

STAFF REPORT



MANAGEMENT SERVICES

DATE: March 24, 2026

TO: Justin Hess, City Manager

FROM: Betsy McClinton, Management Services Director

SUBJECT: Annual Report on Citywide Vacancies and Recruitment and Retention Efforts in Compliance with Assembly Bill 2561

RECOMMENDATION

Note and file.

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to AB 2561, local government agencies are required to hold at least one public hearing per year to report on workforce vacancy rates, recruitment and retention efforts, and any issues that lead to obstacles in the hiring process. The hearing must occur prior to the adoption of the annual budget and recognized labor groups must be allowed to speak at the hearing. Additionally, if 20% or more of positions in a labor group are vacant, labor groups may request certain additional information at the hearing, including number of vacancies, number of applicants, average time to hire, and suggestions for improved compensation and working conditions.

Each of the City's six labor groups was invited and allocated five minutes to speak following staff's presentation. The labor groups are not required to attend or speak. Staff randomly selected the order that the labor groups will present, should they elect to speak:

1. Burbank Fire Fighters Association – Chief Officers' Unit (BFFCOU)
2. International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)
3. Burbank Management Association (BMA)
4. Burbank Police Officers' Association (BPOA)
5. Burbank Fire Fighters Association (BFF)
6. Burbank City Employees' Association (BCEA)

DISCUSSION

This report is divided into several sections. The first four sections provide data regarding the City's general workforce, vacancy rates, number of recruitments and timeframes, and number of employees put through background and timeframes. The last three sections address the City's ongoing recruitment and retention efforts, recruitment processes and improvements, and challenges in the hiring process.

General Workforce Data

From Fiscal Years (FYs) 2024-25 to 2025-26, the City's budgeted fulltime equivalent positions (FTEs) increased from 1,535.76 to 1,575.191. Attachment 1, Table 1 shows the City's budgeted FTEs for each FY by labor or employee group. Table 2 shows the same data arranged by department.

Vacancy Rate Data

The average monthly vacancy rate for each labor group for calendar year 2025 was below 20% and is shown in Attachment 1, Table 3. While not represented by a labor group, vacancy rate data for the City's unrepresented mid management employees and Executives is also provided. Attachment 1, Table 3 shows the monthly vacancy rate for 2025, which has been below 20%. The average vacancy rates for each labor group for 2024 have been provided for comparison and show a decrease for 2025 across most groups.

Recruitment Data

During 2025, Management Services (MS) staff received 433 personnel requisitions (departmental requests to fill at least one vacancy) for a total of 584 vacancies. As a result, MS staff conducted 285 separate recruitments, many of which filled multiple vacancies, particularly for temporary/seasonal positions. In addition to the 285 recruitments, and as part of the City's special recruitment plan for Police Officers, MS staff continuously recruited for Police Recruit/Police Officer – Lateral and conducted 12 testing processes, resulting in 20 Police Recruits and one Police Officer lateral.

While the details of individual recruitments vary, most follow a similar process that begins with the hiring department submitting a personnel requisition to MS outlining recruitment details such as advertising duration and testing methods. The position is then advertised and applications are accepted for a set period, after which MS screens applications to confirm minimum qualifications. Qualified applicants participate in the testing process, results are compiled, and a list of eligible candidates is provided to the hiring department. The hiring department conducts interviews and selects a candidate, after which MS coordinates the onboarding process (including background checks, medical examinations, and personnel and benefits paperwork) before establishing a start date.

In 2025, the average time to complete a recruitment, and provide a list of candidates to the hiring department for final interviews, was 71 calendar days, or approximately 2.4 months. The average length of time individual departments spend on final interviews varies across departments. Attachment 1, Table 4 further breaks down the average time to complete a recruitment process based on different types of recruitments.

Background Process Data

During 2025, MS staff completed the background process for 637 employees (backgrounds, medical examinations, and personnel/benefits paperwork), including 351 new hires, 165 promotions, 37 rehires, 58 transfers, and 26 other title/position changes. The onboarding process averaged 35 calendar days for all employees hired in 2025. This represents the time between the department selection and the employee's start date. About 19 calendar days on average, or a little less than three weeks, were spent conducting the background and medical examination. The remainder of the time, (16 calendar days) on average, was spent assisting candidates and departments with the completion of required paperwork and allowing time for other issues such as selected candidates providing notice to their current employers or salary negotiations between the selected candidate and the department.

Recruitment and Retention Efforts

The most critical and effective recruitment and retention effort is the Council's continued commitment to the City's publicly adopted compensation policy which states that subject to the City's financial policies, and "in order to recruit and retain a well-qualified workforce to provide exceptional services, we will compensate employees at a level commensurate with the average of Burbank's relevant labor market."

Council continues to work with MS staff to ensure adherence to the City's compensation policy by approving contracts with the City's labor groups that provide competitive salaries and benefits. The City's long history of financial responsibility enabled the City to provide competitive compensation even through financial instability. Council's commitment to competitive wages is critical to ensuring that the City recruits and retains employees who continue to provide excellent City services that the Burbank community has come to expect.

In addition to competitive compensation, MS staff have taken steps to broaden the City's outreach to potential candidates and market the City as a desirable employer. These efforts focus on increasing the visibility of the City and its employment opportunities. Specifically, the City's efforts on LinkedIn have resulted in measurable growth in candidate engagement. Over the past year, followers of the City's LinkedIn jobs page increased by 22.9%, and engagement with recruitment postings rose by 94.4%. The City also utilizes Handshake, a career services and recruitment platform used by colleges and

universities nationwide, to connect directly with college students and recent graduates, which expands the City's outreach to emerging talent.

These new outreach efforts build on existing recruitment strategies, including creating visually engaging job advertisements that highlight why Burbank is a great place to work; attending career fairs, job fairs, and community and college recruitment events on a regular basis; and building a pipeline of future talent through the City's Youth Employment Programs.

Lastly, the City continues to prioritize recruitment efforts for Police Recruits/Laterals to maintain staffing levels within the Police Department. Council has continued to support these efforts with one time funding each year to cover the cost of temporary staff and overtime in MS to assist with the additional workload associated with running Police Recruit/Lateral recruitments up to 12 times per year. Council has also approved lateral signing bonuses for Police Officers from other agencies as well as additional vacation and sick leave, to remain competitive with surrounding agencies and strengthen the City's ability to attract experienced Police Officers.

Recruitment Processes and Improvements

MS staff continues advancing improvements aimed at streamlining recruitment processes while enhancing the candidate experience. Recent efforts include the implementation of ioPredict, an online testing platform providing a library of validated, job-specific written examinations, and AssureHire, a background screening and pre-employment platform that integrates with NEOGOV, the City's recruitment software, eliminating manual data entry and minimizing processing delays.

These new efforts to streamline processes build on previous initiatives implemented over the last few years, such as TestGenius, providing online skills assessments; Spark Hire In-Time Interviews, providing remote video interviews; a centralized onboarding portal for candidates through NEOGOV; and the creation, in partnership with the BCEA, of an Ongoing Candidate Pool (OCP), which allows departments to fill high-turnover and hard to fill positions faster.

Challenges in the Hiring Process

A continuing challenge in the hiring process is that the City's human resources software systems are not integrated with each other and/or are reaching the end of their useful life. As a result, many processes are manual or require workarounds due to system gaps.

The City's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, which is the backbone financial and human resources software that touches every employee, is over 25 years old and reaching the end of its life. Due to this, many of the steps of the hiring process require manual processing, which is time consuming and requires MS staff to focus on

administering the process rather than higher-value activities such as supporting departments with recruitment strategies. As part of the FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget, Council approved a multi-year funding plan to replace the City's ERP system over the next few years, and the planning phase of this project began in FY 2025-26. This project will ultimately enable the City to modernize and streamline its hiring processes.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

This activity has no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and as such, is not a "project" subject to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) 14 Cal. Code Regs § 15378.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

CONCLUSION

This report presents workforce, vacancy rate, and recruitment data, in compliance with AB 2561, as well as background data. It also showcases the Council's and staff's ongoing work to ensure that the City can recruit and retain a well-qualified workforce to provide the high-quality services the Burbank community expects. The work discussed in this report directly contributes to the Council's goals under City Services (recruit and retain high caliber employees) and Public Safety (maintain staffing of police and fire departments and increase appropriately as the City grows).

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1 – City of Burbank Workforce and Recruitment Data
Correspondences