



CITY OF OAKLAND

# AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Jestin D. Johnson  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Mary Hao  
Human Resources Director

**SUBJECT:** Informational Report On City-Wide  
Staffing - April 2025

**DATE:** April 28, 2025

City Administrator Approval

  
[Jestin Johnson \(May 13, 2025 18:09 PDT\)](#)

Date: **May 13, 2025**

## RECOMMENDATION

**Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report On City-Wide Staffing From The City Administrator Regarding (1) Citywide Vacancy Rates And Status As Of April 1, 2025, (2) Budgeted Vacancy Rate For Fiscal Year 2024/25 (3) The Vacancy Rates Of Regional Local Public Entities, (4) Recruitment Outreach And Community Engagement, And (5) The Analysis Of The City Workforce And Recruitment Conditions.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This informational report provides an update on city-wide staffing as of the position control report run on April 1, 2025. As of this date, there were 4,246.12 full time equivalent (FTE). Of the 4,246.12 FTE positions, 3,323.34 were authorized, unfrozen, and filled; 24 were unauthorized, unfrozen, and filled; 1 was authorized, frozen, and filled; 136.15 were authorized, unfrozen, and encumbered; and 761.63 were unfrozen and vacant. This results in a city-wide vacancy rate of 17.94 percent.

It is important to note that this report does not account for position reductions that resulted from the recent Reduction-in-Force (RIF) implemented in March 2025. While certain positions were identified for elimination as part of the RIF, this data does not yet reflect those changes, as the impacted positions have not been formally deleted from our reporting systems. These positions remain in the position count and are currently contributing to an artificially inflated vacancy rate.

This report also includes an analysis of the status of each authorized, unfrozen vacancy by department (**Attachment A**)<sup>1</sup>. The Human Resources Management (HRM) Department continues to align recruitment priorities with departmental needs and, in some cases, directives from the City Administrator's Office. Please note that the status of positions can change daily as

<sup>1</sup> Attachment A includes 24 positions that were unauthorized, unfrozen, and filled, and 1 position that was authorized, frozen, and filled. While these positions are typically excluded from vacancy reporting, they have been included here to accurately reflect the City's current staffing as of April 1, 2025.

the City hires new employees and as employees transition between positions or leave City service. Therefore, this data reflects a snapshot as of April 1, 2025.

We also note that in 2024, Governor Newsom signed into law, Assembly Bill (AB) 2561 (codified in Government Code Section 3502.3), which requires public agencies to hold a public hearing to address the status of job vacancies prior to the adoption of the final annual budget. During this public hearing, the City must present information on the status of vacancies, as well as its recruitment and retention efforts. If necessary, the City will identify changes to policies, procedures, or recruitment strategies that may contribute to delays or challenges in the hiring process. This public hearing will ensure compliance with the new law.

The Human Resources Management (HRM) Department continues to align recruitment priorities with departmental needs and, in some cases, directives from the City Administrator's Office.

## **BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY**

Over the past several years, HRM has provided to the Finance and Management Committee a report that examines full-time and permanent part-time vacancy data for City of Oakland positions. The report analyzes several key organizational staffing elements, including recruitment process improvements, community recruitment efforts, unemployment rates, retention rates, and employee tenure. This year's report also includes the requirements under AB 2561.

## **ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

This report supports the citywide priority of being a **responsive, trustworthy government** by providing the most recent staffing data and efforts by the City of Oakland related to staffing, and recruitment efforts and processes.

### ***Citywide Vacancy Rates and Status as of April 2025***

#### ***Vacancies***

For the purposes of this report, vacancies are described as **non-encumbered** and **unfrozen**. A non-encumbered position is available to be filled and not linked for any other purpose. Positions may be marked as encumbered when they are tied to funding for overtime, temporary staffing, underfilled positions (to allow for flexible staffing), or acting assignments.

While frozen positions are generally excluded from vacancy calculations, this report includes one authorized, frozen, and filled position, as an employee is currently assigned to it. Furthermore, this report includes 24 positions that are unauthorized, unfrozen, and filled. Including these exceptions ensures the data accurately reflects the City's staffing reality as of April 1, 2025.

**Citywide Positions**

**Table 1** shows the status of the Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Positions.

Table 1: Position Status		
Position Status	Sum of FTE Positions	Percentage of FTE Positions
.	3,323.34	78.27%
Unfrozen, Unauthorized, Filled	24	0.57%
Frozen, Authorized, Filled	1	0.02%
Total Filled	3,348.34	78.86%
Unfrozen, Authorized, Encumbered	136.15	3.21%
Unfrozen, Authorized, Vacant	761.63	17.94%
	<b>4,246.12</b>	<b>100%</b>

Additional reporting information regarding the Citywide Positions can be found in the following tables.

**Table 2** shows the vacancy rate by department, sorted from high to low percentage.

Table 2: Vacancy Rate by Department					
Department	Total FTE	Filled	Encumbered	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
City Council	22.92	0	12.24	10.68	46.60%
Police Commission	28	14	3	11	39.29%
Department of Workplace and Employment Standards	22	10	4	8	36.36%
Department of Violence Prevention	60.8	29.8	13	18	29.61%
Human Services Department	265.46	168	20.96	76.5	28.82%
Department of Transportation	387.85	252.85	24	111	28.62%
Planning & Building Department	212	147	5	60	28.30%
Housing & Community Development Department	93	63	4	26	27.96%
Office of the City Auditor	11	7	1	3	27.27%
Office of the Mayor	11	8	0	3	27.27%
Human Resources Management Department	53	34	5	14	26.42%

Department	Total FTE	Filled	Encumbered	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
Department of Race and Equity	4	3	0	1	25.00%
Oakland Parks & Recreation Department	98.28	73.48	0.75	24.05	24.47%
Oakland Public Works Department	633.91	489.91	10	134	21.14%
Economic & Workforce Development Department	58.8	44	3	11.8	20.07%
Public Ethics Commission	11	7	2	2	18.18%
Animal Services	26	21.5	0	4.5	17.31%
City Administrator's Office	54.6	40	6	8.6	15.75%
Fire Department	639.5	530	10	99.5	15.56%
Information Technology Department	90	76	0	14	15.56%
Oakland Public Library	226.2	191	1.2	34	15.03%
Finance Department	178.8	146.8	6	26	14.54%
Office of the City Clerk	15	14	0	1	6.67%
Office of the City Attorney	78	71	2	5	6.41%
Police Department	965	907	3	55	5.70%
	<b>4,246.12</b>	<b>3,348.34</b>	<b>136.15</b>	<b>761.63</b>	<b>17.94%</b>

**Sworn vs. Non-Sworn Positions**

Table 3 shows the vacancy rate broken out by positions designated as Non-Sworn versus Sworn.

Sworn vs Non	Total FTE	Filled	Encumbered	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
Non-Sworn	3,082.12	2,248.34	132.15	701.63	23.50%
Sworn	1,164.00	1,100.00	4.00	60.00	5.15%
	<b>4,246.12</b>	<b>3,348.34</b>	<b>136.15</b>	<b>761.63</b>	<b>17.94%</b>

**Union Representation**

The City of Oakland has memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with 6 unions.

**Table 4** shows the vacancy rate broken down representing union, sorted by vacancy rate.

Union	Total FTE	Filled	Encumbered	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
IFPTE Local 21	1,433.72	953.00	100.24	380.48	26.54%
IBEW Local 1245	19.00	13.00	1.00	5.00	26.32%
SEIU Local 1021	1,526.4	1,198.34	25.91	302.15	19.79%
Unrepresented	63.00	51.00	1.00	11.00	17.46%
IAFF Local 55	488.00	429.00	4.00	55.00	11.27%
CMEA	47.00	40.00	3.00	4.00	8.51%
OPOA/OPMA	669.00	665.00	0.00	4.00	0.60%
	<b>4,246.12</b>	<b>3,348.34</b>	<b>136.15</b>	<b>761.63</b>	<b>17.94%</b>

**Bargaining Unit Representation**

Within the respective Memorandum of Understanding for each union, there may be multiple bargaining units.

**Table 5** shows the vacancy rate broken down by bargaining unit, sorted by vacancy rate.

Bargaining Unit	Total FTE	Filled	Encumbered	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
TA1: Confidential Employees (L21)	44.92	14.00	14.24	16.68	37.13%
TF1: Prof. Engineers, Architects & Museum Employees (L21)	124.00	66.00	12.00	46.00	37.10%
UM2: Management Employees (CS) (L21)	256.50	160.00	18.00	78.50	30.60%
TW1: Admin, Prof, Technical & Other (L21)	586.30	377.00	48.00	160.30	27.34%
UN2: Sworn Police Mgmt, Deputy Chief & Captain of Police (OPOA/OPMA)	15.00	11.00	0.00	4.00	26.67%
IE1: IBEW Professional & Para-Professional Electricians (IBEW)	19.00	13.00	1.00	5.00	26.32%
TM2: Supervising Civil & Transportation Engineers (L21)	17.00	10.00	3.00	4.00	23.53%

Table 5: Vacancy Rate by Bargaining Unit

Bargaining Unit	Total FTE	Filled	Encumbered	Vacant	Vacancy Rate
SD1: Office and Technical Employees (L1021)	588.26	440.60	17.16	130.50	22.18%
SB1: Craft Employees (L1021)	116.00	85.00	6.00	25.00	21.55%
UH1: Supervisors (L21)	237.00	187.00	2.00	48.00	20.25%
UM1: Management Employees (Exempt) (L21)	118.00	93.00	2.00	23.00	19.49%
SC1: Field and Operations Employees (L1021)	822.14	672.74	2.75	146.65	17.84%
FQ1: Sworn Firefighters (IAFF)	488.00	429.00	4.00	55.00	11.27%
TM1: Deputy City Attorney I - IV (L21)	41.00	36.00	1.00	4.00	9.76%
U31: CMEA Confidential Management Employees (CMEA)	47.00	40.00	3.00	4.00	8.51%
U41: DCAV-SCA Deputy City Attorneys V & Special Counsel (L21)	9.00	9.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%
PP1: Sworn Police Officers (OPOA/OPMA)	654.00	654.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%
Unrepresented	63.00	51.00	1.00	11.00	17.46%
	<b>4,246.12</b>	<b>3,348.34</b>	<b>135.15</b>	<b>761.63</b>	<b>17.94%</b>

The bargaining units with vacancy rates equal to or greater than 20% are subject to the AB 2561 reporting requirements. AB 2561 requires that if the number of job vacancies within a single bargaining unit meets or exceeds 20% of the total number of authorized full-time positions, the staff presentation will also include the following information:

1. The total number of job vacancies within the bargaining unit.
2. The total number of applicants for vacant positions within the bargaining unit.
3. The average number of days to complete the hiring process from when a position is posted.
4. Opportunities to improve compensation and other working conditions.

Based on the information in Table 5, there are 10 bargaining units that had a vacancy rate of 20% or greater as of April 1, 2025; these 10 bargaining units were represented by 4 unions – IFPTE Local 21, OPOA/OPMA, IBEW Local 1245, and SEIU Local 1021.

**Table 6** summarizes the total number of applications received and the average time to complete the hiring process for classifications with current vacancies in bargaining units meeting the AB 2561 reporting threshold.

Table 6: Applicant Volume & Hiring Timeline for Bargaining Units with Vacancy Rates of 20% or Higher				
Classification by Bargaining Unit	# of Applications Received July 1, 2020 - April 1, 2025	Average # Days from Job Posting to List Created	Average # Days from Referred to Hire	Average # Days to Complete the Hiring Process
IFPTE Local 21				
TA1	956.00	71.50	47.98	119.48
TF1	616.00	115.42	96.75	212.16
UM2	2643.00	70.25	63.04	133.30
TW1	8021.00	89.83	73.30	163.13
TM2	53.00	78.50	50.39	128.89
UH1	1378.00	81.16	85.68	166.84
OPOA/OPMA				
UN2	45.00	95.25	24.25	119.50
IBEW Local 1245				
IE1	85.00	218.00	66.00	284.00
SEIU Local 1021				
SD1	5081.00	63.17	68.09	131.26
SB1	1008.00	130.36	108.79	239.16

***Opportunities to Reduce Hiring Timelines and Vacancy Rates***

As shown in Table 6, the City of Oakland has gathered data to meet the requirements outlined in AB 2561, including the number of job vacancies, total applicants, and average time to hire for bargaining units with vacancy rates exceeding 20%. This data was collected for the period between July 1, 2020, and April 1, 2025, focusing specifically on classifications that currently have at least one active vacancy. While comprehensive, it is important to acknowledge several limitations in the data: some classifications may not have had any recruitments during the review period, some recruitments were restricted (limited to current City or Port or Oakland employees) and not open to the general public, thus yielding less application submission, and the height of

the COVID-19 pandemic likely impacted application volumes and timelines in 2020 through early 2021.

The average hiring timeline was divided into two stages: (1) the number of days from the announcement opening to the establishment of an eligible list, and (2) the number of days from candidate referral to hire approval. HRM is responsible for the tasks included in No. 1, whereas the hiring departments are responsible for the tasks in No. 2. Only recruitments with complete data for both stages were included to ensure the integrity of the time-to-hire metrics.

#### *From Job Announcement to Eligible List*

It is important to recognize the structural challenges HRM faces and the governing rules that impact recruitment timelines:

- *Stringent MOU Requirements:* Many of the City's MOUs and past practices require the use of only external assessors during assessment processes. Since HRM cannot use internal staff as raters for most recruitments, staff must solicit and identify qualified external assessors who are willing to volunteer their time without compensation, which can be extremely challenging. Further, departments are also often unable or unwilling to reciprocate by volunteering for other agencies, compounding the difficulty.
- *Limited Departmental Participation in Job Analysis:* HRM depends on departments to provide Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to develop the job announcement. Since department hiring managers must balance performing their regular duties and focusing on recruitment, there are often delays in this step in the process.
- *SME Availability:* Even when departmental Single-Points-of-Contact (SPOCs) provide HRM with internal SMEs to assist throughout the recruitment process, the availability of departmental SMEs is limited due to competing operational demands, leading to further delays in recruitment development and exam planning.
- *Recruitment Outreach Constraints:* Outreach efforts are constrained by limited funding. We rely heavily on free advertising methods and the public outreach networks of hiring departments. Without a dedicated budget for expansive or targeted recruitment outreach, attracting larger or more diverse applicant pools is more difficult.
- *Internal Staffing Limitations:* HRM's own staffing shortages also impact the number of recruitments that can be managed *concurrently*.

#### *From Referral of Eligible Candidates to Hire*

After HRM establishes an eligible list, HRM refers the names of eligible candidates to departments for their selection processes. An analysis of the time-to-hire data reveals significant opportunities for process improvement, particularly at the departmental level. For classifications represented by IFPTE Local 21, the department's portion of the hiring process (from referral to hire) took, on average, approximately two weeks less than the recruitment process managed by HRM. For classifications represented by SEIU Local 1021, departmental hiring timelines were, on average, about one week less than HRM's portion of the recruitment lifecycle.

While there may be specific reasons for delays at the department level after names of eligible candidates have been referred to them, HRM has identified the following opportunities for departments to reduce these timelines:

- *Streamlining Departmental Hiring Processes:* Departments should prioritize scheduling interviews and completing selection activities immediately upon receiving eligible list referrals. Setting clear internal service standards for timeframes to interview, select, and make conditional offers will help accelerate the hiring cycle.
- *Enhancing Hiring Manager Accountability:* Departments must recognize their role in the hiring lifecycle and be held accountable for timely movement through the hiring process. Regular reporting on departmental hiring timelines to HRM and candidates could help increase transparency and encourage greater responsiveness.
- *Improved Recruitment Planning:* Early and coordinated planning between HRM and departments is critical. Departments should proactively plan for interview panels, reference checks, and onboarding activities as soon as a recruitment is initiated, rather than waiting until an eligible list is established.
- *Training and Support:* Targeted training for hiring managers on best practices for candidate evaluation, interview scheduling, and timely decision-making could help departments move more efficiently through the selection process.
- *Leveraging Technology:* Where appropriate, greater use of technology (e.g., digital scheduling tools, automated reminders) can help expedite communication and minimize administrative delays.

While departmental delays are a contributing factor, it is also important to recognize the structural challenges HRM faces and the governing rules that impact recruitment timelines:

- *Stringent MOU Requirements:* Many of the City's MOUs and past practices require the use of only external assessors during selection processes. HRM cannot use internal staff as raters for most recruitments. Identifying qualified external assessors who are willing to volunteer their time without compensation is extremely challenging. Furthermore, the City of Oakland no longer has a budget to feed the external assessors that do participate in person. Departments are also often unable or unwilling to reciprocate by volunteering for other agencies, compounding the difficulty.
- *Limited Departmental Participation in Job Analysis:* Departments often do not prioritize providing Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) during the job analysis and recruitment planning phases, delaying key milestones in the process.
- *SME Availability:* Even when departmental Single-Points-of-Contact (SPOCs) provide HRM with internal SMEs to assist throughout the recruitment process, the availability of departmental SMEs is limited due to competing operational demands, leading to further delays in recruitment development and exam planning.
- *Recruitment Outreach Constraints:* Outreach efforts are constrained by limited funding. We rely heavily on free advertising methods and the public outreach networks of hiring

departments. Without a dedicated budget for expansive or targeted recruitment outreach, attracting larger or more diverse applicant pools is more difficult.

- *Internal Staffing Limitations:* HRM's own staffing shortages also impact how many recruitments can be managed concurrently. Recruitment staff are assigned high caseloads and must balance competing timelines and priorities, which inherently slows the process when bandwidth is limited.

Addressing both HRM and departmental challenges will be essential for improving time-to-hire metrics, decreasing vacancy rates, resulting in improving the City's ability to attract and retain talent to better meet the staffing needs of the City.

HRM is committed to reducing the vacancy rates within impacted bargaining units, and ultimately, better serving the Oakland community by ensuring critical positions are filled more quickly.

**Table 7** shows the historical vacancy rates, starting April 2020, including the number of positions that were added or deleted since the previous reporting period.

Table 7: Historical Vacancy Rates			
Position Control Report Date	# of budgeted positions	Vacancies	% Vacant
4/1/2025 Positions deleted:	4,246.12 -38.99	761.63	17.94%
10/1/2023 Positions deleted:	4,285.11 -62.35	789.31	18.42%
5/1/2023 Positions added:	4,347.46 +27.70	833.51	19.17%
11/23/2022 Positions added:	4,319.76 +200.70	855.05	19.79%
4/12/2022 Positions added:	4,119.06 +40.50	792.24	19.23%
10/18/2021 Positions added:	4,078.56 +170.51	759.5	18.62%
5/4/2021 Positions deleted:	3,908.05 -138.05	481.56	12.32%
11/16/2020 Positions deleted:	4,046.44 -1.61	576.09	14.24%
4/27/2020	4,048.05	587.16	14.50%

**Status of Vacancies**

As of April 1, 2025, the City of Oakland's total workforce position count was 4,246.12 Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs), spread across 4,293 unique positions. While FTE represents the total

workforce (with some positions funded at less than 1.00 FTE), the number of unique position numbers captures the actual number of individual job slots in the City's workforce.

Of the total positions:

- 3,348.34 FTE are currently filled, comprising:
  - 3,323.34 FTE that are unfrozen, authorized, and filled;
  - 24 FTE that are unfrozen, unauthorized, but filled;
  - 1 FTE that is frozen, authorized, but filled.
- 136.15 FTE are unfrozen, authorized, and encumbered, meaning that incumbents are allocated to those position numbers in a way other than what was originally designated when the position was created – this can be tied to funding for overtime, temporary or limited duration staffing, underfilled positions (to allow for flexible staffing), or acting assignments.
- 761.63 FTE are unfrozen, authorized, and vacant, meaning the positions are available to be filled but not currently occupied. This results in a vacancy rate of 17.94% among authorized, unfrozen positions.

While the total vacant FTE count is 761.63, there are 799 individual positions – some positions may be funded at less than 1.0 FTE.

On April 4, 2025, the HRM Recruitment and Classification Division reviewed the vacancy status of all 799 positions using NeoGov, the City's applicant tracking system and system of record. Each vacant position was categorized into a status option to reflect its current state in the recruitment or hiring process. Below is an explanation of each status category used:

- No Requisition
  - The hiring department has not submitted a requisition to fill their vacant position.
  - For Civil Service positions, no eligible list exists for this classification. To fill the vacancy, the hiring department must initiate a new recruitment request.
- Eligible List Available, No Requisition
  - The Recruitment and Classification team within HRM previously established an eligible list, but the department has not submitted a requisition to initiate hiring.
  - Without a requisition, no action can be taken to fill the position, despite there being a list of eligible candidates.

- Requisition Pending Approval
  - The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill their vacant position, but it is still pending approval from one or more required approvers (e.g., department Director, City Administrator's Office, Budget, HRM)
- Pending HR Analyst Assignment
  - The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
  - The recruitment activities have not yet started because HRM needs to assign an analyst to conduct the recruitment process.
- On Hold by Department
  - The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
  - The hiring department requested that HRM pause the recruitment process.
  - This may occur for operational, funding, or organizational reasons.
- On Hold for Class Specification/Title Changes
  - The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
  - During recruitment planning, it was identified that the existing Class Spec needed to be updated or retitled.
  - The Recruitment is on hold until the class spec accurately reflects the duties and qualifications for the position.
- Recruitment Planning and Preparation
  - The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
  - HRM has assigned an analyst, and they are actively preparing to conduct the recruitment.

- This may include, but it not limited to drafting announcements, conducting job analyses, developing exam plans, and coordinating testing materials prior to formally posting the job as available to accept applications.
- Active HRM Recruitment in Progress
  - The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
  - The Recruitment and Classification Division team is actively conducting a civil service recruitment to establish an eligible list, which may include opening a job announcement, screening applicants, or testing applicants, with the goal of referring qualified candidates to the department for hiring consideration.
- Department Interview Process (Eligible List Referred)
  - The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
  - For Civil Service positions, HRM completed the recruitment, referred eligible candidates, and the hiring department is in the process of interviewing candidates, but has not yet selected a finalist.
  - For Non-Civil Service or exempt positions, the department has a pool of candidates but has not finalized a selection.
- Non-Civil Service – Departments conduct the hiring process
  - The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
  - Since the position is exempt from Civil Service, the hiring department can conduct their hiring process without needing HRM to run a full recruitment.
  - The hiring department has not identified a selection.
- Candidate Identified (Backgrounds, Offers, and Hire Approvals)
  - The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.

- For Civil Service positions, HRM completed the recruitment, referred eligible candidates, and the hiring department has identified a selection, however, the hire has not yet been fully approved through the City’s approval processes, such as background checks or final offer approval.

The vacancy status analysis provides greater insight into where hiring bottlenecks exist and identifies opportunities for process improvements. Some vacancies are well along in the hiring pipeline, while others remain stalled due to a lack of department requisition submissions, hiring freezes, classification updates, insufficient HRM staff to complete the recruitment processes, or department-initiated holds.

Ongoing monitoring of these statuses will help ensure that:

- Departments are aware of the next steps needed to advance their recruitments.
- HRM is strategically allocating resources where they are most urgently needed.
- Citywide vacancy reduction efforts are transparent and measurable.

The table below provides a snapshot of the number of vacant positions by status category as of April 4, 2025.

**Table 8** is a summary of the vacancy status throughout all departments.

Table 8: Summary of Vacancy Status	
Vacancy Status	Positions
No Requisition	240
Eligible List Available, No Requisition	221
Requisition Pending Approval	77
Pending HR Analyst Assignment	10
On Hold by Department	21
On Hold for Class Specification/Title Changes	11
Recruitment Planning and Preparation	6
Active HRM Recruitment in Progress <sup>2</sup>	43
Non-Civil Service – Departments conduct hiring process	9
Department Interview Process (Eligible List Referred)	101
Candidate Identified (Backgrounds, Offers, and Hire Approvals)	40
	<b>779</b>

<sup>2</sup> There may be multiple vacancies associated with a single recruitment process.

**Budgeted Vacancy Rate for Fiscal Year 2024-25**

**Table 9** shows the Budgeted Vacancy Factor by department, which is distinct from the Vacancy Rate. The Budgeted Vacancy Factor is a negative percentage applied to all positions, which reduces the cost of each, to account for cost savings that are anticipated from vacant positions throughout the fiscal year. The Budgeted Vacancy Factor is fixed in the Adopted Budget and applied to the various departments. Historically, the Budgeted Vacancy Factor has been 4% for most departments.

Table 9: Budgeted Vacancy Factor by Department (FY 2024-25)				
Department	Budgeted Vacancy Factor			
	10%	8%	6%	0%
DPCCO - City Council				X
DP010 - Office of the Mayor				X
DP020 - City Administrator's Office		X		
DP030 - Office of the City Clerk				X
DP040 - Office of the City Attorney				X
DP050 - Human Resources Management Department			X	
DP070 - Office of the City Auditor				X
DP080 - Finance Department			X	
DP1000 - Police Department		X		
DP200 - Fire Department		X		
DP300 - Oakland Public Works Department	X			
DP350 - Department of Transportation		X		
DP460 - Information Technology Department			X	
DP5000 - Oakland Parks & Recreation Department		X		
DP610 - Oakland Public Library			X	
DP620 - Animal Services				X
DP640 - Race and Equity				X
DP650 - Public Ethics Commission				X
DP660 - Police Commission				X
DP670 - Department of Workplace and Employment Standards			X	
DP700 - Violence Prevention Administration	X			
DP750 - Human Services Department		X		
DP840 - Planning & Building Department		X		
DP850 - Economic & Workforce Development Department	X			
DP890 - Housing & Community Development Department	X			

*Vacancy Rates do not apply to Rep Units UX1, PP1, UU1, UN1, UR1, UN2, and US1*

**The Vacancy Rates of Regional Local Public Entities**

**Table 10** shows the surveys of regional comparator jurisdictions that have been included since May 2022 through April 2025. During that time, most of the comparator agencies have experienced varying vacancy rates as shown below:

Table 10: Regional Vacancy Rates									
	San Jose	SF	Berk	Concord	Hayward	Fremont	Richmond	Vallejo	Oakland
<b>April 2025</b>									
Budgeted FTE	6,994	35,256.09	1,766	419	956.3	1,021	808		4,246.12
Vacancy Rate	10.09%	6.65%	16.25%	8.83%	12.02%	13.61%	20.42%	N/A	17.94%
<b>September 2023</b>									
Vacancy Rate	13.46%	11.03%	12.93%	8.85%	17.08%	14.72%	17.52%	N/A	18.42%
<b>May 2023</b>									
Vacancy Rate	14.41%	12.47%	18.68%	11.30%	12.82%	12.76%	19.01%	N/A	19.17%
<b>December 2022</b>									
Vacancy Rate	15.21%	13.27%	17.85%	11.63%	14.16%	12.56%	20.19%	26.75%	19.79%
<b>May 2022</b>									
Vacancy Rate	13.20%	NA	16.21%	13.69%	14.80%	11.49%	16.15%	28.48%	19.23%

**Recruitment Outreach and Community Engagement**

HRM is committed to promoting careers with the City of Oakland and connecting with the community to build a diverse and talented workforce. Over the past two years, HRM's Recruitment and Classification Division team has partnered with departments and participated in various job fairs, career expos, and community events to raise awareness about City employment opportunities and services in the pursuit of the City of Oakland becoming an employer-of-choice in the Bay Area.

Between May 2023 and April 2025, some of the notable events that City staff attended were:

- Fruitvale Job and Resource Fair (May 2023)
- Town Night Festival (July 2023)
- Resume Compilation and Job Readiness Workshop (August 2023)

- Oakland Chinatown 34th Street Festival (August 2023)
- Art and Soul Festival (September 2023)
- College of Alameda Recruitment Event (September 2023)
- Insight Global Job Fair (October 2023)
- Goodwill Job Fair (October 2023)
- Merit College Job Fair (October 2023)
- Holiday Career Fair (November 2023)
- OPRYD Winter Hires Event (December 2023)
- Public Services Career Fair (March & June 2024)
- Laney College Job Fair (October 2024)
- Harvard Kennedy School's Inaugural State and City Career Expo (April 2025)
- Police Communications Dispatcher Outreach Events (Bi-monthly)

In addition to participating in external events, the Recruitment and Classification Division team coordinated the City of Oakland's first Citywide Career and Resources Expo in March 2024. This major event was a tremendous success and represented a significant collaborative effort across the department. Every City department was invited to set up informational tables and engage with potential candidates about the services they provide and the career paths available.

Career Expo highlights included:

- Workshops on how to create and edit a NeoGov applicant profile
- Tips for interpreting Civil Service Rules and navigating the City's hiring process
- Guidance on resume building and filling out applications
- Information sessions on the City's benefits and resources
- Hands-on support from HRM staff to assist applicants in real time
- Distribution of promotional items and City of Oakland career materials

The event not only helped educate the public about job opportunities but also strengthened the City's recruitment brand and visibility in the community.

To better understand the work performed across the City and enhance recruitment materials, the entire Recruitment and Classification Division team also participated in job shadowing activities throughout the year. Staff toured City facilities, observed operations in departments such as the Oakland Fire Department (OFD), Oakland Parks, Recreation, and Youth Development (OPRYD), Mobile Assistance Community Responders of Oakland (MACRO), and OFD Emergency Services, and learned directly from subject matter experts. These experiences have enhanced the team's ability to draft detailed and accurate job descriptions and to develop compelling job announcements and value propositions tailored to each role.

Through these outreach and engagement efforts, HRM is working to build a pipeline of diverse, qualified applicants and strengthen community connections that are essential to achieving the City's recruitment and equity goals.

### ***The Analysis of The City Workforce and Recruitment Conditions***

The City of Oakland continues to navigate a highly challenging labor environment, balancing recruitment and retention needs with organizational changes, civil service requirements, and ongoing resource constraints.

### ***Human Resources Management Department Workforce and Staffing Conditions***

Over the past year, the Department of Human Resources Management – Recruitment and Classification Division has undergone significant staffing changes. Departures included three Human Resources Analysts, one Senior Human Resources Analyst, three Human Resources Technicians, one Administrative Assistant II (Confidential), and one Human Resources Manager. Additionally, one Human Resources Technician promoted to a different department. In preceding years, the Division also lost a Human Resources Analyst from the Classification Unit and a Human Resources Technician, both of whom possessed multiple years of institutional knowledge and provided substantial support to recruitment efforts.

The loss of the Human Resources Manager, who possessed expertise in recruitment processes, the City's applicant tracking system (NeoGov), and extensive experience in data and analytics to support the preparation of the staffing report, has been particularly impactful.

To maintain critical operations, HRM reassigned a Senior Human Resources Analyst to oversee position control reconciliation, processing of new employee paperwork, and personnel transactions – functions traditionally performed by HR Technicians. At the same time, the Division has contended with the lack of permanent front desk staffing, requiring various team members to rotate in for coverage, further stretching available resources. The Citywide reduction in force compounded these challenges, as three more tenured R&C team members were reassigned to non-recruitment duties leaving the remaining team members responsible for meeting the City's comprehensive recruitment and classification needs.

Despite these staffing constraints, HRM has maintained essential service delivery and invested in strategies to strengthen organizational resilience.

To further strengthen operations and mitigate the impacts of turnover, the HRM has increasingly focused on:

- *Cross-Training*: Building redundancy in critical functions to reduce risk associated with staff turnover.
- *Professional Development*: Investing in mentoring, coaching, and learning opportunities for professional staff to deepen their expertise.
- *Standardization of Procedures*: Formalizing recruitment and classification workflows to promote consistency and reduce reliance on individual institutional knowledge.

These efforts have been essential in sustaining operations and enhancing service delivery despite ongoing resource challenges.

### ***Citywide Challenges and Considerations***

Several key challenges continue to impact the City's ability to attract and retain talent efficiently:

- *Civil Service and MOU Constraints*: The City's reliance on traditional competitive civil service examinations contributes to longer hiring timelines. Some jurisdictions have moved toward alternate certification models, such as rule-of-the-list or ranked banding, to expedite hiring where appropriate.
- *Classification and Compensation Alignment*: Some classifications are no longer aligned with regional market rates. The City does not typically realign salary steps outside of bargaining. We are entering negotiations with our labor partners, and salary adjustments may be considered. During negotiations, there may also be an opportunity to discuss hiring incentives or retention bonuses to provide competitive relief.
- *Appeal of Public Service*: While public service remains a strong motivator, competitiveness around benefits, flexibility (including hybrid schedules), and career development opportunities are increasingly important. Highlighting these strengths could attract more robust applicant pools.
- *Technology and Process Modernization*: Continued investment in digital hiring solutions – including online testing, applicant tracking enhancements, and on-demand interviewing platforms – is essential to maintaining a modern, competitive candidate experience.
- *Applicant Non-Responsiveness*: Reflecting national trends, Oakland continues to face challenges with applicant engagement, including missed exams and interviews. Tightening timelines between the application, examination, and referral stages is one strategy being explored to maintain candidate interest.

### ***Opportunities for Process and Policy Improvements***

Recognizing the constraints of the current environment, HRM continues to identify targeted opportunities for improvement, including:

- Expanding the use of alternative certification, models where allowable, to expedite hiring.

- Strengthening employer branding by attending more career fairs and community events.
- Continuing modernization of hiring systems to provide a seamless applicant experience.
- Further shortening recruitment process timelines where feasible.

Through these strategies, HRM remains committed to supporting City departments in attracting and retaining the workforce needed to serve the Oakland community, while proactively adapting to evolving workforce and organizational realities.

### ***Broader Labor Market and Economic Trends***

As of March 2025, the U.S. unemployment rate stood at 4.2 percent, with approximately 7.1 million unemployed individuals, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). These figures represent minimal change over recent months, with the unemployment rate holding within a narrow range of 4.0 percent to 4.2 percent since May 2024. While overall employment remains relatively stable, one trend that may be worth watching is the continued decline in federal government employment – with a loss of 4,000 positions in March 2025, following a loss of 11,000 jobs in February 2025. This could reflect broader fiscal tightening as public agencies adjust to post-pandemic budget pressures, shifting funding priorities, and the policies of a new Presidential administration. It may also suggest that governments, like private sector employers, will need to rethink how they attract and retain talent in a changing labor market. Additionally, high turnover rates, now commonly referred to as the “Great Reshuffling,” continue to characterize the employment landscape, with employees increasingly open to changing jobs for better pay, improved working conditions, or new career growth opportunities.

California’s labor market appears to be facing even greater challenges relative to national trends. According to the BLS, California’s unemployment rate was 5.3 percent in March 2025, compared to 5.1 percent in March 2024, and remains higher than the national unemployment rate of 4.4 percent reported in January 2025. Factors that may be contributing to this could include cautious hiring practices amid concerns about a potential economic slowdown, persistent inflation in specific sectors, and fluctuating state revenues. The aging workforce could also be playing a role, more vacancies may arise as retirements in public sector roles traditionally held by longer-tenured employees occur. These dynamics suggest that competition for skilled workers will likely remain strong, particularly for government agencies seeking to replace deep institutional knowledge.

Looking more broadly, international trends also hint at an evolving employment landscape. Remote and hybrid work expectations have become deeply entrenched across industries, and job seekers now appear to view workplace flexibility as a core expectation rather than a temporary adjustment. According to the World Economic Forum: Future of Jobs Report, global economic uncertainty is also a factor – driven by factors such as interest rate volatility, geopolitical tensions, and ongoing supply chain disruptions – may affect workforce behavior and employer hiring decisions worldwide.

In this broader context, Oakland’s recruitment and retention challenges are consistent with, and in some ways magnify, these national and state-level trends. The competition for qualified candidates remains intense, particularly within the public sector, and candidate expectations around flexibility, career advancement, and total compensation continue to grow. These

pressures suggest that it will be increasingly important for the City to continue modernizing its recruitment practices, positioning itself competitively, and highlighting the unique and meaningful opportunities that public service in Oakland can offer.

**Hiring Efforts**

There were 262 full-time and permanent part-time new hires during FY 2023-2024, and an additional 71 Police/Fire Trainees. Between July 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025, there have been 67 new full-time and permanent part-time hires. To reduce the overall vacancy rate, City hiring needs to outpace separations.

There were 263 separations during FY 2023–2024. Between July 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025, we have already had 275 separations, with three months still remaining in the fiscal year. Notably, there have already been more retirements this FY year compared to FY 23-24, suggesting a shift in workforce demographics. This increase in separations may, in part, be attributed to the recent RIF, as organizational changes can prompt employees — especially those nearing retirement or seeking greater job security — to make career decisions earlier than they might have otherwise.

**Table 11** shows the reasons for the separation of full-time City employees since the Fiscal Year 2013-14.

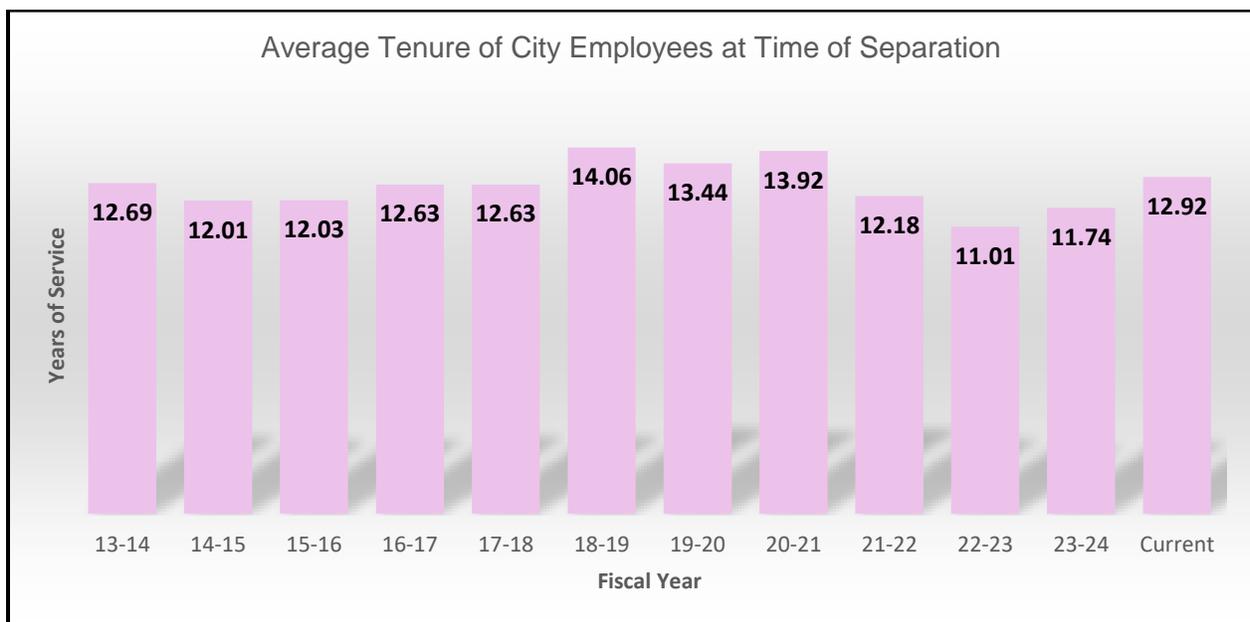
FY	Resign	Retire	Other	Total
23-24	149	86	26	263
22-23	201	84	48	333
21-22	242	135	69	446
20-21	140	123	39	302
19-20	146	96	61	303
18-19	111	78	41	230
17-18	117	110	34	261
16-17	106	131	39	276
15-16	98	113	36	247
14-15	80	108	43	231
13-14	73	100	33	206

1. **Tenure of Separations:** According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), median employee tenure dropped to 3.9 years as of January 2024, the lowest level reported since 2002. This marks a decline from 4.1 years in January 2022 and reflects a broader trend of increased job mobility. The BLS also found that tenure varies significantly by age, with older workers tending to stay with employers much longer than younger workers. For

example, workers aged 55 to 64 had a median tenure of 9.6 years, compared to just 2.7 years for workers aged 25 to 34. Additionally, more than half of workers aged 60 to 64 had been with their employer for at least a decade, while only about one-fifth of workers aged 35 to 39 had similar long-term tenure.

In contrast to national trends, departing City of Oakland employees had an average tenure of 11.74 years in Fiscal Year 2023-24. In the current fiscal year, the average tenure of separating employees has risen to 12.92 years. This increase appears to be driven primarily by a higher number of retirement separations, as many long-serving employees exit the organization. As the City's workforce continues to evolve and the proportion of retirement-eligible employees declines over time, it is anticipated that the average tenure at separation may begin to decrease.

**Figure A:** Average Tenure of City Employees at time of Separation



- 4. **Separations by Department:** While the tenure of separating employees is above the national average, rates of separation vary by department.

**Table 12** shows the number of separations, including retirements and resignations in six of the largest city departments.

Table 12: Largest Department Separations, Retirements, and Resignations					
	FY23-24				
Department	Total Department FTE FY23-24	Total Separations	Retirements	Resignations	Other
Police	1010	85	33	42	10
			38.82%	49.41%	11.76%
Fire	574	30	12	14	4
			40.00%	46.67%	13.33%
Public Works	531	31	17	12	2
			54.84%	38.71%	6.45%
Transportation	280	17	4	13	0
			23.53%	76.47%	0.00%
Library	219	12	6	5	1
			50.00%	41.67%	8.33%
Human Services	184	10	0	10	0
			0.00%	100.00%	0.00%
Planning & Building	153	10	3	7	0
			30.00%	70.00%	0.00%

Like many public sector organizations, the City of Oakland continues to experience challenges with employee retention. Turnover trends suggest that separations remain a significant concern, emphasizing the critical need for sustained focus on employee engagement, development, and organizational culture. While some level of turnover is natural, high rates of separation can strain operations, disrupt service delivery, and lead to the loss of valuable institutional knowledge.

Several factors can contribute to employee separations, including increased competition for talent, evolving employee expectations around work-life balance, career development opportunities, and organizational culture. Employees are likely seeking workplaces that offer flexibility, growth pathways, meaningful recognition, and a clear connection to purpose. According to Gallup, Workplace Consulting & Global Research, employee engagement is significantly influenced by factors such as opportunities for development, recognition, and alignment with the organization’s mission. Further, the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) indicates that employees who feel valued and see a clear path for advancement are more likely to remain with their organizations. Organizations that proactively address these aspects are more likely to retain engaged employees, while those who do not may face higher rates of disengagement and turnover.

Recognizing these dynamics, the City is focused on strengthening its retention strategies by investing in employee development, enhancing support for supervisors and managers, expanding career growth opportunities, and promoting a workplace culture rooted in equity, inclusion, and belonging. There is an increased emphasis on equipping leadership with the skills and resources necessary to foster engagement at all levels of the workforce.

As separations continue to outpace hires and average tenure of employees continues to trend downward, an increased emphasis on employee engagement and retention is critical. Looking ahead, by fostering a supportive and responsive organizational environment, the City can improve retention, sustain service excellence, and ensure the success of its workforce into the future.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This item is for informational purposes only and does not have a direct fiscal impact or cost.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST**

In accordance with AB 2561, recognized employee organizations representing bargaining units are entitled to make a presentation during the public hearing at which the City presents the status of vacancies, recruitment, and retention efforts. If vacancies within a bargaining unit meet or exceed 20 percent of the total authorized full-time positions, and upon request of the recognized employee organization, the City will also include specific vacancy and hiring data during the hearing, including the number of job vacancies, the number of applicants, the average time to hire, and opportunities to improve compensation and working conditions.

No additional public outreach beyond the standard City Council agenda noticing procedures is required for this report, as it focuses on internal staffing efforts. The respective unions are provided the opportunity to participate in the public hearing as prescribed by law.

### **COORDINATION**

This report was developed in coordination with information provided by the Budget Division of the Finance Department in relation to staffing data and the budgeted vacancy factor.

### **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

#### ***Economic:***

There are no economic opportunities associated with this report.

#### ***Environmental:***

There are no environmental opportunities associated with this report.

#### ***Race & Equity:***

The City of Oakland is committed to addressing systemic inequities within its recruitment and hiring processes. With the public sector facing significant challenges in filling positions, especially in underserved areas, it is critical that we approach these challenges with an improved the model

of service that doesn't further harm or increase disparities for communities impacted by system racism.

In alignment with the City's broader equity goals, HRM has been working to develop and implement tools and strategies that ensure more equitable outcomes in recruitment, hiring, and retention. The goal is to dismantle barriers rooted in bias and systemic racism, making Oakland a leader in equitable employment practices. This work is part of an organizational change effort to integrate race and equity competencies throughout the employee lifecycle, from job analysis to promotion and career development.

Key efforts in this initiative include:

- *Capacity Building and Training:* HRM continues to engage in capacity building and training to develop a shared understanding of equity, inclusion, and bias reduction across departments. This includes offering leadership and staff opportunities to learn how to apply operational and leadership tools in their daily work, as well as facilitating activities that promote inclusion and participation. As part of this effort, HRM is incorporating awareness around salary negotiation perceptions into the Supervisory Academy's hiring bias training, in alignment with the City Auditor's November 4, 2024, recommendations.
- *Equity Framework and System Implementation:* Through ongoing collaboration, HRM has made strides in creating and applying an Equity Framework and System to guide recruitment, hiring, and retention efforts. This Equity Framework System includes incorporating racial equity language into job descriptions and qualifications, identifying, and removing barriers that disproportionately affect communities harmed or inequitably served due to the impacts of systemic racism, and ensuring equity standards are integrated into the performance appraisal process. Additionally, we include resources such as assessor orientation training and hiring bias reduction training.
- *Inclusive Outreach and Engagement:* To promote greater access to City job opportunities, the HRM Equity Team has focused on enhancing outreach and engagement efforts. This includes increasing partnerships with community organizations and workforce development programs to develop employment pipelines from various educational institutions into the City that are dedicated and committed to growing future leaders in equity focused work.
- *Tracking and Recognizing Progress:* HRM continues to track the application of the Equity Framework and System and celebrates progress toward meeting equity goals designed in their Equity Action Plan. This includes regular Equity Labs (Human Resources focused training on the topics of Equity, Inclusion and Bias Reduction), reviewing documents and current processes for bias and equity language, and conducting racial equity impact analyses following significant HR processes, such as layoffs or hiring.
- *Long-Term Commitment:* By incorporating racial equity language and a standalone racial equity competency into behavioral competencies used in job analysis and throughout the employee lifecycle, HRM aims to foster a workforce that is representative of its diverse community, and consequently equipped to serve Oakland residents more effectively. This commitment is reinforced through continuous feedback and the active role of leadership

and department staff in identifying and applying equity tools and practices to their specific work.

In summary, the HRM team is dedicated to addressing systemic inequities and reducing harm by developing processes and practices with a central focus on equity within the City of Oakland's recruitment and employment practices. This effort is essential in ensuring that the City's workforce better reflects the people of Oakland.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report On City-Wide Staffing From The City Administrator Regarding (1) Citywide Vacancy Rates And Status As Of April 1, 2025, (2) Budgeted Vacancy Rate For Fiscal Year 2024/25 (3) The Vacancy Rates Of Regional Local Public Entities, (4) Recruitment Outreach And Community Engagement, And (5) The Analysis Of The City Workforce And Recruitment Conditions.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Mary Hao, Human Resources Director, at (510) 238-6450.

Respectfully submitted,



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Mary Hao  
Human Resources Director  
Department of Human Resources Management

Prepared by:  
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Attachment(s) (1):

A: Citywide Vacancy Status Report