

CITY OF PALM DESERT STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: May 22, 2025

PREPARED BY: Andrea Staehle, Director of Human Resources

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING ON CITY VACANCIES, RECRUITMENT AND
RETENTION EFFORTS AS REQUIRED BY ASSEMBLY BILL 2561

RECOMMENDATION:

Hold a public hearing and receive and file the annual report on the status of City vacancies, recruitment, and retention efforts, as required by Assembly Bill 2561.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS:

California State Assembly Bill 2561 (AB 2561), approved on September 22, 2024, added Section 3502.3 to the Government Code. This law requires public agencies to present the status of their vacancies at a public hearing before their governing board at least once per fiscal year. The hearing must occur before the adoption of the City's final budget for the upcoming fiscal year. It must also include a discussion of current recruitment and retention efforts. Additionally, the recognized employee organization must be given the opportunity to present at the hearing. The recognized employee association, the Palm Desert Employees Organization (PDEO), was notified of the opportunity to make a presentation at this public hearing.

In accordance with AB 2561, if the number of vacancies exceeds 20% of the total number of authorized full-time positions in a particular bargaining unit, upon the request of the employee organization, the City shall include specified information during the public hearing. Currently, there are three (3) vacancies with positions in the PDEO, which equates to a vacancy rate of approximately 3%. As such, this threshold has not been met, and the additional reporting requirement does not apply.

Current Recruitment and Retention Efforts

As part of AB 2561, the City must also identify any changes to policies, procedures, or recruitment activities that impact the City's efforts to reduce vacancies. While the City has historically experienced success in its recruitment efforts, certain specialized positions, such as Advanced Planners and Engineers, remain more challenging to fill. To address these challenges and continue attracting high-quality candidates, the Human Resources Office has implemented several enhanced strategies:

- Recruitment Initiatives
 - Enhanced Marketing and Outreach Strategies
 - Targeted advertising across industry platforms
 - Strategic use of social media channels
 - Participation in job fairs

- Dedicated Recruitment Oversight
 - A focused staff member manages the recruitment process to ensure timely communication and promote the City's workplace culture
- Streamlined Hiring Process
 - Job Announcements with a clear timeline
 - Candidate-friendly hiring and orientation process
- Retention Strategies
 - Professional Development Programs
 - Internal programs designed to foster employee growth and advancement
 - Employee Recognition Programs
 - Initiatives to regularly acknowledge employee contributions
 - Competitive Compensation and Benefits
 - Ongoing evaluations to maintain competitive salaries and benefits
 - New Hire Orientation Program
 - Structure new hire orientation to assist in the successful integration
 - Flexible Schedule
 - Positive and Productive Workplace Culture

These efforts are continuously evaluated, with adjustments based on employee and applicant feedback.

Next Steps

Currently, the City has not identified any changes to existing policies or procedures that negatively impact our hiring or retention efforts. However, we remain committed to evaluating and adjusting our strategies to meet the evolving needs of the City's priorities and goals, as well as its customers.

Legal Review:

This report has been reviewed by the City Attorney's Office.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact on the General Fund with this action.

ATTACHMENT:

1. Assembly Bill 2561