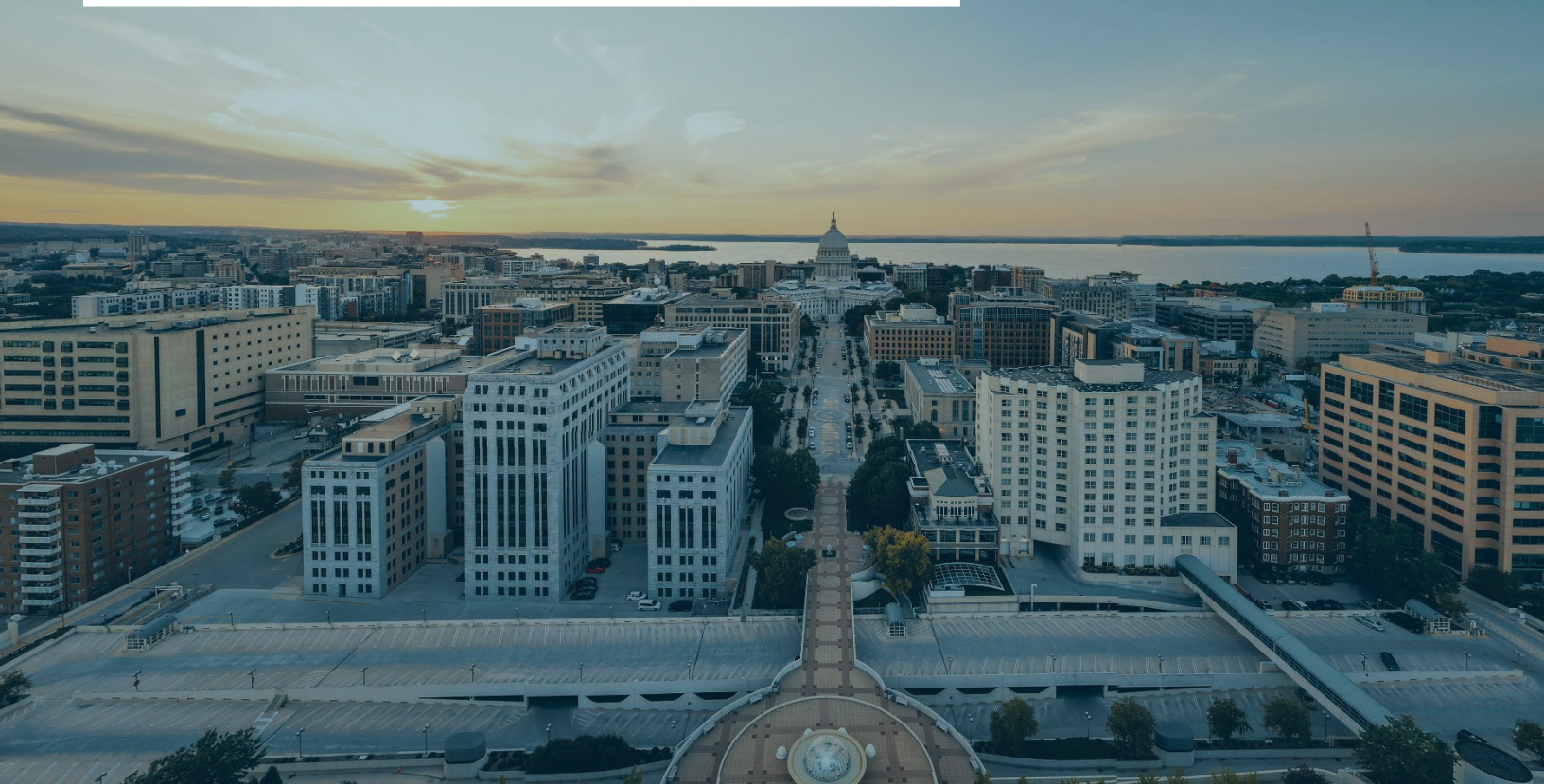




2025

Human Resources Annual Report



Navigate this Report:

- Executive Summary 3
- Introduction 7
- Attract a Talented and Diverse Workforce 8
- Retain an Engaged and Diverse Workforce Where All Employees Feel They Belong 12
- Develop our Employees and Organization to be an Inclusive and High-Performing City 17
- Implement Innovative & Progressive Human Resources Practices 23
- Next Steps 26
- Appendix 27

Executive Summary

Dear #TeamCity and valued partners,

This is the third year we are producing our annual report, which continues to capitalize on our efforts to ensure high-level communication, accountability and transparency. This report seeks to highlight what we have accomplished compared to the [City of Madison Human Resources Strategic Plan](#); to provide a deepened understanding of Human Resources operations organization-wide; and to reveal important data trends supporting our decision-making.

In our third year we saw major projects and improvements either completing or moving to a new phase. Namely, we finalized and released our Talent Management Strategy, which is designed to enhance the employee experience and increase opportunities for growth. This strategy was developed after an intensive Talent Management initiative with Bloomberg Harvard's City Leadership Initiative. Other key highlights include:

- Completed our organization-wide Compensation study and received the final report, readying us for implementation of the findings;
- Built new bridges into employment through our newly implemented Partnership Pathway Program with Urban League, Operation Fresh Start, and Latino Workforce Academy;
- Completed and released the first ever #TeamCity survey in partnership with the Department of Civil Rights, the Gender Equity Team and Multi-cultural Affairs Committee;
- Completed the redesign of our Compensation Group 21 hiring process; and
- Purchased a new Human Resources Management system and began preparing for future implementation.

These are just a portion of our efforts in 2025, which also include all the day-to-day work our staff do to support recruitment, development and retention in our organization, and to ensure our City of Madison is inclusive, innovative, and thriving. I want to take a moment to thank our talented team in Human Resources, but also our entire workforce for the incredible work you do every day to impact our community in a positive way.

Best,
Erin

Erin Hillson (she/her/hers)
Director of Human Resources



Executive Summary

Our outcomes in 2025 related to **recruitment** and **retention** demonstrate the successes we have seen through implementation of our [five-year strategic plan](#). Key highlights in this report include:

Recruitment



In 2025, the City saw:

- **11.8% increase** in total applicants compared to 2024.
- **15.6% increase** in applicants per recruitment, from 47.2 in 2024 to 54.6 in 2025.



In 2025, the City's hiring of women and other marginalized gender identities **increased from 37.7% to 38.2%**, with 2.2% responding to the question as preferred not to answer or not answering the question on the application.



Our **time to fill in 2025 increased almost 9 days from 71.6 to 80.1 days**. Interestingly, this number has gone up and down each of the last 5 years, from 86.1 in 2021 to 76.1 in 2022, to 81.6 in 2023, to 71.6 in 2024, and back to 80.1 in 2025. However, 80.1 days is in line with the 5 year average of 79.26 days.

** Time to fill is the time between when HR assigns a requisition to an Analyst until a job offer is accepted by a final candidate.*

Retention



Overall Permanent Employee retention¹ for 2025 was 92.3%. **Retention continues to be stable** over the past five years, fluctuating by +/- 0.6% over that time period.



The retention rate of BIPOC employees improved by 1.1% in 2025, to 90.1% This is a rebound of 1.6% since the low-water mark of 88.5% in 2023, yet is still 2.2% lower than the overall retention rate.



The percentage of **new hires who terminate employment within the first year** rose slightly in 2024/2025 to 27.5%. In 2023/2024 was 24.3%. The City still has work to do as 1 out of 4 newly hired permanent employees leaves before their 1st anniversary date.

Termination includes employees who leave employment for a variety of reasons including retirement, resignation, involuntary dismissal, layoff, etc.

¹ Retention is a measure of the number of employees on a given date and whether the same employees remain employed at a later date. This is different than turnover, in that turnover measures the number of employees who leave in a given time frame versus the total number of positions and could include multiple people holding the same position in that period.

Highlights from the #TeamCity Employee Survey



The #TeamCity survey had responses from 1,832 employees, representing a **60% overall response rate**. Approximately **88%** of respondents to the #TeamCity survey **agreed or strongly agreed** that they are satisfied with their job.



Workgroup Dynamics: Several aspects of employees' immediate work groups received strong ratings and were generally in line with national benchmarks, including **working relationships** (80% excellent or good), **collaboration among staff** (76%), and **communication among staff** (72%).



Career Pathways: Most employees (88%) planned to **still be working for the City one year from now**, and about 8 in 10 saw a career path with the City.



Responses on employee experience showed variation amongst non-office & office employees, folks of different genders, people of differing racial/ethnic backgrounds, and employees with varying tenure with the City. **More detailed data analysis will provide a foundation for action planning around the #TeamCity results in 2026.**

Data Related to Learning + Development



Our team organized over **151 courses** in 2025, which is an **increase of over 9%**.



Unique attendees **increased** from **958 unique attendees** to **1,296 unique attendees** (33% of City of Madison employees in 2025).

The **increase in attendees** demonstrates an **increased effort & interest among our employees** in City-offered learning opportunities.



Success rates of these courses are shown by a **99% response rating** that attendees **could apply what they learned to their present job**.

99%+ of respondents indicated that the courses were **well-organized** and **easy to follow**.



83% of respondents felt the **length of time** dedicated to the course was **just right**, suggesting we need to continue to ensure correct time is provided for courses.

88% of respondents thought the **pace of the course was just right**.

2025 Executive Summary

In summary, what we are experiencing related to recruitment and retention is an **overall increase** in applicants for City positions and **relative stability** in the organization-wide rate of employee turnover and retention.

In 2025, we completed the **organization-wide Compensation Study**; began intensive implementation of our **Talent Management Strategy**; and completed the purchase of a robust **Human Resources Management (HRM) system** (*EmployeeNet hub coming soon*). This HRM system will improve the efficiency of our employee onboarding processes and streamline the development and delivery of training to staff throughout our organization. These three projects serve as our foundation to continue to build positive employee experiences, with the aim to increase job quality and overall retention across the organization.

In 2026, we intend to implement the findings of the **Compensation Study**; focus on Skill-Based Hiring and career development as key parts of our **Talent Management Strategy**; and intensively prepare for the launch of the first phase of the HRM.

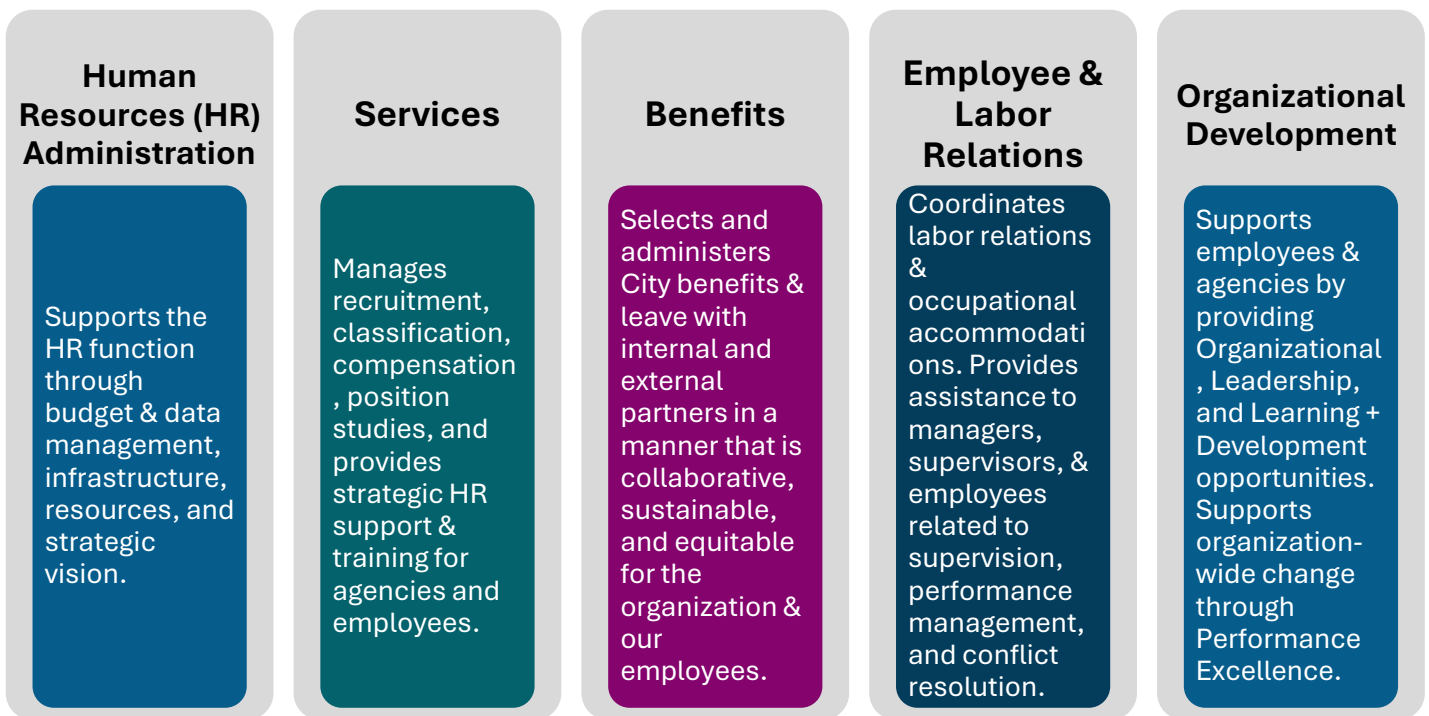
If you have feedback on our processes, ideas about our services, or suggestions for improvements we can make, we welcome you to submit them through our **customer service survey**.

Introduction

This report is segmented by our four goals in Human Resources to:

- 1 Attract** a talented and diverse workforce.
- 2 Retain** an engaged and diverse workforce where all employees feel they belong.
- 3 Develop** our employees and organization to be an inclusive and high-performing City.
- 4 Implement** innovative and progressive Human Resources practices.

Human Resources has 22 permanent employees and one hourly employee, with an annual operating budget of approximately \$2.275 million. The [Human Resources Department](#) charged with these responsibilities is divided into five units:



These units work together to recruit and retain a workforce of approximately 3,031 permanent and up to approximately 1,000 annual hourly employees across 32 agencies. What follows is a summary of the strategies used to improve services in Human Resources in 2025, as well as the outcomes and data related to our work.

Note: As outlined above, there are now **five** units in Human Resources instead of four! In 2025, we began a restructure of our Department to improve outcomes and accountability. Please see Section Four (Page 22) of this report for more details.

1 Attract a Talented and Diverse Workforce

Recruitment Data

Our HR Services Unit is tasked with all aspects of recruitment, including attracting candidates, screening for qualifications, completing background checks, and providing support for City hiring managers as they interview and hire qualified candidates. The [hiring process](#) includes multiple steps, which are detailed in our supervisor resources.

While **permanent turnover** has been relatively steady around 10% per year, it **increased slightly** moving from 9.1% in 2024 to 9.7% in 2025, still below the five-year peak of 10.2% in 2023. Turnover includes terminations for any reason, including retirement, poor job performance, to accept another opportunity, or death. The turnover rate is calculated by dividing the number of permanent employee departures by the average number of permanent staff throughout the year.

In 2025, the **number of applications received continued to increase**. While the number of recruitments went down slightly from 2024 (269 to 260), the applicants per recruitment continues to increase to over 54 per job, and the total number of applications increased by 12%. Since 2021, the City of Madison has posted an average of 280 jobs per year and has received an average of 10,521 applications per year. In 2025, there were a total of **14,202 applications received across 260 postings**.


12%
Applicants

Applicants Per Job Posting

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Applications Received	7,376	8,229	10,104	12,696	14,202
Posted Jobs	247	304	326	269	260
Applications Per Job Posting	29.9	27.1	31.0	47.2	54.6

This data represents an **increase in volume of workload** for HR Services staff, as well as for the various hiring agencies and any subject matter experts involved in the hiring process. A job is posted when turnover occurs or when a new position is created in an agency. The date that an official request, aka requisition, is assigned to an HR Analyst in NEOGOV marks the start of the clock on “time to fill” the position.

From 2020 to 2025, permanent full-time positions were open for applicants to apply for an average of 13.5 days before HR screened for minimum qualifications. Then, either a subject matter expert panel reviewed and scored applications, or the applicant completed another form of job testing to create an eligible list for interview(s). After interview(s), a job offer was made. The date a candidate accepts a job offer marks the end of the clock on “time to fill” the position. **On average, the hiring process in 2025 took 82.3 days** from start to finish for permanent full-time staff, which is almost **exactly in line** with the average from 2020-2024 (82.1 days) and is a **slight increase** from 2024 (71.6 days), but short of our goal of 70 days.

It should be noted that while Human Resources had a goal in 2025 of **reducing** the time to fill positions below 70 days, some reductions in total time to fill may not show up in future data since we do not include efficiencies like reuse of eligible lists across similar position types in time to fill calculations. Further, while Human Resources has a goal of reducing the number of days required to fill positions, the **increased volume** of applications will continue to have a counter-balancing effect on the length of recruitment due to increases in screening and testing time.

Understanding Hiring Process Data by Race and Gender

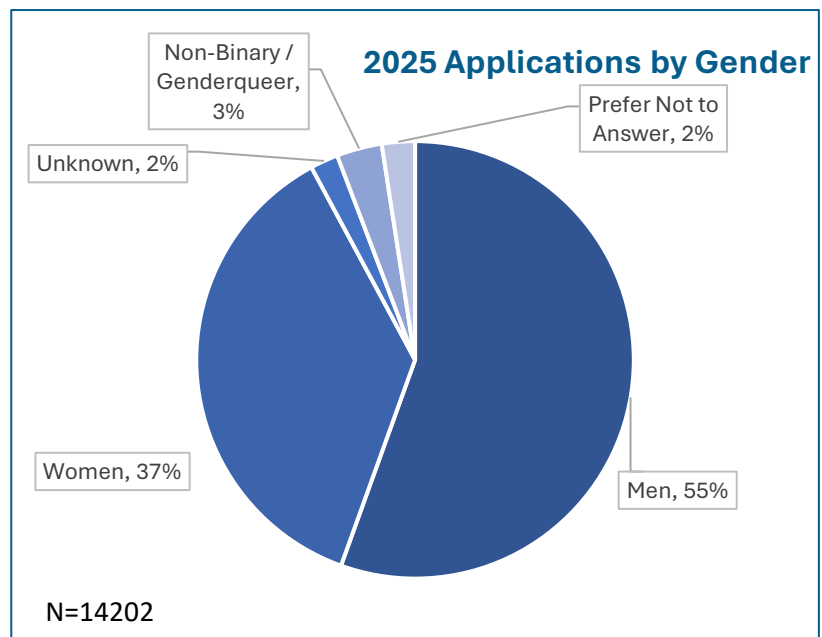
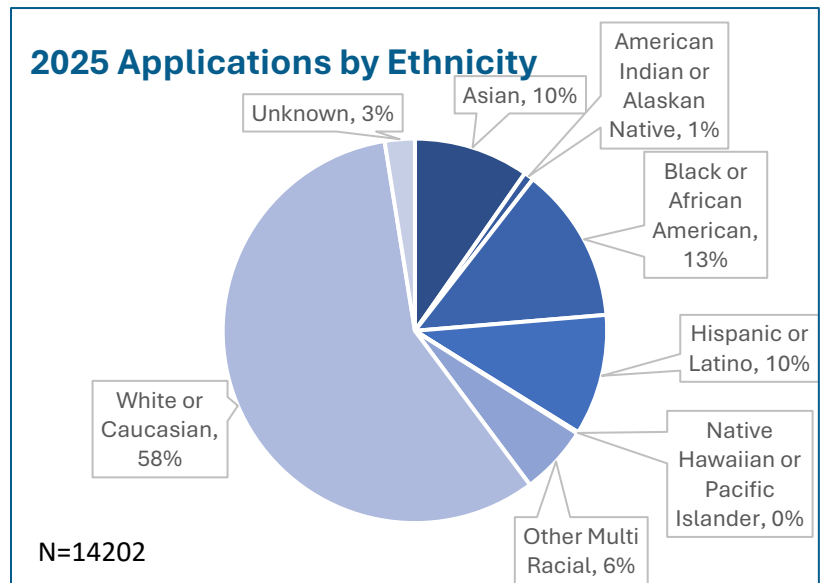


According to 2020 US Census data, the White or Caucasian population makes up approximately **70% of Madison residents**. Thus, it is not surprising that White applicants accounted for 58% of the total job applications received in 2025. Examining our hiring process by looking at the total number of White applicants advancing versus the number of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) candidates advancing may present an incomplete view. The graphs on the next page display the **percentage of BIPOC applicants who were referred for an interview versus the percentage of White or Caucasian applicants who were**

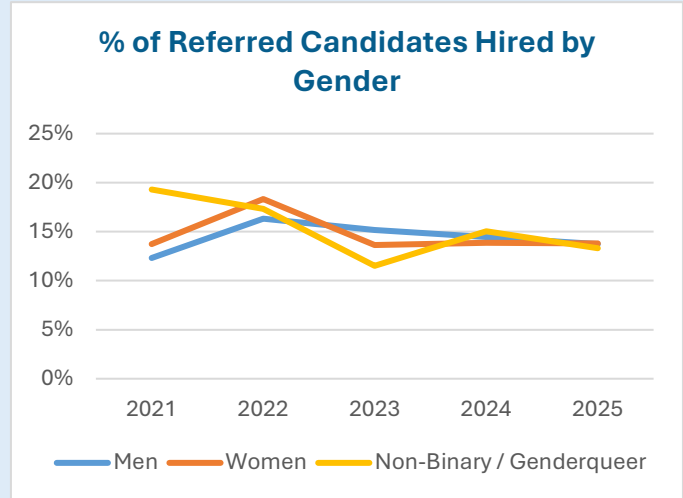
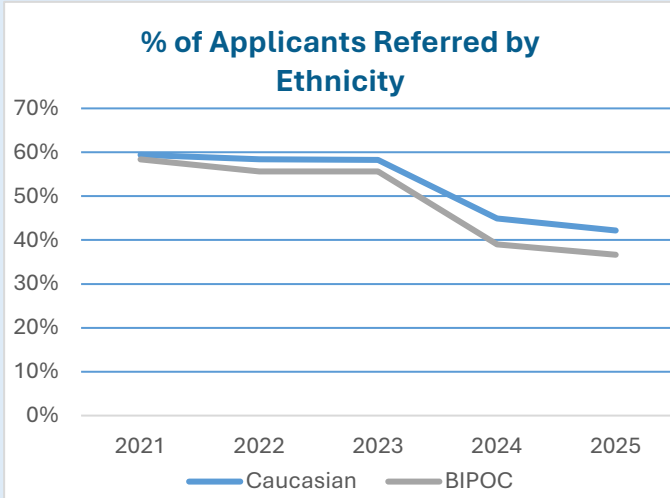
referred. The numbers are very similar, and over the past five years the percentage of BIPOC applicant referrals **trails** White or Caucasian referrals **by less than 5%**. Over the past five years, hiring data shows comparable results. Of the BIPOC candidates referred for interview, just under 15% were hired. Outcomes for White or Caucasian referred applicants were within 0.5% of the BIPOC results. Consequently, **City of Madison new hires represent the community at large** when considering the percent representation through a race- or ethnicity-based lens.

Examining our hiring process through **a gender-based lens produces similar results**. Men accounted for 55.5% of all the applications received in 2025. However, over the past five years the percentage of applications referred for interviews were nearly identical: 48.5% of applications submitted by Women and 49.8% of applications submitted by Men were referred for interview. The total percentage of applicants referred for interviews has been decreasing for the past 5 years, this has coincided with an increasing number of applicants following the COVID-19 trough. Inspecting the data on referred candidates to hires shows that **over the past five years the percentage of referred Women who were hired (14.6%) slightly exceeds the percentage of referred Men (14.4%)**.

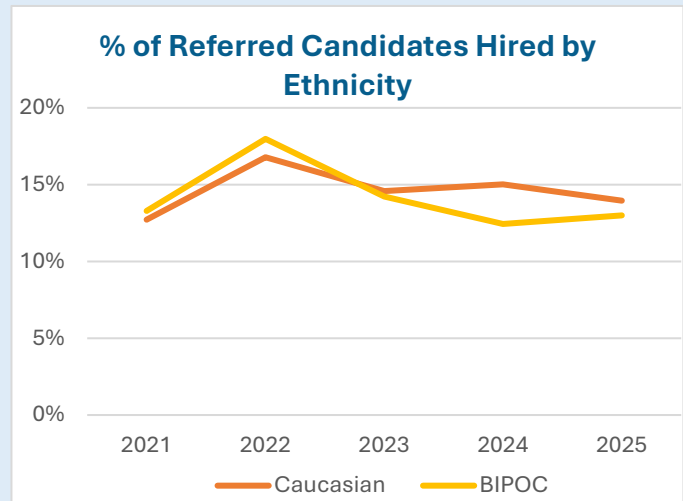
Another trend we are seeing among our applicants is an increase in candidates who are reporting a disability. Applications claiming a disability have risen each year since 2020. In that year 533 or 7.8% of applicants reported a disability. In 2025 more than 2000 applicants, 14.3% of the total applications, claimed a disability. Of the 762 hires completed in 2025, approximately 11% reported a disability.



Race and Gender Hiring Data Trends



As stated, **applicant reporting of alternative genders is also increasing**. The selection of non-binary/genderqueer was not available in 2019. Since then, the percentage has risen to approximately 3% of applicants in 2024 and 2025. **The percentage of applicants who “prefer not to answer” has also steadily risen** and now represents roughly 2.3% of the 2025 applicants.



As presented in the chart below, **the diversity of applicants continues to increase**. White or Caucasian applicants made up almost 70% of total applicants in 2020, but in 2025, that number was only 57.6%. The number of Hispanic and Asian applicants continues to grow.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Ethnicity	# of Applications	# of Applications	# of Applications	# of Applications	# of Applications	# of Applications
Asian	365	364	329	419	1,136	1,377
American Indian or Alaskan Native	60	80	50	66	76	118
Black or African American	765	824	1,008	1,322	1,529	1,867
Hispanic or Latinx	412	481	637	807	1,202	1,445
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	6	20	32	27	24	19
Other Multi Racial	328	307	454	606	790	825
White or Caucasian	4,759	5,174	5,619	6,693	7,709	8,192
Unknown	108	126	100	164	230	359
Total	6,803	7,376	8,229	10,104	12,696	14,202

2025 Recruitment Strategies

Strategies related to attracting and retaining a talented and diverse workforce are not just about implementing new tools and innovations. It's also about addressing policies that were barriers to efficient, effective, and employee-centered processes. In 2025 we began advertising through GovJobs.com, and added newly developed marketing to our City Facebook, and Instagram accounts. We also continued advertising targeted positions through LinkedIn. This extra outreach **improved our applicant pool from 47.5 applicants per posting to 54.6 applicants per posting.**



To enhance recruitment in 2025, we also spent a lot of time on outreach, attending **31 career fairs and hiring events**, making contact with potential applicants totaling **approximately 4,050 people.**

Equitable Hiring Plan Implementation

In 2025, in partnership with the [Department of Civil Rights](#), we developed and released a new [Equitable Hiring Plan](#). The updated process addressed several barriers to using the Equitable Hire Tool document, including that it:

- was time intensive,
- caused repetitive conversations,
- was difficult to schedule,
- often relied on the same people,
- and placed too much focus on minimum qualifications.

The new [Equitable Hire Plan](#) has a **reduction from 60 to 16 questions**, takes a hiring committee approach, focuses on **positive** interview experiences, and is designed to capture **“STAR” applicants**: those who are Skilled Through Alternative Routes. This update was first launched at our “Pie Day” celebration on March 14th, 2025, where we launched a number of completed efforts from our [Talent Management Strategy](#).

Skill-Based Hiring Enhancements

Our Human Resources Services Unit also began the shift toward **Skill-Based Hiring** in alignment with our [Talent Management Strategy](#). Skill-Based Hiring is an approach to recruitment that focuses on the applicants and candidates’ **skills** and **abilities** over more traditional credentials like degrees or years of service. By doing so, we aim to hire candidates strong in the ability to **perform the work** – whether they have those skills through more traditional methods, or whether they could be considered STARS (Skilled Through Alternative Routes). In 2025 we:

- updated the Equitable Hire Plan in alignment with Skill-Based Hiring,
- identified a few individual skill-based career pathways and began development,
- updated our testing tools,
- and updated our job posting templates.

The job posting templates will go live in 2026, along with additional hiring manager resources to expand our ability to perform equitable evaluations of candidates based on skills.

Executive Hiring Process Improvements

In 2025, we posted and filled several of our executive positions in Compensation Group 21 (CG21), including the Interim Office of the Independent Police Monitor, Transit General Manager, City Clerk, Police Chief, and Transportation Director positions. While the executive hiring process is not completed in accordance with Civil Service Processes, it does use the Equitable Hire Plan process that is used for Civil Service positions in the City. The new executive hiring process saw changes to marketing materials, featured increased contact between the Mayor and staff in earlier steps in the process, and provided an easy-to-follow template for each recruitment.

Team HR Changes

Meet the Rest of Team HR



Juan Ortiz
(he/him/his)

Former Team HR
Admin Clerk

New Role: Leave
& Benefits
Assistant



Mike Lipski
(he/him/his)

Returning to
#TeamCity!

HRM System
Administrator



Katherine Roe
(she/her/hers)

New to
#TeamCity!

HR-Employee &
Labor Relations
Administrative
Assistant

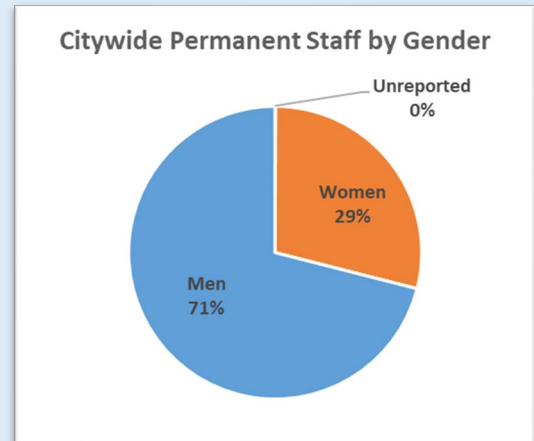
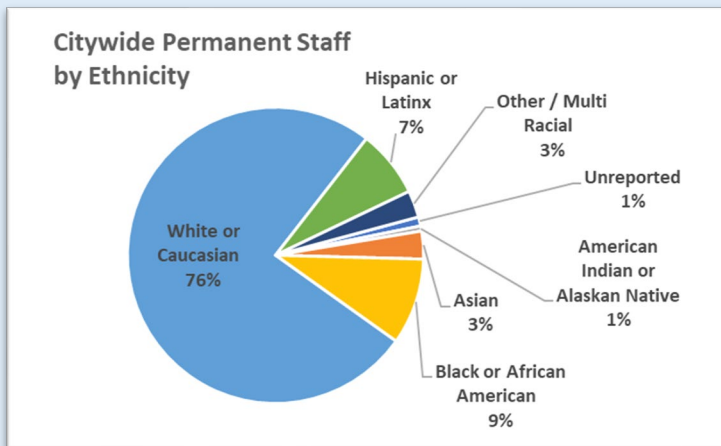
2

Retain an Engaged and Diverse Workforce Where All Employees Feel They Belong

Efforts to improve employee retention and job satisfaction are heavily intertwined with our efforts to improve the overall organization.

Workforce Data

In January of 2026 the City had **3,812 employees** in hourly, elected, and permanent positions, with **3,031 permanent staff**. Demographics by race and gender are included in the charts below for permanent staff. (Pulled January 6, 2026.)



Our Retention and Turnover

An Employee Retention Rate can be described simply as the count of those employees remaining at the end of the year divided by the number of employees who were present at the beginning of the year.

 Retention

Overall Permanent Employee retention for 2025 was 92.3%. **Retention continues to be stable** over the past five years, fluctuating by +/- 0.6% over that time period.

 BIPOC Retention

The retention rate of BIPOC employees improved by 1.1% in 2025, to 90.1% This is a rebound of 1.6% since the low-water mark of 88.5% in 2023, yet is still 2.2% lower than the overall retention rate.

 First Year Turnover

The percentage of **new hires who terminate employment within the first year** rose slightly in 2024/2025 to 27.5%. In 2023/2024 was 24.3%. The City still has work to do as 1 out of 4 newly hired permanent employees leaves before their 1st anniversary date.

Termination includes employees who leave employment for a variety of reasons including retirement, resignation, involuntary dismissal, layoff, etc.

Retention Data and Strategies:

In 2025, we combined efforts with [Affinity Groups](#) to conduct an organization-wide [#TeamCity Employee Survey](#) assessing multiple aspects of the employee experience, including employee satisfaction. We conducted the survey from November 3, 2025 – December 1, 2025, and **1,832 employees** participated (60% overall response rate). This survey was made up of both specific questions from the [National Employee Survey](#), and custom questions created by a team of representatives from HR, DCR, and Affinity Groups. The custom questions were then evaluated by the UW Survey Center and modified as recommended.

While some of the early results offer an initial snapshot of key themes and trends across the organization, demographic data are currently under review by [HR, DCR, and the Finance Data Team](#). [Affinity Groups](#) will provide input on narrative findings before results are shared with the broader organization.

Once demographic findings are finalized, organization-wide messaging and next steps will be shared with all staff. In the meantime, **initial findings suggest positive employee experiences**, including that:

Employees expressed strong satisfaction with their jobs and alignment with organizational values.

- Nearly 9 in 10 employees were satisfied with their job overall (88% excellent or good) and felt their personal values align with the City's values (85%).
- About 8 in 10 indicated that the City of Madison's mission and vision make their work feel important.
- Most employees (88%) planned to still be working for the City one year from now, and about 8 in 10 saw a career path with the City.

Supervisors are valued at the City of Madison.

- About 7 in 10 employees positively rated their supervisor's communication of expectations.
- A similar share approved of supervisors providing opportunities to learn and grow, as well as offering specific, constructive feedback.
- Roughly two-thirds rated supervisors positively for applying discipline fairly and consistently, higher than the national benchmark.
- Recognition of high-performing employees also received above-average ratings (61% excellent or good).

Results indicate that employees value their work group.

- Several aspects of employees' immediate work groups received strong ratings and were generally in line with national benchmarks, including:
 - Working relationships (80% excellent or good)
 - Collaboration among staff (76% excellent or good)
 - Communication among staff (72% excellent or good)

Talent Management Strategy Development:

Talent Management is an intentional strategy through which an organization:

- brings employees into the organization,
- develops employees and their workforce,
- ensures employees are successful and high-performing,
- retains employees,
- and aligns their skill and potential with organizational needs.

In 2025, City Human Resources continued our work in this area, focusing on operationalizing our equitable [Talent Management Strategy](#) (TMS), which we defined in 2024. The purpose of the City’s TMS is to meet the following goals:

- Hire a talented & diverse workforce.
- Retain an engaged & diverse workforce where all employees feel they belong.
- Develop our employees & organization to be an inclusive and high performing organization.
- Implement innovative & progressive practices.

Much of our work in 2025 was driven by our TMS and can be read about in detail throughout this report. A few of our organization-wide efforts include:

- Identifying key metrics to measure impact of efforts.
- Continued development of **four Career Pathways**:
 1. Leadership
 2. Data
 3. Communications
 4. Infrastructure
- Creating **Skills-Based Hiring** best practices.
- Identifying **core Management Competencies**.
- Completing the **Compensation Study**.
- Completing next steps of securing a **Human Resources Management (HRM) System**.



Our [Talent Management Strategy](#) seeks to ensure all components of talent management are working together to provide employees with line-of-sight opportunities for advancement, clear alignment of performance and goals with the organization, and frequent and proactive recognition of their work. It also works to allow the organization to be more adept at active workforce development planning, measurement, and accountability – which ultimately furthers our goals of positive recruitment and retention outcomes and effective services for our community.

2025 Human Resources Management (HRM) System:

In 2025, the City of Madison HR and Information Technology departments completed the next series of steps to secure the Human Resources Management System (HRM). The goals of the HRM Implementation Project (*EmployeeNet site coming soon!*) are as follows:

1. To deliver a **modern, inclusive, and efficient** HRM System that empowers City employees, supports a consistent employee experience, improves service delivery, and aligns with the [City of Madison’s vision, mission, values, and service promise](#).
2. To enable HR and leaders to optimize and utilize the [Talent Management Strategy](#) to improve the employee experience.

To recap, in 2023 a Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued to identify a consultant to assist with selection and implementation of the HRM System. In 2024, Moss Adams was selected as our consultant and completed initial discovery sessions, oversaw the creation of system requirements, and conducted preliminary vendor research.

In early 2025, the consultation with Moss Adams concluded and an internal, cross-agency evaluation team formed, finalized system requirements, and issued an RFP for an HRM vendor. The RFP generated 14 responses and the evaluation process occurred in the second and third quarters of 2025.

The evaluation team assessed each of the proposals independently based on the pre-established criteria determined by the panel. Then, the panel met to discuss all qualitative and quantitative aspects of the proposals and review the overall ratings as a group. Purchasing staff rated the cost section of the proposals. After extensive analysis and consideration, it was determined that the top three scoring vendors would be short-listed to advance to the final round. All three finalists came to Madison and presented full-day software demonstrations in front of the evaluation panel. **Based on the final scores, the RFP was awarded to NEOGOV in August 2025.** The contract was signed in January of 2026, and work on implementation began with the HRM Steering Team in February of 2026.



Compensation Study:

In 2025, City Human Resources completed all but the final phase of the organization-wide [Compensation Study](#). This resulted in the creation of a **new Compensation Plan; analysis of City benefits and their comparability to similar employers**; and a **full equity study of pay**. Once this report was finished, the Compensation Study Steering Team began final review of this plan with the vendor that had been selected to conduct the study, Baker Tilly. This study began in earnest in May of 2024, and was composed of five phases including:



Key findings of the Compensation Study included **strong market comparability** with the City of Madison at approximately **102% of the market rate across around 700 distinct classifications**.

In the second quarter of 2026, a draft implementation plan will be finalized, costed, and presented to decision makers through the 2027 budget process. Final decisions on implementation are expected to come through that process and to be adopted by the Common Council in November, 2026.

3

Develop our Employees and Organization to be an Inclusive and High-Performing City

In 2025, HR-Organizational Development (HR-OD) led **over 25 consultations** and **multiple organization-wide projects supporting 18 different departments and #TeamCity**. Our efforts focused on providing support to staff and agencies to develop an organization that is healthy, high-performing, self-renewing, and able to lead & manage change. We continue to collaborate across #TeamCity to impact our top **organizational-wide challenges** which were identified in 2023, with one newly identified challenge. These are:

- Workload Management & Balance/Burnout
- Navigating Change/Change Management
- Holding Feedback Conversations
- Accountability (added in 2025)

Access in-depth [2025 End of Year reports for topics below via the HR-OD Reports webpage](#).

Third Annual Leadership Gathering:

The 2025 gathering focused on **Leading with Humanity: Building a Culture of Care** and was attended by 115 staff representing 29 of 32 agencies. This is an **8% increase** in attendance from the 2024 gathering (30 agencies). The gathering continues to aim to foster a collaborative environment where leaders across #TeamCity can:

- **Share insights** and **learn** from each other.
- Build relationships in a way that **breaks down departmental silos** and **strengthens** the City’s collective efforts.
- Identify actionable strategies for **enhancing leadership** practices while sustaining **employee wellbeing**.

This year’s gathering included a keynote speaker with highly interactive activities centered on three themes: personal growth and awareness, comfort zone management (discomfort as a growth mechanism) and leadership development and application. Participants feedback included:

- **100% of respondents** rated the gathering **successful in promoting a sense of unity among leaders across different departments**.
- **99% of respondents** rated the gathering **successful in promoting cross-departmental collaboration among participants**.
- **99% of respondents** rated the gathering **successful in strengthening collective efforts**.
- **95% of respondents** rated the gathering **overall as excellent or good**.



Mentorship Program:

The Mentorship Program continues to cultivate a deep sense of **belonging, respect, & inclusion** among participants. A total of 18 staff participated, with 100% of participants agreeing the program was effective in fostering mutual trust and respect – underscoring its success in building positive interpersonal relationships. **61% of the participants submitted feedback**, and the feedback trends included:

- Steady sense of belonging & inclusion.
- Marked improvement in equitable treatment perceptions.
- Positive cross-identity relationships & non-tolerance for discrimination.
- Improvement in sense of empowerment related to decision making.
- High confidence in program effectiveness.

Program structure remained the same from 2024, with separate orientations for mentees and mentors before a combined in-person kickoff mixer. Mentee focus was on ownership of their development journey. Mentor focus was on sharing best practices to ensure a successful mentoring relationship. The Program Manager facilitated workshops for mentors and mentees to support the application of the provided resources. E.g.: skill assessment and networking ABCs.

Implementation of 360 Feedback Survey Process Improvements:

In 2023, the HR-OD Unit piloted a transformative initiative to introduce a multi-rater feedback tool, commonly known as **360-feedback**. This marked a significant change from the organization's previous absence of 360.

During the pilot in 2023, six executive members of the Mayor's Management Team (MMT) completed 360-feedback surveys. 2023 also marked the launch of the Executive Team Development Program (EXTD), which is designed to increase an agency's executive team's effectiveness in the areas of change, execution of strategy, and overall leadership. Participation in EXTD also includes commitment to take part in the 360-feedback program. More details on the EXTD program are provided later in this report. 2024 was dedicated to implementing recommendations for improvement, which resulted in the development of an updated process.

Since implementing the new process, from January 2025 to December 2025 the following **seven (7) agencies** have participated in the 360Feedback Program: the City Attorney's Office; the Department of Planning, Community and Economic Development (DPCED); Human Resources; Public Health; Parks; Streets; and Traffic Engineering. A total of six executives, 24 managers, and two individual contributors participated.

Across the 32 leaders who participated in the 360-feedback program, a total of **92 people provided feedback** on their experience as raters. The results are as follows:

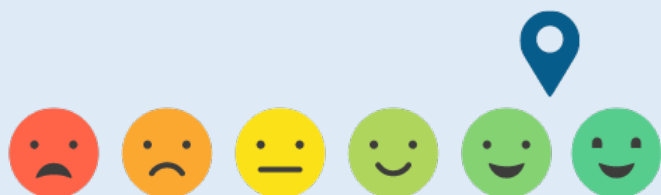
- **97%** of respondents were **satisfied with their experience as a rater** in the 360-feedback process.
- **96%** of respondents reported they felt **confidentiality was maintained well** during the 360-feedback process.
- **95%** of respondents reported they **would participate as a rater again in the future**.
- **92%** of respondents reported they **felt comfortable providing feedback to their peer or leader**.

Throughout 2026, **eight more agencies** (Directors and/or Agency Management Teams) are slotted to complete the 360-feedback program.

Successful Leadership Development Courses:

A total of **11 Leadership courses** were facilitated by HR-OD staff, Learning Partners, & third-party vendors in 2025, with **277 staff members attending**. Course topics included:

- [Employee Check-Ins](#)
- [Giving & Receiving Feedback, Part 1 & Part 2](#)
- [Values-Based Leadership, Part 1 & Part 2](#)
- [Build Bridges, not Barriers](#)
- [Leading with Compassion](#)
- [Supervisor Orientation](#)
- [Involving People in Decisions that Impact Them](#)
- [Supervisors Building a Gender-Inclusive Workplace](#)
- [Next Level Leadership](#)



Leadership Development Course Feedback:

- **99%** of respondents **could apply what they learned to their job**.
- **95%** of respondents **rated the courses overall as good or excellent**.

Agency Work Planning:

Round four of Agency Work Planning continued, as we train agencies organization-wide on work planning basics. **22 agencies** have now completed this training after the fourth year of our day-long workshop. Remaining agencies have been assigned this training, and **our goal is to train the final cohort in 2027**.

2025 added the six sub-units of the Department of Planning, Community, and Economic Development (DPCED), which also includes Building Inspection and CDA Housing. Attendees left with a concrete action plan for 2026 Quarter 1 goals and will check in with HR-OD on managing to the work plan.

- **14 agencies completed follow-up evaluation in December 2025**. Lessons learned indicate routines of goal-setting and work planning discussions have lasting benefits. **Practices vary by agency**, with some checking progress weekly, others quarterly; despite check-ins, some cited losing discipline on work planning after training and follow-ups end.
- Evaluation data tells us that **anywhere from 5 to 10 of each agency's top goals were complete**. We saw an **overall 80% goal completion rate**. Data suggests discipline sticks best with accountability; however, no agency specifically indicated that ongoing consultation would help them stay on track. Some indicated the work planning process "helped us achieve more" while others noted leadership transitions, operating budget outlook, Federal funding schedules, and multi-year goal setting decreased the agency's ability to complete all goals.

Results Madison:

As Change Managers for [Results Madison](#) implementation, HR-OD continues to support people in our organization to **align City services to the outcomes that matter most to Madison residents**. In 2025, the Finance Data Team facilitated data engagements organization-wide, ensuring agencies are equipped with data to support decision making. At the end of the year, **46% of agencies are complete, 29% are in progress, and 28% are in future cohorts**. Throughout the year, HR-OD coordinated the Steering Team, ensuring progress on project milestones, and consulted in the data engagement planning. In 2026, Steering Team will move into an advisory role.

Change Management Community of Practice:

We continued **year three collaboration** with a **cohort of 14 staff** from **nine agencies** to tackle pressing organizational challenges. Together, we have worked on improving our personal and organizational skills in the application of [Prosci's Change Management methodologies](#). As attendance waned, we surveyed staff to learn many are playing multiple roles (e.g. change manager, project manager, and/or sponsor) to support project completion in their agency. **Mindset shifts** between multiple roles and competing project deadlines limited participation. With the goal of continuing to increase [organizational change management maturity](#) (i.e. implementing change management standards organization-wide), the community of practice will expand invites in 2026 to representatives from each agency.

Gender-Inclusive Workplace:

In response to interviews and feedback from supervisors, the training team developed and launched the **Gender-Inclusive Workplace Resource for Supervisors**. This resource answers questions supervisors have identified as wanting to get more specific language around with examples to use along with resources.

Three different courses were offered by third-party contractors for all City staff in 2025. A total of 6 course sessions attended by 37 staff, representing 13 different agencies. This is a decrease from 2024 of 13 course sessions attended by 178 staff, representing 27 different agencies. We also had a total of 181 views of our recorded versions of these courses in 2025.

Courses remained the same and included:

- [Gender-Inclusive Language](#)
- [Creating a Gender-Inclusive Workplace 101](#)
- [Supervisors Building a Gender-Inclusive Workplace](#)

Participants’ feedback: (27% response rate)

- **100% of respondents** reported that they **could apply what they learned in the course(s) to their work**. *Increased from 2023.*
- **100% of respondents** reported that the **overall rating** of the course was **good or excellent**. *Increased from 2023.*



Learning + Development (L+D):

HR-OD supported **nine team-specific trainings for six different agencies**. These team trainings included:

- Change Management
- Creating Collaborative Relationships
- Giving & Receiving Feedback
- Involving People in Decisions that Impact Them
- Trauma-Informed Living
- Plan for a Positive Approach
- Values-Based Leadership
- Mindset Team Training

We also developed and launched a **Team Development Toolkit** focusing on the five stages of Team Development. Each stage is described in depth along with tips, resources, tools and team exercises to grow trust and effectiveness in a team. Staff can also complete an assessment to estimate their team’s current stage, strengths and opportunities for growth.

Working with our **32 learning partners**, we offered a total of **151 course sessions** for City Employees and [City Partners](#) seeing a significant impact on City staff, including:



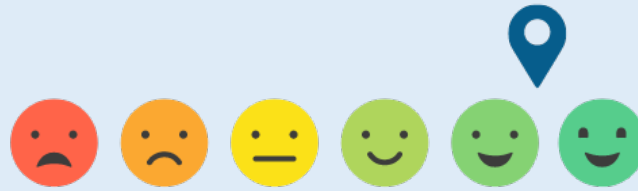
- **Strong engagement:** In 2025, L+D supported 3,467 registrations and 2,384 attendances, with 1,296 unique attendees participating in at least one learning opportunity.
- **High-quality learning:** 95% of participants rated courses as good or excellent and 99% reported being able to apply what they learned to their work.
- **Solid feedback systems:** Course evaluation response rates remained solid at 45% in 2025, reflecting intentional improvements in seeking and applying feedback to the learning experience.
- **Equity & access:** Demographic participation closely mirrored overall workforce demographics, and targeted accommodations were successfully provided when requested.

We have seen an **increase across all areas in our 2025 courses**, except for a **small decrease in survey response rate**. Additional information can be found in our [End of Year L+D Data Summary](#).

Yearly Course Data:

	2022	2023	2024	2025	Change
Attendances	1,717	1,957	1,806	2,384	Increase
Unique Attendees	580	947 (25% of Employees)	958 (26% of Employees)	1,296 (33% of Employees)	Increase
Attendance Rate	67%	73%	64%	69%	Increase
No-Show Rate	33%	27%	28%	16%	Decrease
Survey Response Rate	31%	41%	48%	45%	Decrease
Different Course (Topic) Offerings	36	41	42	45	Increase
Total Course Sessions	81	103	139	151	Increase

Course Feedback:



99% of respondents could **apply what they learned to their job.**

99% of respondents thought the courses were **organized & easy to follow.**

95% of respondents thought the **subject matter of the course(s) was just right.**

88% of respondents thought the **pace of the course(s) was just right.**

83% of respondents thought the **time for the course(s) was just right.**

95% of respondents rated the **course(s) overall as good or excellent.**

Organization Consultation and Capacity Building:

Our Organizational Development Unit also provided services to build organizational capacity, including:

- **Led consultation with Public Works to Develop a Train the Trainer Program**
 - Our 2025 challenge was to design a sustainable approach to develop a larger pool of non-office staff to conduct effective training both for onboarding and for growth and career pathways. We captured first-hand information in 27 ride-alongs & 45 hours of side-by-side discussions in Public Works and Transportation agencies. We wanted to understand how employees are trained during onboarding and as they prepare for future roles.
 - We analyzed and shared the findings with those who are impacted by programmatic decisions going into 2026. As a result, we are developing a multi-agency approach to create a consistent training experience and structure for onboarding and developing our non-office staff. This will be accomplished in 2026 through a joint effort between Public Works, Transportation, and HR-OD to develop a Field (Non-Office) Staff Train-the-Trainer program founded on newly developed training competencies and a regular cohort and community of practice.
- Provided **over 25 organization-wide consultations** to **18 different agencies** on various topics including Climate and Culture Enhancement, Strategic Planning, Leadership Development, Change Management, Organizational Structure, Train the Trainer Program, Training Facilitation and Coordination, and Operations.
 - **Survey respondents** reported being **very or somewhat satisfied with the following:**
 - Outcome of the consultation 87%
 - Goals/purpose of project being achieved 86%
 - Communication from the HR-OD Unit 95%
 - Level of customer service provided 95%
- **Round three of Executive Team Development (EXTD)** for three agencies involving 37 staff members. Agencies included IT, Parking and Library. 54% (20 of 37) of participants responded to our survey and rated the experience below:
 - **75%** agreed the experience **increased the leadership's team to work together effectively to drive change and execute strategy.**

- **75%** agreed the experience **increased the level of self-awareness in leaders.**
- **100%** agreed the experience **provided new tools and practices to improve leadership ability and effectiveness.**
- **80%** reported they were **somewhat or very satisfied** with the purpose of the sessions being achieved.
- **Continued support of seven Affinity Groups in partnership with DCR.** Included two quarterly gatherings of Affinity Group leads and co-leads to discuss challenges, successes and desired outcomes. Provided leadership and guidance for staff safety and accountability.

You can access additional 2025 End of Year Reports for a deeper dive into these areas on our [Organizational Development Reports webpage](#).

4

Implement Innovative & Progressive Human Resources Practices

In terms of implementing innovative and progressive Human Resources practices, HR completed a tremendous amount of foundational work in 2023 to establish standard operating procedures and uniform operations to improve our overall customer service. In 2024 through completing an internal growth plan, implementing our [Customer Service Framework](#) and [Internal Communication Strategies](#).

We continued those efforts in 2025 through a restructure of Human Resources to include a new Benefits service area, continued implementation of our Internal Communication Strategies, and purchase of the HRM system which will automate many previously manual functions to improve employee accessibility.

Strategic Plan

Our [5-Year Strategic Plan](#) is broken down into annual focus areas, including Strategic Foundations (2023), Employee Experience & Onboarding (2024), Career Pathways & Employee Development (2025), Organizational Excellence (2026), and Planning for the Future (2027).



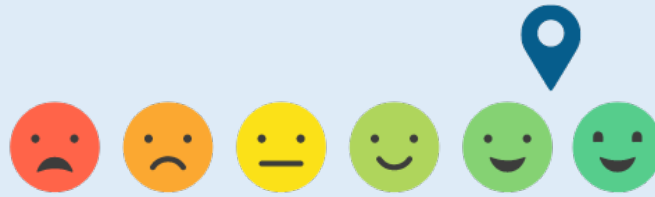
In the third year of our plan (2025), we focused on **Career Pathways & Employee Development**, with a special focus on creation of the leadership, data, communication, and infrastructure pathways. These pathways continue to progress in 2026 and will be fully realized with implementation of the HRM System in 2027. This is ongoing work which is embedded in our Talent Management Strategy.

Customer Service Measures

In the fall of 2023, the HR Department began collecting customer feedback data as a part of our [Customer Service Framework](#) and accountability methods. Each HR staff person is required to include in their email signature a link to our [customer service survey](#) to ensure we are getting anonymous feedback about the services we provide, and to create a better understanding of where we need to improve processes.



In 2025, our department received **18 complete responses** and **19 total responses** representing customers from **11 different agencies**.



100% of respondents (18) indicated they were treated in a kind and empathetic manner.

- Approximately half of the respondents cited “Benefits Information” as their reason for contacting Human Resources.

16 out of 19 respondents indicated they were satisfied with their service.

16 out of 18 respondents indicated they had exceptionally timely responses.

While this is an exceptional customer satisfaction rate, **our aim is to continue to improve** and to **demonstrate high commitment to our customers** with empathetic and knowledgeable responses and a one to two business-day response rate.

Internal Communication Strategy (ICS):

In 2025, the ICS implementation team continued integrating into our daily operations, strengthening communication within HR and across the organization. Key focuses included:

- Establishing consistent workflows for the **quarterly HR Newsletter**.
- Developing **communication plans** for HR projects and initiatives.
- Using a **shared OneNote** for information sharing.
- **Building communication skills** in plain language and accessibility through attending DCR-facilitated courses.

We also launched **two communications surveys** – one internal (Team HR) and **one external** – to gather feedback and guide improvements. Analysis produced several key recommendations:

- Update HR webpages to improve accessibility, navigation, and readability.
- Require all HR staff to complete plain language and accessibility training, using checklists to ensure consistency.
- Revisit tools like the HR Shared OneNote (and possibly SharePoint) to improve usability.
- Prioritize communications work, supported by the HR-OD & Communications Specialist role.

Looking ahead to 2026, we’ll continue advancing these initiatives. The upcoming HRM System will reshape our processes, while collaborations with IT, DCR, and the Mayor’s Office will strengthen organization-wide communication and accessibility standards.

Human Resources Restructure:

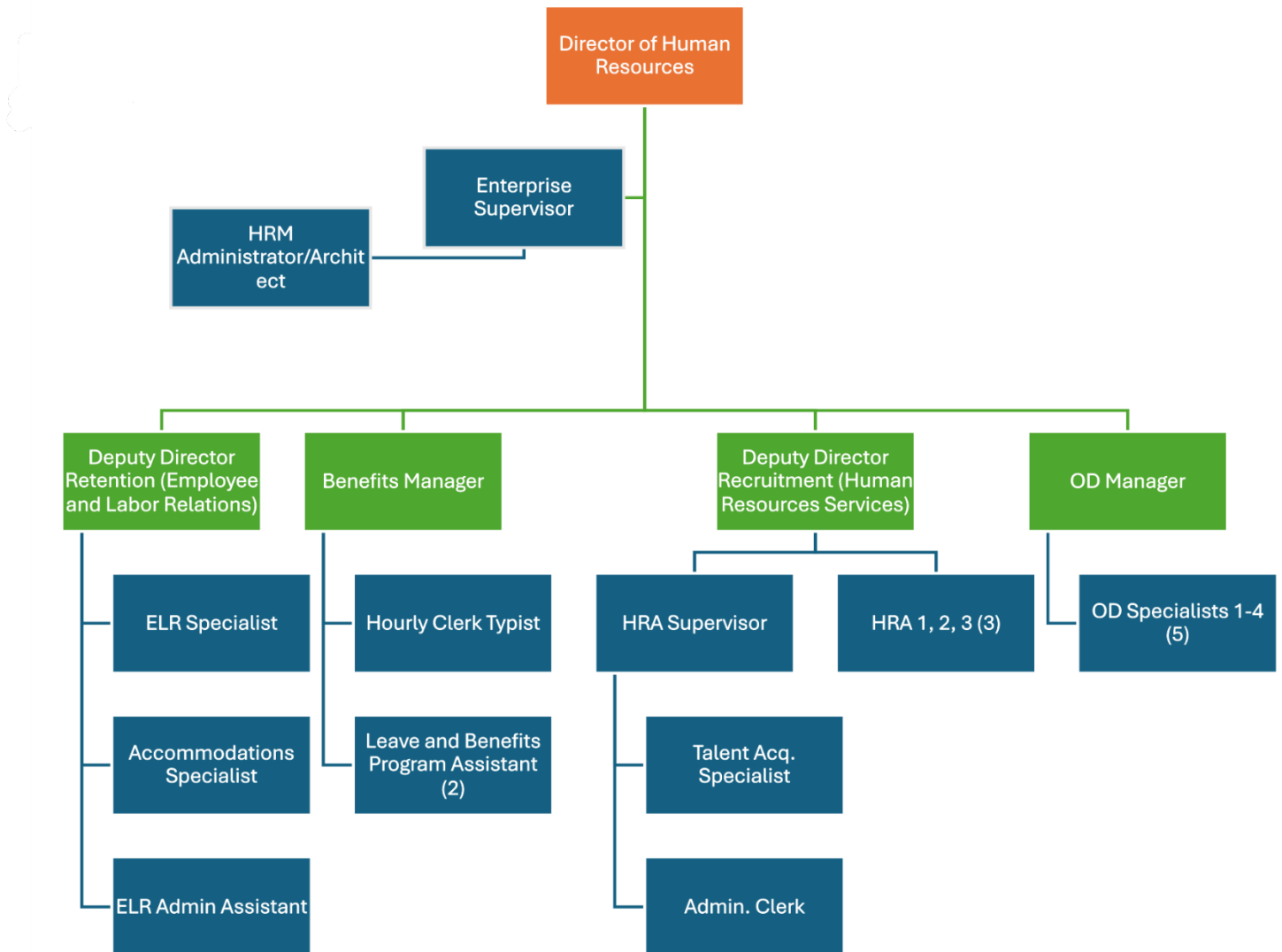
In 2026, Human Resources made some **structural changes** in accordance with our **five-year growth plan** to also re-organize the work of the agency. Previously, there were **three Unit leaders** reporting to the HR Director on three different services, with a Data Analyst reporting directly to the Director as well.

The **new structure** creates **four distinct services** which will be memorialized in the 2027 budget as:

- Employee and Labor Relations
- Benefits
- Human Resources Services
- Organizational Development

The changes in structure allow the needed separation between leave management (FMLA and Disability Leave/Layoff), now housed in our Benefits Unit, and Performance Management, Alcohol and Drug Testing, and Negotiations/Bargaining, which is housed in our Employee and Labor Relations Unit.

Future changes are planned to include added support around implementation of our [Talent Management Strategy](#) and continuous improvement of the employee experience, as well as shifting Accommodations under the Benefits Unit. The 2026 planned HR organization chart is included below.





Next Steps

In 2025, we hit **major milestones in two very long-term projects** that have been on our annual workplans since the advent of our Strategic Plan: our **[organization-wide Classification and Compensation Study](#)**, and the RFP for the **Human Resources Management System (HRM)**. In addition to tackling implementation of the Compensation Study with development and approval of a multi-year plan, we are slated to focus heavily on two main goals: **Implementation of the HRM** and further implementation of our **Talent Management Strategy**.

Human Resources Management (HRM) System Implementation

- Develop a system-wide HRM governance plan
- Develop an implementation communication and change management plan
- Identify necessary data fields and plan crosswalk between existing organization-wide systems like MUNIS, Active Directory, and others
- Develop CoreHR module & modify existing Insight module
- Develop Onboard, eForms, and Learn modules
- Develop a folder structure for on-line management of Personnel records

Talent Management Strategy

- Design recognition and customer service frameworks
- Develop and implement baseline expectations for supervisors and managers around Performance Management
- Complete full Skills-Based Hiring modifications
- Create and plan at least four distinct career pathways (Communication, Data, Leadership, Women In Infrastructure)
- Launch management development pilot program
- Provide new trainings and support around employee check-ins

In addition to these two goals and related milestones, we will be working through the details of the Compensation Study's final implementation plan, and each work unit has continuous improvement efforts underway in 2026.

Please see our [2026 Unit Workplans](#) broken down by each work unit for more information.

Appendix

Hiring Data:

Total Online Applications Received

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Applications	7376	8229	10104	12696	14202

Employment Applications by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	# of Applications	# of Applications	# of Applications	# of Applications	# of Applications
Asian	364	329	419	1,136	1,377
American Indian or Alaskan Native	80	50	66	76	118
Black or African American	824	1,008	1,322	1,529	1,867
Hispanic or Latino	481	637	807	1,202	1,445
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	20	32	27	24	19
Other Multi Racial	307	454	606	790	825
White or Caucasian	5,174	5,619	6,693	7,709	8,192
Unknown	126	100	164	230	359
Total	7,376	8,229	10,104	12,696	14,202

Employment Applications by Gender

Gender	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	# of Applications	# of Applications	# of Applications	# of Applications	# of Applications
Men	4,328	5,151	5,518	7,519	7882
Women	2,793	2,681	3,942	4,282	5204
Unknown	105	76	91	189	293
Non-Binary / Genderqueer	81	190	319	364	476
Prefer Not to Answer	69	131	234	342	347
Total	7,376	8,229	10,104	12,696	14202

Ethnicity of Referred Applicants

Ethnicity	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	# Referred	# Referred	# Referred	# Referred	# Referred
Asian	153	219	184	301	395
American Indian or Alaskan Native	41	27	40	38	51
Black or African American	469	584	737	662	704
Hispanic or Latino	331	318	492	511	588

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	8	14	14	14	7
Other Multi Racial	210	234	339	331	326
White or Caucasian	3,074	3,283	3,898	3,463	3455
Unknown	43	57	78	79	98
Total	4,329	4,736	5,782	5,399	5624

Referred Applicants by Gender

Gender	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	# Referred	# Referred	# Referred	# Referred	# Referred
Men	2,566	2,769	3,382	3,118	3309
Women	1,638	1,686	2,068	1,867	1914
Unknown	35	45	42	62	71
Non-Binary / Genderqueer	57	127	165	193	203
Prefer Not to Answer	33	109	125	159	127
Total	4,329	4,736	5,782	5,399	5624

Ethnicity of Hires

Ethnicity	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	# Hired	# Hired	# Hired	# Hired	# Hired
Asian	20	35	27	21	37
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3	3	6	2	3
Black or African American	62	122	114	94	106
Hispanic or Latino	55	52	68	71	84
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	1	2	2	2
Other Multi Racial	21	38	40	41	37
White or Caucasian	391	551	568	520	482
Unknown	5	4	10	12	11
Total	557	806	835	763	762

Hires by Gender

Gender	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	# Hired	# Hired	# Hired	# Hired	# Hired
Men	316	452	513	451	454
Women	225	309	282	259	264
Unknown	1	5	8	8	7
Non-Binary / Genderqueer	11	22	19	29	27
Prefer Not to Answer	4	18	13	16	10
Total	557	806	835	763	762

Termination Data:

Permanent Staff Termination Actions by Year and Longevity

Longevity / Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Grand Total
Less than 1 year	39	81	121	63	78	382
1-3 years	26	24	33	40	38	161
3 to 5 years	23	16	12	11	18	80
5 to 10 years	42	31	28	49	40	190
10 to 15 years	21	22	22	21	17	103
15 to 20 years	13	17	12	20	20	82
20 to 25 years	31	41	18	16	26	132
25 to 30 years	28	22	30	32	36	148
30 to 35 years	21	16	13	15	14	79
More than 35 years	9	11	4	2	4	30
Unknown	0	1	0	0	0	1
Grand Total	253	282	293	269	291	1388

Permanent Staff Termination Actions by Year and Ethnicity (% of Yearly Total)

Ethnicity / Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Grand Total
Asian	2.4%	4.6%	5.8%	4.8%	2.7%	4.1%
Black or African American	13.4%	18.8%	21.2%	18.6%	19.6%	18.4%
Hispanic or Latino	2.4%	7.1%	6.1%	5.6%	11.3%	6.6%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.2%	0.4%	1.0%	0.4%	0.3%	0.6%
Other Multi Racial	3.2%	3.2%	4.8%	3.0%	2.4%	3.3%
Unknown	1.6%	1.1%	1.4%	0.4%	0.7%	1.0%
White or Caucasian	75.9%	64.9%	59.7%	67.3%	62.9%	65.9%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Permanent Staff Termination Actions by Year and Gender (% of Yearly Total)

Gender / Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Grand Total
Unreported	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%
Women	33.6%	35.8%	37.9%	35.7%	29.9%	34.6%
Men	66.4%	64.2%	61.8%	64.3%	69.8%	65.3%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

From MUNIS Actions History Termination data for 2020-2024. Data may differ from actual events due to duplicated and inaccurate Personnel Action entries.