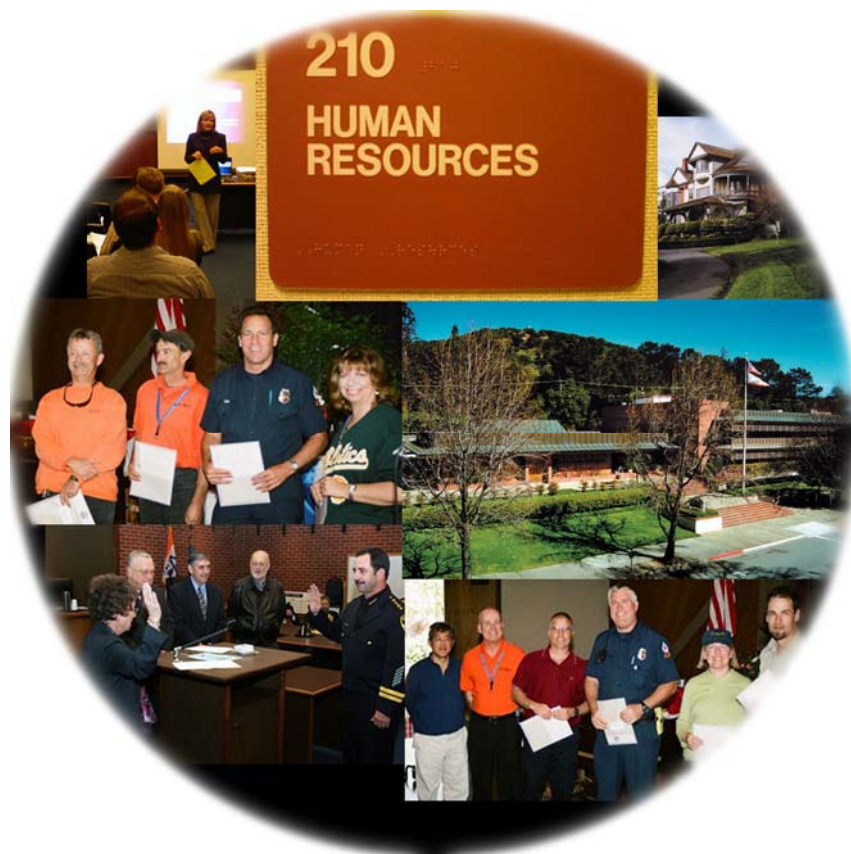


Department of Human Resources
LONG RANGE STRATEGY PLAN 2007-2011
City of San Rafael ▫ August 6, 2007



City of San Rafael, California

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1. Introduction

To recruit, retain, and develop City of San Rafael employees by providing services that are customer responsive, cost effective, aligned with the overall mission of the City and the priorities established by the City Council, and to incorporate the best practices of the human resources profession.

The above statement is the mission of the Department of Human Resources for the City of San Rafael. Before getting into the main part of the Strategy Plan, this section will answer the *who, what, when, where, why, and how*.

WHO SHOULD USE THIS STRATEGY

While primarily used by Human Resources staff to guide their work, this Strategy Plan contains information that will be of interest to many readers:

If you are a City of San Rafael Employee....

Use this Strategy Plan to find out what is in place and what your Human Resources Department is doing for you. Turn to Chapter 4 to find out about City policies and procedures. Turn to Chapter 5 to read about new opportunities for training and development or Chapter Six for planned benefit and wellness efforts.

If you are a City of San Rafael Human Resources Employee....

Use this Strategy Plan to guide your work by implementing the short, mid, and long range strategies in priority order. Use this Plan to develop the Human Resources budget.

If you are seeking a job or promotion with the City of San Rafael...

Use this Strategy Plan to learn how the City of San Rafael values its employees and is committed to remaining an employer of choice. See Chapter 3 for how our recruitment efforts will be improving.

If you are an Elected Official....

Use this Strategy Plan to ensure that your organizational vision is reflected in the strategies herein. Turn to any of the Chapters to review the short, mid, and long range strategies to verify their priority in this document. As the Plan will be updated from time to time, you will be able to track progress of the HR Department.

If you are a Human Resources Service Provider/Partner....

Use this Strategy Plan to see the direction the Human Resources Department will be headed in the coming months and years and plan how your organization can partner with, or provide service to the City to make Human Resources more effective.

If you are a Human Resources Professional in Another Jurisdiction....

Use this Strategy Plan to contemplate your own Human Resources efforts and improvements you'd like to make. Have a suggestion for us? Please send it to our Human Resources Department. We value your input and want to learn from our colleagues.

If you are a Resident or Business owner in San Rafael....

Use this Strategy Plan to read about the City's commitment to recruiting, hiring and developing a knowledgeable workforce to provide the highest levels of service to all segments of our community.

As this section demonstrates, the Human Resources Department is working to further its mission with a great number of stakeholders, whether they are users, partners, or providers. The types of stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- Mayor and Council,
- City Manager,
- Senior management staff,

- Employees and retirees of the City of San Rafael,
- Bargaining units,
- Prospective employees,
- Residents and business owners who benefit from the hard work of all City employees,
- Insurance providers,
- Benefit providers,
- Trainers/instructors,
- Recruiters,
- Safety experts, and more.

WHAT IS THE HUMAN RESOURCES LONG RANGE STRATEGY PLAN?

The Human Resources Long Range Strategy Plan presents an overview of what the Department of Human Resources is accomplishing now and what it will accomplish in the future. After reviewing the Strategy Plan, any reader will have a concrete understanding of what the Department of Human Resources is and what it aspires to be. The Strategy Plan presents a vision for Human Resources and then precisely describes how that vision will be achieved over the short, mid, and long ranges.

The Strategy Plan goes into detail on the business of Human Resources including: recruitment and selection, policies and procedures, training and development, benefits administration and wellness, risk management and workers' compensation, and labor/employee relations.

WHEN DOES THE STRATEGY PLAN APPLY?

The Strategy Plan is written for a five-year implementation (2007-2011) with the greatest clarity in the first half of that period. As time goes on and needs change or re-focus, the Plan will be updated to reflect current needs. Specific strategies in this document have been included in the City's two year (Fiscal Years 2007-2009) budget as objectives of the Human Resources Department.

WHERE IS HUMAN RESOURCES?

The Department of Human Resources is on the second floor of City Hall located at 1400 Fifth Avenue, Room 210, San Rafael, California. Information about the

Human Resources Department can be found on the City's website at www.srhr.org or by calling the Department at (415) 485-3063. Employees can also access information via the City of San Rafael's Intranet site. To answer the question more broadly, Human Resources can be found throughout the workplace in *who the employees are*, sometimes *the work that they are doing*, and almost always *how they are doing the work*.

WHY HAVE A STRATEGY PLAN?

The Strategy Plan provides clarity and transparency to the complex array of functions and responsibilities inherent to a Department of Human Resources. As the organization's greatest resource is its employees, it makes sense to have a Strategy Plan to guide this Department.

The Strategy Plan will improve the City's organizational effectiveness and address the most important issues by establishing strategies in priority order by timeframe. The Strategy Plan serves as a blueprint for implementing the mission of the Human Resources Department which, in turn, helps to implement the overall City mission.

The specific need for a Strategy Plan *right now*, is due to a number of factors including:

- In February 2007, the Department of Human Resources was reorganized with changes to classifications and structure. The Human Resources Manager position was upgraded to a Director of Human Resources, a new position of Employee Benefits Analyst was created, and the Technician class became Human Resources Representatives I/II. This created a staff of four to serve 425 regular employees, 215 temporary and seasonal employees, and 245 retirees.
- A backlog of work was created in the few years leading up to the reorganization as the Department faced internal staffing challenges such as a series of Interim Human Resources Managers. This led to a shorter-term perspective rather than a comprehensive long range strategy approach.
- The workforce requirements are changing as the City experiences broader demographic trends such as the retirements of the "Baby Boomer" generation, the training needs of first time or new managers, the need to increase interest in public service for college graduates or second career seekers, the issues regarding health care and pension costs, etc.

The Department of Human Resources is responding to these challenges by developing a focused, long range strategy to guide the Department into the future.

HOW IS THIS STRATEGY PLAN ORGANIZED?

The Strategy Plan begins with a brief background of Human Resources and its organizational culture. Following this, the next six chapters each address a particular focal point of Human Resources including:

- Recruitment and Selection,
- Policies and Procedures,
- Training and Development,
- Benefits Administration and Wellness,
- Risk Management and Workers' Compensation,
- and Labor/Employee Relations,

Again, the Strategy Plan presents a vision for Human Resources and then precisely describes how that vision will be achieved over the short, mid, and long ranges. Short range is herein defined to mean a task or effort that is commenced (and not necessarily completed) in the period of 2007/2008, mid-range relates to efforts begun in 2008/2009, and long range 2009/2011.

Though these periods represent five years, it is clear that the majority of the tasks are planned to be implemented in the first couple of years. Some efforts may take only a very short period of time to complete (such as posting certain forms on the Intranet) while other tasks may span more than a year or require an on-going effort. Again, as time goes on, the need to change or re-focus will likely be necessary and the Plan can be updated to reflect needs.

Following these main six chapters is a brief discussion of measuring performance. Lastly, the appendices contain other useful information including a prioritization of strategies.

2. Human Resources Background

HUMAN RESOURCES RECENT HISTORY

Over the past several years, the Human Resources Department has been evolving to reflect City needs and budget priorities. In September 1997, the Council approved a name change from “Personnel Department” to “Human Resources Department.” The intent of the re-naming was to reflect the nature of the Department’s work which had transitioned from “hire/fire and record keeping” to a new focus on “training, development, and retaining employees.”

The Department’s goal was to provide a greater level and array of services. The mission of the Human Resources Department was intended to reflect its changing nature: “To recruit, retain, and develop City of San Rafael employees by providing services that are customer responsive, cost effective, aligned with the overall mission of the City and the priorities established by the City Council, and to incorporate the best practices of the human resources profession.”

In 1998, as part of a reorganization due to the departure of the Assistant City Manager, Human Resources became a division of the new Management Services Department. This new Department included: Human Resources, Risk Management, Finance, Information Services, Volunteer Programs, and the Print Shop.

In 2004, the City was in the midst of serious budget cuts and staff reductions. Human Resources was restructured by changing the Assistant Director of Management Services to a Human Resources Manager and requiring that position to assume the additional day to day responsibility for risk management (workers’ compensation and liability insurance) programs. The City eliminated a full-time Risk Management position and a three-quarter time training position as part of cost cutting moves.

A few years following the downsizing, it became evident that the cuts made to Human Resources significantly hampered its ability to fully carry out its mission and meet expectations. In February 2007, the City Council approved the reorganization of the Human Resources Department. Human Resources continues to be a key part of Management Services. The Assistant City Manager recruitment in late 2006 placed employee relations and negotiations in the hands of the Assistant City Manager and the Human Resources Director.

In March 2007, a series of meetings were held with City department directors and managers to get their feedback on what items should be included in this Strategy

Plan. Subsequently, there was also a “bottom up” review of the Strategy by various levels of employees. The staff gave very useful feedback regarding what was working and what needed improvement, but also made statements about the culture of the Human Resources Department.

HUMAN RESOURCES ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Considering the recent reorganization and the writing of this Plan, the Department of Human Resources is widely seen in the City as “moving to a higher level of service to the employees.” While this is taking place, the directors and managers interviewed stressed the need to maintain the Department’s current culture, which was described by words and phrases such as:

- Collaborative
- Knowledgeable
- Open Door
- Helpful/Friendly
- Direct with Advice/Input
- Strategic Partner
- Professional
- Highly Ethical
- Voice of Reason/Conscience
- Demonstrates Integrity
- Not Rigid or Dogmatic
- Seeking the Best Solution to Issues

The Department will strive to maintain this culture while also renewing focus on accuracy, expanding attention to the key issues rather than only the most urgent, and diligently implementing the strategies in this Plan.

The City Council has also weighed in on the sort of organizational culture expected. The Council has stated a priority of “Financial and Governance Stability” which includes organizational excellence, excellent customer service, succession planning and staff development, and maintaining quality services with limited funding. Human Resources is seen as a part of the “foundation” of city services because other city services can not be accomplished as effectively without excellent Human Resources programs and services.

Lastly, the League of California Cities created a Leadership Manual that describes Human Resources professionals as having four major roles within their cities. They describe the traditional role of providing technical expertise, and add three emerging roles: “business partner”, working with management to devise effective solutions to an organizational or performance problem; “change agent”, helping others understand the need for change, planning and training for change; and, “leader”, influencing others, and balancing concerns for employees with organizational requirements and goals.

These four roles describe the City of San Rafael’s current Human Resources Department, assist in describing the culture of the organization, and serve as the backbone for the future of this vital city organization.

3. Recruitment and Selection

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Human Resources staff works with the requesting department through all phases of the recruitment and selection process, from working with the departments on position control issues, to advertising a vacancy, to final appointment of an employee, and beyond. The goal of recruitment is to target a pool of well-qualified applicants. Staff may advertise on the Human Resources' webpage (www.srhr.org), in newspapers, with professional associations, in newsletters and magazines, through various on-line services, and other media sources.

The use of the Internet for job postings has moved quickly from being a creative new way to get your announcement out, to today's norm. In fact, the City subscribes to NeoGov (www.neogov.com) and CalOpps (www.calopps.org) for various on-line functions related to recruitment and selection.

Staff evaluates job applications according to established qualifications for education, training, and experience. They also test applicants via written exams and performance tests. They are responsible for overall coordination of oral board examinations, including notification letters to applicants, preparation of written material for oral board panelists, training of panelists to ensure fair practices, and scoring of exams. Interview panels may consist of representatives from other agencies in addition to City staff from the department.

Human Resources staff is responsible for compliance with state and federal non-discrimination laws in the hiring process, including Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and similar California statutes. They may assist departments with background checks on top candidates, and coordinate pre-employment medical exams and fingerprinting of new hires. Other responsibilities include new employee orientation so that new hires learn about the city, its services, compensation, benefit programs, and overall values and mission.

CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION

Comparing salaries and benefits with other public agencies for similar positions is an ongoing function of Human Resources staff. The data is used in collective bargaining with labor groups and for establishing new or revised positions. The factors involved in comparison, and the selection of comparison employers, are

matters of policy (determined by City Council) and collective bargaining (determined with employee organizations).

As functions of departments change in response to public needs, Human Resources staff analyzes job duties and recommends changes in current jobs or creation of new positions. Compensation changes may be recommended commensurate with changes in duties. Pay or classification studies may be conducted for an entire city department, a division, a specific bargaining unit, or a job family (for example, administrative positions). The City subscribes to Bay Area ERS (www.bayareaers.org) for on-line access to salary and benefit data.

STRATEGIES

The City's recruitment process is formal and can be seen as inflexible and burdensome. First, a hiring practices policy should be created. Also, the process should be streamlined with the goal of expediting the process, such as through the increased use of technology. Time should be invested where it is most valuable, such as improving background and reference checking, rather than meeting a lengthy process. Also, the location of the funding for recruitments should be formalized in the budget.

The new employee orientation is an employee's first real look at Human Resources services as a City staff member. The orientation has been expanding, such as by adding a Disaster Service Worker (DSW) presentation, and should continue to be used as a venue for practical knowledge the employee will need to function. For example, an Information Technology (IT) presentation could take place to orient the employee to the computer system. Other items that can be presented include: the Personnel Rules, MOUs, Form 700s, policies and procedures, and a "field trip" to all City facilities to acquaint new employees with the scope of services provided by the City.

In addition, the orientation may be expanded to include a "buddy system" with a colleague (from within the same or from another department) or a mentor. This would assist in the orientation of the new employee and start the relationship building process from the first day.

Just as the beginning of an employee's tenure is important, the end of employment can also be useful to both the City and employee. Human Resources should conduct an exit interview with all willing out-going employees in an effort to get valuable feedback. That feedback can relate to the role of Human Resources, the employee's department, streamlining procedures, improving communication, expanding service, etc.

Another necessary action is to examine the system for hiring temporary or seasonal employees including the process for requests and approval. This should be done to formalize and standardize the City's approach to temporary and seasonal employees.

At the current time, there is an inconsistent approval process for new positions and reclassifications. This process needs to be formalized so all Departments follow the same procedures.

All job specifications should be reviewed for physical or other requirements and call for enhanced pre-employment physicals as appropriate. Lastly, it is a good practice to periodically conduct a classification and compensation study.

STRATEGIES:	Short Range (07/08)	Mid Range (08/09)	Long Range (09/11)
Recruitment and Selection			
Create a hiring practices policy	X		
Streamline recruitment process to reduce steps, increase use of technology (e.g. on-line internal information such as the Personnel Action Report [PAR] and external information such as job announcements), and increase focus on background checking	X		
Expand and formalize new employee orientation. Explore creating a "buddy system" between colleagues or as mentor. Add IT overview, Personnel Rules, MOUs, Form 700s, policies and procedures, or other necessary practices	X		
Conduct exit interviews for all employees when they leave the City to get valuable feedback	X		
Examine system for hiring temporary or seasonal employees including the request/approval process	X		
Formalize approval process for reclassifications and new positions		X	
Review job specifications for physical requirements (to ensure current with position needs) and require enhanced pre-employment physicals as appropriate			X
Periodically conduct a classification/compensation study for benchmark positions			X

4. Policies and Procedures

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Being in business since 1874, the City of San Rafael has a large number of policies and procedures to guide its daily activities. These policies and procedures change and improve over time. The varying nature of public service (and the varying needs of multiple departments) means that not all employees are subject to the same policies and procedures. For example, rules around sewer safety are not likely relevant to a library clerk. However, the majority of policies and procedures relate equally to employees and are typically a part of one of the following:

- Personnel Rules and Regulations,
- Employee/Employer Relations Resolution
- City's Adopted Administrative Policies,
- Departmental Policies and Procedures,

Personnel Rules include items like the hiring process, probationary period, terminations, disciplinary action, leave benefits, grievance procedures, records, and other miscellaneous provisions. Many of the policies and procedures found in the Personnel Rules are required by State or Federal Law. The Employee/Employer Relations Resolution relates to declaring employee organizations, appeals, impasse procedures, and other miscellaneous provisions.

The City's Adopted Administrative Policies, which are approved by the City Manager, address subjects such as: outside employment, catastrophic leave, anti-harassment, travel and training, etc. These policies do not generally require Council approval and there is some amount of flexibility in how they are established (as opposed to other subjects that may be required to strictly adhere to a State or Federal Law). However, all adopted administrative policies must be consistently implemented throughout the organization.

Departmental Policies and Procedures include items that relate primarily to the work of a specific city department and may not translate well to other departments. For example, a safety policy of how to correctly work with specific motorized tools may only apply to the department(s) that utilizes the tools. This Strategy Plan is not intended to address such specific policies and procedures.

Management staff must be diligent to ensure their employees know the "rules" and follow them. Likewise, employees must take responsibility to know the

“rules” and follow them. Policies and procedures that apply equally from department to department should be applied consistently between them. The following section describes the strategies in this area.

STRATEGIES

Staff must create policy guidelines regarding retiree health issues. There are a number of issues in this area that should have specific policies in place for greater clarity to employees and retirees.

The Personnel Rules and Regulations should be updated periodically to reflect the organization’s changing preferences and required legal revisions. The City of San Rafael’s Personnel Rules were last revised in 1995 and an update should begin in the “short range” time period.

One of the most important things managers do is provide thorough and timely, on-going professional feedback to their employees. The performance evaluation system should be enhanced to create a “performance evaluation culture” that starts at the top of the organization and permeates throughout it.

Timesheets are an important tool to track the many types of hours that an employee may have during the pay period (e.g. sick leave, regular hours, vacation, floating holiday, etc.). The timesheet process, including the form and the approval process, should be standardized throughout the organization. Staff should also analyze the pros and cons of making this an on-line, paperless process.

Staff should use our current tools of the Intranet (internal) and the Internet (public website) to make appropriate documents available. Policies and procedures should be posted on the Intranet in addition to most forms. The Intranet should also be a clearinghouse of information such as a Human Resources Frequently Asked Questions list to reduce the repetition of the most common questions to Human Resources staff.

By making more and more information available on-line, the needs of employees that do not have a workstation must be considered. Information Technology staff should address such issues in the most appropriate way – such as adding a computer workstation in a break room or common space where employees can access it at convenient times.

Lastly, new policies and procedures will be needed to address issues that develop in addition to the more pressing need of reviewing and updating the current policies and procedures. Policies and procedures should be easy to

access and comprehend and employees must be informed of their content and held accountable for adhering to them. Organizing all policies and procedures on the Intranet would be an appropriate location in addition to a hard copy in the Human Resources office.

STRATEGIES: Policies and Procedures	Short Range (07/08)	Mid Range (08/09)	Long Range (09/11)
Create policy guidelines regarding retiree health issues	X		
Update Personnel Rules to make improvements and continue compliance with legal requirements	X		
Update Administrative Policy to require annual performance evaluations for every employee. Improve evaluation forms	X		
Continually monitor work schedules and responsibilities to maintain compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)	X		
Standardize process for timesheets and timesheet approvals. Consider automation of timesheets	X		
Increase use of Intranet and Internet for posting of policies, procedures, forms, FAQs, etc. Address access need for employees without individual computers		X	
Create new or modify existing policies and procedures as needed; organize all policies and procedures on the Intranet; provide training to employees to put into practice (see "Training and Development" section). On-Going.		X	

5. Training and Development

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A key role of Human Resources is to facilitate training and development of employees in an effort to improve their professional and personal skills with the goal of enhancing service to the public. Training may be conducted by Human Resources staff, staff of other departments, volunteers, or by external experts. Training is often thought of as an investment because it can reduce the city's liability, increase employee productivity, assist with career development and succession planning, and improve services. Typical training programs may include:

- **Supervisory Training Programs:** When new supervisors are hired into the city from another agency or a non-supervisory employee is promoted to a supervisor, management training is key. This will be of increasing importance to the City of San Rafael and most cities as one generation of employees retire and the next generation steps up.
- **Professional Development Training:** New Federal or State regulations affecting programs operated by city staff require regular, ongoing training so that staff remains in compliance with appropriate regulations, as well as providing knowledge and skills that will be important for the employee for career advancement.
- **Skills Training:** As job skills change, staff must be trained to effectively keep up with new job requirements.
- **Technology Training:** As new technology is introduced citywide, staff must receive training on new software as well as application specific training to efficiently apply new technology to their jobs.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

The City of San Rafael has a highly regarded employee recognition program that is supported by Human Resources Department staff. The employee recognition program includes:

- Employee of the Quarter and Employee of the Year
- Special employee commendations, such as to an out-going employee
- Annual employee recognition luncheon
- Service year awards

- New employee gatherings
- New employee introductions at City Council meetings

The employee recognition program involves nominations by co-workers or supervisors for exceptional performance by individual employees. Service awards are presented to employees who have worked for the city for a certain number of years, e.g., at five-year intervals.

STRATEGIES

There are a number of strategies around training: formalize it so it has structure and is available to all appropriate employees, develop a master training plan and schedule, track employee's participation, budget to allow for in-house and outside training, ensure training is taking place on City benefits, create a Supervisory Academy to formalize management training, and train Human Resources staff to stay up on current issues.

Potential topics for training are as vast as the scope of government service: customer service, computer, leadership, legal issues, legislative issues, management skills, employee development, conflict resolution, budget and finance, safety, community based governance, policy review, etc.

Human Resources should assume primary responsibility for the Employee Recognition Program, but continue to receive assistance from other departments in the planning and implementation of the program.

Human Resources should also play a key role in employee communications with the goal of broadening the employees' understanding of the city's "big picture." One way to improve internal communications is through a newsletter, which should be in the form of an e-mail or on the City's Intranet site, rather than paper-based.

Lastly, Human Resources staff should have an understanding of the make-up of the current workforce and likely changes over time. In many cities, the issue of retiring "baby boomers" is of concern as the demand will be great for new talent to fill key positions. Human Resources staff should specifically identify areas where this could be an issue in San Rafael and develop a succession plan to address it.

In many ways, this issue is being addressed by training and development, but it is still useful to view the potentially affected positions individually to think through plans ahead of time.

STRATEGIES:	Short Range (07/08)	Mid Range (08/09)	Long Range (09/11)
Training and Development			
Formalize regular training on topics identified by supervisors and staff. Develop a master training plan and schedule	X		
Budget for training to occur both in-house and at local consortiums such as the Sonoma/Marin Employment Relations Consortium	X		
Ensure educational opportunities for the City's employee benefits, such as 457 Plan, PARS, etc.	X		
Human Resources staff should also stay current with relevant issues by participating in the League of California Cities Employee Relations events, NorCal, CALPELRA, and/or other HR organizations	X		
Assume primary responsibility for the Employee Recognition Program, while receiving assistance from other Departments	X		
Develop methods for improved communications with employees to increase employee's knowledge of the entire organization (e.g. internal newsletter)		X	
Emphasize employee development of subordinates as a dimension in performance evaluations		X	
Formalize participation in Cal-ICMA coaching telephone panel by participating in a group setting and then discussing the call as a group		X	
Create a formal Supervisory Academy; potentially including CEO-type speakers, leadership training, speaker's bureau, job shadowing, etc.			X
Analyze impending retirements and develop a succession plan; potentially include cross-departmental or cross jurisdictional work opportunities, mentoring programs, career assessment and planning, etc.			X
Create summer internship program for college and graduate students to obtain assistance, new ideas, and increase exposure to public service to potential future employees			X

6. Benefits Administration & Wellness

BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION AND WELLNESS

The City of San Rafael provides a wide range of benefits to their employees. Depending on the position, these benefits may include: health, dental, vision, disability and life insurance, employee assistance programs, deferred compensation programs, time off, allowances and incentives, and retirement. Many of these benefits are subject to Federal and State regulations.

San Rafael's contribution toward the costs of these benefits and the scope of the plans is generally subject to negotiation with the employee bargaining units. These negotiations can be multifaceted due to plan complexities, the significant costs of these programs, and the frequency and severity of cost increases.

Regarding retirement, the City of San Rafael participates in the Marin County Employees' Retirement Association ("MCERA"). MCERA was established July 1, 1950, in accordance with a vote of the people of Marin County, as an organization that was created to administer retirement benefits.

MCERA is an independent fiduciary board whose members function as pension trustees under the authority of the County Employees Retirement Law of 1937 (Government Code Title 3, Division 4, Part 3, Chapter 3 and 3.9, Sections 31450-31899.10), governed by the principles of Article 16, Section 17 of the California Constitution ("Proposition 162").

San Rafael contracts with the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) to provide health insurance. The City offers employees the option to participate in the CalPERS long-term care at their expense.

In part to meet the need for benefit services for the City, the San Rafael City Council created the new position of "Employee Benefits Analyst" in February 2007. The Employee Benefits Analyst is responsible for coordinating the broad range of employee benefits programs.

In April 2007, the City created an Employee Benefits Committee to deal with benefits issues, including analysis of and changes to existing benefits, identifying cost containment/savings measures, changes in Federal/State-mandated guidelines, and communicating updates and changes to all employees. This Committee is representative of the city's workforce and includes one or more members of each bargaining unit.

STRATEGIES

The Employee Benefits Committee should be an important part of strategy formation and implementation related to employee benefits. The Committee can discuss priorities and make recommendations regarding employee benefits and other issues.

An easy victory in the area of employee benefits would be to improve communication with employees about what they have, why, and options available to them. Many great programs are not taken advantage of due to insufficient knowledge of the employees. Human Resources staff shall improve communication with the goal of making employees more aware of what is available to them and make informed choices.

An annual Employee Benefits Statement is one way of quantifying an employee's benefits on a regular interval. Many employees may not realize the full value of the City's total benefits.

STRATEGIES: Benefits Administration and Wellness	Short Range (07/08)	Mid Range (08/09)	Long Range (09/11)
Create an Employee Benefits Committee and conduct regular meetings to discuss and address key issues. Make improvements and updates to benefits where possible considering limited funding	X		
Improve communication and education of employee benefits to employees; include training on alternatives and options	X		
Create and distribute for each employee an annual Employee Benefits Statement showing actual costs/benefits		X	

7. Risk Management and Workers' Compensation

RISK MANAGEMENT

The City's liability claims are processed by George Hills Company Inc., a third-party claims administrator. Claims are usually filed against the City by persons seeking to recover money for damages or injuries. Claims usually arise from minor property damage incidents, trip-and-fall accidents, vehicle accidents, allegations of employee misconduct or civil rights violations, contract disputes, and similar issues. George Hills provides the City with evaluations of claims and recommendations for resolution.

The City of San Rafael is self-insured for such liability claims in an initial amount of exposure or "self-insured retention," similar to a deductible in a typical homeowner's insurance policy. The City's self-insured retention is \$500,000 per incident. In addition, the City participates with other public entities in an excess liability "pool" managed by the California Joint Powers Risk Management Authority (CJPRMA). CJPRMA provides, under a Memorandum of Coverage, excess liability coverage to \$39,500,000 for the City's liability exposure. The CJPRMA board is responsible for making decisions about general administration, claims administration, insurance programs, coverages and investments.

Staff responsibilities, outside of claims administration, include participating in the Loss Committee, consulting with departments, analyzing loss patterns, and predicting future losses. The City Council has delegated its authority to deny or settle claims for amounts under \$20,000 to the City Manager upon review and recommendation to him by the Property and Casualty Loss Committee. Settlements above the delegated amount are decided during City Council closed sessions, after presentations and recommendations by the City Attorney and other key staff. As the City is self-funded, it needs to have sufficient funds to pay both current costs and future potential claims.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Employees who become ill or are injured in the course of their jobs are entitled to workers' compensation benefits. The California Labor Code explicitly defines these benefits. Human Resources staff must understand the Labor Code, be able to communicate effectively with supervisors and employees about the responsibilities of the city and the rights of the employees, and have a general understanding of medical and legal terminology.

The Redwood Empire Municipal Insurance Fund (REMIF) serves as the City's Workers Compensation claims administrator, providing the City with risk management, claims evaluation, and resolution and administration services for the City's workers compensation claims. The City funds a self-insured retention, to \$750,000, and purchases excess insurance for losses above the retention.

Human Resources staff responsibilities include analyzing claims frequency and severity, predicting future losses, developing loss control programs, working with departments to create appropriate workplace safety policies, and working with departments and employees to effectively return injured employees to work. Staff is responsible for ensuring the initial claim form is filed by the department to REMIF in a timely and accurate manner and for ensuring accuracy of time sheets for modified work, injury time, and 4850 time. Staff also provides information to injured workers regarding sick time, workers' compensation benefits, and other issues and works with physicians to receive information on claims.

The newly created position of Employee Benefits Analyst will play a key role in the planning and implementation of workers' compensation, risk management, safety, and wellness programs in order to minimize the exposure to incidents which may cause loss to the City or injury to its employees. Safety and wellness programs also have benefits such as increasing productivity, reducing absenteeism, reducing health care costs, and improving morale.

STRATEGIES

First, staff should create a cross-departmental Workplace Safety Committee to promote a safe working environment by addressing safety concerns and recommending safety policies and programs.

Risk Management and Workers' Compensation are two areas that require additional employee education in San Rafael. Human Resources staff should work to improve employees' (including both injured workers and supervisors) understanding of these programs. Staff should provide consistent materials and training and make regular, consistent reports to the City Council and staff regarding status of claims and settlements.

In addition to education, current policies and procedures should be reviewed to determine if they need to be updated or if new policies need to be created. Topics should include workplace incident reporting, departmental monitoring and tracking of workers' compensation, transitional duty, etc. The standard for reporting workers' compensation incidents should be one day.

It would also be useful to develop new materials regarding workers' compensation. Staff should produce a "Guide to Workers' Compensation" handbook for employees or other handbooks/manuals to assist the process.

Taking advantage of new technology, Human Resources staff can implement an electronic (Intranet) workers' compensation incident reporting system that automatically transfers information to claims system. This will expedite the process and ultimately save revenue for the City.

Finally, an Executive Safety Committee can be formed (to complement the Workplace Safety Committee) so the City Manager and Department Directors visibly take the lead in safety culture. Having the Directors involved at this level will increase awareness of global issues in addition to more minor, specific issues so that they can set the tone for the organization of a commitment to employee safety and well-being.

STRATEGIES:	Short Range (07/08)	Mid Range (08/09)	Long Range (09/11)
Risk Management and Workers' Compensation			
Create a Workplace Safety Committee and meet regularly to proactively address safety issues	X		
Improve employees' (both injured workers and supervisors) understanding of the workers' compensation program; provide materials and training; provide reporting to City Council and staff regarding status of claims and settlements	X		
Develop/update policies on workers' compensation such as on workplace incident reporting, departmental monitoring and tracking of workers' compensation, transitional duty, etc.		X	
Set standard of reporting workers' compensation incidents		X	
Produce "Guide to Workers' Compensation" handbook for employees			X
Implement electronic (Intranet) workers' compensation incident reporting system that automatically transfers information to claims system			X
Create <i>Executive</i> Safety Committee so that City Manager and Department Directors are taking lead in safety culture			X

8. Labor/Employee Relations

LABOR/EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

The City's Human Resources Director, working with the Assistant City Manager, serves as the lead in the negotiation process for city management. Outside consultants, such as labor attorneys, are also used at times for complex issues.

The City's bargaining team requests guidance and provides labor relations information through the City Manager to the City Council. Such contacts, normally during Closed Session, include:

- Discussion of parameters for negotiating with specific employee groups
- Data on employee groups (wage and benefit data and comparisons with similar positions in other public agencies)
- Proposals made to the city's bargaining team by employee groups along with the cost of implementing the proposals
- Proposals made by the city's bargaining team, along with cost data

The City Council has the authority to approve final labor contracts, or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), in open session.

In the event the management and labor representatives are unable to reach agreement on an MOU, the City's Employer-Employee Relations Resolution (EERR) provides for impasse procedures that may include a hearing by the Council, mediation, fact-finding or arbitration.

The EERR defines the process for recognizing employee organizations (or "bargaining units") as prescribed by Government Code Section 3500 et seq, the "Meyers-Milias-Brown Act" or MMBA, originally adopted in 1969. In 2001, MMBA was modified to include resolution of disputes regarding unit determination through the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB).

The EERR, last updated in February 2007, also provides procedures for administering employer-employee relations between city management and the employee organizations and addresses disputes regarding wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment.

The City of San Rafael currently has the following bargaining units:

1. Association of Confidential Employees
2. Association of Professional Employees represented by the Western Council of Engineers
3. San Rafael Fire Chief Officers' Association
4. San Rafael Firefighters' Association, IAAF, Local 1775
5. Unrepresented Management Employees
6. Unrepresented Mid-Management Employees
7. Unrepresented City Clerk and City Attorney
8. San Rafael Police Association
9. San Rafael Police Mid-Management Association
10. SEIU Child Care Unit
11. SEIU Supervisory and Miscellaneous Units

STRATEGIES

Human Resources staff should lead the spirit of “effective collaboration” with employees and associations. Staff should continue to develop open and effective communications with employee groups and representatives and work collaboratively to solve issues and seek results.

Analyzing alternative actions in response to Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 45 is currently a key work effort for all state and local governments. Human Resources staff should work with employees to review implications and alternatives in response to GASB 45. While GASB 45 relates to “Other Post Employment Benefits” or OPEBs, the City’s pension obligations also require review and study to manage costs.

An evaluation survey process should be created to get direct feedback from stakeholders on their experiences with Human Resources. This survey process should be completed on a regular basis with the results informing future updates of this Strategy.

The City’s bargaining team should seek input from managers prior to the MOU negotiations. This will serve to identify issues that need resolution to improve employee relations. All bargaining unit contracts will need to be renewed during the term of this Strategy and the Human Resources Director will take a lead role in the negotiation process.

Human Resources staff should set up a training program for the content and application of MOUs. They should also strive to simplify and improve the clarity/readability of MOUs over time.

STRATEGIES: Labor/Employee Relations	Short Range (07/08)	Mid Range (08/09)	Long Range (09/11)
Continue to develop open and effective communications with employee groups and representatives. Work collaboratively to solve issues and seek results (on-going)	X		
Review implications and alternatives in response to Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 45	X		
Examine alternatives and implement strategies regarding pension cost management	X		
Create a HR evaluation survey process to be completed on a regular basis with the results informing future updates of this Strategy	X		
Seek manager input prior to MOU negotiations (on-going - subject to time cycle of agreements) and effectively lead negotiation process		X	
Develop training program for key implementing staff on content and application of MOUs		X	
Simplify and improve the clarity/readability of MOUs		X	

9. Measuring Performance

There are two primary ways in which Human Resources staff intends to measure their performance in the implementation of this Strategy. First, staff will provide an annual report of accomplishments to the stakeholders. These accomplishments will be directly tied to this Strategy so stakeholders will be able to see and measure progress.

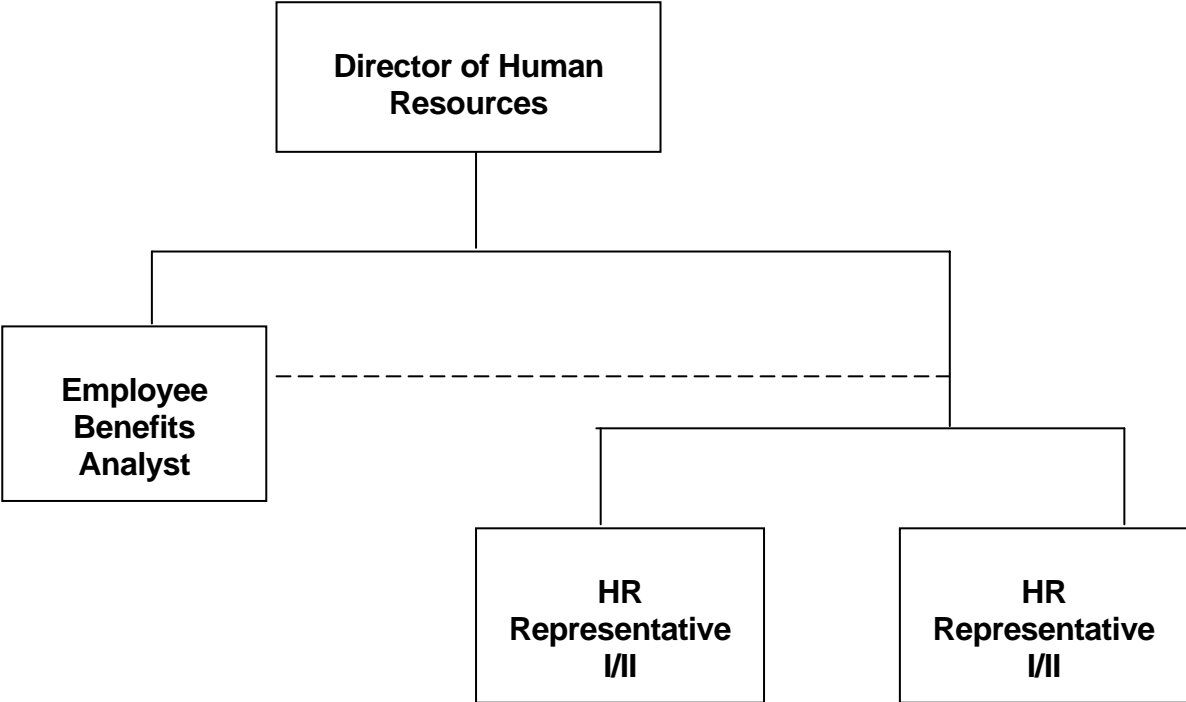
Second, an evaluation survey process will be created (see strategy in the “Labor/Employee Relations” section) to get direct feedback from stakeholders on their experiences with Human Resources.

Using these two means, staff will measure performance against the strategies and timeframes in this document. As noted in the first Chapter, the Strategy Plan is written for a five-year implementation (2007-2011) with the greatest clarity in the first half of that period. As time goes on and needs change or re-focus, the Plan can be updated to reflect current needs. Lessons learned in the annual reports and evaluation process can be used to improve future updates.

In addition, specific strategies in this document will be included in the City’s two year (Fiscal Years 2007-2009) budget as objectives of the Human Resources Department. The budget also includes performance measures to track progress of these priorities.

10. Appendices

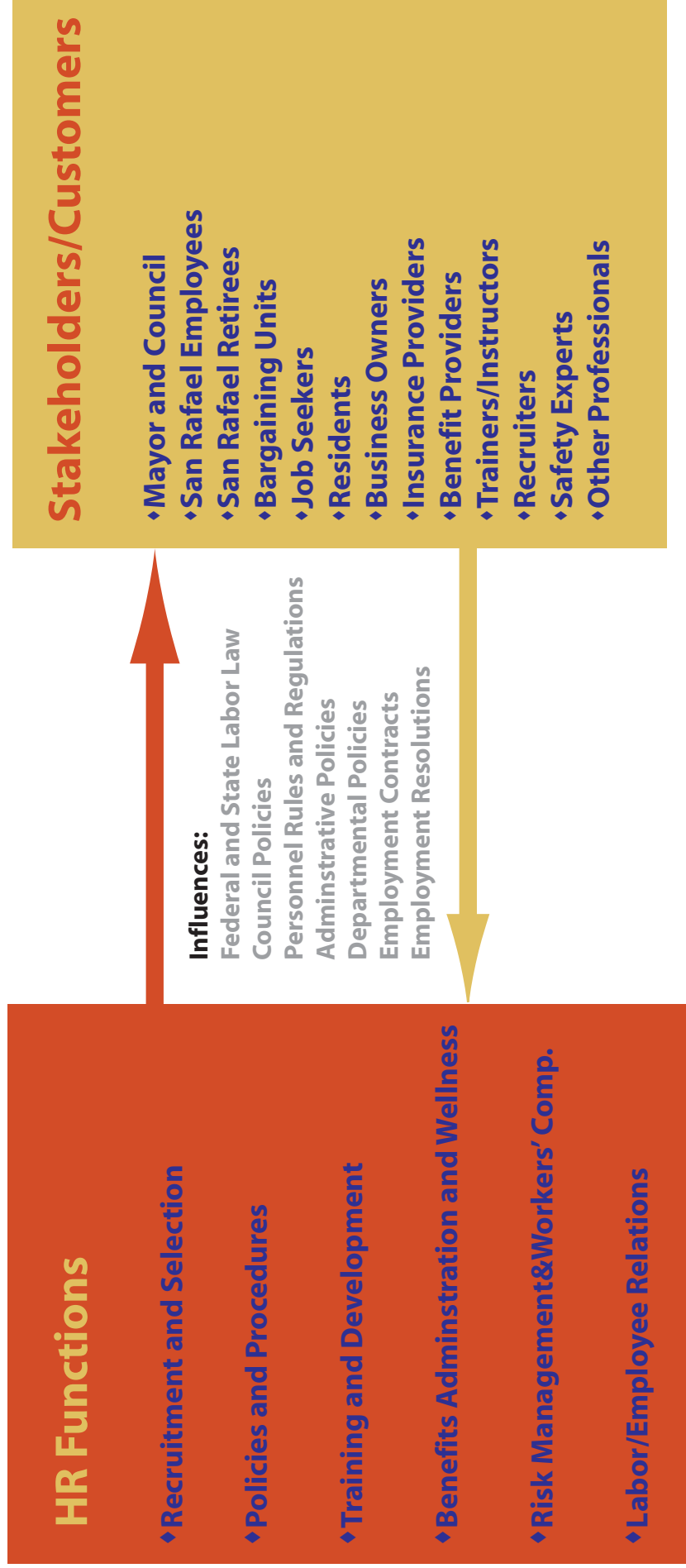
Human Resources Department Organizational Chart July 2007



Human Resources Department - City of San Rafael

Long Range Strategy Plan 2007-2011

August 2007



To recruit, retain, and develop City of San Rafael employees by providing services that are customer responsive, cost effective, aligned with the overall mission of the City and the priorities established by the City Council, and to incorporate the best practices of the human resources profession.

Acknowledgements

City of San Rafael City Council

Mayor Albert J. Boro
 Vice Mayor Paul M. Cohen
 Councilmember Barbara Heller
 Councilmember Cyr N. Miller
 Councilmember Gary O. Phillips

Contributing San Rafael City Staff

Ken Nordhoff, City Manager
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 Matt Odetto, Police Chief
 Nancy Mackle, Deputy City Manager
 Sylvia Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant III

Employee Benefits Committee

Leslie Loomis, Director of Human Resources (Committee Chair) *
 Bill Scharf, Assistant Director of Community Services
 Brad Mark, Fire Captain Specialist
 Catherine Wright, Supervising Librarian
 Dan Fink, Police Sergeant
 Dan Hulett, Police Lieutenant
 Helena Munoz, Accounting Assistant II
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Resources

League of California Cities, "Mayors and City Managers Resource Guide." "Section Three: Understanding Your City Departments." January 2002. Written by Barbara Dillon, Personnel Director in Fairfield. Revised by Mark Flannery, Personnel Director in Fullerton and Gordon Youngs, Personnel Director in Brea.

* *primary authors*

Prioritization of Strategies Table

Listing of **Short Range (2007/2008)** Strategies sorted by high, medium, and lower priority:

SHORT RANGE STRATEGIES:	High	Medium	Lower
Policies and Procedures: Create policy guidelines regarding retiree health issues	X		
Policies and Procedures: Continually monitor work schedules and responsibilities to maintain compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)	X		
Recruitment and Selection: Create a hiring practices policy	X		
Recruitment and Selection: Streamline recruitment process to reduce steps, increase use of technology (e.g. on-line internal information such as the PAR and external information such as job announcements), and increase focus on background checking	X		
Risk Management and Workers' Compensation: Improve employees' (both injured workers and supervisors) understanding of the workers' compensation program; provide materials and training; provide reporting to City Council and staff regarding status of claims and settlements	X		
Benefits Administration and Wellness: Create an Employee Benefits Committee and conduct regular meetings to discuss and address key issues. Make improvements and updates to benefits where possible considering limited funding	X		

Risk Management and Workers' Compensation: Create a Workplace Safety Committee and meet regularly to proactively address safety issues	X		
Policies and Procedures: Update Administrative Policy to require annual performance evaluations for every employee. Improve evaluation forms	X		
Recruitment and Selection: Examine system for hiring temporary or seasonal employees including the process for requests and approval	X		
Recruitment and Selection: Expand and formalize new employee orientation. Explore creating a "buddy system" between colleagues or as mentor. Add IT overview, Personnel Rules, MOUs, Form 700s, policies and procedures, or other necessary practices	X		
Labor/Employee Relations: Continue to develop open and effective communications with employee groups and representatives. Work collaboratively to solve issues and seek results (on-going)	X		
Labor/Employee Relations: Review implications and alternatives in response to Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 45	X		
Labor/Employee Relations: Examine alternatives and implement strategies regarding pension cost management	X		
Policies and Procedures: Update Personnel Rules to make improvements and continue compliance with legal requirements		X	
Policies and Procedures: Standardize process for timesheets and timesheet approvals. Consider automation of timesheets		X	

Labor/Employee Relations: Create a HR evaluation survey process to be completed on a regular basis with the results informing future updates of this Strategy		X	
Training and Development: Formalize regular training on topics identified by supervisors and staff. Develop a master training plan and schedule		X	
Training and Development: Budget for training to occur both in-house and at local consortiums such as the Sonoma/Marin Employment Relations Consortium		X	
Training and Development: Ensure educational opportunities for the City's employee benefits, such as 457 Plan, PARS, etc.		X	
Benefits Administration and Wellness: Improve communication and education of employee benefits to employees; include training on alternatives and options		X	
Training and Development: Human Resources staff should also stay current with relevant issues by participating in the League of California Cities Employee Relations events, NorCal, CALPELRA, and/or other HR organizations			X
Training and Development: Assume primary responsibility for the Employee Recognition Program, while receiving assistance from other Departments			X
Recruitment and Selection: Conduct exit interviews for all employees when they leave the City to get valuable feedback			X

Listing of **Mid-Range (2008/2009)** Strategies sorted by high, medium, and lower priority:

MID-RANGE STRATEGIES:	High	Medium	Lower
Recruitment and Selection: Formalize approval process for reclassifications and new positions	X		
Risk Management and Workers' Compensation: Develop/update policies on workers' compensation such as on workplace incident reporting, departmental monitoring and tracking of workers' compensation, transitional duty, etc.	X		
Risk Management and Workers' Compensation: Set standard of reporting workers' compensation incidents	X		
Labor/Employee Relations: Seek manager input prior to MOU negotiations (on-going - subject to time cycle of agreements) and effectively lead negotiation process	X		
Labor/Employee Relations: Develop training program for key implementing staff on content and application of MOUs	X		
Labor/Employee Relations: Simplify and improve the clarity/readability of MOUs	X		
Training and Development: Develop methods for improved communications with employees to increase employees' knowledge of the entire organization (e.g. internal newsletter)		X	
Policies and Procedures: Increase use of Intranet and Internet for posting of policies, procedures, forms, FAQs, etc. Address access need for employees without computers			X

<p>Policies and Procedures:</p> <p>Create new or modify existing policies and procedures as needed; organize all policies and procedures on the Intranet; provide training to employees to put into practice (see “Training and Development” section). On-Going.</p>			X
<p>Training and Development:</p> <p>Emphasize employee development of subordinates as a dimension in performance evaluations</p>			X
<p>Training and Development:</p> <p>Formalize participation in Cal-ICMA coaching telephone panel by participating in a group setting and then discussing the call as a group</p>			X
<p>Benefits Administration and Wellness:</p> <p>Create and distribute for each employee an annual Employee Benefits Statement showing actual costs/benefits</p>			X

Listing of Long Range (2009/2011) Strategies sorted by high, medium, and lower priority:

LONG RANGE STRATEGIES:	High	Medium	Lower
Risk Management and Workers' Compensation: Create <i>Executive</i> Safety Committee so that City Manager and Department Directors are taking lead in safety culture	X		
Training and Development: Create a formal Supervisory Academy; potentially including CEO-type speakers, leadership training, speaker's bureau, job shadowing, etc.	X		
Training and Development: Analyze impending retirements and develop a succession plan; potentially include cross-departmental or cross jurisdictional work opportunities, mentoring programs, career assessment and planning, etc.	X		
Recruitment and Selection: Periodically conduct a classification/compensation study for benchmark positions		X	
Risk Management and Workers' Compensation: Produce "Guide to Workers' Compensation" handbook for employees		X	
Risk Management and Workers' Compensation: Implement electronic (Intranet) workers' compensation incident reporting system that automatically transfers information to claims system		X	
Training and Development: Create summer internship program for college and graduate students to obtain assistance, new ideas, and increase exposure to public service to potential future employees			X

<p>Recruitment and Selection:</p> <p>Review job specifications for physical requirements (to make sure they are current with position needs) and require enhanced pre-employment physicals as appropriate</p>			<p>X</p>
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