



# Staff Report

## City Council

Item No. 5.A

**Meeting Date:** April 23, 2025

**From:** Eugenia Torres, Human Resources Manager

**Title:** Assembly Bill 2561 - Public Hearing on City Vacancies and Recruitment and Retention Efforts

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

To hold a public hearing and receive and file this report.

### **BACKGROUND:**

On September 22, 2024, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill 2561 (AB 2561) into law to amend the Meyers-Milias-Brown Act (MMBA) to create a new obligation for public agencies to address the status of vacancies publicly. As the basis for the new requirements, the California Legislature determined that vacancies are a widespread and significant problem in the public sector. Vacancies require employees to take on heavier workloads, resulting in burnout and increased turnover, which negatively impacts the delivery of public service.

The MMBA authorizes local public employees to form, join, and participate in the activities of employee organizations of their own choosing for the purpose of representation on matters of labor relations. The MMBA also requires the governing body or management of public agency to meet and confer in good faith regarding wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment with representatives of recognized employee organizations and to fully consider presentations that are made by the employee organization on behalf of its members before arriving at a determination of policy or course of action.

### **DISCUSSION:**

In compliance with the new legal obligations under AB 2561, the City is required to do the following:

#### **Public Hearing Requirements:**

AB 2561 requires public agencies to present the status of their vacancies in a public hearing before their governing body at least once per fiscal year. The presentation must be made prior to the adoption of a final budget for the fiscal year. This report must also address the recruitment and retention efforts currently employed by the public agency. During this

presentation, the public agency is also required to identify any changes to policies, procedures, or recruitment activities that negatively impact the entity's efforts to reduce its vacancies.

Additionally, if the number of vacancies exceeds 20% of the total number of authorized full-time positions in a particular bargaining unit, the public agency shall include the following information in its presentation upon request of the recognized employee organization:

1. The total number of job vacancies within a bargaining unit.
2. The total number of applicants for vacant positions within the bargaining unit.
3. The average number of days to complete the hiring process form when a position is posted.
4. Opportunities to improve compensation and other working conditions.

Currently, none of the City's bargaining units have vacancy rates exceeding 20%, so this additional reporting is not required for this public hearing.

AB 2561 requires that recognized employee organizations shall be entitled to make a presentation before the governing board of a public agency during the same public hearing in which the public agency makes its annual presentation on vacancies.

AB 2561 further provides that the new law may not prevent an agency's government board from holding additional public hearings about vacancies.

## **Current Recruitment and Retention Efforts**

The Human Resources Department has implemented the following enhanced strategies over the past 18 months to address recruitment challenges and improve employee retention:

### Recruitment Initiatives:

- Streamline Application Process: Simplified hiring procedures and reduced processing time for candidates.
- Public Service Motivation Messaging: Enhanced communication about the rewards and impact of public service careers.
- Enhanced Marketing and Outreach Strategies:
  - Strategic job posting across multiple platforms
  - Increased presence at regional career fairs
  - Target local community outreach programs
  - Expand social media recruitment campaigns
  - Engagement with professional networks and associations

### Retention Strategies:

- Career Development Pathways:
  - Structured advancement opportunities in Police Department
  - Career progression in Fire Department
- Professional Development Programs: Expanded training opportunities and tuition support for continuing education.
- Employee Recognition Initiatives: Formal and informal programs to acknowledge exceptional service and performance.
- Competitive Benefits Package: Comprehensive health benefits, retirement planning,

and work-life balance support.

- Flexible Work Arrangements: Alternative scheduling options where operationally feasible.
- Policy Modernization: Regular review and updates to personnel policies to reflect best practices.

These efforts are continuously evaluated for effectiveness, with adjustments based on measurable outcomes and employee feedback.

#### Next Steps

No changes have been identified or implemented to address hiring obstacles at this time. The City continues to take steps to support recruitment and retention and will continue monitoring vacancy rates.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

None

#### **FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:**

Goal A – Serve the Community with Pride and Dedication

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Bill Text – AB 2561