



**DEPARTMENT OF  
UTILITIES**  
  
BUSINESS SERVICES

**CITY OF SACRAMENTO**  
CALIFORNIA

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March 15, 1994

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Personnel and Public Employees Committee  
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session:

**SUBJECT:** Affirmative Action Plan Concept, Department of Utilities

**LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT:** City Wide

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Personnel and Public Employees Committee support the Department's Affirmative Action Plan in concept and forward it to the City Council.

**CONTACT PERSON:** Kathy Mullen, Administrative Services Officer (433-6609)

**FOR COMMITTEE MEETING OF:** March 22, 1994

**SUMMARY**

This report requests that the Personnel and Public Employees Committee endorse the Department of Utilities Affirmative Action Plan in concept and forward it to the City Council. If the plan is approved by the City Council, the Department will return to the Council during the budget hearings to request additional positions and funding to implement the plan.

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## **COMMITTEE/COMMISSION ACTION**

This report was presented to the Affirmative Action Advisory Committee March 9, 1994.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The City Council has established goals for 1994 that include providing positive alternatives for City youth and inclusiveness for City residents and employees. With a view toward these goals, the Department of Utilities has completed an analysis of its work force diversity and has found only two cases department-wide where minority employment has achieved parity with the City population. These are in the employment of Hispanic males and Native American males. Not surprisingly, Caucasian males also exceed parity goals. For males of all other minority groups as well as for females of every group, the Department's employment statistics are well below the parity goals established by the City Council.

**Current Efforts to Increase Work Force Diversity.** The Department of Utilities is committed to developing a fully diversified and fully empowered work force. In the past year, the Utilities Department has hired or promoted 20 minorities and females out of a total 43 opportunities. Many of these hiring decisions involved City employees who were facing layoff. Through already existing programs, apprentice or career development trainee status was offered to those who did not meet the minimum qualifications for their positions. Additionally, the Department is currently engaged in a selective recruitment for two superintendent positions in the Plant Services Division. However, the annual vacancy rate has been very low, less than 3% of authorized positions. Therefore, we are proposing additional efforts to diversify the work force which will also have the effect of providing positive youth alternatives as well as inclusiveness for City residents.

**Increasing Diversity Through Outreach to Youth.** In order to accomplish the diversity goal, the Department is investigating the feasibility of an innovative plan

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aimed at hiring minorities and grooming them, along with existing staff, for advancement through the full range of occupational categories. This plan is multifaceted. It involves working with local school districts to determine if mutual benefits can be obtained by employing high school students under the Regional Occupation Program (ROP). A second facet involves working with the Minority Engineering Program (MEP) at California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) for the purpose of providing "real world" experience to engineering students. The Department already has in place programs to offer apprenticeships to under-qualified but motivated persons. We also offer Career Development Trainee (CDT) status to those who are within one year of meeting the minimum qualifications for a full time position. And we have a 0.5 FTE student trainee position in the Engineering Services Division which is used to train student engineers.

In order to provide positive alternatives to the City's youth and to accelerate the diversification of the work force, the Department will be prepared to request, as part of the 1994-95 budget cycle, that additional part-time and full-time positions be authorized for the specific purpose of recruiting minorities, females, and the disabled into the Department's work force. This assumes that discussions with the school districts and CSUS prove fruitful and beneficial for all.

Any new positions authorized for the affirmative action program would be dedicated for the employment of minority and female students. The Utilities Department is working in cooperation with the Human Resources Department to develop appropriate class specifications and salary schedules for ROP students. The plan calls for them to advance, upon graduation, to full time apprentice status (for those classifications under the Plumbers and Pipefitters Union) or to full time CDT status (for those classifications under the jurisdiction of the Plant Operators Unit of Local 39). These former ROP students would continue to advance through the training program applicable to their career goals until they achieved full career status as a City employee. Students hired under the MEP program would be utilized as student trainees during their internship with the City. They would not be guaranteed a full time engineering position with the City upon graduation.

In order to assure the success of the program, the Utilities Department would train and assign mentors to new hires. These mentors would be carefully chosen from among existing employees for their ability to establish rapport, to serve as a role model, and to provide guidance to the mentee. Mentors would be available to

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support the candidates through the entire process to full time career employment, or until graduation, in the case of MEP students.

The Department would like to establish a program which is large enough to effect real progress toward achieving diversity, while keeping it at a manageable level. A successful program will also require a major investment of time and financial resources from current Utilities staff . With these two opposing factors in mind, the Department is prepared to propose 12.5 additional FTE for affirmative action purposes. The distribution of these positions among the Engineering Services, Field Services, and Plant Services Divisions is shown in the table below.

PROPOSED ADDITIONAL FTE						
ORG	ROP	APPRENTICE PROGRAM	CDT	MEP	STUDENT TRAINEE	ORG TOTALS
Engineering Services				1.5	0.5	2.0
Field Services	1.5	6.0				7.5
Plant Services	1.0		2.0			3.0
Program Totals	2.5	3.0	5.0	1.5	0.5	12.5

Increasing Existing Work Force Diversity By Enhancing Promotion Opportunities.

The second Departmental goal is to field a well trained and fully empowered work force. This also is integrally linked to the diversity issue. At present, only the Service Maintenance Occupational Category has reached parity for any minority group (Hispanic males). Other categories, such as Skilled Crafts, Technicians, Clerical, Supervisory, Professional and Exempt, are farther from parity. Positions in the Supervisory Category are filled almost exclusively from within. In order to improve opportunities for existing personnel to move up and enter these categories, the Department is embarking upon a training plan and a career development plan to enhance the skills and promotability of its existing staff.

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The Training Plan is aimed at improving the quality of the work force overall, improving efficiency and effectiveness, and complying with state and federal regulations. The Department offers training in technical, safety, managerial, supervisory, leadership, and diversity subjects. In the coming year, we plan to improve our employee orientation training. Professional conferences and networking are also supported.

In the fall of 1993, the Department convened The Diversity Task Force. Twenty-five Utilities employees representing all occupational categories sat on this panel. After five meetings covering various topics related to affirmative action, including the training area, The Task Force recommended additional training in leadership and supervisory skills, diversity issues, and technical and safety skills.

The career development plan provides the opportunity for individuals to direct the path of their own career by gaining job experience (through rotation, for instance) or by taking courses they are interested in. Such course work may be City sponsored, including in-house or outside training, and it may be vocational or college course work reimbursed through tuition assistance.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

Not Applicable

#### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Full and complete financial details will be presented to the City Council later this year during the budget hearings. A preliminary analysis of the funding requirements suggest that the costs for employee services will total approximately \$300,000 and will be split fairly evenly among the three utility enterprise funds, water, sewer, and storm drainage. There will be additional costs for uniforms, tools, new hire training and mentor training.

The Department will delete one position, the Assistant Director, currently funded at \$92, 517, to help offset the cost of this program. In December 1993, the Utilities Department deleted two management positions totalling \$169,538. Together, these reductions yield a savings in the Department of \$262,055. Additionally,

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through the assistance of the Human Resources Department, we plan to apply for a grant from SETA of \$35,000.

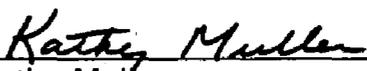
**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

The Department of Utilities' Affirmative Action Plan directly supports the City Council's stated goals of providing positive alternatives for youth and inclusiveness for all City residents and employees.

**MBA/WBE**

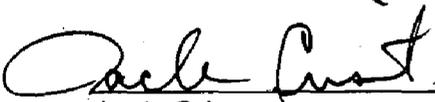
Not Applicable. No goods or services are being purchased

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kathy Mullen  
Administrative Services Officer

RECOMMENDATION APPROVED:

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jack Crist  
Deputy City Manager

  
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James G. Sequeira  
Director of Utilities