

Engaging Our Diversity: 2015 - 2019



The mission of the district is to provide Silicon Valley safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment, and economy.

Diversity and Inclusion Master Plan



Executive Management Commitment

Critical to delivering quality products and services for the communities we serve is a District workforce that finds strength and creativity in its diversity, and that flourishes in an inclusive and engaged work environment. Our diversity includes a broad range of individual attributes such as ethnicity, economic status, education, work background, gender, and thinking style, to name a few. Within this diverse environment, our success comes from the actions of skilled, dedicated employees from across our organization who work hard every day to ensure a reliable and safe supply of water, flood protection for homes, schools and businesses, and stewardship of streams and watersheds through creek restoration and habitat protection.

We are proud of our workforce and with that diversity as a continuing foundation, our focus in the coming several years must be fully leveraging our diversity in support of our mission to provide Silicon Valley safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment and economy.

Engaging Our Diversity: 2015-19 is the District's strategic framework for advancing our goal to engage all employees in a culture of inclusion, openness, respect, and trust. It is also a road map to prepare our future leaders to lead an engaged and diverse workforce. *Engaging Our Diversity* builds on the foundation established by the District's prior Diversity and Inclusion Master Plans, which laid important groundwork for sustaining and strengthening the capability of all employees to contribute to their full potential.

We understand that employee engagement requires a leadership commitment. It begins with our commitment to communicating honestly, demonstrating integrity and accountability, fostering trust, and setting the right course to lead to success. While engagement begins at the top, it is sustained only when it is embraced at all levels of the organization. We look forward to the participation of all employees in this important work.

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Chief Executive Officer

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Clerk of the Board

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Chief Operating Officer, Water Utility Enterprise

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Table of Contents

Section	Name	Page(s)
I.	Overview	
	Engaging Our Diversity: Why it Matters	5
	Building on our Foundation	6
	Developing the 2015-19 Plan	9
II.	Engagement Strategies and Tactics, FY15-19	
	Goal 1: Sustain and Enhance a Diverse Workforce	11
	Goal 2: Advance Workplace Inclusion & Engagement	13
	Goal 3: Leverage and Support Strategic Community Alliances	18
III.	Evaluating Our Progress for Continuous Improvement	19
	Appendix: Planned Projected Implementation Timeline	

I. Overview

Engaging Our Diversity: Why it Matters

The District is critical in managing the core water resources needed to support the region’s economic engine. Facing significant challenges, including severe drought, aging infrastructure, and climate change, the District must plan for the future to ensure it adapts and can effectively leverage the economic and demographic opportunities. This includes keeping pace with technological advances to remain at the forefront of innovation in the water resources industry.

At the same time, the District’s workforce faces significant transitions similar to other technical organizations. For example, in FY14, with an average age of 50, 43% of the District workforce is eligible to retire; up 3% from FY13. Effective planning for a future workforce, along with succession planning and identifying professional development needs of our current workforce, are paramount to help ensure all District employees are equipped with the right information and skills at the right time. This type of planning supports continuity and resiliency of District operations despite major workforce shifts.

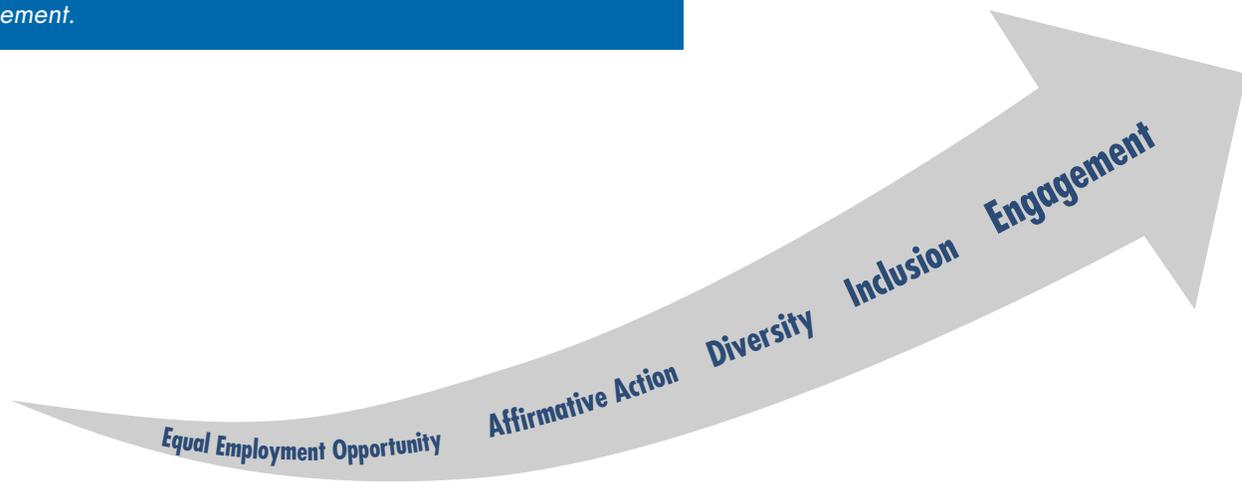
Against this backdrop, effectively engaging a diverse workforce requires implementing organizational strategies that invest strategically in the development of all employees’ talents, knowledge base, and leadership for long into the future.

This investment is critical to our business success. An engaged workforce creates continuity during periods of organizational transition, improves productivity and performance, enhances problem solving, and breeds innovation – all of which contribute to employee satisfaction and keep the District an enjoyable place to work.

“Diversity encompasses all that makes us unique, including the diversity of thought and perspective that accompanies our identity. Only then can we realize the full performance potential and harness innovation that diversity offers. This is more than a legal or moral imperative, it is a business imperative for public service.”

Source: U.S. Office of Personnel Management

As noted in the District’s previous master plans, the Diversity Continuum is a conceptual framework to aid organizations in evaluating their historical diversity journey to full employee engagement.

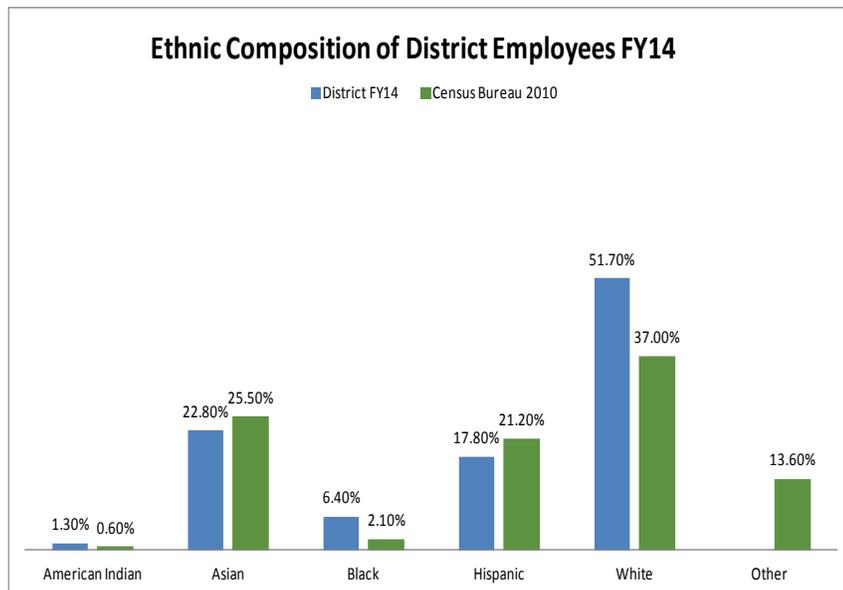


Building on Our Foundation

Our Workforce

The District can most effectively accomplish its mission by sustaining a workforce that reflects the realities of our region's communities and of our customer base. By ethnicity, FY14 data shows the District's workforce is 52% white, 23% Asian/Pacific Islander, 18% Hispanic, 6% black and 1% American Indian. A comparison to the Santa Clara County 2010 Census general population data is indicated in the graphic at the right. In regard to gender, the FY14 data shows the District's workforce is 51% male and 49% female. Continuing to examine and understand the broader community helps in shaping effective strategies to accomplish our mission.

To promote our diversity and broad outreach for recruitment, we regularly review the traditional indicators of diversity (ethnicity and gender) against available census data. Compared to Santa Clara County 2010 Census Job Group Availability, for example, the District's workforce composition is on par with the County labor force criteria in 90% of the categories. Sample Santa Clara County Job Group Categories include Technicians, Admin/Clerical, Skilled Craft and Service/Maintenance.*



Governance Policies

The District's commitment to a diverse and inclusive workplace is affirmed through the District's Board Governance Policies.

In its governance process policies, the Board of Directors has affirmed the following:

- All individuals are unique and important and will be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect. (GP-7.3)
- We are committed to creating an inclusive work environment which reflects and supports the diversity of our community and enriches our perspectives. (GP-7.7)
- The Board will require that the organization's work environment be one in which all people are welcomed and included, and in which all individuals are unique and important and are treated with fairness and dignity. (GP-11.3)

In addition, among the expectations it has established for its Board Appointed Officers (BAOs), the Board has adopted Executive Limitation 8.1 that states that the BAOs will provide leadership in diversity and inclusion that is open, honest, and fair. Management and employees will demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, honesty, and conduct to inspire trust and foster collaboration with each other, customers, and the community. (EL-8.1)

*See Board Agenda Item 6.1 on January 14, 2014 for a list of Equal Employment Opportunity Job Groups and District Classifications

Building on Our Foundation (cont'd.)

The District's Diversity and Inclusion Master Plans

The District's Diversity and Inclusion Master Plan for 2015-19 continues to build on strategies that previous master plans put in motion. *Engaging Our Diversity* carries forward many of the objectives of earlier plans, including our goal to recruit and retain a high performing staff, provide innovative service delivery, and to reflect the realities of the communities we serve.

Now in its fourth cycle, the District's master plans have each recognized that diversity is manifested in many forms that go beyond traditional external indicators.

At the District, embracing the rich array of differences and similarities that exists among employees enriches our perspectives, builds bridges to greater creativity and shared purpose, and therefore helps promote engagement.

Engaging Our Diversity is designed to provide a strategic framework to successfully embed our diversity and inclusion goals into the fabric of our organizational culture. Sustaining a diverse and inclusive workforce is a top organizational priority.



DIVERSITY

"A collection of individual attributes that together help agencies pursue organizational objectives efficiently and effectively. These include, but are not limited to, characteristics such as national origin, language, race, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, veteran status, and family structures. The concept also encompasses differences among people concerning where they are from and where they have lived and their differences of thought and life experiences."

Source: U.S. Office of Personnel Management

INCLUSION

"Recognizing and valuing our diversity and leveraging it to create a work environment where all employees feel welcomed and empowered to contribute to their full potential."

Source: District's FY12-14 D&I Master Plan

ENGAGEMENT

"The emotional commitment and 'discretionary effort' of employees; it is not just satisfaction but also emotional connectedness, trust, and commitment. Engaged employees are more likely to be very satisfied with their jobs and less likely to leave."

Source: International City/County Management Association

Building on Our Foundation (cont'd.)

Employee Resource Groups

The District's network of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) help foster a diverse and inclusive workplace in alignment with the District's mission and values by promoting cultural learning and awareness. Under the District's ERG Guidelines, ERGs are defined as groups of District employees that unite in a shared vision to enhance awareness and opportunities for people of a common identity. Identity is typically viewed as one or more characteristics by which individuals recognize themselves as belonging to a specific group.

Throughout the year, ERG programming helps encourages interaction across cultures and experiences. In addition to broadening understanding and enhancing cultural competency, internal ERG programs provide opportunities for employee's professional growth for future leadership roles and volunteerism, support to address shared issues or concerns, and insights for developing and strengthening the District's ongoing inclusion efforts. ERGs also serve as a resource to project teams to provide insight on communities within the District's project areas.

The ERGs are also vital in establishing community alliances that help the District recognize and understand the communities we serve. ERGs can connect the District with diverse communities by establishing mutually beneficial partnerships in support of the District's mission. These partnerships may also lead way to potential career opportunities by expanding our outreach beyond traditional recruitment efforts. Through these strategic relationships, ERGs assist the District in building the talent pipeline and assuring broad outreach for future workforce needs. ERGs are instrumental in supporting and shaping community engagement and education around our mission and programs.

The District has nine chartered Employee Resource Groups:

- **Asian Pacific Resources Group**
- **Association of Black Employees**
- **Baby Boomers**
- **Green Team**
- **Indo-American Association**
- **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Straight Alliance**
- **Organization for Latino Affairs**
- **Parent's Advisory Network**
- **Veteran's Awareness Group**

Note: The Association of Women Employees, although not a chartered group, is a recognized group at the District.

ERG Collaboration

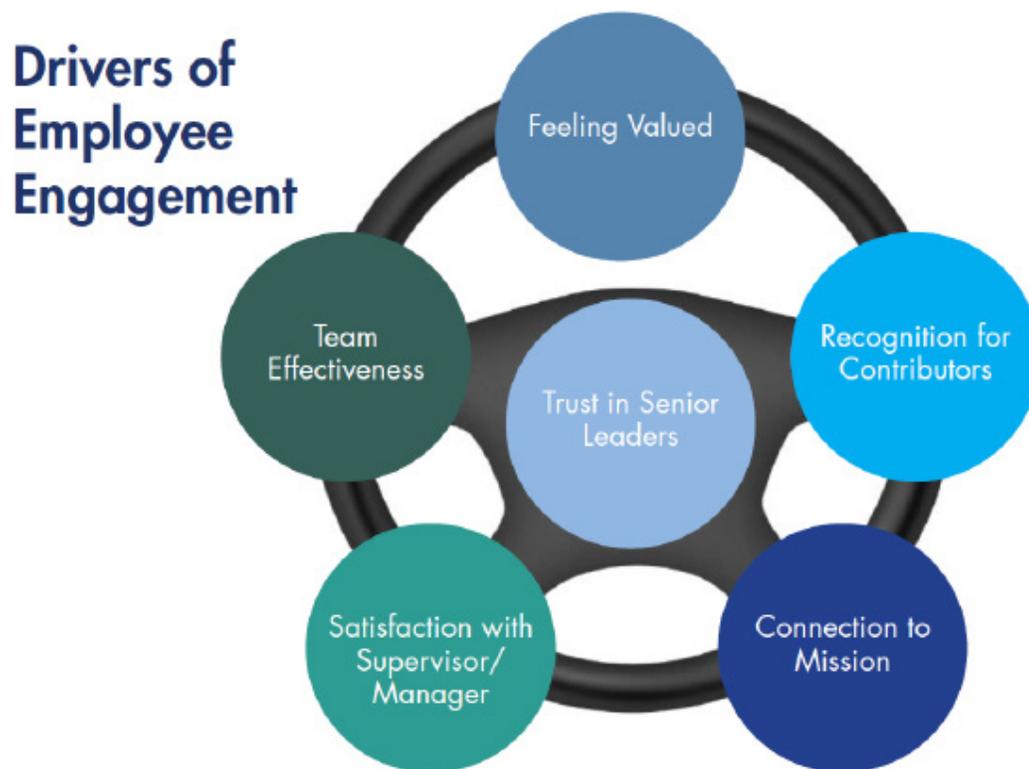
To provide a forum to support and coordinate the activities of the ERGs collectively, a District-wide group of leaders meet regularly to strategize on ERG activities, address topics of shared interest, and provide broad perspectives to support inclusion and engagement at the District. Regular participants include ERG officials elected by their membership, and other employee leaders from a variety of classifications who work in a broad range of capacities throughout the District, including executive staff, and others.

Structured through 2014 as the "Diversity and Inclusion Council," the Council will be undertaking a self-assessment of the existing structure, format, and purpose with the 2015 launch of *Engaging Our Diversity* to identify the best structure to help the District monitor and achieve its engagement goals. The Council's self-assessment will determine whether any changes should be made in its operation for FY16 and beyond.

Developing the 2015-19 Plan

In developing the framework for the District's 2015-19 Diversity and Inclusion Master Plan a range of information and resources were consulted from across the District, including direct input from employees and the bargaining units.

2014 Workforce Satisfaction Survey - Administered regularly, the District's 2014 employee satisfaction survey told us what matters most to employees when it comes to their job satisfaction. To develop the 2014 survey we retained many questions asked previously for continuity. We also compared survey questions to those of the Bay Area News Group's Top Workplaces Program annual survey to identify similarities and to provide a point of comparison. Importantly, to help focus on actionable strategies, we also researched common drivers of engagement broadly across organizational sectors. From this we understand that, in general terms, employee engagement can be viewed as driven by several common factors shown in the graphic below.



**Engagement Drivers are derived from the following professional sources: American Society for Public Administration, Quantum Workplace, Partnership for Public Service, Society for Human Resource Management*

Cross-Functional Team Input - Cross-functional teams established by the CEO to evaluate workforce challenges also yielded feedback and recommendations to strengthen and reinforce the role of values in our actions as a inclusive workforce. The 2014 Values and Ethics Team, for example, received broad feedback validating the Values Statement and, recommended governance policy changes to enhance expectations for respecting and supporting all staff. Adopted by the Board in July 2014, that policy provides the District leadership will:

- Integrate and operate within written ethics policies and behavioral expectations that embody fairness, dignity and respect. (EL-3.4)

Employee Engagement Roundtables - To validate our survey findings and research, we also initiated a series of internal roundtables throughout the District to provide further insights on the ways District employees find their motivation.

Communication Outreach - To garner as much feedback as possible on a draft of the plan, we presented it to the Management Leadership Team and posted a draft on the internal website “News You Can Use” with ample opportunity and ways to provide feedback. We also hosted informal discussions over the lunch hour and reached out to groups and individuals requesting feedback.

Broad feedback received from these outreach activities underscored that inclusive actions and practices are both a personal and organizational responsibility, and they are pre-requisites to a culture of full engagement. To achieve this requires a demonstrated commitment to leading, managing and collaborating inclusively across all levels of the organization, both in defining the issues and in implementing specific solutions. Full employee engagement does not occur immediately. Through incremental change that is focused and consistent, however a culture shift can occur that will enable engagement to flourish.

The District’s Values Statement also provides a foundation for an inclusive District culture that respects and engages all employees.

The District’s **Values Statement** (Governance Policy GP-7)

- The District is entrusted to serve the public and is responsible for carrying out the District mission for the benefit of the community.
- The District is committed to providing excellent service to all customers.
- All individuals are unique and important and will be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect.
- The District takes pride in its work and is accountable and trusted to carry out its responsibilities safely with honesty and integrity.
- Initiative, leadership, personal development, and training are vital for the District to continuously improve.
- Open communication, cooperation, and teamwork are shared responsibilities and essential to the successful performance of the District’s work.
- The District is committed to creating an inclusive work environment which reflects and supports the diversity of its community and enriches its perspectives.
- A balance between work and family is essential to the quality of District employees’ lives, and it will promote a family-friendly work environment.

II. Goals, Strategies, & Tactics

To leverage our diversity as an organization and achieve a more fully inclusive work environment in which all employees are actively engaged, *Engaging Our Diversity* identifies these master plan goals for 2015-19:



GOAL 1: Sustain and Enhance a Diverse Workforce

The District's strategies for sustaining and enhancing a diverse workforce in a period of significant workforce transition include approaches designed to leverage the skill and support the success of all District employees, both now and into the future. With this in mind, strategies for Goal 1 are designed to attract, promote, and retain a diverse, creative and highly skilled workforce to support a high performing organization. These strategies continue to build on a number of key Human Resource initiatives identified through prior Diversity and Inclusion Master Plans that are continuing to be implemented. These include:

- Continuing to develop the existing workforce by establishing robust workforce development programs that provide opportunities for all employees to develop their career paths.
- Continuing to develop a succession planning program that addresses the retirement wave, identifies employee opportunities, and advances diversity in the workplace.
- Continuing to identify potential gaps in the labor force through quarterly labor utilization and annual disparate impact analyses; develop outreach strategies as appropriate.

Building on the efforts already underway, for 2015-19, the following tactics have also been identified to achieve Goal 1.

Strategy 1.1: Maintain a skilled and diverse workforce that is adaptable to future conditions.

- Tactic:**
- 1.1.1 Develop a comprehensive workforce development plan that presents the structure for developing the workforce.
 - 1.1.2 Develop a long-term staff resources plan that identifies future staffing needs.
 - 1.1.3 Identify and develop District-wide competencies for core leadership functions including leading, managing and collaborating across differences.
 - 1.1.4 Review and evaluate the District's labor utilization and disparate impact analyses and establish mechanisms for executive leadership to annually review and address areas for improvement.

Strategy 1.2: Establish and strengthen relationships with diverse community groups to attract highly qualified candidates into the organization and support pipelines for future workforce.

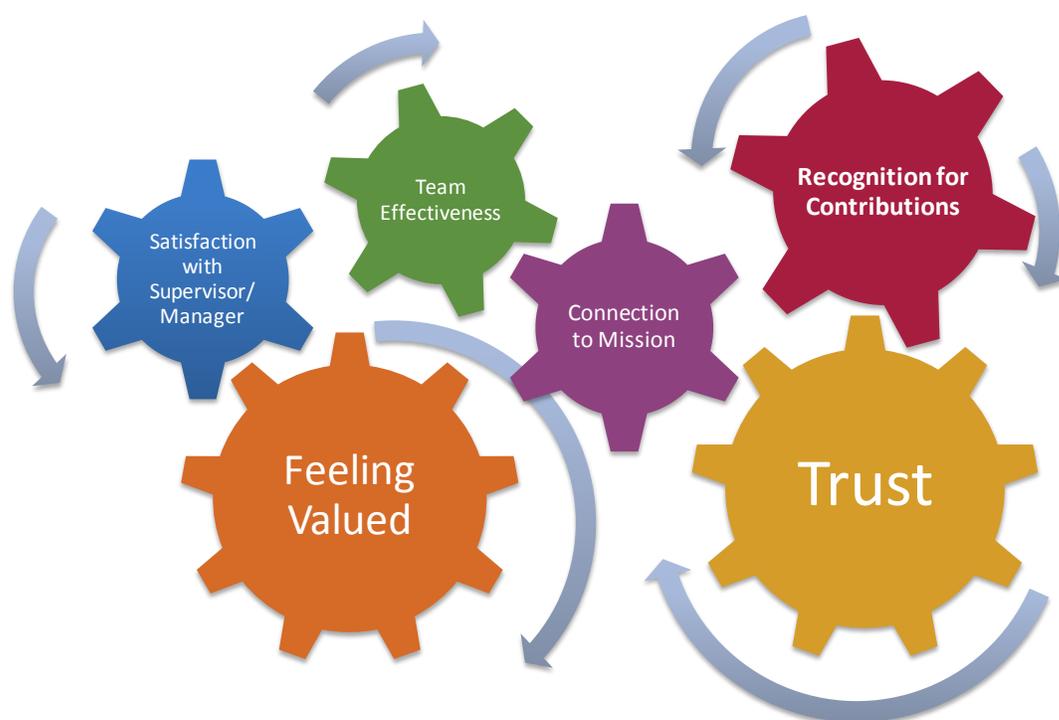
- Tactic:**
- 1.2.1 Based on workforce labor utilization analysis, identify and conduct heightened outreach for underrepresented job classifications.
 - 1.2.2 Incorporate diverse community groups into a District key stakeholder program to develop productive relationships that promote water resource management careers.
 - 1.2.3 Support outreach to potential applicant pool to enhance interest among underserved communities by engaging District employees as mentors.
 - 1.2.4 Maintain the Youth Stewardship Commission that encourages sophomores and juniors to pursue careers in the water industry.
 - 1.2.5 Continue to grow our water education program in diverse communities to encourage careers in the water industry.

Strategy 1.3: Recruit and hire from a highly qualified, diverse pool of candidates.

- Tactic:**
- 1.3.1 Enhance advertisement of District employment opportunities by using a comprehensive range of media sources, educational programs, and community-based resources.
 - 1.3.2 Fully implement the revised recruitment and selection policy to ensure the District's hiring process incorporates generally recognized best practices including a hiring process premised on objectivity and fairness.
 - 1.3.3 Enhance employee awareness of District policies and processes for fair and consistent recruitment and hiring practices, by continuing to provide hiring workshops and resources for managers and employees.
 - 1.3.4 Partner with the educational systems and diverse professional associations, to support outreach and pathways for sourcing the District's future workforce.
 - 1.3.5 Implement a competitive, flourishing intern program that facilitates hiring of entry-level staff contingent upon graduation.
 - 1.3.6 Develop an apprenticeship program that focuses on underrepresented job classes.

GOAL 2: Advance Workplace Inclusion & Engagement

Goal 2 places an emphasis on supporting and empowering individuals to contribute to their full potential and to cultivate an inclusive and engaged workplace that respects differences and values the unique qualities, ideas and perspectives of all employees. The District's strategies for advancing workplace inclusion and engagement build on broad employee feedback and are set in motion by a series of interrelated "engagement drivers." Working in tandem, focused strategies in one area can yield progress in others as well.



These engagement drivers were analyzed and correlated with the questions and responses from the 2014 Workforce Satisfaction Survey. This analysis indicated three specific drivers as areas at the District that need improvement: strengthening trust in senior leaders, valuing and recognizing our employees, and recognizing them for contributions to the overall success of the organization. Three other key drivers of engagement are areas in which the District showed strong positives; and ongoing efforts to support these drivers will also be continued: connecting employees to our mission and goals, satisfaction with supervisors/managers, and team effectiveness.

Strategy 2.1: Strengthen Trust in Senior Leaders

Trust in senior leaders is developed when senior leaders set the right course to lead to success, create an environment that drives performance, communicate honestly and enable it with others, demonstrate integrity by honoring commitments, and act in alignment with core values/principles

Across organizations and job sectors, it is widely recognized that an organization's senior leadership has an increased responsibility to build trust, the underpinning of any effective working relationship. Senior leaders can be anyone who has a leadership position in a group or team; this master plan begins at the top. Many of the leadership trust strategies discussed below focus on the District's Leadership Team (that is, Unclassified employees). As these strategies and their impact take deeper root, their focus will cascade into additional leadership roles within the organization (i.e., Management Leadership Team and other team leaders). We recognize and acknowledge the heightened role senior leaders have in developing and sustaining trust, which is a major contributor to workplace inclusion and engagement.

Trust in leadership is earned by actions that are consistently aligned with our values:

- Accountability and follow through: doing what we say we are going to do and acting accordingly
- Effectively communicating the strategic direction of the organization, and providing support to promote success
- Demonstrating a commitment to inspire, support, and lead diverse teams
- Removing unintentional barriers to individual and organizational effectiveness
- Continuing to develop and refine the "soft" skills needed to lead high performing teams

Accordingly to achieve Goal 2, Strategy 2.1 will be pursued in 2015-19 through the following tactics:

- Tactic:** 2.1.1 Within the next fiscal year, senior leaders will develop a shared understanding of the value of trust and its relationship to inclusive leadership practices in a high-performing organization.
- a. The Leadership Team (LT) will provide multiple avenues to hear employee input on ways to improve trust levels across the organization.
 - b. The LT will develop a facilitated LT workshop(s) on the link between trust, inclusion, and employee engagement to identify and develop division-specific strategies for improving and sustaining trust.
 - c. The LT will develop and implement an action plan to promote inclusive leadership practices within their division.
- Tactic:** 2.1.2 Demonstrate senior leader commitment to strengthening engagement throughout the organization.
- a. Beginning in FY16, LT members will identify as part of their annual performance goals one or more methods for advancing the District's strategies for inclusion and engagement each year.
 - b. LT members will commit to serving as an ERG ally/resource every other year to broaden leadership support and promote success of ERG efforts.

Tactic: 2.1.3 Support ongoing strengthening of knowledge, skills, and abilities for leading inclusively.

- a. All new managers/supervisors and emerging leaders at the District, including ERG leaders, will participate in a leadership course focused on leading across differences within their first year.
- b. As part of their 5-year professional development plans, LT and Management Leadership Team (MLT) will identify one or more training opportunities on leading across differences (e.g., soft skill, unconscious bias) no less than every three years.
- c. Develop and launch a pilot program to enable LT to use a 360-review as a coaching opportunity to gain additional insights and feedback on inclusive leadership practices.

Strategy 2.2: Recognize and Promote the Value of Employees

When we feel valued as employees we are more likely to advocate for the organization as a workplace, see the organization investing in our professional growth, see people valued as the organization's most important asset, have the ability to have some control over how our work is done, scheduled and managed, and feel work/life balance.

The strategies below continue to build on a number of key Human Resource initiatives underway aimed at valuing and developing the workforce, including:

- Opportunities for each employee to develop a 5-year career plan with their manager's support
- Training for emerging leaders interested in management positions and management administration for new supervisors/managers
- A rotational program that allows employees to learn new skills on the job
- Mentoring for technical areas and leadership development including increased employee involvement in leadership and accreditation programs
- Continuing to grow the Wellness Program aimed at improving health and fitness, boosting morale, and increasing productivity in the workplace

The following additional tactics have been identified to achieve the strategies of Goal 2:

- Tactic:** 2.2.1 Ensure that the workforce is proficient and competitive for promotional opportunities by fully implementing and sustaining an effective Employee Development Performance Program (EDPP) that helps all employees develop their skills by:
- a. Supporting LT and MLT in their understanding of the responsibility for developing their staff, by requiring participation in one or more performance management workshops (e.g. on effective goal setting, EDPP user software training, 1:1 coaching, evaluations, dealing with poor performers, and providing effective feedback) no less than every two years.
 - b. Tracking development conversations with staff by reporting out with LT and MLT semi-annually on the extent of completed development conversation that link employee goals to future achievement at the District.

- Tactic:** 2.2.2 Promote a work environment that values all employees and a richly diverse workforce, including work/life balance, and that is free of any form of harassment or discrimination.
- a. Conduct workshops on District Values and behavioral expectations that solicit employee input and discussions at the unit level to help develop a set of District Expectations that support a work environment that promotes organizational values in practice.
 - b. Expand the offerings and regularity of ERG programs that help foster strong internal networks, personal connection, and positive work relations.
 - c. Ensure a supportive environment and equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities by developing and providing ongoing training for supervisors and managers to heighten awareness of the Reasonable Accommodation process.
 - d. Identify, assess and apply workplace and personnel policies and practices that support flexibility and work/life balance to help drive individual and team performance.
 - e. Ensure effective ethics and equal opportunity policies and procedures, clear mechanisms for reporting concerns, easy-to-access guidance, and fair and consistent interventions and inquiries, when warranted.

Strategy 2.3: Recognize Employee Contributions to the Success of the Organization

As employees we are more engaged when we feel we will be recognized for contributing to the success of the organization, when our jobs allows the use of our individual strengths, and when we find our jobs interesting and challenging.

- Tactic:** 2.3.1 Build a District-wide culture of recognition by promoting methods and regular programs that recognize employees at all levels for their role in the success of the organization.
- a. Promote broad participation in District recognition programs including “On-the Spot” Awards, Annual Employee Recognition Awards, Annual Service Awards, Quarterly Great Talent Developer Award, and Annual Exemplary Employee Program.
- Tactic:** 2.3.2 Evaluate and adapt recognition methods and programs to identify ways to ensure their positive impact and effectiveness on organizational performance.

For 2015-19, to achieve Goal 2 the following strategies and tactics have been identified for the other three engagement drivers: connecting employees to our mission and goals, satisfaction with supervisors/managers, and team effectiveness.

Strategy 2.4: Maintain Satisfaction with Supervisor/Manager

As employees we are more likely to be fully engaged when we feel trusted and respected because our supervisor/manager cares about our professional development, regularly gives constructive feedback, provides and establishes 2-way communication, acknowledges our contributions, and has a amiable working relationship with us.

- Tactic:** 2.4.1 Cultivate an employee/employer relationship that drives individual and team performance based on openness, mutual respect, support and acknowledgement by implementing methods, such as an open door policy, to foster open dialogue at all levels without fear of retaliation.
- a. Strengthen unit manager's/supervisor's engagement with team members by providing timely development and regular monitoring of annual work plans that reflect clear goal setting and clear team member objectives for achieving them.
 - b. Ensure all employees have tools and opportunities to regularly reflect on and clarify their own professional goals and communicate them to supervisors/managers.
 - c. Launch a pilot program to enable MLT to use a 360-review as a coaching opportunity to gain additional insights and feedback on inclusive leadership practices.

Strategy 2.5: Sustain Connection to Mission and Alignment with Goals

As employees we are more likely to be fully engaged when we feel pride in our organization's mission/products/accomplishments, understand our organization's strategic direction, and understand our own role toward that end.

- Tactic:** 2.5.1 Establish mechanisms to regularly communicate District-wide strategies to all employees:
- a. Implement an on-boarding program that orients and acclimates all new employees to the business and culture of our organization.
 - b. CEO and senior leadership will communicate across all work units (e.g., site visits, division meetings) to provide transparency about District goals and strategies and to connect employee contributions to advancing the organization's mission.
 - c. CEO and senior leadership will establish office hours each week in order to solicit employee input and foster accessibility and dialogue with all levels of staff.

Strategy 2.6: Continue to Sustain Team Effectiveness

When teams collaborate with individuals using their own strengths, and when they have a respectful collegial relationship with their peers, we feel more engaged as employees.

- Tactic:** 2.6.1 IT will identify opportunities at the beginning of each year to engage diverse groups of employees in cross-unit collaboration to propose solutions to operational or organizational issues.
- 2.6.2 Develop ongoing opportunities for training to enhance skills to effectively lead and collaborate among diverse teams (e.g., communication and listening, meeting facilitation).

GOAL 3: Leverage and Support Strategic Community Alliances

The District's strategies for leveraging and supporting strategic community alliances are designed to connect an understanding of our customer base with improved service delivery. Goal 3 aims to engage and understand diverse community and neighborhood groups and foster innovative solutions to countywide challenges. Mutually beneficial alliances can provide important opportunities to better understand community needs and concerns, and help shape and develop effective solutions.

For 2015-19, the following strategy and tactics have been identified to achieve Goal 3:

Strategy 3.1 Engage with diverse community groups to understand community needs and help shape and support innovative solutions to countywide challenges.

- Tactic:**
- 3.1.1 Develop and establish a comprehensive, multi-year community partners strategy to identify and sustain strategic and mutually beneficial organizational alliances that promote volunteerism and community service that enhances the delivery of District products and services through lasting, effective engagement.
 - 3.1.2 Enhance the leadership role and visibility of ERGs in establishing effective community partnerships by developing and implementing a process for ERG engagement as part of the District's community partners strategy.
 - 3.1.3 Identify and implement workforce development opportunities for new unit managers and emerging Employee Resource Group leaders to broaden their skills for engaging broadly with external audiences on the District's behalf, including the District's Speakers Bureau Program.
 - 3.1.4 Develop a method and implement a process to annually evaluate the effectiveness of these community partnerships.

III. Evaluating Our Progress for Continuous Improvement

To assess whether these strategies are moving us closer toward fuller employee engagement, we will annually evaluate our programs to adjust and adapt our implementation. We will continue to analyze data from regular workforce satisfaction surveys and workforce demographics (i.e. retention rates, vacancies, promotions, retirement rates, etc.) to determine where we need to improve or better anticipate potential changes in the work environment. Communicating our efforts to employees through the intranet, roundtable discussions, and in our annual reports to the Board of Directors will not only hold us accountable, but also will provide feedback mechanisms for staff and the Board.

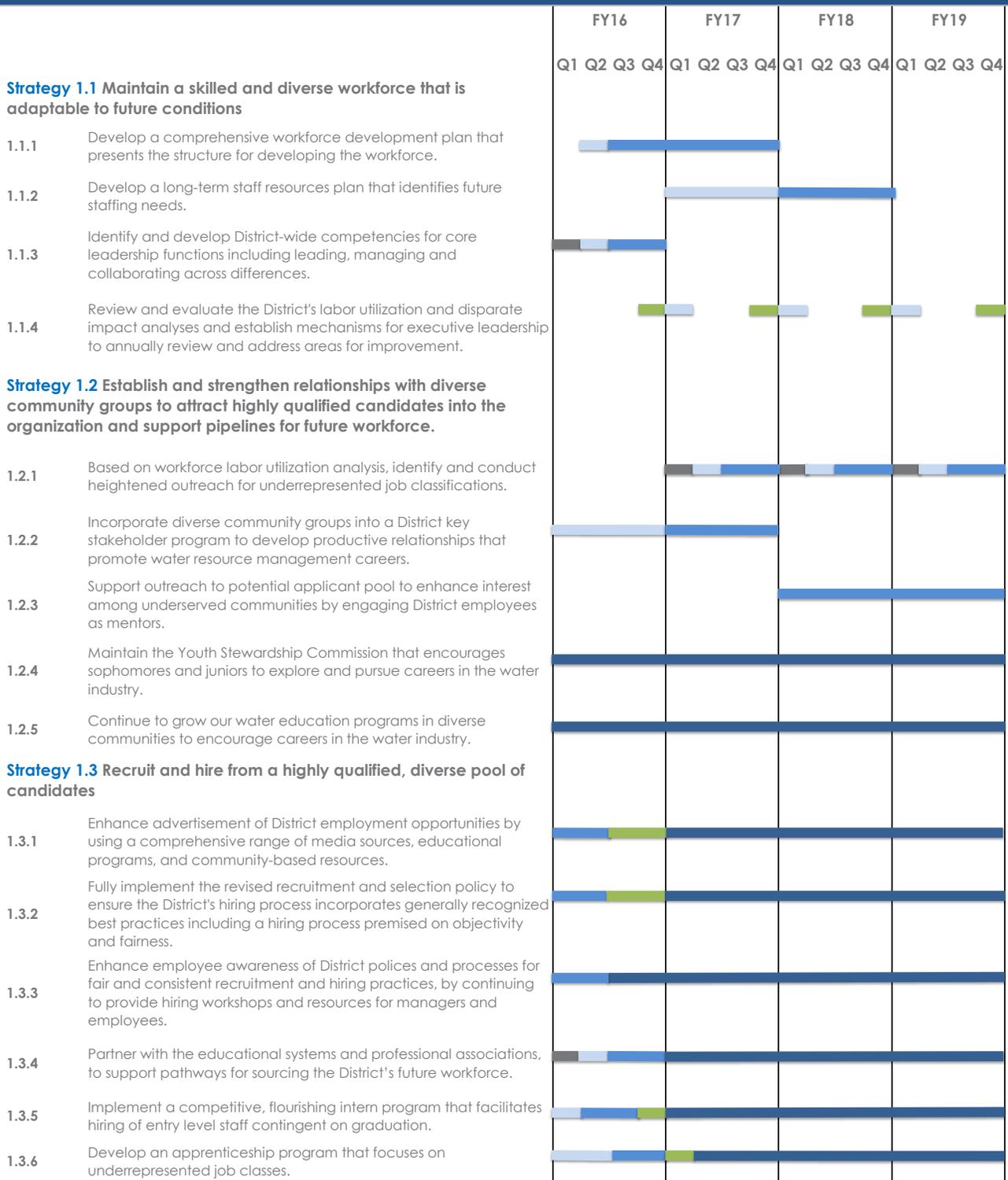
In any organization, employee engagement is an ongoing effort. Engagement begins at the top with organizational trust, open communication, and shared values. While it begins with a commitment from our organization's leadership, it is a collective responsibility for each of us as individuals, across the organization.

Our previous workforce satisfaction surveys indicated that District employees are proud of the vital public services we provide to Santa Clara County. Fuller employee engagement is translating that pride into a high performing work environment that is also an enjoyable place to be.

For more information for more about the District's Diversity and Inclusion Program visit: www.valleywater.org. District employees can also visit the SCVWD intranet at aqua.gov.

Appendix: Planned Projected Implementation Timeline

GOAL 1: Sustain and Enhance a Diverse Workforce



GOAL 2: Advance Workplace Inclusion & Engagement

		FY16				FY17				FY18				FY19			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4												
Strategy 2.1 Strengthen Trust in Senior Leaders																	
2.1.1	Within the next fiscal year, senior leaders will develop a shared understanding of the value of trust and its relationship to inclusive leadership practices in a high-performing organization.																
a.	The Leadership Team (LT) will provide multiple avenues for employee input on ways to improve trust levels across the organization.	Identify															
b.	The LT will develop a facilitated LT workshop(s) on the link between trust, inclusion, and employee engagement to identify and develop division-specific strategies for improving and sustaining trust.	Develop															
c.	The LT will develop and implement an action plan to promote inclusive leadership practices within their division.	Implement															
2.1.2	Demonstrate senior leader commitment to strengthening engagement throughout the organization.																
a.	Beginning in FY16, LT members will identify as part of their annual performance goals one or more methods for advancing the District's strategies for inclusion and engagement each year.	Identify				Implement				Identify				Implement			
b.	LT members will commit to serving as an ERG ally/resource every other year to broaden leadership support and promote success of ERG efforts.	Identify				Implement				Identify				Implement			
2.1.3	Support ongoing strengthening of knowledge, skills, and abilities for leading inclusively.																
a.	All new managers/supervisors and emerging leaders at the District, including ERG leaders, will participate in a leadership course focused on leading across differences within their first year.					Implement											
b.	As part of their ongoing professional development plans, LT and Management Leadership Team (MLT) will identify one or more training opportunities on leading across differences no less than every three years.					Identify				Implement							
c.	Develop and launch a pilot program to enable LT to use a 360-review as a coaching opportunity to gain additional insights and feedback on inclusive leadership practices.					Develop				Implement							
Strategy 2.2 Recognize and Promote the Value of Employees																	
2.2.1	Ensure that the workforce is proficient and competitive for promotional opportunities by fully implementing and sustaining an effective Employee Development Performance Program that helps all employees develop their skills.																
a.	Supporting LT and MLT in their understanding of the responsibility for developing their staff, by requiring participation in 1 or more performance management workshops (e.g. on effective goal setting, EDPP user software training, 1:1 coaching, evaluations, dealing with poor performers, and providing effective feedback) no less than every two years.	Implement															
b.	Tracking development conversations with staff by reporting out with LT and MLT semi-annually on the extent of completed development conversation that link employee goals to future achievement at the District.	Implement															



	FY16				FY17				FY18				FY19			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2.2.2	Promote a work environment that values all employees and a richly diverse workforce, including work/life balance, and that is free of any form of harassment or discrimination.															
a.	Conduct workshops on District Values and behavioral expectations that solicit employee input and discussion at the organizational Unit level to help develop set of District Expectations that support a work environment that promotes organizational values in practice.															
b.	Expand the offerings and regularity of ERG programs that help foster strong internal networks, personal connection, and positive work relations.															
c.	Ensure a supportive environment and equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities by developing and providing ongoing training for supervisors and managers to heighten awareness of the Reasonable Accommodation process.															
d.	Identify, assess and apply workplace and personnel policies and practices that support flexibility and work/life balance to help drive individual and team performance.															
e.	Ensure effective ethics and equal opportunity policies and procedures, clear mechanisms for reporting concerns, easy-to-access guidance, and fair and consistent interventions and inquiries, when warranted.															
Strategy 2.3 Recognize Employee Contributions to the Success of the Organization																
2.3.1	Build a District-wide culture of recognition by promoting methods and regular programs that recognize employees at all levels for their role in the success of the organization.															
a.	Promote broad participation in District recognition programs including "On-the-Spot" Awards, Annual Employee Recognition Awards, Annual Service Awards, Quarterly Great Talent Developer Award, and Annual Exemplary Employee Program.															
2.3.2	Evaluate and adapt recognition methods and programs to identify ways to ensure their positive impact and effectiveness on organizational performance.															
Strategy 2.4 Maintain Satisfaction with Supervisor/Manager																
2.4.1	Cultivate an employee/employer relationship that drives individual and team performance based on openness, mutual respect, support and acknowledgement by implementing methods, such as an open door policy, to foster open dialogue at all levels without fear or retaliation.															
a.	Strengthen unit manager's/supervisor's engagement with team members by providing timely development and regular monitoring of annual work plans that reflect clear goal setting and clear team member objectives for achieving them.															
b.	Ensure all employees have tools and opportunities to regularly reflect and clarify their own professional goals and to communicate them to supervisors/managers.															
c.	Launch a pilot program to enable MLT to use a 360-review as a coaching opportunity to gain additional insights and feedback on inclusive leadership practices.															

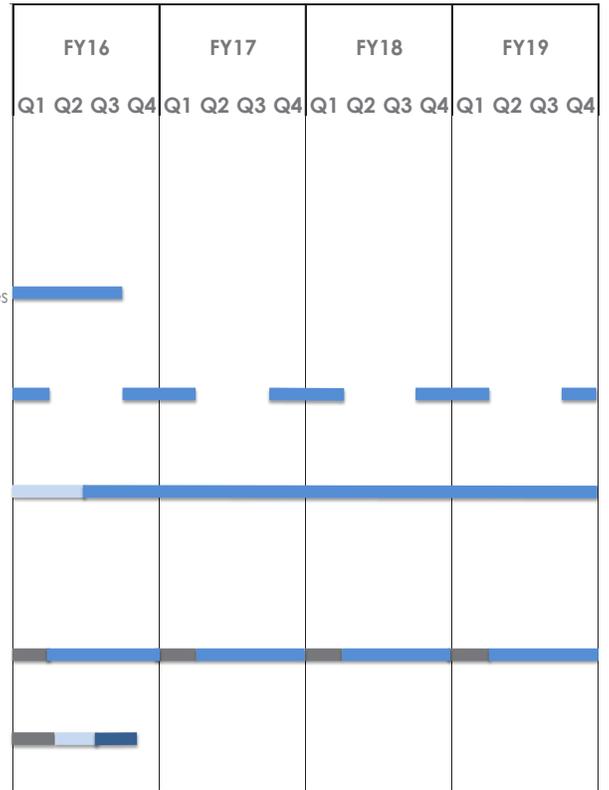


Strategy 2.5 Sustain Connection to Mission and Alignment with Goals

- 2.5.1 Establish mechanisms to regularly communicate District-wide strategies to all employees.
- a. Implement an on-boarding program that orients and acclimates all new employees to the business and culture of our organization.
- b. CEO and senior leadership will communicate across all work units (e.g. site visits, division meetings) to provide transparency about District goals and strategies and to connect employee contributions to advancing the organization's mission.
- c. CEO and senior leadership will establish open office hours each week in order to solicit employee input and foster accessibility and dialogue with all levels of staff.

Strategy 2.6 Continue to Sustain Team Effectiveness

- 2.6.1 LT will identify opportunities at the beginning of each year to engage diverse groups of employees in cross-unit collaboration to propose solutions to operational or organizational issues.
- 2.6.2 Develop ongoing training opportunities for training to enhance skills to effectively lead and collaborate among diverse teams (e.g. communication and listening, meeting facilitation)



GOAL 3: Leverage and Support Strategic Community Alliances

Strategy 3.1 Engage with diverse community groups to help shape and support innovative solutions to countywide challenges.



work
gender
ethnicity
communication
sexual orientation
economic status
family/worklife
marital status functional specialty
military experience
job level native born
religious beliefs non-native born
union/non-union workers
thinking style geographic location
physical abilities parental status
work background education
sexual orientation communication style
native born work economic status family/worklife
non-native born marital status military experience
abilities/qualities work background
thinking style economic status functional specialty geographic location
communication style ethnicity parental status
education work sexual orientation
military experience union/non-union workers
family/worklife job level communication style
non-native born economic status marital status thinking style
native born work job level economic status
thinking style parental status physical abilities
communication functional specialty union/non-union workers
work education physical abilities
geographic location thinking style
family/worklife parental status
military experience
ethnicity



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