



Recruitment Strategic Plan 2015-2020

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Austin Fire Department

Austin, Texas

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To: Department of Justice (DOJ)

From: Assistant Fire Chief Richard Davis

Subject: Recruitment Strategic Plan

The Austin Fire Department (AFD)'s Recruiting Division is the forefront for introducing fire department employment opportunities to the community. Our mission is to attract, cultivate and maintain pipelines of diverse applicants. This includes introducing firefighting as a career option to qualified members from underrepresented minority and women populations. Our objective is to create a plan that will obtain and foster a diverse workforce within AFD.

The innovative concepts that were incorporated into this plan were achieved through a blend of past practice, research and observations from various industries. Fire department recruitment strategies should be based on an understanding of the social variables that exist within each community. As we move forward with a consent decree, it is incumbent upon AFD management to ensure their continued support and sustainment of recruiting initiatives.

The Fire Department wants to work toward ensuring that we have a workforce that reflects the community we serve. As we look toward the future, adjustments and updates to the recruiting plan will be necessary to stay abreast of the cities forecasted demographical trends listed below.

- Long term, sustained, rapid population growth
- Profound racial and ethnic diversification
- Growth from Hispanics dominates overall growth
- Significant suburbanization of African American Households
- The Asian Boom

As the executive sponsor over AFD recruiting section for the last five years, we have experienced some success with recruiting a diverse applicant pool. Our recruiting strategy has been a culmination of effort and ideas from members of the Austin Firefighters Association, African American Firefighters Association and Hispanic Firefighters Association, as well as Asian American and female firefighters. Collectively, we will continue to evolve our approaches toward attracting and recruiting a diverse workforce.

If there are any questions concerning this recruiting initiative, please call me at 512-974-0133 or email me at the following address: Richard.davis2@austintexas.gov.

Introduction

The purpose of this Recruitment Strategic Plan is to guide the recruitment efforts of the Austin Fire Department over the next five years, 2015-2020 in addition, to abiding by the requirements set forth in the consent decree. The intent is to put together a framework of successful practices that could be updated and/or adjusted over time. The Fire Department currently has 98 vacancies. It is projected that retirements and normal attrition will continue to increase.

Fire Department personnel, affinity groups, community members and stakeholders have provided invaluable insight and information over time. The development of this recruiting strategic plan is a continuous work in progress, with no end. Taking this stance ensures that our process stays relevant and keeps the organization into a proactive versus reactive mode.

This strategic plan is meant to provide direction and structure in the coming years. It is intended to be a living document that will evolve as our environment changes and as we evaluate what works and what does not. Therefore, we fully expect that there may be adjustments to our goals and strategies over the next five years.

Questions about any part of this plan can be directed to the Assistant Chief over the fire recruiting section. The recruitment section will be constantly evaluating our successes and setbacks. We fully expect to be engaged in community outreach and recruiting campaigns year round.

As the plan is implemented, feedback is encouraged. There is a role for every Fire Department member in the recruitment process. We continue to be transparent in our recruitment protocols and encourage Fire Department participation.

The importance of achieving a diverse workforce can be coordinated with the understanding of our changing demographics. Languages, customs and courtesy will be different from past years. In order to remain commercially competitive, organizations will need to update and adapt to this changing environment. Though minority demographics have increased, AFD's numbers have remained significantly lower than the community it serves.

This recruitment plan includes an overview of the Fire Department. This is followed by an assessment of internal & external factors, projected staffing needs, budget, recruiting plan implementation, recruitment goals, special requirements and a supplemental program. These sections provide a summary of information needed to develop this departmental plan. Furthermore, a checklist (see Appendix A) is incorporated into this plan to ensure the structure and format of the recruiting process is sustained. This agenda outlines a predetermined list of criteria that will assist with illustrating the requirements for the plan.

Fire Department Overview

The Austin Fire Department (AFD) serves a population estimated to be near 842,592. The Department has 1,129 authorized sworn firefighter positions. Austin’s response teams provide emergency service to citizens within a 308 square mile area. Like most fire departments, AFD is responsible for providing a multitude of services. This includes operations, support services, aircraft firefighting and rescue, communications, maintenance shops, medical operations, emergency prevention, professional standards, community outreach, safety, special operations and educational services. Figure 1 provides a summary of the current 2014 AFD staffing by rank, gender, number and ethnicity.

Figure 1

AFD Staffing Chart

1	AFD RANK	Male	Female	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	Asian/Pac Is	American Indian
2	Total	963	67	804	43	164	15	4
3	Assistant Chief	5	0	3	1	1	0	0
4	Division Chief	5	1	6	0	0	0	0
5	Battalion Chief	34	0	32	0	2	0	0
6	Captain	70	1	64	0	7	0	0
7	Lieutenant	176	9	159	6	19	1	0
8	Specialist	184	11	164	6	24	0	1
9	Firefighter	489	45	376	30	111	14	3

An analysis of the AFD staffing chart shows a disproportion number of minorities in the various ranks. In order to maintain the pipeline for diversity in the coming years, it is important to have a diverse management team that will be available to inspire, coach and lead potential candidates to apply for employment opportunities with AFD.

The community demographics (see figure 2) provides a glimpse into the ethnic/cultural composition of the Fire Department and the Austin community. The 2010 census percentages show that the African American, Hispanics and Asians Americans are underrepresented when compared to the Austin Fire Department.

Figure 2

Fire Department comparison to 2010 census percentages

Classification	Hispanic	African American	Asian American	Caucasian	Native American
Austin Fire Department	15.9%	4.2%	1.5%	78.1%	0.4%
Austin Community	35.1%	8.1%	6.3%	68.3%	0.9%

A review of the current department roster reveals that only 15.9 percent of the Department is Hispanic, as compared to 35.1 percent of the community. In addition, the African American

representation in the Fire Department is 4.2 percent compared to 8.1 percent. In each case, representation or lack thereof is almost half of the community statistics. Furthermore, 1.5 percent of the Fire Department is Asian American as compared to 6.3 percent of the local workforce. As noted earlier, Austin's demographical trends will experience an Asian boom in the future. AFD needs to continue to be proactive so the Department's Asian community percentages do not decrease.

Internal Factors

A review of factors internal to the Department has identified the following potential impacts:

- An antiquated Local government code chapter 143, municipal civil service, limits the options for hiring new personnel.
- The Austin Fire Department (AFD) is projecting an overall increase of \$3.3 million, or 2.3%, in their operating budget for FY 2014-15. The most significant forecast increase is the conversion of 36 grant-funded firefighters into the General Fund at a cost of \$2.1 million in FY 2014-15.
- Current estimates put vacancies peaking at over 100 in FY 2014-15. In addition, AFD's firefighter vacancies average about 1.6 a pay period. This equals to about 42 vacancies per year.
- Although the City does not have a current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the Austin Firefighters' Association, the forecast maintains a placeholder for potential wage increases for sworn firefighters at the levels included for sworn Police and EMS.
- There will be 16 new firefighters positions needed in FY 2016-17 to staff the Onion Creek Fire Station, which is expected to be completed and ready for operation by June 2017.
- The lack of diversity within the ranks of the fire department coupled with the Austin Fire Department's second Consent decree could make it difficult to recruit potential candidates. AFD first consent decree was from 1977 to 1982.
- The average age of Austin Fire personnel is 42.2, with 14.5 years of service. AFD is transitioning toward a younger department, with more of the tenured personnel beginning to retire.
- AFD recruiting section does not have adequate office space to meet demand.

External Factors

A review of external factors has revealed the following changes that will influence future staffing:

- In areas annexed for full purposes, the City provides full municipal services, assesses taxes, and enforces City ordinances and regulations. Residents may vote in all City elections and run for office. The following areas are proposed for future full purpose annexation under approved Strategic Partnership Agreements:
 - ❖ Lost Creek Municipal Utility District – 2015
 - ❖ River Place Municipal Utility District – 2017
 - ❖ Shady Hollow Municipal Utility District – 2020
- Austin is currently the fastest growing city in the United States and, from 2011 to 2016; it is expected to have an economic growth rate of over 6%, with a population growth rate approaching 3%.

- Voters approved the change in Austin’s municipal government to geographic representation. Single-member districts are thought of as the best way to have adequate representation based on demographic diversity. This new form of representation will bring new dynamics to City Hall.
- According to census data, the city is following the statewide trend of a growing Hispanic population. The Hispanic population currently represents 35 percent of the community. The other ethnic segments of the community will remain the same or slightly decline, with the exception of the Asian population.
- Minority perceptions of the Austin Fire Department. Image of the employer can work as a potential constraint for recruitment. An organization with positive image and goodwill as an employer finds it easier to attract and retain employees than an organization with negative image.
- The Millennial generation will be the applicant pool for most fire departments. The challenge is how to attract these individuals and make the fire service an appealing career choice. This generation is very educated and technologically savvy with access to many different career opportunities and industries.
- One of the factors that influence the availability of applicants is the growth of the economy (whether economy is growing or not and its rate). As of September 2014, the city of Austin unemployment rate is 3.9 percent.
- The recruitment policies of other public safety organizations also affect the recruitment function of the organizations. To remain competitive, many organizations will change their policies according to the protocols being followed by their competitors.

Projected Staffing Needs

Staffing projections for General Fund departments do not include any positions required to implement new programs or enhance service levels. However, positions have been included to address service demands arising from newly annexed areas, a growing population, and the opening of new facilities.

- Thirty-six firefighter positions, previously funded by an expiring SAFER grant, are being transferred to the General Fund in FY 2014-15;
- Sixteen new firefighters in FY 2016-17 to staff the Onion Creek Fire Station, which is expected to be completed and ready for operation by June 2017.
- Other projections can be associated with future annexations and fire department expansion needs (see figure 3).

Figure 3

Personnel Summary: Projected Full-Time Equivalents

Department	FY 2014 Approved	FY 2015 Forecast	FY 2016 Forecast	FY 2017 Forecast	FY 2018 Forecast	FY 2019 Forecast
Fire (sworn)	1,093.00	1129.00	1129.00	1145.00	1145.00	1145.00

Budget and Staff Resources

The proper analysis of the recruitment budget is essential to the recruitment planning process. As noted below (figure 4), the recruitment plan allocates costs which results in key components of the recruitment strategy being secure. An analysis of the recruitment expenditures can identify gaps in the process. This can provide valuable feedback for adjustments in strategy. AFD continues to monitor its expenses and assesses cost effective methods for recruitment.

Figure 4

Recruiting budget

Object	Object Description	Budget	Comments
5001	Regular wages - full-time	64,629	Personnel Budget
5007	Regular wages - Civil Services	130,601	Personnel Budget
5008	Overtime - Civil Service	21,000	Personnel Budget
5041	Longevity pay-civil service	880	Personnel Budget
5111	Assignment pay	3,600	Personnel Budget
5113	Educational incentive pay	1,200	Personnel Budget
5133	Phone allowance	588	Personnel Budget
5185	Insurance-health/life/dental	39,884	Personnel Budget
5190	FICA tax	4,016	Personnel Budget
5191	Medicare tax	2,209	Personnel Budget
5196	Contribution to employees ret	11,634	Personnel Budget
5197	Contribution to firefighter rt	28,991	Personnel Budget
	Personnel Budget	309,232	
6250	Fleet-equip.preventative maint	23,161	Committed
6255	Transportation-city veh fuel	10,192	Committed
	Vehicle Budget	33,353	
5860	Services-other	50,000	Discretionary
6450	Advertising/publication	78,159	Discretionary
6452	Printing/binding/photo/repr	5,000	Discretionary
6520	Employee recruiting	12,500	Discretionary
6531	Seminar/training fees	22,000	Discretionary
7454	Educational/promotional	5,000	Discretionary
7486	Books-library	200	Discretionary
7500	Office supplies	2,500	Discretionary
7600	Small tools/minor equipment	5,000	Discretionary
7610	Minor computer hardware	1,000	Discretionary
	Total Discretionary	181,359	
	Grand Total	523,944	

The recruiting section currently has one lieutenant, one fire specialist, one administrative specialist and two firefighter positions. Currently, the two-firefighter positions are vacant. There have been many attempts to fill these vacant positions but most firefighters would rather work shift than fill these permanent positions. In order to circumvent this shortfall, the recruiting section will offer two individuals (firefighters) a special assignment that will last from six to nine months. Furthermore, we will solicit internships from local colleges and acquire temporary civilian assistance for the duration of the recruiting cycle. As mentioned before, it is our desire to permanently employ experienced civilian recruiters that will bring stability and continuity to the recruiting section. Due to the transient nature of uniformed personnel, this tactic is conducive to the success and maintenance of the recruiting strategy.

Recruiting Plan Implementation

The Fire Lieutenant supervising recruiting is responsible for the deployment of this recruitment plan. This individual will report directly to the Assistant Chief of support services. The Fire Lieutenant will attend staff meetings on the first Monday of each month to report on the plan's progress. Individuals responsible for other aspects of the plan, regardless of assignment, will provide monthly progress reports to the Fire Lieutenant.

Recruitment Goals

The following recruitment goals have been established. Each goal is accompanied by supporting objectives, strategies, and evaluation criteria.

Goal #1 – Achieve annual hiring goals to meet anticipated staffing needs.

Objective #1.1 – Develop a Recruitment Team that reflects the Department's hiring goals.

Strategy #1.1.1 – Select a full-time civilian recruiter that can provide continuity to the recruiting process. Due to the transitional nature of uniform staff, permanent civilian positions provide stability to the process.

Strategy #1.1.2 – Identify a diverse cadre of ancillary staff, including civilians, who can attend recruitment events, be a point of contact for candidates (see Strategy #1.5.3), and assist with various recruitment goals/strategies.

Strategy #1.1.3 – Create a diversity policy statement that is disseminated throughout the organization. (See Appendix E)

Evaluation Criteria – Does the recruitment team reflect the department's annual hiring goals?

Assigned to: Recruiting Lieutenant

Objective #1.2 – Reduce the time required for the hiring process by 20 percent.

Strategy #1.2.1 – Flow chart the hiring process for Firefighters, accurately depicting in detail each step in the process from filing an application to final offer of employment, including the estimated time needed for each step.

Strategy #1.2.2 – Review the POST selection and background requirements for fire cadets.

Strategy #1.2.3 – Meet with HR to discuss labor law and personnel rules pertinent to employee selection; technology that can be employed, including online applications; and continue to brainstorm ways to expedite the recruitment and hiring process.

Strategy #1.2.4 – Prioritize options to accelerate the hiring process and implement as appropriate to achieve at least a 20 percent reduction in the time required for the selection process.

Evaluation Criteria – After implementing changes, compare the time required to complete a hiring process with that prior to making changes.

Assigned to: Recruiting Lieutenant

Objective #1.3 – Actively solicits the assistance of Fire Department employees to identify and refer qualified candidates in each hiring cycle.

Strategy #1.3.1 – Conduct employee focus groups (see Appendix B) primarily comprised of firefighters to determine what ideas they have to improve the recruitment process, and gather information about what they like best about working for the Department.

Strategy #1.3.2 – Develop a recruitment memo explaining how employees can assist with the recruitment process, including Frequently Asked Questions.

Strategy #1.3.3 – Determine the best locations to place recruitment information to facilitate employee access.

Strategy #1.3.4 – Identify a person to regularly stock employee recruitment materials.

Evaluation Criteria – Track the number of employees who participate and the number of candidates who were referred by a department employee.

Assigned to: Recruiting Lieutenant

Objective #1.4 – Continue to update recruitment materials.

Strategy #1.4.1 – Collect copies of current videos and recruitment flyers (see Appendix C) of firefighters. Review these materials to ensure the information is current and accurate. Update as needed.

Strategy #1.4.2 – Determine the number and type of recruitment materials, including exhibit promotional “give-away,” and amount of money needed to have the necessary materials printed and/or videoed.

Strategy #1.4.3 – Add Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement to all recruiting materials and videos.

Evaluations Criteria – Obtain employee and candidate feedback on revised recruitment materials.

Assigned to: TBD

Objective #1.5 – Personalize the recruitment process.

Strategy #1.5.1 – Develop and update the candidate interest card email database.

Strategy #1.5.2 – Send out brief monthly emails to candidates providing them with information about current events in the Department and general information about the recruitment and selection processes.

Strategy #1.5.3 – Develop a list of recruitment coordinators who will serve as a point of contact for candidates who have questions. Provide training to these coordinators on the kinds of information they can provide to candidates. Encourage coordinators to make personal contact with the candidates, especially from targeted groups, on a monthly basis.

Strategy #1.5.4 – Schedule and invite candidates and their friends to attend a recruitment presentation (see Appendix D), Q & A time, ride-outs and/or tour station facilities.

Strategy #1.5.5 – Utilize commercial spots and talk show formats on radio stations (AM & FM) with high ethnic demographics.

Strategy #1.5.6 – Post testimonials on career websites from minority & women employees.

Strategy #1.5.7 – Develop diverse videos and images on AFD’s career page website.

Strategy # 1.5.8 – Continue to advertise in the various minority publications and newspapers both local and regional.

Strategy# 1.5.9 – Engage with local civic and community-based organizations on outreach efforts.

Strategy#1.5.10 – Identify functions and/or events that cater to the African American and Hispanic populations.

Strategy# 1.5.11 – Deploy recruitment advertisement and messaging via social media networks utilizing formats such as Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube.

Evaluation Criteria – Obtain feedback from candidates about how well the emails, radio, advertisements, personal contacts, open houses and other options caught their attention and motivated them to apply. Track the success.

Assigned to: TBD

Objective #1.6 – Determine the feasibility of establishing a cyclical hiring cycle.

Strategy #1.6.1 – Meet with the civil service office to discuss conducting an annual testing process to meet hiring demand.

Strategy #1.6.2 – Review past records to determine how many people applied for firefighter positions, and the number who advanced to the next step of the process, up to, and including, the background process and number actually deemed qualified to be hired.

Strategy #1.6.3 – Modify the testing process so that it happens around the same time each year and the practicality of testing in different locations.

Evaluation Criteria – Track each hiring cycle to determine the number of applicants, how many move forward in the testing cycle, and how many are ultimately hired. Monitor the results against hiring goals and adjust the frequency of testing accordingly.

Assigned to: Recruiting Lieutenant

Objective #1.7 – Enhance the recruitment webpage.

Strategy #1.7.1 – Identify resources that will assist in creating an effective website.

Strategy #1.7.2 – Contact other fire departments to determine what contributes to their website recruitment success.

Strategy #1.7.3 – Conduct focus groups with applicants to determine which types of information would be necessary in order to sway a potential candidate to complete the application process.

Strategy #1.7.4 – Update the website based on information gained in 1.7.1-1.7.3.

Strategy #1.7.5 – Add Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement to recruiting website.

Strategy# 1.7.6 – Migrate to a mobile centric website. More millennials utilize mobile devices for collecting and disseminating information.

Evaluation Criteria – Survey job candidates to determine if the website provided the information they needed. Include a section for candidates to provide ideas to improve the website.

Assigned to: Webmaster

Goal #2 – Motivate at least 38.6 percent of Hispanics (This percentage is based on the 2013 written test takers) from the total applicant pool to take the firefighter’s exam.

Objective #2.1– Identify specific approaches and organizations with whom to collaborate in order to target candidates from the Hispanic community.

Strategy #2.1.1 – Conduct a focus group with current Hispanic staff to identify recruitment ideas and organizations within the Hispanic community.

Strategy #2.1.2 – Compile a list of Hispanic community groups, including faith-based organizations, and invite them to informational meetings.

Strategy #2.1.3 – Determine whether recruitment materials should be translated into Spanish and the costs to do so.

Strategy #2.1.4 – Identify specific strategies to create awareness of career opportunities within the Hispanic community, including paid advertisements in at least two Hispanic publications targeting young-adult Hispanics.

Evaluation Criteria – Track the number of Hispanics who apply for department positions and subsequently hired.

Assigned to: TBD

Objective #2.2 – Engage Hispanic employees in the recruitment process.

Strategy #2.2.1 – Involve Hispanic employees who would be willing to videotape a “My Story” or testimonial as to why they chose a career with Austin Fire Department and what they have enjoyed about working for the organization. Use employee quotes in recruitment materials specifically targeting Hispanic candidates and/or place the interviews on the department’s website.

Strategy #2.2.2 – Identify Hispanic employees who would be willing to attend job fairs, speak to Hispanic community groups, and answer questions from candidates and/or their families.

Strategy #2.2.3 – Identify Hispanic employees who would be willing to coach Hispanic candidates through the hiring process.

Evaluation Criteria – Solicit feedback from selected employees on how effective they were in coaching candidates. Solicit feedback from candidates on the coaching process.

Assigned to: Recruiting Lieutenant

Goal #3 – Motivate at least 12.5 percent of African Americans (This percentage is based on the 2013 written test takers) from the total applicant pool to take the firefighter’s exam.

Objective #3.1– Identify specific approaches and organizations with whom to collaborate in order to attract African American candidates.

Strategy #3.1.1 – Conduct a focus group with African American firefighters to identify recruitment ideas that could attract candidates and organizations/groups within the community where prospective African Americans candidates may be found.

Strategy #3.1.2 – Compile a list of community groups frequented by African Americans, including faith-based organizations, and invite them to informational meetings.

Strategy #3.1.3 – Determine whether recruitment materials should be modified or developed specifically to recruit African Americans.

Strategy #3.1.4 – Identify specific strategies to create awareness of career opportunities for African Americans, including paid advertisements in one or more publications.

Evaluation Criteria – Track the number of African Americans that apply for fire department positions and are subsequently hired.

Assigned to: TBD

Objective #3.2 – Engage African Americans in the recruitment process.

Strategy #3.2.1 – Identify African American firefighters who would be willing to videotape a “My Story” or testimonial as to why they chose a career with Austin Fire Department and what they have enjoyed about working for the organization. Use employee quotes in recruitment materials specifically targeting African American candidates and/or place the interviews on the department’s website.

Strategy #3.2.2 – Identify African American firefighters who would be willing to attend job fairs, speak to community groups, and answer questions from candidates and/or their families.

Strategy #3.2.3 – Identify African American employees who would be willing to coach candidates through the hiring process.

Evaluation Criteria – Solicit feedback from selected employees on how effective they were in coaching candidates. Solicit feedback from candidates on the coaching process.

Assigned to: Recruiting Lieutenant

Special Requirements

The following is an excerpt from the Austin Fire Departments consent decree. AFD is required to meet certain advertising and job announcement requirements concerning the decree.

“The City shall advertise the dates and times of its application period and the administration of its selection procedures for fire cadet by: (a) issuing testing announcements at least 60 days prior to the closing date for submitting an application; (b) advertising in the Austin American-Statesman at least thirty (30) days prior to the closing date; (c) posting fire cadet testing announcements on the City’s website with a link to the applicable application for at least 45 days prior to the closing date; (d) posting fire cadet testing announcements in each City Department where job announcements are posted at least 45 days prior to the closing date; (e) sending a copy of each such testing announcement at least 45 days prior to the closing date to the Texas Workforce Commission for statewide distribution and to the placement officer of each two-year and four-year post-secondary school in the Austin area.”

Supplemental Program

The phrase “Pass the Torch” refers to a speech prepared by former AFD captain Willie Ray Davis, who was one of the first three African-American firefighters hired by the Austin Fire Department in 1952 and the State of Texas. The other two were Nathaniel Kindred and Roy Greene. Davis referred to his hiring as the lighting of a torch that should be passed on to future generations of minority men and women seeking careers in the fire service. AFD has expanded this ideology to assist with building its applicant pool by creating the Pass the Torch Academy in 2005.

In 2014, the Pass the Torch Academy (see Appendix F) was the first expanded version of the original one-day program. Seven weekend sessions ran from March to July with a varied age range among the participants. The program provides participants with the opportunity to learn about their community, fire department and emergency medical services response in a safe, controlled and educational environment. Due to the expanded time-line of the most recent academy, participants were able to engage in activities that included vehicle extrication, swift water rescue, emergency medical procedures and fire extinguisher training. In addition, this program served as a means of personal development, as well as a recruiting pool for the fire department. At the end of the program, participants were able to make an educated decision about whether or not to pursue a career in the fire service.

Appendix A
Recruitment Strategic planning checklist

Getting started

- Select a project coordinator who is knowledgeable about planning and recruitment.
- Select an executive sponsor.
- Develop a partnership with HR.
- What is the time frame associated with this plan?

Planning considerations

- Identify the ideal candidate.
- Are there particular segments of the community that should be targeted for recruitment?
- Identify possible satellite locations in which to launch recruiting initiative.

Internal factors

- What is the current number of firefighter vacancies?
- What is the annual attrition rate by type (retirement, voluntary termination, etc.)?
- How many positions need to be filled annually over the life of the plan? Has a workload study been conducted?
- To what extent do employee demographics reflect that of the community? What priorities should be established to focus recruitment efforts?

External factors

- How much will the residential or business communities grow annually over the next three to five years?
- What external factors may increase staffing levels in the next three to five years, such as an annexation or contract to provide service to another jurisdiction or customer?
- How will community demographics change in the next three to five years?
- What kind of development or redevelopment has been approved or is in the planning process and how will this impact staffing?
- Are service priorities expected to change that could result in staffing increases or decreases?
- What is the cumulative impact of these external factors annually?
- What is happening with other employers in the region that represent hiring opportunities and/or make them a competitor for qualified candidates?
- What are the regional/local pay and benefit trends among other fire departments employers and how do those compare with the pay and benefits of your agency?
- How will sociological, technological, environmental, economic, or political trends impact the city/county?
- Who are stakeholders that may impact the selection and hiring process?

Organizational strengths and weaknesses

- What is the reputation of the agency in the community and how can that reputation benefit or hinder the recruitment process?
- Does the agency have a good Internet recruitment site?
- Which aspects about the community and region can be used to attract potential candidates and what drawbacks may exist that adversely impact recruitment?

- Which aspects about the agency, including culture, may be attractive to potential candidates?
- What kind of relationship does the agency have with internal and external stakeholders?
- Did candidates have a positive experience in the selection process?

Selection and training of recruitment staff

- Who will implement the recruitment strategic plan? How can they be involved in the development and implementation of this plan?
- What training will they need to be effective recruiters?
- Do they clearly understand the selection process?

End to end review

- Review POST, labor law, and HR requirements.
- Develop a flowchart depicting the selection process.
- In light of the requirements, review the selection process flowchart to determine what steps can be eliminated, combined, or modified to expedite the selection process.
- How can technology be employed to make the process faster and/or more effective?

Personalize the process

- How will contact be maintained with candidates during the selection process (e.g., e-mail or telephone)?
- Designate a point of contact that candidates can call with questions.
- How will you market to those who can influence candidates?

Strategies

- Review the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Diversity Initiative Achieving and Retaining a Diverse Fire Service Workforce.

Employees

- How will employees be advised and reminded, as “adjunct recruiters” about job opportunities prior to and during the selection process?
- Where will recruitment information for employees be placed and who will restock the supplies?
- Has an employee recruitment incentive been considered?

Community partnerships

- Which community organizations can help to connect with qualified candidates?
- How can a partnership with high priority community organizations be developed?
- How will contact with community organizations be maintained?

Advertising

- Which advertising strategies will reach the targeted audience?
- Which advertising strategies have successfully worked in the past? What monies have been approved for advertising in the past?
- What are the most cost effective strategies to use, considering the number of positions to fill and available resources to pay for advertising?
- How much money will be needed to budget for advertising?

Evaluation

- How will the effectiveness of the recruitment plan be evaluated?
- Based on evaluation feedback, what changes will be made to improve results?

Appendix B Focus Group Collaboration



Community Outreach Diversity Council
Meeting Minutes

4/30/13 Attendees: DC Tom Dodds, AC Richard Davis, BC David Girouard, BC Robert Nicks, Capt. Frank Alvarez, Capt. Marc Saenz, LT Jose Cortina, FF Rory Campbell, Ronnelle Paulsen, Marion Sanchez, Celeste Garcia

Agenda Item	Discussion
Introductions – what brings you to this meeting?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of thought makes better organizations • Revolving door of ideas – nothing yet that has given us the results we need • Losing guys who came in during consent decree • Wish for department to be acknowledged for its efforts • Push to empower all members of the department to recruit best candidates possible – has worked for APD • Need to collaborate with hiring to create most effective processes • Expecting a highly successful process this year • Wish to help department move forward • Everyone plays an important part whether we like it or not – can always learn something from each other • Path forward not clear – but some methods are tried and true • Not just playing at diversity – not simple • Need to keep trying, maintain optimism and push envelopes
Current outreach strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining outreach throughout interim period – not just through application deadline • Emails, autodialers – both process driven and personal narratives, layered messaging from all levels of AFD • “Why not you?” campaign • Live call-backs – organic recruiting most effective • Provides opportunities for candidates to share reservations and break down barriers
Results so far	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 33%;">• 38.7% Hispanic <li style="width: 33%;">• 14.2% African American <li style="width: 33%;">• .8% American Indian <li style="width: 33%;">• 34.7% Caucasian <li style="width: 33%;">• 2.3% Asian <li style="width: 33%;">• Most diverse numbers in AFD history
Brainstorm Session	Suggestions/Action Items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why so late? Missed opportunities in underrepresented areas & wasted time on regions/organizations without targeted numbers • Recruitment never stops – mentoring goes hand in hand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mentoring throughout year from contacts in communities – Recruiters as surrogate family members • How to measure success? Don't separate recruitment from retention • How to improve diversity in retention rates? • Lack of understanding among ranks re: “diversity problem” • Test does not determine what a person can do – how to identify good firefighters without standardized test? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 49% of African Americans who applied did not show up for test – where do numbers drop most drastically? – Timing of test is a factor – minorities less likely to be able to miss work – Classes being cancelled is a factor – Perception that the process is rigged – by both minority and majority • Fire department should provide more prep materials for hiring process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote regular strategy meetings starting now for next year to facilitate discussion between experienced recruiters • Provide small group workshops for targeted applicants • Provide checkbox to be contacted and direct phone numbers for diversity recruiters on application • Encourage all department members to take ownership of recruiting • Collaboration between command staff & operations to improve numbers • Provide seminars/open house opportunities with Q&A sessions, skills stations • Provide <u>Vimeo</u> classes for more information • Need to determine where diversity fails during hiring process • Department in process of evaluating timing of test for future classes • Email current applicants with contact information for advocacy groups • Send all further brainstormed ideas for organization improvement to Marion Sanchez (marion.sanchez@austintexas.gov) • Commitment to participate in personalized communications with targeted candidates during current retention effort
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC Davis • BC Girouard • ALL PRESENT

Diversity Council - Thank You

Thu 05/02/2013 10:12

Good morning,

I would like to personally thank you all for attending and contributing to the lively discussion we had Tuesday during our strategy meeting for 2013 recruitment. Your collective experience and expertise in the areas of recruiting and outreach are invaluable as we work toward a shared goal of creating a department that is representative of the community it serves.

As we agreed on Tuesday, the hiring process needs to be treated as a yearlong effort to increase diversity among AFD ranks. In light of this conclusion, we will be holding Diversity Council meetings at HQ every two months starting in July to continue strategizing for the 2014 hiring process and beyond.

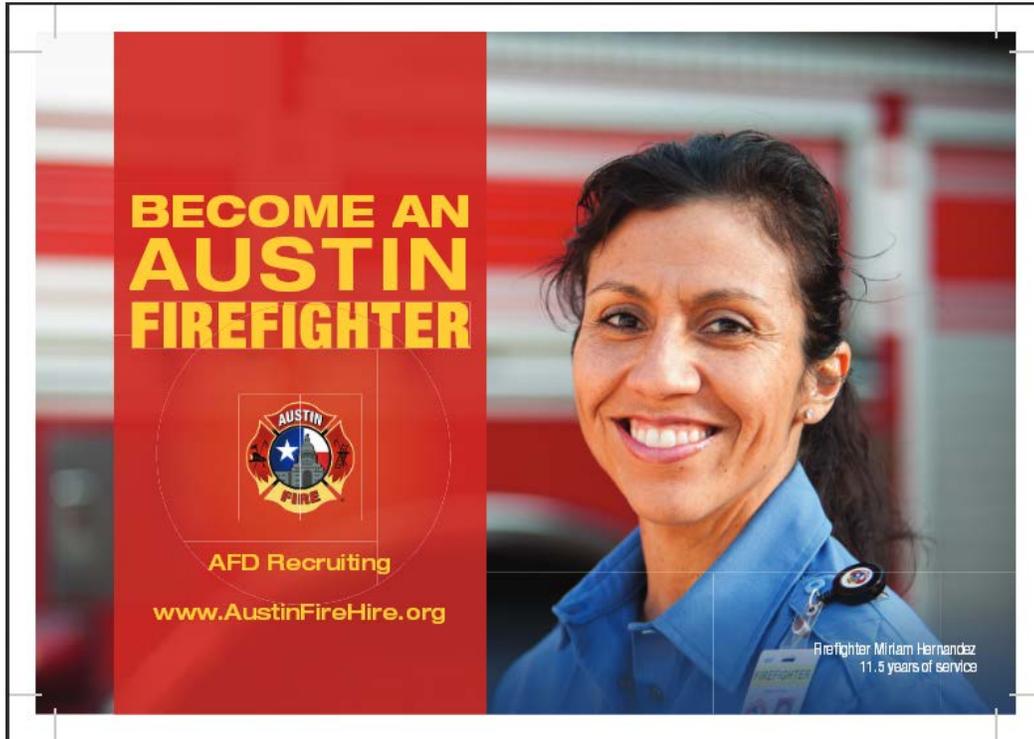
I am optimistic that together we will make great strides toward overcoming the numerous obstacles that stand in the way of departmental diversity. I welcome you as an integral part of the Diversity Council – and I encourage you to invite anyone else you know who is able to offer a diverse perspective to join as well.

Attached are the minutes from Tuesday's meeting. Please send any changes or updates to Celeste at celeste.garcia@austintexas.gov by close of business tomorrow. An official calendar invitation to the next Diversity Council meeting will follow.

Thank you,

Richard Davis
Assistant Chief

Appendix C
 “Recruiting” front and back of Interest Card



Recruiting Flyer

AUSTIN FIRE DEPARTMENT

**Starting pay
more than 50K!**

Go to www.AustinFireHire.org
to learn more and fill out
a Candidate Interest Card.

**10 DAYS
PER MONTH
WORK SCHEDULE***

SALARY (YEARLY)

- 6 month paid Fire Academy training
\$2,500 per month
- Probationary Firefighter \$49,188
- 1 Year Firefighter \$53,456
- 2 Year Firefighter \$58,003
- 3 Year Firefighter \$63,311

SPECIALTY / SKILL PAY (MONTHLY)

- Bilingual \$150
- Special Operations \$150
- Aircraft Rescue \$150
- Staff Assignment \$300

EDUCATION PAY (MONTHLY)

- College Credit - 60 hrs \$50
- Bachelor's Degree \$100

CERTIFICATION PAY (MONTHLY)

- Intermediate FF Cert. \$50
- Advanced FF Cert. \$100
- Master's FF Cert. \$150

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- Comprehensive health insurance
- Comprehensive dental insurance
- Life insurance
- Vision plan
- Short and long term disability
- Tuition reimbursement
- Retirement pension plan

PAID LEAVE

- 15 Vacation days per year
- 11 City Holidays per year
- 2 Personal days per year
- 15 Days of Military Leave per year
- 15 Sick days accrued per year

POTENTIAL CAREER PATHS

- Firefighting
- Emergency Medicine
- Special Operations
- Arson Investigation
- Communications
- Training Instructor
- Community Outreach
- Prevention
- Safety/ Equipment

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- Must be 18, and not 36 years
of age on May 13, 2013
- 15 hrs college credit
- Valid Social Security card
- Valid government issued I.D.
- US citizenship or valid work visa
- Able to read, write and
speak English

*24 hr schedule of 24 hrs on duty, 48 hrs off duty

**BECOME AN AUSTIN
FIREFIGHTER!**



512.974.0292 or 800.832.5264

www.AustinFireHire.org

Appendix D
“Q & A” day

June 17, 2013

Dear Fire Cadet Candidate:

Congratulations on making it to the next level in the hiring process!

Question and answer (Q&A) sessions have been scheduled for those of you who want more information concerning Austin Fire Department (AFD) employment. ***All candidates are encouraged to attend any Q&A session that is convenient to them.*** The AFD Community Outreach Division is coordinating two two-hour Q&A sessions. Members from the Austin Firefighters Association, African American Firefighters Association and Hispanic Firefighters Association, as well as Asian American and Female firefighters will be available for questions at these sessions. Representatives from AFD’s Human Resources section will also be available to answer questions about employment benefits. Similar information will be provided at each session.

The purpose of these sessions is to inform, direct, persuade and inspire your continued participation in the hiring process. We hope that having current and retired firefighters available for a panel discussion and one-on-one conversations will create opportunities for you to further explore fire department procedures, polices, customs and courtesies.

The following dates, times and locations have been designated:

Monday, July 1 – 6-8pm at George Washington Carver Library (Auditorium), 1161 Angelina St.
Wednesday, July 3 – 6-8pm at Mexican American Community Center, 600 River St.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Recruiting at (512) 974-0292.

Warm regards,

AC Davis

Appendix E
A Diversity Policy Statement Example

Diversity is not a program or policy – it is a state of being. Diversity sparks innovation and incorporates fresh approaches. It provides well-rounded perspectives in problem solving that let us identify better ways of performing the duties entrusted to us by our community.

The Fire Department is a diverse workforce. Our mission success and our core values require us to ensure our work environment enhances the potential and contribution of all employees by promoting inclusion, equity and respect.

Each of you, regardless of who you are or where you sit in the organization, plays a key role in the success of the Austin Fire Department. You are our greatest strength. Your creativity, commitment, experience and collaboration make the difference between getting results, and just doing a job.

Mission execution, reputation, leadership and culture are defined primarily by the abilities and performance of our people. All Fire Department personnel, your commitment to excellence is apparent every day, in every mission, across the country, around the world, against all threats, and all hazards.

I am personally committed to ensuring our Fire Department provides an environment that values and embraces the contributions and potential of every member of our diverse workforce. Our core values of Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty are fundamental to our individual and collective success. Live them every day.

Appendix F
Recruiting Supplemental Program



INFORMATION BULLETIN

Disposal Date:

February 28, 2014

TO: All Fire Department Personnel
FROM: Richard Davis, Assistant Chief
DATE: January 10, 2014
SUBJECT: Pass the Torch Academy

We are excited to announce that AFD is revamping and revitalizing the Willie Ray Davis Pass the Torch Academy!

Unlike in years past, this "new" Academy will be more extensive; previous academies were conducted on just one day while this academy includes seven sessions running from March to July. Participants will receive education on fire science, participate in skills activities, and hear from firefighters about their experiences in the department. At the end of this program, participants will be able to make an educated decision about whether or not to pursue a career in the fire service.

The academy is open to **all** 18-24 year olds who are interested, regardless of race, gender, or background. Participants will be required to fill out an application, answer essay questions, participate in a structured oral interview, and submit their own physical assessment showing that they are able to perform the skills and training found in the academy.

Applications can be found at www.austinfirehire.org with an application deadline set for **February 7**. If you know someone who may be considering a career in the fire service or would like more first-hand knowledge of firefighting, please encourage them to apply.

For questions about the program, please contact:

Lieutenant Matt Holmes: matt.holmes@austintexas.gov
Melanie Liner: melanie.liner@austintexas.gov

“Pass the Torch” front and back of Interest Card



AFD PASS THE TORCH ACADEMY
Be the change you wish to see in the world
AUSTIN FIRE DEPARTMENT

“It was not what I thought, but I liked what I saw. I could see myself staying there (fire station)- it’s like a family”
--2014 Class graduate



The Pass the Torch Academy gives you a firsthand look at a career in the fire service

Participate in activities like:

- Wear the gear and participate in simulated fire scenes
- Vehicle extrication training
- Swift water rescue training
- Learn about fire science from trained instructors
- Climb ladders and handle charged fire hoses

Why Participate?

Not only will you get certificates of completion, you will gain:

- A more realistic understanding of firefighting
- A network of firefighters at your disposal to answer questions
- A CD full of pictures and videos of your experience
- An educated decision about your career choice

Check out our website for more information and to apply

www.AustinFireHire.org | 512-974-0108 | FireRecruiting@AustinTexas.gov

“Pass the Torch” Flyer

The Pass the Torch Academy gives you a firsthand look at a career in the fire service.



Find out if this job is right for you

Apply online at AustinFireHire.org



**TURN ME
INTO WE.**

**2015 PASS
THE TORCH
ACADEMY**

Be the chance you wish to see in the world
AUSTIN FIRE DEPARTMENT

While most **dream**, we **achieve**

Program consists of 9 sessions:

- Feb 7th
- Feb 21st
- Mar 28th
- Apr 18th
- May 16th
- Jun 6th
- Jun 20th
- Jul 11th
- Jul 25th

Participants must be 18 - 26 and able to provide a passing physical.

Applications due by
Friday, January 3rd

www.AustinFireHire.org | 512-974-0108 | FireRecruiting@AustinTexas.gov

*Participation in this program will have no bearing towards acceptance into the Austin Fire Department Academy