

FIRE DEPARTMENT > **EQUITY PLAN**



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# LETTER FROM THE SANTA ROSA FIRE CHIEF

## Dear Employees,

I am excited to share the following Santa Rosa Fire Department (SRFD or Department) Equity Plan (Plan) developed through a collaborative process that included a diverse representation of Department staff. The Plan is another step on our journey towards embedding workforce diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging (DEIB), and employee well-being in our organizational structures, policies, procedures, and practices.

The Plan results from countless hours of thought partnership, collaboration, input, and feedback by our employees through individual interviews, focus groups, surveys, and group processes. The Plan represents the consensus decisions of employee work groups to institutionalize:

Workforce  
diversity

Inclusive  
decision-making  
models that incorporate  
principles of co-creation  
and shared leadership

Centering  
DEIB as  
core values  
for SRFD

Advancing policies,  
practices, procedures,  
and structures that  
support employee  
well-being and  
belonging

In November 2021, the Department formed the Recruitment and Diversity Taskforce (RDT) to develop recommendations to improve DEIB within SRFD. The RDT agreed on a methodology that incorporated concepts of shared leadership, co-creation, and trust, and implemented a process grounded by consensus decisions. The methodology and group process instilled a sense of co-ownership of the Plan that will sustain our joint efforts to implement the strategies outlined in this Plan and ensure that we hold ourselves accountable for the desired outcomes.

The Plan is a continuation of the Department's efforts to align DEIB with SRFD's strategic goals and priorities. It is the culmination of many hours of staff time that begins to reimagine SRFD as a place where everyone belongs.

Scott Westrope  
*Fire Chief*

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The SRFD Recruitment and Diversity Taskforce (RDT) is pleased to present this Equity Plan (Plan) to the Santa Rosa City Council. The RDT acknowledges the commitment of time, innovation, collaboration and thought partnership that SRFD staff contributed to this Plan.

This Plan could not have been created without the active engagement and collaboration of the following staff members.

## INTERNAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NAME	POSITION	DEPARTMENT
JESSIE TAINTOR	FIRE ENGINEER	FIRE
JIM AREND (RETIRED)	ADMIN. SERVICES OFFICER	FIRE
KEMPLIN ROBBINS	ASSISTANT FIRE MARSHAL	FIRE
RUBEN (JOSE) ALVAREZ	FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC	FIRE
SCOTT WESTROPE	FIRE CHIEF	FIRE
SOCORRO SHIELS (LEFT CITY)	CITY OF SANTA ROSA DIEEO OFFICER <sup>1</sup>	HUMAN RESOURCES

## EXTERNAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

NAME	POSITION	DEPARTMENT
CORI RICKERT	FIRE CAPTAIN	FIRE
DEISY VARGAS	SRFD COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
GARY LOPEZ	CAPTAIN (PROMOTED FROM ENGINEER)	FIRE
GWYN BUCKHEIT	ADMINISTRATIVE ANALYST	FIRE
KEITH JEFFUS	FIRE CAPTAIN/UNION REP	FIRE
PATRICK BRADLEY	FIRE ENGINEER	FIRE

<sup>1</sup> Ms. Shields left the city during the group process.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Among the Santa Rosa City Council's 2022 goals and priorities is "Achieve Organizational Excellence"<sup>2</sup> informed by the directive:

**"Create a high-performing organization that is proactive; fiscally sound, promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion; and reliably delivers outstanding services to the community."**

With the implementation of the recommendations included in this Plan, SRFD takes a transformative step toward realizing diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging throughout the Department and in SRFD's interactions with the community.

## THE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS ARE:

- Create a permanent Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Standing Committee within the structure of SRFD to review and monitor implementation, assess success, and ensure accountability for Plan recommendations that is modeled on inclusive representation, shared leadership, and consensus decision-making.
- Increase workforce diversity by improving the percentage of diverse staff hired by 2025.
- Develop and implement equitable policies, processes, procedures, practices, and structures in the hiring and selection of candidates for employment.
- Continue to track data relevant to recruitment, selection, hiring, and retention.
- Recruitment efforts include outreach to a diverse pool of applicants for employment, with the goal of hiring staff in each cohort who represent diverse backgrounds by 2025.
- Permanently fund two full-time SRFD Community Outreach Specialist (COS) positions, with a preference for bilingual candidates, to conduct community outreach, and manage communications and recruitment efforts.

<sup>2</sup> Council Goals and Priorities 2022, <https://www.srcity.org/2476/Mission-Vision-Values-Goals-Priorities>.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



➤ In partnership with the City's Communications Department, develop an Outreach and Communications Plan with targeted strategies and actions designed to reach potential applicants from diverse ethnic, gender, cultural, and sexual orientation backgrounds.

## SRFD'S PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS ARE GROUNDED BY COMMITMENTS THAT TARGET FOUNDATIONAL CHANGE. THE COMMITMENTS ARE:

➤ Dedication to the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging that drive innovation, productivity, employee well-being, improved community relations and trust, and an enhanced sense of belonging for all employees.

➤ Establishment of sustainable universal goals achieved through targeted engagement, outreach, and communication strategies to reach diverse constituents, attract qualified candidates, and bridge with city departments and Santa Rosa communities and residents.

➤ Institutionalize DEIB practices, policies, and approaches so that change is not dependent on current leadership or anyone individual.

# BACKGROUND



Firefighter service has historically been a white male-dominated profession. In 2019, only 4% of career firefighters were female, and over 78% were white.<sup>3</sup> In SRFD, 83% of employees are white, and 91% are male. The white male dominance of the profession has been influenced by male prototypes of masculinity and strength and career pipeline legacies related to friends and family connections to the profession, targeted outreach and mentorship, and exclusive hiring practices.

Employment as a Santa Rosa Firefighter has historically been a highly desirable and competitive career to enter, but recent hiring trends reflect changes in the employment environment.

For the period between 2010 to 2015, SRFD received 2,874 applications for Firefighter and Firefighter/Paramedic, since 2015, SRFD has received 718 applications.<sup>4</sup> The reduction in the number of applicants has compounded the issue of diversity within SRFD.

Due to the decreased number of applications, in late 2019 SRFD developed an internal recruiting strategy document (Proposal). The Proposal identified diversity and recruitment strategies that addressed challenges in recruiting enough qualified entry-level employees (Firefighter/Paramedic) and identified opportunities to improve the diversity of the workforce to better match the diversity of the community.

The stated objective of the Proposal was to attract, hire, and retain a candidate pool that meets or exceeds the minimum qualifications of all SRFD safety job classifications while enhancing the diversity within the organization.

In 2020, SRFD developed and began implementing the SRFD Recruitment and Diversity Strategic Plan (Strategic Plan).<sup>5</sup> The Strategic Plan describes SRFD's implementation of best practices in outreach and hiring, provides a comparative demographic overview of SRFD, and outlines recruitment and hiring strategies focused on communications, recruitment, selection processes, data analysis, and staffing.

In the fall of 2021, SRFD initiated another internal review process in partnership with Seed Collaborative, LLC (Seed). The internal review analyzed additional data findings collected by Seed, uplifted questions, challenges, and opportunities related to the data findings, and identified a broad set of focus areas that included recruitment, hiring, onboarding, promotion, communications, collaboration, and culture.

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<sup>3</sup> National Fire Protection Association: <https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/Emergency-Responders/US-fire-department-profile>

<sup>4</sup> The Santa Rosa Fire Department began the attrition to a Firefighter/Paramedic rank in 2014. This resulted in no longer hiring Firefighter/EMTs. Due to the increased requirement of being a Paramedic, it can be assumed that to a degree, that the decrease in applicants can also be attributed to this direction.

<sup>5</sup> SRFD's Strategic Plan is included in Exhibit A

# APPROACH



## TARGETED UNIVERSALISM

The Targeted Universalism (TU) approach was co-conceptualized by Seed co-founder John A. Powell and entails establishing a universal goal achieved by targeted strategies and processes to reach the goal.

TU recognizes that to accomplish universal goals, we must acknowledge that different groups of people are situated differently within society, structures, and institutions. This difference results from structural and systemic inequities that create different barriers and challenges and thus require different pathways for reaching a goal.

TU directs attention to these various barriers and pathways and suggests structural changes to reach the goal. Strategies are designed to accomplish a goal by considering people's specific situations so they can get what they need when and how they need it while also moving all towards the universal goal.

TU also addresses polarization caused by only targeted or only universal strategies. Solely universal strategies, such as social security and minimum wage that treat everyone equally fail to recognize the ways in which groups are situated differently. These strategies will work for those considered the norm but not those with specific and unique conditions and challenges. Universal strategies are often perceived as overly ambitious and inadequate in helping those most in need.

Conversely, solely targeted strategies, such as the American Disabilities Act or Affirmative Action, focus on supporting targeted groups to eliminate disparities but often fail to transform structures and systems. They are sometimes criticized for unfairly helping one group over another and can be viewed as preferential, thus seeding hostility and resentment.

The RDT utilized a TU<sup>6</sup> framework to develop a set of universal recommendations aligned with targeted strategies.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/targeteduniversalism>



# DATA - DUE DILIGENCE PROCESS



TU is based on measuring differences and understanding where different groups are situated, for example, women within SRFD, relative to the universal goal. To better understand how different groups are situated within SRFD and learn individual and group DEIB perceptions and experiences, Seed conducted a combination of individual interviews, focus group sessions and surveys.

## INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS

In August, 2021, Seed conducted ten (10) individual interviews and two (2) focus group sessions that included thirty-three (17) participants.

### > 10 Fire Department Interviews (August 2021)

- > Cross section of SRFD departments, ranks, and years of service

### > 2 SRFD focus groups with 7 participants each

- > Community advocates, union leadership, line staff, management, police subject matter experts, nonprofit and civil rights volunteers/activists, and diverse identities represented

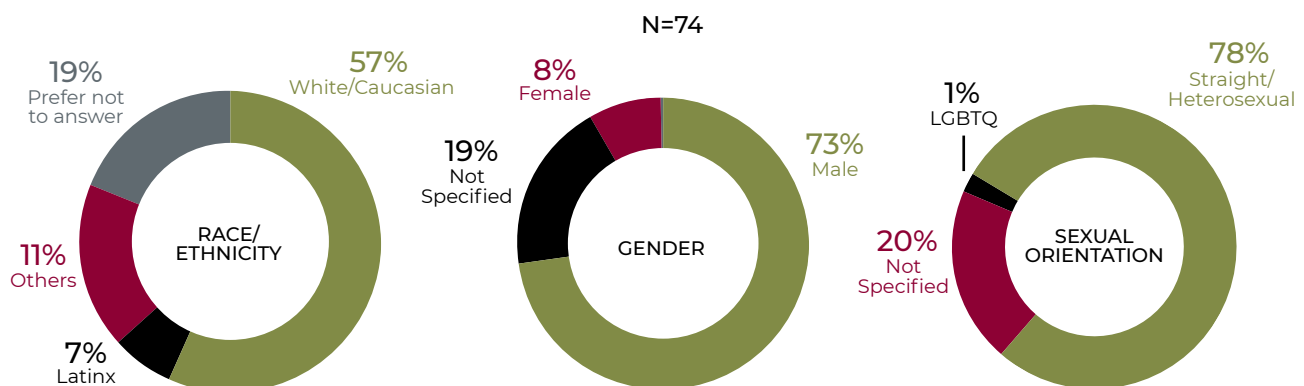
SRFD identified a diverse cross-section of employees to participate in the interview and focus group process. Participants included those working in operations, prevention, and operations, with additional diversity based on position, tenure, cultural background, age, gender, sexual orientation, and other inherent and acquired diverse characteristics.

## SURVEYS

Seed conducted an all-staff survey that resulted in 525 responses, of which 74 were SRFD participants. Survey findings informed the identification of DEIB problems and opportunities. Of the 74 SRFD staff survey responses:

## SRFD RESPONDENT PROFILE: DEMOGRAPHICS

- > Nearly 60% White/Caucasian | 7% Hispanic/Latinx | 11% Mixed | Nearly 20% did not specify
- > Nearly 3/4 are male | 8% female | 19% Did not specify | 1% identify as LGBTQ

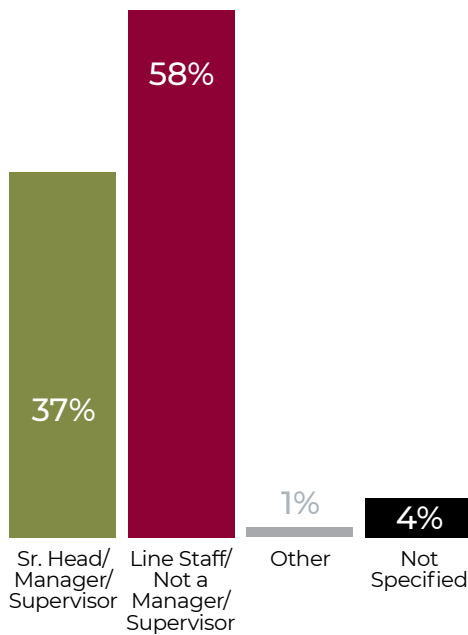


# DATA - DUE DILIGENCE PROCESS

## SRFD RESPONDENT PROFILE: DEMOGRAPHICS (CONT'D)

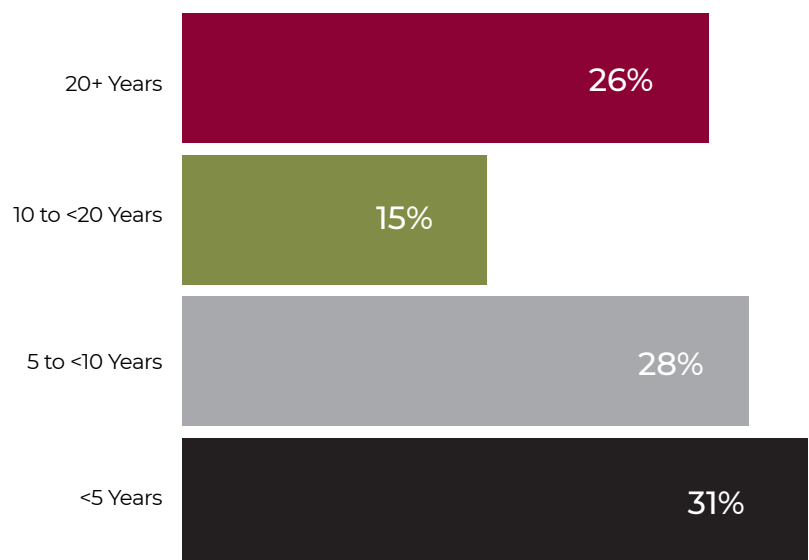
### Position

Nearly 60% are in Non-managerial/  
Non-supervisor roles

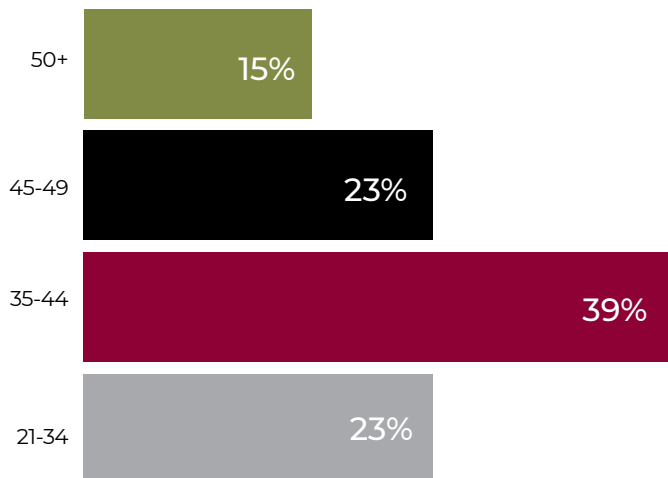


### Employment Length

Approximately 60% have been at  
SRFD for less than 10 years

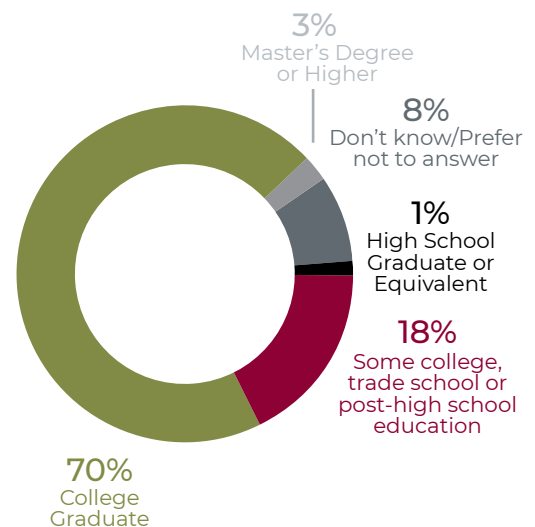


**Age** Nearly 40% are 35-44 years,  
nearly 40% are 45+ years



N=74

**Education** 73% have a college  
or advanced degree



# DATA - DUE DILIGENCE PROCESS



## DOCUMENT REVIEW/BEST PRACTICE RESEARCH

In addition to analyzing due diligence data, Seed reviewed the SRFD Strategic Plan, Chief Scott Westrope's Santa Rosa Fire Department Recruitment and Diversity Strategic Plan (Exhibit A), demographic data, organizational chart, and departmental reports.

Seed also conducted best/next practices research in fire service and firefighting to support RDT participants and Plan recommendations in boosting DEIB for SRFD.

## DATA FINDINGS

Data findings from Seed's due diligence process, City data, and employees' lived experience informed the RDT's identification of challenges and barriers to DEIB and pointed to areas needing exploration during the working group process.

## DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Santa Rosa has a diverse population of approximately 177,000<sup>7</sup>. Figure 1 below reflects the demographic breakdown by ethnicity and gender for the City of Santa Rosa, SRFD<sup>8</sup>, and the average of US Fire Departments<sup>9</sup>.

**FIGURE 1: DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE CITY OF SANTA ROSA, SRFD, AND US FIRE DEPARTMENTS**

ETHNICITY	SANTA ROSA	SRFD	US FIRE DEPTS (AVG)
ASIAN	5.5%	1.6%	1.1%
BLACK	2.2%	0.8%	8.4%
HISPANIC	32.8%	6.5%	8.0%
NATIVE	1.6%	-	-
WHITE	54.7%	87.9%	82.5%
OTHER/TWO OR MORE	N/A	3.2%	N/A
FEMALE	51.6%	4.8%	4.7%
TOTAL	177,000	124	N/A

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (July 2019). Santa Rosa, CA Population Estimates. Retrieved from: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/santarosacalifornia>

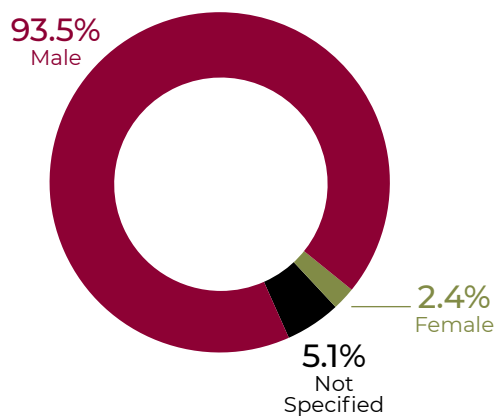
<sup>8</sup> City of Santa Rosa Human Resources (2020)

<sup>9</sup> National Fire Protection Association. (February 2020). US Fire Department Profile – 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/Files/News-and-Research/Fire-statistics-and-reports/Emergencyresponders/osFDProfileTables.pdf>

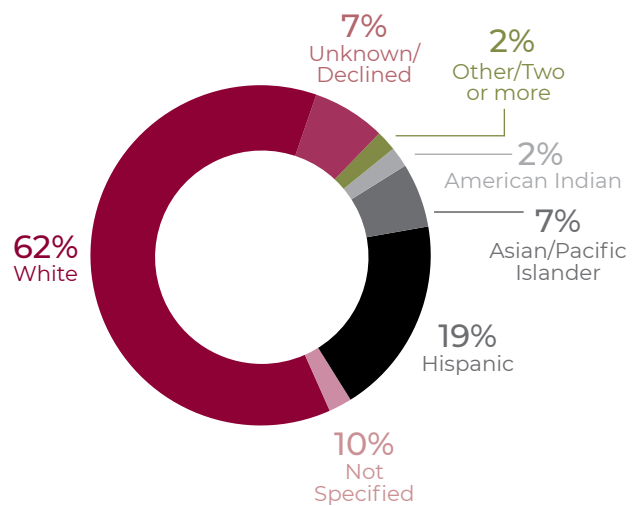
# DATA FINDINGS

**FIGURES 2 AND 3:** DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE CITY OF SANTA ROSA, SRFD, AND US FIRE DEPARTMENTS INDICATE THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF SRFD APPLICANTS FROM 2015-2020.

**FIGURE 2** % SRFD FIREFIGHTER/  
PARAMEDIC APPLICANTS  
BY GENDER: 2015-2020



**FIGURE 3** % SRFD FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC  
APPLICANTS BY RACE/ETHNICITY: 2015-2020



N=104

## DUE DILIGENCE THEMES

**1 Hiring and Recruitment Fair and Adequate** - a significant majority of SRFD survey respondents believe the hiring evaluation process is fair and the department is doing enough to attract diverse candidates. Many do not believe current hiring and recruitment practices should be changed.

➤ While nearly two-thirds of respondents believe the department is doing enough to attract/recruit female candidates, fewer believe it is doing enough to attract/recruit Latinx candidates (57%).

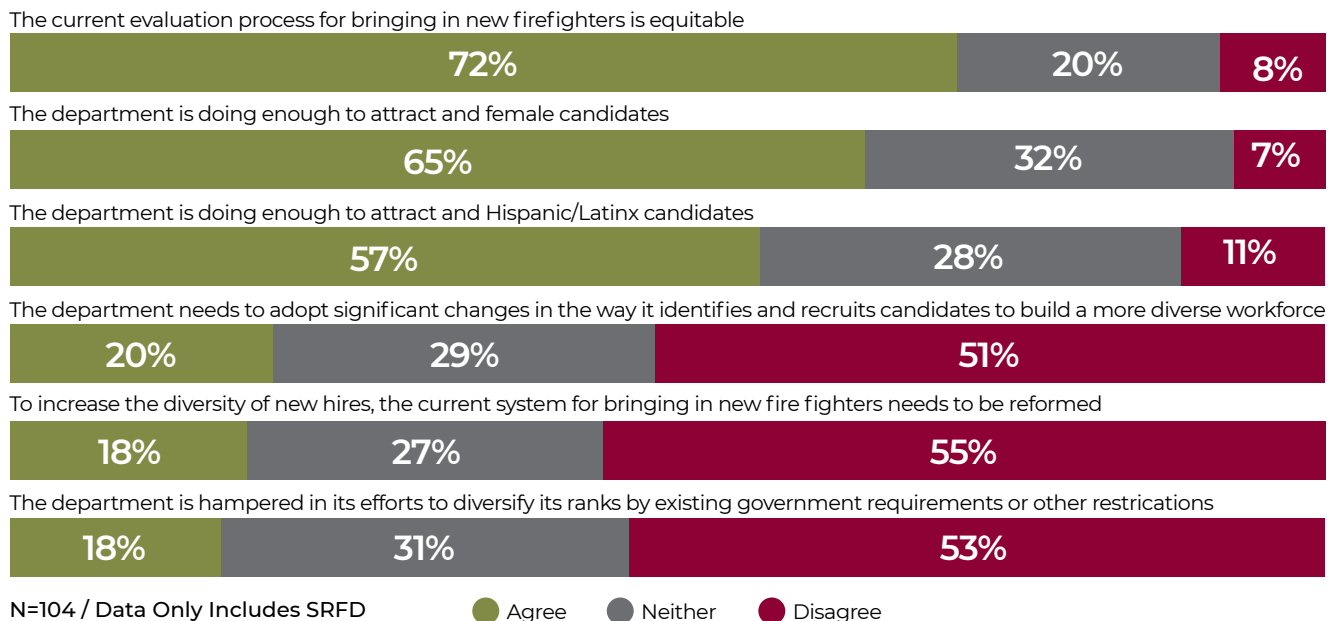
# DATA FINDINGS

## DUE DILIGENCE THEMES (CONT'D)

**FIGURE 1: HIRING AND RECRUITMENT AT SFRD**

- When it comes to hiring and recruiting practices at SFRD, a significant majority believe the evaluation process is equitable and the department is doing enough to attract/recruit female candidates (65%)—though the figure drops to significantly when it comes to attracting/recruiting Hispanic/Latinx candidates (57%)
- A majority of SFRD do not believe the current hiring and recruitment practices should be changed

**FIGURE 1: HIRING AND RECRUITMENT AT SFRD**



F1: The following statements are based on SFRD's recruitment and hiring practices based on your opinion, observations and perspectives. Please select one response based on the following scale below from '1' to '5' – where '1' is Not At All Satisfied and '5' is Very Satisfied.

**2 Appreciate and Support Diversity** - most SFRD survey respondents believe those of diverse backgrounds are equally appreciated and supported as everyone else.

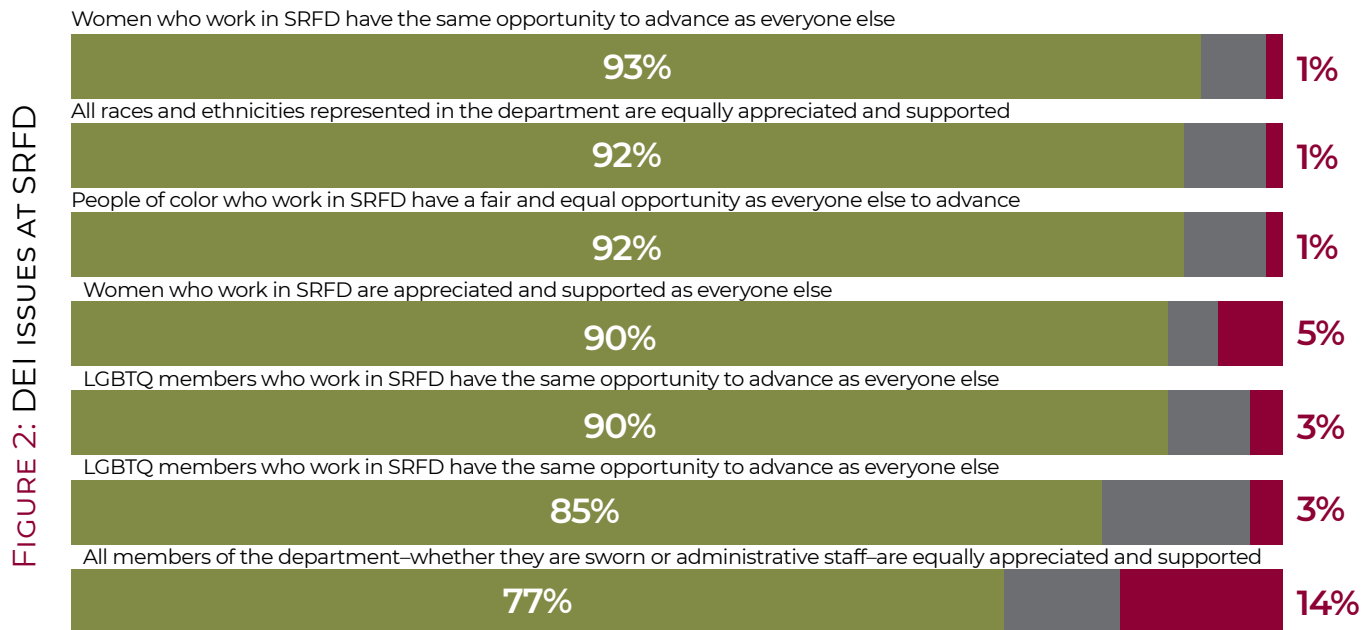
- There is some disagreement about whether the civilian staff are equally appreciated and supported.

# DATA FINDINGS

## DUE DILIGENCE THEMES (CONT'D)

FIGURE 2: DEI ISSUES AT SRFD

➤ The vast majority of SRFD members believe those of diverse backgrounds are equally supported and appreciated as everyone else



N=74 / Data Only Includes SRFD

● Agree ● Neither ● Disagree

FI: The following statements are based on SRFD's recruitment and hiring practices based on your opinion, observations and perspectives. Please select one response based on the following scale below from '1' to '5' – where '1' is Not At All Satisfied and '5' is Very Satisfied.

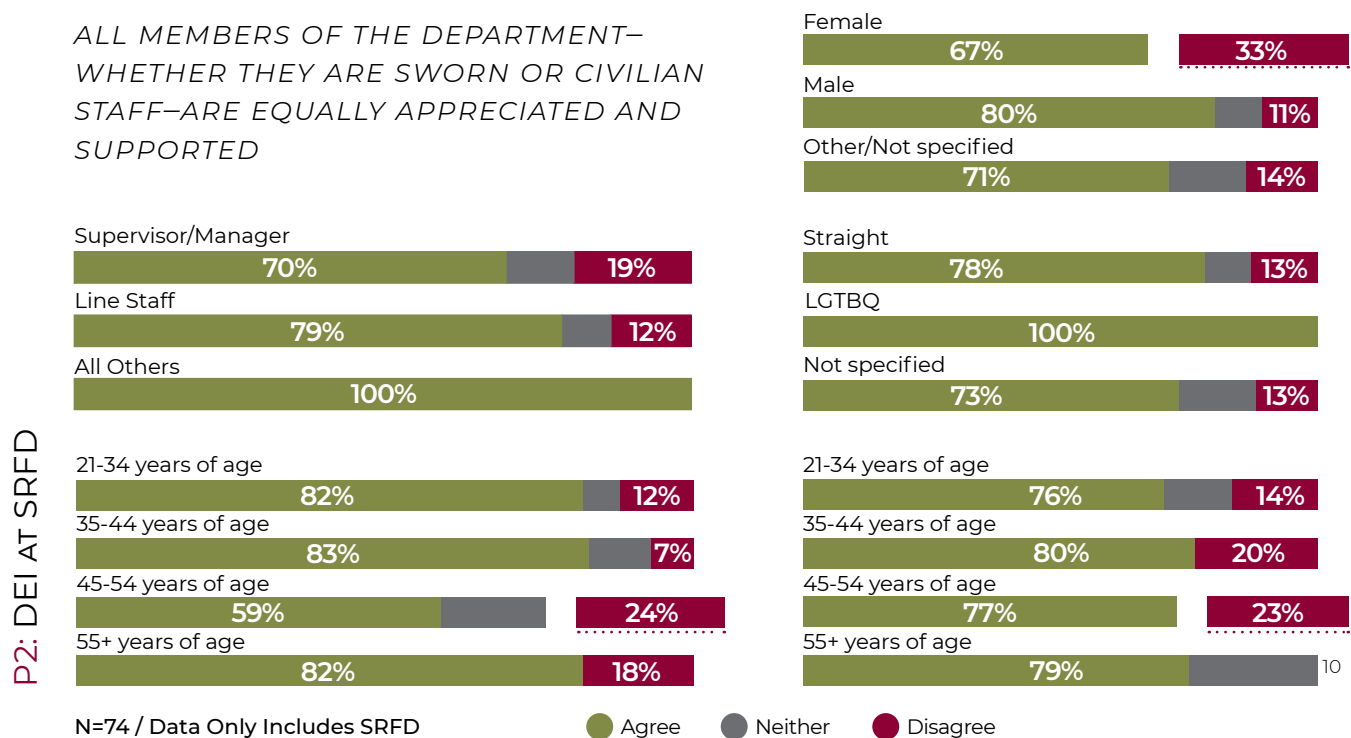
➤ In response to the statement that all departments, whether sworn or civilian, are equally appreciated and supported, there were significant variances based on demographic disaggregation. Women responded with the largest percentage of disagreement at 33%, followed by employees aged 45-54 of which 24% disagreed with the statement, 23% of respondents who identified as Other disagreed with the statement, and 20% of Hispanic/Latinx respondents disagreed.

# DATA FINDINGS

## DUE DILIGENCE THEMES (CONT'D)

**FIGURE 2: DEI SENTIMENTS AT SRFD - BY KEY DEMOS**

➤ Of those who express disagreement with the idea that sworn and civilian staff are equally appreciated and supported, one third are female, nearly one-quarter are other ethnicities (other than White or Hispanic). Nearly one-quarter also between the ages of 45-54 years of age



P2: Please select one response based on the following scale below from '1' to '5'—where '1' is Not At All Satisfied and '5' is Very Satisfied

**3 Belonging** - SRFD employees have a strong sense of belonging due to their familial culture and communal living (“the kitchen table thing”<sup>11</sup>). The Department has gradually transitioned from traditional onboarding and probationary practices that reflected a military approach to acclimating new hires to practices that are more respectful, understanding, and focused on learning. Firefighters from different cultural backgrounds feel welcome and supported. Many interviewees uplifted the “family” culture of SRFD.

10 0% disagree among those choosing not to specify  
11 Interviews

# DATA FINDINGS



**4 Diverse Workforce** - The Department has expanded outreach strategies beyond local recruitment through traditional referral channels. SRFD has made significant progress with adapting recruitment, hiring, and onboarding policies, procedures, and practices to attract, hire and retain diverse candidates. Despite the department's success, SRFD acknowledges that diversifying the workforce continues to be a challenge, as well as ensuring that the hiring process is equitable.

**5 Culture** - SRFD culture has changed in the last 5-10 years to be more of a learning culture and more adaptable to change. The culture change has been attributed to the retirement of older firefighters, the addition of younger and more diverse hires, and progressive leadership. Respondents indicate that most staff are embracing the change.



# GROUP PROCESS



In November 2021, the RDT was organized by staff volunteers interested in engaging in a data-driven process around issues related to DEIB. SRFD was intentional about ensuring diverse representation on the RDT to include members from operations, prevention, and administration, and diversity of position, tenure with the department, gender, cultural ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

The RDT formed two sub-groups, an Internal Committee and External Committee, to generate recommendations for this Plan.

# GROUP PROCESS



## GROUP PROCESS METHODOLOGY - CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING

The RDT implemented a group process that involved the following:

- Addressing the challenges, barriers, and problems unique to SRFD based on participants lived experiences and the data collected
- Implementing a culture of shared decision-making and co-creation
- Creating a sense of belonging and ownership by participants

The RDT group process was centered on a collaborative learning-exchange, trust among participants, and in the process, staff inclusion, transparency, and consensus decisions. The process also modeled shared leadership and co-ownership.

All decisions and recommendations of the RDT and the two committees were by consensus. Seed facilitated the group process and provided guidance and coaching with crafting recommendations.

## RDT ORGANIZATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The RDT organized itself into two committees, Internal and External, centered on the following focus areas:

- Recruitment
- Community Engagement
- Communications
- Hiring and On-Boarding
- Data

The RDT convened eleven (11) team meetings, twenty (20) committee meetings, and countless hours of work between meetings from November 9, 2021, to April 20, 2022. The RDT developed seven (7) recommendations, along with strategies for consideration by SRFD.

# GROUP PROCESS



## RDT ORGANIZATION AND ENGAGEMENT (CONT'D)

The RDT committees reviewed and analyzed the data findings based on focus areas, uplifted challenges and opportunities, agreed by consensus on a set of recommendations, developed rationales for the recommendations and strategies for consideration. The committees uplifted recommendations to the RDT for discussion, clarification, and consensus decision.

RDT members and other SRFD staff spent a tremendous amount of volunteer time preparing for and participating in meetings, conferring with community leaders and potential partners, and researching best practices of other department practices. SRFD staff spent volunteer time planning for and conducting outreach events in schools, such as Elsie Allen High School, and organizing the multi-agency Women in Public Safety Day.

Considerations regarding potential areas for improvement and DEIB growth were grouped in a wide range of areas of the employee experience, including but not limited to the following:

<i>RECRUITMENT</i>	<i>PROBATION</i>
<i>CERTIFICATIONS</i>	<i>CULTURE OF INCLUSION</i>
<i>TESTING</i>	<i>PROMOTION</i>
<i>ORGANIZATIONAL STAFFING NEEDS</i>	<i>COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS</i>
<i>TRAINING AND PREPARATION</i>	<i>RETENTION (HOUSING)</i>
<i>FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT</i>	<i>PARENTAL AND CHILDCARE NEEDS</i>
<i>HIRING</i>	<i>LANGUAGE BONUSES</i>
<i>GROOMING STANDARDS</i>	<i>ALL GENDER/WOMEN'S BATHROOMS, SHOWERS, AND FACILITIES</i>

Data findings from Seed's due diligence process, coupled with employees' lived experience informed the RDT's identification of challenges and barriers to DEIB.

# TERMINOLOGY - DEIB TERMS DEFINED



**DIVERSITY** refers to a broad range of differences and variations in identifying individuals' characteristics, both visible and invisible. Any human dimension used to identify groups of people can be represented in a diverse group. For example, a diverse organization may be comprised of individuals with different and intersecting **inherent** and **acquired** identities.

➤ **Inherent identities:** Traits one is born with, such as skin color, gender, sexual orientation, and abilities

➤ **Acquired identities:** Traits gained through life experiences such as cultural background, religion, education, citizenship status, and cognitive diversity (political views, perspectives, ideas, etc.)

**“EQUITY** is **FAIRNESS** and justice achieved through systematically assessing disparities in opportunities, outcomes, and representation and redressing [those] disparities through targeted actions.”<sup>12</sup>

**INCLUSION** is the act of being included, e.g., you are invited to participate according to the rules and norms previously set.

**BELONGING** means more than just having access or being included; it means having a meaningful voice and participation in co-creation and shared leadership. It involves trust, transparency, and co-ownership. It describes values and practices where no person is left out of the circle of concern.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Source Centering equity in collective impact by Sheri Brady, Junious Williams, Mark Kramer, Paul Schmitz, John Kani, <https://philanthropynewsdigest.org/columns/ssir-pnd/centering-equity-in-collective-impact>

<sup>13</sup> <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/bridging-belonging>

# RECOMMENDATIONS



The recommendations included in this Plan were approved by consensus decision of the RDT and the City Equity Taskforce.

## INTERNAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The RDT committees reviewed and analyzed the data findings based on focus areas, uplifted challenges and opportunities, agreed by consensus on a set of recommendations, developed rationales for the recommendations and strategies for consideration. The committees uplifted recommendations to the RDT for discussion, clarification, and consensus decision.

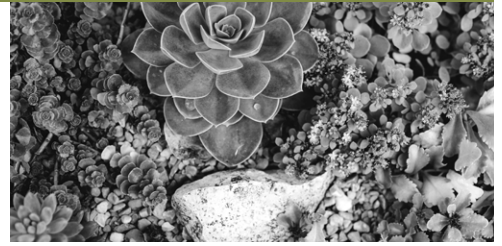
**GUIDING STATEMENT-STRUCTURE:** Incorporate a structure into Santa Rosa Fire Department (SRFD) to manage the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the Recruitment and Diversity Plan (RDT Plan) or a structure that incorporates principles of co-creation and inclusive consensus decision-making.

## RECOMMENDATION 1

SRFD will form a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) standing committee (Standing Committee) composed of firefighters from all ranks and seniority, prevention and administration personnel, leadership, and the City's DI/EEO, and to include representation from SRFD personnel with diverse cultural, ethnic, gender, and sexual orientation backgrounds. The Standing Committee to be facilitated by a SRFD Community Outreach Specialist (COS) or another designated person.

The Standing Committee's charge will be to provide continuous review of Plan recommendations and strategies, support the implementation process, changes to the Recruitment and Diversity Plan (R&D Plan), and monitor and evaluation of the Plan. The Standing Committee will also conduct a review of the Plan and DEIB recommendations at least annually.

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Without institutional structures that support DEIB, transformative change is not sustainable.

### FINDINGS:

➤ Among the critical success factors of DE&I is: Sustainable Infrastructure – “By making sustainable infrastructure a part of an initiative, organizations ensure that they maintain the ground they gain and march forward from there.” (See Exhibit G for critical success factors)

➤ Systemic challenges - “Four Black female firefighters in the District (District of Columbia) sued the city Monday, saying they have been “systematically and continuously discriminated against on the basis of their race and gender,” including being denied salary increases and overtime pay and being subjected to unfair disciplinary action.”<sup>14</sup>

### RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES/ACTIONS:

- Institutionalize policy changes and decision-making processes to avoid change being dependent on individual leadership.
- The Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Employment Officer (DIEEO) convenes a diverse taskforce for annual review of all SRFD recommendations. Taskforce to include firefighters, SRFD leadership, folks with diverse cultural backgrounds, Human Resources, and DIEEO.

**GUIDING STATEMENT-DIVERSE WORKFORCE:** Increase the diversity of the SRFD workforce.

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<sup>14</sup> Washington Post, Paul Duggan, August 2, 2022.

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## RECOMMENDATION 2

SRFD to increase workforce diversity by improving the percentage of diverse staff hired by 2025.

### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Diverse workforces increase productivity and innovation, contribute to promoting employment opportunities to diverse applicants and improve community outreach and engagement with diverse communities.

#### FINDINGS:

- McKinsey & Company found in their 2015 report, “Diversity Matters,”<sup>15</sup> that “...when companies commit themselves to diverse leadership, they are more successful. More diverse companies, we believe, are better able to win top talent and improve their customer orientation, employee satisfaction, and decision making, leading to a virtuous cycle of increasing returns” The report also found that increased diversity improves innovation and enhances organizational image.
- Moving the needle on diversity is harder than completing a typical transformation due to barriers like unconscious bias. This makes it even more important that companies have a robust transformation program that explicitly addresses unconscious bias and that there is a visible commitment from the leadership team.”
- Workforce diversity continues to be a challenge for SRFD. The chart below reflects current SRFD demographics.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> diversity matters.pdf (mckinsey.com), Vivian Hunt Dennis Layton Sara Prince, February 2, 2015  
<sup>16</sup> Santa Rosa employee demographic data provided by the city 02-08-2022.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## Bargaining Unit

- ☐ Select All
- ☒ 02-FIRE
- ☒ 04-SUPP
- ☒ 07-TECH
- ☒ 09-FSAF
- ☒ 10-SFTY
- ☒ 18-MGMT
- ☐ 00-NONE
- ☐ 99-ELEC



> Data strongly suggests that homogeneity stifles innovation. A 2014 study found that if a market is dominated by any one ethnicity, it tends to make worse decisions<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Melinda Marshall, and Laura Sherbin with Tara Gonsalves, Innovation, Diversity, and Market Growth, Center for Talent Innovation, 2013.



# RECOMMENDATIONS



➤ “Scientists now believe that almost every form of life is involved in some kind of cooperation or mutually beneficial relationship. Why did scientists get this wrong for so long? One reason is that the group of ecologists that were working on this problem were an extremely homogeneous group who, themselves, had only ever experienced a competitive environment.”<sup>18</sup>

## RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES/ACTIONS<sup>19</sup>:

- **Firefighters that speak any second language should receive a pay bump.** (Explanation: Their contract gives them a bump for Spanish, the argument was that they need it for Vietnamese, Russian, and any other languages Firefighters speak on the job to better communicate with residents.)
- **Implicit Bias/Cultural Competency Training**
  - “The SRFD’s selection process has been developed from best practices; however, as in all processes, there is still room for bias. Sending all SRFD staff that participate in the selection process to implicit bias and cultural competency training would equip them with the tools to identify and mitigate any potential biases. This training would be required for any member who wishes to participate in the selection process. The SRFD would continue working with the City of Santa Rosa Inclusion Council to remain updated with relevant protocols and training.”<sup>20</sup>

**GUIDING STATEMENT-HIRING<sup>21</sup>:** SRFD has an opportunity to improve hiring and selection processes, procedures, and practices to prevent bias.

## RECOMMENDATION 3

SRFD to improve equitable policies, processes, procedures, practices, and structures in the hiring and selection of candidates for employment. The Standing Committee to review, at least annually, SRFD hiring and selection processes, procedures, practices, and structures to evaluate for fairness, to identify potential barriers to employment, and analyze metrics to increase the diversity of applicants and new hires.

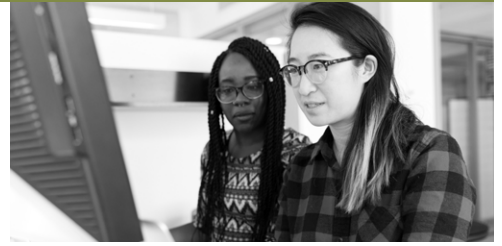
<sup>18</sup> September 2, 2022, interview with Jessica Nordell, a science journalist and speaker, about her book, *The End of Bias: A Beginning* (Macmillan). <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/mckinsey-on-books/author-talks-how-to-remove-unconscious-bias-from-the-workplace>.

<sup>19</sup> See Exhibit B – “Key steps for successful diversity programs”

<sup>20</sup> SRFD Recruitment and Diversity Strategic Plan

<sup>21</sup> See Exhibit C – Current Implementation of Best Practices

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Without equitable policies, procedures, practices, and structures, selection and hiring processes and practices are subject to explicit and implicit biases. (See Exhibit D for underlying reasons for bias).

### FINDINGS:

- The McKinsey & Company report “Diversity does not Equal Inclusion”<sup>22</sup> notes that “even where companies are more diverse, many appear as yet unable to cultivate work environments which effectively promote inclusive leadership and accountability among managers, equality and fairness of opportunity, and openness and freedom from bias and discrimination.”
- Sonoma County officials cite bias.<sup>23</sup>
- Diversity at the leadership level “breaks down insular biases through personal experience, making the organization more likely to act inclusively, foster a communicative culture, and create an environment where workers are free to voice unorthodox views and suggest creative solutions”<sup>24</sup>

## RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES/ACTIONS:

- **Testing**
  - Ensure FCTC is culturally competent
  - Provide local training and testing sites for CPAT through FCTC
- **Interviews**
  - Reduce process time by conducting both interviews on the same day
  - Provide education and training for success in interviews
  - Use of Community Members in Oral Interviews - typically, the use of community members on oral board panels is reserved for higher level promotions within the organization, such as Fire Captain and Chief Officers. To provide a community voice in the selection process of SRFD members of the future, the SRFD will begin using community members on all oral board panels.

<sup>22</sup> McKinsey’s New Report Finds That Diversity Does Not Equal Inclusion — Consulting Point

<sup>23</sup> “Exiting Officials Cite Racial Bias”, Press Democrat, October 29, 2021

<sup>24</sup> Center for Talent Innovation, 2015 report

# RECOMMENDATIONS



The panels will consist of (at minimum) one SRFD Manager, one SRFD line staff member, and one community member with Human Resources as a proctor.<sup>25</sup>

## → Background Checks

- Add additional investigators to increase capacity and reduce turnaround times for background checks.
- Periodically review the Pre-Employment Questionnaire for social norms and potential bias in questions.

## → General

- Establish data sets to monitor background failures, the success of recruitment tools, etc.
- Work with HR on evaluation of job descriptions to keep in line with social norms and competitive landscape.
- Institutionalize policy changes to include decision-making processes.
- Increase decision-making ability in the application review process
- Once recruited, consider what can make women feel welcome in SRFD (facilities, equipment, policies, etc.).

→ See Exhibit E, Techniques for overcoming bias.

**GUIDING STATEMENT-DATA:** Without data, it is more difficult to identify barriers, track what works and what does not, and monitor the accomplishment of targeted goals.

## RECOMMENDATION 4

SRFD will continue to track data relevant to recruitment, selection, hiring, and retention. The Standing Committee will partner with Human Resources to develop a data dashboard comprised of critical data necessary to evaluate the Department's progress toward diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

## RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Targeted universalism, like many approaches to equity, is data-driven. Data supports and guides change and informs targeted strategies.

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## FINDINGS:

➤ Assessment and performance measurement is critical to the Targeted Universalism approach in two areas: measuring how the overall population fares relative to the universal goal and conducting a granular assessment of how various subgroups perform relative to the universal goal.<sup>26</sup>

## RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES/ACTIONS:

- ↳ To better adjust and adapt to enhanced recruiting strategies, the SRFD will closely monitor metrics related to engagement and recruitment.
  - The recruit academy for lateral employees has also been augmented to shorten the time they are assigned to the Training Tower and gets these employees into the field as quickly as possible.
  - Tracking effectiveness of communications - SRFD staff will use social media and website usage to track and geolocate data on the effectiveness of communication strategies. These methods of communication will need to be monitored and adjusted to generational norms and forms of communication. Metrics such as use of communication methods, “hotspots” of usage, and effectiveness in recruitment will be monitored.
  - Tracking effectiveness of recruitment programs - SRFD staff will continually monitor and adapt the effectiveness of recruitment strategies based on the raw numbers of applicants and the diversity of the applicant pool. Data on applicants as it relates to the genesis of their application (which program or communication strategy drew them to SRFD), length of time in SRFD programs, and feasibility and effectiveness of recruitment strategies will be assessed adapted as needed. These data points will need to be monitored on the short-term, mid-term, and long-term basis because some strategies will see immediate results, and others may not yield results for years to come.

<sup>26</sup> Targeted Universalism - Policy and Practice, John A. Powell, Stephen Menendian, Wendy Ake, May 2019. [https://belonging.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/targeted\\_universalism\\_primer.pdf?file=1&force=1](https://belonging.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/targeted_universalism_primer.pdf?file=1&force=1)

# RECOMMENDATIONS



- > Establish and monitor data sets as mentioned above and others, as they are identified, needs to monitor, and analyze what strategies are improving success and which need to be reconsidered for increased positive impact. This should be through an inclusive process to assess what needs to be measured/monitored—analyzing it on a continuous basis. What happens as a result of this data?
- > Establish a place to house this data with access by appropriate staff and leadership.
- > Ensure that existing and future positions have the collection and analysis of this data in their regular job descriptions.
- > Ensure the application of a DEIB lens with periodic review of the whole package of data sets available to include involvement from DIEEO in the annual assessment and evaluation of the data needs.

## RECRUITMENT, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

**GUIDING STATEMENT-RECRUITMENT:** Given the competitive employment market and Santa Rosa's demographics and cost of living, SRFD can improve outreach and recruitment efforts to generate a sufficiently diverse candidate pool.

### RECOMMENDATION 5

The Standing Committee will ensure that SRFD recruitment efforts include outreach to a diverse pool of applicants for employment, with the goal of hiring staff in each cohort who represent diverse backgrounds by 2025.

### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

A diverse applicant pool is a condition of having a diverse workforce.

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## FINDINGS:

- Throughout the California fire service, there are significant trends impacting recruitment and diversity efforts. Industrywide there is a lack of interested and qualified candidates coupled with a surplus of available open positions due to a significant wave of generational retirements. There is also a noted decrease of interest in public safety education programs and declining numbers participating in fire and paramedic academies. These trends have led to an industrywide challenge in recruiting and retaining qualified candidates, particularly in small to mid-sized organizations. This has contributed to a lack of diversity in the general candidate pool and further limits an organization from having the ability to enhance diversity in an acceptable manner.
- “The solution that needs to be applied immediately is a significant paradigm shift in how and when recruiting is accomplished. The days of applicants actively seeking employment, interest cards, and utilization of large candidate pool resources are behind us. This new strategy must look at the interests of the next generation of the workforce and adhere to cultural norms by leveraging tools that are presently and predictably relevant. SRFD must remain nimble to the constantly evolving societal and cultural norms and modes of communication.”<sup>27</sup>
- “Within recent history, the candidate pool has lacked diversity, whether it be the structure and content of a department-issued test or using a resource of a larger candidate pool shared amongst multiple jurisdictions. To shift this paradigm and solve medium to long-term recruiting challenges, SRFD must make a significant long-term investment in the community.”<sup>28</sup>
- “The application and training process requires perseverance. Lots of work and study without being paid.”<sup>29</sup>
- “Social media is the way to reach potential applicants.”<sup>30</sup>
- “Throughout this process, the RDT identified barriers and obstacles that need to be overcome or circumvented for applicants. Changes to policies, practices and procedures aim to reduce the number of obstacles and flatten the barriers in an intentional way to broaden, increase, and diversify the applicant pool.”

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27 SRFD Recruitment and Diversity Strategic Plan  
28 SRFD Recruitment and Diversity Strategic Plan

29 Interviews  
30 Interviews

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES/ACTIONS:

The SRFD must adapt to recruitment challenges by enhancing current recruiting strategies to attract a wide talent pool of qualified candidates. The enhanced strategies should align with current and predicted social, cultural, and generational norms and expectations. SRFD will develop and deploy a grassroots recruitment campaign to attract and develop local and diverse talent into the profession and organization.

While the challenges that SRFD is facing in recruitment and improving diversity exist now, the solutions could potentially take some time to develop and implement. It will take time, resources, and effort to build long-term strategies and garner the relationships to influence a significant shift in the workforce. That said, the changes necessary to begin measuring success are long overdue and will be a guiding force in the organization's future.<sup>31</sup>

*The following recruitment strategies are recommended:*

- **The SRFD has instituted OPEN LATERAL RECRUITMENT to allow lateral candidates to apply on a consistent basis.**
  - The recruit academy for lateral employees has also been augmented to shorten the time they are assigned to the Training Tower and gets these employees into the field as quickly as possible.
- **Provide education and resources to potential candidates prior to entering the process to ensure success.**
- **Increase decision-making ability by applicant reviewers to provide additional insurance regarding equity in the application review process**
- **Work with the school foundations, community foundations, the fire foundation, and other funders to create scholarships and paid internships for future firefighters, paramedics, and other Fire Service workers.**



# RECOMMENDATIONS



## RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES/ACTIONS: (CONT'D)

- Improving the infrastructure for approving and onboarding paid interns must be built across the City organization.
  - Consideration - getting paid interns on board via the City is complex. Improving access to the SRFD internship program will generate a better youth pipeline for positions across all Bureaus.
- Sponsor people through their training, physical fitness training, and EMT and other pre-requisite certifications
- Create an institutional partnership with SRJC to map and create a clear path for sponsoring/pursuing fire and EMS certifications.
- Utilize community events and resources to advertise.
- Representation/celebration/inspiration: Get diverse Fire Department members into schools and community groups to explain the career path.
- Create posters with examples of those who have made it from diverse backgrounds/genders.
- Outreach and education - contact specific groups with diverse representation. Forge connections with other local ethnic & immigrant communities (Ex. Eritrean, Hmong, Russian, Vietnamese, Chinese, etc.)
- Plan social media campaigns to highlight diversity in the SRFD. Create SRFD ownership and management of a “#JoinSRFire” social media profile.
  - SRFD does not currently have more than temporary access to social media accounts.
  - City of Santa Rosa allow SRFD to create and manage its own specialized social media profile for frequent custom posts.
- Honor cultural holidays. Find space at Cinco de Mayo, Black History Month, and the Gay pride parade. Be part of community events that represent the diversity we seek at SRFD.
- Increase access through financial incentives to pursue the needed certifications and employment opportunities: scholarships and financial aid. Fire Fund to create scholarship and work with school foundations and SRJC to provide funding.



# RECOMMENDATIONS



## RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES/ACTIONS: (CONT'D)

- Offer some basic classes at the training tower in partnership with SRJC. The partnership would allow SRFD to meet potential applicants and provide a basis for their career path. Offer the beginning classes at our regional training site to capture interest and show off what we can offer from the beginning of their career.
- Certification or beginning EMS classes at SRFD facility to peak interest.
- Develop and deploy a grassroots recruitment campaign to attract and develop local and diverse talent into the profession and organization.
- Implement an upstream approach with Mentorship and Youth Explorer programs as catalysts for the necessary change for the organization in the commitment and investment in the community.
- Connect with local athletic leagues and college teams to find potential recruits, particularly females.<sup>32</sup>
- Connect with Veterans groups to find potential recruits.
- Make and advertise a “how to become a firefighter” map
- Speak to an individual's culture, listen for, and address their needs instead of making assumptions.
- Educate and engage local youth and community members on what it takes to become a firefighter/paramedic and equip them with the tools and resources to guide them through the process.
- Keep developing identified pipeline streams including, but not limited to engagement in local schools (i.e., high school Career Technical Education programs), with organizations focused on civic and business interests, women, veterans, non-profits, and the LGBTQI community.
- Demonstrate the opportunities and benefits of a career in public safety by partnering with other community groups to provide youth with guidance, resources, and mentorship to ensure their readiness to become qualified applicants for the fire service within a few years of graduating high school.
- Research and implement different creative strategies with shorter timelines.

<sup>32</sup> Female former athletes to become firefighters.  
<https://www.thehawkeye.com/story/sports/2021/04/11/two-high-school-women-athletes-use-skills-become-firefighters-burlington-new-london/4610995001/>

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES/ACTIONS: (CONT'D)

- The SRFD, through the City of Santa Rosa Human Resources Department, advertises not only on City websites and social media platforms but also on numerous outside platforms. See the list in Exhibit F.
- Social Media Marketing - Recruiting through technology, app-based systems, and real-time, prevalent information will be the cornerstone of these efforts. The SRFD will also partner with Santa Rosa Firefighters to share content on social media platforms to ensure more robust coverage of the community.
- Update Website - SRFD will update and use the City's website as a marketing tool with various training resources, "how-to" guides, candidate preparation instruction, and resources available for potential recruits. As other programs develop, the website will be updated to provide accurate information on available recruitment strategies and programs.

**GUIDING STATEMENT-OUTREACH:** Diverse candidates are less likely to be aware of or be exposed to the pathways, processes, and requirements for a career with the fire department.

## RECOMMENDATION 6

Recommend the funding for up to two full-time SRFD Community Outreach Specialist (COS) positions, with a preference for bilingual candidates, to conduct community outreach, and manage communications and recruitment efforts. At least one should have experience in Fire prevention, suppression, or operations. COSs to collaborate and coordinate with the City's Community Engagement Division to ensure shared understanding and alignment of strategies.

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Community outreach and engagement is a specialized function that requires expertise and experience. Experienced COSs enhance awareness of opportunities, can communicate the benefits of employment, and improve community relations and bridging with diverse communities. SRFD prefers one COS have Fire Service experience to be equipped to communicate about the work in an informed insider way.

## FINDINGS:

- Fifteen percent of residents feel they speak English “less than very well” and are considered “linguistically isolated.” Of those, 80 percent are Spanish speakers, 13.5 percent speak Asian or Pacific Island languages, 5 percent speak Indo-European languages, and the remaining 1.5 percent speak other languages.<sup>33</sup>
- Spanish-speaking firefighters are essential for communication, community trust building, and creating a sense of belonging for all residents.<sup>34</sup>
- The process on how to qualify and apply to become a member of the Fire Service can seem opaque and complex to individuals who haven’t a relative or person close to them who can guide them.

## RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES/ACTIONS:

- Bilingual/Multilingual firefighters
- Permanent Outreach/Community Engagement positions should develop digital media and print advertising in conjunction with the City’s Communications and HR. Departments to share their expertise and knowledge of Fire Service needs.
- The outreach Coordinator can schedule, plan, and utilize the energy, talents, and diversity of our current workforce for engagement with these programs and organizations while managing the events.

<sup>33</sup> Key Findings from the Santa Rosa General Plan Update  
<sup>34</sup> Interviews

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES/ACTIONS: (CONT'D)

- ↳ Establish a Mentorship program. Connect interested existing line staff with potential mentees. The program targeted to benefit applicants without social or family ties to the Fire Service. The SRFD mentors will guide mentees toward maintaining a clean background for a successful career in public safety.
  - The SRFD will establish a comprehensive mentorship program. SRFD staff will develop an application for interested applicants to fill out and post on the SRFD website.
  - Staff will reach out to existing line staff to connect them with a potential mentee.
  - Create clear instruction pieces in words and videos for potential candidates.

**GUIDING STATEMENT-COMMUNICATIONS/OUTREACH:** Without comprehensive community outreach and communications, SRFD will not generate a sufficiently diverse applicant pool.

## RECOMMENDATION 7

The Standing Committee, in partnership with the City's Communications Department, will develop an Outreach and Communications Plan with targeted strategies and actions designed to reach potential applicants from diverse backgrounds.

### RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Outreach and Communications Plan will provide a roadmap for accessing diverse communities and provide a gauge for measuring success over time.

### FINDINGS:

- "It's not that women don't want to be firefighters, and aren't capable of being firefighters," said Larson. "It's just that we're never told, never exposed to it; it's never seen as an option."<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Fire Captain Kimberly Larson, S.F. Examiner, September 13, 2021, Jessica Wolfrom

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## FINDINGS: (CONT'D)

➤ Fifteen percent of residents feel they speak English “less than very well” and are considered “linguistically isolated.” Of those, 80 percent are Spanish speakers, 13.5 percent speak Asian or Pacific Island languages, 5 percent speak Indo-European languages, and the remaining 1.5 percent speak other languages.<sup>36</sup>

## RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES/ACTIONS:

- ➔ Partner with Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) to clarify and adapt path. Establish a program to monitor and support recruits through the needed training with SRJC. SRJC provides the community with local and affordable resources to meet minimum qualifications to become a Firefighter/Paramedic. The SRFD should leverage and deepen the established relationship: develop a sponsorship program to designate SRFD positions in both the Firefighter and Paramedic Academies, allowing candidates to have priority access to these programs by being part of the Youth Explorer or Mentorship programs.
- SRFD’s proximity and current relationship with SRJC is a significant benefit for outreach and communication. SRJC provides the community with local and affordable resources to meet minimum qualifications to become a Firefighter/Paramedic.
- ➔ Women in the Fire Service Day - SRFD to partner with the SRJC and other local fire departments to develop a one-day, annual event to honor women in the fire service, beginning with a panel of female firefighters of all ranks, asking them questions about how they became interested in the fire service and describing their path. In the afternoon, attendees would be able to practice firefighting skills and receive guidance and resources on how to improve from existing female firefighters. The event will be open to all but would target females. (First event held in 2022)
- ➔ Create and post video content and a clear checklist for each chronological steps from interest to hiring as firefighter in both English and Spanish, on the website and on social media, with SRFD staff representative of the value placed on diversity and inclusion within SRFD.

# ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS



## IMPACT OF STEREOTYPES

Entire demographic groups can face disadvantage when the traits they are believed to share do not align with the expectations of their environment or their desired profession.<sup>37</sup>

For example, “The strong association between being a man and being a firefighter, a scientist, or a business leader makes it difficult for people to picture a woman succeeding in these professions (McClellan et al. 2017). This is because the set of traits perceived to be essential for success (the professional prototype) is better aligned with the set of traits that are stereotypically associated with men than the set of traits that are stereotypically associated with women (Heilman 1983, Eagly and Karau 2002). As a result, women in these professions often face chronic skepticism and undervaluation. This skepticism inevitably leads to further underrepresentation, perpetuating income disparities (Lips 2013, Bureau of Labor Statistics 2015) and undermining women’s potential contributions to those professions (Herring 2009, Ely and Meyerson 2010, Galinsky et al. 2015).”<sup>38</sup>

“The persistent scrutiny and being under a microscope — and any mistakes being really, really held against you and proof of the assumption of incompetence... is absolutely pervasive,” said Corrinne Bendersky.<sup>39</sup>

Bendersky points out that for municipal fire departments, a vast majority of calls are medical emergencies — situations that require not brawn and bravado, but compassion and care. These traits are more stereotypically associated with women. Bendersky and Danbold call consideration of traits of underrepresented groups, “*balancing prototypes*”.

By theorizing about the content and malleability of category prototypes, Bendersky and Danbold argue that because prototypes are generally weighted in favor of historically dominant groups (e.g., men), the disadvantage this causes nondominant or underrepresented groups (e.g., women) can be reduced by balancing these prototypes.<sup>40</sup>

37 “Balancing Professional Prototypes Increases the Valuation of Women in Male-Dominated Professions”, Organization Science, Felix Danbold and Corrinne Bendersky, November 2019

38 Corrinne Bendersky, a UCLA professor who researches diversity, equity and inclusion in firefighting, S.F. Examiner, September 13, 2021, Jessica Wolfrom

39 “Balancing Professional Prototypes Increases the Valuation of Women in Male-Dominated Professions”, Organization Science, Felix Danbold and Corrinne Bendersky, November 2019

40 SOURCE: Scott Keller and Colin Price, Beyond Performance: How great organizations build ultimate competitive advantage, Wiley, 201



# ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS



## IMPLEMENTATION – SUCCESS FACTORS

As SRFD continues its implementation of the Plan and associated strategies, the following factors are important to take into consideration:

- 1 Incorporate and detail** DEIB metrics and success indicators, along with an implementation timeline, and budget implications.
- 2 Command leadership invests** in understanding the Plan and buying in and taking ownership of DEIB recommendations.
- 3 Institutionalizing** balancing prototypes to support belonging for all employees.
- 4 Department and city-wide support** and resources for the Standing Committee.

## MEASURE O<sup>41</sup> AND MEASURE H

On July 26, the City Council unanimously placed a measure on the November 8, 2022, ballot to renew the existing local 1/4 cent sales tax that provides dedicated public safety and violence prevention funding.

Over 73% of voters approved Measure H on the Santa Rosa City ballot renewing the public safety sales tax for 20 years, expected to raise \$10 million annually in the November 2022 election.

The SRFD currently has 10.25 positions paid for via Measure O. This equates to the personnel required to staff a fire station full time. Measure O also pays for 15 of the Fire Department Paramedic positions, allowing five of the twelve on-duty fire apparatus to be Advanced Life Support staffed and equipped.

SRFD has used local sales tax funds to construct and relocate fire stations. Since 2005, three new fire stations have been built with these funds, Stations 5, 10, and 11. Additional funds are reserved for the future relocation of Station 8 (Roseland) or Station 9 (Southeast). Past and proposed fire station relocations are designed to place emergency response personnel and equipment close to key population centers to keep 9-1-1 emergency response times as quick as possible. Measure O

has purchased fire engines, a wildland fire engine, command vehicles, swift water rescue equipment, and communications equipment.

Measure H's passing supports continuing public safety services, youth programs, and violence and fire prevention initiatives in Santa Rosa.

# CONCLUSION



“It will take time, resources, and effort to build long term strategies and garner the relationships to influence a significant shift in the workforce. That said, the changes necessary to begin measuring success are long overdue and will be a guiding force into the future of the organization.”

SCOTT WESTROPE, *FIRE CHIEF*

The Department’s commitment to sustainable change, and the understanding that transformation happens in increments over time and requires patience and perseverance underpins all the DEIB recommendations and strategies.

This Plan represents a continuation of SRFD’s journey to Belonging for all and is grounded by a strong family culture and a willingness to be bold.



# EXHIBIT A



Documents have been provided to the City under separate cover.

## EXHIBIT B



### KEY STEPS FOR SUCCESSFUL DIVERSITY PROGRAMS<sup>41</sup>

As SRFD continues its implementation of the Plan and associated strategies, the following factors are important to take into consideration:

#### **1** Define a Clear Value Proposition

- Create a clear value proposition for having a diverse and inclusive culture
  - Set a few clear targets (not quotas) that balance complexity with cohesiveness
- Define a clear value proposition

#### **2** Establish a fact base

- Understand the current situation in terms of statistics and mindsets and learn from external best practices. Understand root causes and underlying mindsets.

#### **3** Create targeted initiatives

- Differentiate initiatives by diversity group, for example, gender initiatives do not always resonate with other minorities. Lead from the top.

#### **4** Define the governance model

- Define the rollout strategy for all initiatives. Launch 1-2 highly visible flagship projects at the beginning of the effort. Monitor rigorously.

#### **5** Build inclusion

- Continuously address potential mindset barriers through systematic change management. Link diversity to other change management efforts.

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<sup>41</sup> SRFD R&I Strategic Plan

# EXHIBIT C



## CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION OF BEST PRACTICES<sup>42</sup>

As SRFD continues its implementation of the Plan and associated strategies, the following factors are important to take into consideration:

### 1 Standardized Written Tests.

> The SRFD uses, and has historically used, nationally recognized, standardized entry level written exams. These tests are professionally vetted either through a private company or through organizations such as the California Professional Firefighters (CPF).

### 2 Standardized Physical Ability Tests.

> The SRFD uses the FCTC Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) process that allows candidates to obtain a CPAT card that demonstrates that they have met minimum physical ability qualifications with the ability to practice and train on events prior to testing. The CPAT is the recognized standard for measuring an individual's ability to handle the physical demands of being a firefighter. The timed test measures how candidates handle eight separate events, all designed to mirror tasks on the job.

### 3 Standardized Oral Interviews.

> The SRFD uses two rounds of oral interviews, each measuring different applicant qualities using a standardized scoring rubric and proctored by the City of Santa Rosa Human Resources Department.

**A The Captain/Battalion Chief interview** is evaluated solely on the content of the interview. Each interviewer fills out a score rubric.

**B The Chief's interview**, which includes the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief, takes a holistic view of the candidate by providing the interview panel access to the candidates resumes and first interview scores.

### 4 Application Window Time.

> The City of Santa Rosa Human Resources Department Firefighter/Paramedic application period is advertised for several months and then is open for two weeks at minimum, typically longer.

<sup>42</sup> diversity matters.pdf (mckinsey.com), Vivian Hunt Dennis Layton Sara Prince, February 2, 2015

## EXHIBIT D



### LESSONS FROM BEHAVIORAL ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY<sup>43</sup>

Recent developments in the fields of behavioral economics and social psychology help to explain why diversity is lacking in organizations, and what methods can be used to increase it.

#### Underlying reasons for bias

➤ A body of research in cognitive psychology and behavioral economics over the past 40 years has established that human behavior is heavily influenced by subconscious, instinctive, and emotional “System 1” responses, rather than being under the exclusive control of rational, deliberate “System 2” thinking. As a result, behavior and attitudes in the workplace are influenced by an array of cognitive biases that affect decision making. The most relevant for diversity are:



**Ingroup favoritism:** a preference for people who are like us, so that an individual might choose to work with someone of the same nationality, gender, and race.



**Outgroup homogeneity bias:** the tendency for an individual to think that the group of people they belong to (their “ingroup”) is more diverse, while their “outgroup” is more homogeneous, with members who appear alike or even interchangeable.



**Implicit stereotypes (sometimes referred to as “subconscious bias”):** the association of groups of people with certain traits or activities, such as men with science and mathematics and women with arts and languages. Without our being aware of it, these associations can powerfully influence decisions such as which candidate to hire.

<sup>43</sup> diversity matters.pdf (mckinsey.com), Vivian Hunt Dennis Layton Sara Prince, February 2, 2015

# EXHIBIT E



## TECHNIQUES FOR OVERCOMING BIAS<sup>44</sup>

**Behavioral insights can be harnessed to increase diversity in three main ways:**

by training and educating people to reduce personal biases, changing organizational processes to take bias out of decision-making and incorporating behavioral principles in the design of programs and communications to spur action.

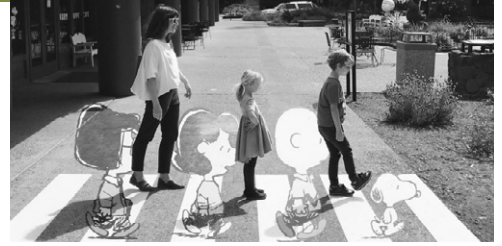
Educating and training people to reduce personal biases Key success factors for raising awareness and building capability include:

- Tailoring delivery to the audience. For example, one engineering company used a computer simulation to show how a systematic 1 percent bias against women in performance evaluation scores caused women to be underrepresented in top positions.
- Getting people to experience bias personally. At Google, for instance, staff are encouraged to take a test that measures biases.
- Reminding people about biases at key moments, such as before reviews.
- Helping people to focus on differences to reduce homogeneity bias and stereotyping. In one experiment, French students discriminated against potential employers who were Arabs but stopped doing so if asked to describe differences between their photos.
- Fostering empathy training and taking the side of the target group—a practice proven to reduce prejudice and discrimination. Simply asking “How would I feel in this situation?” can be enough to have a positive effect.

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<sup>44</sup> <https://kgdiversity.com/critical-success-factors/>

# EXHIBIT F



## LIST OF CURRENT JOB ANNOUNCEMENT ADVERTISING RESOURCES

- > National Association of Hispanic Firefighters
- > International Association of Women in Fire & Emergency
- > International Association of Black Professional Firefighters (Southwest)
- > Careers in Government that provide information to the following media outlets:
  - > [africanamericanjobnetwork.com](http://africanamericanjobnetwork.com)
  - > [asianjobnetwork.com](http://asianjobnetwork.com)
  - > [latinojobnetwork.com](http://latinojobnetwork.com)
  - > [lgbtjobnetwork.com](http://lgbtjobnetwork.com)
  - > [retirementjobnetwork.com](http://retirementjobnetwork.com)
  - > [veteranjobnetwork.net](http://veteranjobnetwork.net)
  - > [womensjobnetwork.com](http://womensjobnetwork.com)
- > CA Fire Prevention Officers
- > National Volunteer Fire Council
- > Sonoma County Fire Chiefs Association
- > Santa Rosa Junior College
- > Sonoma State University
- > Fire Recruitment Specialist
- > [Calchiefs.org](http://Calchiefs.org)
- > CA Firefighter Joint Apprenticeship
- > Careers at IAFC
- > Daily Dispatch
- > Western Fire Chiefs Association
- > Diversity Outreach - Email Distribution List
- > EMS Job Center
- > [FireJobs.com](http://FireJobs.com)
- > [Flrerecruit.com](http://Flrerecruit.com)
- > Glassdoor
- > Indeed
- > National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians

# EXHIBIT G



## CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS OF DE&I<sup>45</sup>

**LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT** ➤ “*Is leadership doing this?*” We get this question all the time. Leadership can approve a D&I effort and individuals will comply. Leadership commitment manifests in three ways: **Define success. Declare success. Demonstrate success.** When leaders lead, organizations follow.

**WIDE INVOLVEMENT** ➤ When each person plays their role in the success of an engagement, they become more likely to play their role in success beyond that engagement. It may seem obvious but be sure your inclusion initiatives are inclusive.

**MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY** ➤ Management must understand and be expected to demonstrate that *leadership in business means leadership of people*.

**TANGIBLE MEASUREMENTS** ➤ There are concrete benefits to focusing on diversity & inclusion. Make sure stakeholders see the business value from where they sit. Then, articulate clearly what success looks like individually and organizationally.

**CULTURAL COMPETENCE** ➤ Cultural competence is the ability to interact effectively across lines of difference. Whether the goal is to expand into new markets, recruit the best talent, or foster innovation, cultural competence is a positive differentiator. Culturally competent organizations have a competitive advantage because they have culturally competent people doing their work in a culturally competent way.

**ROLE CLARIFICATION** ➤ Wide involvement is critical but requires role clarification. Individuals need to understand for what and to whom they are responsible.

**WEIGHTED INPUT** ➤ Understood that directly affected or relevant groups will have potentially valuable insight. If you’re talking about millennials, for example, it’s important that there are some millennials “at the table”.

**VARIED APPROACHES** ➤ Across business units and over time, varied approaches may be appropriate. There is no one way to achieve success. Engagements and strategies must be tailored to specific circumstances.

**SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE** ➤ By making sustainable infrastructure a part of an initiative, organizations ensure that they maintain the ground they gain and march forward from there.

**HEALTHY DEBATE** ➤ Healthy debate fosters innovation, reaching answers together that would never have been reached alone.

# EXHIBIT H



Documents have been provided to the City under separate cover.



# EXHIBIT I



## About Seed Collaborative, LLC

Seed Collaborative supports institutions and communities working on visionary initiatives to advance a more equitable and sustainable world. We believe that fair and just communities effectively tackle all forms of discrimination, build systems that mimic the everyday ways we care for one another, and ensure that the benefits of public and private investments are broadly shared.

Seed is a Black-owned and women led firm, and as such, is uniquely qualified to understand the barriers to equity, design strategies to improve DEI, implement action plans and evaluate and monitor progress toward an agreed upon universal goal.

Seed works with mission-driven institutions, government agencies, and community organizations to operationalize visionary initiatives in two practice areas.

- Equity 2.0—Targeted Universalism: Developing equitable solutions that advance belonging through Targeted Universalism.
- Organizational Development: Strengthening organizational impact and sustainability through collaboration and innovation.

Seed's approach is grounded by practices that reinforce the assets and wisdom of people who experience disinvestment and discrimination and draws on Targeted Universalism, setting universal goals that can be achieved through targeted strategies to meet the needs of different populations situated differently.

Seed consultants have extensive experience with equity and the challenges faced by people and communities of color. Using a Targeted Universalism and Belonging lens, Seed has worked with a variety of clients—both large and small—nonprofit and government agencies, and in social service sectors that include education, youth services, arts, mental health, homeless and foster care. Seed utilizes Targeted Universalism as a framework to analyze structures, policies and practices and to inform strategies and recommendations that support and promote work environments where everyone belongs, coupled with collaborative community engagement and evaluation metrics.