

CITY OF
Richmond

Citywide Workforce Analysis

Project Report / May 3, 2024

May 3, 2024

Ms. Nickie Mastay, Deputy City Manager
City of Richmond
450 Civic Center Plaza
Richmond, CA 94804

Subject: Citywide Workforce Analysis Report

Dear Ms. Mastay:

We are pleased to provide this report presenting our analysis of the City of Richmond's (City) workload and staffing.

This organizational assessment was undertaken to evaluate staffing levels and the need for budgeted vacant positions citywide in response to a recommendation from the California State Auditor. This report summarizes our analysis of staffing and service levels within each department based upon current program and service offerings in order to develop recommendations on staffing levels, organization structure, succession planning, and to identify opportunities to increase operational efficiency.

The City of Richmond is fortunate to be staffed with employees who care deeply about the community and are passionate about the community. We are confident the City Council can use this report to better understand the staffing requirements for existing City programs and services and to then determine priorities to address community needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the City of Richmond.

Sincerely,



Michelle Ferguson

Vice President - Organizational Assessment

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Executive Summary

The City of Richmond is a diverse community, home to over 114,000 people located northeast of San Francisco in Contra Costa County. The City was incorporated in 1905, has a port on the coast, played a key role as a shipyard and employer during World War II, and presently supports both shipping and oil refineries.

In June 2023, and in response to a report by the California State Auditor, the City of Richmond contracted with Raftelis to perform a workforce analysis of City departments. The goal of this assessment was to determine appropriate staffing levels to maintain current and future service levels, assess the ongoing need for existing vacant and budgeted positions, and ensure succession planning was maintained. This assessment yielded several important conclusions as of its writing in January 2024.

The City is staffed with passionate, dedicated staff committed to supporting the City Council’s strategic vision for the community. The City had 742.9 authorized staff positions in the FY2023-24 budget. However, staff have been stretched with a Citywide average vacancy rate of 18% over the past three fiscal years. In some departments, the use of mandatory overtime has resulted in fatigue and turnover, with an average Citywide overtime use equating to 0.16 full time equivalent (FTE) or over six additional hours per week for every employee working for the City.

The City’s current menu of programs and services, combined with decreased authorized staffing levels in some areas and increased vacancies, has stretched remaining staff. For the past three years, the City has continued to provide service with many vacant positions, resulting in the need for mandatory overtime and additional work stress on remaining staff. Many staff are close to retirement and the City will need to prepare for succession to ensure new leaders are developed. While hiring has improved in recent months, the City will need to continue to think about the best means to recruit and attract new staff. Information technology requires an investment in order to automate operations as well as to provide data-driven tools for management.

The City should focus first upon filling existing vacancies and then consider whether specific programs and services merit, and ongoing revenues can support, an investment in new staff positions. This report shows that, to provide its existing menu of services and programs well, an investment of 74 additional staff positions – above the existing vacancies – is required, at a cost of over \$12 million. The City is unlikely to have this level of ongoing financial growth and, thus, will need to prioritize its offerings to residents.

The following table summarizes the recommendations included in this report. A total of 52 recommendations are provided, including both staffing and operational recommendations, across all City departments.

Table 1: Summary of Recommendations

Number	Recommendation
Community Development	
1	Add one new Building Inspector position.
2	Create one new Plan Check Engineer position and increase training.
3	Recruit and fill a vacant Code Enforcement Officer position and embed with the Police Department.
4	Create three new Code Enforcement Officer positions.
5	Support a “full cost recovery” approach to community development services with a comprehensive Community Development Department user fee study.

Number	Recommendation
6	Assess the continued benefit of contracted plan-check firms for administrative and permit processes.
7	Improve telecommunications and mobile computing technology.
Economic Development	
8	Add one new full-time Senior Business Assistance Officer dedicated to the Port of Richmond.
9	Develop a Strategic Plan for Port operations.
10	Develop a marketing strategy and add additional contracted support for Marketing and Operations management for the Port of Richmond.
Community Services	
11	Add 10 new full-time Recreation Program Coordinator positions to support the City's recreation and community centers.
12	Add one new Auditorium Leadworker or similar position to oversee Auditorium rentals and supervise the Auditorium Aide positions.
13	Work with the Children & Youth Division to see if YouthWORKS grant funding can be used to supplement part-time Recreation staff.
14	Fill seven FTE Library Assistant vacancies and add three new FTE positions to add evening hours
15	Add one FTE Management Analyst position to oversee Transportation Services (R-Transit, Paratransit, Public Transportation) as the unit is transitioned to the Public Works Department.
16	Add one Assistant Planner to the Planning Department to create a Transportation Planning function for the City.
17	Streamline the Community Services fee structure to increase cost recovery and ease of use by staff.
18	Review the inventory of Recreation programs and services to eliminate those which are outdated and serving fewer residents.
19	For Children & Youth, evaluate the grant management workload after FY2024 awardees are selected and re-evaluate hiring needs accordingly.
Internal Services	
20	Create one project management position in IT to support prioritized City investment in technological improvements.
21	Establish a Grants Management Office within the Finance Division that includes the Grant Coordinator and two new Accountant II positions.
22	Establish a formal Human Resources Liaison role within each department to support proactive recruitment efforts.
23	Develop an organizational development and training program that incorporates workplace safety and supervisory training.
Executive Offices	
24	Reduce reliance on outside legal contracts.
25	Realign City Clerk services to create capacity for records management and public requests.
26	Increase the threshold for City Manager contract approval.
Public Works	
27	Adopt a ratio of 7-10 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects per project manager based on scope and complexity.
28	Maintain current Fleet Maintenance staffing, develop a mechanism to track utilization rates, and establish a utilization rate target.
29	Prioritize filling vacant positions in the Facilities Maintenance Division and monitor the need for additional staff.
30	Add one new Supervisor position to oversee the Painters and Carpenter's Unit.
31	Add one new Management Analyst position to serve as contract manager and oversee non-program or project-specific contracts.
32	Update the capital planning process to align with best practice.

Number	Recommendation
33	Begin performing proactive street sign maintenance and implement a 10-year work plan.
34	Work with the Police Department to enhance the effectiveness of the street sweeping program.
35	Pursue a Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) to track work orders and labor hours by task.
36	Implement an annual work planning process and track staff performance.
37	Dedicate two mechanics to Public Safety Vehicles.
38	Re-evaluate service levels for city-wide maintenance and assessment districts.
39	Negotiate to add a bulk pickup service within the existing waste contract.
Fire Department	
40	Enable Battalion Chiefs, Captains, and Engineers to work out of grade to prevent overworking specific ranks in the organization.
41	Prioritize hiring staff to fill all existing vacancies.
42	Add 18.0 FTE new firefighter positions to reach a staffing factor of 1.3 personnel per shift.
43	Implement a rover or floater staffing policy allowing staff on shift to cover various leave types.
44	Develop and maintain an ongoing hiring list for recruits as well as an ongoing eligibility list for promotions.
45	Develop a Department-wide strategic plan.
46	Improve technology to increase the efficiency and accuracy of data.
47	Expand the mental health program recently initiated to aid staff experiencing the effects of mandatory overtime and high call volume.
Police Department	
48	Add staff positions in the Patrol function.
49	Add at least two Detective positions for additional capacity in the Investigations Bureau.
50	Evaluate service levels in light of current staff capacity.
51	Cultivate a culture of wellness throughout the Police Department.
52	Explore opportunities to regionalize or contract out some dispatch services.

Introduction

Background and Methodology

In June 2023, the City of Richmond engaged Raftelis to conduct a workforce analysis of all eight City departments, including Public Works, Police, Fire, Community Development, Economic Development, Community Services, Internal Services, and Executive. The purpose of this study was to perform a workforce analysis in order to determine appropriate staffing levels to maintain current and future service levels, assess the ongoing need for existing vacant positions, and ensure succession planning was maintained.

In November 2022, the California State Auditor released a report, “City of Richmond: Anticipated Deficits, High Pension Debt, and Mismanagement of its Housing Authority Cause the City to Be High Risk.” In this report, the Auditor states:

To mitigate the costs of increasing salaries, the city should perform a workforce analysis by June 2024. Based on the results of the analysis, the city council should consider eliminating vacant positions that it deems no longer necessary. Additionally, the city should continue to assess its need for any vacant position before it seeks to fill it.

With these goals in mind, interviews were conducted remotely with the City Manager, the Mayor, and each member of the City Council in order to learn about their expectations for this review and their perceptions with regard to staffing levels and concerns. Raftelis’ project team visited the City and spent time onsite at each City department, performing individual and small group interviews with staff to learn about their experiences and thoughts regarding staffing and service levels, and to understand operations. Our team also reviewed documents and data provided by the City, including detailed staffing rosters, vacancy listings, and organizational charts among many other items. Our review for each department included comparisons to national benchmarks and best practices from industry associations and other municipalities.

These interviews, document and data analysis, and best practices research informed the recommendations included in this report.

About Richmond

The City of Richmond is a charter city in the State of California incorporated in 1905 in the State of California and in Contra Costa County. The City is diverse, with a population of over 114,000 persons including 44.6% Hispanic or Latino, 19.1% Black or African American, 14.4% Asian, and 20% White. Over 66% of the population was foreign born according to the US Census Bureau and over half speak a language besides English at home. Median household income is \$79,478¹.

The City of Richmond operates under the City Manager form of government, in which the City Council provides policy direction and appoints a City Manager to implement them, directing departments and providing daily leadership. The City provides a full menu of municipal services to this community. The Mayor is elected at large and is a member of the City Council.

¹ US Census Bureau 2017-2021 ACS 5-Year estimate

The organizational structure of the City of Richmond is summarized below.

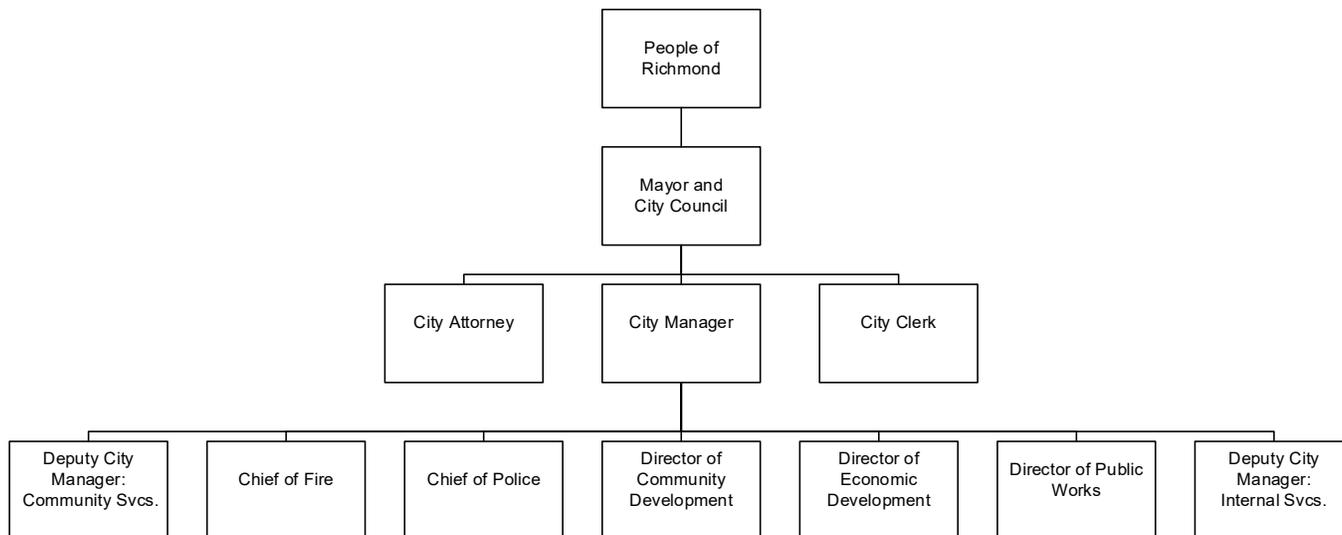


Figure 1: City of Richmond Organizational Chart, FY2024

Personnel expenditures, consisting of salaries and wages and fringe benefits, comprise nearly 65% of the total General Fund operating budget. Fringe benefits for the City are a significant ongoing cost, driven in part to a high pension liability. Based on FY2024 budget estimates, for every dollar of salary cost, there is an additional 75 cents required to support fringe benefits. The table below provides a summary of growth in General Fund expenditures by category.

Table 2: General Fund Expenditures by Category, FY2020 – FY2024²

Category	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Actual	FY2022 Actual	FY2023 Actual	FY2024 Budget	Percent Change FY2020 to FY2024
Salaries and Wages	\$73,104,770	\$69,477,203	\$70,437,323	\$69,111,901	\$83,176,695	13.8%
Fringe Benefits	\$54,674,483	\$60,032,737	\$60,166,323	\$66,944,218	\$63,042,611	15.3%
Professional and Administrative	\$7,923,019	\$7,956,432	\$10,539,784	\$13,159,837	\$20,045,191	153.0%
Utilities	\$3,893,693	\$4,459,855	\$4,740,670	\$4,356,261	\$5,295,865	36.0%
Debt Service	\$1,037,942	\$1,047,339	\$2,908,306	\$2,944,812	\$841,353	-18.9%
Asset/Capital Outlay/Transfers Out	\$13,562,225	\$17,481,415	\$17,498,328	\$35,749,048	\$19,658,202	44.9%
Other³	\$17,159,765	\$17,154,439	\$17,188,915	\$17,837,413	\$33,314,690	94.1%
Total	\$171,355,897	\$177,609,420	\$183,479,649	\$210,103,490	\$225,374,607	31.5%

² Actual expenditures retrieved from Richmond Open Budget Data. Budget data retrieved from FY2023-2024 Budget Document.

³ Includes the following expenditure categories: cost pool expenditures and reimbursement, equipment and contract services, grant expenditures, other operating, and provision for insurance loss.

Workload Drivers

In thinking about staffing levels for the City, it is important to consider service level expectations. What programs and services are staff expected to provide? What are the performance standards? What are the expectations from the community, from City management, and from the Mayor and City Council? To accurately determine necessary staffing levels, expectations must be clarified.

The workload of a city's staff is driven by many things, including:

City growth. If the community population is increasing, or its geographic boundaries expand through annexation or development, this will necessarily increase staff workload; simply put, more residents or more area must be covered. The population in Richmond has grown 17.4% over the past 20 years, from 99,216 residents in 2000 to 116,448 in 2020.

External mandates or City policies. Often, staff must address new regulations or requirements put upon them from either local or external regulations. The Community Development Department, for example, has had to respond to many State mandates with regard to affordable housing and accessory dwelling units that were imposed externally upon them. This requires additional work and staff capacity to address.

Community demands. Sometimes specific trends or interest areas rise to the attention of the local community which then demands action by the City. In many communities, the rise of the sport pickleball in recent years resulted in demands for increased court space, resulting in the need for Recreation providers to address this. The Reimagining Public Safety Task Force in Richmond is an example of this as well, when residents sought a new approach to policing in the community, which resulted in the need for staff time to address the issue.

The VIP Phenomenon. It is not uncommon for Mayors, City Council members, and the City Manager's Office to directly contact departments to make specific service requests on a regular basis. While understandable, this can result in a "drop everything else to address this VIP's request right now" reaction from departments. While each person thinks "it is just one request," multiple officials are often doing it concurrently. This results in disruption of daily work plans and priorities in departments, putting staff in a reactive mode, jumping from request to request and limiting their ability to act thoughtfully and proactively to address service requests equitably and effectively for City residents.

While the items above can change the amount of workload, workload efficiency and the ability of staff to quickly and accurately perform is impacted by other factors, including:

Staff vacancies. When staff vacancies exist, the available staff capacity to perform work is reduced. This work is either not completed or given to other remaining staff on top of their existing duties, which means work is not performed to the level of quality it was previously.

Manual vs. automated processes. The manner in which staff conduct work can drive workload; if processes are manually done rather than automated through use of computers, laptops, or cell phones, or if the software systems already in place are not optimized, this can take more time and slow processes, reducing available staff capacity to address other tasks.

"Because we've always done it that way." In many agencies, the lack of systematic change or review of existing programs and services leads to continued use of old approaches to performing the work that may now offer modern tools or new approaches. This can reduce staff capacity to address other workload tasks, decreasing staff efficiency.

It is important to consider what drives staff workload on a day-to-day basis in thinking about staffing levels and their ability to meet expectations. Staff time is a finite resource, limited to an employee’s ability to work in a day and financial resources to pay for overtime. The workload is driven by a combination of daily tasks to address existing ongoing programs and services, often with an added layer of annual “special projects” or City Council priorities. It is easy to forget that these new initiatives, which are all posed with great intent, must be added to staff capacity on top of the tasks already required to address existing programs and services, as illustrated in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2: The Staff Workload Iceberg

In order to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of its staff, the City must consider and address the workload items above. Staff need clear expectations and priorities as well as the tools to perform their work well in order to address City goals. The phrase, “Jack of all trades, master of none” becomes relevant; staff can provide excellent service in a few focused areas or lackluster/moderate service in many. Their time is limited so they must be focused on the City’s priorities to ensure they are addressed in a quality manner. A reasonable number of limited annual goals and new initiatives should be imposed with the understanding that most staff time is already committed to existing daily operations. If a new initiative is of higher priority, then other programs and services should be reduced or eliminated to make room.

City Staffing Overview

In analyzing the current and future staffing needs of the City, it was important to begin with some context as to historical authorized staffing levels, vacancies, the use of overtime, and ongoing revenues that support ongoing personnel cost.

AUTHORIZED STAFFING

The City’s staffing levels have ebbed and flowed since 2005, as they have in many communities. Staffing is fluid and changes daily; the information for this review was from reports run in August and November 2023. A summary of authorized FTEs reported in the annual budget document as compared to the City’s General Fund revenues is provided in Figure 3 below.

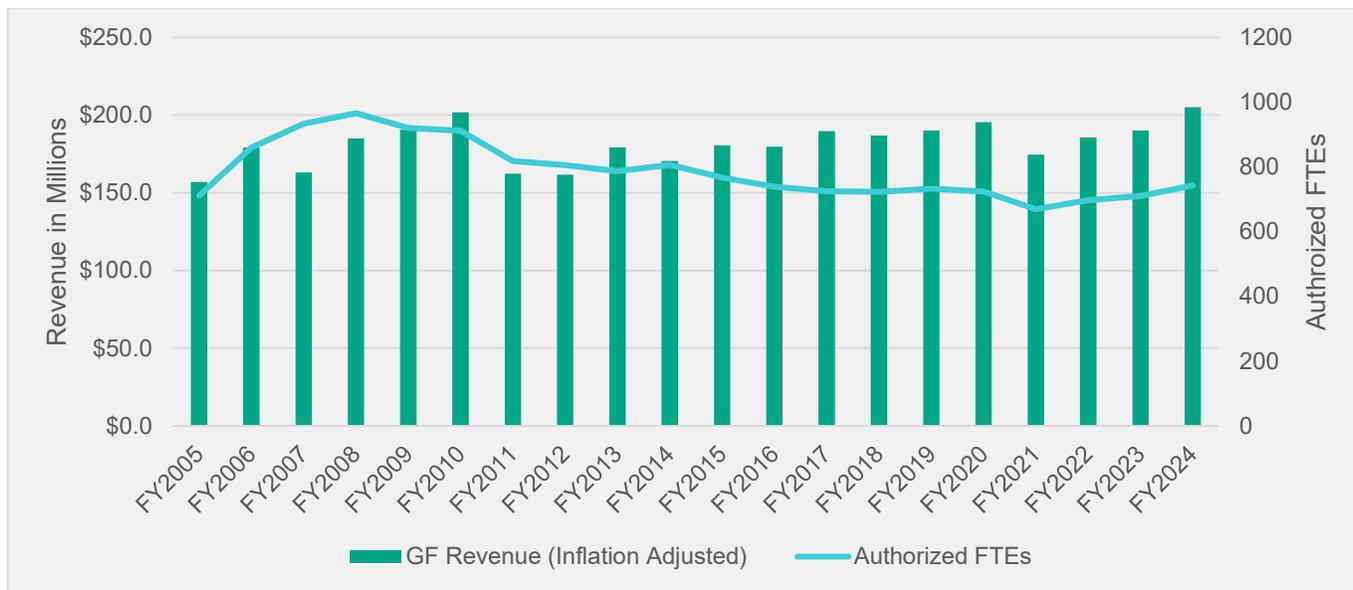


Figure 3: City Staffing and Revenues, 2005 - Present

As can be seen, Richmond downsized authorized positions as a result of the national 2008-09 economic downturn and related revenue shortfalls, and again as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-21. In FY2024, staffing levels are just exceeding those from 2010, with 742.9 authorized positions for FY2024. Over the past decade the City has been cautious about increasing authorized staffing, as General Fund revenue growth was slow or declining in some years.

POSITION VACANCIES

Based on data from FY2022 to FY2024, the City had an average of 17% of authorized positions vacant, excluding soft holds or those positions not filled temporarily at the City Manager’s discretion. This is the equivalent of 135 FTEs or 18% of authorized staffing levels. In other words, *the City has been operating at 82% staffing levels for the past three years*. This means that the City has continued to operate programs and services with almost 20% less staff than budgeted.

The City reports difficulty recruiting and hiring for some positions; in some cases, positions have been vacant for up to a year or more. This is not unusual in the post-pandemic era, with many cities nationwide struggling to recruit and retain qualified staff members. A change in leadership and direction of the Richmond Human Resources Department has led to an increased pace of hirings, and many previously vacant positions have been filled since summer of 2023.

While it is noteworthy that staff have been able to continue delivering services in this environment, it does not come without consequences. As mentioned previously, increased workload leads to a decline in the quality of service and the adverse impact this increased workload has had on staff morale was evident during our interview process. The increasing workload burden associated with assuming the responsibilities of vacant positions creates long-term service sustainability risk to the organization. As staff become burned out, they will seek employment elsewhere. Moreover, many of the staff are reaching retirement age eligibility, which further exacerbates the vacancy issue.

OVERTIME

While overtime use is normal for most agencies, the level used in Richmond is significant. A review of overtime usage Citywide from FY2021 – 2023 showed that overtime equated to 15% of regular staff hours. This essentially mirrors the vacancy rate trends discussed above, indicating that workload demand clearly exists beyond the current staffing capacity, and it is only being met by staff working beyond regularly scheduled hours.

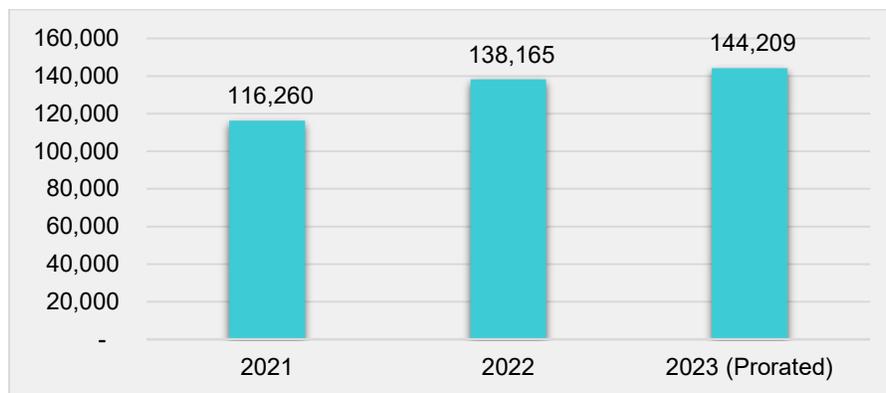


Figure 4: Total Overtime Hours Citywide, 2021 - 2023

Overtime usage is highest in the City’s Fire and Police Departments, which have mandated its use to meet minimum staffing coverage due to vacancies. Fire Department overtime equates to 38% of regular staff hours, with the Police Department at 18% of regular staff hours.

As shown in Figure 5 below, Citywide the average overtime hours *per employee* is more than 300 hours, or almost 0.16 FTE. This is a significant burden upon existing staff members; though compensated, overtime contributes to physical and mental fatigue, safety concerns, and reduced work/life balance. Overtime is also typically paid at 1.5 times an employee’s normal salary, resulting in costs to the City.

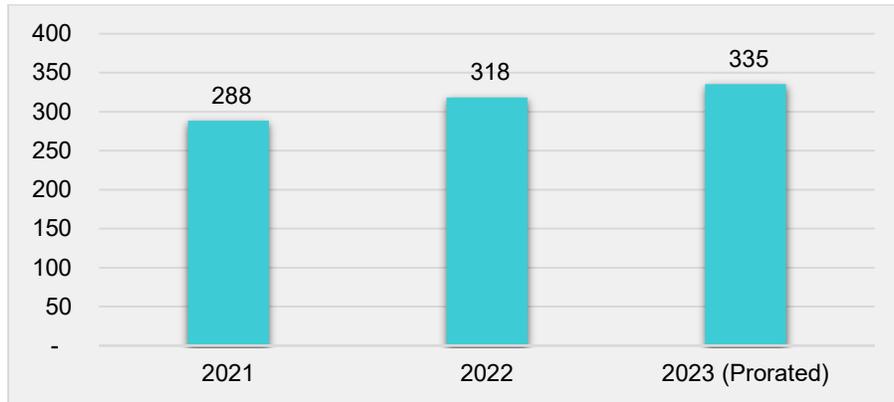


Figure 5: Average Overtime Hours per Employee Citywide, 2021 - 2023

Translating these overtime levels to dollars, and based upon this three-year average, the City’s average overtime is the equivalent of 63.7 FTEs, or almost half of its vacancies.

RESPONSE TO THE STATE AUDITOR

This analysis was in response to the State Auditor’s report with a desire to answer the question, “Does the City actually need to fund the vacant positions for which it is budgeting?” Based upon Raftelis’ analysis, and upon the current inventory of City programs and services, the answer is yes.

In fact, our analysis shows the need for an additional 74 FTE positions *beyond* filling the known vacancies in order to meet current service level expectations for all of the City’s existing programs and services. This would be at a significant cost of \$12.5 million; while a financial analysis was beyond the scope of this review, Raftelis’ opinion is that the City does not have the revenue growth necessary to immediately support this level of staffing increase. Any additional authorized staffing should be tied to ongoing revenue growth that supports the position or a corresponding adjustment to staffing levels within other discretionary programs the City provides.

While the City has made positive progress in growing its reserves in recent years, this is likely in part due to vacancy savings and not all the result of actual economic growth. The City will need to be cautious in increasing staff levels without ongoing revenues to support them. Care should be given to carefully invest staff in those areas that will support long-term financial sustainability, and/or can be offset through either cost recovery or grant funds. The City might also utilize external professional services where appropriate to augment service requirements rather than add long-term staff and additional pension liabilities to the City.

Analysis and Recommendations

The information below is relevant to the recommendations provided in this report. It provides important context for the reader and a starting place to begin thinking about the prioritization of City services.

Limitations to the Analysis

It is important to remember that this workload analysis was conducted at a moment in time; staffing and vacancies are quite fluid in the City. The information is based upon position control information from August and November 2023 provided by the Human Resources Division. It is likely that, even during the writing of this report, these numbers have changed considerably. This analysis focused upon each department's ability to provide its programs and services in a quality manner, based upon local need, and the staffing resources necessary to do so. This analysis is still relevant should some formerly vacant positions be filled.

Financial analysis was limited to the City's online Adopted Budget and Annual Comprehensive Finance Report (ACFR) documents, as well as the City's online financial transparency site. Detail regarding the funding for specific staff positions was not available. For this reason, and because an in-depth financial analysis was outside of the scope of work for this engagement, Raftelis has provided its assessment of the staffing necessary to provide high service levels in each service area outside of the context of financial ability and resources.

Core Services Matrix

The City of Richmond provides a wide array of programs and services to its residents, ranging from street maintenance and public safety to library services and employment training. Every community has a constant desire for more services, but is limited by its available financial and operating resources. It is the role of policymakers to prioritize and determine how best to maximize services and programs for the most residents using the finite resources available.

In order to do this, the City Council will need to prioritize amongst the many programs and services competing for limited resources. This is a difficult task for which there is no right answer. One approach to address this is to review each program or service provided by the City against specific criteria in order to score and rank them. The program ranking can comprise a first step to determine which programs best meet specific local objectives, City Council goals, and offer the greatest benefit to residents.

To support this effort, Raftelis created a Core Service Matrix to initiate the prioritization of City services and programs. Raftelis first inventoried the City's many programs and services across all departments and developed ratings for each of the following seven criteria:

- Is this service or program mandated at the local, state, or federal level?
- Is this service or program necessary for life safety?
- Does this service or program preserve existing City assets or infrastructure?
- Does this service or program provide direct service to the public?
- Does this service or program support City Council goals or the strategic plan?
- Can this service or program be outsourced or contracted to other providers?

- How many customers does this program serve?

While the criteria selection and subsequent rating may be considered subjective, the core service matrix approach creates a framework to support discussion of programs and priorities. By focusing on those criteria most critical to the local community, policymakers can begin to see where they receive the most return on community investment from provided services and programs.

Matrix Results

Raftelis listed each key program or service within each department and then rated it against the seven criteria above. The results as summarized on a department-wide level are provided in Table 3 below and ranked from high priority (5) to low priority (1).

Table 3: Richmond Department Core Service Priority Ranking

Department	Ranking
Fire	3.2
Public Works	2.8
Community Development	2.7
Police	2.6
Community Services	2.5
Executive	2.3
Economic Development	2.1
Internal Services	1.8

As can be seen, the top three departments were Fire, Public Works, and Community Development, with Police at fourth. It is somewhat surprising that Police ranked below Community Development, but this is impacted by City Council goals and state/federal mandates which increase some Community Development rankings.

The bottom three departments included Executive, Economic Development, and Internal Services. While Executive and Internal Services makes sense as internal service departments, we would expect Economic Development to rank higher, in particular given the desire expressed in interviews with the Mayor and City Council to enhance it locally. Again, these rankings are not perfect and meant to provide a framework for discussion.

Much more telling than these department-wide rankings, however, are those of the specific programs and services within each department, which vary widely. These are provided below in descending order of ranked priority.

Table 4: Richmond Program Core Service Priority Ranking

Department	Program Area	Ranking
Police	Police Communications Center	4.3
Police	Patrol Operations Bureau	4.2
Fire	Fire Prevention	4.1
Fire	Fire Suppression and EMS	3.8
Police	Investigations Bureau	3.8
Fire	Emergency Services Center Manager	3.6
Public Works	Water Resource Recovery	3.6
Police	Crime Scene Investigation	3.4

Department	Program Area	Ranking
Police	Jail Facility	3.1
Public Works	Street Maintenance	3.1
Public Works	Engineering & Capital Improvement Program (CIP)	3.0
Community Services	Office of Neighborhood Safety	2.9
Economic Development	Environmental & Health Initiatives	2.9
Police	Traffic & Special Events Unit	2.9
Executive	City Clerk's Office	2.8
Internal Services	Risk Management & Benefits	2.8
Community Services	Children and Youth	2.8
Police	Police Property and Records Section	2.8
Public Works	Parks Maintenance	2.8
Community Services	Recreation	2.6
Economic Development	Port	2.5
Executive	City Manager's Office	2.5
Fire	Training	2.5
Economic Development	Arts and Culture	2.4
Community Services	Library & Cultural Services	2.3
Executive	Mayor's Office	2.3
Internal Services	Budget & Treasury	2.3
Police	Crime Analysis	2.3
Internal Services	General Accounting	2.3
Police	Police Safety Technology Section	2.3
Police	Crime Prevention Services Unit	2.3
Police	Office of the Chief	2.3
Public Works	Maintenance and Abatement	2.3
Public Works	Fleet	2.3
Community Services	Transportation	2.2
Internal Services	Revenue & Business Tax	2.2
Internal Services	Accounts Payable & Procurement	2.2
Internal Services	Business Systems and Application Support	2.2
Community Services	Employment & Training	2.1
Internal Services	Infrastructure and client support	2.1
Economic Development	Business Development	1.9
Internal Services	Payroll	1.9
Police	Cadet Program	1.9
Economic Development	Real Estate	1.8
Executive	City Council's Office	1.8
Executive	City Attorney's Office	1.8
Fire	Fire Administration and Support	1.8
Police	Personnel and Training Section	1.8
Police	Office of Professional Accountability	1.8
Police	Administration Bureau Management	1.8
Internal Services	IT Public Communication	1.7
Internal Services	Labor Relations	1.7

Department	Program Area	Ranking
Police	Financial Services Unit	1.4
Economic Development	Economic Development Administration	1.3
Internal Services	Recruitment and personnel management	1.3
Internal Services	Finance Administration	1.2
Internal Services	HR Administration	1.2
Internal Services	IT Administration	1.0

Again, these rankings are subjective and therefore subject to debate. Nonetheless, the Core Service Matrix is a tool to begin to review and prioritize the City’s many services and programs and was used by Raftelis as a part of this workload analysis. A Microsoft® Excel version of the core service matrix will be provided to the City, and adjustments can be made to specific criteria to change rankings as the City desires for its internal use.

Community Development Department

The Community Development Department provides services supporting the development of the urban environment, including built and open space. The mission of the Department is to “foster the community towards sustainable, equitable, smart growth, transit-oriented community envisioned in the City’s General Plan.” The Department is comprised of six divisions: Planning, Building, Code Enforcement, Transformative Climate Communities, Housing Division/Successor Agency, and Administrative Services. The Department is led by the Director of Community Development.

The City’s FY2023-24 Adopted Budget included 40.0 FTE positions in the Department. The Department’s functional organizational structure is summarized in Figure 2 below.

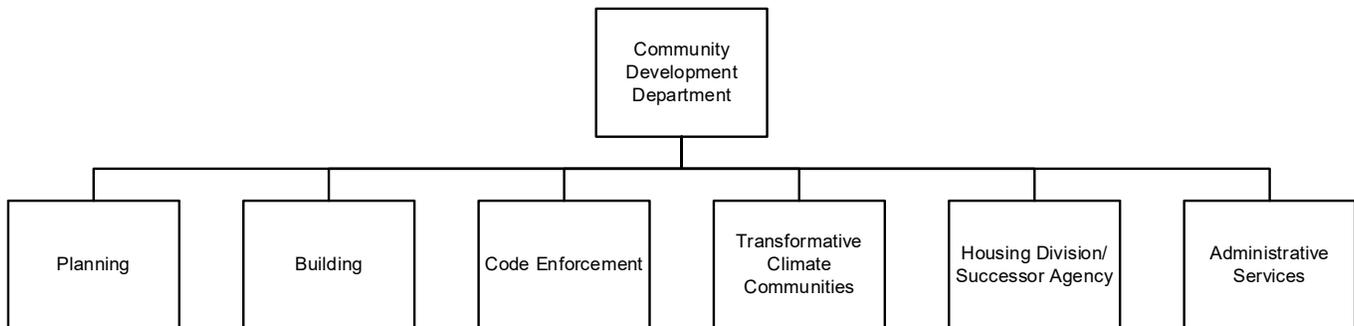


Figure 6: Community Development Department Organizational Structure, FY2023-24

The **Planning Division** is responsible for long-range and current planning policies, plans, and activities, including the implementation and funding (e.g., grant writing) of plan objectives and initiatives, evaluation of development proposals, property regulation inquiries, and liaising and assisting various boards, commissions, and neighborhood associations.

The **Building Division** enforces and manages codes and programs to facilitate the health and safety of the built environment in Richmond. This excludes the enforcement of California Building Code Standards, the management of the Residential Inspection Program, and the collection of various fees.

The **Code Enforcement Division** administers programs to enforce City ordinances and State and Federal laws related to the built environment and issues within the public right of way. These issues generally relate to public nuisances, property maintenance, land use, zoning, and housing compliance, and complaints. Activities within the division aim to protect public safety, welfare, quality of life, and property values within Richmond.

The **Transformative Climate Communities** Division is an initiative funded through the California Strategic Growth Council. The Division addresses concerns related to climate change, including sustainability, resilience, and environmental justice, by empowering marginalized communities within Richmond to implement a range of action-oriented solutions identified in its Climate Action Plan, “Richmond Rising.” Solutions identified in the plan relate to affordable transit, complete streets design, renewable energy, water, food, and urban greening.

The **Housing Division/Successor Agency** is a legacy division of the Richmond Community Redevelopment Agency that facilitates community and economic development, job training, and real estate activity to revitalize blighted areas, reduce crime, and encourage private investment throughout Richmond. The Housing Division also assists homeless and disabled individuals in obtaining housing, develops new affordable housing, expands opportunities for low- and

moderate-income residents, and improves existing housing conditions. The City Council approved The Richmond Homelessness Strategic Plan⁴ on May 23, 2023. The Richmond Homelessness Strategic Plan recommends short-term and long-term action steps to meet the following goals:

1. Improve quality of life for unsheltered individuals and communities;
2. Create temporary supportive housing and expand/sustain permanent supportive and affordable long-term housing;
3. Expand prevention and crisis programming;
4. Improve economic pathways for unhoused and recently housed individuals; and
5. Build capacity, collaboration and accountability within agencies working to address homelessness and the system of care as a whole.

The **Administrative Services Division** provides administrative support to the Community Development Department Director as well as supporting the general operations of the Planning Division, the Building Division, and the Code Enforcement Division. The Division provides department-wide leadership, management oversight, and policy direction for overall operations and implementation. The Division coordinates information technology issues, special projects and research, budget and fiscal oversight, regulatory compliance and reporting, and associated purchasing, payroll, and accounting services for the entire Department.

STAFFING LEVEL HISTORY

Staffing within the Community Development Department increased 18.3% over the past five years from 33.8 authorized FTEs to 40.0 FTEs. This rate of change includes the Code Enforcement Division, which was a unit in the Infrastructure Maintenance & Operations Department in the FY 2020 budget. These positions were included to provide comparability across time in this function. Staffing in the Code Enforcement Division has remained relatively stable with one new FTE added in the FY 2022 Budget. The Planning Division recorded the largest increase in authorized FTEs at 3.0 FTEs between FY2020 and FY2024, representing a 50% increase. The addition of grant funded positions for Transformative Climate Communities added 2.0 new authorized FTEs to the Department between FY2023 and FY2024. Finally, the Department averaged a vacancy rate of 15.6% between FY2020 and FY2024.

Table 5: Community Development Department Staffing, FY2020 through FY2024

Staffing (FTE)	FY2020 Budget	FY2021 Budget	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Budget	FY2024 Budget	Percent Change FY2020 to FY2024
Planning	6.0	6.0	6.0	8.0	9.0	50.0%
Building	14.0	14.0	15.0	15.0	14.0	0.0%
Code Enforcement	7.0 ⁵	7.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	14.3%
Transformative Climate Communities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	NA
Housing Division /Successor Agency	3.8	2.8	2.0	1.0	3.0	-21.1%
Administrative Services	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	33.0%
Community Development Total	33.8	33.8	35.0	36.0	40.0	18.3%

⁴ The Richmond Homelessness Strategic Plan is located on the City website:

<https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/64766/Richmond-Homelessness-Strategic-Plan-02-08-23>

⁵ Code Enforcement positions in FY 2020 were part of the Infrastructure Maintenance & Operations Department; they are included here for relative comparison of staff changes by function over time.

CORE SERVICE MATRIX

The following table outlines core services (programs) provided by each division within the Community Development Department. The table is not meant to be all inclusive; rather, it summarizes at a high level how staff are allocated to meet the service-level demand for each division. Programs are prioritized based on key factors and assumptions detailed in the section on the Core Service Matrix above.

Table 6: Community Development Department Core Services Matrix

Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
Housing Division/ Successor Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate community and economic development, job training, and real estate activity Unhoused rental assistance and grant programs Manage Home Improvement Loan Program Monitor Regulatory Agreement 	1.0	2.0
Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce standard building codes Manage Residential Inspection Program Manage habitability complaints and inspections Assess and collect associated fees and fines 	13.0	1.0
Code Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce nuisance, property maintenance, land use, zoning, and housing compliance codes Coordinate inspections and dispositions Enforce RRIP compliance Manage Vacant Property Monitoring 	6.0	2.0
Transformative Climate Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a range of action-oriented solutions identified in its Climate Action Plan, "Richmond Rising" 	2.0	0.0
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop long-range plans Develop and manage current plans Develop and submit grants Develop responses to public/property regulation inquiries Support board / commission / neighborhood association meetings and management 	6.0	3.0
Administrative Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides administrative support to the Director and the major operating divisions Manage budgets Purchasing Administer contracts Manage personnel transactions 	2.0	2.0

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Service demands in community development, and the resources necessary to support that demand, can vary from city to city. Demographic and economic differences between communities can affect the scope, depth, and volume of services provided.

Demographic considerations impacting community development functional workload include geographic dispersion of community development, the relative income disparity that exists across the community, and the relatively greater share of residents identifying as foreign born. The incorporated areas of the City are geographically dispersed as displayed in the following figure. The US Census identifies City geography comprising approximately 30 square miles⁶. This geographic size and dispersion can contribute to greater service times for necessary site inspections by various Community Development staff.

Richmond is also a diverse community in many ways, including household income. As displayed in the following figure, based on US Census data⁷, there is considerable variation in household income by geographic area in the City. Community Development functional service demands can increase as the community strives to support residents to meet their responsibilities for necessary property repair and maintenance as those expenses compete with other daily living expenses. The latest US Census data identifies that 13.4% of City residents are individuals with incomes below the poverty level.

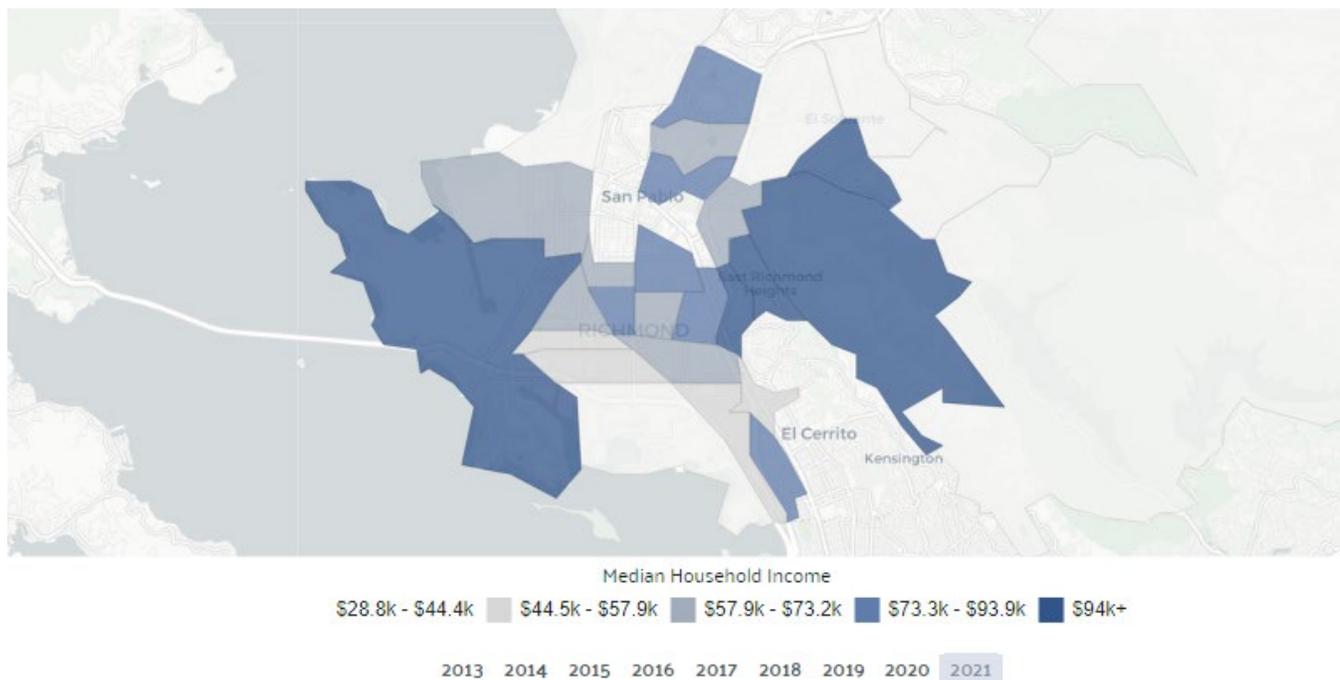


Figure 7: Richmond Median Household Income by Area, 2021

The City of Richmond is also diverse in terms of its racial and ethnic makeup. The percentage of residents that identify as foreign born is relatively high compared to other local areas and the State. The following figure presents the percentage of City of Richmond foreign born residents (33.6%) compared to other local, regional, and state areas.

Table 7: Foreign-Born Residents by Area

Community / Area	% Foreign Born
Richmond	33.6%
San Francisco – Oakland – Hayward	30.8%

⁶ US Census. QuickFacts. Richmond city, California. Geography.

⁷ NeighborhoodScout.com, Richmond, California.

Community / Area	% Foreign Born
Richmond (North), Hercules & El Cerrito Cities	30.7%
California	26.5%
Contra Costa County	25.0%
Concord, Martinez & Pleasant Hill Cities	21.6%
United States	13.6%

While diversity is a strength, it can also present cultural differences that must be acknowledged and incorporated into the fabric of the community. This can impact Community Development functions with the varying cultural viewpoints and expectations regarding necessary and appropriate use and maintenance of private property. The Community Development functional staff are challenged to identify these issues, address them with the owners and residents, and reach acceptable solutions.

The Community Development function may vary between cities in terms of organization, areas of responsibility, service demands, and operating resources to support residents and their property. One common feature they share is their general role safeguarding their respective communities in terms of assessed value.

The assessed value of the community can provide a uniform and understood metric for community value. Comparing different operating factors to the total assessed value in a community can help to identify different approaches and results.

In the following table, the total assessed value for Richmond and four other peer communities are listed with total value expressed in thousands (\$000). Operating expenditures supporting the respective Community Development functions in each city are also listed. The operating expenditures per \$1,000 of assessed value are provided and indicate that Richmond spends relatively more per \$1,000 of assessed value than the peer communities.

Table 8: Community Development Expenditures per \$1,000 Assessed Value

	Richmond	Berkeley	El Cerrito	Vallejo	Oakland
Assessed Value (\$000)	\$17,703,134	\$26,712,286	\$5,127,378	\$12,746,896	\$85,251,575
Expenditures	\$13,604,327	\$27,993,360	\$4,402,640	\$6,618,358	\$51,413,001
Exp / \$1,000 Assessed Value	\$0.77	\$1.05	\$0.86	\$0.52	\$0.60

Because short-term increases in expenditures associated with development initiatives or code updates can inflate budget amounts in a particular year, the Richmond Community Development Department expenditures were reduced by an estimated \$7 million, representing one year of the five-year \$35 million Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) Grant. With this adjustment, Richmond expends \$0.77 per \$1,000 in total assessed value to support community services. Berkeley spends considerably more, while the remaining three peers are similar to Richmond. Comparing the average expenditure per \$1,000 assessed value for these three communities (El Cerrito, Vallejo, and Oakland) of \$0.66 identifies a cost savings of approximately 14%. Comparing Richmond expenditures to the lowest two communities (Vallejo and Oakland) identifies cost savings of approximately 27%. The difference in the relative cost to provide services may be related to how the services are provided.

The City of Richmond uses contractual services in lieu of direct City staff to provide services in Community Development to a greater extent than its peers. The following table provides the budgeted amounts for Salaries & Benefits as well as Contractual Services for Richmond and each of the peers. The increased reliance on contracted

services to support operations may contribute to the higher relative operating cost expressed as expenditures per \$1,000 assessed value.

Table 9: Community Development Expenditures per \$1,000 Assessed Value

	Richmond	Berkeley	El Cerrito	Vallejo	Oakland
Total Expenditures	\$13,604,327	\$27,993,360	\$4,402,640	\$6,618,358	\$51,413,001
Salaries & Benefits	\$5,576,155	\$19,904,438	\$2,571,014	\$5,508,728	\$39,781,265
Contractual Services	\$5,524,834	\$4,012,225	\$1,557,825	\$720,662	\$6,647,950
% Salaries of Total	41.0%	71.1%	58.4%	83.2%	77.4%
% Contractual of Total	40.6%	14.3%	35.4%	10.9%	12.9%

STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Add one new Building Inspector position.

The City supports development and aggressively pursues approaches to support development and rehabilitation. To that end, the City maintains an operating goal to support both residents and the development community by providing next-day inspections following a request. Actions that support predictable and productive scheduling help to reduce delays and development costs.

Adding another Building Inspector position is an immediate step that the City can take to support more effective service and move towards the next-day inspections target. Predictability with systems and schedules can restore confidence with clients that their needs will be met, minimizing additional client contacts and associated processing issues.

Adding a full-time position will incur additional operating costs for salary, benefits, and initial outlay of necessary supplies, equipment, and technology. This additional cost can be partially offset through a reduction in use and costs associated with contracted vendors. Taking steps to reduce reliance on contracted services may reduce total operating costs and support succession planning efforts for the City.

The estimated cost for this position at the median and using the City’s 80% benefits multiplier is \$157,569.

Recommendation 2: Create one new Plan Check Engineer position and increase training.

The Plan Check Engineer function is fundamental to an effective and productive building inspection and permitting operation. The position performs professional engineering work such as: checking plans, calculations, specifications, technical reports, and other submittal documents for compliance with Federal, State, and local building codes, ordinances, and regulations; receiving and checking plans and designs for complex structures, new and remodeled commercial, and industrial and residential buildings to ensure compliance; assisting inspectors, contractors, design professionals, and the public regarding construction requirements; providing technical and professional assistance to the Building Official; and performing related work as required.

In addition to a new position to support the process, the organization can benefit from additional training resources. These resources would support knowledge development and transfer, allowing other related positions in the unit to learn and leverage skills from this position, providing additional resources to support the review process as well as supporting succession planning for the Department.

Adding a full-time position will incur additional operating costs for salary, benefits, and initial outlay of necessary supplies, equipment, and technology. This additional cost can be partially offset through a reduction in use and costs

associated with contracted vendors. Taking steps to reduce reliance on contracted services may reduce total operating costs and support succession planning efforts for the City.

The estimated cost for this position at the median and using the City's 80% benefits multiplier is \$203,707.

Recommendation 3: Recruit and fill a vacant Code Enforcement Officer position and embed with the Police Department.

All City staff providing front-line services to the community may find themselves at risk at some point. While unfortunate, this has become part of the job. Given the nature of the position, its regulatory and enforcement role, and direct contact with the community, the Code Enforcement Officers may find themselves at risk on a regular basis.

The code enforcement function was previously located in the Police Department, providing direct and continuing contact with Police staff and enhanced communications and data access. The City is in the continuing process of reimagining the role of Police and public safety generally. Retaining the code enforcement function in the Community Development Department supports alignment of the function with a public safety role while emphasizing community outreach, education, and customer service.

While it is appropriately located in the Community Development Department, taking steps to improve communication and coordination with the Police Department and its systems can provide improved support to the Code Enforcement Officers. The City currently maintains a Code Enforcement Officer vacancy. This position should be filled and repurposed as a Community Development Department staff member embedded in the Police Department. In addition to limited code enforcement duties, the role would focus on supporting improved communication with Police on code enforcement issues, provide appropriate access to Police systems to support Code Enforcement Officers, and provide liaison services on developing issues.

The existing vacancy exists in the personnel system and is budgeted. The fiscal impact associated with the hire would be limited to associated initial outlay for necessary supplies, equipment, and technology.

Recommendation 4: Create three additional Code Enforcement Officer positions.

Code enforcement is a difficult task that is often underappreciated by the community that it serves. With current staffing levels and service demands, the function is limited exclusively to reactive efforts. There is little opportunity for proactive engagement with the community to educate residents and support their efforts to address issues when they are small to avoid serious problems if they grow.

While the division has kept pace, increasing service demands in the community threaten to overwhelm the function. Based on information presented in the most recent two budgets, general service demands have remained steady while the number of inspections has increased by over 50% between 2022 and 2023. With the increased caseload comes increasing administrative support requirements.

The City should provide additional staff capacity with three additional Code Enforcement Officers. The enhanced staff capacity will better position the Department to handle increasing caseloads and the associated administrative support and processing required. The code enforcement function goes to the problem in the community to assess and resolve. Additional Code Enforcement Officers can also better support service delivery to the geographically dispersed areas of the City. This can help to address concerns regarding inequitable coverage, focus, and enforcement in certain areas. Additional staff capacity can also support knowledge transfer among staff, provide flexibility in assignments and area coverage, as well as provide additional coverage for staff absences due to turnover, sick, or leave periods.

The estimated cost for these three positions at the median and using the City's 80% benefits multiplier is \$430,552.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below offer suggestions to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Recommendation 5: Support a “full cost recovery” approach to community development services with a comprehensive Community Development Department user fee study.

Cities have the power to charge fees for the services that they provide, as long as the amount of a fee does not exceed the reasonable estimated cost of providing the service. The City should contract for an updated fee study to determine defensible and reasonable costs of providing building and planning services to the public.

Completion of the plan will enable the City to determine the amounts of fees that would recover the full cost of providing services, as well as to compare the City's fees with other communities. It is best practice to periodically update fee studies to reflect changing practices and costs. The City has completed cost allocation plans that provide additional information on support costs for internal services that should be included in the user fee study to determine comprehensive and defensible service costs.

Ensuring that service fees are charged where appropriate and are set at levels necessary to recover direct and indirect costs will support the City's full-cost recovery objectives. The information can also provide valuable insights on relative costs and how they compare internally to other time periods or externally to fees charged in other communities. Costs that diverge from the past or peer operations may indicate areas requiring management and operational review.

Based on the range of services reviewed, a contracted third-party review of operations and determination of appropriate user fees for support may range from \$25,000 to \$40,000.

Recommendation 6: Assess the continued benefit of contracted plan-check firms for administrative and permit processes.

Community development processes are populated with time-sensitive processing requirements. These “shot clocks” can defeat the public safety features of community development functions by approving a permit application if stipulated processing deadlines are not met. Contracted services can be one approach to address these time pressures. As mentioned earlier, Richmond's Community Development Department makes relatively greater use of contracted services at possibly greater cost to the City compared to peers.

Local governments routinely contract with outside vendors to provide a wide array of services. The decision whether to contract, or outsource, municipal services is influenced by a variety of factors, including the level of specialization or expertise required, the available market for the services, the service levels required by the municipality, and whether a private contractor can provide a service more affordably than the public entity.

The Department has relied on contracted services for both on-demand professional services (long-term planning) as well as labor support for outsourced services and to meet peak period demands (building inspection). The City and Department should periodically reassess the contracted service levels as the needs of the City may change. Developing core in-house service capability where practical and supplementing where needed with contract services can reduce total operating costs while meeting increased service demands. Using contracted services to augment core service provision through in-house resources can serve to limit relatively higher cost contracted services while improving internal service capacity, service communication, and service sustainability.

Relative cost comprises the key element to determining an effective mix of internal and external resources for service provision. Understanding costs of service through internal sources is a necessary first step and the Department should develop historical information on cost-of-service provision for an identified unit of service to form a basis for comparison with alternative sourcing provided by outside parties.

The Department should leverage available data for review, analysis, and management decision purposes. Different models can be developed that focus on decision criteria such as maximizing service levels, minimizing total costs, or other performance criteria. However, the value of the various modeling and decision support approaches to the Department will be predicated on the validity and accuracy of the data identified and used in their development. Important factors impacting data elements include the following:

Service demand

- How modeled service demand varies throughout the year
- Identifying the appropriate element for measurement (unit of demand/service)

Service supply

- Sources of labor/service provision supply
- Total operating costs per transaction for modeled services (internal Department cost and contracted service provider cost)

Ensure consistent interpretation of data elements (through use of a data dictionary)

Ensure consistent development and collection of data over time

The Department should develop appropriate decision support models to identify how best to provide a range of public services. While past practice can provide a guide, the Department will need to move beyond its experience to address new demands. Using a data-driven and analytical approach can provide a foundation for greater understanding of the services provided, their relative benefits and costs, and alternative approaches to consider for providing quality services on a timely basis to meet the community's demands while minimizing operating costs. This approach is especially important when addressing changing conditions and community expectations.

The City and Department should regularly test assumptions regarding service resourcing and provision. The City should strive to provide the greatest net value to the community from its actions and decisions. Where there is an existing internal service provider, the City can employ a "managed competition" assessment approach. With this method, the internal service provider is supported to develop a competitive proposal for the services provided to allow comparison to a bid cost and service provided by an outside contractor. Where there is no internal service provider, the City can solicit cost and operating information from a peer's internal operation or can "go to market" and issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit competitive price and service information from multiple firms for comparison.

Recommendation 7: Improve telecommunications and mobile computing technology.

The Department uses the eTRAKiT system that supports the homeowner, developer, and contractor to apply and pay for planning projects online, submit building permit applications electronically, submit business licenses applications electronically, track the progress of their construction projects online, schedule and locate the results of inspections, and check plan review status.

While the Department's field staff may have some technology for use in the field, staff are unable to do live field updates, resulting in wasted time and the need to return to the office to input information. Such efforts are duplicative and create the potential for inaccurate and incomplete recordkeeping. The purpose of the fieldwork is to develop

information supporting business processes. Manually accessing and collecting this information requiring later, duplicate entry takes additional time that could be better used on higher priority tasks.

The project team recommends that the Department issue and require the use of laptops and tablets with integrated software to the field to facilitate digital data entry, access, use, and communication in the field. This will support improved business processes and reduce total and individual transaction operating costs. Improving Department staff capability and capacity through mobile computing and communications presents an opportunity for improved operational efficiency and data integrity.

The Department would incur technology equipment and software acquisition expenses as well as continuing operational expenses for mobile communications in the devices to support remote work. Department staff would also require training to effectively use the devices and software, as well as in how to effectively communicate and share data to maximize effectiveness. In tandem with the adoption of the technology, the Department should develop assessment criteria to determine whether staff have adopted and are effectively using the technology to support improved business performance.

Economic Development

The Economic Development Department strives to enhance the overall economic well-being and quality of life in the City of Richmond. Their work includes promoting arts and culture throughout the City, business attraction and retention, and real estate management. Staff also actively advance environmental and health initiatives to foster sustainable neighborhoods and development opportunities that benefit all residents and workers. The Department serves a vital role in implementing Goal 2 of the City Council’s Goals and Objectives, which is to “Improve Revenue and Economic Development.”⁸

The Department is led by the Director of Economic Development, who oversees a staff of 12.0 FTEs according to the FY2024 Budget. The Department is divided into six divisions, including: Environmental and Health Initiatives, Port of Richmond, Arts and Culture, Business Development, Real Estate, and The Richmond Housing Authority.

The organizational structure of the Department is shown in Figure 8 below.

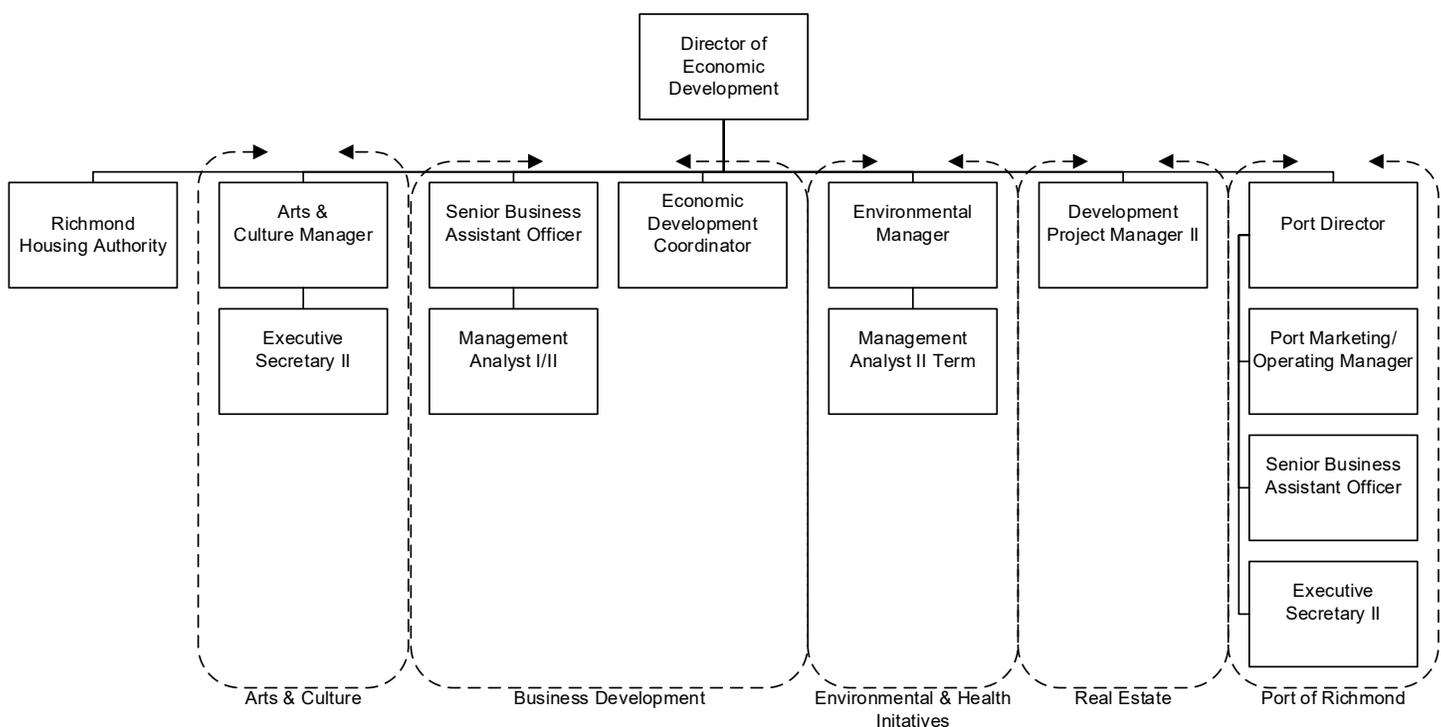


Figure 8: Economic Development Department Organizational Structure, FY2023-24

The Environmental & Health Initiatives Division collaborates with community organizations and internal City Departments to implement actions identified in environmental, health, and sustainability plans. They also administer the Solid Waste and Recycling contract, support community air monitoring, and identify funding through grant opportunities.

The Port of Richmond is a public enterprise established by the City and administered through the Economic Development Department. Port operations include managing five City-owned terminals for handling bulk liquids, dry bulk materials, metals, vehicles, break-bulk cargo, and commercial rental properties.⁹

⁸ City Council Goals and Objectives

⁹ The City of Richmond California Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2022

The Arts and Culture Division positions art to help achieve economic development goals and shape a unique identity for the City. This work includes maintaining an inventory of public art installations, supporting local artists and non-profit organizations, and administering policies to require public art in development projects for the City.

The Business Development Division works with the development community and local businesses to attract and retain business, grow job opportunities, and facilitate business-to-business transactions. Their work also includes connecting local businesses to workforce development programs, supporting small businesses, and market development opportunities within the City.

The Real Estate Division manages City-owned properties and lease agreements, providing coordination with private developers to encourage development activities in priority areas, and performing developer outreach and support.

The Richmond Housing Authority is responsible for providing affordable housing for low- and very low-income residents of the City of Richmond through federally funded housing programs.¹⁰

CORE SERVICE MATRIX

The following table outlines core services (programs) provided by each division within the Economic Development Department. The table is not meant to be all inclusive and instead summarizes at a high level how staff are allocated to meet the service-level demand for each division.

Table 10: Economic Development Department Core Services Matrix

Program Area	Activities and Service Levels ¹¹	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
Environmental & Health Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write and strategically implement the Health in All Policies (HiAP) Ordinance Maintain partnerships with City Departments, UC Berkeley, other public institutions, and nonprofit organizations to support HiAP implementation Perform data tracking and analysis regarding HiAP implementation to improve health equity Collaborate with regional and State stakeholders that support the implementation of the Climate Action Plan and HiAP Support implementation of Climate Action Plan Monitor the Climate Action Plan via Open Data Dashboard to improve environmental quality and reduce GHG emissions Administer Solid Waste and Recycling contract Support Community air monitoring Support Regional and State air quality laws and programs Provide program funding and grant opportunities research and grant administration 	2.0	0.0
Arts & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare ordinances, policies, and procedures Maintain an inventory of City-owned art Provide support for non-profit art organizations and local artists, including facilitating collaboration with City departments, outside governmental entities, 	1.0	0.2

¹⁰ The City of Richmond California Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the Year Ended June 30, 2022

¹¹ Richmond, California Adopted Operating Budget Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Program Area	Activities and Service Levels ¹¹	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> community-based organizations, foundations, and residents Administer the policy calling for 1% Public Art on Private Development Projects & 1.5% on City Capital Improvement Projects Fund and administer Neighborhood Public Art mini-grants and the Poet Laureate competition Provide staffing and support for the Richmond Arts & Culture Commission and Public Art Advisory Committee 		
Real Estate and Port of Richmond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage City-owned sites and leases, including Port property Coordinate with private developers to encourage development in Priority Development Areas Perform developer outreach and support Coordinate regulatory, tariff, and safety compliance Maintain Port Clean Air Action Plan 	3.5	0.8
Business Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an Economic Development Action short- and long-term plan Manage business retention, attraction, promotion, and support activities with resource partners Negotiate economic incentives with prospective developers Support small businesses through connection to local classes, seminars, collaborations, and technical assistance Design, implement, and manage projects/ programs to market the City of Richmond Provide staffing and support for the Economic Development Commission and Richmond Promise Board 	1.5	1.0
Housing Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the PHARS agreement between HUD, City of Richmond, and the Housing Authority Manage repositioning of Housing Authority assets Administer and manage public housing, including reporting, lease enforcement, maintenance, vacancy turnaround, resident services, eviction activity administration, and program oversight Administer grants for capital planning, modernization, project management, etc. Provide oversight and enforcement of development agreements Administer Easter Hill Housing Corporation, RHA Corp., etc. Provide staffing and support to Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, Housing Advisory Commission, and Nevin Plaza Resident Council 	5.0	0.0

STAFFING LEVEL HISTORY

Economic Development became a standalone City department in 2021, combining staff previously in the City Manager’s office with the Port of Richmond staff. Since the Department was formed, budgeted staffing levels have remained at 12.0 FTEs between 2021 and 2023. In the FY2024 budget, there are 11.0 FTEs. The staffing changes in the 2024 Budget include the addition of an Economic Development Coordinator, the elimination of a Senior Administrative Analyst position, and the elimination of a Project Manager I/II (Grants Manager) position. The Department’s staffing history from FY2020 to FY2024 is shown in the table below.

Table 11: Economic Development Department Staffing, FY2021 through FY2022

Staffing (FTE)	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024 Budget	%Change FY2020 to FY2022
Economic Development	-	8.0	12.0	12.0	11.0	1100%
Port of Richmond	4.0	4.0	-	-	-	-100%
Total	4.0	12.0	12.0	12.0	11.0	175%

The Department currently has the equivalent of two budgeted vacant positions. This includes an Executive Secretary position supporting the Port of Richmond and the Arts and Culture Division and an Economic Development Coordinator position in the Business Development Division. The role of Port Director was previously vacant, but according to the staff interviews, the City hired a new Port Director in November 2023.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

The Port of Richmond is one of Northern California's most diversified cargo handlers. It features five City-owned terminals and 10 privately owned terminals. According to the California Association of Port Authorities (CAPA), in 2019, the Port's total trade was valued at \$9.5 billion, with \$2.0 billion in exports and \$7.5 billion in imports. The top exports from the Port of Richmond were gasoline/other fuels, scrap iron and steel, and coal. The top imports were oil, passenger vehicles, and gasoline/other fuels.¹²

In addition to the Port's impact on the overall economy and supply chain through its handling of imports and exports, the Port also directly benefits the local City economy. Five City-owned terminals generate revenue from rent, wharfage, and dockage fees. Operators of the 10 privately owned terminals pay property taxes, income taxes, sales taxes, and utility user fees.¹³ According to the City's most recent Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, the Port brought in \$10.5 million in operating revenues compared to \$4.6 in operating expenses in the 2021-2022 fiscal year.¹⁴ This revenue is partly due to a 15-year lease agreement with Honda, which was signed in 2010 and created more than 100 new full-time jobs and more than 150 new part-time jobs. The total economic impact to the local Richmond Economy of the Honda Port of Entry Project is estimated to be \$100 million over the term of the lease.¹⁵

Currently, the Port is experiencing challenges in terms of staffing, which limits its potential as an economic driver for the City. Budgeted staffing for the Port of Richmond is 3.3 FTEs, including the Port Director, Port Marketing/Operating Manager, an Executive Secretary II who splits their time with the Arts & Culture section within the Department, and a Senior Business Assistance Officer who splits their time between the Port and Business Development for the entire City. The City hired a new Port Director in October 2023. Before the hiring, a consultant was used to oversee Port Operations. The Port Marketing/Operating Manager is on leave, and the Executive Secretary II position is vacant. Therefore, the Port effectively has only 1.5 employees to oversee operations, manage tenant relations, and market/attract new businesses.

¹² [Port of Richmond, CA, California Association of Port Authorities](#)

¹³ Economic Development Richmond General Plan 2030

¹⁴ "Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2022", The City of Richmond California

¹⁵ [Honda Port of Entry Project, City of Richmond Website](#)

STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 8: Add one new full-time Senior Business Assistance Officer dedicated to the Port of Richmond.

The Port of Richmond is an economic development driver for the City of Richmond, as seen with the 15-year lease agreement with Honda signed in 2010 that created an estimated 100 new full-time jobs, 150 new part-time jobs, and an economic impact estimated to be \$100 million over the term of the lease. The hiring of a new Port Director in October 2023 presents an opportunity to utilize this driver to advance the City Council Goals and Objectives, particularly Goal #2, which is to “Improve Revenue and Improve Economic Development,” as well as the subgoal to “Revision Richmond Port as an ecologically responsible revenue generator.”¹⁶

Currently, a Senior Business Assistance Officer is splitting time between business development for the entire City and the Port. To effectively pursue economic development projects, tenants for available spaces, and new business opportunities, the Department should add a full-time Senior Business Assistance Officer fully dedicated to the Port of Richmond. A dedicated resource for business assistance and attraction at the Port will facilitate a concentrated effort to identify and capitalize on revenue-generating opportunities. This includes building a business retention and expansion program (BRE) for the current lessees, such as Honda. A BRE is a proactive program to support existing businesses and foster growth. Within a BRE, staff engage with local businesses to understand their challenges, identify business needs, and discover opportunities to expand their operations. The program includes regular communication, identifying resources, services, and programs that can assist businesses in overcoming challenges or capitalizing on opportunities, connecting businesses to workforce development programs, and more.

Furthermore, adding a full-time Senior Business Assistance Officer benefits the Port and ensures a full-time resource for Citywide economic development is in place by eliminating the need for the current Senior Business Assistance Officer to split their time. This position’s focus can now shift to support the other goals of the Economic Development Department. For example, they can be redeployed to focus on helping to revitalize small businesses, another subgoal under Goal #2 of the City Council Goals and Objectives.

Adding a full-time Senior Business Assistance Officer would lead to a net gain of 1.0 FTE for the Department. From a budget standpoint, the addition of the position will impact both the operating budget for the Port, an enterprise fund, and the General Fund operating budget for the Department. Each budget will see salary and benefits expenses increase by 0.5 FTEs. City Leadership, the Director of Economic Development, and Human Resources should determine the compensation package for the new position based on the selected candidate’s experience according to the existing salary structure.

The estimated cost at the median and with benefits for this position is \$251,658.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below offer suggestions to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Recommendation 9: Develop a Strategic Plan for Port operations.

Ports can serve as a driver for economic development for a City and have economic benefits that are both direct and indirect. The Richmond City Council recognizes this through the Council’s Goals and Objectives, which include the goal to “Revision Richmond Port as an ecologically responsible revenue generator.”¹⁷ The hiring of a new Port

¹⁶ City Council Goals and Objectives

¹⁷ City Council Goals and Objectives

Director in October 2023 provides an opportunity to set forth a new strategic direction for the Port to capitalize on opportunities and maximize the economic benefit it can provide to the community.

According to the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Operating Budget Presentation dated June 20, 2023, the City has appropriated \$250,000 toward professional services for Port strategic planning. The City should utilize these funds to develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan for Port Operations. Doing so will help the City achieve the Council goals and enable the new Port Director to put forth their vision for the future of the Port of Richmond.

In the 2022 publication, “Port Economics, Management and Policy,” authors Theo Notteboom, Athanasios Pallis and Jean-Paul Rodrigue present the five steps involved in the strategic planning process for a port. These steps are summarized in the figure below.

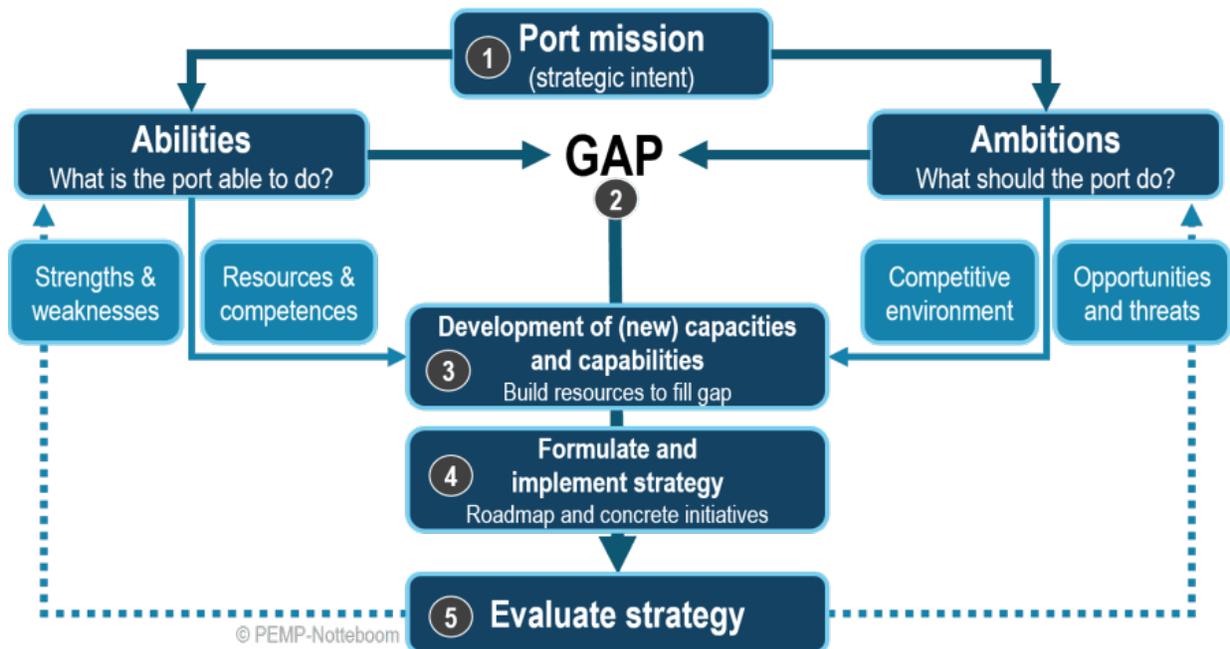


Figure 9: The Port Strategic Planning Process¹⁸

The first step is establishing an ambitious mission statement or strategic intent for the organization. This mission statement sets forth the long-term objective the Port hopes to achieve. It should seek to answer the question, "What do we hope to be true about our organization in the future?" The mission statement should look beyond what the Port is currently capable of doing and aim to establish a competitive advantage in the marketplace.¹⁹

In step two, staff can perform a gap analysis of current operations to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the organization to determine what the Port *can do* and what it *should do*. It should also include a review of the competitive environment. The Port of Richmond is one of 11 Ports in California²⁰, two of which are just across the San Francisco Bay in the City of San Francisco and the City of Oakland. Understanding the external environment is crucial to identify opportunities to achieve the Port’s mission.

¹⁸ [Theo Notteboom, Athanasios Pallis and Jean-Paul Rodrigue \(2022\) Port Economics, Management and Policy, New York: Routledge](#)

¹⁹ [Theo Notteboom, Athanasios Pallis and Jean-Paul Rodrigue \(2022\) Port Economics, Management and Policy, New York: Routledge](#)

²⁰ [California Association of Port Authorities](#)

Step three is about resource building. Incorporating resource building into the strategic planning process allows staff to identify the organization's core competencies based on the current assets, personnel, and available resources. Core competencies are the characteristics that make it stand apart from the competition.

Next, staff should define specific goals, objectives, and strategies that align with the new mission. This process includes developing and comparing alternative strategies to determine the most effective approach to push the organization forward and become what it *should be*. Specific, detailed initiatives and action items that leverage resources should be established for each goal to create a framework for successfully executing the organization's long-term objectives. By undertaking this analysis, the Port Director will be informed on how best to reallocate resources to achieve the established goals.

Finally, staff should regularly monitor the effectiveness of the chosen strategies. The Port Director should regularly monitor how successful the organization is in implementing initiatives and action items to bridge the gap between what the Port *can do* and *should do*. As the organization acquires and develops additional resources and capabilities, the Port Director should continuously adapt objectives and strategies to help achieve the mission. Monitoring progress against the goals ensures the Port can evolve to capitalize on opportunities and overcome challenges.²¹

Creating a comprehensive strategic plan for the Port will require planning, investment, and effort. However, it will benefit the organization in several ways, including:

- Evaluating the current circumstances and capabilities of the Port
- Creating a foundation to capitalize on economic growth opportunities
- Aligning staff and the new Port Director under a shared mission and set of goals
- Providing a long-term vision for where the organization wants to go.

Recommendation 10: Develop a marketing strategy and add additional contracted support for Marketing and Operations management for the Port of Richmond.

While adding a dedicated Senior Business Assistance Officer as recommended earlier will help to maximize revenue-generating opportunities at the Port, the Department should also provide additional marketing and strategy direction assistance to support this employee's efforts. Currently, there is one budgeted position at the Port for operations and marketing. This level of staff support should be increased through contracted assistance to help fully realize the Port's economic development potential.

By strengthening the marketing efforts for the Port, the visibility of available spaces and economic opportunities can be enhanced, helping the Senior Business Assistance Officer to attract potential new business partners, investors, and tenants.

The new Port Director, hired in October 2023, and the current Port Marketing and Operations Manager should develop a strategic marketing strategy that aligns with the Port Strategic Plan discussed in the above recommendations. This strategy will be essential to maximizing revenue-generating opportunities and effectively positioning the Port to contribute to the overall success and growth of the City of Richmond. The strategy should include the following elements:

²¹ [Theo Notteboom, Athanasios Pallis and Jean-Paul Rodrigue \(2022\) Port Economics, Management and Policy, New York: Routledge](#)

Market analysis: Analysis of industry trends, challenges to current operations, potential growth areas, the competitive landscape, and the unique characteristics of the Port of Richmond that may help attract new business opportunities.

Target Audience Analysis: Identification of the specific businesses and industry clusters that align with the Port of Richmond's strengths and capabilities.

Brand Analysis: Analysis of the Port's strengths and capabilities to develop or redefine how to brand and position the Port to the business community.

Marketing Tools: Evaluation of the current marketing tools used to promote the Port.

Strategies to Expand Marketing: The development of new strategies or tools to expand the reach of marketing efforts to a wider, more diverse audience.

Sample Marketing Collateral: The development of new marketing materials incorporating updated branding and marketing strategies designed to attract potential new businesses and opportunities.

This marketing strategy will define the marketing materials, tools, and tactics to implement, which will help define the level of additional support needed. Once identified, the Department should seek additional support for marketing and operations management personnel to effectively address the renewed effort to promote the Port. The Department can secure this additional level of support through either additional staff resources or contracted services based on available resources.

Community Services Department

The Community Services Department provides a broad array of recreation, growth, and support opportunities to Richmond residents. The Department is comprised of six divisions: Recreation, Library, Employment and Training, Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS), Transportation, and Children and Youth. The Department is led by the Deputy City Manager of Community Services.

The City's FY2023-24 Adopted Budget included a total of 125.7 FTE positions in the Department. The Department's organizational structure is summarized in Figure 10 below.

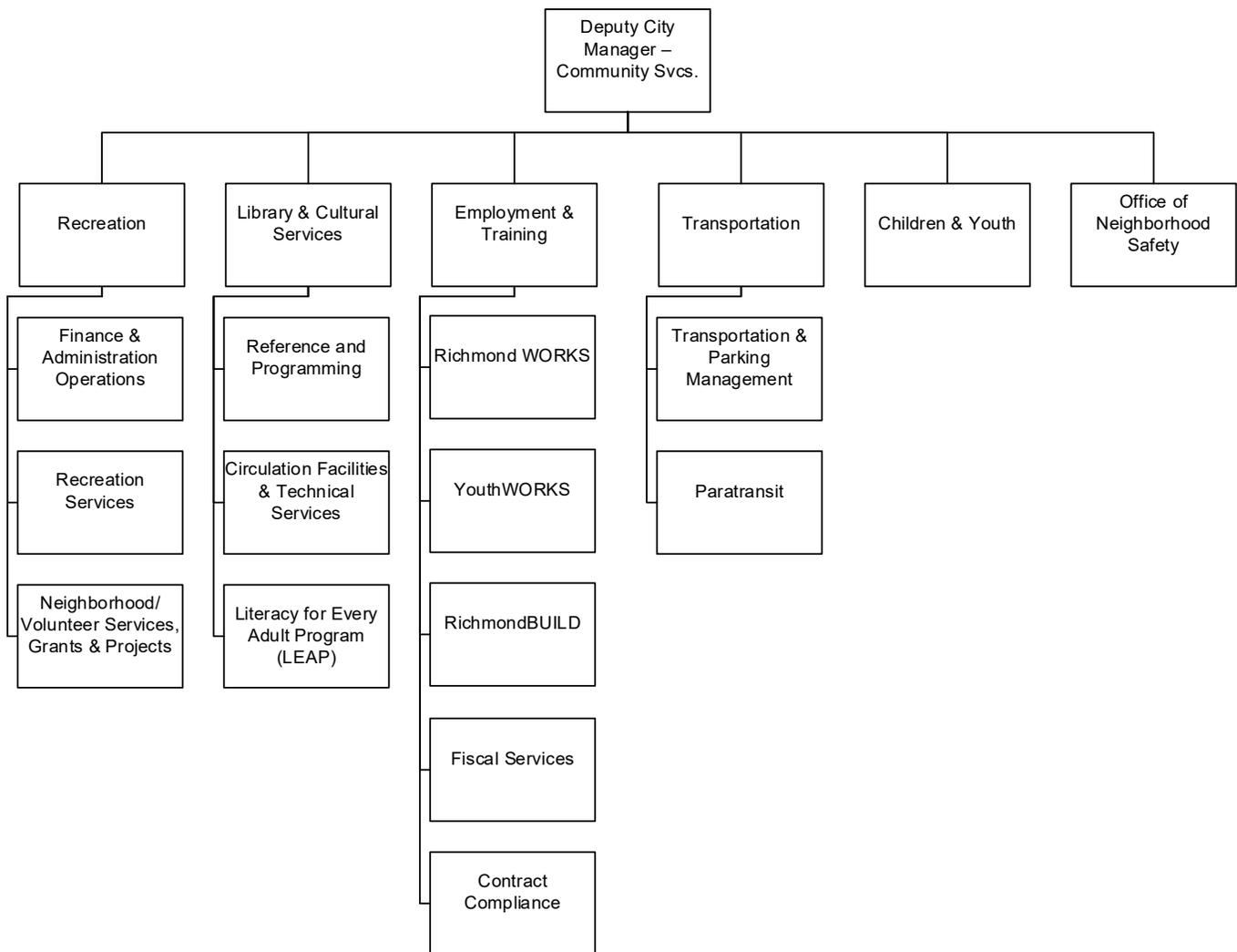


Figure 10: Community Services Department Organizational Structure, FY2023-24

The **Recreation Division** provides a wide variety of sports and cultural activities and events for Richmond residents, including adult programs, youth programs, youth sports, aquatics, senior programs, and community special events. The Division operates several facilities, including the Richmond Recreation Complex, four neighborhood community centers, two indoor swimming facilities, a senior center, an annex senior center, and a 3,000 seat convention center in the City's Civic Center. While Recreation utilizes the City's over 50 parks and sports fields for

programming sites, these are maintained by the Parks Maintenance Division within the City’s Public Works Department.

The **Library and Cultural Services Division** provides library services at both a main library in the City’s Civic Center complex, as well as at two branch library locations. Residents can borrow a wide array of book and other media provided at the library, as well as take part in a variety of programs such as LEAP (Literacy for Every Adult Program), GED programs to assist in completion of high school diplomas, English as a Second Language, and other tutoring.

The **Employment & Training Division** provides job training and assistance to both adults and youth. Programs include Richmond WORKS which provides job search assistance, resume help, skill assessments and testing, literacy, English Language Learner, career training, and other assistance to residents. Richmond BUILD is a public private partnership providing skill training in the high-wage and high-growth construction and renewable energy fields. YouthWORKS provides youth ages 14-24 with knowledge and experience for future job success and includes work experience, apprenticeship training, life skills, work readiness workshops, and more. Staff support and staff the City’s Workforce Development Board.

The **Transportation Division** provides a variety of transit programs and transportation planning initiatives for the City, including commuter resources, electric vehicle accessibility, R-Transit for seniors and paratransit services for those with accessibility needs, an on-demand shuttle service called Richmond Moves, commuter resources and public transportation information, and transportation planning services.

The **Children & Youth Division** oversees the Fund for Children and Youth, which was created to provide sustainable funding for community organizations that serve the City’s youth. The Division primarily serves as a funding agency to provide and monitor grant funding to various organizations serving Richmond residents under age 24. The Division staffs and supports the Richmond Fund for Children and Youth Oversight Board and has prepared a Strategic Investment Plan to identify gaps in service and address needs for the community’s youth.

The **Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS)** establishes partnerships and strategies to achieve reductions in firearm-related assaults, retaliations, and fatalities. ONS leads the City’s gun violence prevention and intervention initiatives, particularly targeting those at high risk of involvement in gun violence. ONS provides outreach to provide alternative opportunities to street violence and crime, which contributes to greater community well-being and public safety.

STAFFING LEVEL HISTORY

Staffing within the Community Services Department increased 33% over the past five years from 94.7 authorized FTE positions to 125.7 authorized FTE positions. Most of this growth is attributable to the Office of Neighborhood Safety Division, which grew 183% from 6.0 FTE in FY2020 to 17.0 FTE in FY2024. The Employment & Training Division also increased 42% from 19.0 FTE positions to 27.0 FTE positions in the same time period. The Department averaged 25.3 FTE position vacancies and a 22.2% vacancy rate over five years.

Table 12: Department Staffing, FY2020 through FY2024

Staffing (FTE)	FY2020 Budget	FY2021 Budget	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Budget	FY2024 Budget	Percent Change FY2020 to FY2024
Recreation	28.4	27.4	30.0	30.0	35.0	20%
Library and Cultural Services	33.3	30.7	30.7	31.7	36.7	7%
Employment & Training	19.0	19.0	21.0	22.0	27.0	42%
Transportation	8.0	7.0	5.0	5.0	6.0	13%

Staffing (FTE)	FY2020 Budget	FY2021 Budget	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Budget	FY2024 Budget	Percent Change FY2020 to FY2024
Children & Youth	-	2.0	3.0	2.0	4.0	300%
Office of Neighborhood Safety	6.0	8.0	8.0	18.0	17.0	183%
Community Services Total	94.7	94.1	97.7	108.7	125.7	33%

CORE SERVICE MATRIX

The following table outlines core services (programs) provided by each division within the Community Services Department. The table is not meant to be all inclusive, rather summarizing at a high level how staff are allocated to meet the service-level demand for each division.

Table 13: Community Services Department Core Services Matrix

Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide recreation programming and classes Maintain and operate four community centers and one recreation facility Operate City parks Plan and run Citywide special events Provide senior programs and classes and operate two senior centers Operate after school and summer camp programs for youth Provide youth sports leagues Maintain and operate two aquatic facilities Provide aquatics programming and classes Manage auditorium rentals Provide logistics to support rentals 	35.0	7.0
Employment & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richmond Works grant program career center services and job search training and assistance YouthWORKS grant program to provide training and education to youth 16-24 for employment through the YouthWORKS grant program Richmond Builds grant program to train residents in skilled trades and apprenticeships 	27.0	9.0
Office of Neighborhood Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing gun violence intervention through neighborhood change agent interaction with local Fellows Creating and providing attention, intensive engagement, and support structures that are designed to improve the social and emotional health and wellness of residents 	17.0	0.0
Library & Cultural Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides library materials and services Offers programming to promote reading and general health Operates central library and two branch facilities 	36.7	9.0
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Parking Authority Electric Vehicle Accessibility Electric Carshare R-Transit Paratransit Services On-Demand Shuttle Provide planning and funding strategies for Fleet Services to aid transition from gas to electric vehicles 	6.0	1.0

Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist with active and long-range transportation planning 		
Children & Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage, award, and monitor grants to local children and youth-serving agencies 	4.0	0.0

KEY OBSERVATIONS

The Community Services Department provides a broad range of services, including some that many other communities do not offer. This is, in large part, because many of the services provided in Richmond are funded by external grant funding; it is likely that, without this funding, the service may not be offered. Richmond’s demographics make it eligible for more grant opportunities than other communities, which is also a benefit that the City is already, and should continue to, capitalize upon. Staff are already working very hard to identify and win grants to provide services. Many cities of Richmond’s size do not offer Employment and Training programs to residents and assume the County or non-profits will provide these services; or, if they do, it is a much smaller program. Few communities offer programs such as the Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS). While taking advantage of grant opportunities is important in increasing the level of services to the community, it can be a drain on staff who must deal with grant administration requirements and an increasing number of services to focus upon. The City will need to be explicit in thoughtfully determining whether or not to go for and accept grant funding if doing so adds additional workload and decreases staff focus on already-existing programs and services.

Many of the services offered by the Community Services Department are difficult to measure and determine their service levels. In most communities, services such as recreation, employment and training, children and youth, library, and transit will be provided *to the level the community can afford* as higher service levels are always desired by the public; it is financial resources that limits the level of service provision. While it cannot be refuted that the quality of life in communities is improved by the provision of parks and recreation, training and education, and library services, these are not “necessities of life” for residents and typically rate lower than other core municipal services such as streets and roads and public safety when competing for general taxpayer funding. Many of these services accrue benefits primarily to an individual or small number of individuals, thus bringing into question the equity and fairness of providing significant General Fund taxpayer support.

The City of Richmond’s population has grown an average of 1.23% per year from 2010-2020.²² Raftelis is unaware of changes in the next 5-10 years that would significantly increase the need for staffing in Community Services other than bringing new facilities online. For example, should a community center be reopened or the main library expanded as planned, this will necessitate additional staff to ensure the ongoing safety and security of both patrons and staff.

Recreation

The Community Services Department Recreation Division provides service at several facilities including the Richmond Recreation Complex, four neighborhood community centers, two indoor swimming facilities, a senior center, an annex senior center, and a 3,000 seat convention center. The NRPA 2023 Agency Performance Review shows the median population per facility numbers for jurisdictions with a population between 100,000 and 250,000. The equivalent for a City of Richmond’s size is shown below.

²² U.S. Census Data, April 2010 – April 2020, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/richmondcitycalifornia/PST045222>

Table 14: NRPA Median Recreation Facilities as Compared to Richmond

Facility Type	Median No. of Facilities	Richmond No. of Facilities
Recreation Center (including gyms)	2.11	1
Community Centers	2.10	4
Senior Centers	0.92	2
Performance amphitheaters	0.94	1
Aquatic Centers	1.05	2
Total	7.13	10.00

As shown, Richmond actually offers a higher number of facilities to its residents than the median in similar-sized communities, offering 10 facilities as compared to a median of just over seven. In particular, Richmond has double the number of community centers, senior centers, and aquatic centers. This is a significant benefit that residents and the City can capitalize upon as the costly capital investments have already been made. In addition, the City has three facilities that are in need of rehabilitation and are not currently operating. Should these three facilities be put into operation, Richmond would be providing almost double the number of facilities as the NRPA median in cities of similar size.

In addition, Richmond has several facilities that are currently closed due to maintenance needs, but could further increase the level of service to the community if renovated. This is a benefit to Richmond residents that the City might capitalize upon as the infrastructure already exists. In interviews, some expressed concern that facilities were not geographically distributed equally throughout the community; this is a valid concern, but also one that requires significant financial resources to address and which does not commonly occur in most cities for this reason.

Staffing levels in Richmond for recreation are well below national norms. Table 15 below shows that, according to the NRPA 2023 Agency Performance Review, the median full-time equivalent staffing for cities of similar size is 121.50 FTEs, in comparison to Richmond’s 34 budgeted FTEs (some of which are vacant).

Table 15: NRPA Recreation Staffing As Compared to Richmond

NRPA Tier	Peer FTEs	Richmond FTEs
Median	121.50	35
Lower Quartile	72.80	
Higher Quartile	198.30	

It is possible and likely that the comparison cities included a parks maintenance function which, in Richmond, is located separately in the Public Works Department and consists of 27.2 FTEs; added to Recreation staff, this would still only total 62.2 FTEs for Richmond. The City also hires many part-time staff such as lifeguards who are not included in the 35 FTE number; these might account for an additional 17.5 FTEs (a rough estimate), bringing the total to 79.7 FTEs, still over 40 FTEs below the peer median but above the lower quartile.

Library

When evaluating Library & Cultural Services staffing levels according to Public Library Survey data for FY21 (most recent), Richmond operates with 19 staff members below the mean and 16 staff members below the median for Bay

Area Cities with populations between 100,000 and 150,000; 10 staff members below the mean and two staff members below the median for California Cities with populations between 100,000 and 150,000; and 14 staff members below the mean and 16 staff members below the median for All US Cities with populations between 100,000 and 150,000.

Within Contra Costa County, there are a total of 31 library branches being operated. Contra Costa County operates 28 of these branches, while Richmond operates three of these branches. Richmond has more staff per branch (13) and lower staff to population ratio (2,898) than those within the Contra Costa County library system at seven and 2,898, respectively. This excludes the two bookmobiles that Richmond operates. Richmond also contributes \$45 per Richmond resident, while Contra Costa County contributes \$38 per resident within its local service area. However, Richmond budgets less per staff member (\$131,138) when compared to Contra Costa County (\$204,450). This means that Richmond has more staff per branch with less money budgeted per staff member.

As of 2023, Richmond is currently operating with 27.7 FTEs while maintaining 9 FTE vacancies (as of the date of the August position control report from the City). At 27.7 FTEs, Richmond is currently operating at 10 FTE less than in FY21, when it operated with 38 FTE. If adjusted and compared to FY21 data, Richmond is currently operating with staffing levels below the mean and median for all Bay Area Cities with populations between 50,000 and 150,000.

Library & Cultural Services currently utilizes a staffing mix that includes one Deputy Director, three service area managers, and 24 staff positions. It provides onsite and remote materials and services to support the community's personal, cultural, educational, and professional needs at its Main Library, two branch locations, and one bookmobile. There is a desire to increase hours of service in the evening and on the weekends to better serve the public. The Main Library currently operates with 46 hours open to the public per week, including 35 daytime hours, six evening hours, and five weekend hours. The Bayview and West Side branches currently operate with 19 regular hours and two evening hours at both branches per week. In total, the Richmond Library system operates with 88 hours that are open to the public per week. Additionally, the City Council has appropriated over \$24 million to modernize the Main Library Location as of May 2023.

The current approach to staffing and hours gives patrons located around Richmond the opportunity to enjoy library services five days per week. This approach supports Richmond's commitment to providing equitable service provision based on geographic location, which was a common theme mentioned by interviewees. However, the approach also requires staffing at every location five days per week and does not address the desire for increased evening and weekend hours. This results in staff being spread thin throughout the community with fewer budgeted hours available to allocate during the evenings and weekends. Additionally, with limited resources, the staff allocation across locations necessarily limits each branch to fewer popular services such as story hours, special events, and children's programming. It also limits the opportunity to provide specialized support services for the increasingly more prevalent mentally ill and unhoused populations, which currently are supported by existing library staff that are not trained to handle such populations. In summary, there is a tradeoff between operating locations and hours and the services they can provide, with more location offerings currently taking priority over evening and weekend hours of operation and additional service offerings.

Transportation

The Transportation Division consists of six FTEs, all of which were filled at the time of this review. The City is currently operating both transportation planning and transit services functions together in this unit, with three employees serving as paratransit drivers and staff, one as an administrative analyst, and two project managers overseeing operations, seeking new grants, and developing new programs. The Division manages micromobility services; coordinates City electric vehicles (EVs), fleet and transportation network electrification, and EV and alternative energy education and outreach to promote clean transportation; assists with active and long-range

transportation planning; and operates the City Parking Authority responsible for curb management and public parking stall inventory.

The current approach leverages the skills and perspective of existing transportation program managers for the oversight and operation of transportation related programs and services. This puts those who facilitated the development of programs and services in charge of their operation, potentially leading to better functional outcomes.

However, this approach does not directly connect transportation planning with other City planners in Community Development and the focus on transit operations detracts from the planning focus. While the two departments coordinate informally, the City's growing focus on transportation planning can be enhanced.

Children and Youth

Children and Youth is a City mandated function by way of Article 15 of the City Charter. The Division is currently fully staffed with four FTEs and focuses on distributing funds to support children and families under the age of 24. The Division funds youth-serving organizations in alignment with the Community Needs Assessment, provides support to a 15-member Oversight Board (e.g., board recruitment, retention, training, agenda-setting, meeting facilitation), works with internal and external organizations, and evaluates grantees, the grant process, and the program to document the collective impact of the Fund. Funded initiatives include the following areas: Violence Prevention and Response; Education and Job Training; Parent/Guardian Support; Media, Arts, Culture and Technology; Youth and Family Leadership; Organizing and Civic Engagement; Health and Well-Being; Environmental Health and Justice; Outdoor Education and Recreation; and/or Deportation Support. The division will move to a three-year grant cycle beginning in FY24.

Office of Neighborhood Services

The Office of Neighborhood Services is a highly regarded local program that provides intervention to reduce gun violence in the community. Neighborhood Change Agents who build relationships in the community and work directly with cohorts of “fellows” who are at-risk youth and adults to identify alternative opportunities to gun violence. The program has been featured in the media and the community has seen a reduction in gun violence. ONS reports a 73% overall reduction in gun violence from 2007-2018. ONS recently signed contracts to begin work in local schools. All ONS staff are funded from the General Fund, with additional funding raised through community support to pay for various fees, book, tuitions, and stipends for participants.

While the Office was fully staffed with 17 FTEs at the time of this review, turnover has been a concern and in the recent past it has reportedly taken some time to get to full staffing levels. There is also some concern regarding succession planning so that long-time Neighborhood Change Agents can move upward into Field Coordinator and Program Manager roles.

Employment and Training

The Employment and Training Division was created to take advantage of available Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) grant funding to provide employment and training services to Richmond residents. Besides providing general career center and job search assistance, the Division funds and manages the YouthWORKS grant program for those ages 16-24, the Richmond Works program for adults over 18 years old, and RichmondBuild and YouthBuild to provide pre-apprenticeship training in trades and construction skills. The Division also staffs and coordinates with the Richmond Workforce Development Board.

Demand is high for these programs; staff report waiting lists and growing demand since the end of the pandemic. The City, as part of the recommendations of the Reimagine Richmond Task Force, reallocated \$1.9 million of General Fund monies to this Division for the YouthWORKS program.

STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 11: Add 10 new full-time Recreation Program Coordinator positions to support the City's recreation and community centers.

In interviews, some City Council members and managers expressed a desire to increase service hours at community centers; a review of current hours shows that most operate between 10am and 6pm. Evening hours would provide significant additional benefit to residents who work during the day and cannot currently utilize the City's facilities.

In interviews, staff noted the need for more assistance and expressed some concern about safety and security at the sites. They noted instances when patrons would pay and then open a side door to provide access for free to other residents. They noted facilities where a single staff member may be on duty; at the senior center, this is typical and patrons must buzz in for facility access. The main cashier station in the recreation center must at times be left unattended (though locked) due to the need for staff to address needs elsewhere in the building. Recreation facility staff are also utilized to staff City special events such as Chinese New Year, Black History celebration, and July fireworks. Doing so requires their withdrawal from regular staffing of community and recreation centers.

Lengthening service hours to add the 6-8pm period, which would be extremely valuable to attract working residents, adds 10 hours per week of additional service per facility (five days X two hours). Adding this to the four community centers and central recreation center is five facilities or 50 total hours per week needed of staff coverage (five facilities X 10 hours per week). Dividing 50 hours needed by 40 hours for a full-time staff member results in the need to have 1.25 FTE for coverage. Adding a staffing factor to account for vacations and training will raise this even higher. We recommend the City add 2.0 FTEs per site, a total of 10 FTEs for five facilities, to ensure full coverage for these extra hours and to provide some additional staffing to enhance coverage overlap for safety and security. It is vital that the safety of both staff and residents using the facilities be a priority when setting staffing levels for all facilities.

The cost of these 10 full-time Recreation Program Coordinators at the median rate and with benefits is estimated to total \$1,312,157. Some of this may be offset through cost recovery, discussed in Recommendation 17 below.

Recommendation 12: Add one new Auditorium Leadworker or similar position to oversee Auditorium rentals and supervise the Auditorium Aide positions.

The City owns and operates the 3,000 seat Richmond Memorial Auditorium, bringing residents entertainment and meeting opportunities and a reason to visit the Civic Center complex. The Auditorium is rented out and operated by a full-time Recreation Supervisor and three Auditorium Aide positions who each work 32 hours per week and provide event setup and other logistical support for renters.

In interviews, staff noted that the Recreation Supervisor, also responsible for other Department programs beyond the auditorium, cannot provide the level of oversight desired for the Auditorium Aide staff, and has limited time to interact with those renting the facility. City policies allow for in-house (City) use of the auditorium for free or reduced rates, which reduces availability for paying customers. There has been recent discussion of the potential to convert the facility for use as a shelter for unhoused persons, something for which it was not designed nor are City staff trained to handle. This would also result in the loss of rental income revenue, which is important to maintain the facility, increasing costs to the City. According to the City's financial transparency site, FY2022-23 City rental income was budgeted at \$395,000 and actuals were \$297,000; whether this was solely auditorium income or included other types is unknown. If the City has not already done so, it might consider establishing a separate enterprise fund for the auditorium operation, to track revenues and expenditures and set a goal for it to become a self-supporting business operation.

The City has invested significant funds in the construction and maintenance of its auditorium. If the City's philosophy is to maximize use of the facility to generate revenue rather than to use it for City purposes, we recommend adding a full-time Auditorium Leadworker position. This position would be responsible for supervising the three Auditorium Aide positions, providing a consistent and professional face to renters, and working to increase usage and rental income, maximizing cost recovery for the operation. Rental income can be used to offset staff salaries and facility maintenance costs which, for a facility of this size, can be substantial.

The estimated cost for this position at the median and with benefits is \$131,216.

Recommendation 13: Work with the Children & Youth Division to see if YouthWORKS grant funding can be used to supplement part-time Recreation staff.

The Recreation Division relies significantly on hiring many part-time staff to run programs and provide service, as most recreation programs do. Staff report that it has become increasingly difficult to hire and retain part-time staff, in particular during weekday hours, when most candidates are working or in school.

In some communities, such as the City of Berkeley, YouthWORKS funding is used to provide work opportunities within the City. Richmond could utilize some of its grant funding to provide part-time staff opportunities to support the Recreation Division and fill some of these vacancies. It is possible the City is already doing this, but this was unknown to the project team at the time of this report so the recommendation is offered.

Recommendation 14: Fill seven FTE Library Assistant vacancies and add three new FTE positions to add evening hours.

Current staffing levels for the Richmond Public Library are significantly below the mean and median staffing levels when compared to libraries located in the Bay Area, California, and national cities with populations between 100,000-150,000. The current staffing approach provides access to locations and services mostly during working hours, and does not provide much access during evenings or on weekends. More specifically, there are currently 88 total opening hours; of these hours, 73 are during the day and 15 are after 5pm or on the weekend.

The addition of 10 FTEs would create 440 additional working hours, translating to 31.5 more hours of library access while maintaining the existing service level ratio. The additional staff would also provide better coverage for existing staff, helping to alleviate overtime, and coverage for training and sick leave or vacations. The addition of 10 FTEs would return the Richmond Library system to its pre-COVID-19 staffing levels of 38 FTEs.

Importantly, more staffing support in addition to the recommended 10 FTEs may be necessary to adequately staff and service increased demand at the Main Library after its renovation is complete (and for which the City Council has already allocated \$24M for renovation).

The estimated cost at the median and with benefits for the three new positions is \$360,318.

Recommendation 15: Add one Management Analyst position to oversee Transportation services (R-Transit, Paratransit, Public Transportation) as the unit is transitioned to the Public Works Department.

The Transportation Division currently operates transportation planning and transit services together with the same staff, resulting in reduced focus and staff capacity for both functional areas. The Division's structure also creates the potential for challenges related to service resilience and succession planning.

The addition of a Management Analyst position to oversee transportation services will, over time, help to improve the quality and efficiency of service delivery by allowing for the effective transition of duties and institutional knowledge from the existing program managers who work out of the City Manager's Office.

The estimated cost at the median and with benefits for this position is \$189,074.

Recommendation 16: Add one Assistant Planner to the Planning Department to create a Transportation Planning function for the City.

The addition of an Assistant Planner to the Planning Department to create a Transportation Planning function will, over time, help to improve the quality and efficiency of service delivery. Additionally, co-locating Transportation, Current, and Long-Range Planning will benefit collective performance while creating new synergies between similar functional areas. This will directly address two City Council's strategies to "Improve road, traffic, bike, and pedestrian safety" and to create a "Strategic parking and transportation plan that aligns with planned development," both of which will help to achieve City Council Goal #4, "Improve Public Safety."

The estimated cost for this position at the median and with benefits is \$157,152.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered to enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness, and to ensure that service to the community is maximized.

Recommendation 17: Streamline the Community Services fee structure to increase cost recovery and ease of use by staff.

Critical to the ability to provide recreation programs is to fund staff to support those programs to ensure they are of high quality. For this reason, a review of revenue is imperative as the City considers whether or not to expand Community Services program offerings, service hours, or numbers of participants.

Nationwide, municipal recreation programs typically recover some percentage of costs in order to offset impacts to the general taxpayers (e.g., to minimize General Fund support). The level of cost recovery varies from community to community and there are many philosophies with regard to the "right" levels to charge participants. While much progress has been made in the past decade toward improving equity and inclusion and ensuring that programs are available to all, both the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and California Park and Recreation Society stop short of recommending the elimination of user fees entirely. Instead, they recommend that low-income participants receive user fee subsidies in accordance with their ability to pay, while other groups should continue to pay user fees commensurate to the benefits they receive.²³

Recreation programs in many municipalities impose general user fees to reach a desired cost recovery level and seek to address equity concerns through scholarship programs with an application process to assess and document each applicant's ability to pay; those who cannot pay the fee receive a scholarship or subsidy. Scholarship fundraising is often provided through support of a "friends" or "foundation" group of volunteers in the community. Agencies will often identify several tiers of their programs ranging from those benefiting large groups (e.g., community events) and moving to those with considerable benefit to a single individual (e.g., facility rentals or individual lessons) and set cost recovery rates from low to high, charging more for those service tiers primarily benefitting individuals.

²³ <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2020/january/pricing-strategies-that-combat-social-injustice/>

A cursory review of fees and charges for the City's programs shows that user fees are low in many areas. Four months of the Achieve afterschool program, providing daily childcare and programming after school until 6pm (approximately 15 hours per week) costs \$80, which equates to 33 cents per hour of care. One season of middle school basketball league from January to April costs \$500. An adult winter volleyball league from January to April costs \$315. Weekly youth swimming lessons for one month cost \$48 for residents and \$60 for non-residents. Access to the fitness room at the Recreation Center is offered for just \$5 per month. Staff expressed that the current fee structure is confusing, with many layers and complexities, and is difficult for staff to administer.

While recent data on cost recovery was not provided for this review and was not found in the current budget, information in the City's FY2017-18 Budget document showed the City to be recovering approximately 22% of the cost of recreation programming at that time. This compares to current best practices of approximately 60% cost recovery, though this varies from 50-80% in recreation programs nationally.

Even if the City were to set a goal for 50% recovery (on the low end, providing its services to residents at half-price), this would result in significant new resources to fund programming and services. The City's financial transparency site shows that recreation fees totaled approximately \$565,000 in FY2023. Assuming the City is currently recovering 22% of total recreation costs (as stated in the FY18 Budget), if cost recovery is increased to 50%, this would total \$1,284,090, an increase of over \$719,000 in new revenues. This could offset the cost of several new staff positions.

Cost recovery is a policy decision and must reflect the values of the community. There is no "right" answer. Raftelis recommends that the City incrementally increase recreation program cost recovery to at least the 50% level, still on the low side as compared to industry best practices, setting a balance between ensuring sustainable funding to support necessary staff to ensure safety and security while also providing access to all residents based upon income levels. Additional funding can mean higher quality service levels for those participating. Many consumers have a choice as to where to pay for recreation programming; private gyms, private lessons, and other options exist. They want a balance between low cost but also good quality and facilities. Increasing pricing is not always a negative but can help express that there is value in the service provided and, at the same time, the increased revenues can support quality improvements. If the price point is too low, consumers question the quality of the service, do not attribute the same "value" to it, and may spend even more elsewhere.

For these reasons, Raftelis recommends a review and overhaul of the fee structure for Community Services programming, particularly in recreation and aquatics. Simplification of the fee structure will result in ease of use and administration by staff, as well as incrementally increase cost recovery over a five-year period.

Recommendation 18: Review the inventory of Recreation programs and services to eliminate those which are outdated and serving fewer residents.

It is not uncommon for cities, over time, to continue to add services and programs without eliminating any. This is one reason that staff may not be able to keep up despite no major increase in population or growth. It is important to regularly inventory and assess the programs and services offered, in particular for recreation programs and services which are somewhat subject to trends over time (Zumba and pickleball being recent examples).

While every program and services does good and makes someone happy, the City is unable to address the needs of every individual in the population. It is important the City review its inventory and eliminate less popular programs that take up staff time which could be devoted to other purposes. The City's Snow Ball Scholarship, as one example, while a lovely local historical event, in essence benefits two scholarship recipients out of a City population of over 114,000 while utilizing considerable Community Services staff time.

One means to prioritize programs and services is to map them into the quadrants shown in Figure 11 below. Ideally, the City should pursue those programs and services in the top right corner (green) and avoid those in the bottom left (red) which provide service to many residents in the most efficient manner.



Figure 11: Program Evaluation Matrix

Recommendation 19: For Children & Youth, evaluate the grant management workload after FY2024 awardees are selected and re-evaluate hiring needs accordingly.

Children and Youth is a City-mandated function by way of Article 15 of the City Charter. The division is currently fully staffed with four FTEs and focuses on distributing funds to local non-profits and partners to support children and families under the age of 24.

The Division will move from an annual to a three-year grant cycle beginning in FY2024, which will greatly change the workload of staff, who can now pivot from focusing on the application and award process to ongoing monitoring of recipients. Staffing should remain static and be re-evaluated and assessed at the end of the three-year cycle to determine the impact this change has had.

Internal Services Department

The Internal Services Department consists of three divisions: Finance, Human Resources (HR), and Information Technology (IT). Each division provides internal support for all of the departments within the City, such as financial reporting, accounting, payroll, technology related services for both hardware and software needs, as well as employment related services like recruiting for vacant positions, compensation and benefits, and employee relations. The chart below shows each division by major program.

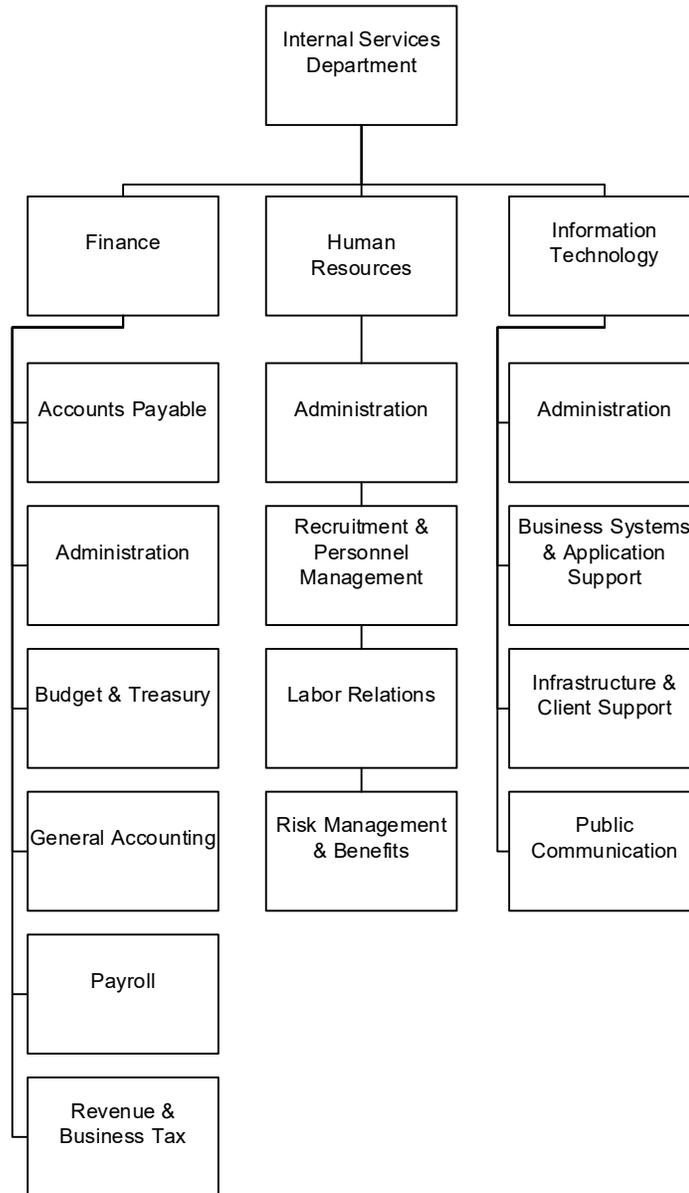


Figure 12: Internal Services Department Organizational Structure, FY2023-24

STAFFING LEVEL HISTORY

Staffing within the Internal Services Department has remained relatively flat over the past five years as shown in Table 16 below. Authorized staffing levels dropped during FY 2020-FY2021 likely in response to the uncertainty and potential revenue loss associated with the global COVID-19 pandemic. Finance staffing is the only division to grow during the past five years, attributable in part to implementation of Measure U Gross Receipts Business Tax and the associated revenue collection efforts required. Measure U was passed by the City Council in November of 2020, changing the methodology for business tax collection to be based on gross receipts rather than the number of employees.

Table 16: Internal Service Department Staffing, FY2020 through FY2024

Staffing (FTE)	FY2020 Budget	FY2021 Budget	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Budget	FY2024 Budget	Percent Change FY2020 to FY2024
Finance	33	29	33	32	35	6.1%
Human Resources	15	14	13	13	15	0.0%
Information Technology	14	13	14	14	14	0.0%
Internal Services Total	62	56	60	59	64	3.2%

CORE SERVICE MATRIX

The following table outlines core services (programs) provided by each division within the Internal Services Department. The table is not meant to be all inclusive; rather, it summarizes at a high level how staff are allocated to meet the service-level demand for each division.

Table 17: Internal Service Department Core Services Matrix

Department Function/Division	Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
Finance	Budget & Treasury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop operating budget, capital budget, and forecasts Debt and cash flow management Monitor and track cash and banking activities, reconcile bank accounts Grants management 	5.0	1.0
	General Accounting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General ledger transactions Internal financial reporting Prepare Annual Consolidated Financial Report (ACFR) External audit liaison, Financial system management (MUNIS) 	7.0	1.0
	Revenue and Business Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect taxes, fees, and charges Record and report revenue results Measure U implementation (business license tax) 	7.0	1.0
	Accounts Payable and Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vendor payments Procurement compliance Departmental contract assistance 	5.0	2.0
	Payroll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process bi-monthly payroll, off-cycle checks Labor and compliance processing 	1.0	2.0

Department Function/Division	Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
	Finance Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy and oversight • Labor negotiation costing, • Compliance oversight 	2.0	1.0
Human Resources	Risk Management & Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer the City's Workers Compensation program • Manage claims, review and assesses insurance obligations for all Citywide contracts • Citywide benefits - CALPERs retirement, medical, vision, and dental healthcare, deferred compensation, paid leave, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Employee Assistance Program (EAP) 	3.0	2.0
	Labor Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract negotiation for five of the eight employee unions • Position control support with Finance • Compensation and classification • Performance management compliance tracking 	1.0	0.0
	Recruitment & Personnel Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract, train, and retain a highly skilled and diversified workforce • Personnel action processing and records maintenance • Payroll support • Citywide onboarding • Pre-employment screening, fingerprinting, and offer letters 	6.0	1.0
	Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and support functions • High sensitivity labor relation issues • Executive-level recruitments • Carry out CM policy 	1.0	1.0
Information Technology	Business Systems and Application Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Software application support and development • Business system processes • Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) management and strategy • Citywide Geographic Information System (GIS) 	2.0	2.0
	Infrastructure and Client Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance, replacement, and support for IT hardware, servers, fiber ring, and all City facilities • Help desk support for City employees • Network security 	4.0	4.0
	Public Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCRT public TV • Website content management • Council chambers technology and broadcasting support • Citywide video and audio support. 	3.0	0.0
	IT Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Departmental leadership and support functions • In-house copy center and mail room 	3.0	0.0

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Authorized staffing in the Finance Division is 35 FTEs in FY2023. This is an increase of 2 FTEs from the previous fiscal year, related in part to the implementation of Measure U revenue collection, which began in January 2022.

Measure U is a business license tax within the City. The ordinance passed by the City Council in 2020 revised the calculation for business license tax to be based on gross receipts instead of number of employees. The Revenue and Business Tax program is responsible for collection and administration of this tax. A new software system has been selected to improve processing and coordination with other City departments. The system will improve tracking, collection, and permitting; however, implementation will require additional staff capacity and effective project management to ensure the technology complements existing processes. The new calculation is unique to the City. As a result, some of the process elements are not fully defined, such as the appeal process. With the recent implementation of this new program and software solution to assist with processing, leadership is still working to assess the ongoing staffing needs and considering ways to leverage third party contractors to assist, e.g., with revenue collection efforts.

The City's payroll program has struggled with a high vacancy rate. The Division's overall vacancy rate is in line with the City at 17% over the past two years; however, the payroll vacancy rate is much higher, averaging 66% in recent months. The program has 3 FTEs authorized, with only one coordinator position filled. The Payroll Manager and second Coordinator position have remained vacant or difficult to fill and retain. This staffing has impacted several departments across the City, particularly those with high staffing levels and complex payroll transactions like public safety. The Division is relying on temporary contract workers and other managers to help fill vacancy gaps in order to meet time sensitive bi-weekly processing of employee pay. During interviews, many staff questioned the accuracy of their paychecks, but acknowledged the limited capacity of one person to meet the demands of this service. Although an internal service function, this program is critical to all employees delivering core services to City residents.

Human Resources (HR)

The highest prioritized program for HR is Risk Management and Benefits. This program features several regulatory mandates, including workplace safety and state pension administrative requirements. In addition, a strong risk management program mitigates risk to the City, particularly financial risk associated with workers compensation claims. At present, the program has two vacancies, resulting in a transactional approach. Staff spend their time processing claims and working with legal and insurance vendors who support workers compensation and benefits. This program requires collaboration with the City Attorney's Office. Often, legal counsel is outsourced to private law firms given limited in-house capacity. This heavy reliance on contractors limits opportunities to see relevant claim history and trends over time that can help inform proactive strategies to mitigate future financial impact. As this program staffs the two remaining vacant positions, the focus should include proactive measures such as review of claims trends and development of workplace safety training and communication to mitigate future risk.

Nearly all City staff are represented by a labor union. Union groups include: Executive and Mid-Managers represented by Local 21, general employees represented by SEIU 1021, Police Management, Police Officers, Fire Management, and Firefighters. Contract terms vary and require ongoing communication between the administration and union representatives. HR has only one FTE supporting this service. The role of HR is to build relationships through improved communication with union representatives, track and maintain compliance with performance requirements outlined in each of the contracts, as well as review and advise leadership (HR Director and City Manager) during contract negotiations. With contracts governing a significant portion of employee interactions with the City and HR, additional resource consideration should be considered for this program.

HR is an integral part of recruiting and retaining the City's workforce. With the recent staffing challenges brought about by the pandemic, retirements, and competitive labor market, the workload demand for the recruiting and personnel management team is significant. As of November 2023, the City was actively recruiting for 126 vacant positions, representing approximately 17% of the authorized FTEs in the FY 2024 Budget. During the interview process with leadership and staff in this division, a citywide organization and development training program was not

identified. Required annual training like workplace harassment are administered. Beyond that, professional training opportunities are handled within respective departments. With the growing number of retirement eligible staff and need to focus on succession planning, resources to support a more comprehensive onboarding and training program are recommended.

Information Technology (IT)

The IT Division’s authorized staffing has remained steady over the past several years, with 14 authorized FTEs. The technology needs of local governments, especially emerging from the pandemic, have increased significantly. Organizations have recognized the need to modernize core services by leveraging technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness. IT has had a lower vacancy rate than the Citywide average, with typically one or two vacant positions. This retention rate is largely attributable to high tenured staff that have been with the City 20 years or more. Succession planning will be a critical focus area in IT. The authorized staffing levels allow for mostly reactive service response. Staff spend nearly all of their time responding to client support needs, e.g., infrastructure, equipment, and software troubleshooting, along with public communication activities that include broadcasting and technical support for City Council, boards, and commissions. Within this staffing structure, there is limited capacity for proactive project management to assist with implementation of new technology and systems that support improved service delivery. While many vendors provide support for setup, it is essential to have in-house expertise that understands each department’s needs and can coordinate among many stakeholders within the organization.

There is limited industry or best practices research indicating the appropriate staffing levels for internal service divisions like Finance, HR, and IT. This is because the workload demands and services can vary significantly from organization to organization. Nonetheless, it is important to keep these staffing levels in mind as staffing across the City changes. Since FY2020, Citywide authorized staffing levels grew by approximately two percent. Internal Service staffing grew by 3.2 percent over the same period.

Another metric to assess staffing levels for internal service functions is the ratio of internal department staff to total organization staff. Internal service functions support the entire organization with various administrative operational needs; as such, as an organization’s staffing levels increase, there should also be consideration for growing internal service staffing. This relationship is not linear and dependent upon the service model used by the organization. For example, many cities utilize a hybrid service model for HR services, where department staff and central HR are involved in the recruiting process. The peer analysis reflected below is not meant to be an all-encompassing method for evaluating internal service staffing levels in Richmond. Absent a comprehensive understanding of the variation in service provisions for each locality’s internal service functions, this is simply a contextual benchmarking data point for consideration. The table below summarizes the ratio of Internal Service Division staff to total authorized staffing for Richmond and peer cities in the Bay area. The ratio indicates how many Citywide authorized staff that one FTE within an Internal Service Division is supporting. The higher the ratio, the more support a single internal services FTE is theoretically providing.

Table 18: FY2023-FY2024 Internal Service Staffing Level Peer Analysis

Peer Localities	Authorized FTEs (All Funds)	City FTEs per Finance FTE	City FTEs per HR FTE	City FTEs per IT FTE
City of Richmond CA	743.0	21.23	49.53	53.07
City of Berkeley CA	1,791.8	32.00	81.45	34.46
City of Concord CA	422.0	20.10	46.89	30.14
City of Vallejo CA	671.0	27.96	44.73	53.68

As can be seen, Richmond IT supports more City FTEs than Berkeley or Concord but a similar amount to Vallejo. Richmond's HR support level is similar to that in Concord and Vallejo and less than that in Berkeley. This is a rough estimation as the level of outside contracted assistance in these departments for each city is unknown, but provides a starting point for comparison.

STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS

The staffing recommendations below reflect prioritized investment in Internal Service personnel that will provide added capacity for the City to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery through technology and grow the availability of outside resources to support core services for residents.

Recommendation 20: Create one project management position in IT to support prioritized City investment in technological improvements.

The City Council Strategic Goal Area number five is to “Strengthen the City’s internal infrastructure and processes.” Within this goal is a strategy to “Improve and modernize City IT.” As part of the strategy to improve and modernize IT, two identified priorities relate to ERP system replacement and/or upgrades. The first is MUNIS®, the City’s financial ERP and the second is Trakit®, community development software that supports permit tracking, project tracking, and code tracking. Both systems will be used by multiple departments across the organization and present an opportunity to make meaningful progress toward Council’s strategy. Long-term operational efficiency will require adequate staff capacity to plan, test, implement, and train users on the new software.

IT departments within local government represent the hub of technical capabilities and project management skill sets. They often serve as subject matter experts between the City and potential vendors to articulate security and network requirements that meet the organization’s needs. IT staff also understand internal customer needs, particularly as it relates to integration with other core system applications required to connect business processes. Recently, many IT departments have also begun to build in-house data teams comprised of administrators and analysts who inventory data sources across the organization to identify ways to improve public transparency and improve leadership’s decision-making capabilities. Finally, IT should also include project management expertise to coordinate the many stakeholders involved in an ERP system upgrade or replacement and to assist with internal business process improvements. Project Managers are capable of developing a realistic implementation plan and translating department business processes and mapping to application requirements to achieve operational efficiency.

Currently, the IT division has four positions within the Application Support program. Two of the positions, Information Technology Manager and Business Analyst I, are vacant. Staff explained the vacant IT Manager is intended to support Citywide GIS and website management. An additional IT Manager position is recommended to support forthcoming ERP upgrades and replacement. These projects will cover multiple years and require full-time support that is not available among existing staff. Even with vendor support through implementation, in-house expertise is essential to ensure the City’s business process is reviewed, modified, and documented in a way that the technology will support and lead to improved service delivery. Providing resources to support internal project management expertise will help identify opportunities for efficiency in workflow and support department staff as they work through implementation and process improvement. The City should prioritize hiring for the two vacant positions as well as the new recommended position in advance of major system upgrades. With a fully staffed business systems and application support team, the City will have the capacity to support a data management and analytics program to inform future process improvement and workflow efficiency opportunities across the organization.

The estimated cost at the median for a Network and Systems Specialist II to provide project management for internal business processes with benefits is \$207,745.

Recommendation 21: Establish a Grants Management Office within the Finance Division that includes the Grant Coordinator and two new Accountant II positions.

Recently, the City Manager's Office created a dedicated Grant Coordinator position. For fiscally constrained cities like Richmond, grants represent an important avenue to increase resources available to the City. Grants also require sufficient staff dedication and involve many administrative and compliance-related requirements tied to the outside funding.

At present, each department, when time and staff capacity allow, identify opportunities to apply for grants that support their program objectives and service to the community. This approach is often ad hoc, shifting based on the priorities and availability of staff. To increase the pool of grant resources available to the City will require a dedicated, centralized team that can help each department in the identification, application, monitoring, and reporting requirements associated with various grants. When done well, a centralized grants management office more than pays for the personnel cost to administer through the additional resources brought into the City.

Finance staff are responsible for budget development and financial reporting requirements, as well as the Single Audit required in reporting for federal grants over a specific threshold. A Grants Management Office fits best within this Division. The Grants Coordinator position complements the budget development process through identification and tracking of grant applications across the City. They can help ensure all grant awards are properly communicated and appropriated. This information can also be added to the annual budget document to provide full transparency of resources available to the City and progress with growing outside resources that support core services.

Similarly, the two Accountant positions will support compliance-related requirements and reporting. This is an area of concern for many departments when they consider applying for grants. With limited capacity, many department staff may elect to bypass applying for the grant because they know they will be limited in their ability to meet monitoring and reporting requirements. While these requirements are ultimately the responsibility of staff working within the program where grant funds were received, providing technical support from Finance is important. This central expertise can also ensure standardized processes are developed and adhered to, as well as identify opportunities to improve reporting capabilities within the City's financial ERP system.

The estimated cost at the median and with benefits for two new Accountant II positions is \$378,148.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below offer suggestions to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Recommendation 22: Establish a formal Human Resources Liaison role within each department to support proactive recruitment efforts.

Each department plays an integral role in recruiting to fill vacant positions. While the recent wave of public sector retirements and competitive labor market put a spotlight on the human resources functions within local governments, it is important to recognize the role of proactively recruiting and retaining staff is shared. Informally, each department relies on hiring managers and administrative staff to assist with recruitment efforts. Depending on the size of the department, the resources dedicated to hiring new staff may increase. For example, the Police Department has three FTEs within the Administration and Support Bureau dedicated to personnel and training. This concentrated effort is needed to address more than one-third of the average vacancies Citywide.

Human Resources utilizes NEOGOV®, a web-based HR system designed to meet public sector workforce needs. One of the features of this system is the ability for electronic workflow. The visibility of the hiring process can be shared among central HR and hiring managers. Current authorized HR staffing is generally in line with peer averages

and Citywide growth in authorized positions over the past five years. While this may be the right staffing complement in a steady state, it does not consider the acute recruitment needs to begin addressing the widespread vacancies across the City. Lowering the average vacancy rate will require a joint effort. One way to maximize this effort is through formalizing an HR Liaison role and providing standard operating procedures and training to support staff in that role.

To formally document the responsibility of an HR Liaison role, central HR should identify the common job classifications that assist with personnel support. The job descriptions for these roles should then be updated to reflect a standardized set of expectations. Hiring managers and administrative support staff should have access to documentation that explains the hiring process, including how to navigate system workflows and requirements. Periodic training should also be offered Citywide, as staff within these roles may turn over often. For large departments with staff dedicated to recruiting, central HR should review roles and responsibilities and consider pushing down tasks where appropriate to expedite the recruiting process. This evaluation should be coupled with tasks where Citywide review and standardization are prioritized for equitable and consistent procedures. Lastly, if not already available, HR should perform a process map of the recruitment process. This activity will highlight process improvement opportunities that reduce time to hire and also help communicate transparently with departments and hiring managers about the average time it will take to fill a position, so expectations are clearly stated.

Recommendation 23: Develop an organizational development and training program that incorporates workplace safety and supervisory training.

The risk management and benefits program within HR is staffed with five FTEs; two are currently vacant. City administration has increased their focus and oversight of risk management, in part due to the high volume of workers' compensation costs. With the current vacancies, this program remains primarily reactive, reviewing insurance requirements and claims activity after it has occurred. As the remaining vacancies are filled, it will be important to transition some of the staff capacity to proactive risk management efforts. One of the first focus areas should be around workplace safety training and supervisory training.

The City has access to multiple training platforms to assist with these efforts; however, it is important to create buy-in and accountability with the departments to partake in the training courses offered. HR relies significantly on supervisors in the field to ensure safety requirements are both understood and adhered to. As the long-tenured workforce continues to retire and be replaced with new employees, this training is even more critical. The City's third-party administrators can provide access to workers' compensation data. The first step in developing a workplace safety and training program is to understand claims activity. For example, which departments and activities generate the greatest share of claims? The data-driven analysis can then be used to develop a communications and training schedule that reinforces key safety concepts regularly to department staff.

Executive Offices

The Executive Offices consist of five departments: the City Council, Mayor’s Office, City Manager’s Office, City Attorney’s Office, and City Clerk’s Office. A functional organization chart is provided below.

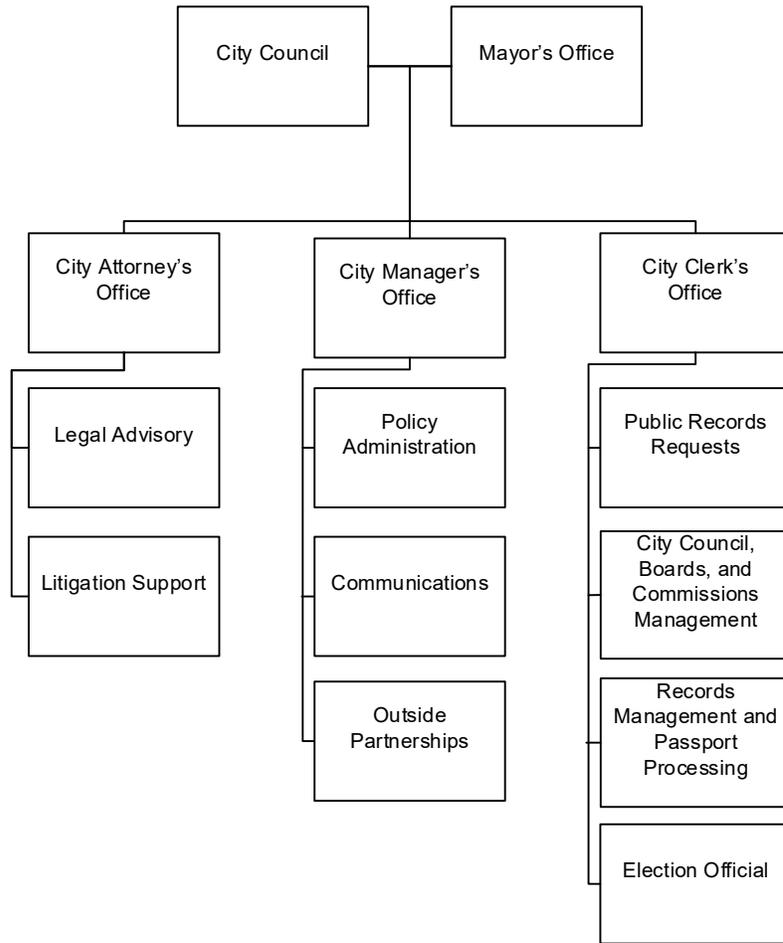


Figure 13: Executive Offices Organizational Structure, FY2023-24

STAFFING LEVEL HISTORY

Staffing levels in the Executive Department have fluctuated by division, except for the City Clerk’s Office, which has remained consistent over the past five years. Both City Council and the Mayor’s office received administrative support positions. The decline in authorized positions within the City Manager’s Office is primarily attributable to re-allocating deputy leadership positions to the respective departments they are overseeing.

Table 19: Department Staffing, FY2020 through FY2024

Staffing (FTE)	FY2020 Budget	FY2021 Budget	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Budget	FY2024 Budget	Percent Change FY2020 to FY2024
City Council	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	8.0	14.3%
Mayor's Office	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.9	5.0	25%
City Manager's Office²⁴	11.9	2.0	4.0	3.0	5.0	-57.9%
City Attorney's Office	9.7	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	3.1%
City Clerk's Office	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	0%
TOTAL	36.6	27	29	27.9	32	-14.4%

CORE SERVICE MATRIX

The following table outlines core services (programs) provided by each division or office within the Executive Offices. The table is not meant to be all inclusive, but rather a summary of how staff are allocated to meet the service-level demand for each division.

Table 20: Executive Offices Core Services Matrix

Department Function/Division	Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
Mayor's Office	Mayor's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informs the public about City issues, policies, and programs • Makes recommendations to the City Council • Works with the City Manager in preparing the annual budget • Makes an annual report to the City Council as to City conditions and affairs 	5.0	0.0
City Council	City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes comprehensive goals and objectives • Establishes policies • Formulates priorities for resource allocation • Appoints City Manager, City Clerk, and City Attorney 	8.0	0.0
City Clerk's Office	Public Records Requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds to public records requests • Publishes legal notices for departments 	1.0	0.0
	Election Official	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracks expiring terms for boards and commissions • Accepts all campaign reports • Ensures Form 700's are filed on time 	1.0	0.0
	City Council, Boards, and Commissions Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepares Council agenda packets • Records meeting minutes • Publishes ordinances 	1.5	0.0
	Records Management and Passport Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custodian of legislative records • Passport processing 	0.5	0.0

²⁴ In 2020, the City of Richmond implemented a city-wide reorganization plan which shifted the structure of the City Manager's Office.

Department Function/Division	Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
City Manager's Office	Policy Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides policy recommendations to Council Implements Council policies through daily oversight of operating departments Initiates, develops, and implements programs Implements City Council Goals and Objectives and communicates regularly with the City Council through weekly reports and regular check-ins Collaborates with City departments to develop and implement financial plans and balanced budgets which are submitted for City Council adoption. 	3.0	0.0
	Outside Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinates with external City stakeholders Provides support to local non-profit organizations Participates in Municipal/ Regional meetings 	1.0	0.0
	Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports external communication needs for the organization Coordinates with department representatives to relay important City information to residents and stakeholders 	0.0	1.0
City Attorney's Office	Legal Advisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advises City Council, boards and commissions, and all City departments, including the Housing Authority, Police and Fire Departments, and the Port Responds to legal opinions, draft ordinances and resolutions Counsel for legal matters across City departments, includes development and review of City contracts, and participation in labor negotiations 	5.0	4.0
	Litigation Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides in-house case management and coordination with outside legal counsel for City litigation matters 	0.0	1.0

KEY OBSERVATIONS

The City Attorney's Office budget supports both authorized staff and outside legal costs. The City Attorney's Office operates under a hybrid model and contracts with an outside firm, Aleshire & Wynder, LLP, to fill its City Attorney position. The cost of contracting the City Attorney position is significant, approximately \$1.6 million, and perhaps not the right long-term model for the Office. Further, the City relies on outside council for affordable housing issues, employee relations matters, and police personnel matters. Employee relations matters handled by outside council, coupled with limited human resources capacity for employee and labor relations, may indicate that patterns and trends go unnoticed or do not come back to risk management strategy. Figure 14 below illustrates the growth in professional services expenditures in the Office.

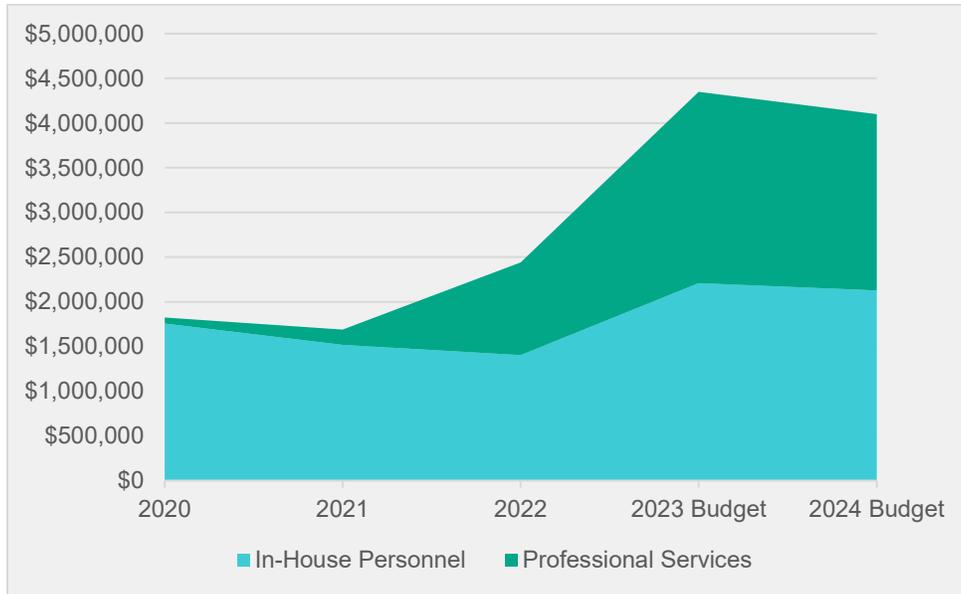


Figure 14: City Attorney Expenditures, FY2020 – FY2024

Meanwhile, legal in-house staff have a significant workload tied to Council actions and meetings that occur three times per month. Departments report significant delays in contract review and legal counsel.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The operational recommendations below provide opportunities to streamline core services and improve efficiency.

Recommendation 24: Reduce reliance on outside legal contracts.

The City Attorney’s budget has grown by 140% from actual cost incurred in FY2020 to Adopted FY2024. During that same time authorized staffing has remained flat at 10 FTEs. The division has one of the highest vacancy rates in the City, averaging over 27% the past two years. When an outside firm and lawyer was appointed as City Attorney in 2022, professional and administrative costs increased by nearly \$1 million, from less than \$70,000 or five percent of total costs in 2020 to over \$1 million or 52% of total costs in 2022. The City has relied on outsourced professional services for their appointed attorney position and presumably other attorney positions that they have struggled to fill.

The cost of receiving these outsourced services may exceed the benefits. For local governments, typically legal services require a combination of in-house and outside legal expertise. For example, complex litigation cases are often referred to external legal counsel while routine legal matters like contract review remain in-house. During conversations with staff, the high rate of vacancies has resulted in minimal legal guidance or employee relations services for departments. This includes procurement and contracting assistance, along with grievance and personnel matters. The frequency of Council meetings and legal support required occupies most of the capacity for existing staff.

The City may be able to realize greater cost savings and improved policies and procedures by transitioning to more in-house attorneys and reducing their outside legal contracts. This may require compensation related adjustments to improve market competitiveness for hiring new attorneys.

Recommendation 25: Realign City Clerk services to create capacity for records management and public requests.

The City Clerk's office is responsible for several mandated programs including serving as the Election Official, records management, management of City Council, Boards, and Commission meetings, schedules, and agendas, as well as public records requests. They also perform a handful of services, like passport processing and intake of subpoenas and workers' compensation claims, which are not core to their mission or focus areas. With the frequency of governance meetings and increasing workload demand for public records request, these discretionary services are becoming more difficult to maintain. Since the services are customer-facing, often records management tasks are placed on the back burner until staff has capacity to address. This has resulted in a backlog of filing and records management. It also limits the capacity of existing staff to proactively address electronic records management and identify more modern or efficient solutions for this program.

The office may benefit from a part-time position or intern that can begin to identify process improvement through digitization and optimal workflow. During staff discussion of existing process workflows, Raftelis identified scenarios where both a permanent physical record is kept along with a digital record. Practices like this may no longer be necessary; however, they require further evaluation to ensure compliance with legal requirements before enabling a more efficient process. Similarly, services like passport processing are offered externally by many service providers. Since it is not core to operations, no longer providing this service can increase capacity for staff to address the increasing volume and workload related to public records requests and records management. Recently, the City implemented NextRequest, a records management software, which will provide better data to inform workload trends over time. With the limited data collected thus far, public records requests are projected to increase 8%, based on activity in FY2023 compared with the first four months of FY2024.

Lastly, there may also be opportunities to streamline workflow. For example, time sensitive correspondence intake is received by the Clerk's Office; however, it does not relate to their area of expertise. Re-routing the communication protocol for items like subpoenas and workers' compensation claims will reduce the workflow steps involved with review and response, leading to a more efficient process.

Recommendation 26: Increase the threshold for City Manager contract approval.

Richmond City Council approves all contracts above \$10,000. This threshold is considerably lower than other peer cities and nationwide averages for mid-size cities. For example, the City of Berkeley requires Council approval if supplies, equipment, and materials exceed \$100,000.²⁵ The City of Vallejo similarly requires City Council approval for purchases over \$100,000.²⁶

While a lower threshold provides the Council with greater scrutiny of resource outlay, it also significantly increases the workload for administrative support departments to prepare, review, and approve each of these items. There are other spending control mechanisms in place to ensure proper stewardship of taxpayer resources, including the Council's role in adopting the annual operating budget that sets appropriation level authority for spending across departments and funds. The City Manager is responsible for ensuring that departments operate within their approved budgetary levels.

Table 21 below provides an analysis of the current approval threshold and estimated impact of increasing the threshold to either \$50,000 or \$100,000. The data is presented in terms of workload volume (e.g., what percentage

²⁵ <https://berkeley.municipal.codes/BMC/7.18.010>

²⁶ https://library.municode.com/ca/vallejo/codes/municipal_code?nodeId=TIT3REFI_CH3.20PU10_3.20.010TI

of vendor payments are most likely requiring Council approval) as well as total expenditure oversight, expressed as the percentage of total expenditures likely to require Council approval. The data to support this analysis was retrieved from the City’s Open Data checkbook and reflects expenditures classified as equipment and contract services or professional and administrative services across all funds in FY2023. It is worth noting the analysis is imperfect and simply compares the approval threshold amount to total aggregate payments made to a single vendor as a proxy for Council approval.

Table 21: Contract Approval Threshold Analysis

Threshold for City Council Approval	% Total Expenditures requiring Council Approval	% of Vendors requiring Council Approval
Current \$10,000	97.5%	37.6%
Increase to \$50,000	89.1%	17.6%
Increase to \$100,000	79.5%	10.1%

By reducing the number of items requiring Council approval, this recommended policy adjustment will streamline the purchasing process for departments and improve operational efficiency across the City, including for the City Clerk, City Manager, City Council, and Mayor’s Office.

Public Works Department

The Public Works Department’s mission is to “provide residents and the City of Richmond with a higher quality of life through quality public service, accomplished through partnership, teamwork, employee development, continuous improvement, and fostering a positive public image.”²⁷ Guided by its mission, the Department is responsible for maintaining 289 miles of roadway, over 9,000 streetlights, approximately 38,000 trees, and 55 parks as well as City right-of-way, trail systems, numerous ballfields and courts, facilities, and more.

The Department is led by the Public Works Director and two Deputy Directors, who oversee a staff totaling 131.2 FTEs and numerous seasonal positions. The Department is organized into seven divisions: Building Maintenance, Engineering and Capital Improvements, Fleet Maintenance, Maintenance and Abatement, Parks Maintenance, Street Maintenance, and Water Resource Recovery. The organizational structure of the Department is shown in the figure below.

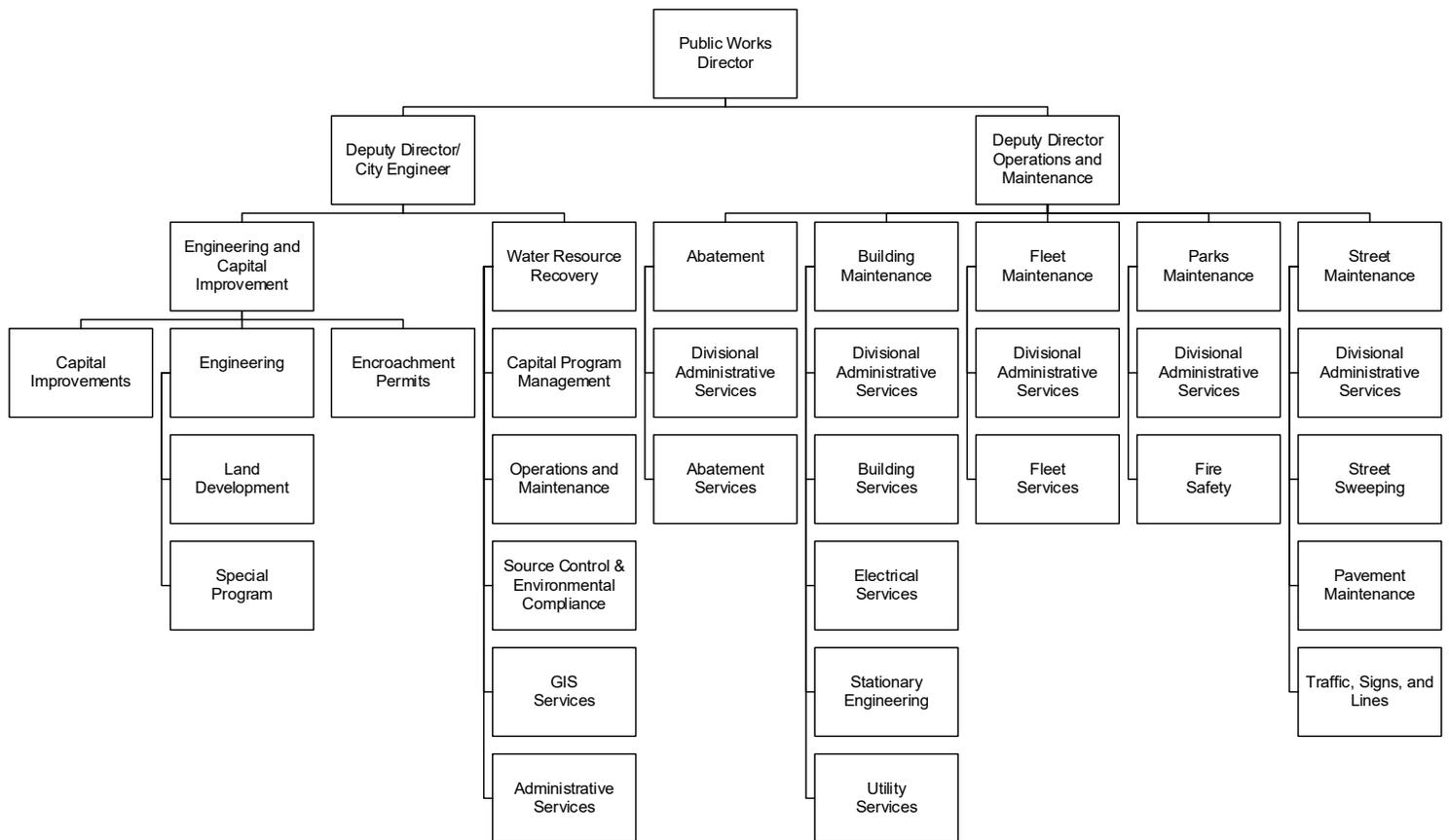


Figure 15: Public Works Department Organizational Structure, FY2023-24

The **Building Maintenance Division** is responsible for maintaining 39 buildings throughout the City, totaling 777,000 square footage (SF). Staff perform various tasks, including, but not limited to, painting, carpentry, custodial work, plumbing, and electrical repairs.

²⁷ [Public Works Department, City of Richmond, CA](#)

The **Engineering and Capital Improvement Program Division** plans and implements the CIP plan for the City of Richmond. This work includes assisting with project design, reviewing plans, preparing bid packages, managing projects, performing inspections, and more.

The **Fleet Maintenance Division** manages and maintains the City’s fleet of vehicles and equipment. This includes overseeing the City’s vehicle replacement program, performing maintenance, and maintaining the City’s fuel sites.

The **Maintenance and Abatement Division** is responsible for removing graffiti, weeding, picking up litter along medians, removing waste from illegal dumping sites, performing code enforcement activities, and clearing homeless encampments.

The **Parks Maintenance Division** is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life through safe and attractive parks, facilities, public landscapes, and natural open spaces.²⁸

The **Street Maintenance Division** is responsible for pavement maintenance, traffic signs, painting, and sweeping.²⁹ This work includes pothole repair, gutter paving, pavement replacement, painting for pedestrian and vehicular traffic control, and sign maintenance and replacement.

The **Water Resource Recovery Division** manages the City’s wastewater treatment plant and pretreatment program, maintains the sanitary sewer and stormwater collection systems, and ensures compliance with various federal, state, and local regulations.

CORE SERVICE MATRIX

The following table outlines core services (programs) provided by each division within the Public Works Department. The table is not meant to be all inclusive, rather summarizing at a high level how staff are allocated to meet the service-level demand for each division.

Table 22: Public Works Department Core Services Matrix

Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
Water Resource Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages the City’s wastewater treatment plant and pretreatment program Maintains the sanitary sewer and stormwater collection systems Ensures compliance with various federal, state, and local regulations 	6.0	0.0
Street Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform pavement maintenance Maintain and replace traffic signs Paint street lines Perform street sweeping 	26.0	0.0
Engineering and Capital Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the City Capital Improvement Program Studying, planning, and designing City infrastructure Prepare plans, specifications, bids, and contracts Provide inspection services for all City projects Manage various programs, including the pavement management program, traffic congestion management program, traffic signal program Coordinate public utility and hazard elimination work 	8.2	3.0

²⁸ [Parks and Landscape Division, City of Richmond California](#)

²⁹ City of Richmond, Street Maintenance, <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/72/Street-Maintenance>

Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue public rights of way permits 		
Parks Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform landscape maintenance of City Parks Open space fire fuel management Urban forest management Special event support Maintenance of Hilltop Landscape Assessment District Maintenance of Marina Bay Landscape & Lighting Assessment District 	27.15	1.0
Building Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for maintaining all City-owned facilities 	30.85	2.0
Fleet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage the fuel stations Perform fleet maintenance Oversee vehicle replacement for the entire City 	14.0	3.0
Maintenance and Abatement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleanup graffiti, medians, illegal dumping sites, code enforcement activities, and homeless encampments 	16.0	0.0
Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee Department operations Work closely City Manager and Council to implement policy initiatives 	3.0	0.0

KEY OBSERVATIONS

The total authorized staffing in the department has increased by 16.1% from FY 2020-2021 according to the City’s budget history. The staffing history from FY2020-21 to FY2023-24 is detailed below.

Table 23: Public Works Department Budgeted Staffing 2018-24³⁰

Category	FY 2020 - 2021	FY 2021 -2022	FY 2022 - 2023	FY 2023- 2024	% Change
Public Works Department	113.0	127.4	132.2	131.2	16.1%

According to data provided by the City dated November 3rd, 2023, the Department currently has nine vacancies, which are impacting the level of service the Department can provide. The vacancies are as follows:

- Combo Equipment Mechanic
- Construction Inspector I
- Custodial Maintenance Supervisor
- Electrician II
- Equipment Operator
- Equipment Supervisor
- Groundskeeper/Gardener
- Stationary Engineer
- Senior Civil Engineer

In addition to the vacancies, there are several key areas where staffing capacity could be increased to help the Department meet service-level demands. For example, there is not currently a budgeted position to supervise the work of the Painters and Carpenters Unit within the Facility Maintenance Division. This has resulted in the

³⁰ [City of Richmond Adopted Operating Budgets from FY 2021-2022 to FY 2023-2024](#)

Superintendent filling the void, which impacts their ability to oversee the whole operation of the Division. Additionally, the Department has over 130 active contracts managed in various locations within the Department. To ensure contract terms are met, resources are spent responsibly, and to increase accountability, the Department would benefit from creating a Contract Manager position to oversee the contracts not tied to a specific program or capital improvement project. Finally, staff turnover has created the opportunity for the Department to reset its CIP process. As this process is implemented and matures, the Department should monitor the need to add additional project management capacity through hiring additional staff or contracting.

The overall workload for the Department has also increased, resulting in staff primarily performing reactive work over preventive maintenance. Drivers of the increased workload include illegal dumping, vandalism, and the discontinuation of pesticide use, which has made weed abatement more labor-intensive than in the past.

A 2023 Needs Assessment of the Department by MRG³¹ included a survey of Public Works staff showing the potential for considerable turnover in coming years (“One in ten members plan to leave or retire from the City within 2 years.”). Respondents also noted the desire for better equipment and training to improve their ability to do their jobs. The report also noted that the use of performance measures varied across the Department, full cost recovery for stormwater services and grant reimbursables was not occurring, and the changing structure of the Department required time to stabilize operations among other recommendations.

STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 27: Adopt a ratio of 7-10 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) projects per project manager based on scope and complexity.

The Public Works Department is currently building its capacity to manage capital improvement projects. Staff turnover has resulted in the Engineering and Capital Improvements Division comprising primarily of staff hired within the last 12-18 months. According to fieldwork interviews, staff reported being able to start a new CIP process from scratch and have been actively identifying future projects. Staff reported that 58 future unfunded projects have been identified to date. However, the project team is unclear about the complexity or scope of these projects. Staff further reported that there are only eight active projects, with two in the construction phase and the remaining six in either bid or concept design. The MRG Needs Assessment included a recommendation to “Ensure the capital improvement program is resourced (staffed) to deliver all the capital project approved...”

The Engineering and Capital Improvements Division has a total of 8.2 budgeted FTEs. The positions within the Divisions include:

- Capital Projects Manager (1.0)
- Office Aide (0.8)
- Senior Civil Engineer (2.0)
- Development Project Manager (0.4)
- Construction Inspector (3.0)
- Engineer I/II (1.0)

Assuming the Engineers are involved in project management activities, a total of 4.4 FTEs are available to assist with actively managing CIP projects. This level of staff capacity limits the number of projects the Department can effectively manage at once. As the list of 58 projects grows and projects become active, the Department must ensure adequate staff capacity to manage each. Unfortunately, no industry guidance is available to determine the best practice ratio of the number of projects or the total value of projects that one project manager can effectively manage.

³¹ City of Richmond Department of Public Works Needs Assessment, Wayne Tanda, MRG, LLC, October 1, 2023.

It is reasonable to assume that a project manager can effectively manage between five and 10 projects a piece; however, what works best for the City of Richmond must be determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on the size and complexity of each project and the staff's workload. To inform decisions regarding project management staffing levels, the project team looked at staffing levels and total project load in other communities. The City of Vallejo, California, utilizes a project approach that may offer insight to the City of Richmond. The table below shows the number of CIP projects and Engineering Division staffing at the City of Vallejo.

Table 24: Vallejo, CA Engineering Division Staffing

# of Projects ³²	CIP	Engineers and Engineering Tech Staff ³³	Ratio
120		Senior Civil Engineer (3) Associate Civil Engineer (6) Assistant Civil Engineer (2) Senior Engineering Tech (1) Engineering Technician II (5)	7:1

The data shows that the City of Vallejo’s staffing allows for a potential project management ratio of 7 to 1. If all 58 projects identified by staff become active, the City of Richmond currently does not have this capacity level. To mitigate this constraint, the Department Director should plan to increase capacity over time as projects are funded and become active. The Director should target a staffing ratio of 7:1 and adjust that ratio based on the complexity and scope of each individual project. To create the additional project management capacity, the City has two options. They can either budget and hire additional staff, or they could contract project management responsibilities to a third-party consultant. Either option will require additional funding in the future to ensure adequate resources are available.

Recommendation 28: Maintain current Fleet Maintenance staffing, develop a mechanism to track utilization rates, and establish a utilization rate target.

The Fleet Division has 14 budgeted FTEs that manage the City’s fleet and maintain vehicles and equipment. Staff include the Equipment Services Superintendent, an Equipment Supervisor, a Parts Specialist, an Administrative Aide, seven Combo Equipment Mechanics, and three Equipment Mechanic IVs. According to data provided by the City, the project team analyzed work order data from 437 different assets within the City fleet, ranging from standard passenger vehicles and trucks to heavy equipment and specialized vehicles like fire trucks. The largest category of assets was pickups, vans, and other light trucks, comprising 63% of the total asset count. The next largest categories were standard vehicles, which included police patrol cars, tractors, and other heavy equipment, which each made up 6% of all assets.

The project team performed a Maintenance and Repair Unit (MRU) analysis to evaluate the staffing level necessary to maintain the City fleet. An MRU analysis compares the maintenance needs across the different asset classes the Division maintains. It indexes the maintenance and repair needs of one asset class compared to a base unit, in this case, a standard passenger car.³⁴ Since the different asset classes require varying levels of preventative maintenance and asset failures, it is important to index them all to a baseline level to make more accurate comparisons across the asset types. For example, the maintenance required on a Fire Truck differs from a light pickup truck used by the Parks Maintenance Division.

³² City of Vallejo, Capital Improvement Program Adopted FY 2021-2022

³³ City of Vallejo, FY 23-24 Adopted Budget

³⁴ Government Fleet, Technician to Vehicle Ratios, <https://www.government-fleet.com/146908/how-to-calculate-technician-to-vehicle-ratios>

An MRU analysis compares the labor hours required to maintain each asset class to those required to maintain a standard vehicle. The resulting ratios, or MRUs, indicate relative labor intensity. For example, if a standard vehicle requires an average of 10 hours of annual maintenance, 1 MRU equals 10 hours. If a Fire Truck requires an average of 40 hours of annual maintenance, that will result in 4 MRUs or the same amount of work as four standard vehicles.

The number of labor hours per MRU can vary significantly based on the unique features of a City’s fleet. Factors that could impact the number of labor hours per MRU include but are not limited to, asset age and climate. The most effective way to perform an MRU analysis is to calculate the labor hours spent on each asset class and index them to the standard vehicle baseline unit. Fleet staff provided an equipment list and work order data from 2021 and 2022, which indicated the maintenance and repair costs for assets worked on for those years. Labor is billed at \$90 per hour. Therefore, the project team calculated the estimated labor hours by dividing each asset's maintenance and repair costs by \$90 for each year. The average annual labor hours by asset class were then used to determine the MRU ratio per asset, with the class of Standard Vehicle serving as the base comparison.

The following table summarizes estimated MRUs by asset class as well as the estimated labor hours and technicians needed to maintain the fleet at the City of Richmond.

Table 25: Maintenance and Repair Unit (MRU) Fleet Staffing Calculation

Asset Class	Number	Average	MRUs Per	Total MRU	Total MRUs as Labor Hours	Estimated Mechanics Needed
Standard Vehicle	28	6.64	1.00	28.00	185.97	0.12
Fire Truck	27	55.93	8.42	227.36	1,510.04	0.97
Forklifts and other lifts	2	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Heavy Truck or School Bus	8	36.53	5.50	44.00	292.24	0.19
Hybrid Vehicle	26	8.31	1.25	32.55	216.16	0.14
Light Equipment and Tools	3	2.33	0.35	1.05	6.99	0.00
Mowers	13	20.29	3.06	39.72	263.81	0.17
Other motorized equipment	11	0.54	0.08	0.89	5.89	0.00
Other non-motorized equipment	4	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Pickups, Vans, and other light trucks	274	13.30	2.00	548.66	3,644.06	2.34
Pumps and Compressors	1	3.94	0.59	0.59	3.94	0.00
Tractors and other heavy equipment	28	51.76	7.79	218.20	1,449.22	0.93
Trailers	12	2.97	0.45	5.37	35.66	0.02
Total	437	202.54	30.50	1,146.39	7,613.98	4.88

In total, the current assets maintained by the Division represent approximately 7,614 MRUs. Based on the analysis, one MRU, or the annual labor hours required to maintain a standard vehicle, equals 6.64 hours labor hours. Using this figure as the baseline, the total labor hours required to maintain the entire City fleet is estimated to be 7,614 per year.

Fleet mechanics work varying schedules, with three mechanics working five eight-hour shifts and the rest on four 10-hour shifts. Regardless of the shift schedule, each is scheduled for 2,080 hours per year. However, the hours dedicated to maintenance activities are less than 2,080 due to administrative tasks, training, vacation, sick leave usage, and other factors. An industry best practice is to strive for a utilization rate (or wrench time target) of 75%. Using this percentage, an individual mechanic should be working 1,560 hours per year on actual maintenance activities. The MRU analysis divides the total labor hours required per year (7,614) by 1,560 hours to calculate the total number of

Mechanic positions needed to maintain the City's fleet. The results show an overall staffing requirement of 4.88 Mechanics.

The data provided to the City did not quantify the current utilization rate of the Mechanics in the Fleet Maintenance Division. The use of the 75% utilization rate in the MRU analysis indicated that the current budgeted staffing level of seven Combo Equipment Mechanics and three Equipment Mechanic IVs is sufficient to meet the maintenance demands of the City Fleet. It is not recommended that the staffing level be reduced based on this analysis. The MRU analysis does not capture all the demands of the Fleet Management staff. Not included in the analysis is work that is tied to a specific asset or equipment that does not have an ID associated with it. It also is unclear if the data provided factored in preventative maintenance activities. Furthermore, other factors can impact a staff utilization rate and reduce the available hours a Mechanic can perform maintenance activities. For example, the fleet facility and equipment layout can impact staff productivity by decreasing focus on maintenance activities or adding time to performing tasks.³⁵ The age of assets can also require specialized parts that are not readily available or require mechanics to perform research that may not be needed on other assets. Of the 10 total Mechanics budgeted for in the Division, staffing vacancies also impact staff productivity. One of the seven Combination Equipment Mechanic positions is vacant; one is on leave, and another is currently acting in the vacant Equipment Supervisor position. There is also a vacancy in the Equipment Mechanic IV classification. Therefore, the total number of Mechanics currently available is six instead of the budgeted 10 positions.

It is recommended that the Division maintain current budgeting staffing levels and prioritize hiring vacant positions that impact the ability to perform maintenance activities. The Division should also create a mechanism to track utilization rates. Based on the initial assessment of current utilization rates, the Equipment Services Superintendent and Department Director should develop a utilization target based on the impact of the City's facilities and fleet age on staff wrench time.

Recommendation 29: Prioritize filling vacant positions in the Facilities Maintenance Division and monitor the need for additional staff.

The Facility Maintenance Division has 30.85 budgeted full-time staff divided into five units or crews:

- Divisional Administrative Services
- Utility Services
- Electrical Services
- Stationary Engineering
- Painters and Carpenters (Building Services)

The Division Administrative Services Unit comprises the Facility Maintenance Superintendent and an Administrative Aide, who together oversee the operations of the Division and provide administrative support. The Utilities Services unit has a Custodial Supervisor and nine Utility Worker I/II's performing janitorial work in various City facilities. Their portfolio does not include facilities for the Fire Department, Port of Richmond, or the Parks system. The Electrical Services Unit has an Electrical Supervisor, a Senior Electrician, 4.85 Electricians, a Building Trades Worker, and a Maintenance Worker responsible for maintaining facility lighting systems, sockets, traffic lights, and light poles in rights-of-way. The Stationary Engineering unit has a Stationary Engineer Supervisor, three Stationary Engineers, and a Building Trades Worker who together maintain and repair non-HVAC machinery and equipment in all City facilities. Finally, the Painters and Carpenters unit has two Carpenters, two Painters, and a Building Trades worker who maintains key systems and perform painting and carpentry work across all City facilities

³⁵ Government Fleet, Technician to Vehicle Ratios, <https://www.government-fleet.com/146908/how-to-calculate-technician-to-vehicle-ratios>

as needed. In total, the Division is responsible for maintaining 39 buildings throughout the City, totaling 777,352 SF. The list of current City facilities is shown in the table below.

Table 26: Current City Facilities

Facilities	Square Footage
American Indian Health Center	4,050
Annex Senior Center	2,470
Art Center	21,000
Auditorium (Convention Center)	40,000
Bay View Library	1,980
Booker T. Anderson (BTA)	12,500
City Hall	61,136
Civic Center Senior Center	31,585
Corporation Yard	35,125
Community Service Bldg. (CSB)	70,200
Disabled Peoples Rec Center	6,398
Dispatch	4,202
Family Justice Ctr	4,870
Fire Training School	7,300
Fire Station 61	4,064
Fire Station 62	6,000
Fire Station 63	8,700
Fire Station 64	10,900
Fire Station 66	2,757
Fire Station 67	7,745
Fire Station 68	5,700
Library	3,200
May Valley Community Center	3,750
Men and Women of Valor	4,100
Museum	6,000
Nevin Comm Center	1,200
Parchester Comm Center	5,400
Parks Field Office	9,048
Plunge	20,000
Pogo Park	1,000
Point Richmond Center	1,845
Police Department	202,811
Recreation Complex	33,400
Richmond Swim Center (RSC)	7,500
Riggers Loft/Port	109,000
Sheilds-Reid Comm Center	7,500
Transit Building	9,000
Washington Field House	1,936
Westside Branch Library	1,980
Total Facility Square Footage	777,352

The International Facilities Management Association (IFMA) produces an Operations and Maintenance Benchmarking Report, which surveys facility professionals to generate key insights on facility operational performance³⁶.

While the current City building portfolio consists of 777,352 square feet, this area includes hallways, storage rooms, and other areas not typically occupied for extended periods. While the proportion of unoccupied to occupied space varies from facility to facility, it is reasonable to assume that 25% of the total space maintained by staff is typically unoccupied. This reduces the total square footage to 583,014. Using this figure, the project team compared data from the IFMA benchmark report to various position classifications found within the Division. The results of this analysis are shown below.

Table 27: Current City Facilities

Position	Rentable SF	IFMA RSF per FTE	Total Staffing Need	Current Budget Staff
Division Leadership	583,014	n/a	n/a	1.0
Administrative Assistant	583,014	629,000	1.0	1.0
Utility/Custodial	395,451 ³⁷	37,400	10.6	10.0
Electrician	583,014	290,000	2.0	6.85
Stationary Engineer	583,014	322,000	1.8	4
Painter	583,014	250,000	2.3	2
Carpenter	583,014	370,000	1.6	2
Generalist³⁸	583,014	120,000	4.9	4
Total Staffing Need			23.2	30.85

The table shows that the current staffing complement for each position classification within the Division is approximately equivalent to or exceeds the benchmark data. However, additional considerations would drive the need to maintain current budgeted staffing levels and prioritize filling vacant positions within the Division. First, the age and condition of the facilities within the City’s portfolio may require additional attention and maintenance. Second, staff reported streetlights often being vandalized, driving an increased demand for staff with an electrical background. Next, there is a need to ensure the Division maintains sufficient staffing and retains institutional knowledge should there be staff turnover. There are significant advantages to having additional positions to assist with maintenance activities while more tenured staff are still employed with the organization. This creates opportunities for staff to share knowledge and best practices, learn new skills, and pass along insights from years of experience with the organization. Finally, the Division needs to prioritize preventative maintenance activities.

With the implementation of a CMMS software system discussed below in Recommendation 35, the Superintendent and Unit Supervisors should begin tracking labor hours to understand how efficiently staff are performing facility maintenance activities. With an understanding of the number of labor hours, the Facilities Maintenance Superintendent should work with the unit supervisors to implement weekly, monthly, and annual work plans to utilize the current staff capacity to address proactive facilities maintenance needs.

³⁶ IFMA, “North America Operations and Maintenance Benchmarking Report,” 2022

³⁷ Rentable SF does not include Fire Department, Port of Richmond, or Parks Facilities

³⁸ Using the Generalist Category for Building Trade Worker and Maintenance Worker Classifications

Recommendation 30: Add one new Supervisor position to oversee the Painters and Carpenter’s Unit.

The Painters and Carpenters Unit is the only unit within the Facilities Division with no Supervisor. Currently, the Facilities Superintendent is filling the void by directing the work of the crew staff. This takes them away from their primary duties overseeing the overall activities of the entire Division.

The Supervisor position plays a critical role for the unit. It ensures the work done aligns with the overall mission and responsibilities of the Department. The position oversees daily, weekly, monthly, and annual work planning, evaluates staff performance, verifies work is completed, and ensures the quality of the work performed. Without a Supervisor, there is no consistent presence of focused leadership to provide direction to the team.

The City should prioritize hiring a Supervisor to oversee the Painters and Carpenters Unit. Doing so provides direct and consistent leadership to the crew and enables the Superintendent to step back and solely focus on their primary responsibilities for the whole Division.

The estimated cost for this position at the median and using the City’s 80% benefits multiplier is \$207,745.

Recommendation 31: Add one new Management Analyst position to serve as contract manager and oversee non-program or project-specific contracts.

The Public Works Department currently has 134 contracts for various types of services, equipment rentals, and more. A breakdown of the Department’s active contracts is included in the following table.

Table 28: Active Public Works Contracts

Contract Type	Number of Contracts	% of Total
As needed/on-call	40	29%
Consistent Services	27	20%
Equipment Rental	5	4%
Joint Powers Agreement	1	1%
Lease Agreement	1	1%
Materials/Supplies	15	11%
Reimbursement	1	1%
Shared Maintenance	1	1%
Project/Program Specific Services	43	32%
Grand Total	134	100%

A review of the list of contracts shows that 68% are unrelated to a specific program or project. Additionally, 30% are for on-call services, while 20% are for consistent services provided for staff.

Each contract has a unique scope, terms, timeline, vendor contact, etc. Currently, contract management responsibilities are spread throughout the Department. The project/program-specific contracts are managed by the specific staff assigned to those programs and projects. However, it is unclear from the project fieldwork who oversees the remaining 68% or 91 active contracts. Without a dedicated resource managing these 91 contracts, the Department risks contracts not being executed according to the specific terms, missed deadlines, overspending, and more.

The Department should add a Management Analyst or similar position to oversee non-program or project-specific contracts. Doing so will provide a single point of contact for internal staff and external vendors, fostering effective

communication. It adds a layer of vendor oversight and accountability to ensure contracts are executed according to the terms and conditions contained within. This position will be able to monitor the status of contracts to promote fiscal responsibility and optimize resource allocation. The Management Analyst should also be responsible for tracking and evaluating vendor performance and maintaining accurate and comprehensive records of change orders and internal and external correspondence.

The estimated cost for this position at the median and with benefits is \$189,074.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below offer suggestions to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Recommendation 32: Update the capital planning process to align with best practice.

According to the City's website, the Capital Improvement Plan is adopted along with the annual operating budget as part of the annual budget process. According to staff this means that preliminary projects and estimates are identified in the fall, projects are finalized, reviewed, and prioritized in the Spring, and the CIP is presented to City Council in a May work session for their review and comment before being adopted in June.

In the past, the CIP identified projects and cost estimates for four future years in addition to the current budget year. However, future year projects are considered unfunded. In the FY2023 CIP, the unfunded future-year project costs totaled \$241,501,964.³⁹ The most recent CIP does not include future-year projects; instead, it only identifies projects for FY2024.⁴⁰ According to staff, capital planning has historically been done one year at a time, with some future needs identified, but those projects and cost estimates are not fully developed. Projects are funded across multiple sources as part of the budget process.

The staff overseeing the CIP process for the Public Works Department are all relatively new to the City and essentially starting the process from scratch, making this an ideal time to implement process improvements to align the Department's CIP planning with best practices.

According to the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), it is a best practice to prepare and adopt a fiscally sustainable, multi-year capital plan to ensure effective management of capital assets. Capital planning is critical to essential public services like water and sewer utilities, transportation, and facilities and fleet management. Capital planning can also be an important component of a community's economic development program and strategic plan. There are four main components to a multi-year capital planning process:⁴¹

Identify needs – Develop a capital asset lifecycle for major capital assets including the cost to operate, maintain, administer, and renew or replace the asset. Capital infrastructure may also be needed to support the comprehensive plan, development projections, master plans, or the City's strategic plan. Organizations should consider changes in policy or community needs, public input, the non-financial impacts of a project, and projects that support private development or have the potential to generate revenue.

³⁹ City of Richmond, Adopted Capital Improvement plan Fiscal Year 2022-2023, <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/61912/Adopted---Capital-Improvement-Projects-Budget-FY2022-23-PDF>

⁴⁰ City of Richmond, Capital Improvement Plan Fiscal Year 2023-2024, <https://city-richmond-ca-budget-book.cleargov.com/10346/introduction/city-officials>

⁴¹ Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), Best Practices: Multi-Year Capital Planning, <https://www.gfoa.org/materials/multi-year-capital-planning>

Determine financial impacts – Determine the full extent of the capital project and the associated life cycle costs. This may require outside assistance to develop an accurate estimate. Consideration should be given to the scope and timing of a project, anticipated inflation for future years, major components of a project such as land acquisition and design, and ongoing costs.

Prioritize capital requests – Projects should be prioritized based on health and safety, asset preservation, and service expansion or addition. As part of this, organizations should consider public input, priority from partner agencies, and operating budget impacts.

Develop a comprehensive financial plan – A viable multi-year financing plan covering the period of the capital plan will ensure that the proposed capital plan is achievable within expected resources. This should involve anticipating revenue and expenditure trends, cash flow projections, compliance with financial policies, considering sources and uses for debt, and evaluating the impact and affordability of different financing strategies.

In addition, it may be appropriate to integrate other considerations into the planning process such as environment, social, and governance (ESG) considerations. According to GFOA, municipal investors are heightening their demand and scrutiny of ESG risks and acknowledging these risks can help a local government choose the financing technique that best meets its cost and risk profile.⁴² This may be as simple as indicating what projects qualify as ESG projects or prioritizing those projects over other proposed projects.

San Diego County was awarded the GFOA Award for Excellence for outstanding use of GFOA’s best practice on Multi-Year Capital Planning and serves as a best practice case study in capital planning.⁴³ The process is coordinated by the Public Works Department and includes input from a number of departments, County leadership, and extensive public engagement. In San Diego County, departments begin the CIP process in August by identifying capital priorities. Projects primarily come from three sources: strategic plans, community input and elected official direction, and operational and maintenance needs. The following figure shows the sources of projects included in the CIP.

⁴² Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), Best Practices: Multi-Year Capital Planning, <https://www.gfoa.org/materials/multi-year-capital-planning>

⁴³ San Diego County, Capital Improvement Plan, <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/dpw/CIP/>

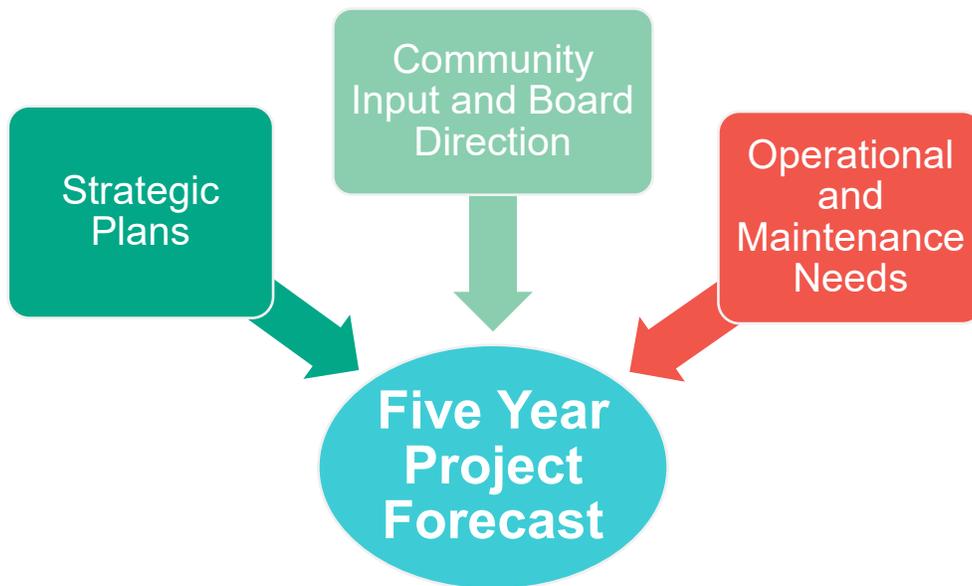


Figure 16: San Diego County How Capital Projects are Selected

Once projects are identified as part of the kickoff phase, the CIP is developed in more detail by determining cost projections, performing community engagement, and determining what can be accomplished in the first year of the CIP. Projects are also prioritized as part of this phase based on how they advance the County’s strategic initiatives. A rubric is used to determine to what degree each project promotes sustainability; advances equity; empowers the workforce and promotes transparency, accountability, and innovation; strengthens community engagement and quality of life; and promotes justice.⁴⁴ The following figure shows the four phases of the capital planning process.

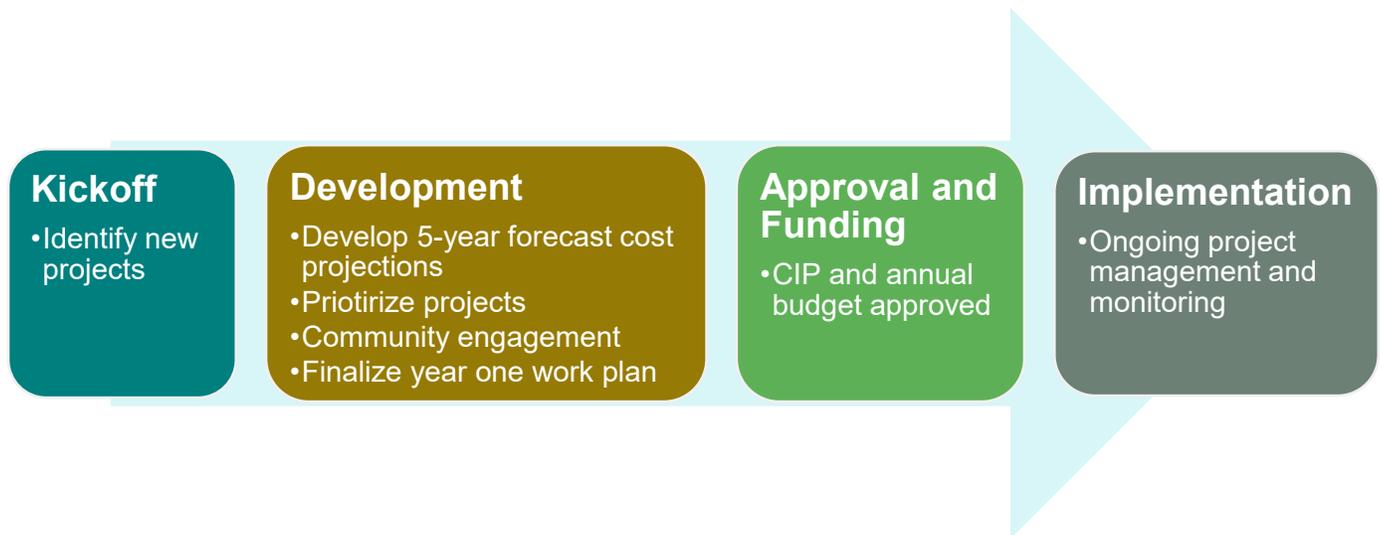


Figure 17: San Diego County Capital Planning Process

The City of Richmond should revise its CIP development process to align with best practices by expanding the planning timeline to five years and developing a financial plan to fund the CIP. The CIP can still be adopted in conjunction with the annual operating budget, but its development should run parallel to the operating budget

⁴⁴ San Diego County, FY2023-2024 Adopted Operational Plan; Page 605, https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/auditor/pdf/adoptedplan_23-25_capital.pdf

development process. Below is an example of a CIP development calendar based on the City of Richmond’s budget calendar.

Table 29: Proposed CIP Development Calendar

Phase	Month	CIP Development Steps	Lead
Capital Needs Identification	October – December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments identify capital needs based on strategic plans, operational and maintenance needs, and City Council and community input 	Department Directors
Project Refinement	January – February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments and Public Works Engineering staff develop cost estimates and timing for projects to meet identified capital needs including related costs such as land acquisition or design Departments identify how projects impact City’s strategic priorities Departments submit capital requests to Budget Division Budget Division develops initial multi-year CIP financial plan to inform planning and prioritization 	Department Directors (with support from Public Works Engineering staff)
City Leadership Review and Prioritization	March – May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Division compiles capital project requests and initial multi-year financial plan to present to the City Manager, Finance Director, City Engineer, and Public Works Director City leadership meets with Department staff as necessary to understand capital requests and assist with prioritization City leadership prioritizes projects based on alignment with City’s strategic priorities and ability to fund in the multi-year financial plan Budget Division develops draft CIP and multi-year financial plan for presentation to City Council 	City Engineer and Finance Director
City Council Review and Approval	May – June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance Director presents draft CIP and multi-year financial plan to City Council for review and feedback Budget Division engages the community to collect input on draft CIP along with feedback on operating budget City Council meets with Department staff as necessary to understand capital requests Budget Division refines the draft CIP and multi-year financial plan based on feedback from City Council City Council adopts CIP and multi-year financial plan with annual operating budget 	Finance Director and City Engineer

In order to add structure to this process, it may be appropriate for the City of Richmond to adopt financial policies related to capital planning. There are two policies that GFOA recommends that would help to clarify and formalize the capital planning process in the City of Richmond. The City does not currently have a Capital Planning Policy, which would identify the approach to capital planning, define a capital improvement project, establish a CIP review committee, and require inclusion of long-term financing strategies.⁴⁵ Establishing a capital renewal and replacement reserve policy is also a GFOA best practice. This is a written policy that establishes a reserve to fund ongoing capital

⁴⁵ Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), Best Practices: Capital Planning Policies, <https://www.gfoa.org/materials/capital-planning-policies>

renewal and replacement.⁴⁶ Reserves are helpful in proactively managing capital assets and to have funding available in the event of unforeseen or catastrophic capital needs. For example, annually setting aside 20% of the five-year asset replacement costs can ensure funding is available when it is needed.

Recommendation 33: Begin performing proactive street sign maintenance and implement a 10-year work plan.

As stated previously, the Street Maintenance Division of the Public Works Department is responsible for pavement maintenance, traffic signs, street painting, and street sweeping.⁴⁷ This work includes pothole repair, gutter paving, pavement replacement, painting for pedestrian and vehicular traffic control, and regular sign maintenance and replacement. In total, the Division is responsible for 289 miles of street and 9,000 streetlights.⁴⁸ However, the City does not have an up-to-date inventory of street signs owned and maintained by the City such as speed limit signs, stop signs, and street name signs.

The Division is responsible for the fabrication and installation of street signs, but sign maintenance tends to be highly reactive. Staff often perform repairs or replacements based on requests from the public or after issues are discovered. According to staff, there has been little capacity for proactive sign maintenance. Data was not available to quantify the current workload associated with sign maintenance and repair in the Department.

Traffic sign maintenance should include regular inspection and proactive maintenance to ensure safety and proper functioning of signs. Inspections should include both informal and proactive methods. Informal inspection includes City employees reporting deficiencies when they see them or engaging police patrols to look out for issues, as well as the practice of responding to resident calls. Formal inspection should include regularly scheduled inspection based on priority areas.

Proactive inspection requires training for staff to ensure they understand what to look out for and that they have the ability to perform on-the-spot repairs. For more time-consuming repairs or replacements, work orders will be necessary so that Street Maintenance staff can perform the work. Generally, inspection should include review of sign position, visibility, condition, discoloration, reflectivity, and any damage or vandalism.⁴⁹ Inspecting reflectivity is particularly important to meet the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards for minimum traffic sign reflectivity. Inspections requires either measuring the sign's reflectivity with a retro-reflectometer, visually comparing the sign with a test panel, or inspecting the sign at night.

Informal and proactive inspection should inform preventative sign and support maintenance. There are four components to proactive sign maintenance to ensure signs are fully functioning:⁵⁰

Sign Cleaning – Signs under trees, along routes with heavy traffic, in areas with infrequent rainfall, and in industrial areas require regular cleaning.

Reflectivity Testing – Ensure signs meet the minimum requirements for retro-reflectivity.

Vegetation Control – Signs can be partially or fully blocked by vegetation and require regular trimming.

⁴⁶ Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), Best Practices: Strategies for Establishing Capital Asset Renewal and Replacement Reserve Policies, <https://www.gfoa.org/materials/strategies-for-establishing-capital-asset-renewal-and-replacement-reserve-policies>

⁴⁷ City of Richmond, Street Maintenance, <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/72/Street-Maintenance>

⁴⁸ City of Richmond, 2021-2022 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, Page 284, <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/64893/City-of-Richmond-ACFR-FY2022-PDF>

⁴⁹ US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, Maintenance of Signs and Sign Supports, Sign Inspection Checklist, Page 28, https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural/training/fhwasa09025/fhwasa09025.pdf

⁵⁰ US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Maintenance of Signs and Sign Supports, Page 29-34, https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural/training/fhwasa09025/fhwasa09025.pdf

Anti-theft Measures – Signs are occasionally stolen, so specific fasteners can be attached to make it more difficult to remove signs.

Sign Support Adjustments – Supports can move over time, so maintenance is needed to ensure signs are vertical and the position of the sign is appropriate, so it is not frequently hit by vehicles or affected by soil erosion or vegetation.

The Department should develop an annual work plan for proactive sign maintenance to improve the annual number of signs that receive inspection and maintenance. All staff in Public Works should be trained to identify sign deficiencies and empowered to perform on-the-spot repairs or report issues when they occur. The Department should use a work order management system to record when a sign has been inspected and the repair performed.

The Department should aim to inspect and maintain all signs at least every 10 years. An annual work plan would be most accurate with an up-to-date sign inventory; however, in the absence of a sign inventory, the City’s street sweeping zones could be used to approximate an equal workload made up of different neighborhoods. The City has a street sweeping schedule that allows staff to sweep all City streets monthly; in order to accomplish this, neighborhoods are placed on 10 different schedules.⁵¹ Each schedule has at least two or as many as 11 neighborhoods to distribute the workload evenly. Using these same neighborhoods to create a proactive sign maintenance plan would keep the workload relatively even year-to-year until a full sign inventory can be performed. The following table shows the neighborhoods where sign maintenance should be performed each year to ensure all signs are maintained at least once every 10 years.

Table 30: Proposed 10-Year Sign Maintenance Work Plan by Neighborhood

Year	Neighborhood
1	Fairmede Hilltop
	Hilltop Bayview
	Hilltop Green
	Hilltop Village
	Parchester Village
2	Bristlecone
	Canyon Oaks
	Carriage Hills North
	Carriage Hills South
	El Sobrante Hills
	Greenbriar
	Greenridge
	Hasford Heights
	Lenora
	Quail Hill
	Via Verdi
3	Clinton Hill I
	Clinton Hill I North
	Country Club

⁵¹ City of Richmond, Neighborhood Sweeping Schedule, <https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/57478/Street-Sweeping-Map?bidId=>

Year	Neighborhood
4	May Valley
	Clinton Hill IV
	East Richmond
5	Clinton Hill II
	Clinton Hill III
6	Atchison Village
	City Center
	Forest Park
	S Belding Woods
	S Iron Triangle
7	N Belding Woods
	N Iron Triangle
	North Richmond
8	Coronado
	Marina Bay
	Point Richmond
	Santa Fe
9	Cortez/Stege
	Laurel Park
	Metro Richmore
	Park Plaza
	Pullman
10	Eastshore
	Panhandle Annex
	Parkview
	Richmond Annex
	Southwest Annex

Instead of adding dedicated staff, the pavement staff and abatement staff should be trained and tasked with performing the work associated with the preventative sign maintenance work plan. Pavement staff are already in the field and, based on staff interviews, have the capacity to take on additional work. The abatement staff's workload should be reduced by implementing a bulky item pickup service with the solid waste contractor; this additional capacity should be directed toward sign maintenance. The Division will need to monitor staff capacity and ability to keep up with the proposed preventative maintenance schedule; based on existing staff's ability to execute the sign maintenance work plan, it may be necessary to increase staffing to meet performance expectations.

Recommendation 34: Work with the Police Department to enhance the effectiveness of the street sweeping program.

Street sweeping through the City of Richmond is performed by a crew of four. Commercial streets are swept weekly, Monday through Friday, from 4 AM to 7 AM, with three routes completed per day. Residential streets are swept monthly, from 7 AM to 11 AM. Each neighborhood has dedicated street sweeping two days per month with three daily routes per day. This current schedule and practice reflect industry best practices by offering a structured approach to cleaning roadways based on usage patterns in the different areas of the City.

Despite the well-structured schedule, staff reported the effectiveness of the street sweeping program being hindered by frequent parking violations, particularly on residential streets. Illegally parked vehicles prevent the sweeper from reaching certain portions of the roadway, limiting the program's effectiveness.

To address the challenges associated with illegally parked vehicles, the Street Maintenance Superintendent and Department Director should work with the Richmond Police Department to provide targeted enforcement of the parking laws before scheduled street sweeping activities. Doing so will increase compliance and ensure vehicles are not blocking the cleaning process. This will improve the program's overall effectiveness and help the City achieve Goal #3 of the City Council's Goals and Objectives, which is to "Improve the Quality of Life and Community Health/Improve Social Determinants of Health."

Recommendation 35: Pursue a Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) to track work orders and labor hours by task.

Work order management and labor hour tracking is inconsistent across the Public Works Department. The Department does not have a true work order management software system to track work performed and labor hours spent on tasks. Each Division has its own approach to creating, assigning, and documenting tasks performed by staff. Some Divisions use Munis to record work. Munis is the City's ERP software primarily used to track financial and human resources transactions. Although Munis can be used to track assets and expenses, it is not meant to be a work order management system or maintenance management system. Other divisions use the system "Track-It!" to produce work orders from resident requests and complaints, meaning the work orders produced by the system are almost entirely reactive. The Track-It! system has a limited ability to track work performed and labor hours spent on tasks and no way to proactively plan preventative maintenance.

There are several issues with this approach. First, without a central system to track and document work, it is difficult to schedule preventative maintenance and document progress toward maintenance plans. A work order management system will support this annual work planning efforts and allow the Department to document performance related to annual work plans and adjust based on the performance of staff.

Second, without a way to schedule and assign preventative maintenance, it is difficult to balance this proactive work against the reactive, complaint-driven work from residents and customers. Staff have a desire to serve the community and address issues that residents have, and as a result, their work tends to be highly reactive and preventative maintenance is not prioritized.

Third, the Department's current approach makes it unable to track performance measures in a systematic manner. Without a robust method to track work orders, compiling performance data is time consuming and difficult to administer. Tracking work orders, labor hours, and materials in a single system would improve the Department's ability to collect performance data, track it over time, and report it.

The City should implement a CMMS to track work orders and labor hour data. A CMMS would better enable the Department to monitor the completion of preventative maintenance work, complaint-driven work, and emergency work. It would also give Department leadership the ability to quickly generate reports, schedule repairs, create inventory forecasts, and determine which assets require maintenance and when. It could also allow for regular, holistic analysis of Departmental workload and will allow the Department to better quantify whether service expectations are being met and, if not, to respond in a proactive manner.

Work order systems also help organizations track the time and materials dedicated to completing work orders. Tracking employee time helps organizations understand the distribution of scheduled work and reactive work completed by staff and also enables organizations to develop activity-based accounting. Activity-based accounting is

useful when making service-level decisions or evaluating opportunities to contract out services. Work order systems that are integrated into GIS systems enable organizations to map work orders and associate work orders with assets.

However, it is important that the software chosen is compatible with the specific needs of a Public Works operation. For example, staff will require access to the detailed system and facility information associated with each City-owned building's needs in order to inform facilities work planning, track activity, and understand maintenance needs. Similarly, park maintenance staff need information on park assets and the ability to plan work based on seasonality and program offerings. The program should be able to integrate with the City's GIS program in order to spatially map assets and understand where components are across the City and within facilities. The program should be able to offer workflow management including assigning work orders, data collection, and asset condition tracking. This should include the ability to auto generate work orders based on maintenance schedules and reminders if work orders are not completed. A software solution to meet the specific needs of the Public Works Department may not be available through Munis, but it is necessary to effectively manage work and staff effectiveness. Many software solutions can connect to financial planning software like Munis; the Department should include that functionality into their software identification requirements.

Implementing a CMMS is expected to have a budgetary impact; software system costs can vary based on the size of a community, number of software users, and how an organization chooses to customize the software. One of the commonly used CMMS platforms in Public Works operations is Cityworks®. The City of Pearland, TX with a population of approximately 122,000 is paying \$81,522 annually over three years for Cityworks.⁵² The City of Sacramento, CA with a population of approximately 525,000 is paying \$119,900 for the final year of a five-year contract.⁵³ The City may also need additional staff capacity for implementation and ongoing support of the CMMS. The Public Works Department should work with the Information Technology Department to identify an appropriate software solution, the necessary staff support, and the appropriate location of that staff support.

Recommendation 36: Implement an annual work planning process and track staff performance.

Within the Public Works Department, there is limited formal work planning. Staff reported having little to no advanced indication of their daily work assignments on a given day. Most of the work they perform is reactive, driven by the resident hotline and Track-It! system. Little preventative maintenance is occurring on a consistent basis. While Public Works functions by necessity involve reactive work and unpredictable customer requests, it is important the Department also prioritizes these requests in the context of other needs, including preventive maintenance. Additionally, it is unclear from the project fieldwork and data provided by the City what the service level goals are for many of the activities being performed by the Department. If service level targets are in place, staff do not appear to know what they are or utilize them to drive their work.

Implementing an annual work planning process with clear and detailed service level targets will enable the Department to align its work with the City Council's Goals and Objectives. Effective work planning involves scheduling preventive maintenance and other routine tasks throughout the year in a manner that balances workload with available staffing resources. Although developing these work plans can be a time-intensive process, there are several tangible benefits that will help the Department more effectively utilize staff. Formal work planning will enable the Department to:

⁵² City of Pearland, City Council Regular Meeting Agenda, February 8, 2021, <https://pearlandtx.civicweb.net/document/70458/?p%20style=margin-top:0;margin-bottom:0;stron.pdf?handle=4B844A4D54B7486FAB2723420CA6400E>

⁵³ City of Sacramento, City Council 2PM Report, December 13, 2022, https://sacramento.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=21&event_id=4544&meta_id=711184

- Explicitly define when preventive maintenance tasks should take place
- Plan ahead to ensure preventative tasks are adequately staffed
- Promote accountability by comparing the work staff actually accomplishes to formal work plans
- Effectively balance proactive and reactive service requests
- Adjust plans and resource allocations as needed
- Plan for future staffing and equipment needs

Superintendents, under the direction of the Department Director, should implement an annual work planning process that defines service level targets for each activity for which staff members are responsible. The service level targets should be detailed, reflect the City Council’s Goals and Objectives, and account for preventative maintenance activities. Preventative maintenance tasks should then be loaded into the CMMS system to produce work orders to ensure completion. Superintendents should engage Supervisors and crew members to estimate the labor hours needed to meet the service level targets for each task. These labor hour estimates will provide a baseline to track and measure staff performance and resource allocation against the data tracked in the CMMS system. Performance data should be reviewed regularly. This information will help identify areas for improvement, allow supervisors to adjust, and assist the Department Director to plan for and justify future staffing requests.

Recommendation 37: Dedicate two mechanics to Public Safety Vehicles.

While the MRU analysis indicated that current budgeted staffing levels are sufficient to adequately maintain the City’s fleet, there is only one mechanic within the Fleet Maintenance Division with specialized training in public safety equipment.

Given the specialized nature of public safety vehicles and the vital services they help provide throughout the City, it is imperative that the Division has trained and certified staff that can work on these vehicles to keep them on the road. The Department should identify another mechanic within the Division to be trained and certified to work on public safety vehicles. Having two mechanics available for these vehicles enhances the Division’s ability to address maintenance needs in a timely manner, reduce vehicle downtime, increase the ability to perform routine and preventative maintenance, and ensure backup support should one of the two mechanics take leave time.

Dedicating two mechanics to Public Safety Vehicles will require specialized training to equip staff with the knowledge and skill set necessary to maintain these vehicles. The California Fire Mechanics Academy offers one such training curriculum. The California Fire Mechanics Academy provides emergency apparatus technicians with contemporary professional development and technical training.⁵⁴ The Academy offers three levels of certification for Emergency Vehicle Technicians. The Fleet Maintenance Superintendent should identify the appropriate certification program and level required based on the current fleet inventory and get the necessary approvals to send staff to attend. The existing mechanic trained to work on public safety vehicles should also be encouraged to attend additional training as resources allow them to ensure their skills are up to date to meet current vehicle and technology standards.

Recommendation 38: Re-evaluate service levels for Citywide maintenance and assessment districts.

Parks maintenance activities are divided into three areas based on the funding source. The City features two assessment districts, the Marina and Hilltop districts, each with dedicated crews of seven full-time staff. A third crew of seven full-time staff is responsible for the remainder of citywide park maintenance activities, funded through the General Fund. The park inventories for these three groups are shown in Table 31 below.

⁵⁴ [California Fire Mechanics Academy](#)

Table 31: Parks Inventory by Funding Source

Measure	Marina Assessment District	Hilltop Assessment District	City Wide	Total
Estimated Population	5,999	3,092	107,357	116,448
# of Parks	5	2	48	55
Acres Maintained	48.8	39.6	222.7	311
Parks Maintenance Staffing	7	7	7	21
Staff per Acre	7.0	5.7	31.8	14.8 (average)

In addition to these crews, the General Fund Maintenance Crew supervisor also oversees the activities of two full-time groundskeepers responsible for managing and maintaining the City’s estimated 30,000 trees.

Assessment Districts

An assessment district is a defined geographical area within a municipality wherein property owners agree to be assessed an additional tax levy or fee to fund specific services, improvements, or projects. The Marina and Hilltop Assessment Districts in the City of Richmond are Landscape Maintenance Districts, meaning the fees collected from property owners fund landscape maintenance throughout the district. The Marina District is also a lighting district, meaning a portion of the fees collected are dedicated to installing, maintaining, and operating public lighting infrastructure.

Overall, parks maintenance staff are responsible for landscape maintenance within the right of way and medians, including, but not limited to:

- Watering
- Pruning
- Staking
- Guying
- Weeding
- Providing insect and disease control
- Fertilizing
- Repairing irrigation systems and appurtenances
- Replacement of missing or dying plants and trees

The Marina District

The Marina District was formed in 2009 and consists of lots, parcels, and subdivisions of land in the southern portion of the City of Richmond, known as Marina Bay. Parks Maintenance staff are responsible for landscape maintenance of the following areas.

Table 32: Marina District Landscape Maintenance Areas⁵⁵

Description	Location
Streetscape	Regatta Gateway
Streetscape	Regatta Blvd Medians
Streetscape	Marina Bay Parkway Medians
Streetscape	Marina Way South Medians

⁵⁵ City of Richmond, Marina Bay Landscaping and Lighting Maintenance District 2023/2024 Engineer’s Annual Levy Report 2023

Description	Location
Streetscape	Hall Ave, Wright Ave, and Harbor Way South Frontages
Streetscape	Bayside Drive Medians
Parks	The contiguous area that includes Marina Bay Park, Rosie the Riveter Monument Park, and Marina Green
Parks	Barbara & Jay Vincent Park
Parks	Shimada Friendship Park
Parks	Lucretia Edwards Park
Parks	Sheridan Point Park
Trails	Bay Trail - Esplanade
Trails	Bay Trail - Bay Shoreline
Trails	Bay Trail - Meeker Slough
Trails	Bayside/Meeker connector trail

Hilltop Top District

The Hilltop District was formed in 1986 and is in the northern portion of the City and includes commercial, industrial, vacant, and residential parcels in the vicinity of the Shops at Hilltop and the Richmond County Club. Parks Maintenance staff are responsible for landscape maintenance of the areas listed in the table below.

Table 33: Hilltop District Landscape Maintenance Areas⁵⁶

Description	Location
Street Trees	Along both sides of Auto Plaza, Research Dr., Lakeside Dr., Shane Dr., Robert H. Miller Dr., Hillview Dr., Klose Way, Garrity Way, and Blume Dr.
Street Trees	Along the outside edge of Hilltop Mall Road
Street Trees	Along the northerly side of Hilltop Dr
Street Trees	In median islands in the areas along both sides of Atlas Road and Richmond Parkway from Giant Highway to 1-80
Landscaping	Along the northerly side of Hilltop Dr
Landscaping	In median islands in the areas along both sides of Atlas Road and Richmond Parkway from Giant Highway to 1-80
Landscaping	In the Parkway Transit Center at Richmond Parkway and 1-80
Park	Hilltop Lake Park and adjacent open space
Directional and Entrance Signs	District-wide
Litter Control	District-wide
Graffiti Removal	District-wide
Sound Wall Maintenance	Along San Pablo Ave. from Richmond Parkway to Hilltop Dr. and along the north side of Richmond Parkway from 1-80 to Giant Highway
Sculpture Maintenance	District-wide

According to the City of Richmond’s Engineering Reports for the Marina and Hilltop Districts, the service level standards within the assessment districts are above and beyond those for the remainder of the City. The enhanced

⁵⁶ City of Richmond, Hilltop Landscaping Maintenance District Engineer’s Report 2023

maintenance standards are detailed in the Marina Bay Landscaping and Lighting Maintenance District 2023/2024 Engineer’s Annual Levy Report. They are summarized in the table below.

Table 34: Maintenance Service Level Standards⁵⁷

Service/Improvements	Citywide Baseline Maintenance	Enhanced Maintenance – Marina District
Lawn Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mowed alternate weeks throughout the season 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mowed each week throughout the season
Tree and Plant Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No set trimming schedule Tree pruning as needed for safety Shrubs trimmed only for growth control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular trimming schedule ongoing throughout the season
Debris Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once a week debris pick-up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twice a week debris pick-up
Irrigation Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly inspection services Repair of damaged equipment only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regularly weekly inspections ongoing throughout the year Repairs as needed to improve function
Replanting and Reseeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No set schedule Reseeding and replanting as needed to replace bare-life areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular inspections throughout the season Replenishment of plants as needed to maintain quantity and quality of plant life
Lighting and Facilities Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced inspection intervals Lights and facilities repaired as needed for safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular inspections ongoing throughout the year Repairs as needed to ensure proper operation
Restroom Custodial Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service three (3) times a week for permanent restrooms Service three (3) times a week for portable restrooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service seven (7) times a week for permanent restrooms Service seven (7) times a week for portable restrooms
Rehabilitation and Replacement of Playground Equipment, Benches, Guardrails, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced inspection intervals Minor repairs of damaged equipment Removal of damaged equipment as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular inspection services ongoing throughout year Repairs as needed for safety Replacement of facilities when funding is available

Differences between the two service levels include more frequent mowing cycles, inspections, restroom cleaning, and repairs.

The City is not consistently tracking labor data to determine if staff meet the current maintenance standards Citywide or within the assessment districts. However, according to anecdotal information provided during the project fieldwork, it does not appear they are being met. For example, according to the table, Citywide reseeding and replanting are done to replace bare-life areas. In the assessment districts, replenishment of plants is done as needed to maintain the quantity and quality of plant life. However, staff reported to the project team that there is very little planting done annually besides trees. Additionally, several standards have specific details regarding the frequency of activities, allowing for weekly and monthly work planning. Other standards are less specific, such as “reduced inspection intervals,” which could result in tasks being missed throughout the year. Without consistent labor tracking and clearly defined standards, Department leadership cannot accurately determine the labor hours or staff needed to meet the service level expectations.

It is recommended that the Parks Maintenance Superintendent and the Department Director re-evaluate the service levels for Citywide maintenance and maintenance within the assessment districts. The goal of this reevaluation should be to promote a unified set of standards to ensure equity throughout the City. Having a unified set of service

⁵⁷ City of Richmond, Marina Bay Landscaping and Lighting Maintenance District 2023/2024 Engineer’s Annual Levy Report

level standards ensures that parks and landscape areas are kept safe and aesthetically appealing regardless of where they are located, which can improve overall community satisfaction by promoting a sense of inclusivity and fairness.

The first step in the reevaluation process is to clearly articulate and document the current service delivery approach employed throughout the different areas of the City. That approach can then be compared to best practices information to redefine service levels. The National Recreation and Parks Association has established benchmark guidelines for service frequencies by infrastructure type. These benchmarks serve as a baseline, but should ultimately be adjusted to reflect the specific environment and expectations of the Richmond Community and with an understanding of the Department’s limited resources. The comparison will allow staff to prioritize activities and define goals and targets. Once this happens, the Parks Superintendent and Department Director can estimate each key task’s labor hours. For example, staff can estimate the labor hours required for lawn care activities. These labor hour requirements can then be compared to service level/frequency goals to strategically deploy existing staff, define future staffing needs, and inform policy conversations around service level goals. The revised service level standards should focus on litter control and lawn care/weeding. Focusing on these areas will help to ensure the cleanliness and visual appeal of the City’s parks, right-of-way, and landscape areas. Seasonal staff should also be utilized to help with the demand for these services during peak times of the year.

Recommendation 39: Negotiate to add a bulk pickup service within the existing waste contract.

The abatement staff is removing a large volume of litter, illegally dumped bulk materials such as mattresses and tires, weeds, and more throughout the City. Since 2018, the quantity of materials removed and locations of work activities have increased in many areas, including the number of homeless encampments abated and tires and graffiti removed. The overall abatement activities performed from 2018-2022 are detailed in Table 35 below.

Table 35: Abatement Activities 2018-2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	% Change
	Locations/ Quantity	Locations/ Quantity	Locations/ Quantity	Locations/ Quantity	Locations/ Quantity	
Homeless Encampments Abated	51	39	40	57	71	39.2%
Fences Built	9	7	2	2	2	-77.8%
Demolitions	3	-	-	-	-	-100.0%
Tags Removed	966	876	768	1,754	1,652	71.0%
Neighborhood Clean Ups Completed	13	15	9	16	28	115.4%
Seniors Serviced	198	178	82	544	671	238.9%
Illegal Dumping	12,596	11,554	15,939	8,003	8,058	-36.0%
Private Property Abatements	17	23	21	8	10	-41.2%
Tires Removed	1,724	1,833	2,025	1,734	1,920	11.4%
Weed Abatement Locations	80	124	103	78	71	-11.3%
Properties Boarded	15	22	11	15	16	6.7%
Mattresses Removed	2,860	2,944	2,882	3,367	2,632	-8.0%
Illegal Dumping (North Richmond M.)	1,140	-	-	-	-	-100.0%

Another way to look at the activities performed by these staff is in terms of the volume of material abated. Since 2018, the overall volume has increased by 7%. The following table shows the volume of materials abated by type.

Table 36: Volume of Materials Abated (Tons) 2018-2022

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	% Change
Homeless Encampments Abated	74	144	63	163	207	64.2%
Demolitions	179	N/A	176	N/A	N/A	-100.0%
Neighborhood Clean Ups Completed	292	349	172	356	436	33.0%
Seniors Serviced	55	86	43	161	264	79.0%
Illegal Dumping	2,473	2,089	2,637	2,891	2,732	9.5%
Private Property Abatements	113	374	84	19	N/A	-100.0%
Weed Abatement Locations	4	123	41	43	N/A	-100.0%
Illegal Dumping (North Richmond M.)	193	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-100.0%
Total	3,384	3,165	3,217	3,632	3,639	7.0%

The table shows that illegal dumping has increased by 9.5% since 2018, with staff removing over 2,700 tons of illegally dumped trash throughout the City. During the project fieldwork, anecdotal evidence suggested that staff believe most illegal dumping is from existing City of Richmond residents.

The City has a contract for waste management with a third-party service provider, Republic. The Company offers two on-call curbside clean-ups of non-hazardous waste per year. One of these clean-ups can be used for bulky household or e-waste items. According to the abatement activity data provided by the City, this level of service is inadequate to reduce the volume of illegal dumping occurring throughout the City.

The City should work with Republic to expand the frequency and capacity of bulk trash removal through the existing waste contract. This could be done by either increasing the number of on-call clean-ups available to residents paired with additional marketing to highlight the availability of this service, the identification of key locations to locate dumpsters throughout the City, or a combination of both.

By increasing the frequency and capacity of bulk trash removal, the City can reduce illegal dumping throughout the City, improving the City's attractiveness and allowing staff to perform other abatement activities more effectively, such as graffiti removal and weed abatement.

Fire Department

The Richmond Fire Department is guided by its purpose to “protect life and preserve property.”⁵⁸ The Department operates from seven fire stations throughout the City that house seven engine companies, a truck company, a cross-staffed truck company, two rescue units, a HAZMAT unit, and a breathing support unit.⁵⁹

The Department is led by the Chief of Fire, who oversees a staff that includes a staff totaling 96.0 budgeted FTEs divided into five divisions: Fire Prevention Services, Operations, Office of Emergency Services, Training, and Administration and Support. The Department’s functional organizational structure is shown in the following figure.

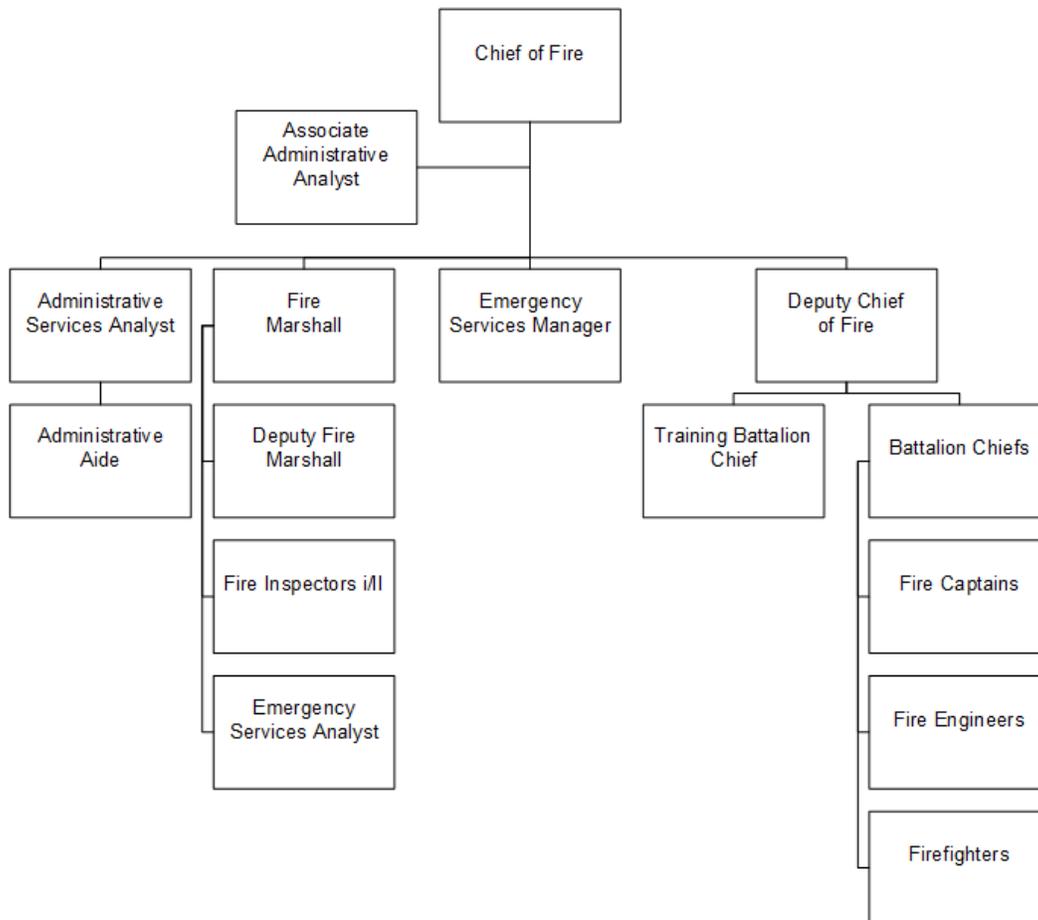


Figure 18: Fire Department Organizational Structure, FY2023-24

The **Fire Prevention Services Division** is responsible for providing public fire safety education programming, performing fire and safety inspections throughout the City, and issuing permits related to the fire code. Additionally, staff perform plan reviews for City development projects, approve transportation requests for hazardous materials, and perform investigations to determine the cause or origin of fires.⁶⁰ One Fire Inspector is also located at the Chevron Refinery within the City of Richmond to help ensure fire safety measures are in place.

⁵⁸ [“Fire Department,” City of Richmond Website](#)

⁵⁹ [“Department Facts,” City of Richmond Website](#)

⁶⁰ [“Fire Prevention Services Division,” City of Richmond website](#)

The **Operations Division** is the largest division within the Department. The Division provides fire suppression, emergency medical, disaster mitigation, and rescue services. Additionally, staff give public tours of fire stations and apparatus and present fire and life safety information. The Division comprises eight companies assigned to seven stations throughout the City that respond to approximately 13,000 calls for service annually.⁶¹

The **Office of Emergency Services’** vision is to “create a more resilient city capable of surviving before, during, and after any major disaster through innovative and effective leadership, citywide awareness, education, and training.”⁶² To achieve this vision, the Division is responsible for maintaining an approved Emergency Operations Plan, providing leadership and coordination for disaster preparedness, and aiding other City departments in developing emergency plans. The Office is also responsible for overseeing the City’s Emergency Operations Center, conducting public education campaigns, and managing the City’s Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) program.⁶³

The **Training Division** is responsible for overseeing the training of new recruits as well as continuous education for current Fire Department staff to maintain skills and keep certifications current. Training includes emergency scene management and emergency patient care.⁶⁴

The **Fire Administration and Support Division** oversees the operations of the Department and provides administrative support related to purchasing, finance, human resources, and other support services.

STAFFING LEVEL HISTORY

The overall budgeted staffing level for the Department has remained consistent since Fiscal Year 2019-2020, with the Department increasing staffing by 2.1% from 94.0 total FTEs to 96.0 FTEs for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. The Department’s staffing history from 2019-2024 is shown in the table below.

Table 37: Department Staffing, FY2019-2020 through FY2023-2024

Category	FY2019-2020	FY2020-2021	FY2021-2022	FY2022-2023	FY2023-2024	% Change
Sworn	89.0	88.0	89.0	89.0	91.0	2.2%
Non-Sworn	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	0.0%
Fire Department	94.0	93.0	93.0	94.0	96.0	2.1%

However, according to data provided by the City for this review, there were 17 vacancies within the Department, which are impacting the Department’s ability to perform its core services. The vacancies are as follows:

- Chief of Fire (Currently have interim Chief in place)
- Administrative Aide (1.0)
- Associate Administrative Analyst (1.0)
- Emergency Services Analyst (1.0)
- Emergency Services Manager (1.0)
- Fire Captain (1.0)
- Fire Engineer (4.0)
- Fire Inspector II (3.0)
- Firefighter (4.0)

⁶¹ [“Fire Operations Division,” City of Richmond website](#)

⁶² [“Responsibilities of the Office of Emergency Services,” City of Richmond website](#)

⁶³ [“Responsibilities of the Office of Emergency Services,” City of Richmond website](#)

⁶⁴ [“Richmond Fire Training Division,” City of Richmond website](#)

The vacancies throughout the Department mean personnel are missing in several key areas, such as the Chief of Fire, Emergency Services Center, Fire Prevention Services, and Operations. In addition to the vacancies, several staff members are on leave, further impacting the Department’s ability to meet service-level demand. As a result, the Department has had to reassign tasks to other staff members and utilize mandatory overtime extensively to ensure daily minimum staffing for emergency response. The Department’s overtime hours from 2020 to November 2023 are shown in the following table.

Table 38: Department Overtime Hours 2020-2023

Description	2020	2021	2022	2023 (through November)
Total Overtime Hours	58,131	51,695	67,594	55,393

The Engineer rank is currently the hardest-hit unit within the Department regarding mandatory overtime. There are four vacancies within the rank. Department policies indicate that firefighters can work up in rank, but they cannot currently work down in rank. For example, Captains can act up as Battalion Chiefs, Engineers can act up as Captains, and Firefighters can act up as Engineers, but none of the ranks can work down a rank to fill staffing gaps. The Department also does not currently use “floaters,” “rovers,” etc. A floater or rover is a firefighter not assigned to a specific station or apparatus. Instead, this staff member is scheduled and can fill voids at different stations or crews to cover staff leave, such as vacations, sick days, training, or injuries. Without the ability of different ranks to act down to fill roles and without floaters or rovers, some staff members are working consecutive 24-hour shifts, in some cases up to 30 days straight. This is well beyond standard practice and puts the Department at risk of job-related injuries and non-scheduled leave due to fatigue and stress.

CORE SERVICE MATRIX

The following table outlines core services (programs) provided by each division within the Fire Department. The table is not meant to be all inclusive and rather summarizes at a high level how staff are allocated to meet the service-level demand for each division.

Table 39: Fire Department Core Services Matrix

Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
Fire Prevention Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide public education programming • Perform fire and life safety inspections • Issue fire code permits • Perform plan review • Perform investigations to determine the cause and origin of fires • Enforce weed abatement program 	7.0	3.0
Operations: Fire Suppression and EMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire suppression • Emergency Medical Service delivery • Perform post-incident analysis • Perform disaster mitigation • Rescue activities • Public tours and presentations • Perform equipment evaluation and testing 	81.0	9.0
Office of Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the City’s Emergency Operations Center 	2.0	2.0

Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and maintain an approved Emergency Operations Plan • Provide leadership and coordination for disaster preparedness • Aide other City departments in developing emergency plans • Conduct disaster exercises • Manage City's CERT program 		
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training to new recruits • Provide continuous education for current firefighters related to emergency scene management and emergency patient care • Issue promotional exams 	1.0	0.0
Fire Administration and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee operations of the Fire Department • Administer policies and guidelines • Provide administrative support regarding payroll, purchasing, hiring/promotion, employee relations, and mutual and automatic aid agreements • Manage logistics, station maintenance, and equipment inventories • Perform grant writing 	5.0	3.0

KEY OBSERVATIONS

It was clear to the project team that the firefighters in the City of Richmond are dedicated to their work and have a strong desire to serve the community. They see one another as a family and are working to help each other to try and alleviate some of the stress experienced daily and to provide firefighters who have worked consecutive shifts as many opportunities to rest as possible. Reportedly, this includes coming to work sick to avoid another firefighter needing to be mandated into overtime. A counselor has also been hired to provide the Fire Department with mental health and wellness services. However, this program is still early in its implementation and not all staff were aware of it at the time of the project fieldwork. Despite these efforts, it is clear to the project team that the overall morale within the Department is low.

To alleviate some of the stress on existing staff, the Department is reportedly conducting background checks on 16 prospective recruits for an Academy that will take place in the first part of 2024. If all 16 make it through the Academy, the Department can promote staff to fill ranks and reduce the need for mandatory overtime. However, according to project interviews, there is a discussion on shortening the Academy from the typical 16 weeks to 10 weeks with an “on-the-job” training portion added to the end. This approach is not recommended except in cases of lateral hiring where candidates have received previous experience and training. Furthermore, the hiring and promotional process is ill-defined. There is no established list of new hires or clear promotional list of each rank. Each time an Academy or position becomes available, the Department conducts a new exam.

Another recruitment process underway is for the vacant Emergency Services Manager position. Filling this position is crucial for the Department. While Battalion Chiefs can handle responsibilities during catastrophic events, no staff currently oversees the emergency manager's day-to-day functions, which are critical to providing leadership and planning for emergencies that may occur and maintaining compliance with state and federal requirements. This gap

may also impact the Department's ability to prepare documentation needed by the state and FEMA, potentially limiting grant eligibility and other opportunities for the Department.

Another critical area that needs attention within the Department is the Fire Prevention Services Division. Due to vacancies and leave, only two staff are available to perform the responsibilities of the Division: the Deputy Fire Marshal and an Inspector who is typically dedicated to the Chevron site but is being pulled from those responsibilities to help with inspections across the City. This area's lack of staff capacity means the Department cannot keep up with inspections, plan review activities, and more.

The Department would further benefit from an increased focus on training. Firefighters require ample training to ensure they maintain the skills and knowledge to respond to the various types of emergency situations they may face, such as fires, medical emergencies, rescue operations, hazardous materials events, and more. According to the staff interviews, a new Training Chief was recently named, adding some direction for training moving forward. It will be critical that the new Training Chief create a comprehensive program to drill firefighters not only on firefighting and medical response but also various scenarios they may also face, including, but not limited to:

Water – rescue and recovery operations in, on, and around water

Rope – rescue and recovery operations using ropes

Trench – specialized form of confined space rescue that involves digging out and shoring up sides of trenches

Confined space – hazard identification as well as rescue and recovery operations involving confined spaces

HAZMAT – hazard identification and handling of hazardous chemicals and materials

High angle – rescue and recovery operations involving slopes of 60 degrees or greater

In addition to regular training, the Department does not appear to be developing staff for promotional positions. Succession training and staff development would help lead to higher passage rates on promotional exams. Staff also reported the Department previously had Acting Engineer and Acting Captain programs. Reopening these classes could offer more opportunities for individuals to gain experience. Succession training and acting programs would lessen the burden on overtime as the Department would have more robust eligibility lists.

Furthermore, the Department has limited use of technology to aid in-line personnel and fire prevention staff. Technology can allow firefighters and inspectors to complete reports and inspections more efficiently. For example, expanding tablet-type devices for field reporting could reduce time spent on report writing and record keeping. Reducing time spent writing reports would relieve stress on firefighters after calls and help inspectors perform inspections more efficiently.

STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 40: Enable Battalion Chiefs, Captains, and Engineers to work out of grade to prevent overworking specific ranks in the organization.

As stated previously, the Department utilizes a significant amount of mandatory overtime to ensure minimum staffing levels. The overtime is particularly impacting the Engineering rank. The four vacancies in the Engineering rank have led some to work multiple 24-hour shifts consecutively, reportedly up to 30 days in a row. This level of work and stress can cause fatigue and mental health concerns and opens the risk of on-the-job injuries and illness.

To help reduce the burden of mandatory overtime in the short term, the Department should work with the City Administration and the appropriate Union representatives to enable Battalion Chiefs, Captains, and Engineers to work out of grade to prevent overworking specific ranks in the organization. Currently, all ranks within the Department can work up in rank, but they cannot work down in rank. During the project interviews, Battalion Chiefs

and Captains expressed a willingness to work down in rank to alleviate the strain on the Engineers. Allowing them to do so should be an interim effort to provide relief for firefighters, particularly Engineers, who work multiple consecutive shifts on mandatory overtime.

Implementing a policy to allow Battalion Chiefs, Captains, and Engineers to work out of grade to prevent overworking specific ranks in the organization would impact individual overtime rates in the short term. However, it represents a proactive solution to address staffing challenges currently facing the Department. It can also reduce the risk of injuries and illnesses that would cause additional staff to take leave time. According to the Interim Human Resources Director, the City is already in the process of implementing such a policy, which will enhance the Department's ability to provide service.

Recommendation 41: Prioritize hiring staff to fill all existing vacancies.

There are 17 vacancies in the Department, including the Chief of Fire, two administrative positions, staffing for the Emergency Services Center, three in the Fire Prevention Services Division, and nine in the Operations Division. These positions represent critical function areas for the Department. Without them, the ability of the Department to meet service-level demands is impacted.

The City should prioritize hiring staff to fill all vacancies in the Department. Doing so will reduce the reliance on mandatory overtime to ensure daily minimum staffing levels in the Operations Division, provide leadership support for the Department, improve planning and coordination in an emergency, and enable the Department to perform fire prevention activities such as annual inspections and plan reviews.

The Department is reportedly conducting background checks on 16 recruits for an Academy scheduled for early 2024. Completing this Academy and getting these recruits into the firefighter rank will enable the Department to fill the Operations Division and Fire Prevention Services Division vacancies through hiring and promotions. However, the Department will still need to prioritize hiring the Chief of Fire, the administrative positions, the Emergency Services Manager, and the Emergency Services Analyst.

Through the project team's analysis and on-site interviews, it was clear the Department's current morale is extremely low due to the high level of mandatory overtime and stress on staff. Therefore, the Chief of Fire will be a critical hire for the Department. To identify a candidate to fill the role, the City of Richmond should conduct a national search for a professional Chief of Fire with extensive fire service and management experience to oversee the day-to-day administration of the Department. The search should also consider internal candidates that meet the qualifications. In addition to day-to-day administration, the new Chief of Fire will be responsible for championing technology implementation to increase operational efficiency, implementing a staffing factor in scheduling, providing a strategic direction for the Department, and adjusting service levels to meet available staff capacity. The City should select a candidate who brings a high level of integrity to the position and can build trust and respect with all Fire Department staff members.

Recommendation 42: Add 18.0 FTE firefighter positions to reach a staffing factor of 1.3 personnel per shift.

According to the MOU between the City of Richmond, California, and the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 188, each of the seven engine companies and the ladder truck company is staffed by a minimum three-member crew consisting of one Captain, one Engineer, and one Firefighter. A Battalion Chief oversees Fire Suppression and Emergency Response, bringing the daily minimum staffing to 25. A duty cycle for a Richmond Firefighter consists

of eight 24-hour duty shifts within a 24-consecutive day schedule. A duty shift is a 24-hour shift starting at 7:30 AM and ending at 7:30 AM the following day.⁶⁵ In total, each firefighter is available to work 2,920 hours per year.

The Department must utilize mandatory overtime daily to meet the minimum staffing requirements due to the number of vacancies among the line staff and to account for firefighters currently on leave. A generally accepted best practice within the fire service is utilizing a staffing factor. A staffing factor represents the number of employees needed to cover each position on a shift after accounting for leave. Utilizing a staffing factor means scheduling more than the minimum staff to ensure coverage. Staffing factors ensure firefighters can respond effectively to calls for service and perform their duties efficiently. The high use of mandatory overtime to cover leave indicates that the Richmond Fire Department is not currently utilizing a staffing factor when scheduling.

To help determine an appropriate staffing coverage level that the Department should use to effectively reduce mandatory overtime, the City provided leave and vacation usage data from 2020 to November 2023. For the purposes of the analysis, only the years 2020 to 2022 were used, as the data from 2023 did not represent a full year. This information is shown in the table below. The total leave time includes administrative, sick, bereavement, injury, FMLA, and unpaid leave.

Table 40: Leave Time and Vacation Usage 2020-2023

Business Unit	2020	2021	2022
Leave Time Hours	47,735	53,392	52,576
Vacation	15,311	18,771	20,370
Total	63,046	72,163	72,946
Average Leave and Vacation Per Employee	657	752	760

Staffing factors can vary among departments based on specific policies and service level targets. With that said, it is recommended that the Department target a staffing factor of 1.3 to provide sufficient staffing to ensure continuity of operations and maintain minimum staffing without the need to utilize mandatory overtime. Utilizing a staffing factor of 1.3 provides enough staff to not only meet daily minimum staffing but also enables the Department to implement a floater or rover system, to be discussed in Recommendation 43. It would also allow the Department, at times, to strategically deploy firefighters to staff companies with four personnel instead of three, which would align with the National Fire Protection Association’s (NFPA) Standard 1710.

To achieve a staffing factor of 1.3, the Department must schedule 33 staff members for each shift. This would mean increasing the total budgeted staffing of the Operations Division from 81 to 99, an increase of 18 FTEs. The addition of 18 FTEs would require a significant investment in the Department. This can be done over time as resources allow. However, adding staff would reduce the financial burden of overtime costs. A review of the City’s budget did not reveal the exact figure the City is spending on overtime expenses for the Department. However, during the interview process, this total was estimated to be \$4 million annually. The Department can also seek grant opportunities to offset staffing costs.

The estimated cost for these positions at the median and using the City’s 80% benefits multiplier is \$3,786,531.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below offer suggestions to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.

⁶⁵ Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Richmond and the International Association of Fire Fighters Local 188, July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2025

Recommendation 43: Implement a rover or floater staffing policy allowing staff on shift to cover various leave types.

The Department is currently scheduling only the personnel needed to meet the daily minimum staffing requirement of 25. However, increasing the overall staffing of the Operations Division as discussed earlier in Recommendation 42 will enable the Fire Department to implement a rover or floater staffing policy. A rover or floater is a staff member who initially is not assigned to a particular company or station, but can fill in where needed based on vacation leave time being used by staff or to allow for opportunities for outside training or other responsibilities within the Department. This staff member can be used first to ensure minimum staffing. If minimum staffing is achieved, the rover or floater can be assigned to help staff engine companies with four personnel to align deployment with NFPA 1710 or to assist with other duties as necessary.

The Department should implement a rover or floater staffing policy as resources allow. This policy will enable staff on shift to cover various leave types or provide additional staff capacity in needed areas as identified by the shift Battalion Chiefs.

Recommendation 44: Develop and maintain an ongoing hiring list for recruits as well as an ongoing eligibility list for promotions.

The Department does not maintain hiring lists for new recruits or an ongoing eligibility list for promotions. Each time a staff member is promoted in rank, it causes a ripple effect, leading to vacancies in lower ranks. Without a list of recruits for future academies or a separate list for promotions, Training Division staff must administer a new test to develop a new list, which is then exhausted. This inefficient process can cause delays in staff being promoted and staffing gaps that require overtime to maintain minimum staffing levels. Maintaining recruitment and promotional lists is a proactive step the Department can take to enhance planning efforts around vacancies and staffing changes. It also promotes an efficient hiring process.

According to staff, an Academy is scheduled for the beginning of 2024. This academy will exhaust any list of new recruits the Department has. It also provides an opportunity to develop a new list for the future staffing needs of the Department. The Department is also identifying staff to promote to fill vacancies for a Captain, four Engineers, and three Fire Inspectors. Again, this will exhaust the current promotional lists in the Department.

A new Training Chief has recently been appointed to the Department. With the current recruitment and promotional lists exhausted, now is the ideal time to develop a new list of recruits for future Academies the Department will hold. To ensure a robust pipeline of candidates, the Training Chief should begin identifying candidates and hold a test to establish a one- to two-year hiring list. Ideally, the target number of recruits should be 50 individuals, which would provide the Department with a qualified pool of recruits ready for training and a pool large enough to provide a contingency plan should selected candidates not successfully complete an Academy. Additionally, the Training Chief should begin identifying internal staff that would be eligible for promotion to ensure a pipeline of individuals ready to take on additional responsibilities. This process should include succession planning training to develop skillsets and implementing a program where staff can shadow or act in a higher rank to gain experience. This training and experience will help improve the passage rates of future promotional exams. Finally, the Training Chief should review eligibility criteria for both the recruitment and promotional lists to align with the Department's current needs.

Recommendation 45: Develop a Department-wide strategic plan.

Developing comprehensive department-wide strategic plans is a common best practice recommended by the International Association of Fire Chiefs, the International City Managers Association, and the Center for Public Safety Excellence. Fire Departments nationwide develop strategic plans to answer three essential questions about their organizations:

- What do we know to be true about our organization?
- What do we hope to be true about our organization in the future?
- How do we get there?

For Fire Departments, strategic plans give the organization a shared understanding of their role in the community and the values that drive them. A key step in any strategic planning process is to define vision, mission, and value statements. These describe how the organization will provide service to the community. For public safety organizations, such as the Richmond Fire Department, these statements are critical to helping ensure staff provide quality services consistently, even in the stressful emergency situations they face daily.

Another benefit of the strategic planning process is the development of specific goals and initiatives that help guide staff in prioritizing their work. These goals and initiatives can align operational and cultural changes within the organization with the overall strategy and communicate the reasoning for future improvements.

The Richmond Fire Department does not currently have a strategic plan to guide operations. Hiring a new Chief of Fire presents an opportunity to reevaluate and redefine service-level goals, particularly related to staffing, inspections, and training. Once an experienced Chief of Fire has been identified, they should have the opportunity to shape the Fire Department in their vision. Additionally, developing a strategic plan provides internal staff and residents with the opportunity to provide input to further cultivate the shared understanding of the Fire Department's role in the community. During the interview process, staff expressed a desire for a strategic plan to help them better understand the long-term outlook and goals of the organization and expressed frustration regarding the lack of communication regarding why changes are made. They want to foster a collaborative relationship with City and Department leadership and assist in building a more comprehensive, strategic outlook for the organization. Residents reportedly have a high appreciation for the services provided by the Fire Department and should also have an opportunity to ensure the strategic plan effectively addresses community needs and expectations. The feedback from both stakeholder groups allows the Department to compare how community needs and expectations compare to current service levels and outcomes to help shape a strategic framework that focuses on effective service delivery. To solicit this feedback, there are several tools that can be used, including, but not limited to, surveys, in-person workgroups, and focus groups.

In addition to soliciting feedback from internal staff and residents, the strategic planning process should include the creation of a committee consisting of a variety of staff members from throughout the different ranks of the Department, representatives from other City Departments, such as the City Manager's Office, Human Resources, and more, and select community leaders. This committee should help drive the process forward, consider feedback, and help shape the strategic plan. The committee should also help define the vision, mission, and value statements and establish goals that define how the Department will fulfill its mission and realize the vision. For each goal, specific, detailed initiatives and action items should be established to help move the Department forward toward achieving the vision. These initiatives and action items will help the Department prioritize work assignments based on how well they advance the Department toward achieving its goals.

Creating a comprehensive Department-wide strategic plan will require significant planning and effort to solicit buy-in and feedback from internal staff and the community. Due to the current staffing constraints within the Department, it would be appropriate for the City to engage a third-party provider to facilitate the process, create survey tools, engage stakeholders, communicate the value of strategic planning, and ultimately incorporate the collected feedback into a final document.

The investment from the City into this process will benefit the Department in several ways, including:

- Evaluating the current circumstances of the organization
- Creating a foundation to base service expectations, performance, and operational practices on
- Aligning staff and the new leadership under a shared understanding and set of goals
- Promoting collaboration and communication
- Providing a long-term vision for where the Department wants to go

Recommendation 46: Improve technology to increase the efficiency and accuracy of data.

Technology is a key component of modern fire department operations. Technology can help staff efficiently get the required information about a call for service and complete reports. The use of technology in the field can also improve the accuracy of reporting due to the information being entered onsite.

According to the staff interviews, the Department's current technology makes it difficult to get needed information. For example, there are tablets in the apparatus, but they have limited information being fed to them from Contra Costa County. Additionally, staff thought the CAD system was inefficient and indicated that reporting programs do not communicate well, meaning reports do not get properly archived and take more time than they should to complete.

The Department should seek to improve access to technology as resources allow. This includes prioritizing identifying a solution to ensure staff in the apparatus have the information they need from the CAD and internal City GIS systems to pull building plans and locations accurately to provide useful information before arriving on the scene of a call for service. Additionally, staff in the field must be able to enter report information accurately with the reports properly archived so they can be retrieved and reviewed as needed. The ability to record patient care reports in the field can help ensure accurate information is passed on for the ongoing care of those patients. The Department should also ensure Fire Prevention staff have mobile devices to log reports and information in the field. The Fire Prevention Services Division has only two staff members available due to vacancies and staff on leave, the Deputy Fire Marshal and an Inspector typically assigned to the Chevron Refinery (but is currently assisting with Citywide inspections). Overall, the Department is tasked with performing approximately 4,000 company-based inspections, wildland inspections, and mandatory inspections on 34 buildings throughout the City. To make the inspection process as efficient as possible, Inspectors should be able to locate past inspection information to identify previous violations or concerns and log inspection reports while in the field. This would reduce the time spent trying to find past information regarding a property, reduce the amount of manual data entry, and enable the staff to prioritize inspection activities based on past violations and potential safety risks.

Incorporating needed technology systems into the operations of the Department will help create a culture of data-driven decision-making and improve efficiency. Adding new software programs and technology will increase operational costs for the Department; purchases should, therefore, be spread out over time as resources allow.

Recommendation 47: Expand the mental health program recently initiated to aid staff experiencing the effects of mandatory overtime and high call volume.

Firefighters face stressful and life-threatening situations daily, and over time, the experiences can have a significant impact on their mental health. At the City of Richmond, these effects are compounded by the high call volumes and the amount of mandatory overtime being asked of several staff members. Working long hours consecutively for multiple days without relief causes fatigue, increases the risk of injuries, and can impact home life, with firefighters not being able to spend a significant amount of time with their families or taking the stressors of their work home with them.

Acknowledging and recognizing the impact of mandatory overtime and the high-stress environment of the fire service is vital to ensuring the well-being of the Fire Department personnel and maintaining morale. To that end, the City

reportedly has begun developing a mental health program that, according to staff interviews, includes counseling. This initiative has laid a foundation for a comprehensive mental health program for the Department. Still, this program must be expanded upon to aid staff experiencing the effects of mandatory overtime and high call volumes. An expanded program could include counseling, stress management workshops, and peer support networks. To identify the most effective means to expand the program, the City should seek input from the Fire Department staff to better understand their unique needs. The City and Department leadership should also ensure clear communication about the availability of the program and the various support options. During staff interviews, it was clear that not all the firefighter's knew counseling was available to them.

By expanding the current mental health program, the City can support the well-being of the Firefighter staff and foster a supportive and caring work environment.

Police Department

The Richmond Police Department (RPD) is responsible for providing public safety services to the City of Richmond, including responding to community requests for assistance, investigating crimes, conducting crime prevention activities, and maintaining a jail. The Department's Communications team is also responsible for answering all emergency calls and dispatching both Police and Fire.

The Department consists of 212 authorized FTEs⁶⁶ and is overseen by the Chief of Police, as illustrated in Figure 19 below.

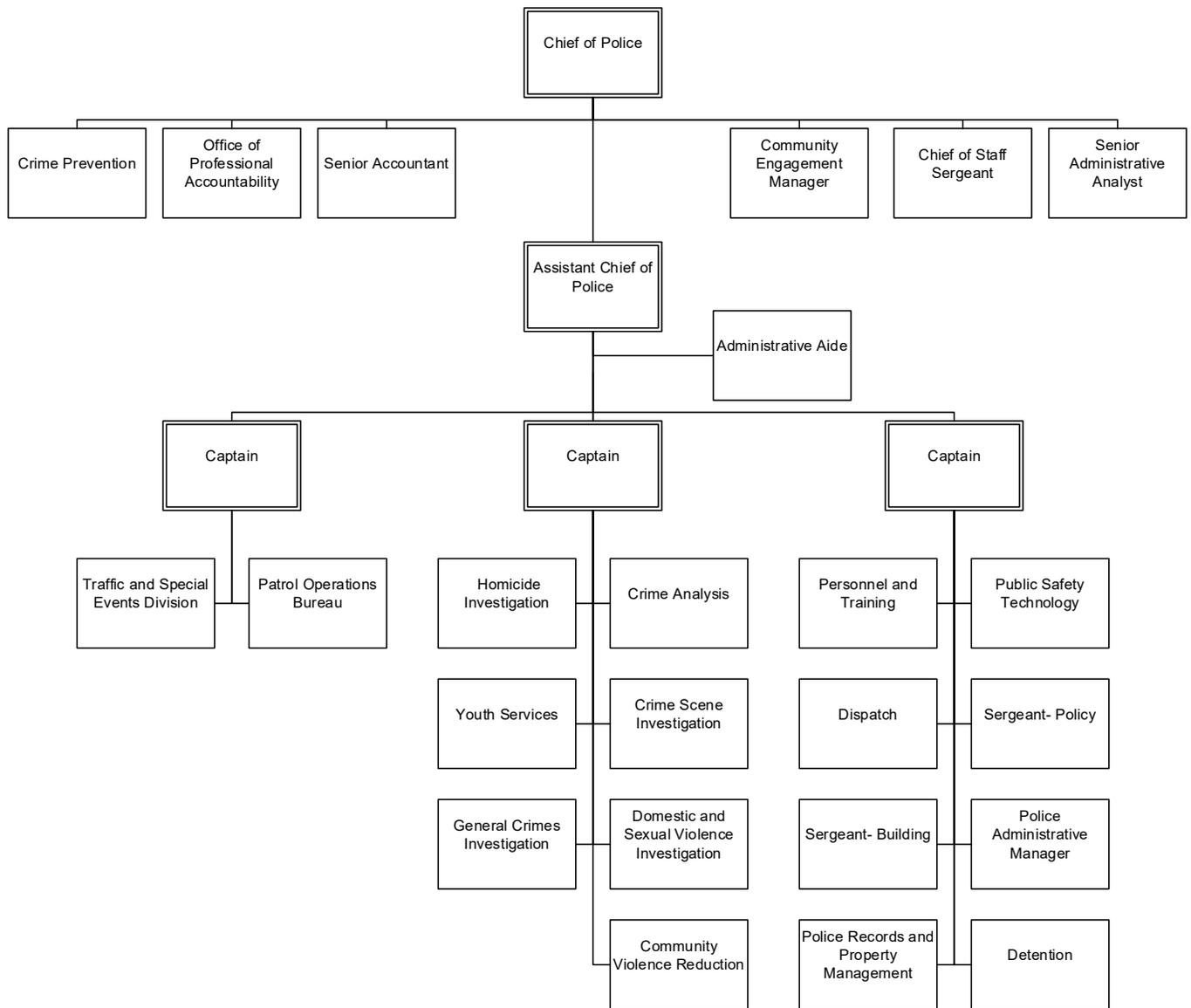


Figure 19: Police Department Organizational Structure, FY2023-24

⁶⁶ Only 194 FTEs are shown in the figure. The rest are longtime vacancies without a specific allocated position in the organization.

The Chief of Police is responsible for managing operations across the entire Department, as well as for supervising certain high-level and administrative functions like crime prevention, community engagement, finance and budgeting, and the Office of Professional Accountability (Internal Affairs).

The Chief also supervises the Assistant Chief of Police, who is responsible for day-to-day operations. The Assistant Chief supervises three Captains, each responsible for a different bureau. One Captain oversees the Patrol Operations Bureau, along with the Traffic and Special Event Division. The Patrol Operations Bureau is responsible for patrolling the City across nine beats and three Districts. The Traffic and Special Event Division is responsible for traffic and parking enforcement, support for public events, and assisting with code enforcement. A second Captain oversees the Investigations Bureau, whose staff are responsible for investigating crimes across the City, as well as analyzing crime trends and digital forensics (e.g., a suspect’s cell phone records). Finally, a third Captain oversees the Administration Bureau. Responsibilities of this Bureau include records and property management, jail management, technology support, and personnel management and training. The Bureau also includes the Communications Center, which is responsible for receiving and dispatching emergency calls for the Police and Fire Departments.

STAFFING LEVEL HISTORY

Authorized staffing in the Police Department decreased by 15% overall between FY2020 and FY2024, as illustrated in the following table. The reduction was especially significant among sworn staff. The Department’s complement of sworn staff decreased from 178 in FY2020 to 145 in FY2024.

It is important to note that authorized staffing does not translate to actual staff capacity. The Department has struggled with the impact of turnover and vacancies in recent years. City vacancy data shows that the Department has had an average of 50 positions vacant at any given time in both 2022 and 2023,⁶⁷ representing nearly a quarter of all authorized positions. This extremely high vacancy rate has a significant impact on capacity and operations.

There are likely a number of reasons for the Department’s high vacancy rate. The policing environment has changed nationally since the 2020 murder of George Floyd, and departments across the country have had difficulties recruiting and retaining staff. Another factor in Richmond is the perception the City Council does not support the Police Department, due to reductions in staffing and budget and comments made by some Councilmembers. Overall Department sworn and non-sworn staffing is summarized in Table 41 and Figure 20 below.

Table 41: Police Department Staffing, FY2020 through FY2024

Staffing (FTE)	FY2020 Budget	FY2021 Budget	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Budget	FY2024 Budget	Percent Change FY2020 to FY2024
Sworn	178	157	145	145	145	-19%
Non-Sworn	70	62	65	65	67	-4%
Total	248	219	210	210	212	-15%

⁶⁷ Through October 2023.

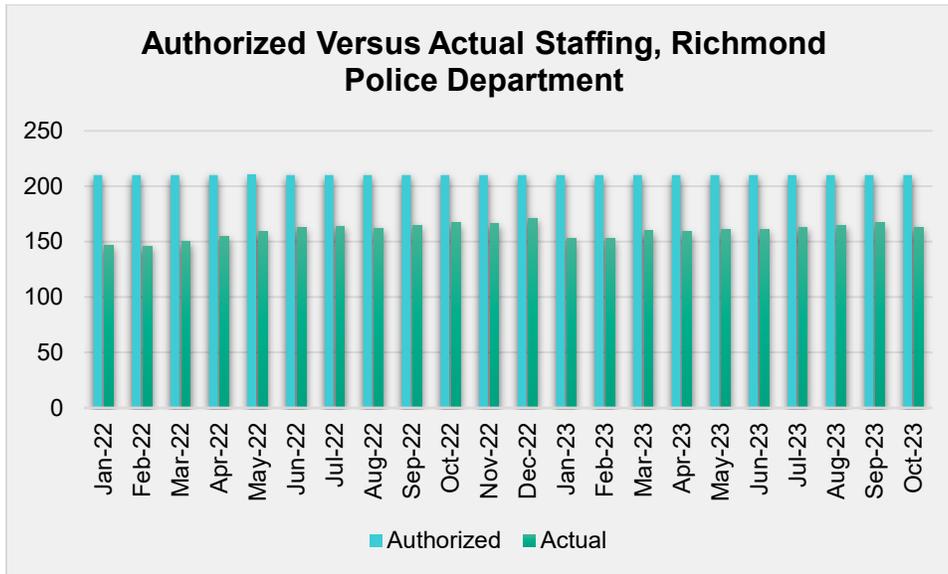


Figure 20: Authorized versus Actual Police Department Staffing, 2022-2023

CORE SERVICE MATRIX

The following table outlines core services (programs) provided by each division within the Police Department. The table is not meant to be all inclusive; rather, the table summarizes at a high level how staff are allocated to meet the service-level demand for each division.

Table 42: Police Department Core Services Matrix

Department Function/Division	Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
Investigations	Investigations Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation of homicides, domestic and sexual violence, crimes related to youth, and other crimes (assaults, robberies, etc.) Coordination with other agencies on violent crimes investigations as part of the FBI Safe Streets Task Force 	25.0	0.0 ⁶⁸
	Crime Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime data analysis Analysis of cell phone records 	2.0	0.0
	Crime Scene Investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime scene investigation Evidence processing 	1.0	0.0
Patrol	Patrol Operations Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactive and reactive patrol across nine City beats Crime scene investigation 	84.0	25.0
Traffic	Traffic & Special Events Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic enforcement Crash investigation Special events support Parking enforcement 	17.0	3.0
Administration and Support	Office of the Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive leadership 	6.0	1.0
	Office of Professional Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal affairs Policy review 	3.0	0.0

⁶⁸ Sworn staff could be allocated to either Investigations or Patrol. All vacancies are shown in Patrol.

Department Function/Division	Program Area	Activities and Service Levels	August 2023 Staffed Positions	August 2023 Vacant Positions
	Communications Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency and non-emergency call answering Police fire and medical dispatch 	22.0	8.0
	Financial Services Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accounting and financial management Budgeting Procurement support 	1.0	0.0
	Crime Prevention Services Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and outreach Liaison to Reimagining Public Safety Task Force 	2.0	1.0
	Administration Bureau Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight of administrative functions 	4.0	1.0
	Personnel and Training Section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment and hiring Training oversight 	3.0	0.0
	Jail Facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Booking Prisoner monitoring Prisoner transport 	6.0	2.0
	Property and Records Section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data entry Evidence logging and property maintenance 	14.0	2.0
	Police Safety Technology Section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of all public safety hardware and software CCTV upkeep and maintenance 	5.0	2.0

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Historically, RPD has been a high-functioning and innovative department providing a high level of service to the community. Loretta Lynch, Attorney General during the Obama Administration, honored RPD in 2015 for programs like trauma-informed care for crime survivors and job training for at-risk youth.⁶⁹ However, since then the City Council’s priorities have shifted, and fewer staff and resources have meant that the Department has moved away from these proactive programs, instead focusing on core policing duties. This limited staffing, combined with a high number of vacancies, have made even providing core police services a challenge.

RPD’s core responsibility is to provide patrol services to the City of Richmond. Its adopted Policy Manual mandates minimum staffing levels of at least two patrol supervisors on duty per shift and at least one officer on duty for each of the City’s nine patrol beats.⁷⁰ This means that at least 11 sworn officers must be on patrol duty at any given time, regardless of absences, vacancies, or other policing responsibilities.

In order to meet this obligation as staffing levels have been reduced, RPD has relied heavily on officers working overtime to meet staff minimums. RPD employees worked an average of 57,720 hours per year of overtime between 2021 and 2023, the equivalent of nearly 28 staff positions. The average person working overtime worked an additional 367 hours per year, the equivalent of more than nine extra weeks of work.

Another strategy that the Department has used to meet staffing minimums is to divert staff from special assignments and from the Investigations Bureau into Patrol. When staffing levels were higher, some patrol officers were assigned to specialized teams, but these opportunities have largely vanished. Similarly, the number of staff assigned to the Investigations Bureau has been reduced. The Bureau used to maintain a number of specialized teams dealing with specific types of crime, but these teams have largely been consolidated due to low staffing levels. This means that

⁶⁹ <https://www.justice.gov/opa/speech/attorney-general-loretta-e-lynch-delivers-remarks-community-policing-forum-richmond>

⁷⁰ Richmond Police Department Policy Manual, Policy 207

certain types of property crimes largely go uninvestigated due to capacity constraints. It is worth noting, however, that the Investigations Bureau has recently hired two civilian positions to assist with crime analysis and reporting. In interviews, staff praised these positions for their assistance in case clearance and informing patrol operations. Ongoing training will be critical for Crime Analysts to optimize their skillsets and continue to provide operational efficiencies for investigation services.

The Communications team, responsible for answering emergency calls and dispatching Police and Fire units, is also struggling with high vacancy rates. The Center operates on minimum staffing of three Dispatchers at any given time, and is vital that this function be staffed appropriately in order to receive and dispatch calls in a timely manner. The team is also struggling with a high vacancy rate, requiring existing staff to work significant overtime for coverage.

It is important to note that the City has already commissioned a recent staffing study of the Police Department, conducted by the Matrix Consulting Group in the Spring of 2023. The study is still in draft form at the time of this report, but it recommends significant staffing increases to address some of these workload and coverage concerns. Altogether, the report recommends 70 new authorized positions, including 31 in the Investigations Bureau and 31 in the Patrol Operations Bureau. This study will review certain staffing recommendations in the report but will not conduct a complete independent analysis.

A number of factors can inform appropriate staffing levels for a police function. Below we will discuss four key indicators for RPD: overtime, capacity for proactive policing, case closure rates, and training.

Overtime

As discussed above, RPD relies heavily on the use of both voluntary and mandatory overtime to accomplish its core functions. In 2023, the average patrol officer is projected to work 420 hours of overtime, the equivalent of more than 10 work weeks. By the end of 2023, six patrol officers are projected to work more than 1,000 hours of overtime. Each of these officers will be doing the work of at least 1.5 FTEs. Overtime for patrol officers is also increasing, as illustrated in the following figures.

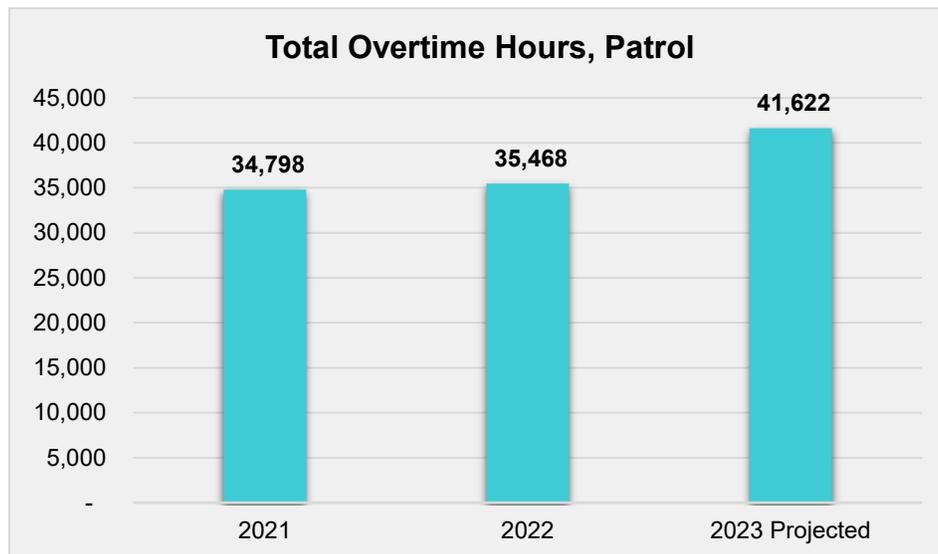


Figure 21: Total Overtime Hours, Patrol, 2021-2023⁷¹

⁷¹ Does not include Communications overtime hours. 2023 prorated figures are based on data from January through October.

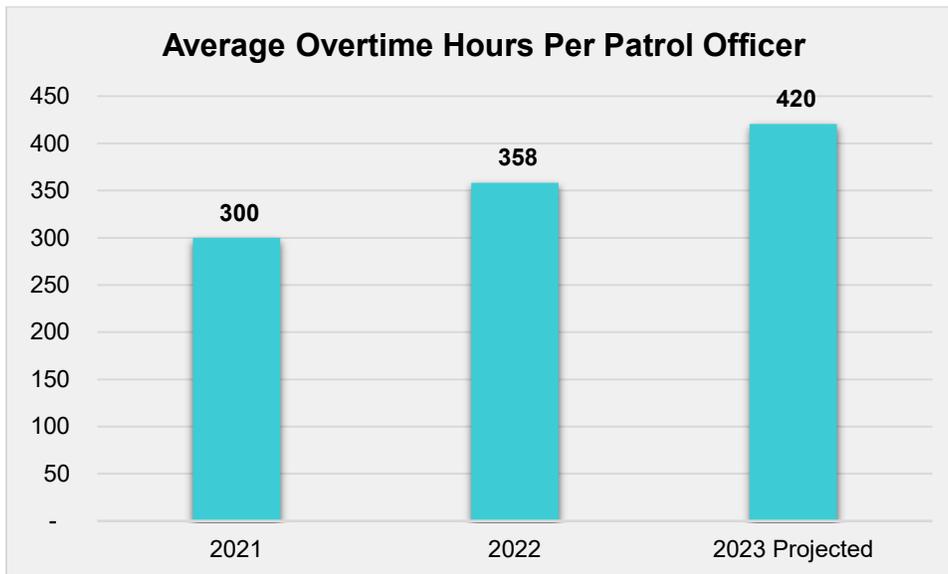


Figure 22: Average Overtime Hours per Person, Patrol, 2021-2023⁷²

It is vital that officers have ample opportunity to rest and to cultivate a work-life balance. If officers are overworked, they may be more likely to leave the Department. Fatigue can also impact decision-making and reaction time, potentially impacting officer effectiveness as well as the safety of the officer and the public.

It is also important for the Department to consider the impact of overtime on officer wellness. Being a police officer is an inherently stressful job. As a 2023 Department of Justice report states, “research demonstrates that law enforcement occupations can contribute to diminished psychological health and well-being that can have negative effects on personnel (and their families) and public safety.”⁷³ Because of the inherent nature of the job, effective police departments must be proactive in cultivating a philosophy of wellness. However, the same report lists mandatory overtime as having a negative impact on police officer wellness, as well as other factors that could be exacerbated by overtime, such as:⁷⁴

- Exhaustion and sleep deprivation
- Work-life balance stressors
- Heavy workload/long shifts
- Mandatory overtime
- Irregular work hours

As such, these factors should never be considered as the normal outcome of operational management. RPD should be working to limit these factors as part of an overall commitment to officer wellness, but the Department is obligated to meet minimum patrol staffing despite high vacancy rates, limiting the flexibility to address this issue. As a result, there are currently some officers working an average of 60+ hours per week. This creates significant risk for the Department and suggests that the current vacancy levels in the Patrol Bureau are impacting operations and officer wellbeing.

⁷² Does not include Communications overtime hours. 2023 prorated figures are based on data from January through October.

⁷³ https://www.justice.gov/d9/2023-05/Sec.%204%28a%29%20-Report%20on%20Best%20Practices%20to%20Advance%20Officer%20Wellness_FINAL.pdf

⁷⁴ Ibid.

There are similar concerns about the use of overtime in the Communications Center. The Center operates on minimum staffing of three Dispatchers at any given time. When there are vacancies, these shifts are filled by Dispatchers working mandatory overtime. Supervisors also routinely work as one of the three Dispatchers, limiting their capacity for staff oversight and support, as well as for quality assurance. In 2023, the average Dispatcher was projected to work 342 hours of overtime, or more than 12,000 hours in total. As in the case of police officers, it is important for Dispatchers to have appropriate rest and work-life balance in order to keep them as effective as possible and to prevent burnout. For this reason, the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) recommends that organizations not rely on mandatory overtime to meet staffing requirements.⁷⁵

Proactive Patrol Capacity

Patrol officers divide their time between three core responsibilities: 1) **Reactive policing** responding to requests for service, such as 911 calls; 2) **Proactive policing**: deterring crime and protecting public safety through strategies like community policing or engaging with residents and businesses; and 3) **Administrative tasks**: writing reports and completing other desk responsibilities.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) recommends that officers' time be split equally between all three tasks, with a third of their time allocated for reactive response, a third for proactive initiatives, and a third for administrative work. However, the amount of time to allocate for proactive tasks is ultimately a policy decision based on each community's needs and priorities.

It is important for the Department to conduct extensive engagement to understand these priorities. Regular community engagement helps the Department ensure that its practices align with community needs and helps strengthen the relationship between police and residents. Specific elements of an effective engagement program include:

- Educating the public (along with elected officials) about what the Department does and the impact it has on the community
- Communicating key plans and initiatives, along with the reasoning behind why those decisions were made
- Engaging with the public using a variety of different methods (e.g., surveys, town halls, meetings with community groups) to understand their concerns and priorities

This engagement, along with policing best practices, should determine the appropriate proactive policing standard for Richmond. Once a proactive policing standard has been established, the Department can evaluate how effectively that standard can be met, given staff capacity and reactive workload. Proactive policing allows for positive community interactions with officers and the opportunity to build relationships. The time spent on reactive calls can be used to estimate officers' capacity for proactive policing and to evaluate whether the proactive policing target is being met. For example, if the Department sets the proactive policing target at 33%, it implies that officers working 12-hour shifts should have approximately four hours per shift available for proactive policing, with another four hours (33%) set aside for administrative duties. This means that under the 33% service level target, each RPD patrol officer should spend a maximum of four hours per shift, on average, responding to calls for service. If they are spending more than four hours per shift, it is a sign that additional patrol capacity may be needed.

Case Closure Rates

The Matrix report examines Investigations Bureau staffing from the lens of staff capacity requirements per type of case. This approach has validity, but it is also useful to examine the results produced. The Investigations Bureau's

⁷⁵ https://retains.apcointl.org/pdf/Effective_Practices_Guide.pdf

core responsibility is to close open cases, and its closure rate is an indicator of its level of success in meeting the community’s public safety needs.

There is no established standard for case closure rates, as they depend on case complexity and a variety of other factors. However, in interviews, multiple RPD staff expressed frustration that many property crimes cases go uninvestigated due to lack of staff capacity. Staff positions have been transferred from Investigations to Patrol to meet patrol staffing minimums, and as a result, the limited number of investigators have had to triage potential investigations based on the seriousness of the crime.

The project team validated employees’ claims by comparing RPD’s closure data for crimes reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) to closure data of peer California communities. Peers were chosen because they have a similar population (between approximately 100,000 and 300,000) and a similar rate of NIBRS crimes (between approximately 4,000 and 5,500 per 100,000 residents). The following table compares population and crime rates.

Table 43: Case Closure Peer Comparison

California City	Population, 2022 ⁷⁶	NIBRS Crimes per 100,000 Residents, 2022
Richmond	114,301	3,606
Berkeley	118,950	6,011
Concord	122,625	3,454
Hayward	156,754	3,252
San Mateo	100,984	2,606
Vallejo	123,564	5,222

Recently the City has deployed new strategies for public safety and crime intervention, including the Office of Neighborhood Services anti-violence group and the community crisis response team (CCRT). While insufficient data exists to interpret the success of these programs, the City’s violent crime did decline from 1,185 reported crimes in 2021 to 1,005 in 2022. The 2022 violent crime rate was in-line with the historical 10-year average of 1,036 reported crimes from 2012 to 2022; while the 2021 violent crime rate was approximately 14% above average.⁷⁷ Richmond’s recent crime data trend is in-line with national trends over the past few years. Tracking crime data in the coming years will be integral to assessing the impact of these programs. Communication between these departments and groups will be vital for long-term success. Patrol and investigative services within RPD inform crime patterns and trends where early intervention work by the CCRT and anti-violence group can be most effective.

RPD had a similar clearance rate for NIBRS violent crimes⁷⁸ in 2022 compared to peers, as illustrated in Figure 23 below.

⁷⁶ Source: the United States Census 2022 Population Estimates Program

⁷⁷ Analysis of NIBRS data utilizing the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Crime Data Explorer. <https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/explorer/crime/crime-trend>

⁷⁸ Categories of violent crime reported to NIBRS include: homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

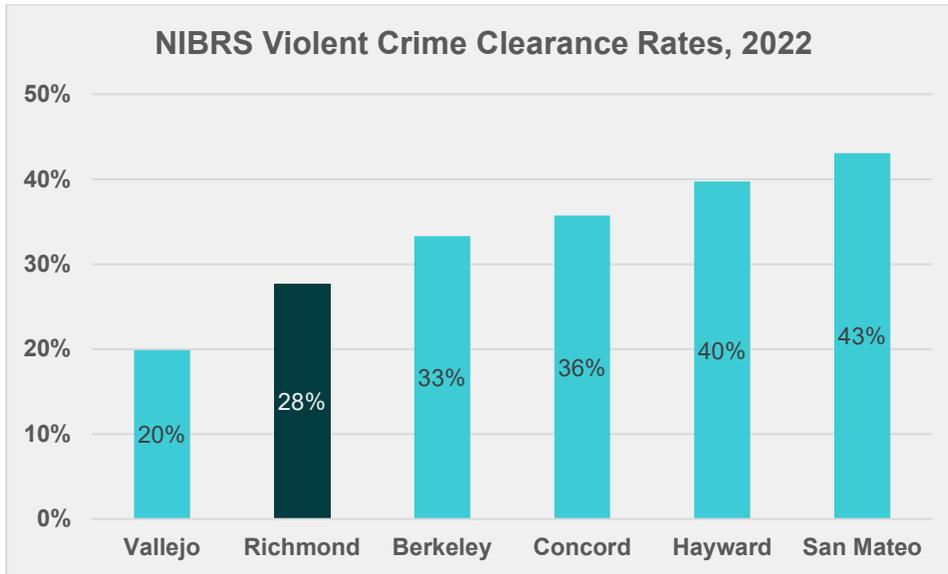


Figure 23: Peer Comparison of NIBRS Violent Crime Clearance Rates, 2022

However, RPD had the lowest NIBRS property crime⁷⁹ clearance rate of any peer in 2022, as illustrated below.

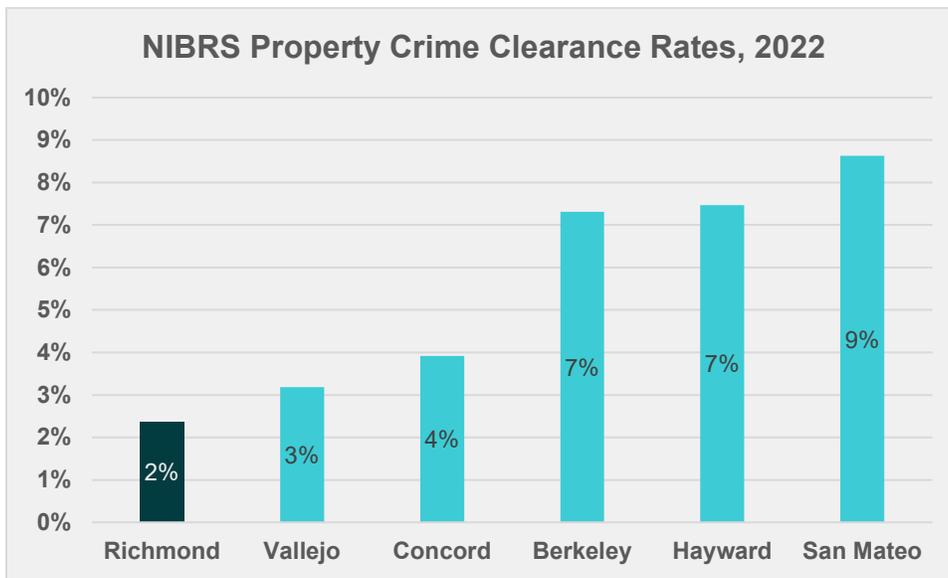


Figure 24: Peer Comparison of NIBRS Property Crime Clearance Rates, 2022

It is important to caution that this data represents a single year of time, that each community has specific challenges and advantages, and that NIBRS crimes are only a subset of the crimes investigated. The recent patterns in violent and property crime suggest that RPD has managed their current staffing shortage as best they can by placing the limited resources they have in the most critical functions. The crime clearance rates, particularly for property crimes, show the impact of this reality. The capacity to provide sufficient investigative services to the community has suffered in order to maintain critical staffing for responding to calls for service within the patrol division. This analysis, the feedback from staff, and the analysis in the Matrix report all suggest that RPD has the opportunity to add staff capacity to investigate property crimes. With the additional investigative capacity is also the opportunity to re-assess

⁷⁹ Categories of property crime reported to NIBRS include: arson, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.

case assignment based on solvability factors, create generalist detective roles versus specialized focus areas, and the ability to leverage civilian crime analysis to improve clearance rates.

Training and Succession Planning

Regular, comprehensive training for all Department staff is important to ensure that they are effective at their jobs and current on all policing best practices. It also helps prepare them for taking on leadership roles in the future, which helps ensure that there is a qualified pool of staff to fill any higher-level positions that become vacant. Professional development is also an important tool to encourage staff retention, as staff are more likely to remain in the organization if they see opportunities to develop their skills and move into different roles in the future.

However, in interviews staff reported that training is regularly delayed or deferred, mostly because of lack of staff capacity. This is another indicator that current staffing levels in the Department are not adequate to meet its needs. It is important to ensure that there is enough capacity to maintain an effective training program. A comprehensive program should include:

- Written policies and procedures for all Department functions – regularly reviewed and updated as needed
- Comprehensive onboarding training for new employees
- Regularly scheduled training for all staff (sworn and civilian) that aligns with their job responsibilities and with their professional development goals

It is important for RPD to have the staff resources to establish and maintain this program.

STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the above analysis, the following staffing recommendations are offered for the Police Department.

Recommendation 48: Add staff positions in the Patrol function.

Some elected officials in the City have expressed reservations about increasing staffing levels in the Police Department. It is the prerogative of the elected body to determine the most effective allocation of resources. However, as long as a patrol function exists in the City of Richmond, it is vital that officers have the capacity to do their jobs effectively and get rest between shifts. Officers who are overworked and who do not have any capacity to build relationships with the community they serve do not effectively meet the needs of anyone in the community, regardless of their views on the role of police. Moreover, this is not a sustainable community policing practice.

The Matrix Consulting Group study reports that RPD patrol officers spent 43,024 hours⁸⁰ responding to reactive calls for service in 2021. The Matrix methodology used a 40% proactive policing goal, and, as discussed in the “Proactive Patrol Capacity” section above, the IACP’s methodology is to assume a 33% proactive policing standard. Under the 33% standard, RPD should allocated approximately 43,000 of patrol officer hours per year to reactive response, 43,000 hours to administrative responsibilities, and 43,000 hours to proactive policing: approximately 123,000 hours total.

In order to determine approximately how many patrol officers would be needed to create 123,000 hours of capacity, the project team calculated a staffing factor. A staffing factor is the number of FTEs needed to staff one shift 365 days per year. According to leave data provided by the City, between 2021 and 2023 patrol officers took an average of 310 hours of leave per officer per year. The Matrix report also estimates an additional 98 hours per officer per year of

⁸⁰ Does not include administrative time

training and court time. Patrol officers are scheduled for approximately 2,086 hours per year, but based on these estimates, they are only on patrol for 1,594 hours.

The following table calculates the staffing factor for 10-hour and 12-hour shifts.

Table 44: Patrol Staffing Factor for 10- and 12-Hour Shifts

Shift	Hours per Shift per Year	Hours Worked per Officer	Staffing Factor
12-Hour Shifts	4,380	1,594	2.75
10-Hour Shifts	3,650	1,594	2.29

Based on these factors and based on the assumption that approximately 56% of officers will continue to work 12-hour shifts (the current configuration), the Department needs a total of 82 patrol officers on duty to meet the 33% proactive policing target. This is 27 more positions than are currently authorized.

It is important to note that the project team did not do an in-depth staffing analysis, and these figures should be considered estimates. However, these calculations suggest that the Matrix report’s recommendation of 31 additional authorized patrol positions is generally appropriate.

Based on this analysis, as well as the overtime hours analysis in the “Overtime” section above, it is recommended that the City increase patrol staffing. The appropriate staffing levels depend on:

- The Department’s policy decision on capacity that should be allocated for proactive policing
- If the Department opts to establish a non-sworn Community Service Officer program to respond to some low risk calls for service
- If the Department opts to decrease its minimum staffing levels for patrol officers

For these reasons, this report does not make a specific recommendation for a number of positions. However, both the Matrix Report and this project team’s analysis identified a need for approximately 30 additional positions given the current structure and service levels if the City seeks to get to the 33% proactive model outlined above.

It is important to note that there is already a high level of vacancies in the Department, so increasing authorized staffing alone may not impact actual staffing capacity. However, many RPD officers reported a perception that the City Council wishes to reduce the number of staff in the Department, and that this perception has influenced officers to leave and has deterred potential candidates from applying to the Department. If the City opted to increase staffing, it could change this perception, potentially supporting recruitment and retention. Another important strategy to support recruitment and retention is the development of a robust wellness program, as discussed in Recommendation 51 below.

The estimated cost at the median and with benefits to add 27 Officer positions is \$4,254,362.

Recommendation 49: Add at least two Detective positions for additional capacity in the Investigations Bureau.

Employees assigned to the Investigative Division report limited staff capacity has meant that cases referred for investigations must be triaged. As a result, staff focus their time on investigating violent crimes, and many property crimes go uninvestigated. The case closure rate analysis conducted above, along with feedback from staff and the analysis in the Matrix report all suggest that RPD has the opportunity to add staff capacity to investigate property

crimes. With the additional investigative capacity is also the opportunity to re-assess case assignment based on solvability factors, create generalist detective roles versus specialized focus areas, and the ability to leverage civilian crime analysis to improve clearance rates.

It is important that RPD focus appropriate resources on investigating violent crimes. These crimes have the largest impact on overall community safety. However, property crimes are generally more common, and therefore are more likely to impact the average person in the community. This means that how RPD handles property crimes is more likely to influence the community's perception of the Department than how it handles violent crimes. Property crimes also have a significant impact on quality of life. A person who has their car or bicycle stolen may have lost their only means of transportation. A person whose home has been burglarized may lose their sense of security.

For these reasons, it is recommended that RPD increase its staff capacity in the Investigations Bureau to address property crime more comprehensively. At least two Detective positions should be created, with a dedicated focus on property crimes. Additionally, case deferral and case closure rates by type of crime should be carefully tracked to evaluate how well existing investigative capacity is able to meet the community needs.

The estimated median cost with benefits for two positions is \$315,138.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below offer suggestions to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Recommendation 50: Evaluate service levels in light of current staff capacity.

RPD has traditionally provided a high level of service to the community. However, as discussed in the "Staffing Level History" section above, RPD's capacity to provide that service has dramatically decreased in recent years. Between FY2020 and FY2024, RPD staffing was reduced by 36 positions, 33 of which were sworn. This reduction, plus the Department's average of 50 vacancies at any given time, means that the Department is operating with 86 fewer positions than were authorized in FY2020. The current model of meeting minimum staffing requirements through significant reliance on overtime is not sustainable. Some Department services go unmet and most importantly, staff and community safety risk are elevated.

The reduction in current staffing levels is significant, and it is important that the Department comprehensively evaluate the level of service that can be provided with this staffing complement. RPD has already taken some steps, such as eliminating certain programs, but it still offers a high level of some core services. For example, even as staffing levels have been reduced, it has maintained a minimum patrol staffing level of nine officers on duty at any given time. As a result, between January and July 2023, the Department maintained an average response time of 13 minutes or less, even for the lowest-priority incidents.⁸¹ Timely response is important, but with current staffing levels, RPD can only achieve that response time by diverting resources from the Investigations Bureau, impacting case closure rates, and by relying on mandatory overtime, impacting officer effectiveness, morale, and retention.

Recommendation 48 above discusses increases to patrol staffing levels, but any increases will take time to implement, and it will likely be a long time before there are any meaningful increases to patrol staffing capacity. In the meantime, RPD should consider reducing minimum staffing levels or consolidating beat patrols to better balance officer workload.

Other opportunities to consider changes to service levels include:

⁸¹ "Richmond Police Department Crime Information Bulletin." August 9, 2023.

Reducing the hours of the Records Bureau and moving away from 24/7 staffing. Since the pandemic, there has been some reduction in staff that have not allowed the unit to provide 24/7 service. It may be time to permanently adjust service hours.

Evaluating the benefits of providing services to other communities like El Cerrito, considering the staff capacity to provide these services.

Evaluating opportunities to allocate response to some low-risk calls for service to non-sworn Community Service Officers.

Service levels can be restored when there is greater staffing capacity and other available resources, but implementing these changes in the short term will help create a more sustainable workload across the Department. When determining where to make changes, the Department should rely on analytics such as those provided by the Crime Analyst in the Detective Bureau to understand where to target staff capacity to have the greatest impact, as well as where service levels could be reduced and reallocated elsewhere.

Recommendation 51: Cultivate a culture of wellness throughout the Police Department.

Staff wellness is a key component of a high-functioning police department. Officers, Dispatchers, and other employees are regularly exposed to dangerous, upsetting, and stressful situations. It is vital that police departments take steps to support these employees' physical, mental, and emotional health. If employees are struggling, they may be less effective in their jobs, and more likely to leave and seek employment elsewhere.

RPD already has some wellness initiatives in place. The Department operates a peer support program, and contracts with mental health professionals. Staff are allowed between 10 and 20 free visits per year.⁸² Officers can also take up to 60 minutes additional time at lunch for exercise. The Department is also currently surveying its staff to help gauge current wellness and plans to institute additional programs based on this feedback.

The recommendations for additional staffing will help promote wellness by reducing the Department's reliance on overtime and allowing officers to have more rest between shifts. The Department is also to be commended for the wellness initiatives that it already has in place and for its proactive efforts to understand employee wellness and build a program based on staff needs. It is important to foster a comprehensive culture of wellness across the entire department, including both sworn and non-sworn employees.

The Department of Justice recommends that a comprehensive wellness program be built around the following strategies:⁸³

Eliminate stigma surrounding mental health and other barriers to help-seeking. While RPD offers mental health services, staff report that many are unaware that these options exist, and that some fear being seen as weak for seeking out support. Stigma around seeking out support is common, and the Department can combat that by promoting these services regularly and working to normalize them in the organizational culture. Confidentiality for employees utilizing these services should be prioritized, as it minimizes the stigma around seeking support.

⁸² 10 for non-sworn staff, 20 for sworn staff

⁸³ https://www.justice.gov/d9/2023-05/Sec.%204%28a%29%20-Report%20on%20Best%20Practices%20to%20Advance%20Officer%20Wellness_FINAL.pdf

Demonstrate leadership and prioritize psychological health and well-being. RPD leadership have already taken steps to demonstrate their commitment to wellness through existing programs and by surveying staff on their wellness needs. It is important for leadership to regularly demonstrate a commitment to wellness by offering comprehensive programming and by ensuring that staff have the capacity to take advantage of it. If services are offered, but staff cannot take time away from their jobs to use these services, then the services are not effective.

It is also important for leadership at the Citywide level to demonstrate their support for RPD staff. There is a perception among many employees that the City Council does not care about the wellbeing of RPD officers, and this perception impacts morale, as well as recruitment and retention.

Utilize policy to advance health and well-being. While RPD's policy manual includes a Wellness section with information on the peer support program, physical wellness, and debriefing after critical incidents, there may be opportunities to enhance this section to ensure that it is more comprehensive. For example, there is nothing in the section about access to mental health support. Additionally, while the section discusses holding debriefs after critical incidents, there is no language about securing employees' ability to attend those debriefs. In interviews, some employees mentioned being unable to attend debriefs because of their work schedule, which should be avoided whenever possible.

Strengthen protections against stressors, trauma, and negative health outcomes. The RPD policy manual states that employees are to be regularly trained on wellness topics like recognizing mental distress, combatting sleep deprivation, trauma reactions, and anger management. It is important for RPD to regularly offer training courses on these topics and to track how often they are offered. Additionally, RPD should publicize and promote its mental health visits as a tool to help manage stress; it is important that staff have the physical tools they need to maintain wellness, including access to exercise equipment and access to quiet wellness areas, separate from any communal rooms or break rooms.

Establishing a comprehensive wellness program that aligns with these best practices will help bolster staff efficacy and encourage retention. A comprehensive wellness program is also an effective recruitment tool, because it helps demonstrate the Department's commitment to its employees.

Recommendation 52: Explore opportunities to regionalize or contract out some dispatch services.

As previously discussed, the Communications Center faces some of the same vacancy and overtime challenges as the Patrol Bureau. However, while staff report that vacancy challenges among sworn staff are relatively recent, spurred by the national climate after the murder of George Floyd and the City Council's perceived lack of support, staff in the Communications Center report that recruitment and retention have been a longstanding issue. Receiving and dispatching calls requires individuals with a specific skillset, including the ability to remember specific protocols, the ability to quickly respond to ongoing situations, and the ability to remain calm under stressful or upsetting situations. Many prospective Dispatchers are unable to meet these requirements or, if they do, eventually move on to become a police officer or take another public safety role. A robust onboarding and training program for new dispatchers is vital. Early in their employment, they need to feel adequately supported to perform job responsibilities.

There may be some steps that the Department can take to encourage recruitment and retention in the Communications Center. The wellness program discussed in Recommendation 51 above, for example, should include Dispatchers, and they should be offered support after particularly challenging calls. Another consideration may be to create dedicated Call Taker positions, who answer emergency calls but are not responsible for dispatching services. These positions require a narrower range of skills, potentially increasing the pool of potential candidates.

However, given the longstanding challenges with recruitment and retention, the City should also explore opportunities to regionalize Dispatch services. Regional dispatch centers create efficiency, because staff can be allocated to the areas of highest need. They also have greater capacity to provide structured recruitment, training, and quality assurance programs, helping reduce turnover and ensure call consistency. Additionally, a larger dispatch function may offer more opportunities for advancement, encouraging retention and professional development.

A regionalized dispatch function will require buy-in from one or more neighboring communities, but it is an important strategy for the Department to explore moving forward.

Conclusion

This workload analysis was undertaken to answer the State Auditor's question as to the necessity of the City's vacant positions, to assess staffing and service levels, and to identify opportunities to enhance succession planning and operational efficiency and effectiveness based upon a high-level review of all departments. The recommendations in this report were developed to build upon the City's already high service level and community-focused approach to providing municipal services. It is fortunate to be staffed with employees, many of whom live in the City, who care deeply about the community and are passionate about meeting the community's expectations.

The City's current menu of programs and services, combined with decreased authorized staffing levels in some areas and increased vacancies, has stretched remaining staff. For the past three years, the City has continued to provide service with just 82% of total authorized staff positions in place. This, combined with mandatory overtime and increasing service demands in some areas, has taxed remaining staff and lowered morale. The potential retirement of many senior staff members requires focus on the development of new leaders. Turnover requires the City to consider how best to recruit and retain new employees to continue the provision of services to residents.

In order to provide high-quality service for all existing City programs and services, the City should focus first upon filling the existing vacancies to get back to fuller staffing levels and provide some relief for other staff. In order to provide its current menu of services at a high level, the City will need an investment of approximately \$12.5 million in additional staff positions. Some of this cost can be offset through increased grants and user charges and fees. In no case should additional staff positions be added without the knowledge of ongoing financial resources available to support them over the long term.

The total cost of the additional recommended 74 new positions is \$12,532,145 as estimated in Table 45 below. These estimates are based upon the salary midpoint for each position plus the City's 80% benefits multiplier (e.g., 1.8 times the midpoint salary). Information as to which positions in the City are funded outside the General Fund was unavailable during this review; it is likely that the cost of some positions can be offset through alternative revenues such as grants or user fees and charges.

Table 45: Summary of Estimated New Position Costs

Department	Position/Description	Number of FTEs	Estimated Cost at Step 3 at 80% Benefits
Community Development	Building Inspector	1.00	\$157,569
	Plan Check Engineer	1.00	\$203,707
	Code Enforcement Officer	3.00	\$430,552
	Assistant Planner - Transportation	1.00	\$157,152
Economic Development	Senior Business Assistance Officer	1.00	\$251,658
Community Services	Recreation Program Coordinator	10.00	\$1,312,157
	Auditorium Leadworker	1.00	\$131,216
	Library Assistant II	3.00	\$360,318
	Management Analyst - Transportation Services	1.00	\$189,074
Internal Services	Network & Systems Specialist II – Project Management	1.00	\$207,745
	Accountant II - Finance Grants Office	2.00	\$378,148
Public Works	Supervisor - Painters and Carpenters Crew	1.00	\$207,745
	Management Analyst - Contract Management	1.00	\$189,074
Fire Department	Firefighter	18.00	\$3,786,531
Police Department	Officers – Patrol	27.00	\$4,254,362
	Detective - Investigations Bureau	2.00	\$315,138
	TOTAL	74.00	\$12,532,145

While an in-depth financial analysis was outside of the scope of this review, we believe the City will need to reassess and identify those programs and services for which it no longer has the financial resources to offer. Service can be provided to residents using alternative models such as the County, local non-profits, or through regionalization and shared services with neighboring agencies. Investments in information technology to automate processes and improve data-driven management and performance tracking are encouraged to optimize operations.

Using this report as a guide, the City will be able to continue to improve operations and services for the benefit of the Richmond community. Prioritization of these recommendations and thoughtful, planned implementation will ensure ongoing service to residents in balance with the City’s finite financial resources and thought to its long-term financial sustainability.