AGENDA REPORT

CITY OF OAKLAND

TO:	Jestin D. Johnson City Administrator	**FROM:**	Mary Hao Human Resources Director
SUBJECT:	Informational Report On City-Wide Staffing - February 2026	**DATE:**	March 24, 2026

City Administrator Approval	*Michelle N. Phillips* Michelle N. Phillips (Mar 13, 2026 10:05:39 PDT)	Date: **Mar 13, 2026**

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 February 1, 2026, (2) Budgeted Vacancy Rate For Fiscal Year 2025/26 (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 February 1, 2026. As of this date, there were 4,264.17 full time equivalent (FTE), of which 3,182.03 were filled (authorized and unfrozen); 4 were filled (authorized and frozen); 69 were filled (unauthorized and unfrozen); 167.39 were encumbered (authorized and unfrozen); 2 were encumbered (authorized and frozen); and 839.75 vacant (authorized and unfrozen). This results in a city-wide vacancy rate of 19.69 percent.

This report also includes an analysis of the status of each vacancy (authorized and unfrozen) by department **(Attachment A)**[1]. Position statuses change frequently as employees are hired, transferred, or separate City service. Accordingly, this data reflects a snapshot as of February 1, 2026.

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.

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[1] Attachment A includes 4 positions that were authorized, <u>frozen</u>, and filled; 69 positions that were <u>unauthorized</u>, unfrozen, and filled. While these positions are typically excluded from vacancy reporting, they have been included to accurately reflect the City's current staffing as of February 1, 2026.

Finance and Management Committee
March 24, 2026

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 report also satisfies the requirements set forth in Assembly Bill (AB) 2561; if the number of job vacancies within a single bargaining unit meets or exceeds 20% of the total number of authorized full-time positions.

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 February 2026

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 held vacant for any other purpose. Positions are considered 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 four authorized, frozen, and filled positions. Furthermore, this report includes 69 positions that were unauthorized, unfrozen, and filled. Including these exceptions provides a more accurate representation of the City's staffing as of February 1, 2026.

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**
Filled	**3,255.03**	**76.33%**
Authorized, Unfrozen	*3,182.03*	*74.62%*
Authorized, Frozen	*4.00*	*0.09%*
Unauthorized, Unfrozen	*69.00*	*1.62%*
Encumbered	**169.39**	**3.97%**
Authorized, Unfrozen	*167.39*	*3.93%*
Authorized, Frozen	*2.00*	*0.05%*
Vacant *Authorized, Unfrozen*	**839.75**	**19.69%**
	4,264.17	**100.00%**

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
Department of Workplace and Employment Standards	20	5	4	11	55.00%
Human Resources Management Department	78	37	6	35	44.87%
Police Commission	23	13	1	9	39.13%
Violence Prevention Administration	62.8	34.8	5	23	36.62%
Public Ethics Commission	12	8	0	4	33.33%
Planning & Building Department	218	142	10	66	30.28%
Department of Transportation	414.85	275.85	20	119	28.69%
Human Services Department	269.96	160	32.96	77	28.52%
Office of the City Clerk	18	13	0	5	27.78%
City Administrator's Office	61.6	42	3.6	16	25.97%
Finance Department	192.3	138.8	9	44.5	23.14%
Economic & Workforce Development Department	56	41	4	11	19.64%
Fire Department	639.5	495	23	121.5	19.00%
Oakland Public Works Department	599.91	485.2	10	104.71	17.45%

Table 2: Vacancy Rate by Department					
Department	**Total FTE**	**Filled**	**Encumbered**	**Vacant**	**Vacancy Rate**
Housing & Community Development Department	80	67	0	13	16.25%
Oakland Public Library	218.6	183.4	0.6	34.6	15.83%
Office of the Mayor	20	16	1	3	15.00%
City Council	24.92	2	19.48	3.44	13.80%
Animal Services	25	22	0	3	12.00%
Police Department	971	848	9	114	11.74%
Oakland Parks & Recreation Department	80.73	66.98	4.75	9	11.15%
Office of the City Auditor	9	7	1	1	11.11%
Information Technology Department	85	74	2	9	10.59%
Office of the City Attorney	81	75	3	3	3.70%
Race and Equity	3	3	0	3	0.00%
	4,264.17	**3,255.03**	**169.39**	**839.75**	**19.69%**

Sworn vs. Non-Sworn Positions

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

Table 3: Vacancy Rate for Sworn vs. Non-Sworn Positions					
Sworn vs Non	**Total FTE**	**Filled**	**Encumbered**	**Vacant**	**Vacancy Rate**
Non-Sworn	3,061.17	2,238.03	146.39	676.75	22.11%
Sworn	1,203.00	1,017.00	23.00	163.00	13.55%
	4,264.17	**3,255.03**	**169.39**	**839.75**	**19.69%**

Union Representation

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

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

Table 4: Vacancy Rate by Union					
Union	**Total FTE**	**Filled**	**Encumbered**	**Vacant**	**Vacancy Rate**
Local 21	1,421.42	969	102.48	349.94	24.62%
SEIU 1021	1,503.75	1,165.03	34.91	303.81	20.20%
IAAF	500	397	18	85	17.00%
CMEA	48	39	2	7	14.58%
IBEW	17	14	1	2	11.76%
OPOA/OPMA	696	615	3	78	11.21%
Unrepresented	78	56	8	14	17.95%
	4,264.17	**3,255.03**	**169.39**	**839.75**	**19.69%**

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.

Table 5: Vacancy Rate by Bargaining Unit					
Bargaining Unit	**Total FTE**	**Filled**	**Encumbered**	**Vacant**	**Vacancy Rate**
TA1: Confidential Employees (Local 21)	58.92	19	20.48	19.44	32.99%
TF1: Prof. Engineers, Architects & Museum Employees (Local 21)	121	71	14	36	29.75%
TM2: Supervising Civil & Transportation Engineers (Local 21)	17	10	2	5	29.41%
UM2: Management Employees (Civil Service) (Local 21)	249.5	163	14	72.5	29.06%

Table 5: Vacancy Rate by Bargaining Unit					
Bargaining Unit	**Total FTE**	**Filled**	**Encumbered**	**Vacant**	**Vacancy Rate**
SB1: Craft Employees (SEIU 1021)	116	85	1	30	25.86%
TW1: Admin, Prof, Technical & Other (Local 21)	574.5	390	43	141.5	24.63%
SD1: Office and Technical Employees (SEIU 1021)	584.76	414	30.16	140.6	24.04%
UM1: Management Employees (Exempt) (Local 21)	115.5	85	5	25.5	22.08%
UN2: Sworn Police Mgmt, Deputy Chief & Captain of Police (OPOA/OPMA)	14	8	3	3	21.43%
UH1: Supervisors (Local 21)	232	183	3	46	19.83%
FQ1: Sworn Firefighters (IAAF)	500	397	18	85	17.00%
SC1: Field and Operations Employees (SEIU 1021)	802.99	666.03	3.75	133.21	16.59%
U31: CMEA Confidential Management Employees (CMEA)	48	39	2	7	14.58%
IE1: IBEW Professional and Para-Professional Electricians (IBEW)	17	14	1	2	11.76%
PP1: Sworn Police Officers (OPOA/OPMA)	682	607	0	75	11.00%
TM1: Deputy City Attorney I – IV (Local 21)	44	39	1	4	09.09%
U41: DCAV-SCA Deputy City Attorneys V & Special Counsel (Local 21)	9	9	0	0	00.00%
Unrepresented	78	56	8	14	17.95%
	4,264.17	**3,255.03**	**169.39**	**839.75**	**19.69%**

The bargaining units with vacancy rates equal to or greater than 20% are subject to expanded 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 report 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 9 bargaining units that had a vacancy rate of 20% or greater as of February 1, 2026; these 9 bargaining units were represented by 3 unions – IFPTE Local 21, OPOA/OPMA, 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 at least one active vacancy within the bargaining unit 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 February 1, 2021 – February 1, 2026	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	1,009	44.33	64.31	108.65
TF1	76	68.00	150.00	218.00
UM2	3,861	73.68	89.97	163.66
TW1	11,612	84.00	120.61	204.61
TM2	24	78.00	74.00	152.00
OPOA/OPMA				
UN2	29	79.67	26.33	106.00
SEIU Local 1021				
SD1	6,599	76.68	100.31	176.99
SB1	985	145.18	122.94	268.11

Opportunities to Reduce Hiring Timelines and Vacancy Rates

As shown in Table 6, the City of Oakland collected data to comply with AB 2561, including the number of job vacancies, total applicants, and average time to hire for bargaining units with vacancy rates over 20%. The data covers the period from February 1, 2021, to February 1, 2026, and focuses on classifications with at least one active vacancy.

While comprehensive, several limitations should be noted:
- Some classifications had no recruitments during the review period,
- Some recruitments were restricted to current City or Port of Oakland employees rather than the general public, and
- Some positions were affected by hiring freezes, which may have reduced applicant submissions.

The average hiring timeline was measured into two stages:

- Stage 1 reflects the number of days from the announcement opening to the establishment of an eligible list, and
- Stage 2 reflects the number of days from candidate referral to hire approval.

HRM is responsible for activities during Stage 1, whereas the hiring departments are responsible for those during Stage 2. Only recruitments with complete data for both stages were included to ensure the accuracy of time-to-hire metrics.

Stage 1: From Job Announcement to Eligible List

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

- MOU Compliance Requirements: City MOUs and longstanding practices require the use of external assessors for assessments. As a result, HRM cannot typically use internal staff as raters and must secure qualified external assessors willing to volunteer without compensation, which can be difficult. Limited departmental reciprocity with other agencies further reduces the available assessor pool and compounds these challenges.

- Departmental SME Participation and Availability Constraints: HRM relies on departments to provide Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to support job analysis, develop job announcements, and assist with recruitment planning. However, competing operational priorities and workload demands often limit SME participation and availability, resulting in delays throughout the recruitment and exam development process.

- Recruitment Outreach Funding Constraints: Outreach is constrained by limited funding and relies primarily on free advertising and departmental networks. Without a dedicated budget for broader or targeted recruitment, attracting larger and more diverse applicant pools is challenging.

- Internal Staffing Limitations: HRM staffing shortages limit the number of recruitments each analyst can manage effectively. High workloads can affect the timeliness and quality of

recruitment, making it difficult to manage a large volume of recruitments simultaneously and provide consistent support to departments.

Stage 2: From Referral of Eligible Candidates to Hire

After HRM establishes an eligible list,, candidate names are available to be referred to departments for their selection processes. Analysis of the time-to-hire data highlights opportunities for process improvement, particularly at the departmental level.

For classifications represented by IFPTE Local 21, the departmental portion of the hiring process (i.e., Stage 2, from referral to hire) averaged approximately four weeks longer than HRM's recruitment process (i.e., Stage 1, from posting of job announcement to establishing of eligible list). For classifications represented by SEIU Local 1021, the average timeline in both Stages 1 and 2 were nearly identical, differing by only about one day.

While departmental delays after receiving eligible candidate lists may have specific causes, HRM has identified several opportunities to reduce timelines:

(1) Streamline Hiring and Accountability
   o The average timeline for Stage 2 activities could be reduced if Departments were accountable for timely progression through the hiring process, including prioritizing interviews and selection activities immediately upon receiving referrals. To assist the acceleration of activities during Stage 2, in July 2025, HRM reduced the number of days that referrals remain active. HRM continues to review other processes to enhance internal service standards. Regularly reporting timelines to HRM and candidates can accelerate the hiring cycle while improving transparency and responsiveness.

(2) Enhance Recruitment Planning and Support
   o Early, coordinated planning between HRM and departments is critical. Departments should proactively prepare interview questions, panels, scoring rubrics, and onboarding activities at the start of a recruitment, rather than waiting until an eligible list is established. In addition, targeted training for hiring managers on best practices for candidate evaluation, interview scheduling, and timely decision-making can help departments move more efficiently through the selection process.

(3) Leverage Digital Recruitment Tools:
   o Departments can streamline communication and reduce administrative delays by using NeoGov OHC's scheduling tools, which enable automated interview notifications and candidate self-scheduling. Departmental Single-Points-of-Contact (SPOCs) have been trained to use these features, and while usage has increased, HRM continues to provide support to encourage consistent adoption. Departments also have the option of using a one-way interview platform (InterviewStream) to efficiently screen and manage candidate interviews.

HRM also identified 87 instances where recruitment efforts resulted in eligible lists that were not utilized before their expiration of 1 year (or longer if the eligible list was extended). In January 2025, HRM began distributing a monthly report to departments identifying active eligible lists to support proactive workforce planning. The report is intended to help departments review available lists and determine whether to submit requisitions or request list extensions, when appropriate.

Because developing eligible lists requires significant time and resources (including job analysis, assessment development, exam administration, candidate evaluation, and list establishment) unused lists represent an opportunity to better align recruitment planning and hiring activities to ensure that recruitment efforts translate into filled positions.

Addressing both HRM and departmental process challenges is essential to improving time-to-hire metrics, reducing vacancy rates, and strengthening the City's ability to attract and retain qualified talent to meet operational needs.

HRM remains committed to lowering vacancy rates within impacted bargaining units and improving service delivery by ensuring critical positions are filled as efficiently and effectively as possible for the Oakland community.

Table 7 shows the historical vacancy rates, starting November 2020.

Table 7: Historical Vacancy Rates[2]			
Report Date	**# of FTE**	**Vacancies**	**% Vacant**
Feb 01, 2026	4,264.17	839.75	19.69%
Apr 01, 2025	4,246.12	761.63	17.94%
Oct 01, 2023	4,285.11	789.31	18.42%
May 01, 2023	4,347.46	833.51	19.17%
Nov 23, 2022	4,319.76	855.05	19.79%
Apr 12, 2022	4,119.06	792.24	19.23%
Oct 18, 2021	4,078.56	759.5	18.62%
May 04, 2021	3,908.05	481.56	12.32%
Nov 16, 2020	4,046.44	576.09	14.24%

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[2] Excludes bargaining units: PT1 - Police Officer Trainees, SI1 - Local 1021 Part Time Employees, Represented (these are TPT classes), TL1 - Part Time Employees, Unrepresented, UG1 - Part Time Employees, Unrepresented, UJ1 - Senior Aides, Unrepresented, US1 - Firefighter Trainees, Unrepresented, UX1 - Mayor and Council Members, Unrepresented

Status of Vacancies

As of February 1, 2026, the City of Oakland's total workforce position count was 4,252.17 full-time equivalents (FTEs), spread across 4,305 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:

- 3,255.03 FTE are currently filled, comprising:
    o 3,183.03 FTE (authorized and unfrozen)
    o 4.00 FTE (authorized and frozen)
    o 69.00 FTE (unauthorized and unfrozen),

- 169.39 FTE are encumbered (authorized and unfrozen), 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.

- 839.75 FTE are vacant (authorized and unfrozen), meaning the positions are available to be filled but not currently occupied. This results in a vacancy rate of 19.69% among authorized, unfrozen positions.

While the total vacant FTE count is 839.75, there are 851 individual positions – some positions may be funded at less than 1.0 FTE.

On February 4, 2026, the HRM Recruitment and Classification Division reviewed the vacancy status of all 851 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:

- No Requisition
    o The hiring department has not submitted a requisition to fill their vacant position.
    o 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
    o The Recruitment and Classification team within HRM previously established an eligible list, but the department has not submitted a requisition to initiate hiring.
    o Without a requisition, no action can be taken to fill the position, despite there being a list of eligible candidates.

- Requisition Pending Approval
    o 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

- o   The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
- o   The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
- o   The recruitment activities have not yet started because HRM needs to assign an analyst to conduct the recruitment process.

- **Active HRM Recruitment in Progress**
  - o   The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - o   The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
  - o   HRM has assigned an analyst to conduct the recruitment.
  - o   This may include, but is 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 or opening a job announcement, screening applicants, or testing applicants, with the goal of referring qualified candidates to the department for hiring consideration.

- **Non-Civil Service – Departments conduct the hiring process**
  - o   The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - o   The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
  - o   Since the position is exempt from Civil Service, the hiring department can conduct their hiring process without needing HRM to run a full recruitment.
  - o   The hiring department has not identified a selection.

- **Department Interview Process (Eligible List Referred)**
  - o   The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - o   The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
  - o   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.
  - o   For Non-Civil Service or exempt positions, the department has a pool of candidates but has not finalized a selection.

- **Candidate Identified (Backgrounds, Offers, and Hire Approvals)**
  - o   The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - o   The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
  - o   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.

- **On Hold for Class Specification/Title Changes**
  - o   The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - o   The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.

- o During recruitment planning, it was identified that the existing Class Specification needed to be updated or retitled.
- o The recruitment is on hold until the class spec accurately reflects the duties and qualifications for the position.

- On Hold by Department
  - o The hiring department has submitted a requisition to fill the vacant position.
  - o The requisition has been fully approved by the hiring department's Director (or designee), the City Administrator's Office, Budget, and HRM.
  - o The hiring department requested that HRM pause the recruitment process.
  - o This may occur for operational, funding, or organizational reasons.

Table 8 provides a snapshot of the number of vacant positions by status category as of February 4, 2026.

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

Table 8: Summary of Vacancy Status		
Vacancy Status	**As of 4/4/25**	**As of 2/4/26**
No Requisition	240	310
Eligible List Available, No Requisition	221	116
Requisition Pending Approval	77	51
Pending HR Analyst Assignment	10	40
Active HRM Recruitment in Progress[3]	49	92
Non-Civil Service – Departments conduct hiring process	9	21
Department Interview Process (Eligible List Referred)	101	120
Candidate Identified (Backgrounds, Offers and Hire Approvals)	40	56
On Hold for Class Specification/Title Changes	11	40
On Hold by Department	21	5
	779	**851**

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.

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[3] There may be multiple vacancies associated with a single recruitment process.

It is important to note that this analysis is based on vacancies not classifications. These vacancies span 254 unique classifications. A single recruitment may include multiple requisitions, and each requisition may cover several vacancies. As a result, one recruitment effort may address multiple vacancies simultaneously.

Additionally, a vacancy categorized as "Active HRM Recruitment in Progress" may ultimately be used to fill a different vacancy once the department is ready to hire, even if a requisition has not yet been submitted for their position.

Ongoing monitoring of vacancy statuses is critical for effective workforce management. It keeps departments informed of next steps to advance recruitments, enables HRM to allocate resources strategically, and ensures citywide vacancy reduction efforts are transparent and measurable. Regular monitoring also supports data-driven workforce planning, maintains service continuity by highlighting critical unfilled positions, and provides accountability for recruitment timelines and outcomes.

Budgeted Vacancy Rate for Fiscal Year 2025-26

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 2025-26)		
Department	**Budgeted Vacancy Factor[4]**	
	4%	**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	

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

Table 9: Budgeted Vacancy Factor by Department (FY 2025-26)		
Department	**Budgeted Vacancy Factor[4]**	
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	

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 December 2025. During that time, most of the comparator agencies have experienced varying vacancy rates as shown below:

Table 10: Regional Vacancy Rates							
	Budgeted FTE	**Dec 2025**	**Apr 2025**	**Sep 2023**	**May 2023**	**Dec 2022**	**May 2022**
San Jose	7,009	9.49%	10.09%	13.46%	14.41%	15.21%	13.20%
San Francisco	34,375.59	4.64%	6.65%	11.03%	12.47%	13.27%	NA
Berkeley	1,773	16.53%	16.25%	12.93%	18.68%	17.85%	16.21%
Concord	426	7.51%	8.83%	8.85%	11.30%	11.63%	13.69%
Hayward	956.3	20.18%	12.02%	17.08%	12.82%	14.16%	14.80%
Fremont	1,007	12.32%	13.61%	14.72%	12.76%	12.56%	11.49%
Richmond	810	18.64%	20.42%	17.52%	19.01%	20.19%	16.15%
Vallejo	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	26.75%	28.48%
Oakland	4,264.17	19.69%	17.94%	18.42%	19.17%	19.79%	19.23%

Recruitment Outreach and Community Engagement

HRM is committed to promoting careers and building a diverse, talented workforce in partnership with City departments. Departments have actively participated in various job fairs 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 April 2025 and January 2026, some of the notable events that City staff attended were:

April 2025
Sacramento JAC Recruitment Event
2025 NorCal Career Fair
Meet and Greet Criminal Justice, CSUEB

May 2025
Oakland Unity Career Fair
Fremont HS Career Day
Discovery Academy Career Day
Lodestar Career Day
Edna Brewer Career Day
Merritt College Instructional Sessions
Oakland Tech HS Health Academy
South Bay Regional Public Safety Fair

July 2025
Bill Pickett Rodeo

August 2025
30x30 – Advancing and Supporting Women in Policing
Popsicle with a Cop
National Night Out
Chinatown Health Fair
Chinatown Street Festival
Highland Games

September 2025
Merritt College Instructional Sessions
30x30 – Advancing and Supporting Women in Policing
Chinatown Night Market
Oakland Ballers
Pride Fest
Travis Air Force Base (Transition Assistance Program class)
Reliant Job Fair
Chabot Public Safety Night
Chabot College Job Fair

October 2025
Fleet Week Recruitment Fair

Los Medanos College Career Fair
Chinatown Safety Fair
Travis Air Force Base (Transition Assistance Program class)
Trunk or Treat

November 2025
Fruitvale Job and Resource Fair
Travis Air Force Base (Transition Assistance Program class)
Reno Job Fair
Laney College

December 2025
Travis Air Force Base (Transition Assistance Program class)
Alameda County Fairgrounds Boxing Event

January 2026
CalJAC's Recruitment (The Spotlight)
Merritt College Pre-Academy Course
Santa Clara Diversity Job Fair
Oakland Chinatown Lunar New Year

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

Since HRM's last staffing report to Council in 2025, several changes have taken place within the Recruitment and Classification Team:

(1) Staffing Changes: The Recruitment and Classification team experienced several staffing changes, including the resignation of one Human Resources Analyst and the leave of absence of another. While the team has onboarded five new staff members (one Human Resources Analyst, one Assistant Human Resources Analyst, and three Human Resources Technicians), operational capacity has been temporarily affected as these new staff complete training and gain competency. Additionally, existing team members offer their support and expertise to these new employees, which has temporarily reduced overall staff availability and productivity. These transitions have necessitated adjustments to workflows and the redistribution of responsibilities to ensure continuity of recruitment and classification functions.

(2) Building Capacity: Between May and July 2025, the team completed a six-week Classification and Compensation training, establishing a shared foundation in classification principles, compensation strategy, and minimum qualification development. The training emphasized the importance of continuity and alignment between

classification development and recruitment implementation and supports a proactive approach to building high-quality candidate pools that contribute to retention.

All team members are now assigned classification work and are applying the knowledge and strategies gained through the training to strengthen citywide recruitment and classification processes. These efforts are intended to stabilize operations, improve consistency, and enhance overall service delivery across the City.

(3) Focusing on Customer Service: In June 2025, the Recruitment and Classification Division added a new Operations team to enhance departmental personnel support. The team focuses on streamlining hiring workflows, strengthening workforce planning, and providing tools and training to help departments navigate HR systems more effectively. This includes citywide recruitment and classification processes, tracking training and performance appraisals, employee investigation intake, risk assessments, and leave management. We have now added an additional 17 positions (13 for personnel support & 4 for Employee & Labor Relations) which we will be filling in the upcoming months.

(4) Supporting Public Safety Recruitment: We also added an additional five positions to the Public Safety team. The expansion of the Public Safety team allows the remainder of the team to focus on citywide priorities.

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 adherence to traditional competitive civil service examinations can extend hiring timelines and reduce flexibility, creating challenges in attracting and securing candidates in a competitive labor market. Lengthy and structured processes may lead to applicant disengagement and result in the loss of strong candidates before positions are filled.

- *Classification and Compensation Alignment*: Maintaining market competitiveness is a key factor in attracting and retaining qualified candidates. Upcoming negotiations with labor partners present an opportunity to consider any relevant compensation for the City's classifications.

- *Appeal of Public Service*: Many candidates are attracted to public service because they have an opportunity to make a tangible impact in the community. HRM continues to work with departments to highlight the benefits of public service to engage a broader and more qualified applicant pool.

- *Technology and Process Modernization*: Ongoing investment in digital hiring solutions is critical to recruiting success. Modernized technology and streamlined processes help reduce hiring timelines, improve candidate experience, expand outreach to qualified applicants, and provide data to support informed, efficient hiring decisions, ultimately strengthening the City's competitiveness in attracting top talent.

- *Applicant Non-Responsiveness*: Reflecting national trends, Oakland continues to face challenges with applicant non-responsiveness, including missed exams and interviews.

Non-responsive candidates can delay hiring, reduce the quality of candidate pools, and make it more difficult to fill positions efficiently. To address this, strategies such as shortening timelines between application, examination, and referral stages are being explored to maintain candidate engagement and improve overall recruitment outcomes.

Opportunities for Process and Policy Improvements

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

- Reviewing recruitment processes that may be covered by existing labor agreements to identify opportunities for process improvement to enhance workforce competitiveness.

- Expanding alternative certification methods, where allowable, by implementing approaches such as rule-of-the-list or ranked banding to expedite hiring and increasing flexibility.

- Strengthening employer branding through increased participation in career fairs, community events, and targeted outreach highlighting the City's benefits, career development opportunities, and meaningful public service work.

- Modernizing hiring systems by continuing to invest in digital tools and streamlined processes to deliver a seamless, efficient, and competitive candidate experience.

- Reducing process steps and timelines where feasible to maintain candidate engagement and improving time-to-fill.

Through these strategies, HRM is dedicated to helping City departments attract and retain the talent necessary to serve the Oakland community, while actively responding to evolving workforce needs and organizational priorities.

Broader Labor Market and Economic Trends

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the national unemployment rate was 4.3 percent in January 2026, with approximately 7.3 million individuals unemployed, reflecting relative stability in the labor market. Federal government employment declined by 34,000 in January, following deferred resignations accepted in 2025. Since peaking in October 2024, federal employment has decreased by 327,000, or 10.9 percent.

Overall employment conditions showed modest improvement, with employers adding 130,000 jobs in January; however, growth over the past year remains weak, and recent data revisions indicate slower job creation than previously estimated.

A notable trend is the ongoing decline in federal government employment, driven in part by fiscal pressures, shifting budget priorities, and evolving policy environments. Persistent high turnover, often described as the "Great Reshuffling," continues to reshape the workforce, with employees increasingly pursuing opportunities that offer higher pay, greater flexibility, and career advancement.

These dynamics, modest changes in unemployment, slow job growth, and evolving candidate expectations, underscore the need for both public and private employers to adapt recruitment and retention strategies to remain competitive in a labor market where candidates are selective and increasingly focused on opportunities aligned with their career and lifestyle goals.

California's labor market continues to experience comparatively greater strain than national trends. As of early 2026, the state's unemployment rate remains in the mid-5 percent range, exceeding the national rate of 4.3 percent reported in January. While the broader U.S. labor market has shown relative stability, California's job growth has been more uneven, reflecting slower hiring activity across several sectors.

Employment conditions in the state indicate modest gains but limited momentum, with employers exercising caution amid ongoing economic uncertainty, persistent inflation in select industries, and fluctuations in state and local revenues. These conditions have contributed to measured workforce expansion and longer recruitment timelines, particularly within the public sector.

A notable trend is the continued impact of workforce demographics. An aging employee base and increasing retirements, especially in government roles traditionally held by long-tenured staff, are contributing to higher vacancy rates and the loss of institutional knowledge. At the same time, evolving candidate expectations around compensation, flexibility, and career mobility continue to influence turnover and hiring outcomes.

Together, these factors, elevated unemployment relative to national levels, slower job growth, and shifting workforce expectations, underscore the need for public agencies and private employers alike to strengthen recruitment and retention strategies to remain competitive in a selective labor market.

From a broader perspective, international workforce trends underscore a lasting shift in how and where work is performed. Remote and hybrid arrangements are now commonplace, and flexibility has become a core factor in candidate decision-making. As a result, employers that lack flexible work options may find it increasingly difficult to compete for top talent.

As highlighted in the World Economic Forum Future of Jobs Report, economic uncertainty at the global level continues to affect both workforce behavior and organizational hiring approaches. Market volatility, geopolitical risks, and supply chain pressures are leading employers to take a more measured approach to staffing, while simultaneously investing in digital capabilities and skills-focused recruitment to support long-term resilience.

Collectively, these factors reinforce the need for both public and private employers to adopt responsive workforce strategies that address operational requirements while meeting evolving expectations related to flexibility, stability, and long-term career progression.

In this environment, Oakland's workforce challenges align with, and in some respects amplify, prevailing national and state labor market pressures. Sustained competition for talent and rising expectations around workplace flexibility, compensation, and professional development underscore the need for the City to adopt forward-looking recruitment practices, enhance its employer brand, and highlight the distinctive purpose and impact of serving the Oakland community.
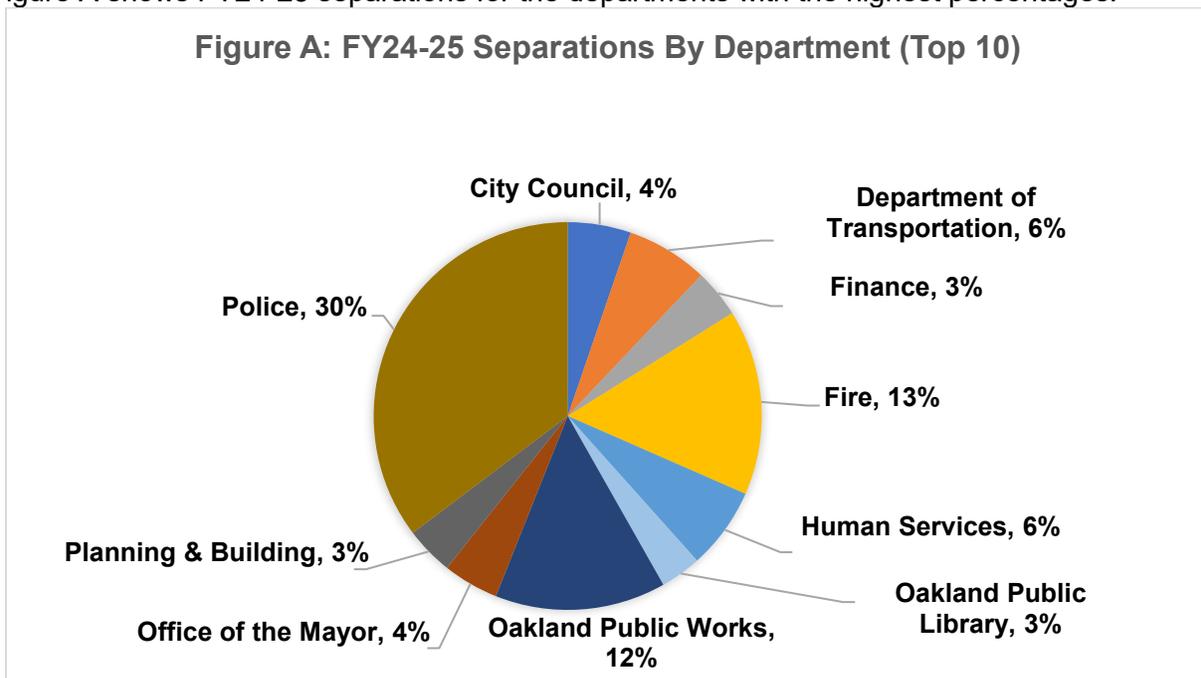
Workforce Planning and Development

There were 380 separations during FY 2024-2025.

Table 11 shows the reasons for the separation of FTE (full-time and permanent part-time) City employees across all departments since the Fiscal Year 2015-16.

Table 11: Reasons for Separations				
FY	**Resign**	**Retire**	**Other**	**Total**
24-25	167	134	79	380
23-24	149	86	26	261
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

Figure A shows FY24-25 separations for the departments with the highest percentages.

Figure A: FY24-25 Separations By Department (Top 10)

City Council, 4%
Department of Transportation, 6%
Finance, 3%
Police, 30%
Fire, 13%
Human Services, 6%
Planning & Building, 3%
Oakland Public Library, 3%
Office of the Mayor, 4%
Oakland Public Works, 12%

The Police Department recorded the highest number of separations, representing 30% (114) of the City's total separations. The Fire Department followed at 13% (50), with Public Works close behind with 12% (46).

Police separations were primarily driven by early and mid-career attrition. Resignations accounted for 43% of total separations, exceeding retirements at 37%. The average resignation age was 34.16, compared with 52.66 at retirement, indicating many officers are leaving well before retirement eligibility and pointing to retention and engagement challenges.

In contrast, Fire separations were largely retirement-based and more predictable. Only 16% were resignations, while 70% were retirements. The average resignation age was higher at 44.25, and the average retirement age (52.69) closely mirrors Police, suggesting longer tenure and greater career stability. Public Works reflects a similarly longer-tenured workforce. The average resignation age was 44.90, and the average retirement age was 60.87, indicating employees generally remain through mid- to late-career stages before separating.
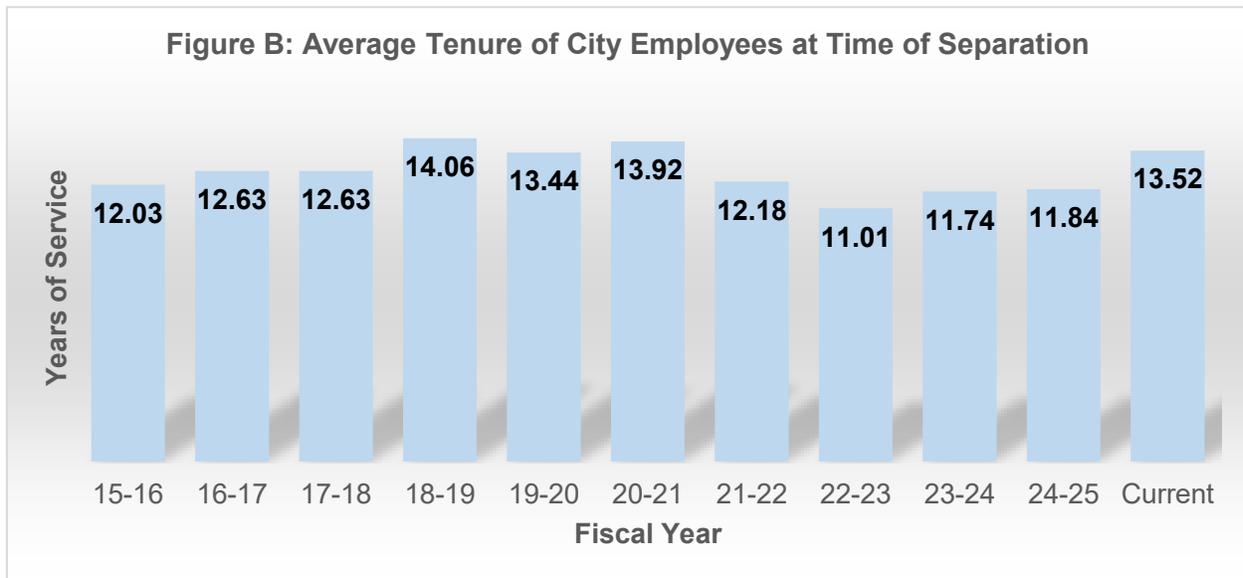
Citywide averages provide additional context, with an average resignation age of 43.32 and an average retirement age of 63.85. Compared with these benchmarks, Police resignations occur substantially earlier, while Fire and Public Works more closely align with, or approach, typical career-length employment.

There exists a workforce trend in which a large cohort of long-tenured employees reach retirement eligibility at roughly the same time. For the City, this is most evident in Fire and Public Works, where separations are concentrated among employees in their 50s and 60s. While this type of turnover is more predictable than resignations, it can occur in waves and result in the simultaneous loss of institutional knowledge, technical expertise, and supervisory capacity, increasing pressure on recruitment, onboarding, and service continuity.

Overall, the data suggests differentiated workforce strategies are needed. Police may require targeted retention efforts, such as improved onboarding, mentorship, career development pathways, and competitive compensation, to reduce early attrition. Fire and Public Works, where separations are largely retirement-driven, would benefit more from succession planning, workforce forecasting, and knowledge transfer initiatives. At the citywide level, strengthening recruitment pipelines, promoting internal advancement opportunities, and enhancing workplace flexibility and engagement can help improve both hiring outcomes and long-term retention across departments.

Tenure of Separations: According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), public-sector workers tend to remain in their positions longer than their private-sector counterparts. In January 2024, the median tenure for public-sector employees was 6.2 years, slightly down from 6.8 years in 2022. Tenure increases with age, with younger employees typically holding jobs for shorter periods, while workers aged 55 and older have a median tenure of nearly 10 years, reflecting longer career stability within the public sector.

In contrast to national trends, employees separating from the City have a longer tenure, averaging 11.84 years in FY 2024-25 and 13.52 years in the current fiscal year, largely due to retirements among long-serving staff. The increase also reflects limited recent hiring due to hiring freezes, delayed retirements, and reduced early-career turnover, though average tenure at separation is expected to decline as the workforce evolves and fewer employees become retirement-eligible.

Figure B: Average Tenure of City Employees at Time of Separation

Fiscal Year	Years of Service
15-16	12.03
16-17	12.63
17-18	12.63
18-19	14.06
19-20	13.44
20-21	13.92
21-22	12.18
22-23	11.01
23-24	11.74
24-25	11.84
Current	13.52

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 Assembly Bill 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 with 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 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 February 1, 2026, (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,

Mary Hao (Mar 13, 2026 09:55:45 PDT)

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Attachment(s) (1):

A: Citywide Vacancy Status Report