates and maintain active communication throughout the process. Secondly, the "Online Hiring Center" (OHC) empowers department users to create, approve, and manage requisitions, as well as review and screen application materials. HR has adeptly utilized the OHC to generate comprehensive digital interview packets for assessors and candidate information. Lastly, "OnBoard" facilitates the creation of personalized onboard portals, digital paperwork submissions for new hires, and task checklists with automated reminders to streamline onboarding processes. While these modules provide robust functionality, additional features from NEOGOV may further enhance recruitment efforts. For instance, the "Attract" module offers a customer relationship management system to automate recruiting communications and source candidates from past hiring cycles, events, and social media. Additionally, "Analytics & Reporting" which was updated in January 2023 provides comprehensive management reporting, although Palo Alto staff requires more training to fully utilize this module. Additional training by NEOGOV can ensure optimal utilization of all of the software's capabilities.



5. **Recruitment Dashboards & Data Integration:** The absence of an easy-to-access, current, and centralized master recruitment dashboard in Palo Alto is causing communication issues and frustrations within the organization. An overall recruitment dashboard serves as a centralized tool for tracking and managing the various stages of the recruitment process, including candidate status, hand-offs between different stakeholders, and the progression of recruitments through different phases. This communication gap is primarily due to the lack of integration between the City's Applicant Tracking System (NEOGOV) and its financial system (SAP), which houses position control, hiring, and payroll data. There are also some data issues between NEOGOV's modules. Currently, creating a current recruitment vacancy report entails extensive cross-referencing of data from both systems by HR staff, often involving redundant entries and position and vacancy verifications. Compounding this issue is the absence of a Human Resources Information System (HRIS), which would typically integrate with NEOGOV, thereby facilitating seamless data flow between systems. Addressing the challenges posed by data integration issues and the absence of management reports is crucial.
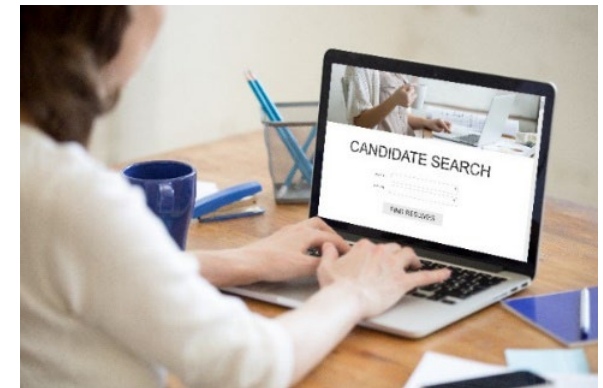
The City anticipates incorporating an HRIS into its upcoming finance system overhaul, slated to commence within the next year. However, based on MRG's experience, such upgrades are intricate, time-consuming endeavors that may take several years to fully implement. Therefore, there is an immediate need for an interim solution to enhance management information and recruitment data accessibility across the organization, including central HR, line departments, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), the City Manager's Office, and the City Council.

6. **Human Resource Liaison Program:** The HRL program acts as a conduit between HR and line departments, aiming to offer additional recruitment support, establish communication channels, and facilitate smoother recruitment and onboarding processes for new hires. Initiated by HR in 2022, the program is undergoing a renewed investment phase. Below are ideas generated during the interview process, with many already in progress:

   - **Invest in Continued Formalized Training for HRLs**: Providing ongoing formal training for Human Resources Liaisons (HRLs) is crucial to ensure they possess the necessary skills and knowledge. HR has recently launched a new HRL certification program.
   - **Enhance Communication and Coordination**: Strengthen communication and coordination between HR and HRLs to promote collaboration and efficiency. Regular gatherings for HRLs can foster camaraderie and knowledge sharing, with meetings held weekly to review and prioritize recruitments, enabling ongoing discussions on recruitment handling at the departmental level.
   - **Utilize HR Staff Expertise**: Leverage HR staff expertise for hard-to-fill or unique positions requiring specialized oversight. HR can also take the lead on positions spanning multiple departments to optimize economies of scale and efficiency.
   - **Create Recruitment Guides**: Enhance HRLs' retention and application of knowledge by providing training materials such as user-friendly scripts, short videos, and one-page cheat sheets derived from the extensive Recruitment Guidebook.

7. **Recruitment Management Expertise:** Adding a Recruitment Division Manager position would significantly enhance the strategic management and effectiveness of the recruitment process. This role would offer expertise, strategic direction, and mentorship vital for navigating the intricacies of modern recruiting. By closely collaborating with department heads and hiring managers, the manager can discern specific hiring needs, tailor recruitment strategies accordingly, and offer guidance on talent acquisition strategies. Additionally, the Manager would provide strategic leadership in devising and executing innovative recruitment initiatives, leveraging their expertise in recruitment trends and technologies to attract top talent effectively. Beyond strategic duties, the Recruitment Division Manager would play a pivotal role in mentoring and developing the recruitment team. Ensuring staff members are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their roles, the Manager would provide training on recruitment best practices, conduct performance evaluations, and foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement within the division and among Human Resource Liaisons.

8. **Recruitment Metrics:** Tracking retention and turnover rates, vacancy rates, and key performance indicators (KPIs) is vital for evaluating recruitment effectiveness and overall HR performance. Establishing specific recruitment-related metrics like time-to-fill, cost-per-hire, and candidate experience allows HR teams to assess performance objectively and identify areas for enhancement. Increasing awareness of these metrics among HR staff and stakeholders promotes transparency and informed decision-making, fostering continuous improvement in recruitment processes. By proactively monitoring and addressing key metrics, organizations can optimize recruitment strategies, reduce turnover, and elevate HR performance. Below are typical recruitment metrics.

| METRICS | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|
| Application Completion Rate | *% of candidates that complete the application process.* |
| Applications per Job Posting | *# of applications per job posting* |
| Time-to-Hire | *Days from job posting to start date.* |
| Time-to- Fill | *Days from opening a requisition for a position, determining recruitment strategy, marketing, to acceptance of offer.* |
| Ad-Cost-to-Hire | *Expenditure per recruitment spent on advertising and outreach.* |
| Source of Hire | *Source of where the candidate learned about the recruitment.* |
| Candidate Experience | *Feedback and survey of candidates through the recruitment process.* |
| Offer Acceptance Rate | *# of candidates that accept an employment offer.* |
| First-Year Attrition Rate | *# of employees that leave during their first year of service.* |

9. **Internships, Apprenticeships & Partnerships:** Palo Alto boasts a rich tradition of fruitful internship programs, a key strategy for attracting and nurturing talent while providing practical experience. These programs also serve as a valuable pipeline for potential future hires. Additionally, Palo Alto has cultivated successful apprenticeships, which present opportunities for further enhancement and expansion. Strengthening partnerships with colleges and universities is instrumental in accessing emerging talent pools, facilitating focused recruitment endeavors, and ensuring a consistent stream of qualified candidates.  It will be important to support these programs to continue to build Palo Alto's talent pipeline.

10. **Screen for Skills Not Requirements:**  Traditionally, many local government jobs have specific requirements such as degrees, supervision, and local government experience.  With today's talent pipeline, there is the need and opportunity to consider candidates who may not possess all desired qualifications but demonstrate strong fundamental skills, the right attitude, and general aptitude, plus a willingness to learn.  By screening our applicant pools differently, we can broaden the candidate pool and uncover hidden potential, ultimately contributing to a more diverse and dynamic workforce.

11. **MOU Process Constraints:** Several items in Palo Alto's Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) constrain flexibility and slow down the recruitment timeline. Below are some of the MOU parameters that were mentioned by staff.  It is important to note that HR staff has tried to negotiate some of these items in the past without success.
    - 10-day Posting Requirement – The SEIU MOU requires a 10-day posting of any position.
    - Internal Candidate Review First – The SEIU MOU requires interviews of internal candidates first if three or more candidates meet the minimal qualifications.  Based on this rule, the City is unable to begin the review of the external candidates until the internal interviews have been completed. Traditionally, this MOU parameter has been interpreted as HR being expected to conduct separate recruitments for each vacancy.  Recently, HR was able to bundle recruitments together for faster processing and greater marketing.  This is a standard practice in many local agencies.
    - SEIU Members on Interview Panels – The SEIU MOU requires a represented employee to sit on an interview panel if a panel interview format is being used.  At times, Human Resources has found it difficult to schedule SEIU representatives which causes delays.
    - Flexible Staffed & Underfilled Positions – The SEIU MOU requires the City to conduct recruitments for flexibly-staffed and underfilled positions, despite having incumbents in the role for some time and thus, meeting the minimum qualifications of the position.  Typically, flexible staff positions are used to designate classifications in a promotional series in which both the entry and journey-level classes are assigned the same kinds of duties, the difference being the range of duties performed, the level of skill required, and the amount of supervision received. Flexible staffing allows departments to hire at the lower-level class in the series, provide on-the-job training, and promote to the next higher level in the series through a non-competitive certification process once the full range of duties is being performed.  This is a standard practice in many local agencies.

12. **Recruitment Process Improvements:**  Streamlining the various phases of the recruitment process is paramount.  As the quote from Boston Consulting Group below states, the recruitment process needs to be simplified with a focus on the candidate.  There are numerous specific suggestions to improve the recruitment process outlined in Appendix A.

> *Our data indicates that candidates' perceptions during the recruitment process significantly impact their decisions. However, many companies still treat recruitment primarily as a corporate procedure, tailored to administrative needs and outdated systems, rather than prioritizing a positive experience for potential employees. Leading employers adopt a zero-based process design, simplifying the process to essential steps and emphasizing the value for the candidate.*
> -Boston Consulting Group

Currently, the City of Palo Alto practices a traditional local government marketing approach. Positions are posted on "GovernmentJobs.com" through NEOGOV as the City's job board -- the number one public sector job board in the nation. The Communications Teams posts information about jobs on the City's social media sites including a Motivation Monday series on LinkedIn. Job listings are included in the City's weekly Uplift Local newsletter to highlight new postings or listings that are closing soon. City Hall lobby screens are actively promoting "we are hiring" messages. Departments utilize professional associations and networks to spread the word about open positions. At this time, limited funding exists to purchase social media advertising or other advertisements. Executive recruitment firms are hired to help market, headhunt, and review candidates at the executive level (Assistant Director, Director, etc.) with separate marketing budgets.

In today's tough talent market, active marketing strategies utilizing digital platforms, modern algorithms, and intentional social media strategies to reach candidates are critical to deliver effective talent outreach efforts. For this study, we have evaluated three key components of marketing and outreach in the talent recruitment arena:

| 1 - Recruiting Strategy | 2 - Employer Branding | 3 - Targeted Advertising & Candidate Sourcing |
| --- | --- | --- |

### 1 - Recruiting Strategy

By combining targeted digital advertising with effective candidate sourcing strategies, organizations can effectively attract, engage, and hire top talent, ultimately contributing to their success. The primary objective of any recruiting strategy is to attract a large number of leads to develop a top-tier talent pool. Leads encompass individuals who have demonstrated interest in the organization through various actions such as participating in talent networking events, visiting the career site, or engaging with existing employees. Through an active digital talent campaign, an employer can turn leads into candidates; candidates into applicants, and finally employees to join the team. The graphic to the right illustrates a recruiting strategy process.
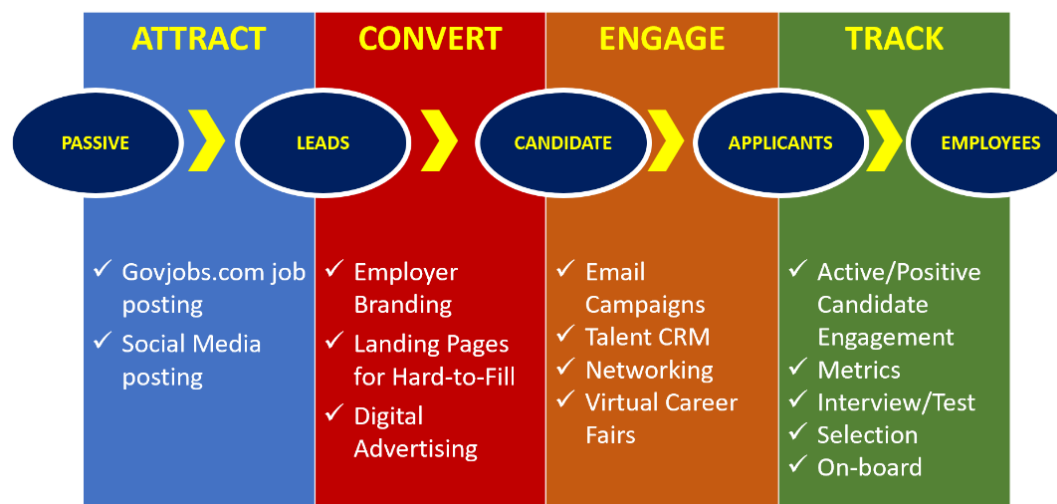
### 2 - Employer Branding

Branding involves shaping and promoting an organization's reputation and identity as an employer. Overall, effective employer branding creates a compelling narrative that resonates with potential candidates, differentiates the organization from competitors, and ultimately helps attract, engage, and retain top talent. To understand Palo Alto's employer branding, the consultant team reviewed the City's Career web pages/sites and social media presence.

| ATTRACT | CONVERT | ENGAGE | TRACK |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| PASSIVE → LEADS | CANDIDATE | APPLICANTS | EMPLOYEES |
| ✓ Govjobs.com job posting<br>✓ Social Media posting | ✓ Employer Branding<br>✓ Landing Pages for Hard-to-Fill<br>✓ Digital Advertising | ✓ Email Campaigns<br>✓ Talent CRM<br>✓ Networking<br>✓ Virtual Career Fairs | ✓ Active/Positive Candidate Engagement<br>✓ Metrics<br>✓ Interview/Test<br>✓ Selection<br>✓ On-board |

**Career Web Pages & Sites**

The City's job opportunities website (https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Human-Resources/Palo-Alto-Careers) is the central location or hub for all of the City's digital marketing campaigns. In Palo Alto, this is called "Careers with the City of Palo Alto". This is the main location that candidates can go to to learn more about the City as an employer. The image to the right shows the current career pages which are clear, traditional, and informational, but not compelling in way to tell the Palo Alto story of being an "Employer of Choice". The following public agencies can be used as examples that showcase a more persuasive style of candidate attraction:
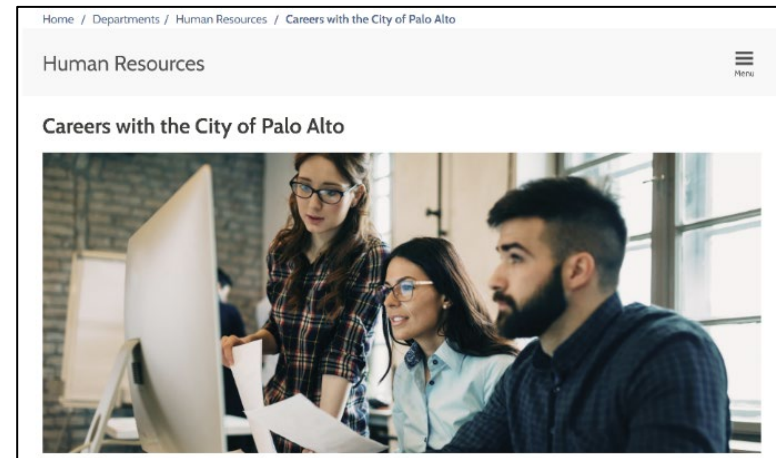
- City of Roseville – Strong primary "Job Opportunities" page with visuals, video, employee profile, an approachable and culture-themed message from the City Manager, and helpful tips for applying. [Link]
- NASA – Site has strong design, compelling story and content explaining the "why" to join NASA as an employee. The site highlights types of positions, benefits, and culture and provides a pleasing interface for viewers. [Career Page Link / 5 Reasons Link]

**Social Media SWOT Assessment**

The consultants reviewed the City's social media accounts to gain an understanding of the City's social media outreach and its impact on Employer Branding. A general SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis was performed in addition to a comparison of other agencies' platforms. Greater detail can be found in Appendix C. The City's social media platforms are reaching numerous audiences including candidates and future employees. In general, there is the opportunity to bring more human elements, employee stories, illustrations of department accomplishments, and a more informal friendly voice to the City's social media conversations.

**Current -- City of Palo Alto's Candidates by Top Sources**

The City's candidate sources are in the graph to the right. This shows that a majority of candidates come from the City's Career Page, signifying that most applicants come from organic traffic. The second is GovernmentJobs.Com which is the public sector jobs board that NEOGOV's applicant tracking system uses to post to. The third top source is Indeed, which is the first top source that does not solely depend on the candidate to find the job on the City of Palo Alto's main webpage. *Data: NEOGOV Analytics dashboard provided by the City of Palo Alto*
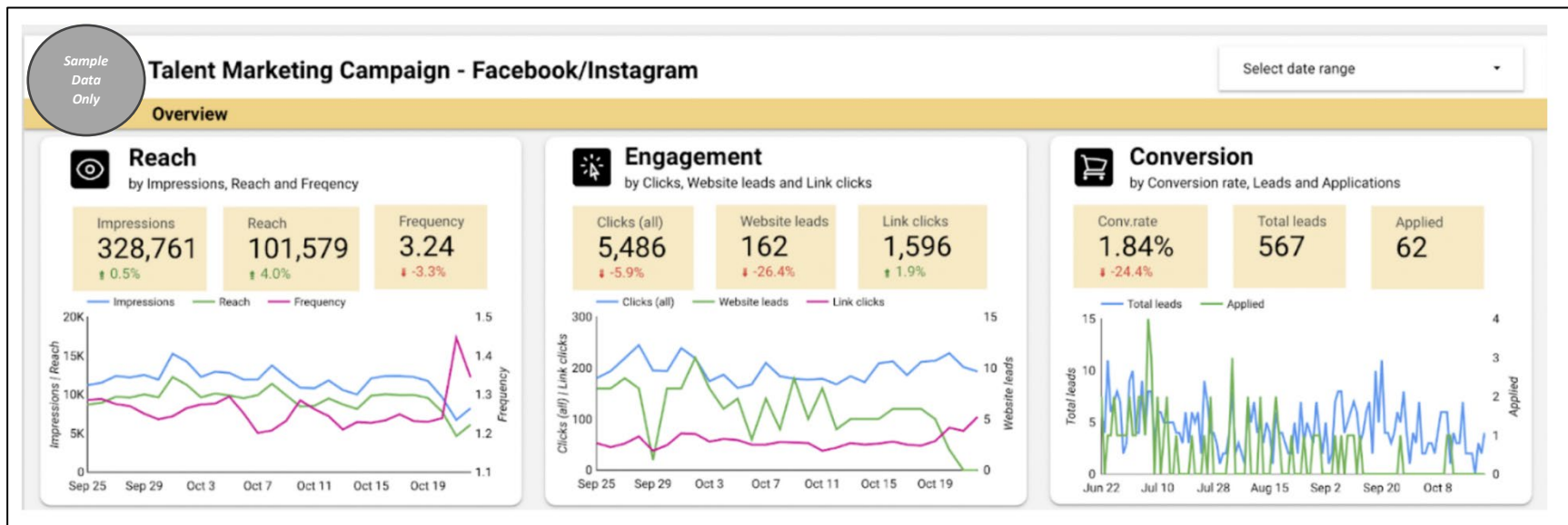


**Targeted Advertising & Candidate Sourcing**

Targeted digital advertising and candidate sourcing in hiring involve leveraging various online platforms and tools to reach potential job candidates who possess the desired skills and qualifications for a particular position. Here's how it typically works:

1. **Identifying Target Audience**: The first step is to clearly define the target audience or the ideal candidate profile for the job opening. This includes factors such as skills, experience, education, location, and any other relevant criteria.
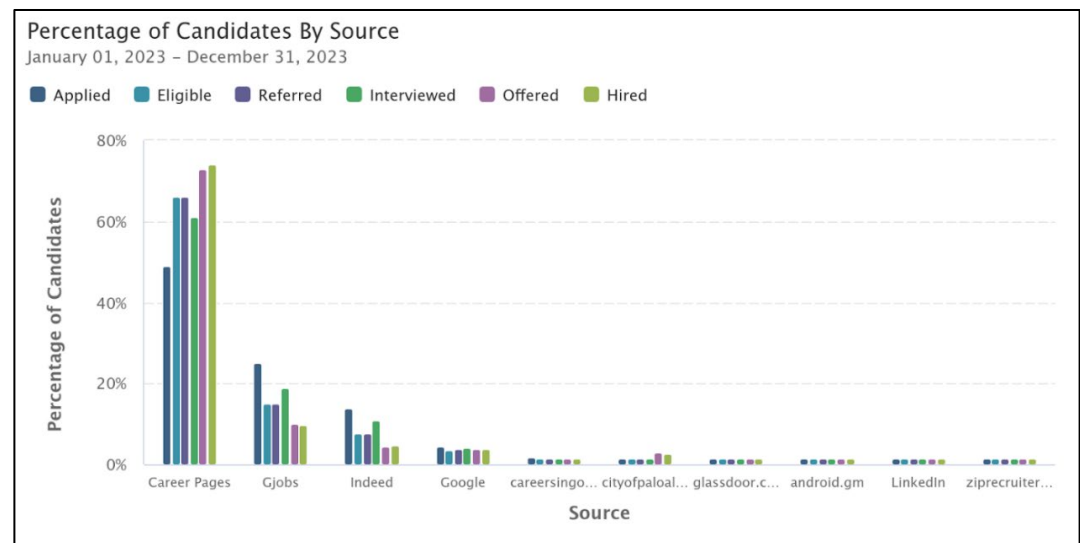
2.  **Creating Job Advertisements & Landing Pages**: Once the target audience is defined, recruiters or hiring managers create compelling job advertisements highlighting the job role, responsibilities, qualifications, and benefits. These advertisements can be in the form of text, images, videos, or a combination of these, depending on the platform and audience.  In addition, focused landing pages are built for a department or a series of jobs to have a compelling site with rich content and enticing images.

3.  **Selecting Digital Platforms**: There are various online platforms where job advertisements can be posted to reach potential candidates, including job boards, social media platforms (such as Google, Facebook, Indeed), professional networking sites, and industry-specific forums or websites. Recruiters choose platforms based on where their target audience is likely to be present.  Today's candidates are also actively applying for jobs from their phones.  There are automated tools to actively engage with candidates via their phone and texts as they learn more about the job.

4.  **Utilizing Targeting Parameters**: Digital advertising platforms allow recruiters to target their advertisements based on specific parameters such as location, age, gender, education level, job title, skills, interests, and even browsing behavior. This ensures that the ads are shown to relevant candidates, increasing the chances of attracting qualified applicants.  This can also increase the diversity of the candidate pool.

5.  **Communication is Key:**  Today's candidates expect regular communication via text messages and their phones.  To guide candidates through the process, a sophisticated CRM communication system helps move candidates from being interested to applying. Texting and regular communication keep the candidates engaged and provide continual learning about Palo Alto's opportunities.

6.  **Optimizing Ad Campaigns**: Recruiters continuously monitor the performance of their digital advertising campaigns, analyzing metrics such as click-through rates, impressions, and conversions. They may tweak the targeting parameters, adjust the ad content, or allocate more budget to platforms that are generating better results.  See the example below of the level of data and analysis that is monitored and evaluated regularly.

7. **Engaging Passive Candidates**: In addition to reaching out to active job seekers, targeted digital advertising can also help in engaging passive candidates who may not be actively looking for a job but could be open to new opportunities if the right offer comes along. This is particularly useful for recruiting top talent in competitive industries.

8. **Candidate Sourcing**: Apart from paid advertising, recruiters also engage in candidate sourcing, which involves actively searching for potential candidates through online channels such as professional networking sites, LinkedIn, resume databases, online forums, and social media. Advanced search filters and search techniques are often used to narrow down the candidate pool based on specific criteria.

9. **Building Talent Pools**: Recruiters often build and maintain talent pools or talent pipelines consisting of qualified candidates who have expressed interest in working for the organization or have been identified through sourcing efforts. These talent pools can be leveraged for future job openings, reducing time-to-hire and recruitment costs.

10. **Virtual Recruitment Events**: With the right outreach, virtual recruitment events are effective ways to showcase an organization. Specifically, these events do the following: (1) meet candidates where they are; decreasing barriers to attend; (2) earn candidates' attention and desire to apply; (3) show the culture of the organization with current employees presenting and talking to candidates; (4) community building with transparency and genuine connection with candidates; and (5) re-connection with interested candidates using smaller breakout rooms.
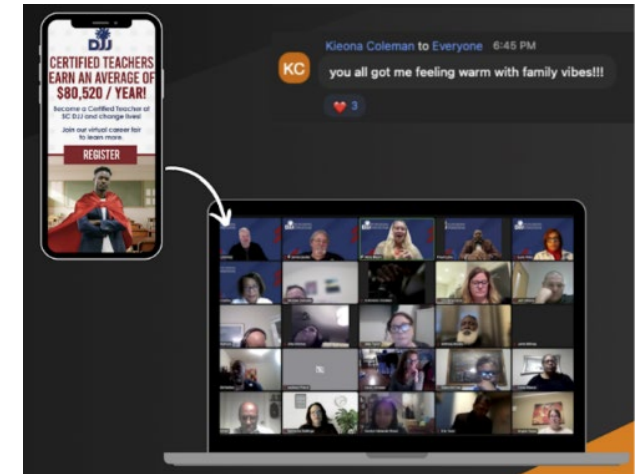


**Pilot Test – Utilities & Public Works Departments**

To pilot the approach above, the City Manager approved a targeted advertising and candidate sourcing program for two positions in the Utilities Department and one position in Public Works (see draft below). Active management of this recruitment campaign will be conducted with routine meetings with HR and Utilities. This initiative allows Palo Alto to test drive these new best practices, learning as they go.

# SECTION 4 - RECRUITMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

*Below is the summary of the Recruitment Strategic Plan. More details on each listed item in shown in the Strategic Plan below.*

## PALO ALTO – RECRUITMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

| #1 Boost Recruitment Team Capacity & Capabilities | #2 Activate Marketing, Advertising & Sourcing | #3 Streamline Process & Uplift Data/Metrics | #4 Invest in Talent Pipeline |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Strategic Management** <br> 1.1 Deploy Strategic Planning & Oversight to Recruitments <br><br> **Staffing & Capacity** <br> 1.2 Add "Recruitment Manager" New Position as Division Manager <br> 1.3 Continue to Augment Recruitment Division with Supplemental Staffing <br> 1.4 Add Data Analytics Support <br> 1.5 Use Consulting Services initially, then add "Digital Talent Recruiter" Position <br> 1.6 Support & Grow the HR Liaison Program <br> 1.7 Invest in training for HR Team | **Branding, Advertising & Candidate Sourcing** <br> 2.1 Leverage Employee Insights & Custom Messaging <br> 2.2 Enhance the City's Job/Career Website: Elevating Candidate Experience and Brand Image <br> 2.3 Streamline City Job Listings: Simplifying Access and Information <br> 2.4 Craft Compelling Content to Strengthen Palo Alto's Employer Brand <br> 2.5 Build Recruitment Landing Pages & Deploy CRM for Active Candidate Engagement <br> 2.6 Invest in Targeted Digital Advertising <br> 2.7 Host Virtual Recruitment Fairs <br><br> **General Marketing** <br> 2.8 Continue to Optimize Social Media for General Marketing <br> 2.9 Foster Employee Ambassadors <br> 2.10 Continue to Utilize LinkedIn | **Process Improvements** <br> 3.1 Streamline Recruitment Process: Focus on Critical Path Actions <br> 3.2 Streamline Phase 7: Pre-boarding – Final Candidate to Start Date <br> 3.3 Candidate Engagement Surveys <br> 3.4 Upgrade Exit Interview Process <br> 3.5 Explore MOU Modifications <br> 3.6 Continually Measure, Evaluate, Communicate, and Improve <br><br> **Data & Metrics** <br> 3.7 Invest in Data Integration, Utilization & Dashboards <br> 3.8 Build Recruitment Metrics <br> 3.9 Workforce Analysis Report | **Pipeline Initiatives** <br> 4.1 Review Job Requirements & Broaden the Candidate Pool <br> 4.2 Build Additional Apprenticeship Programs <br> 4.3 Continue Internship and Fellowship Programs <br> 4.4 Build Local Outreach Programs <br> 4.5 Implement "Stay Interviews" |

# RECRUITMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **BOOST RECRUITMENT TEAM CAPACITY & CAPABILITIES** | **ACTIVATE MARKETING, ADVERTISING & SOURCING** | **STREAMLINE PROCESS & UPLIFT DATA/METRICS** | **INVEST IN TALENT PIPELINE** |

**RECRUITMENT STRATEGIC PLAN**

## STRATEGIC PLAN

Recruiting top talent necessitates proactive marketing and branding efforts, along with the establishment of a robust talent pipeline. Successful recruitment operations prioritize building their employer brand, treating candidates as valued customers and potential future team members, and implementing streamlined systems in collaboration with departmental partners. Currently, there is a pressing need for Palo Alto to intensify its efforts, focus, and resource allocation to address the numerous vacant positions across the organization. By filling these budgeted vacancies, Palo Alto demonstrates its commitment to existing employees, leading to a more balanced workload and reduced stress over time. Moreover, bolstering staffing levels in community services enhances overall service delivery by attracting the highest caliber of talent.

Optimizing HR staffing levels and fully leveraging modern recruitment tools are imperative steps to enhance the City's recruitment program. Implementing an intentional and cohesive marketing campaign through the strategic use of social media advertising platforms can significantly amplify recruitment efforts. Recognizing that the recruitment process, as well as the first day and initial months of an employee's tenure, profoundly impact their overall satisfaction, engagement, and retention.

The Recruitment Strategic Plan centers on four key areas, encompassing work in progress, general findings, ongoing initiatives, and actionable recommendations for improvement.

## #1 – BOOST RECRUITMENT TEAM CAPACITY & CAPABILITIES

*In Process:*

- Regular meetings with the City Manager, Assistant City Manager, HR Director, and Assistant HR Director have been initiated to keep focus and priority on recruitment activity and hiring.
- After several failed recruitment attempts, HR hired a new Senior HR Administrator who started in February 2024.
- Currently augmenting recruitment staff with external recruiters, contract recruiters, and two part-time Management Specialists. Increased one Management Specialist to 40 hours per week for the rest of FY 23/24 (cost estimate of $45K).
- Training in process for seven additional HR Liaison positions (four in Public Works and three in Community Services).
- Developing a formal certification program for the HR Liaison Program to provide greater support and responsibility based on level, role clarity, and authority. A formal recognition program for HRLs will also be created.
  - o Level 1 – Provides administrative and logistical support to HR or department HRLs.
  - o Level 2 – Provides entry-level professional-level recruitment actions on active department recruitments. Screens applications, communicates with candidates, drives the key steps of the recruitment, develops questions and tests in coordination with HR & department management staff
  - o Level 3 – Provides all of Level 2, plus has expertise in negotiating the employee's pre-boarding offer letter and other areas of preboarding items.
- Sent two HR staff to the annual NEOGOV user conference this year, plus funding for all recruiters to attend in the coming year to improve software competency.
- Trained HR Team on how to create engaging job postings versus using the full job descriptions; added branded logos and ideal candidate descriptions.

### Strategic Management

| 1.1 | Deploy Strategic Planning & Oversight to Recruitments | Invest in new management capacity and deploy more strategic oversight of the City's recruitment program. Shift from triaging recruitments to strategic planning by creating a master plan for how to roll out the recruitments with prioritization, resource management, communication, and efficiency. |
|---|---|---|
| | | - In the interim, create an integrated spreadsheet (*Recruitment/Vacancy Project Plan*) that tracks current vacancies by department and current recruitments in process by department. In the future, use an umbrella CRM (Candidate Response Management system) to have a dashboard and easily accessible management reports. |
| | | - Use core project management skills (GANTT charts) to manage the City's current and upcoming recruitments. This can help with visualization in scheduling, managing, and monitoring specific tasks and resources in a project. By outlining all recruitments, HR can determine the overall timing and the level of additional resources/support needed. |
| | | - Continue to give departments a critical voice in outlining their recruitment needs and priorities, but add a citywide lens with input from the City Manager's Office and HR executive management. |
| | | - Develop an overall strategy for completing backlogged recruitments due to the peak demand of the City's staffing rebuild. One recommended strategy is to add external recruiters to focus on Utilities and Public Works vacancies to help them through their backlog and relevel the vacancy list. |
| | | - Embrace HR's role in looking at efficiencies to bundle recruitments and strategically manage recruitment priorities and flow. |

### Staffing & Capacity

| 1.2 | Add "Recruitment Manager" New Position as Division Manager | The complexity and importance of recruitments requires a new division-level management position to develop priorities, improve systems, manage staff, and lead new digital marketing programs specifically dedicated to recruitments. This role would offer expertise, strategic direction, and mentorship vital for navigating the intricacies of modern recruiting. The |

| | | Recruitment Manager would deliver additional training, mentoring, and support as needed for the central HR Team and HRLs. |
|---|---|---|
| 1.3 | Continue to Augment Recruitment Division with Supplemental Staffing | Continue efforts to augment recruiting staffing with additional part-time assistance or consultant assistance to expand staffing resources for Recruitment/Selection.  Continue part-time help to assist with para-professional and administrative duties related to recruitments including scheduling, pre-boarding, etc.  Develop an overall strategy for completing backlogged recruitments and then add specific recruiting capacity as needed. |
| 1.4 | Add Data Analytics Support | Add database and analytic support to the HR team by starting with consulting or part-time assistance to build a CRM (customer relationship management software) and/or a recruitment dashboard (see Recommendation 3.7).  Critical investment area to improve communication, coordination, and data-enabled decision-making. |
| 1.5 | Use Consulting Services Initially, then Add "Digital Talent Recruiter" Position | Add marketing and candidate sourcing expertise for the HR Recruitment Team to assist with social media, marketing, and digital advertising.  After a digital advertising program is built through consultants and integrated into the recruitment program, a new internal position should be added to drive this work.  Specific duties include:<br>▪ Serve as the internal expert on digital advertising and candidate sourcing. Support other HR staff to grow their knowledge and competencies.<br>▪ Conduct active candidate sourcing to increase the number and quality of candidates in recruitments.<br>▪ Hold virtual recruitment and career fair events to generate interest in Palo Alto jobs with specific targeting of open positions.<br>▪ Actively place advertisements and post to key social media platforms.<br>▪ Communicate directly with candidates to develop interest and commitment.  Hand-off to other recruitment staff for follow-through and continuing communication.<br>▪ Coordinate social and digital media efforts with the City's Communications staff.<br>▪ Implement candidate and hiring manager surveys to gain their feedback and experience for immediate implementation of necessary adjustments to recruitment efforts. |
| 1.6 | Support & Grow the HR Liaison Program | Review and refresh the HR Liaison Program.<br>▪ Create formal oversight of department HRL staff with linkage to central HR staff.  Reinforce the collaborative and strong partnership between HR and HRLs by ensuring engagement during the full recruitment cycle.<br>▪ Actively coordinate support, screen,  and train to grow HRL's capacity and capabilities.  Retain strong business partner relationships with Department management.<br>▪ Hold regular meetings for coordination with HRLs including Brown Bag Lunch and Learn Sessions with HRLs to facilitate learning through knowledge transfer and sharing of ideas including joint problem-solving.<br>▪ Augment the "Recruitment Guide" with shorter project management tools, cheat sheets, and scripts to support HR staff and HRLs in the recruitment process.  Utilize short videos for quick training tips.<br>▪ Celebrate the work and achievements of HRLs. |
| 1.7 | Invest in Training for the HR Team | Create regular professional development opportunities for HR recruiters and HRLs.<br>▪ <u>Marketing / Digital Advertising Training</u> – Utilize outside consultant expertise for training in digital advertising and social media marketing.   Utilize Communications staff to provide training on the City's website and social media accounts.  Increase exposure, knowledge, and aptitude. Provide regular boot camp with virtual monthly coaching/training.<br>▪ <u>Project Management Training</u> – Provide project management training and tools to help HR Recruiters manage various recruitments effectively and efficiently. |

## #2 – ACTIVATE MARKETING, ADVERTISING & SOURCING

### *Completed:*

- Posting recruitments on the City's social media platforms. Exploring specific social media strategies to increase digital engagement. Purchasing some digital advertisements with the current PIO budget. Posting both job-specific and general 'we are hiring' posts.
- Job listings in *Uplift* weekly e-newsletter. Highlighting new postings/listings that are closing soon. (over 50k subscribers, 45% open rate)
- City Hall Lobby screen activation 'We are hiring' with link to www.cityofpaloalto.org/careers.
- Tie job openings specific to City priorities such as the recent DEI program manager listing included in the recent race and equity progress blog.
- Created the Motivation Mondays series on LinkedIn.
- Added Careers to the City's homepage for additional exposure (over 1 million unique visitors annually).
- Add/follow hiring partners, industry associations, etc. on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Instagram.
- Refresh/rebranded the City's Careers page in partnership with the HR team. Adding ongoing content such as recent commute programs information.
- Updated City's GovernmentJobs.com opening employer description.
- Refreshed Recruitment templates for website, social media, and other digital communications.

### *In Process:*

- Enhancing LinkedIn recruitment strategies; ongoing presence overall about City recruitments, adding new job openings as they are posted.
- Employee recognitions at Council with an Instagram series.
- New Employee Orientation Welcomes - engage on social media with a focus on LinkedIn.

### *Branding, Advertising & Candidate Sourcing*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2.1 | Leverage Employee Insights & Custom Messaging | To effectively attract candidates, it's crucial to grasp the organization's culture, the employee value proposition, and factors that both attract and retain current staff. Recently, the City conducted a comprehensive employee engagement survey, providing valuable insights into why employees enjoy working for Palo Alto. Augmenting this survey, a variety of employees could be interviewed with a focus on hard-to-fill positions to offer more specific marketing insights. Additionally, short videos capturing employee testimonials could be produced. Using the collected data, customized messaging and notifications could be crafted to strengthen departmental appeal and attract a diverse candidate pool. |
| 2.2 | Enhance the City's Job/Career Website: Elevating Candidate Experience and Brand Image | Revamp the current Careers/Job Opening web pages to create a dynamic platform that not only connects to job openings but also provides comprehensive details about employee benefits, perks, corporate culture, and more. By showcasing compelling content, including language, images, videos, and branding, the website can captivate potential recruits and reinforce Palo Alto's employer brand. <br>• Appealing & Friendly Design: Develop a user-friendly jobs/career website with visually appealing design elements such as spacing, colors, and logos. <br>• Compelling Content: Share meaningful stories from current staff members highlighting exciting City-wide projects, such as economic development initiatives, innovative projects, and employee wellness programs. These testimonials offer valuable insights into the work environment and opportunities available in Palo Alto. <br>• Lead Generation: Implement a contact form to capture leads from website visitors interested in a career with Palo Alto. Utilize these leads to initiate further engagement and recruitment efforts. <br>• Interactive Features: Incorporate interactive elements such as videos and virtual tours to provide a firsthand glimpse into life at Palo Alto. These features engage visitors and encourage them to explore job opportunities further. |

| 2.3 | Streamline City Job Listings: Simplifying Access and Information | The City's job listings are accessible via https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/paloaltoca, facilitated by the City's NEOGOV software. While this platform serves as the primary hub for job postings, additional linked pages on the site provide information on benefits and other city-related details. However, this setup presents challenges, as it requires HR staff to maintain two separate locations for updates and content management.  To enhance efficiency and user experience, it is recommended that the City utilize www.governmentjobs.com exclusively for job postings and not post other general information. Candidates can then be directed to the City's Career/Jobs webpage for more comprehensive information. By consolidating resources and streamlining access, both HR staff and candidates will benefit from a more cohesive and user-friendly approach to job listings and information dissemination. |
|------|------|------|
| 2.4 | Craft Compelling Content to Strengthen Palo Alto's Employer Brand | The aim is to equip HR with compelling and professional content, tailored for social media, advertising campaigns, and website development, bolstering Palo Alto's employer brand. This content will humanize the brand by sharing stories of actual employees, highlighting personal and professional growth opportunities provided by the City. It should reinforce Palo Alto's employer brand and value proposition while maintaining consistency and recognition across departments. <br> ▪ Tailored Taglines and Ad Copy: Develop taglines and ad copy based on market research to attract new candidates effectively. <br> ▪ Department-Specific Content: Create content tailored to key department's unique offerings and culture to resonate with potential candidates. <br> ▪ Multimedia Assets: Generate graphics, landing pages, emails, banner ads, and social media ads infused with Palo Alto branding and messaging from research findings. <br> ▪ Promotional Videos: Produce short- and long-form promotional videos, including motion graphics and b-roll footage, to be shared across various platforms like YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and the City's website. <br> ▪ Ongoing Research: Use insights from 1:1 interviews to inform initial messaging and positioning. |
| 2.5 | Build Recruitment Landing Pages & Deploy CRM for Active Candidate Engagement | Adoption of an advanced marketing strategy entails the development of specialized landing pages customized for specific job positions.  Grouping similar positions on these pages enables the City to streamline the recruitment process by addressing multiple vacancies simultaneously, thus minimizing the resources needed for individual recruitment efforts. As these landing pages mature, they have the potential to transform into standalone recruitment websites, mirroring the approach utilized by numerous Police Departments for recruitment and marketing purposes. <br> The landing pages are linked to a robust CRM for candidate communication and tracking.  This integration allows for the accurate tracking of lead sources, facilitating the analysis of key metrics such as cost per lead, cost per interview, and cost per hire based on the origin of the leads.  The CRM also allows HR and the department to have real-time information regarding interest, applications, and candidate communication.  The CRM also uses a text and email-enabled communication system to make it easy for recruiters to connect and communicate with leads and candidates. |
| 2.6 | Invest in Targeted Digital Advertising | Take a proactive approach to recruitment by leveraging targeted advertising on job sites, social media platforms, and relevant websites frequented by potential candidates. This targeted approach allows employers to tailor their outreach efforts to individuals with specific skills and qualifications, rather than casting a wide net to a generic audience. Moreover, targeted advertising can enhance the organization's brand image by showcasing its core values and employer value proposition to potential recruits. These ads can be tailored based on various factors such as facility similarities, military focus, or diversity initiatives aligned with organizational hiring goals. <br> Launch ad campaigns featuring imagery and messaging derived from research findings. Implement Google Ads across Search, Display, and YouTube platforms to drive traffic through search and marketplace ads.  Initiate campaigns on job platforms like Indeed to expand reach and attract relevant candidates. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2.7 | Host Virtual Recruitment Fairs | In conjunction with a robust digital strategy, hosting virtual recruitment events offers a personalized touchpoint for candidates, humanizing the City and alleviating questions about specific departments. These events should maintain consistency and capitalize on candidate lists generated through targeted advertising. Moreover, they should include dedicated campaigns to drive registrations and attract attendees who express interest in working for Palo Alto. Additionally, past applicants and candidates from previous recruitments who were not selected can also be considered as potential candidates for other City positions, thereby constituting a pool of individuals already interested in joining the organization.  Insights gathered from virtual career fairs can be particularly motivating and may rekindle interest in employment opportunities with Palo Alto. These initiatives can be tailored to address general recruitment needs or targeted towards specific departments as required. |
| *General Marketing* | | |
| 2.8 | Continue to Optimize Social Media for General Marketing | The City boasts a sizable social media following, with substantial engagement across platforms [City: Facebook-12,000; Twitter/X-18,700; Instagram 6,600]. While these channels are valuable for some general recruitment marketing, they will not reach a broader candidate pool on their own. The objective of the City's social media presence for recruitment is to bolster its brand by spotlighting achievements, introducing employees, and showcasing the meaningful work undertaken.<br>▪ Transition from generic "We're Hiring" posts to a recruitment branding initiative like "Join Team Palo Alto," featuring stories and personal highlights.<br>▪ Inject more personality and human touch into social media content to spotlight employees and the City's successes.<br>▪ Continue to support departments in crafting and disseminating posts highlighting program initiatives, achievements, videos, employee profiles, and operational updates.<br>▪ Continue to use relevant hashtags on job postings to enhance visibility. Hashtags enable web crawlers to identify job postings, ensuring they appear in searches conducted by job seekers. Examples include #Engineer, #PublicWorks, #Transportation.<br>▪ Refer to Appendix C - Social Media Analysis for additional recommendations to optimize the City's social media platforms. |
| 2.9 | Foster Employee Ambassadors | Empower Palo Alto staff to become brand ambassadors to help promote and recruit future employees.<br>▪ Social Media Networkers - Provide employees with a Social Media Playbook containing assets, information, and images for effective marketing. Conduct training sessions to enhance their proficiency in platforms like LinkedIn and expand their professional networks. Recognize and incentivize employee ambassadors who actively promote the City's website from their posts.<br>▪ Employee Referral Program -- Develop an employee referral bonus program. Provide a cash bonus or vacation day for current employees who help attract new employees.  Examples of other agencies with employee referral bonus programs include UC Berkeley, San Mateo County, City of Torrance. |
| 2.10 | Continue to Utilize LinkedIn | Continue to leverage the LinkedIn platform, which currently boasts over 7,000 followers on Palo Alto's page, as a recruitment tool for hard-to-fill positions.  Enhance the City's presence on LinkedIn by focusing on employee stories, new hires, career opportunities, and notable achievements rather than general city updates.  Explore LinkedIn recruitment products to engage in direct outreach to individuals who match the competency map for the challenging positions. Encourage Palo Alto employees to engage with and share posts to expand the reach of recruitment efforts. |

## #3 – STREAMLINE PROCESS & UPLIFT DATA/METRICS

*In Process:*

- Delegated salary parameter decisions for job offers to the Assistant HR Director for expedited approvals, reducing the time from 2-3 weeks to 24-48 hours.
- A Pre-Requisition Questionnaire was created by MRG to facilitate key questions and logistical issues that can be determined at the front of the recruitment process to reduce time delays. The questionnaire is being rolled out to the recruitment team.
- IT and HR staff are working together to enhance and expedite the workflow when issuing employee numbers and preparing for onboarding.
- A Candidate Pulse Engagement Survey is being created to measure and track overall experiences both by candidates and hiring managers.
- Hiring a part-time HR position to assist with pre-boarding processing, coordination, and paperwork.

### Process Improvements

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | Streamline Recruitment Process: Focus on Critical Path Actions | Streamline the recruitment process with a focus on critical path decisions to reduce processing time by anticipating logistical issues that can be determined ahead of time to reduce delays. Refer to Appendix A for specific recommendations. Begin by focusing on Phase 1 – Requisition Approval and Phase 2 – Planning & Posting. <ul><li>Hold recruitment strategy meetings with department hiring managers at the start of each recruitment cycle to establish key parameters. Use a recruitment checklist and pre-recruitment questionnaire and equip HRLs and Hiring Managers with as much information upfront to proactively plan and conduct the recruitment process. Determine ahead of time the targeted interview dates, panel members (including SEIU, if applicable), screening processes (phone, panel, or HireVue), candidate salary expectations, and tentative salary placement based on internal equity considerations. Develop a timeline with mutually agreed-upon key dates.</li><li>Review minimum requirements and request candidates to provide proof of licenses and certifications during the initial interview stages, rather than delaying until the final candidate selection phase.</li><li>Require all candidates to sign a reference waiver form at the time of their first interview. Dispose of unnecessary forms promptly and proceed immediately with reference checks for final candidates. Encourage hiring managers and departments to initiate reference checks during the final round of interviews to expedite the selection process and start dates.</li><li>Prepare draft conditional offer letters at the time of the final round of interviews to allow HRLs and HR to effectively collaborate and partner on the process and initiate the final job offer discussion with the selected candidate. For HRLs with a Level 3 certification, allow them to drive the pre-boarding and offer process in conjunction with HR versus handing the baton back to HR at this time. Allows for higher level candidate communication and department relationship building with the final candidate.</li></ul> |
| 3.2 | Streamline Phase 7: Pre-boarding – Final Candidate to Start Date | Use an interdepartmental Strike Team to streamline final preboarding. Refer to Appendix A for more recommendations. <ul><li>Create an online checklist for workspace readiness with department responsibilities outlined.</li><li>Document roles and processes for HR and Information Technology Departments to ensure new employees have a computer, login access, phone, and any other necessary equipment ready to go on Day 1.</li><li>Document roles and streamline processes for HR and the Public Works Department to ensure new employees' identification badges/access key cards are ready on the employees' start dates.</li><li>Fully utilize NEOGOV more effectively by full deployment of online *OnBoard* forms with more consistent follow-up.</li><li>Ensure prompt setup of direct deposit for new employees.</li></ul> |

| 3.3 | Candidate Engagement Surveys | Candidate Engagement Surveys aim to uncover reasons why potential candidates withdraw. Timely pulse engagement surveys are administered before candidates exit the application process to capture their experiences and pain points. The surveys typically assess process satisfaction, timing, communication, and support. They also gauge satisfaction with key retention metrics like the quality of hiring steps, communication, and clarity. In the past, HR conducted these surveys regularly but hasn't been able to continue due to workload and staffing constraints. |
|---|---|---|
| 3.4 | Upgrade Exit Interview Process | Upgrade the City's exit interview process featuring confidential surveys and one-on-one phone or in-person interviews. Share key themes and insights with departments quarterly to enhance awareness and dedication to process enhancement initiatives. Compile an annual update with citywide and department-level information detailing reasons for employee departures. |
| 3.5 | Explore MOU Modifications | Review SEIU MOU procedural requirements for recruitments and explore modifications at the bargaining table and updates for today's recruitment environment.<br>▪ Requires 10-day posting of positions. Options to explore include: (1) consider identifying positions that may be posted concurrently; (2) consider modifying language in posting for 5 days internally only prior to advertising externally when there are strong internal candidates who can apply and compete for the position; and (3) explore direct appointment language for certain positions.<br>▪ Requires interview of internal candidates first, if three or more candidates meet the minimal qualifications. The City is unable to begin the review of the external candidates until the internal interviews have been completed. Explore ways to modify or eliminate this practice.<br>▪ Requires represented employee to sit on interview panel if panel format is being used. Consider establishing a list of panel members who will commit to serving and being available for various recruitments throughout the year.<br>▪ Requires the City to conduct recruitments for flexibly staffed and underfilled positions, despite incumbents in the role for a period of time. Consider negotiating language to waive requirements to conduct recruitments for flexibly staffed and underfilled positions to fully encourage and foster internal promotions. |
| 3.6 | Continually Measure, Evaluate, Communicate, and Improve | Embrace a "Lean Startup" mindset for marketing campaigns and recruitment efforts, focusing on rapid adaptation based on real-time feedback and data insights. Utilize dashboards and metrics to guide decision-making and continuously refine the recruitment strategy. Effective project management ensures timely execution of the recruitment plan and proactive problem-solving. Additionally, foster stronger collaboration between HR recruitment staff and departments by enhancing communication and training:<br>▪ Hold regular check-in meetings and monthly report sessions to facilitate communication and accountability. Conduct quarterly and annual meetings with departments to review recruitment progress and identify areas for improvement.<br>▪ Establish service-level agreements with departments to streamline communication and deliverables, reducing turnaround times in the recruitment process.<br>▪ Develop recruitment training programs for first-time supervisors/managers and maintain a list of panel interview members per department to ensure adequate training and availability. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Data & Metrics** | | |
| 3.7 | Invest in Data Integration, Utilization & Dashboards | Invest in software integration and better data management/utilization for data-enabled decision-making.<br>▪ Build an interim real-time Recruitment Dashboard with key data and metrics to monitor recruitment processing and improve internal communication and coordination. Identify and establish various *Phases of Recruitments* for ease in communicating the status with departments. Provide information access to city departments that assist with recruitment and new employee processing including Communications, Finance, Public Works, Information Technology, etc.<br>▪ Bring NEOGOV training in-house for HR recruiters and HRLs and increase software learning for full competency. Review the NEOGOV management module and gain internal expertise for custom management reporting as needed.<br>▪ Invest in the proper integration of SAP and NEOGOV to avoid redundant processes, cumbersome data collection, and manual maintenance of HR reports.<br>▪ Explore an interim web-based Human Resource Information System (HRIS) to begin foundational employee/position controls and other management information. [A human resources information system (HRIS) helps companies manage and automate core HR processes. These HR software systems support benefits administration, time and attendance, payroll, and other workflows, as well as the storage of employee data, such as personal, demographic, and compensation information.] |
| 3.8 | Build Recruitment Metrics | Build data and metrics to track recruitment progress. Once base data is captured, set goals and time frames for each metric as performance goals. Target future vacancy rate of 8-10% for all full-time budgeted positions in the organization.<br>▪ Quantitative Metrics<br>  ▪ Vacancy Rate – overall and by department. Resignations by month by department including reasons for departure.<br>  ▪ Application Completion Rate<br>  ▪ Applications per Job Posting<br>  ▪ Time to Hire<br>  ▪ Time to Fill<br>  ▪ Ad Cost to Hire<br>  ▪ Source of Hire<br>  ▪ Offer Acceptance Rate<br>  ▪ First-Year Attrition Rate<br>  ▪ Recruitment Phases<br>▪ Qualitative Metrics<br>  ▪ Candidate Experience – Survey candidates across several metrics, such as responsiveness, interview competence, communication skills, and courtesy.<br>  ▪ Hiring Manager Experience – Survey hiring managers on efficiency, responsiveness, and overall quality of the hiring process. |
| 3.9 | Workforce Analysis Report | Build data and systems to create an annual Workforce Analysis Report for reporting to departments and the City Council. It will take several years before HR is positioned to prepare this document as HR builds capacity, systems, and data. See the example from San Mateo County [Link]. |

## #4 – INVEST IN TALENT PIPELINE

### Pipeline Initiatives

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4.1 | Review Job Requirements & Broaden the Candidate Pool | Review job requirements to maximize inclusivity and attract diverse candidates by considering equivalent combinations of education and experience. Reframe previous public sector experience requirements as preferred or desirable qualifications for certain positions. Introduce trainee-level roles to facilitate progression towards journey-level positions. Broaden applicant pools through proactive recruitment efforts to eliminate unnecessary degree prerequisites, evaluate minimum qualifications in general, shift to a focus on skills, welcome candidates with private sector experience, and demonstrate flexibility in considering resume gaps. |
| 4.2 | Build Additional Apprenticeship Programs | The City has utilized apprenticeship programs in some occupations historically (Fire, Police).  More recently, Utilities successfully deployed a Utility Systems Operator Trainee position which has helped to reduce vacancies in this classification.  Partner with local junior colleges, colleges, and universities to establish and develop apprenticeship programs.  Explore the creation of a summer apprenticeship program in partnership with Foothill Community College. |
| 4.3 | Continue Internship & Fellowship Programs | Continue and expand internship opportunities for high school and undergraduate students, as well as fellowships for graduate-level students, to nurture the employee pipeline and offer students valuable professional exposure. Leveraging successful programs like those with the Art Center and Children's Theatre, the City can provide students with opportunities to enhance their skills, expand their professional networks, and contribute to the community. Although the traditional summer internship program has been dormant due to the pandemic, it should be restarted once recruitments are stabilized or by hiring a contractor to oversee the program if started earlier. |
| 4.4 | Build Local Outreach Programs | Develop additional Community Technical Education (CTE) pathway programs in collaboration with the Palo Alto Unified School District and East Palo Unified School District that begin to expose students and prepare them for careers within the City.  Support CTE pathways with a variety of volunteer and paid internships, explorer programs, and other opportunities to develop potential future employees of the City. |
| 4.5 | Implement "Stay Interviews" | Focus on retaining current employees to minimize vacancies by utilizing "stay interviews".  A stay interview is a proactive approach used by organizations to engage with current employees and understand their job satisfaction, motivations, and reasons for staying with the organization. Unlike exit interviews, which occur when an employee is leaving the organization, stay interviews are conducted while the employee is still employed. During a stay interview, a manager or HR representative meets with the employee to discuss various aspects of their job, including their current role, career aspirations, work environment, challenges, and suggestions for improvement. The purpose is to gather feedback directly from the employee about what they value in their job, what keeps them engaged, and any concerns or areas where they may need support. Stay interviews are valuable because they provide insight into the factors that contribute to employee retention and job satisfaction. By actively listening to employees and addressing their concerns or suggestions, organizations can create a positive work environment, improve employee morale, and reduce turnover. Additionally, stay interviews can help identify opportunities for career development and advancement, aligning employees' goals with organizational objectives. |

# SECTION 5 – IMPLEMENTATION

*This section outlines key thoughts and recommendations on how and what Palo Alto will need to do to implement this Recruitment Strategic Plan.*

## Financial Investments

Financial investments will be required to execute a heightened recruitment strategy with targeted digital advertising and candidate sourcing. Specifically, areas of investment are listed below.  A precise budget and investment package will need to be researched.

| |
|---|
| **Advertising Budget**: Allocating a budget for paid advertising on digital platforms is essential for reaching a wider audience and maximizing the visibility of job advertisements. This could include spending on pay-per-click (PPC) advertising, sponsored posts on social media, or premium listings on job boards. |
| **Data Dashboards & Integration:**  Utilizing data and analytics tools is crucial for tracking the performance of recruitment campaigns, analyzing candidate demographics and behavior, and making data-driven decisions to optimize hiring efforts.  Consulting assistance will be needed to create better integration with Palo Alto's software systems and to create a comprehensive and easy-to-view Recruitment Dashboard/CRM.  Additional consulting or staffing resources will be needed to build the data systems needed for active candidate managing and management reports. |
| **Content Creation**:  Developing high-quality, engaging content for job advertisements, social media posts, and other recruitment materials may involve expenses related to hiring copywriters, graphic designers, or video producers. |
| **Training and Development**:  Providing training and development opportunities for recruitment teams to enhance their skills and stay updated with industry trends may require financial investment in workshops, seminars, online courses, or certifications. |
| **Consulting Services**:  The City may choose to enlist the help of external consultants or recruitment agencies to assist with targeted digital advertising campaigns, candidate sourcing and communication efforts, or employer branding initiatives. |

## Key Roles of the City Council

The leadership of the City Council plays a pivotal role in the success of the Recruitment Strategic Plan. Initially, MRG identifies three crucial roles for the City Council:
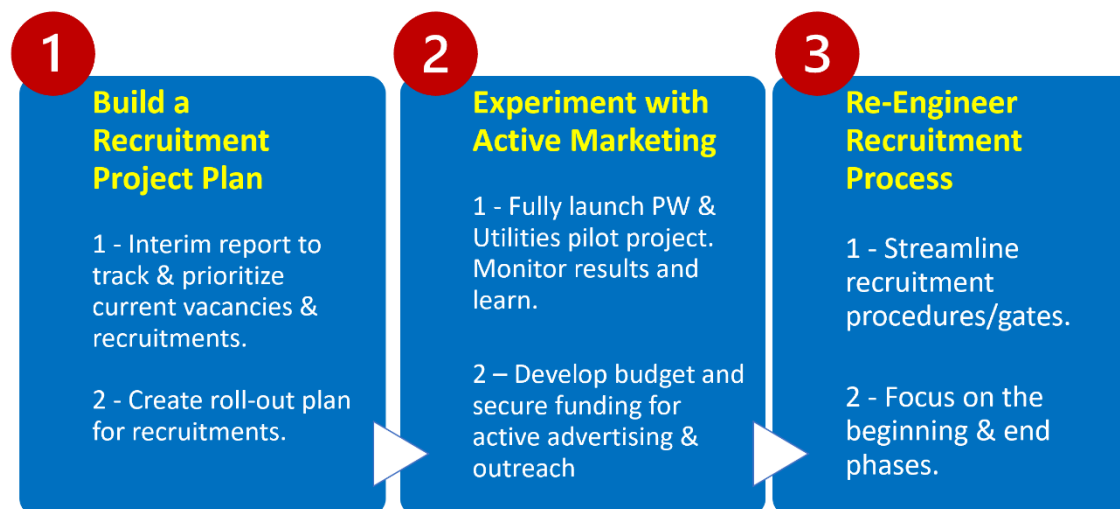
1. Prioritize Recruiting: The City Council recognizes that fulfilling its priorities for the community relies on having a well-staffed organization with skilled employees. Continued support and policy direction for the City's recruitment program and strategy is key.

2. Providing Financial Support and Resources: As outlined above, the Strategic Plan will necessitate both one-time and ongoing financial resources for staffing, tools, technology, and equipment. Without secured financial support and investment, the Strategic Plan's success will be compromised. MRG recommends that the City Manager present an initial resource request followed by a recommendation for a more comprehensive multi-year budget investment.

3. Monitoring Compensation & Benefits: The City has implemented strategic improvements in base pay, benefits, and work schedules.  Continuous monitoring of compensation and benefits is essential for effective recruitment and retention efforts.

## The Need to Move Quickly

While full implementation of the Strategic Plan will take some time, immediate action and resolve are required.

- **Executive Leadership & Project Champion** – Committed executive leadership is required to ensure organizational change occurs and the Strategic Plan is implemented. The City Manager's Office has the vision and organizational leadership acumen to ensure this work is driven forward.

- **Seasoned Project Manager** – The Recruitment Strategic Plan will require a seasoned manager to lead and drive these efforts forward with the full support of the executive champion. This should be Assistant HR Director at this time and eventually, the Recruitment Division Manager after that position is hired.

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

- **Strike Teams** – Implementing the transformative steps outlined in this report can greatly enhance hiring effectiveness, but it's a challenging task for any organization. To overcome these challenges and expedite the process of closing talent gaps, Strike Teams can be established. These specialized teams are tasked with orchestrating and accelerating the implementation of these steps to drive rapid improvements in hiring practices. For success, a Strike Team needs the following:

  - Cross-Functional Team of Stakeholders: A diverse team of stakeholders from HR, business, and subject matter experts work together to expedite the hiring process by minimizing delays and ensuring alignment.

  - Commitment to Interactive Improvements: An iterative working model supported by agile methods enables rapid identification of hiring bottlenecks, intervention deployment, and data-informed adjustments for continuous improvement.

- **Prioritized Action Plan** – There are thirty-one (31) individual recommendations in the Strategic Plan. While a complete implementation of this Strategic Plan might take a few years, it is critical to move forward with urgency. Below are the prioritized items to begin the in first 90 days.

# 90-Day Implementation Plan

**1**

**Build a Recruitment Project Plan**

1 - Interim report to track & prioritize current vacancies & recruitments.

2 - Create roll-out plan for recruitments.

**2**

**Experiment with Active Marketing**

1 - Fully launch PW & Utilities pilot project. Monitor results and learn.

2 – Develop budget and secure funding for active advertising & outreach

**3**

**Re-Engineer Recruitment Process**

1 - Streamline recruitment procedures/gates.

2 - Focus on the beginning & end phases.

# SECTION 6 -- APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A – Detailed Recruitment Process Recommendations

A recruitment process includes all the steps that move the hiring process from job description to a new employee starting the job – including the initial authority to begin a recruitment, development of the job posting, outreach and marketing, application screening, interviews and assessments, background checks, job offer, and pre-boarding activities -- all of the elements crucial to making the right hire.  Addressing areas for improvement can significantly enhance the recruitment process, resulting in better outcomes for both candidates and the organization.  Below are the recruitment phases found in Palo Alto's recruitment program.

| GATE | PHASE | PHASE NAME | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *Phase A and B below aren't differentiated currently in Palo Alto's system or discussions, but additional clarity and tracking are needed here. Recommend new language and new phases to be created for the recruitments that have not been initiated.* |
| | Phase A | Department Hold | Vacant positions that departments are not ready to initiate recruitments for at this time.  A department "hold" can occur when using interim staffing options, reorganizing, modifying the work, or generating salary savings. |
| | Phase B | On Deck | The department is ready to proceed; waiting for a recruiter to launch the recruitment. |
| GATE 1 | Phase 1 | Requisition Approval | *Requisition approval process.*  Confirmation by OMB, department, and HR that the position is approved for hire. |
| | Phase 2 | Planning & Posting | *From approval of the position for hiring (requisition) to posting of the position.*  This phase involves identifying hiring needs, defining job requirements, agreeing on outreach efforts, anticipating potential salary and benefits issues, and developing a well-defined recruitment strategy. Clear candidate profiles & marketing are created. |
| GATE 2 | Phase 3 | Marketing, Sourcing & Outreach | *Open application time including outreach and marketing.*  Recruiters market to potential candidates using various methods such as job boards, advertising, trade and professional organizations, social media, networking, and employee referrals. |
| GATE 3 | Phase 4 | Screening / Application Processing | *HR-internal or HRL review for applications for minimum qualifications and then department review for top candidates (HRL or management).*  Recruiters review resumes, applications, and other candidate materials to assess qualifications and suitability for the position. Phone screenings or initial interviews can be conducted to evaluate candidates' skills and fit for the role. |
| | Phase 5 | Interview, Testing & Selection | *Interview, testing, and vetting of candidates.*  In the selection phase, recruiters and hiring managers conduct interviews and assessments to evaluate candidates' qualifications, experience, and cultural fit. A final candidate is identified. |
| GATE 4 | Phase 6 | Finalist to Offer Letter | *Time from selection of final candidate to offer letter.*  Once a candidate is selected, reference checking is completed.  A verbal offer is extended. Negotiations may occur regarding salary, benefits, start date, and other terms of employment. |
| GATE 5 | Phase 7 | Pre-boarding | *Activities to be ready for new employee's start date.*  Pre-boarding ensures a seamless transition for new employees by ensuring that all necessary tools, technology, pertinent documents, and resources are prepared and accessible from day one. This can include setting up workstations, providing access to software systems and user IDs, and ensuring that necessary equipment is ready for use. |

## GATE 1 – Phase 1 (Requisition Approval) + Phase 2 (Planning and Posting of the Position)

Upon notification of a pending vacancy or approval of a new budget/approved position, Departments initiate the process by submitting a requisition via NEOGOV, the applicant tracking system, with the relevant manager and department head approvals. The requisition serves to obtain authorization to fill the vacancy and includes essential information such as Job Title, Top Annual Salary, and Position Number. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reviews all requisitions for approval, ensuring alignment with City Council-approved levels in the annual budget regarding position title classification, bargaining group, and budgetary allocation. Once approved, the requisition is forwarded to HR for classification review based on the scope of work, salary range, bargaining group, and confirmation of any existing re-employment lists. HR prioritizes requisition reviews based on departmental needs. Upon final approval, the requisition is assigned to a recruiter who collaborates with the Hiring Manager and the HRL to develop a customized recruitment plan for each vacancy. This detailed plan establishes mutual expectations regarding job announcement language, posting duration, candidate evaluation procedures, subject matter experts, panel members, advertisement strategies, and stakeholders' involvement at each step of the recruitment process.

*Areas of Improvement:*
- Recommend a focused Strike Team review *Phase 1 Requisition Approval* to find ways to reduce and streamline this process thoroughly. For example, consider increasing the frequency of when requisitions are approved by OMB to effectively prioritize recruitments by department. Currently, OMB batches requisitions and approves them on one day per week. Also, explore how OMB can preapprove new positions that are created as part of a mid-year or annual budget process versus reviewing each position individually.
- Currently, the work of recruitment processing is done sequentially and would benefit from more pre-planning and critical path contemplation. For example, setting dates for interviews and selecting your panelists when you launch the recruitment reduces time at the interview stage.
- Using a recruitment checklist and pre-recruitment questionnaire, equip HRLs and Hiring Managers with as much information upfront to proactively plan and conduct the recruitment process. Discuss and resolve anticipated critical issues by providing advance notification to Hiring Managers and include higher-level management if needed to move issues along. MRG created a pre-recruitment questionnaire which is being deployed now to improve this process.
- Provide training for Hiring Managers and supervisors to clarify and explain their specific roles and responsibilities in talent management. Identify specific expectations for each stage of the recruitment process, clarify roles and responsibilities, and ensure alignment and accountability among team members. Establishing a recruitment calendar and cheat sheets to help keep the team organized and on track, minimizing delays and oversights.
- Establish a large pool of City-wide panel interview experts, plus SEIU representatives, to ensure a diverse panel that is available and accessible throughout the year. Conduct annual training for panel interview experts on Unconscious Bias Training, Principles of Recruitment and Selection, etc.
- Develop an effective communication system to keep public information staff informed about upcoming openings to assist with posting and marketing on the City's social media site. In the future, additional capacity and staff need to be added to the HR team to absorb these duties.

## GATE 2 – Phase 3 (Marketing, Sourcing & Outreach)

Typically, a job posting remains open for 2-4 weeks, accompanied by targeted marketing and outreach efforts. During this period, active communication with candidates is ongoing, including responding to inquiries. It's also an opportunity for proactive candidate sourcing, actively seeking out potential candidates who may not be actively job hunting but could be interested in a new opportunity.

*Areas of Improvement:*
- Actively sourcing candidates through various channels and advertising, such as social media and professional networks, expand the candidate pool and increase the likelihood of finding the right fit for open positions.
- Update promotional marketing information on the City's career pages to better tell Palo Alto's story of being an Employer of Choice.
- Advertise with anticipated recruitment timelines including dates to review applications, interview dates, and expected appointment date.

- Explore a referral bonus program for general employees to incentivize current employees to actively participate in the recruitment process, tapping into their networks to identify potential candidates. This can be a financial bonus or day(s) off.
- Utilize LinkedIn for posting professional and management positions and searching/targeting potential candidates.
- Create brief videos that highlight Palo Alto's offerings to attract and retain top talent by showcasing the value of working for Palo Alto in general and for specific departments such as utilities, public works, and public safety. (The Library Services Department is creating a video currently.)
- Develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for using HireVue to ensure consistency and efficiency in conducting interviews, improving the candidate experience, and streamlining the selection process.

## GATE 3 – Phase 4 (Screening / Application Processing) + Phase 5 (Interview, Testing & Selection)

During the screening and application process, Human Resources and/or HRLs assesses the candidate pool and screens for minimum qualifications (MQs). Qualified candidates are then forwarded to the department for review by subject matter experts. These experts evaluate candidates, rate their suitability, add notes to their profiles, and determine who progresses to the next stage. The selection process may involve practical skills assessments, phone screenings, or panel interviews conducted through platforms like HireVue, Teams, or in-person meetings. The recruiter collaborates with the Hiring Manager to decide on the selection process and develop interview questions. Additionally, the recruiter facilitates and coordinates all selection process steps and provides candidates with recruitment updates.

*Areas of Improvement:*
- Further engage with Hiring Managers to fully partner and collaborate after initial screening and to expedite the involvement of Subject Matter Experts (SME) in the process.
- At the interview stage, have all final candidates sign the release form for reference checks. Release forms that aren't needed can be destroyed. Alternatively, initiate a preliminary reference check for top finalists during the interview process as part of information gathering.
- Whenever possible, prepare draft conditional offers for initial feedback from the final candidate.

## GATE 4 – Phase 6 (Finalist to Offer Letter)

At the conclusion of the recruitment, testing, and selection process, the top candidate is identified. The Hiring Manager and Department Director collaborate on a salary recommendation, which is then reviewed by HR. For salary offers above the mid-range, written justification and approval from the HR Director are required. Offers within 7% of the top of the range necessitate approval from the City Manager (recently delegated to the Assistant HR Director). Once proper authorization is obtained, HR extends a conditional e-offer (Onboard) to the candidate, outlining pre-employment requirements such as medical, education, employment, and criminal background checks. The conditional offer letter includes an anticipated start date and salary offer. The candidate must accept the offer terms and complete all pre-employment requirements before receiving the final offer letter, which confirms the terms of employment and start date.

*Areas of Improvement:*
- Reduce the time between the informal job offer and the formal job letter which was taking 2-3 weeks, addressing a major source of frustration for departments and final candidates. Recent improvements, including granting authority to the Assistant HR Director to approve compensation parameters without regular review by the City Manager or HR Director, have led to significant progress. With this change, MRG estimates a reduction to just 1-2 days.
- Provide advance notification to IT (weekly report) on upcoming new hires to facilitate planning of onboarding equipment and other IT needs. HR and IT will properly coordinate to expedite the issuance of employee ID numbers. (This communication has typically waited for Gate 5 which is too late in the process.)
- Whenever possible, prepare draft conditional offers for initial feedback from the final candidate.

## GATE 5 – Phase 7 (Pre-boarding)

After the conditional offer is accepted and the candidate fulfills all pre-employment requirements, a final offer, onboarding email, and a new hire portal are generated through Onboard. The new hire then has a few days to complete all onboarding forms via NEOGOV and subsequently meets with the recruiter for I-9 verification and review of all new hire documents. A Personnel Action Form (PAF) is initiated, with the recruiter inputting relevant information for the future employee. To ensure completeness, Human Resources employs a New Hire Checklist, which is attached along with all supporting documentation including the requisition form, application, and new hire packet. The PAF undergoes review and sign-off by the Hiring Manager, Department Director, and HR Director. If the hire is at the Director level, the City Manager's approval is also required.

Once all necessary information is gathered and the PAF is approved by appropriate personnel, it is forwarded to another HR team (Human Resource Information System) for entry into SAP. Before the payroll entry deadline, the information is carefully reviewed to ensure accurate application of pay rates and proper implementation of any changes. Additionally, a confirmation message is sent to the Hiring Manager, notifying them of the successful onboarding of the new hire. The recruiter also provides IT links for the department to initiate equipment access requests for the new hire.

### *Areas of Improvement:*
- Recommend the use of a Strike Team to review the Pre-boarding process and find ways to reduce and streamline this process.
- Utilize NEOGOV more effectively through the full deployment of online *OnBoard* forms with more consistent follow-up.
- Ensure prompt setup of direct deposit. Departments communicated that direct deposit for new employees can lag one pay period which creates more work for Finance.
- Provide necessary tools and resources, such as computers, keys/access cards, and ID badges, immediately upon starting, enhances efficiency and productivity. Numerous examples of employees not having these resources until several days to a week after their arrival.
- As staffing allows, HR should explore if having a single point person to oversee internal preboarding processes can facilitate communication and expedite the resolution of issues.

# APPENDIX B – MARKETING STRATEGY SUMMARY & BEST PRACTICES

| BUILD CONTENT,<br>BRANDING & MESSAGING | ACTIVATE CANDIDATE COMMUNICATION<br>+ UTILIZE TARGETED ADVERTISING |
|---|---|
| **RESEARCH & MARKETING CONTENT DEVELOPMENT**<br>• Understand the employee value proposition and what attracts and keeps current employees in their careers. Create and survey existing employees. Develop branding and outreach based on survey themes.<br>• Custom messaging and notifications should be developed to reinforce department brands and built to attract a diverse candidate pool.<br>• Concepts and specific analysis of DEI data will be leveraged to create detailed campaigns. | **CANDIDATE COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN**<br>• Create email and SMS follow-up campaigns for candidate leads.<br>• These follow-up campaigns should be dependent on classification as well as current candidate status in the application process.<br>• In addition, the communication campaigns may also include messaging from individual departments based on their hiring processes. |
| **FOCUS GROUPS**<br>• Focus groups to test, verify, and build acceptance of the messaging and values identified in the survey research.<br>• Mined messages and guidelines will be used in the creative process to guide design and ad language.<br>• After the focus groups are conducted, there should be meetings with key leadership to discuss findings and finalize messaging and overall brand. | **DIGITAL ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN**<br>• Facebook/ Instagram Ad Management -- Manage Facebook and Instagram campaigns including reporting.<br>• Google Paid Ads Management -- Manage Google paid ads including YouTube, Google Marketplace, and Google Search.<br>• Indeed Paid Ads Management -- Connect Indeed ads to landing pages similar to Google and Facebook.<br>• Advertising Placements -- Direct spend payable to Google, Hulu, Facebook/Instagram, YouTube, and other vendor sources. |
| **CREATE & DESIGN DIGITAL ASSETS**<br>• Provide digital assets/designs for advertisements, banner ads, social media ads, and various other uses. | **IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT OF CAMPAIGN**<br>• Implement and manage the proposed campaign.<br>• Should include weekly strategy calls, overall vendor management, and metrics tracking leveraging digital dashboards. |
| **PROMOTIONAL VIDEO & PHOTOGRAPHY**<br>• 60 Second, 30 Second, and four 15-second videos promoting careers.<br>• Photography will be leveraged across all media channels, video will be added to landing pages, and YouTube promotional campaigns will also be utilized. | **VIRTUAL RECRUITMENT EVENTS**<br>• Virtual recruitment events can humanize the City and provide a connection point to the organization that lowers the fears about working in a specific department.<br>• Build consistency and leverage the candidate lists that are being generated through the targeted advertising as well as have a dedicated campaign focused on pushing registrations and attendees who express an interest in working for Palo Alto. |

# APPENDIX C
# Social Media SWOT Review
*SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)*

Click the LINK to see full analysis

| UTILITIES SOCIAL MEDIA | FACEBOOK | TWITTER (X) | INSTAGRAM |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1,300+ | 5,057 | 595 |
| **STRENGTHS** | **WEAKNESSES** | **OPPORTUNITIES** | **THREATS** |
| ▪ Overall, the social strategy Palo Alto Utilities has taken appears to be fairly successful.<br>▪ Followership is moderate across the three platforms. | ▪ Many posts/graphics are reused and reshared; sometimes back-to-back.<br>▪ Instagram could use the most improvement when it comes to sizing of graphics, types of content used, profile photo, organization description, links, etc. | ▪ Leverage the 'rule of thirds' - meaning rotate out content that is a mix of promotional, educational, and interactive/cultural topics.<br>▪ Incorporate more diversity into the content topics and content types. | ▪ Posting the same content at the same times every day could result in a lack of engagement and a reduction in followers.<br>▪ Low engagement across platforms.<br>▪ Organic posts are not being seen by followers in this "pay-to-play" environment. |

| GENERAL CITY SOCIAL MEDIA | FACEBOOK | TWITTER (X) | INSTAGRAM |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 12,000+ | 18,700+ | 6,600+ |
| **STRENGTHS** | **WEAKNESSES** | **OPPORTUNITIES** | **THREATS** |
| ▪ Overall, the social strategy the City of Palo Alto has taken appears to be fairly successful.<br>▪ Followership is pretty high across the three platforms. | ▪ Weaknesses include the time-of-day content is posted and the frequency, sizing of content for the platforms, length of copy, lack of hashtags, and content diversity.<br>▪ The pages need more mix of content topics and types. Content is the same most weeks. | ▪ Incorporate additional content types (i.e. video, motion graphics, infographics, stories/reels, featured posts, carousels, collages, etc.). | ▪ Low engagement across platforms could be due to: how often content is posted, content is the same across platforms, content is repeated, copy length is too long<br>▪ Not enough human element including employee stories and accomplishments.<br>▪ Organic posts are not being seen by followers in this "pay-to-play" environment. |

**High-Level Recommendations:**

- Leverage the 'rule of thirds' - meaning rotate out content that is a mix of promotional, educational, and interactive/cultural topics.
- Incorporate additional content types (i.e. video, motion graphics, infographics, stories/reels, live videos, featured posts, articles, documents, carousels, collages, etc.).
- Incorporate additional content topics, such as:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ○ Job Postings | ○ Emergency Alerts + Weather Updates | ○ Interactive Questions to Followers |
| ○ City-Wide Initiatives | ○ Partnerships with organizations | ○ Social issues |
| ○ Social Media Campaigns | ○ Interviews with employees | ○ Holidays/National XYZ Holidays |
| ○ Contests/Giveaways | ○ Trivia, Polls, Did You Know, FAQs | ○ Day in the Life |
| ○ Historical photos and #tbt | ○ Awards/Honors | ○ Engaging photos of local sites |
| ○ Tips for XYZ | ○ Events | ○ Human interest stories |
| ○ Employee Testimonials and Spotlights | ○ Articles/Blogs | ○ Top Reasons to work for Palo Alto |
| ○ News/Announcements | ○ Volunteer Opps | ○ By the Numbers |

- Incorporate other types of reels/stories into Instagram that incorporate people and social media trends, vs just the Uplift Local and Emergency Alert System, and house them as featured or pinned content on the page.
- Leverage a content calendar (i.e. Excel, Trello, etc.) to help plan and schedule out posts across the three platforms. You can also plan what kind of content it will be (i.e. graphic, infographic, video, collage, etc.).
- Keep up with social media trends to share fun, relatable content with audiences.
- Reshare posts from (and about) Palo Alto agency posts with @ and #.
- Cross-promote each of the platforms on the other channels to increase followership and incorporate advertising (Also, link to the other platforms on Facebook).
- Consider the day of the week, time of day, and frequency of posting across all three platforms (Reduce the # of posts on Facebook to about 8 posts per week).
- Keep copy length short (use bitly for long links).
- Post manually to Instagram vs from Facebook to ensure content is sized appropriately for the platform.
- Reduce the number of links used on Linktree to 5-8 links vs 30+.
- Use a design tool like Canva to quickly create graphics, motion graphics, infographics, and videos to use across social platforms.
- Create content that keeps the user on the platform vs always directing to the website or link in the bio to learn more.
- When applicable, share posts in various languages, depending on the demographics of Palo Alto (i.e. English, Spanish, Chinese, etc).
- Leverage social media advertising to boost followership and promote open jobs at the organization.
- Leverage brand ambassadors to help boost followership, post engagement, traffic to platforms, and help promote open positions at the organization
- Update bios for consistency and update cover photos to include a human element.
- Leverage the City's website, email signatures, emails, printed materials, ads, and additional social platforms to drive users to the Palo Alto social platforms.

# APPENDIX D
# Secret Shopper Analysis

Click the LINK to see full analysis

**SUMMARY**

All Star Talents submitted an applicant in two recruitments (*Equipment Maintenance Serviceperson* in Public Works and *Water Quality Plant Operator I / Operator Trainee* in Utilities) to gain an understanding of the experience of a candidate interfacing with the recruitment process. This portion of the analysis is through the first receipt of the application.

**Positive Aspects of the Application Process:**
- Easy job discovery on the website.
- Seamless website navigation.
- Clear and accessible HR contact information.
- Transparent salary information presented prominently at the top.
- Well-defined expectations for the job outlined.
- Receipt of a well-structured confirmation email.
- Appreciation for the immediate follow-up in the application process.

**Recommendations for Improvement:**
- Provide more active and regular communication with candidates to improve the candidate experience.
- Enhance the prominence of the benefits section on the website.
- Include links in the job posting for additional information and explanations.
- Provide further clarification on items that require more explanation, such as work schedule and PERS retirement.
- Add specific guidance for out-of-state applicants or those who need to travel for the position.
- Ensure consistent placement of contact information on every page for easy access to inquiries.
- Integrate a more detailed timeline of the hiring process for applicants' better understanding.

# APPENDIX E – Consultant Firms / Team Information

**MRG**

MRG 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. The MRG team is experienced in working with elected officials, agency executives, managers, and staff. MRG helps agencies rethink historic practices and delivers transformational solutions to leadership, governance, human resources, financial management, and other complex organizational needs and issues.

**ALL-STAR TALENT**

All-Star Talent is an experienced consulting firm that leverages marketing channels for recruiting in the public sector. All-Star Talent is the premier talent marketing and recruiting firm for the public sector with a specialty in public safety. All Star Talent delivers the following consulting expertise:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ▪ Recruitment and Retention Consultant<br>▪ Candidate Tracking System | ▪ DEI Focused Solutions<br>▪ Social Media & Digital Marketing | ▪ Dashboard Analytics<br>▪ Video & Photography<br>▪ Virtual Recruitment Events |

**CONSULTANT TEAM**

**MARY EGAN**
Chief Executive Officer
MRG

- Over 30 years
- Executive Coaching, Workplace Investigation, & Crisis Navigation
- Delivering truth to governing boards/leaders to solve complex problems

**CATHY CAPRIOLA**
Project Manager
MRG

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

**PATTY FRANCISCO**
Consultant
MRG

- 30 years public sector HR
- Ph.D. Organizational Leadership
- Problem solver & driver of HR solutions

**JASON LITCHNEY**
Co-Founder
All Star Talent

- 20 years of marketing, PR, & employer branding
- Thought leader on public sector employer branding
- Help public agencies compete and win the talent game

**PAM HONG**
Director of Operations
All Star Talent

- Research and data analytics expert
- Creator of recruitment & retention products