CASE STUDY

CITY OF BERKELEY
Employer of Choice Roadmap
Completed February 2023

RESULT – An action-oriented forward-facing ROADMAP with six lanes of strategies focused on employee recruitment and retention from a review of culture, systems, communication, and tools. An implementation guide with strike teams and rolling 90-day action plans for real and practical implementation.

In September 2022, the City of Berkeley engaged Municipal Resource Group ("MRG") to provide a ROADMAP to help the City become an *Employer of Choice* to support the City's Strategic Plan goal to attract and retain a talented and diverse City government workforce. Berkeley was facing significant vacancies across the organization and experiencing challenges recruiting and retaining employees. Jurisdictions around the country, including the City of Berkeley, need to identify and tailor new methods of recruiting, retaining and engaging employees, and to plan for future workforce development. Employers that are not adapting and advancing their organizations are at danger of losing excellent employees and being unable to retain or compete for top talent.
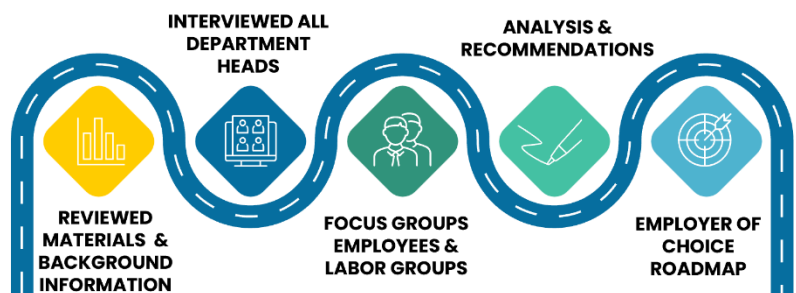
A team of three MRG consultants were selected for this project based on their broad experience managing public organizations at the executive level. This project shifted away from the typical model of a traditional organizational assessment with detailed findings and a laundry list of recommendations. While a diagnostic assessment of the organization was completed, the report's focus was a proactive and action-oriented ROADMAP with clear lanes or focus areas for action. The ROADMAP created six (6) strategic lanes with a total of forty-eight (48) initiatives.

City Manager Dee Williams-Ridley told the Berkeley City Council that "This was a call to action to quickly assess the state of our staffing and experiences of staff who are here and set a roadmap to move the city forward in a thoughtfully and swiftly." The goal of the ROADMAP is to strengthen the culture of the organization in a way that improves the work environment and increases job satisfaction -- making Berkeley an exciting and supportive place to work and thrive. While the ROADMAP reviewed recruitment and retention issues, it was also an assessment of Berkeley's culture and organizational issues at a high level.

> "The City of Berkeley has been struggling with what so many organizations are experiencing right now, i.e., rising levels of staff discontent, high vacancies, hard to fill positions and the loss of good talent. So much has changed in the workplace over the past 3 years, we knew we needed to set a new baseline for where our staff are and what we can do to improve the employee experience, as well as attract new talent. **MRG was a great thought-partner and delivered not only an assessment of current issues, strengths and challenges, but also a clear path forward with actionable items so we could start addressing issues immediately**."
> *-Dee Williams-Ridley*
> *City Manager, City of Berkeley*

Process:
MRG interviewed executive managers in each department and facilitated focus groups with staff at all levels of the organization, as well as labor representatives, to get their input. Best practices were researched and ideas from other agencies were explored to craft the ROADMAP for the City of Berkeley.

INTERVIEWED ALL DEPARTMENT HEADS

ANALYSIS & RECOMMENDATIONS

REVIEWED MATERIALS & BACKGROUND INFORMATION

FOCUS GROUPS EMPLOYEES & LABOR GROUPS

EMPLOYER OF CHOICE ROADMAP

Contents of the ROADMAP:
Berkeley's key strengths were outlined, and a high-level portrait of the key findings were communicated. The recommendations were organized into six lanes with a dashboard showcasing all recommended initiatives as shown below. For a look at the full ROADMAP, please visit Berkeley's Agenda Packet at page 217 at this link.

RECRUITING FOR TALENT	RETAINING OUR EMPLOYEES	CULTURE, COMMUNICATION & EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT	TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLNESS	ELEVATE INTERNAL PROCESSES

CITY OF BERKELEY -- Employer of Choice Roadmap

1 Recruiting for Talent	**2** Retaining Our Employees	**3** Culture, Communication & Employee Engagement	**4** Training & Professional Development	**5** Health, Safety & Wellness	**6** Elevate Internal Processes
Staffing & HR Role 1.1 Invest in Human Resources Department (HR) Staffing Levels 1.2 Streamline Recruitment Process – Strike Team 1.3 Act as Business Partners with Departments *Marketing & Branding* 1.4 Create Recruitment Brand & Marketing Strategy 1.5 Upgrade Jobs/Career Web Presence 1.6 Utilize Social Media 1.7 Hire Graphic Design & Social Media Expertise 1.8 Referral Bonus for Current Employees *HR Systems & Data* 1.9 Resources & Tools on Day 1 1.10 HR Performance Metrics & Reporting 1.11 Workforce Analysis Report 1.12 Training & User Guides For ERMA & NEOGOV 1.13 Update Key Job Classifications	*HR Systems* 2.1 Overhaul Onboarding Program 2.2 Reform Eligibility List Process 2.3 Continue to Improve HR Communications (*Berkeley Matters*) 2.4 Performance Evaluation and Feedback 2.5 Upgrade Exit Interview Process *Recognition & Appreciation* 2.6 Create a Comprehensive City Recognition Program 2.7 Restart Longevity Awards Program *Organizational Priority Setting & Workload* 2.8 Focus Priorities & Initiatives by City Council	*Communication* 3.1 Invest in Internal Communication 3.2 Foster Cross Department Collaboration 3.3 Open Department Access to Website and Social Media Use *Team Building & Culture* 3.4 Invest in Cross Department Relationship Building 3.5 Link to new DEI Program	*Training Strategy & Program* 4.1 Develop Training Strategy & Plan for Learning Culture 4.2 Invest in Learning Academies & Specialized Training 4.3 Invest in Coaching 4.4 Invest in Learning Management Software 4.5 Invest in Technology Training 4.6 Develop Hybrid Management Training *Systems & Financial Support* 4.7 Use Credit Cards to Ease Training Procurement 4.8 Upgrade Financial Support for Training & Education	*Employee Health* 5.1 Clear & Consistent COVID Safety Protocols & Practices 5.2 Invest in Mental & Physical Health Services for Employees *Employee Safety* 5.3 Create a Citywide Safety Team 5.4 De-escalation and High Conflict Training *Work Schedules & Flexibility* 5.5 Explore Expanding Alternative Work Schedules 5.6 Formalize Hybrid Work Program *Facilities & Equipment* 5.7 Adequately Fund Capital Improvement Program & Replacement Reserves 5.8 Prioritize Investments in Buildings, Vehicles & Equipment	*Structure & Programs* 6.1 Restructure Reporting of Administrative Services (HR, IT, Finance, Contracts) to One Deputy City Manager 6.2 Elevate Importance of Service-Oriented Administrative Services & Customer Connectivity 6.3 Create an Innovation Program *Business Improvements* 6.4 Empower Strike Teams / Interdepartmental Work Groups 6.5 Provide Training on Common Administrative Practices & Procedures 6.6 Maximize Intranet as an Employee Resource 6.7 Implement Business Practice Improvements in Finance, Information Technology, Payroll, HR and Contracts

MRG as a Firm & Consultant Team:
Municipal Resource Group, LLC is an experienced, full-service consulting firm dedicated to assisting client agencies in attaining their strategic goals. Founded in 2009, MRG has a team of professionals who work to address challenges for both public and private sector clients. Our consultants have extensive experience in all aspects of Organizational Assessment & Development, Human Resources, including staffing and effectiveness analyses. Our team is experienced in working with elected officials, agency executives, managers, and staff. Mary Egan serves as MRG's CEO and lead trusted advisor.

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