



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: June 16, 2015
To: Honorable Mayor & City Council
From: Mahdi Aluzri, Interim City Manager
Subject: Management Partners Review of Beverly Hills Police Department Hiring and Disciplinary Practices

Attachments: 1. Management Partners' Report

INTRODUCTION

This report transmits Management Partners' review of the Police Department's hiring and disciplinary processes. The City retained Management Partners, a respected consulting firm specializing in public agencies, in January 2015 to conduct a review of the City's hiring practices related to filling sworn officer vacancies, and to review disciplinary processes currently in place. As part of its review, the firm's project team members conducted interviews with 25 individuals, including members of the Police Department, City Council members, and other City executives. Additionally, the firm reviewed a variety of data, analyzed hiring and turnover data since 2012, and implemented a confidential survey of Police Department employees.

DISCUSSION

The Beverly Hills Police Department has several vacant officer positions and is interested in being able to recruit and hire in a timely manner while ensuring that high standards are retained. In the past five years, the Beverly Hills Police Department has been hampered from fully realizing its potential due to vacancies in the ranks of sworn officers. This has resulted from several factors, most notably 15 retirements in 2011. In addition, there was interest in evaluating the Department's disciplinary processes. In response, the City initiated this process and selected Management Partners to conduct the review.

Management Partners' report identified 24 recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the Police Department's hiring and disciplinary procedures. These recommendations incorporate areas such as recruitment, testing, interviews, promotions and the disciplinary process. In addition, the report contains recommendations regarding teambuilding and strategic planning.

Developing the strategy to implement these recommendations will be the responsibility of an incoming interim Police Chief to fill the vacancy of retiring Chief David Snowden.

FISCAL IMPACT

The financial impact of implementing these recommendations is unknown at this time. The fiscal impact will be evaluated as part of the implementation strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is for information only. The implementation strategy and timeline will be brought back to the City Council for approval at a future meeting once the report has been reviewed and evaluated by the Interim Police Chief who will succeed Police Chief Snowden.

Mahdi Aluzri
Approved By



Attachment 1

City of Beverly Hills

**Review of Police Department Hiring and
Disciplinary Practices**

June 2015

**Management
Partners**





June 10, 2015

Mr. Mahdi Aluzri
Interim City Manager
City of Beverly Hills
455 N. Rexford Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Dear Mr. Aluzri:

Management Partners is pleased to transmit our report containing results of our review of the Beverly Hills Police Department's hiring and disciplinary practices. The City has a number of vacant police officer positions and it interested in being able to hire in a timely manner while ensuring that high standards are retained.

In conducting our review, we interviewed 25 individuals, designed and administered an employee survey, and reviewed a variety of data. In this report we provide a summary of our analysis and 24 recommendations to improve the effectiveness of the department's hiring and disciplinary processes.

Overall we found that the hiring process is consistent with best practices among police departments. There are several opportunities for improvement, however, which we have identified. Among our key recommendations for the hiring process are establishing written standards and criteria for evaluating police officer candidates; expanding the composition of the first interview panel to include a lieutenant, member of the Human Resources staff and a senior police officer; and, instituting a short prescreening questionnaire for candidates. We have also made recommendations for the promotional process, including creating standards and identifying expected competencies for all promotional levels and modifying the scoring system to move from precise points to bands (e.g., "outstanding," "highly competent," "competent, and "unacceptable").

Key recommendations regarding the disciplinary process include creating a disciplinary matrix to provide greater transparency regarding discipline and augmenting resources within the Professional Standards Unit to provide timely resolution of investigations that could result in discipline. We also have made recommendations regarding teambuilding and strategic planning.

In implementing the recommendations in this report, it will be important to engage employees and labor association representatives. The Beverly Hills Police Department team can be strengthened through active communications and engagement regarding process improvements.

We want to thank City staff for assisting us with this project. They readily provided information throughout the project.

Sincerely,



Gerald E. Newfarmer
President and CEO



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Executive Summary

The City of Beverly Hills retained Management Partners in January 2015 to conduct a review of the City's hiring practices and procedures related to filling sworn officer vacancies, and to review disciplinary processes in place. This study was prompted by concerns about the length of time taken to fill police officer positions and by the City's interest in disciplinary processes that are timely, effective and transparent.

Police departments throughout California and the rest of the nation are experiencing significant challenges in recruiting qualified police officer applicants. Challenges resulting from recent economic and social conditions, work-life changes, and generational preferences of the conception of work and career, have all factored into the ability for departments to recruit qualified applicants for entry-level police officer positions. As a result, the Beverly Hills Police Department (BHPD) is competing with many other municipalities for police officer candidates, and its hiring process needs to be structured in such a way that it can be competitive with other agencies for top quality candidates.

The Police Department's vision is *"To become the model organization of the law enforcement profession through an uncompromising dedication to public service and continuous improvement in hiring, technology and law enforcement techniques."* This vision serves as the guide for the department in making hiring decisions.

Management Partners' project team members conducted interviews with members of the Police Department, City Manager's Office, Office of Human Resources, City Attorney's Office and City Council. We reviewed numerous documents provided by staff, obtained and analyzed hiring and turnover data since 2012, and conducted a confidential employee survey.

The overall hiring process for sworn officers and the department's disciplinary practices reflect standard practices for police departments. However, as any process can be improved, Management Partners identified several opportunities for improvement, reflected in 24 recommendations. These should be prioritized collaboratively by BHPD

and City staff, and an implementation action plan developed. Implementation should involve employees at all levels and representatives of the labor associations.

Highlights of the recommendations are provided below and Attachment A contains a complete list.

Hiring Processes

- Develop a formal recruitment plan. Establish a formal recruitment team comprised of outstanding officers and sergeants to actively implement the recruitment plan in a timely manner.
- Assign a lieutenant, a sergeant, a senior police officer, and a member of the Office of Human Resources to participate on the first interview panel.
- Develop written standards and criteria for evaluating police officer candidates. Create relevant questions and a rating sheet to assist in evaluating candidates against the standards.
- Create a short, prescreening questionnaire to be administered after the written examination and before the physical ability test. This would identify background issues that would disqualify an individual from consideration.
- Provide training to all interviewers in effective techniques for interviewing and assessing candidates.

Training and Promotions

- Develop a comprehensive succession plan that is articulated and engages all employees within the department.
- Develop written standards and competencies expected for all promotional levels. This will create clarity about expectations and assist individuals in preparing themselves for promotional opportunities.
- Modify the scoring system for promotions to rate individuals on each component of the exam on a banding format. This would result in a final placement of candidates into one of several bands. An example of the band range is "outstanding," "highly competent," "competent, and "unacceptable."

Disciplinary Processes

- Incorporate standards related to disciplinary practices published by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies into the BHPD manual.
- Develop a disciplinary matrix to guide discipline based on offense.
- Assign additional resources to the Professional Standards Unit when necessary to complete investigations in a timely manner.

Organization Development

- Initiate teambuilding at all levels of the department to strengthen communications and team effectiveness.
- Initiate a process to create a five-year strategic plan for the department that includes organizational development components as well as goals and strategies for the future.
- Establish teams comprised of members of the department and Human Resources to create action plans for implementing recommendations in this report.

Project Approach and Background Information

Management Partners' project team members used various analytical techniques in reviewing the recruitment and hiring practices of the Beverly Hills Police Department. We examined documents provided by the City, conducted interviews, developed a hiring process map to identify and analyze the various steps in the hiring process, analyzed turnover data since 2010 and hiring data since 2012, and conducted a web-based confidential employee survey. Each of these is described below.

Document and Data Review

Management Partners' team members analyzed numerous City documents related to recruitment and hiring processes of the Police Department. These included:

- Adopted budget for FY 2014-15
- Current organization chart
- Detailed staffing breakdown as provided in the annual budget
- Beverly Hills Police Department monthly reports for June 2013 and June 2014
- Police Department accomplishments and special recognition, 2013 and 2014
- Current memoranda of understanding and compensation plans for the following bargaining units or employee groups:
 - Beverly Hills Police Officers' Association
 - Beverly Hills Police Management Association
 - Beverly Hills Safety Support Association
 - The Beverly Hills Confidential Employees Association
 - The Beverly Hills Management and Professional Employees Association
 - Executive Compensation Plan
- City personnel system rules and regulations
- Beverly Hills Police Department manual

- City Council staff reports and internal memoranda related to the Department's hiring processes and recruitment needs in 2014 and 2015
- Beverly Hills Police Department employment guide
- Recruitment flyers
- Oral interview appraisal form
- City rating sheet and police officer interview questions
- City Council staff report and resolution dated November 7, 2006 approving the Agreement between the Beverly Hills Police Officers' Association and the City of Beverly Hills for the Submission of Certain Administrative Appeals to a Neutral Hearing Officer ("Binding Arbitration Agreement")
- Statistical data related to disciplinary cases from 2010 through 2014

Interviews

Management Partners conducted interviews with 25 individuals, including all City Council members, and staff from City administration and the Police Department. The purpose of the interviews was to gather information about perceived strengths and weaknesses regarding police officer hiring processes. Major themes from the interviews are summarized below.

- There is a common desire to hire qualified candidates quickly to fill vacancies without compromising the department's vision statement.
- Hiring standards for ideal candidates are not articulated or consistently applied. The phrases, "we hire the best of the best" and "uncompromised excellence" were cited.
- The Personnel and Training Bureau plays a key role in the hiring process.
- There is a concern that qualified candidates are being failed out of the first interview.
- There were comments about a lack of diversity within the department.
- External factors may be impeding recruitments. These include pay and benefits compared with other local agencies, a three-tiered pension formula potentially limiting lateral hires, and the location and lack of affordable housing within a reasonable commute time.
- Human Resources staff members are not involved in all aspects of the hiring process.

- The departure of 15 police officers within a two-month period in 2011 contributed to concerns about pension plan reductions.
- The department has not been able to meet the need to fill the significant number of positions on a timely basis.
- A succession plan is not well articulated, and there is insufficient mentoring to help develop officers to successfully compete for higher levels.
- Morale has been affected by police officer vacancies, with mandatory overtime being required in patrol resulting in “burnout” of affected personnel.
- Departure of highly tenured sergeants and officers has depleted the department’s institutional knowledge about policies and practices, and knowledge about the community.
- Communication should be improved within the department.

Hiring Process Map

Management Partners prepared a process map to document the flow of activities in the hiring process from the point at which the testing process begins until an offer is accepted and the employee is on-boarded by the Office of Human Resources. This is provided in Attachment B.

Turnover and Hiring Data Analysis

Management Partners analyzed turnover data from January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2014, and hiring data from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2014, to better understand concerns regarding the number of vacant sworn officer positions and the time it took to fill those positions.¹

Employee Survey

Management Partners designed and conducted a confidential survey of Police Department employees to provide an opportunity for all staff to offer input about the department, its hiring processes and issues surrounding accountability, performance and communications. The survey was conducted using a web-based tool during the period from February 3 to 15, 2015. A total of 120 department members responded

¹ Due to changes in hiring in 2012 and the lack of availability of detailed hiring data prior to that time, Management Partners chose to obtain hiring data from January 1, 2012 rather than January 2010.

(out of a possible 194 employees), representing a 62% response rate. Based on our experience, this is a very good response rate.

The survey asked various questions related to staffing, organizational culture, teamwork and communications. Responses indicated that employees are clear about what is expected of them, are regularly evaluated, have a good relationship with their supervisor, and believe policies and procedures are clear.

Responses also indicate that a large number of employees believe morale and trust are low and that members are not always held accountable.

Highlights of the survey results are provided below.

Over 50% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements.

- Supervisory and managerial staffing is the right size to meet department needs.
- Orientation for new employees is adequate.
- Training for new employees is effective.
- The department does a good job of retaining sworn and non-sworn staff.
- I trust my supervisor and co-workers.
- Communication from my supervisor is good.
- Overall, the Beverly Hills PD a good place to work.
- Department policies and procedures are clear, and department leaders emphasize their importance within the department.
- I understand what is expected in terms of duties and performance.
- I have a good understanding of my performance based on feedback received from my supervisor.
- Performance evaluations provide constructive feedback for my professional development.

Over 50% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the following statements.

- The department does a good job recruiting sworn staff.
- The department is able to fill vacant sworn officer positions in a timely fashion.
- The department recognizes employees appropriately.
- Succession planning meets the needs of the department.
- Teamwork within the department is good.
- Morale within the department is good.
- Trust within the department is good.

- Department leaders inspire respect.
- Department leaders inspire me to do a good job.
- Department-wide communications are good.
- Communication from management to civilian staff is good.
- Individuals are held accountable for their actions.
- Quality performance is recognized and rewarded.

Several questions on the survey related to promotions, performance feedback and succession planning. The employees provided positive responses about promotional opportunities, being clear about expectations of performance and having regular performance evaluations. Employees disagreed, however, with the statement that they have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills to compete for promotional opportunities and that the department’s succession planning efforts meet the needs of the department.

Table 1 shows survey respondents’ years of service and Table 2 shows respondents’ positions in the organization.

Please note that while 120 individuals responded to the survey, only 106 responded to the questions pertaining to years of service and position held.

Table 1. Survey Respondents by Years of Service

Years of Service	Response Count	Response Percent	Total Employees by Years of Service	Participation Percentage by Years of Service
0 to 5 years	13	12%	43	30%
6 to 15 years	43	41%	75	57%
15+ years	50	47%	76	66%
Total	106	100%	194	55%

Table 2. Survey Respondents by Categories of Positions

Position Classification	Response Count	Response Percent	Total Employees by Position Category	Participation Percentage by Category of Position
Command staff	8	8%	12	67%
Supervisor (i.e., sergeant or civilian manager)	21	20%	33	64%
Other sworn officer	55	52%	96	57%
Civilian staff member	22	21%	53	42%
Total	106	100%	194	55%

Police Department Organization Structure and Staffing

The City of Beverly Hills is located in Los Angeles County, California. The City encompasses a total of 5.7 square miles and has an estimated population of 34,677 (as of January 1, 2014) according to the California Department of Finance.

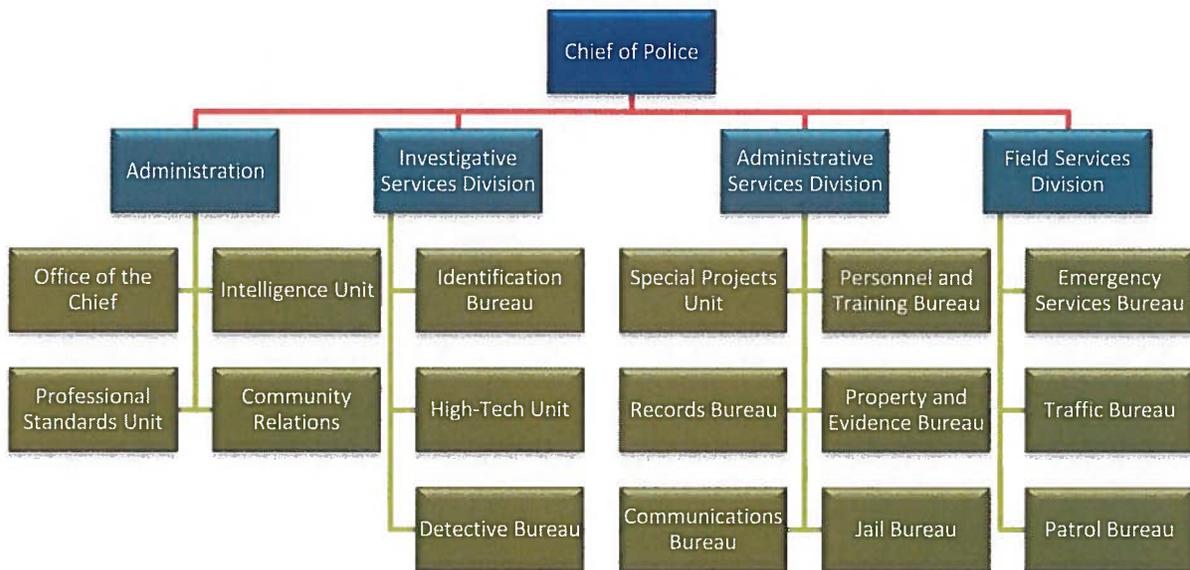
At the time of our engagement, the department had a total of 194 employees, which includes full-time sworn and non-sworn employees as well as part-time employees. The FY 2014-15 budget shows authorized department staffing of 188 full-time positions with 128 sworn and 60 non-sworn positions (which excludes part-time positions).

There are four divisions within the department.

- Administration
- Investigative Services
- Administrative Services
- Field Services

Figure 1 shows the department's current structure.

Figure 1. Beverly Hills Police Department Table of Organization FY 2014-15



Personnel and Training Bureau

The Administrative Services Division has responsibility for six functions, as noted in Figure 1. One of the functions is the Personnel and Training Bureau. This bureau is responsible for coordinating the hiring process and the department's required training program. This unit is also responsible for managing the background investigation and polygraph process required as part of candidate evaluation process.

A sergeant leads this unit. Recruitment and testing of police officer candidates are responsibilities of this unit. Two police officers from the department assist with recruiting through attendance at venues like job fairs and colleges. These officers also assist with background investigations and ensuring California Police Officer Standards Training (POST) mandates are met. Two part-time retired police officers are also available to assist with background investigations, and other police officers with primary duties in other bureaus administer pre-employment polygraph tests.

Professional Standards Unit

Police Administration has direct supervisory responsibility for the Professional Standards Unit, which conducts all internal affairs investigations within the department. This includes investigations involving complaints from the public, complaints initiated by other City departments or staff, and other issues initiated by the Police Department. Disciplinary matters are handled in accordance with the Beverly Hills Police Department's Department Manual and applicable provisions in the relevant memoranda of agreement (MOU), City Personnel Rules and Binding Arbitration Agreement.

Hiring Processes

This section contains the results of our analysis of hiring processes for police officer positions, and a set of recommendations to improve outcomes.

Description of Hiring Process

The Beverly Hills Police Department publishes an Employment Guide, which was updated in 2014, to describe the process an individual must complete to be hired by the City. In addition to reviewing this guide, Management Partners mapped the hiring process to ascertain whether the steps reflect best practices in police officer hiring and to identify opportunities for improvement. Attachment B contains the process map.

Overall, the steps in the process are consistent with those of other police departments in California. There are, however, opportunities for improvement, as described further in this report.

There are five phases to the hiring process:

1. **Application.** The application process is open and continuous, which means that an individual can apply at any time, rather than during a specific timeframe. The City's Office of Human Resources reviews applications to determine whether the applicant meets minimum qualifications.
2. **Testing Process.** Applicants who meet minimum qualifications are invited to take a written test. This step occurs once the BHPD notifies the Office of Human Resources that vacancies exist and once there are a sufficient number of applicants meeting minimum qualifications to warrant scheduling a written examination and a physical ability test (PAT). Applicants passing the written test are invited to take a physical ability test.

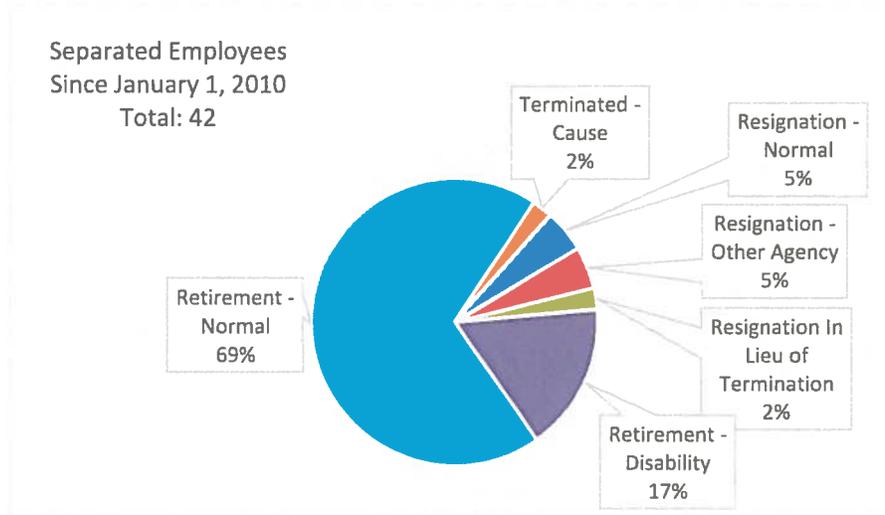
3. **Interviews.** Two interviews are held. Applicants who successfully complete the PAT are interviewed by two sergeants. Those who pass the first interview are then invited to be interviewed by the two BHPD Captains at what is called the "Chief's interview." This second interview is typically held within five days of the first interview.
4. **Background check.** Individuals who are successful in the Chief's interview are subjected to a background investigation, polygraph test and psychological evaluation, as required by POST.
5. **Employment offer and onboarding.** Individuals who pass the background and polygraph components are then extended an offer of employment. They are placed into a two-week pre-police academy training program to help prepare them for the rigors of the police academy.

Turnover Data

As shown in Figure 2, a total of 42 sworn personnel (captain through entry level police officer) have separated from employment since January 1, 2010. Of these, 29 (69%) retired under non-disability retirement, seven (17%) with a disability retirement, two (5%) to go to another agency and the balance for other reasons. The average length of service with Beverly Hills for non-disability retirees was 31 years.

In 2011 there was a spike in retirements with 15 people retiring within a two-month period. Those retirements added to the number of vacancies ranging from 11 to 14 each year.

Figure 2. Beverly Hills Police Department Personnel Separated from Service January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2014



Time Required to Hire Officers

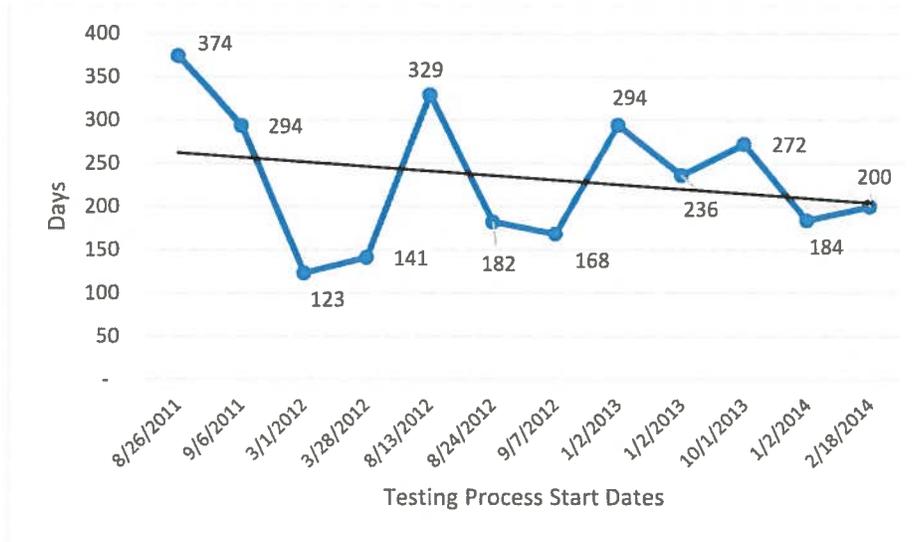
Between January 2, 2010 and December 31, 2014 a total of 23 officer positions were filled. Of those nine were lateral hires and 14 were pre-entry level police officer.

The City provided data to Management Partners which showed the time required to hire police officers over the three-year period from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2014. The City held 12 testing processes during this period.

As indicated in Figure 3, candidates were hired in as few as 123 days from the date the applicants were scheduled for written exams, and as many as 374 days. The average length of time it takes to fill a position over the past three years was approximately 233 days (about eight months).

Eight months is consistent with our experience with other California police agencies. It can easily take six to nine months from date of application submittal to date of employment offer.

Figure 3. Beverly Hills Police Department – Number of Days to Hire from Start of Candidate Assessment Process Average Days to Fill Police Officer Position Openings



Applicants

As shown in Table 3, there were 10,759 total applicants for police officer positions during the three calendar years from 2012 to 2014. Of those, 90% (9,703 applicants) were applying with no prior peace officer experience. The remaining applicants (1,056) were lateral moves.

Table 3. Police Officer Applicants from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2014

Year	Total Number of Applicants	Pre-Service Entry Level Officer Applicants	Lateral Police Officer Applicants
2012	4,472	4,002	470
2013	4,341	3,993	348
2014	1,946	1,708	238
Grand Total	10,759	9,703	1,056

Pre-Service Entry Level Officer Testing Processes

The Office of Human Resources provided Management Partners with hiring data for the 14 pre-service entry level candidates were hired between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2014. This data set included the following data:

- Candidates invited to take the written test,
- Candidates invited to first interviews,
- Offers issued,
- Candidates that enrolled in Police Academy,
- Candidates that passed Police Academy or were still enrolled at the time of this report, and
- Final number of officers hired.

Other data were not available that would have been instructive in preparing this report. Those are:

- Number and percentage of candidates failing the written exam,
- Number and percentage of candidates failing the physical ability test,
- Number and percentage of candidates invited to first interviews after having passed the written exam,
- Number and percentage of candidates failing the first interview, and
- Number and percentage of candidates failing the second interview.

Prior to 2015, the Office of Human Resources was not tracking these statistics. It would have taken a significant amount of time and effort for the City to recreate them in time for the preparation of this report. During Management Partners' work, the Human Resources Director indicated these data would be tracked in the future. Doing so will be helpful to the City in understanding the success rate at each step and provide an opportunity for further process improvements.

Management Partners reviewed the staff report that was presented to the City Council at its February 5, 2015 meeting in regard to hiring sworn officer positions for FY 2013-2014. The data we received separately from the Office of Human Resources is generally consistent with the information provided in that staff report.

As Table 4 indicates, the City received 9,703 applications from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2014. Of those applicants, less than half (4,117 applicants) took the written test. Those not taking the written test either failed to meet the position’s minimum qualifications, or failed to respond to invitations to take the written test.

Individuals who passed the written exam were offered the opportunity to take the physical ability test. Data about the number of candidates passing the written or PAT were not available.

At the conclusion of the written test and PAT, only 332 (or 8%) of the total applicant pool were provided the opportunity to a first interview panel, which was with two sergeants.

Sixteen pre-service entry level officer candidates (or 0.4% of the total applicant pool) received offers of employment that were made during the three-year period of January 2012 to December 2014. Fourteen of those offers were accepted and those officers were hired by the department (with two pending completion of academy at the time of our review). The 0.4% of the total applicant pool ultimately hired is lower than we would expect. Police chiefs in California generally note that about 5% of applicants are successful in completing the entire process to be hired.

As of June 1, 2015 there were 8 police officer vacancies, which is the lowest since October 2011.

Table 4. Pre-Service Entry Level Officer Recruitment Summary – Officers Hired from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2014

Pre-service Entry Level Officer Recruitments by Year Hired	2012	2013	2014	Grand Total
Positions Recruited For	15	11	15	41
Total Applications Received	4,002	3,993	1,708	9,703
Candidates Taking the Written Test	1,284	1,733	1,100	4,117
Candidates Invited to First Interviews ¹	267	31	34	332
Final Number Hired	6	4	4	14

¹ Candidates who pass the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Entry Level Law Enforcement Test Battery with a test score of 50 or greater, and then who pass the physical ability test (PAT), are invited for interviews.

Management Partners conducted a random sample of 180 applications received during the three-year period. Of the sample selected, 64 (35%) were selected to take the written exam, and nine (14%) of those passed the exam. Five (8%) were invited for interviews, and two applicants (or 1% of the total applicant pool) were given offers of employment.

While the data in Table 4 are for three calendar years, the data provided to the City Council dated February 3, 2015 were for FY 2013-14. That report stated of the 733 candidates that took the written exam, 250 of them (or 34%) passed the written exam. Of the 250 that were invited to take the physical ability test, only 118 (or 47%) passed that test. The next step was the first interview. Of the 118 who went through the first interview, only 16 passed. This is an 86% failure rate out of this first interview.

Lateral Officer Testing Processes

Similar to the data received for pre-service entry level officers discussed above, Management Partners received data about the nine lateral officers that were hired between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2014. The nine officers hired during that period came out of three testing processes that coincided with the testing processes for pre-service entry level officers.

As indicated in Table 5, a total of 1,056 lateral officer applications were received between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2014. Human Resources staff conduct a review the applications from lateral officers to determine if the individuals meet the City's minimum qualifications. Applicants who do are then invited to take the physical ability test. Of the 1,056 lateral officer applicants, 49 applicants were extended invitations to interviews as they were the only ones to meet the minimum qualifications and pass the physical ability test. Eight offers of employment were issued to the 49 candidates interviewed, and all of those candidates were hired.

Table 5. *Lateral Officer Recruitment Summary – Officers Hired from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2014*

Lateral Officer Recruitments by Year Hired	2012	2013	2014	Grand Total
Positions Recruited For	15	11	15	41
Total Applications Received	470	348	238	1,056
Lateral Officer Candidates Invited to Interviews	36	10	3	49
Final Number Hired	3	2	3	8

Opportunities for Improvement

The hiring process must do two things: attract high-quality candidates and identify people who will represent the City of Beverly Hills well.

With regards to recruitment, police agencies throughout the country are having difficulties filling police officer positions. Articles in law enforcement periodicals cite some of the reasons for this challenge. In a 2014 article published in Law Enforcement Executive Forum², several factors were identified that are limiting the applicant pool:

- *Economic changes*: The post-Recession recovery is enticing workers back into other sectors such as technology, biotech, and other industries.
- *Societal views*: Negative images of policing do not encourage people to consider law enforcement as a career.
- *Generational differences*: Preferences and conceptions of work and career, including views of work-life balance and perspectives about what constitutes a meaningful career, are focusing many young people on careers other than law enforcement.

These factors are compounding the problem faced by police agencies with significant numbers of “baby boomers” retiring, creating a high number of vacancies throughout California for consideration by candidates. Even with this situation, however, the Beverly Hills Police Department has been successful in receiving a large number of applications for police officer.

After the recruitment phase, the evaluation process is key to hiring people with the skills, values and ability to represent the City of Beverly Hills well.

Management Partners identified several ways to improve the results of the hiring process, as summarized in the following sections.

Recruitment

The Beverly Hills Police Department conducts an open and continuous recruitment process for entry-level and lateral officer positions. This is to create a sufficient applicant pool from which to draw when vacancies

² Jeremy M. Wilson, P. (2014). *Strategies for Police Recruitment: A Review of Trends, Contemporary Issues, and Existing Approaches*. Law Enforcement Executive Forum, 78-97.

occur. This is a best practice, since it is in the City's interest to invite candidates to apply when they are interested.

The City advertises its openings on GovernmentJobs.com and uses a variety of other means to advertise its sworn officer openings. These include job flyers posted in various City facilities and businesses within the community, announcements on the City's government access channel, the City's website, and occasionally in local newspapers. The City uses NeoGov as its applicant tracking system. NeoGov allows applicants to create a profile for any potential future openings that may arise within the City.

The existing recruitment and evaluation team consists of the following individuals.

- Police Commander: Oversees the recruitment needs of the Department.
- Office of Human Resources: Advertises for police officer applicants, handles the City's applicant tracking system, and administer the written exams.
- Sergeant in charge of Personnel and Training Bureau: Administers the physical ability tests and the first interview.
- Two background investigators: Assist with recruitment and conduct background investigations.
- Two part-time officer annuitants: Conduct background investigations.
- Two polygraph examiners: Conduct the required polygraph tests.

The City is receiving a significant number of applications, so there does not seem to be a problem attracting individuals to apply. However, any recruitment process can be improved, and Management Partners suggests two steps to strengthen the BHPD recruiting results.

1. Prepare a written recruitment plan that states the objectives of the recruitment, the skills and qualities being recruited for, and proactive steps that will be taken to encourage people to apply. Engage human resources staff in preparing this plan. The plan should include the many recruitment activities now underway, and formalize a work plan and schedule for the recruitment program. Examples of existing recruitment activities that should be continued and included in the recruitment follow.
 - Recruit in a variety of communities, including different cultures, women's groups, athletic groups, and veterans organizations;

- Recruit candidates statewide who are either currently in or have recently graduated from academy, to identify individuals who have self-enrolled in a police academy but do not yet have a job offer;
- Hold in-house recruitments to encourage civilian members of the BHPD or City of Beverly Hills organization as a whole to apply;
- Engage or incentivize existing police officers to encourage people to apply; and
- Use a “farm team” such as an explorer and/or cadet program through which recruits are developed.

The recruitment plan would include turnover projections, an assessment of the results of current recruitment methods, new avenues for recruitment, and specific goals, milestones and timetables.

Engaging line officers as well as supervisors and command staff in this endeavor is a good way to create a comprehensive plan that reaches a variety of target audiences.

Recommendation 1. Prepare a formal recruitment plan that contains goals, milestones and timetables for achievement.

2. Establish a formal recruitment team from within the Police Department, along with active participation with staff from the Office of Human Resources. This would consist of a diverse team of outstanding officers and sergeants to carry out the recruitment plan. They would regularly conduct outreach, participate in recruitment fairs, mentor candidates, and have time allocated for ongoing recruitment tasks. Officers would be invited by the department to apply for this team, and those selected will be those who will best represent the department.

Serving on the recruitment team would be a collateral duty, most likely performed using overtime. We suggest this assignment continue for three to four years. Such a term will provide continuity while renewing the team with a diversity of perspectives.

Recommendation 2. Establish a formal recruitment team comprised of a diverse representation of officers and sergeants, along with staff from the Office of Human Resources.

Written Test

The California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) was established under California law to set minimum selection and training standards for California law enforcement. While the POST program is voluntary, more than 600 agencies in California participate in POST for a variety of services. Beverly Hills Police Department is one of those participating agencies.

Each pre-service entry level officer candidate must take the POST Entry Level Law Enforcement Test Battery. It is a written aptitude test evaluating writing, reading and reasoning abilities.

The test is electronically scored by POST. Statistical calculations are performed by POST to convert the number of items answered correctly into a "T-score." A T-score is a standardized score that places an individual's performance on the test into a distribution with an average of 50 and a standard deviation of 10. If an individual's score falls near 50, his/her performance is considered average when compared with other applicants who have taken the test. POST states that the likelihood of successful academy completion increases for every POST examination scored above 42.³

The Beverly Hills Police Department requires that a candidate pass the exam with a test score of 50 or higher to proceed to the next step in the hiring process. This is reasonable given that POST's historical data shows the likelihood of successful academy completion increases above a T-score of 42. It is expensive and time consuming for the City of Beverly Hills to place individuals into a police academy with a below-average score. Therefore, requiring a minimum T-score of 50 is reasonable.

³ California Peace Officer Standards Training, "Applicant Preparation Guide for the POST Entry Level Law Enforcement Test Battery."

Physical Ability Test

Upon successful completion of the written exam, candidates are invited to participate in a physical ability test (PAT). This test ensures they meet the physical demands of being a police officer. The physical ability test includes four components that measure endurance, strength and agility. These four components are minimum standards required by POST and must be passed at the end of the police academy. It is a typical practice for police departments to require candidates to pass all four components prior to proceeding to the next step in the hiring process.

The four components are described in the BHPD’s Employment Guide, which is made available to applicants. Table 6 describes the four components.

Table 6. Physical Ability Test Components and Benchmarks

Agility Test Component	Department Benchmark
Wall Scale	Run a total of 150 feet, then scale a smooth wall 6 feet high
Maintain Grip	Run a total of 150 feet, then take an overhand grip on a chinning bar and hang free for 60 seconds
Weight Drag	Run 50 feet to a dead weight of 140 lbs. (dummy), and drag the dead weight 50 feet backwards
Endurance Run	Run 6 laps as fast as possible in 12 minutes on a ¼ mile track*

**The Employment Guide indicates that the candidate needs to run “as many laps as possible.” However interviews with the Personnel and Training sergeant clarified that the benchmark is six laps, the equivalent of running an eight-minute mile.*

A successful candidate must pass each of the requirements for every test in order to pass the PAT as a whole and be invited to an interview. Failure of any one component constitutes failure of the entire PAT. The pass/fail approach used by BHPD is typical of other police departments. The reason for this is that anyone being hired and placed into a police academy must meet these standards. If an individual is unable to meet the required thresholds at the end of the academy, he or she will fail.

It was also noted from interviews that personal behavior during the PAT is also evaluated and may be used to further screen out a candidate from being considered for an interview even if the applicant passes the PAT. Management Partners notes that the department may be screening out viable candidates through these subjective observations.

If candidate behavior is to be evaluated during the PAT, it should be written as part of the hiring standards described below, and be

articulated in a rating sheet containing behaviors to be evaluated. This is to prevent hidden biases that undermine the department's ability to hire talented individuals. The best approach in our view would be for the PAT to remain focused only on physical abilities and not on other subjective assessments.

Many departments provide coaching to candidates who nearly pass the PAT to help prepare them to take the test at a future time. BHPD currently refers these candidates to a local fitness center or to programs offered in the Orange County Sheriff's Department or Los Angeles Sheriff's Department academies. Some police departments assign members of their recruitment teams to mentor and coach these candidates. This approach is effective in gaining viable candidates. It is particularly helpful in qualifying viable women candidates through coaching on techniques such as the wall climb.

Recommendation 3. Assign members of the department to provide coaching to individuals close to passing the physical ability test to prepare them to pass at a later time.

Interviews

The department conducts two rounds of interviews for candidates that successfully complete both the written and physical agility tests. The first round is with two sergeants. Individuals passing with a score of 80% or higher then proceed to the second interview, called the Chief's interview, conducted by two police captains.

Management Partners has identified several areas for improvement regarding the interviews, including composition of the first interview panel, providing training in conducting personnel interviews, creating evaluation standards, creating a new rating sheet, and creating a banding system rather than precise numerical scores. Each is described below.

Composition of First Interview Panel

Currently two sergeants comprise the interview panel for the first interview. Recently, human resources personnel have been invited to observe some of the interviews but do not ask questions or participate in evaluating candidates.

A best practice used by other police departments is to have a larger interview panel that includes a lieutenant and sometimes a highly

experienced and respected senior police officer. A member of the city's human resources staff is also typically present to observe the proceedings. They introduce candidates to the panel, create a welcoming environment, monitor for appropriate questions, and provide professional advice regarding the interview process.

At the minimum, the City of Beverly Hills Human Resources staff should be present for every interview. Additionally, given the importance of candidate selection, a member of the command staff at the lieutenant level should also be present.

Recommendation 4. Modify the composition of the first interview panel to include a lieutenant, a senior experienced police officer, and a staff member from the City's Office of Human Resources in each interview.

As mentioned previously, the second interview is with the two captains and it is referred to as the "Chief's interview." It is a standard process within California police departments and no changes are recommended to it.

Interviewing and Candidate Assessment Skills Training

We reviewed the questions being asked of candidates by the Sergeants during the initial interviews. We noted that some of the questions are focused on the candidates' backgrounds that would normally be asked during the formal background investigation phase of the hiring process. The interviews for police officer candidates should be conducted using best practices for hiring. Initial interviews should focus on identifying the candidates' skills and abilities in performing the job.

The department has not provided training specifically focused on interviews for the hiring process or assessing candidates' skills. Since the aim of the recruitment and hiring process is to successfully fill police officer vacancies, it is essential that all interviewers be skilled in effective interview techniques, how to properly evaluate candidates, and how to ensure that laws and policies pertaining to fair employment are followed.

Training for interviewing and assessing candidates can be provided by the City's Office of Human Resources, supplemented by the City Attorney's Office and outside resources such as Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) and the California Public Employers Labor Relations Association (CalPELRA).

Recommendation 5. Develop a training program to teach interviewing and assessment skills to Police Department employees who will serve on interview panels.

Create Written Standards and Revise Interview Questions

The evaluation standards used by the interview panel in the first interview are neither written nor clear. A rating sheet is provided by human resources staff, but it is general in nature, applying to all City of Beverly Hills positions, and not specific to police officers.

Additionally, the set of interview questions used for the first interview has several questions focused on disqualifying factors rather than on the skills expected of Beverly Hills police officers. Questions about disciplinary history, criminal history, driving citations or prior drug usage could easily be answered in a pre-screening questionnaire rather than during the first interview. The interview should be focused on information that cannot be obtained in other ways.

The department indicated it uses the "Background Investigation Dimensions for Peace Officers," published by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) to evaluate candidates during the first interview. However, these dimensions are not identified in any written manner nor reflected on the rating sheet.

When asked about the standards used to evaluate candidates, the department noted it hires, "the best of the best." However, without clearly identifying the skills and qualities, including values expected of police officers, there is no objective way of ascertaining whether high quality candidates are or are not being passed to the next level.

The department notes that the success rate of new hires completing probation is high, which suggests that the individuals who pass the first interview have the necessary skills to be a Beverly Hills police officer. However, the failure rate is high for this first interview, as noted previously.

POST has a number of publications that can help the Police Department create written standards for evaluating police officer candidates. One is the above-referenced "Background Investigation Dimensions for Peace Officers." This document contains a list of important attributes for police officers and the requirements of each attribute.

Table 7 shows the five job attributes and requirements as described in the POST Background Investigations Dimensions.

Table 7. Job Attributes and Requirements: POST Background Investigations Dimensions

Attribute	Types of Requirements (Examples)
Stress tolerance	Accepting criticism and calm demeanor, frequency of conflict situations, dealing with unpleasant or angry people, self-control
Decision making and judgment	Critical thinking, ability to make decisions, inductive reasoning, deductive reasoning
Conscientiousness	Dependability, initiative, attention to detail, obtaining information
Interpersonal skills	Working directly with the public, working with team, concern for others and being helpful, active listening
Communication skills	Oral comprehension, conveying information effectively, writing so others will understand

Source: Appendix A, Development of POST Background Investigation Dimensions, Background Investigation Manual: Guidelines for the Investigator, 2013.

“Pre-Offer Personality Testing in the Selection of Entry-Level California Peace Officers: Resource Guide” is another resource. This document was prepared based on a statewide analysis conducted by POST. It articulates the personal and interpersonal demands of the job of police officer. POST engaged patrol supervisors and field training officers to rate a set of competencies based on importance to successful police officer performance.

Competencies are defined by POST as:

Observable patterns of behavior (whose sources may lie in skills, knowledge, abilities, values, or traits) that account for individual differences in job performance. The identified personality-based competencies receiving average importance ratings ranging from “very important” to “critically important” by participating patrol supervisors and field training officers are listed below.

- *Integrity/Ethics*
- *Conscientiousness/Dependability*
- *Assertiveness/Persuasiveness*
- *Teamwork*
- *Decision Making and Judgment*
- *Adaptability/Flexibility*
- *Impulse Control/Attention to Safety*
- *Social Competence*
- *Emotional Regulation and Stress*

- *Service Orientation*
- *Tolerance⁴*

The Beverly Hills Police Department has good resources for use in developing written standards for assessing police officer candidates. Formalizing the department's current practices of referring to the POST standards will aid in the candidate assessment process, particularly at the first interview level. Developing these written standards is an effective avenue for engaging a vertical slice of the organization, from command staff to front line officer.

Recommendation 6. Develop written standards, including qualities and characteristics, for assessing police officer candidates.

The current set of interview questions includes a combination of skill and values-related questions, and several that are designed to identify disqualifying factors (e.g., prior drug usage).

The skills and values-related questions are typical and are designed to gauge a candidate's response to situations, such as a particular type of traffic accident or an altercation. There is also a question to gauge ethics and responses to difficult arrests.

Examples of other competencies-based questions that could be asked are the following.

- Give us an example of something that may be legal but is not ethical.
- Describe a situation in which you made a mistake and what you learned from that experience.
- Tell us about a time when you had an intense difference of opinion with another person and how you resolved the conflict.
- What types of situations are frustrating to you? Why? How do you handle those situations?
- Tell us about a situation where you worked as a member of a team to carry out a project. What did you contribute to the team?
- The City of Beverly Hills is committed to community policing. What is your understanding of this philosophy and why is it important to the City of Beverly Hills?

⁴ Pre-Offer Personality Testing in the Selection of Entry-Level California Peace Officers: Resource Guide," California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, 2010.

- The City of Beverly Hills is a culturally and ethnically diverse community. Please tell us about your experiences in dealing with people who come from different backgrounds, religions or cultures than you.

Recommendation 7. Revise the questions used in the first interview to focus on job-related competencies.

Short Pre-Screening Questionnaire

As noted above, some of the current interview questions are designed to identify disqualifying factors, such as prior drug use or criminal activity. Asking these questions in the interview is not a good use of the limited time available to assess a candidate, as these factors can be assessed in other ways.

A pre-screening questionnaire can be used early on in the process to identify disqualifying factors. This would be much shorter than the personal history questionnaire being used by the department for those individuals passing the first interview, which is lengthy and is essential for the background investigation process.

Using a short pre-screening questionnaire would enable the department to eliminate clearly unqualified candidates early on, and save the time and expense now spent on a full background investigation. The pre-screening questionnaire would contain questions about an applicant's history related to discipline, criminal activity, driving citations, driving while impaired, and drug history.

Applicants would be provided this questionnaire at the time of application so they would know about disqualifying factors. This would prevent the department from having to test individuals who clearly have disqualifying factors and would not be considered later in the hiring process.

Recommendation 8. Create a short pre-screening questionnaire to obtain information about disqualifying factors (e.g., prior drug use, criminal history, traffic citations) to be given to candidates at the time of application. Require completion of this questionnaire after a candidate passes the written test and before he or she takes the physical ability test.

Rating Forms

The current rating form used for the first interview of police officer candidates is one used for a variety of City of Beverly Hills positions and does not include a list of the competencies sought in Beverly Hills police officers. To be useful, a rating sheet should mirror the competencies that interview questions are designed to evaluate, as described above.

Currently, the first interview panel of two sergeants determines whether each applicant passes or fails, and assigns a score. This is not an accurate method of evaluation since desired competencies are not stated and rated.

A new rating sheet should be designed that includes specific evaluation criteria. Rating each candidate on the basis of stated standards provides a clearer understanding of why someone did or did not pass this first interview. The Office of Human Resources can provide expert advice in creating a meaningful rating sheet for police officer candidates based on the competencies being assessed.

The general rating form currently used has four categories of ratings: "outstanding," "above average," "average," and "unacceptable." Using terms that relate to the competencies sought would make clearer what the department is looking for, rather than terms such as "above average" or "average." Alternate language would be "outstanding," "highly competent," "competent" and "unacceptable."

The current rating form also associates scores with each category. A numerical score is not needed for a rating sheet. Numerical scores can give the impression of precision when precision is not actually the case.

Each competency should be articulated in such a way that raters are clear about its meaning. Additionally, raters must understand what would warrant a judgment of each of the rating categories (e.g., "outstanding" and the other categories) to provide greater objectivity to the assessments.

Articulating the competencies and having a rating form that mirrors the desired competencies also provides structure and equity to the rating process, as multiple raters are involved. The City could also decide to weight each competency to identify those factors that may be more important than others.

Recommendation 9. Develop a rating sheet that incorporates the written standards for an ideal candidate into rating factors upon which candidates can be objectively assessed.

Recommendation 10. Establish categories for rating candidates in the first interview.

Additionally, a method for the interview panel as a whole to determine one consolidated rating category is needed. A summary rating should be utilized at the conclusion of the interview of each candidate.

Panel members would share their individual ratings of the candidate and the panel would discuss differences of opinions, with the conclusion of the discussion being a summary rating by the panel. The summary rating would then determine the category into which the candidates are placed (e.g., outstanding, competent, unacceptable).

Recommendation 11. Create a summary sheet that combines the results of interview panel members for each candidate and establish a rating level that a candidate must achieve to move forward to management-level interviews.

Promotional Processes

The Beverly Hills Police Department typically promotes from inside its ranks, which is common throughout California police agencies. Promoting from within, when there are highly qualified candidates, helps build morale and provides incentives for employees to continue to improve their supervisory, leadership and knowledge-based skills.

Promotions are key to succession planning in a police department as people move into positions of leadership. Through appointments, the department conveys what it values.

When line personnel understand the process used as well as the criteria on which individuals are promoted there is greater likelihood of unity of purpose within the department. Survey comments and interviews indicated some people are concerned about fairness in promotions. Credibility of the process and in the individuals selected are critical to the confidence level employees have in the department's leadership.

The department has outlined the process it uses to evaluate qualified candidates for promotions. A memorandum from the chief is provided to employees stating the components of the promotion process. The memorandum also provides a reading list.

The examination components and weighting for sergeant level are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. BHPD Sergeant Examination Components and Score

Examination Components	Percent of Total Score
Written examination	25%
Extended resume review	5%
Outside oral board ¹	30%
Practical exercise	10%
Inside oral board	30%
Total	100%

¹The outside oral board consists of representative of outside law enforcement agencies and a member of the Beverly Hills community.

Some police departments use additional methods to assess candidates for promotional opportunities.

- **Self-assessment:** This is a rating sheet completed by the candidates providing a self-assessment on the factors identified as criteria for success in the position. While the BHPD uses an extended resume review component, the self-assessment is based on criteria desired for the position.
- **Peer assessment:** Peers of promotional candidates provide an assessment based on specific criteria (the same criteria as in the self-assessment and other evaluation components). The peer assessments are reviewed only by the chief. They are important in providing input about areas that the chief may otherwise be unaware of because the chief is not working alongside the candidates on a day-to-day basis.

Recommendation 12. Initiate a review of the promotional process and involve employees in discussions. Consider including additional evaluation tools in the process.

Competencies and Success Factors

The department’s manual contains a list of duties of the position of chief of police, captain, lieutenant, field training officer, police officer and desk officer. However, the duties do not describe the competencies and success factors expected in performance of the duties. It is difficult to truly assess candidates without clarity of what is being sought by way of knowledge, skills, values and other qualities.

Just as we are recommending a set of written standards and competencies for hiring entry level or lateral police officers, we also do so for promotions. Expected competencies for positions along with clearly identified success factors for individuals in leadership positions would be

of value in two ways. First, individuals desiring to move up in the department would be better able to gear their skills development toward what the department is seeking in its leaders. Second, employees would better understand how individuals are rated and therefore why people are selected for promotions.

Examples of success factors from other police departments for the position of sergeant are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Examples of Competencies and Success Factors for Sergeant Promotions

Examples of Competencies	Examples of Success Factors
Integrity and respect for others	Shows caring and compassion; makes decisions based on the right thing to do; demonstrates respect to others both within and outside the organization, demonstrates open-mindedness, uses appropriate discretion
Technical skills	Write reports that are complete and clear, conducts thorough investigations, demonstrates knowledge and application of local and state laws, and the constitution, demonstrates officer safety
Interpersonal skills	Adjusts style of communication with different people, maintains proper professional relationships, open and available to employees who work for/with him or her, fosters teamwork, identifies and reinforces common goals that build commitment and collaboration across unit lines
Innovation/creativity	Solicits ideas from a wide range of people as a means of promoting innovation, helps others look at situations differently by asking "what if" or "why not" questions, publicly supports people who try new ideas even when they are not successful, develops partnerships with other employees and the public to continually learn about emerging issues or new ideas
Problem solving	Makes difficult decisions well, applies rules fairly and flexibly, is adept at synthesizing facts in complicated situations, applies knowledge of city departments and their goals and resources, anticipates problems and assists with solutions
Leadership	Efficiently uses overtime, does not play favorites, sets and maintains high standards of behavior for self and others, does not ask others to do what he/she would not do, encourages others to do new and difficult tasks, brings out the best in people, effectively represents the department
Accountability	Holds self and others accountable, helps employees learn from their mistakes, offers appropriate praise and constructive criticism, maintains proper confidentiality about disciplinary matters, handles disciplinary matters fairly and impartially
Strategic planning and implementation of goals	Takes into account short-term goals as well as the future of the organization, effectively leverages the expertise of others to achieve objectives, seeks and uses broad knowledge of the profession to make informed decisions in the best interest of the organization
Fiscal responsibility	Demonstrates knowledge of department budget resources, demonstrates an understanding of fiscal feasibility of expenditures, thoroughly and accurately assesses the fiscal effect of decisions

Examples of Competencies	Examples of Success Factors
Professional development	Volunteers to work various assignments, participates in community activities, pursued educational and training opportunities

An important component of assessment for promotions is past performance which for Beverly Hills involves the extended resume review. BHPD leaders indicate they also review performance evaluations. Having criteria against which the extended resume review is evaluated as well as criteria for each phase in the process is the best way to ensure that the qualities desired for leadership are being assessed.

Best practice is to have a transparent promotional system through which every candidate understands how he or she will be evaluated and how to prepare for the position to which he or she aspires. The goal of promotional processes is to identify the most qualified person(s) for the job based on identified factors.

Recommendation 13. Establish written competencies and associated success factors for the position of sergeant, lieutenant and captain for promotional purposes. Use those competencies and success factors to evaluate a candidate’s readiness for promotion.

Ranking

A numerical score is given in each component of the promotional process. Each person is given a final score. The department’s practice is to promote solely on the basis of who has the highest numerical score. Yet the City’s rules do not require the department to promote the person with the top score. Anyone deemed qualified could be appointed. This is typically called the “rule of the list.”

The practice of using precise points and to appoint the person with the highest score limits the ability of the department to appoint individuals who are indeed highly qualified, but may be one point off. Numerical scores are not in themselves scientific because they are a combination of subjective assessments and written examinations. Giving a precise numerical score implies objectivity, but objectivity cannot be guaranteed simply through the use of numbers.

An alternate way of ranking individuals for promotional purposes is to determine through the combination of evaluation factors which of several tiers they fall into. Examples of tiers are “outstanding,” “highly

competent," "competent" or "unacceptable." The chief would then have the ability to promote from the list starting with any candidate(s) from the highest-ranked band, being guided by the core competencies that will have been previously established.

Members of the department from all levels, including representatives of the labor associations, should be engaged in creating a new system for ranking individuals for promotional purposes. Using a collaborative process will be key to creating a system that is understood and supported by members of the department.

Recommendation 14. Create a tiered ranking system for promotions and eliminate precise scores.

Succession Planning

As the "retirement tsunami" continues in local governments, an emphasis on preparing people for promotions is increasingly important. In the employee survey, we noted that 50% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that they are able to obtain the skills they needed to compete for promotional opportunities. In addition, 63% disagreed with the statement that succession planning is meeting the needs of the department.

Succession planning is a way for the department to be proactive in preparing employees for future supervisory and leadership positions, and other positions that require specific competencies. Succession planning involves the following key components.

- *Replacement planning.* Identifying positions that will become vacant and need successors, with a focus on the skills and competencies that will be needed in the future.
- *Human capital recruitment plan.* Recognizing the strong preference for internal promotions, a comprehensive succession plan focuses on the pipeline of talent and sourcing candidates from within as well as outside the organization. This ensures that highly qualified people are in place to meet the organization's standards and goals.
- *Internal succession candidate analysis.* Identifying candidates ready for promotion based on objective, job-related assessments and ratings of readiness to assume higher positions.
- *Skills gap analysis.* Identifying gaps in the skills of employees based on the needed future skills and competencies of higher positions.

- *Training.* Utilizing a targeted approach that merges employee interests and organizational needs.
- *Developmental assignments.* Identifying developmental or “stretch” assignments in addition to formal training to help prepare employees for higher positions.

Creating a succession planning program offers an opportunity to engage employees. Developing a comprehensive program will take time. Doing so requires establishing goals for the program and will need expertise from people knowledgeable about succession planning.

A task force could be established, with expert assistance from the City’s Office of Human Resources, to develop a multi-year program that would guide training and employee development efforts.

Recommendation 15. Develop a comprehensive succession plan that engages all employees within the department. Once developed, communicate the plan to all employees.

Special Assignments

The department has a number of special assignments. Through the confidential employee survey conducted by Management Partners, employees indicated they feel they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills to compete for promotional opportunities and that the department’s succession planning efforts do not meet the needs of the department.

Special assignments can serve as effective professional development opportunities for individuals desiring to learn skills that will be useful in higher-level positions. As such, rotating the assignments on a regular basis to provide a variety of individuals is a useful developmental tool. Rotations are beneficial because they:

- Develop core skills in multiple individuals within the organization;
- Expand institutional knowledge of the function;
- Provide for fresh perspectives in personnel and training matters, particularly in the area of hiring and recruiting;
- Reduce the potential for developing a narrow focus in job assignments;
- Encourage written standards for recruiting as assignments rotate to others within the organization over time;

- Enhance broader skill sets and professional growth opportunities; and,
- Allow those that have filled the position to provide training and leadership for others.

To enable more people to have opportunities in special assignments, implementing a policy whereby special assignments are rotated every three to four years is suggested. It may take at least a year to become proficient in required tasks, so it would be important to not have the length of assignment too short.

Recommendation 16. Rotate special assignments on a three to four year basis to provide professional development opportunities to a variety of personnel.

Office of Human Resources

The Office of Human Resources currently plays a limited role in the recruitment of sworn officer positions. Human Resources staff opens the recruitment using the City's applicant tracking system, reviews applications against minimum qualifications, and administers written exams for pre-service entry level officers.

Recently, Human Resources staff members have observed several of the first interviews held with candidates, but are currently not in all of those interviews, as was recommended above. Human Resources personnel are not included in other steps in the hiring process. For all other operating departments of the City, the Office of Human Resources is involved in all steps in the hiring process.

The Office of Human Resources has responsibility for overseeing employee recruitment and selection for the City of Beverly Hills, with the goal of attracting the most highly qualified and talented workforce possible. Human Resources staff are also responsible for ensuring that the workforce and operating departments adhere to city policies regarding employment and other personnel matters.

Cities with successful employment practices incorporate human resources personnel as a strategic partner in the delivery of municipal services. While operating departments fulfill their respective roles in serving their community and best understand how to provide those services, HR can act as a strategic partner in supporting the departments' efforts in delivering those services with a productive, quality workforce.

Recommendation 17. Incorporate the support of the Office of Human Resources as a strategic partner throughout the entire recruitment and hiring process.

Disciplinary Processes

This section contains the results of our review of disciplinary processes within the Police Department. We have identified several recommendations for improvement.

Over the past five years the Police Department has investigated 114 formal complaints against sworn personnel. Of the 114 complaints, 12 complaints were sustained which led to formal discipline in 10 cases, and informal discipline in two cases. Formal Discipline is a progressive disciplinary process that includes actions such as letter of reprimand, suspension, demotion and termination. Informal discipline, which includes documentation of verbal counseling as well as letters of warning by direct supervisors, is not tracked by the Professional Standards Unit and was beyond the scope of Management Partners' engagement. Generally, informal discipline is used to correct minor policy violations that do not warrant formal investigation.

Whether the discipline administered in each case was appropriate for the offense and consistent with other cases would be determined by a review of each case, then comparing each case to all similar cases. Such a case-level review was beyond the scope of Management Partners' engagement.

Opportunities for Improvement

We have recommended three changes in disciplinary processes, as described below.

Department Manual

The Beverly Hills Police Department has a comprehensive administrative manual containing the general orders for the department. The manual incorporates and references other City documents such as the municipal code section covering disciplinary action and the City's Personnel Rules.

The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) is nationally recognized by law enforcement agencies for its accreditation programs. The standards established as part of an accreditation process are intended to help public safety practitioners strengthen crime prevention and control capabilities, formalize essential management procedures, establish fair and nondiscriminatory personnel practices, and increase community and staff confidence in the agency. The standards serve as a useful guide for police departments as a way to assess the extent to which they are following best practices, regardless of whether or not a department is formally accredited.

Most of the provisions within the BHPD's department manual are consistent with the standards related to disciplinary practices published by CALEA. There are a few CALEA standards that are not currently part of the manual pertaining to disciplinary matters. The department may wish to consider them in future revisions to the manual. Pointing these out does not suggest that the intent of these standards is not being implemented now. Having them explicitly stated can help establish clear expectations for all concerned.

The specific CALEA standards to consider for inclusion in the department manual follow:

- A. *CALEA Section 26.1.1 (Code of Conduct and Appearances)* states that a written directive should include compliance with agency directives; unbecoming conduct; use of alcohol and drugs; acceptance of gratuities, bribes, or rewards; abuse of authority; use of force; and proper care and maintenance of equipment. The BHPD manual references all but the following:
- Abuse of authority; and
 - Proper care and maintenance of equipment.

Also, acceptance of gratuities, bribes and rewards should be referenced specifically, rather than covered generally by reference to integrity.

- B. *CALEA Section 26.1.2 (Employee Awards)* states that the written directive should enhance consistency in recognizing employees. The department manual does not reference the need for consistency in issuance of awards.
- C. *CALEA Section 26.1.4 (Disciplinary System)* states that the written directive should encourage training as a means of improving employee productivity and effectiveness. While the manual implies

that training is encouraged (by reference to Performance Improvement Plans), there is no statement directly encouraging the use of training to improve employee productivity and effectiveness.

- D. *CALEA Section 26.1.7 (Dismissal Procedures)* states that the written directive should require that the employee be provided a statement of the status of fringe and retirement benefits after dismissal. Neither the manual, the City Personnel Rules, nor the Municipal Code have this requirement, although this is a practice of the Human Resources Department in any termination action.

Recommendation 18. Revise the BHPD department manual to incorporate standards related to disciplinary practices published by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.

Disciplinary Matrix

To create greater transparency regarding discipline and to diffuse employee concerns, a best practice is to use a guide for discipline, also referred to as a "disciplinary matrix." The guide should be developed with a clear understanding that discipline may be less or more than stated in the matrix, depending on circumstances. The actual level of discipline would be determined through consultation between Police Department management, City Attorney and Human Resources.

Creating this document would be an opportunity to engage employees, as well as command staff, City Attorney and Human Resources in its development. A guide to discipline would include elements such as the following:

- Define conduct categories and set discipline levels;
- Identify what rules or regulations fall within each category;
- Identify ranges of sanctions that would be appropriate for each conduct category;
- Identify fair and reasonable presumptive penalties for each discipline level;
- Provide fair and reasonable ranges of penalties at each discipline level to consider mitigating or aggravating factors;
- Provide notice to officers and the community of the likely sanction for a particular violation unless the facts or circumstances justify a different result; and

- Provide a framework for consistent and equitable discipline based on established department standards, equally applicable to all members of the department.

Recommendation 19. Explore the development of a disciplinary matrix to guide discipline based on offense. Engage the City Attorney's Office, Human Resources staff, and a team of employees from the Police Department, including labor association representatives, in creating this guide.

Professional Standards Unit Staffing (PSU)

From January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2014, the department has had 114 formal complaints against sworn personnel that could have potentially led to disciplinary action. The workload, coupled with collateral duties of the PSU sergeant, is impacting the PSU's ability to complete the investigation of cases in a prompt manner. The PSU sergeant is the primary individual investigating formal complaints. In some cases, investigations identified as minor in nature may be assigned to an employee's direct supervisor. The PSU sergeant oversees these investigations.

The amount of time required to investigate complaints can vary based on the type of offense, but it is not uncommon for some complex investigations to take in excess of six months to complete from the inception of the investigation, to the determination of findings and the administration of discipline.

It should be noted that the Police Department is planning to purchase personnel investigation software in FY 2016-2017. This software will assist in efficiently tracking and handling citizen complaints, administrative investigations, use-of-force reporting, and other types of incidents, while providing the means to analyze and identify areas of concern. The analytical capability offered by the software may help the department identify potential problems early on, so that proactive steps can be taken.

For discipline to be effective, it must be fair, commensurate with the nature of the offense, and consistently applied. It must also be timely to both correct the behavior as well as set an example for others in the department. Given the size of the Beverly Hills Police Department, and the nature and the workload placed on the PSU, having only one sworn member whose primary duty is to handle internal investigations is not

sufficient for handling the volume of disciplinary cases requiring the necessary level of detail when there are spikes in workload. The PSU sergeant has other collateral administrative duties including responding to certain types of Public Records Act requests, preparing for and attending Pitchess motion hearings, and serving as the back-up for media relations. Additional resources are made available through the reassignment of minor cases to direct supervisors and contracted trained investigators when necessary, but more may be needed to ensure timely resolution of disciplinary matters.

Recommendation 20. Assign additional resources to the Professional Standards Unit to complete investigations in a timely manner.

Organization Development

Effective organizations have clear direction and sense of purpose, open communications, teamwork, mutual respect, trust, and are continually improving. The confidential employee survey highlighted a need for organizational development. A majority of survey respondents indicated that trust, morale and communications are in need of improvement.

Opportunities for Improvement

There are a variety of methods that can be used to strengthen communications, build trust and morale, and foster a cohesive team environment. Several methods are described below for improved communications, strategic planning, teambuilding and implementing the recommendations within this report.

Departmental Communications

A majority of employees responding to the survey indicated that communications within the department are in need of improvement. Successful organizations ensure that every employee understands the organization's purpose, goals and values and is in alignment with them. Communication is at the core of that strategic alignment.

Communication is not limited to formal media such as policies, memos or emails. It should also include less formal means of interacting with and hearing personally from the chief and command staff regarding issues affecting the department and vision for the future. The chief and command staff should become more visible to employees. A variety of communication methods are successfully employed in other law enforcement agencies, such as:

- Holding periodic all-hands meetings for every employee to hear directly from the chief of police,
- Holding vertical staff meetings focused around functions or team assignments,

- Having horizontal team meetings for those in various functions to share information and priorities,
- Using respected internal opinion leaders to share critical information about the organization and its goals,
- Developing strong relationships between management and the POA to help disseminate accurate information within the organization, and
- Creating an organizational excellence team from various disciplines and levels within the organization to identify ways the organization can improve. Support from the chief and other managers is an important element for success in this endeavor.

These methods also have additional benefits in helping to assuage rumors within the organization, foster a sense of employees belonging to a larger team, provide avenues for two-way communications, and strengthen morale.

The Office of Human Resources may be able to help the department develop other ideas that could help the organization come together as one cohesive team.

Recommendation 21. Improve communications within the department through a variety of formal and informal communications channels.

Strategic Planning

The department has vision and mission statements and a set of values. Currently there is not a multi-year strategic plan. Some employees responding to the survey indicated there is a lack of clarity about the vision and direction of the department. Defining a clear path for the future of the department is a way to engage all members and to help employees understand how they individually fit into the larger picture.

A strategic plan would involve analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), developing an environmental scan, reexamining the vision and mission statements, reviewing the values with a description of the behaviors that are associated with each, establishing a set of goals, and creating strategies for reaching the goals. A useful strategic plan also has an implementation action plan component that identifies timelines, resource needs and assignments.

Creating a strategic plan should not be a top-down exercise. To be meaningful to all members of the department a task force approach with expert guidance should be used. The task force could research other

police department strategic plans, including the process used to develop them, and create a work plan for developing the strategic plan. It also could identify how all members of the department will be engaged. For instance there could be work group meetings, task groups to work on components of the strategic plan, a workshop involving people from all work groups, and other methods. The task force might also consider the results of the confidential employee survey to identify elements to include in the strategic plan.

Community members and representatives from other city departments could also be engaged in developing a strategic plan for the Beverly Hills Police Department. Sufficient time must be allocated for this process for the result to be meaningful. Outside resources may be helpful in providing expert advice in strategic planning. There are numerous ways to design the process. The key is to engage members of the department from all levels and to be thoughtful in creating the process.

Recommendation 22. Initiate a strategic planning process for the department.

Teambuilding

The interviews and confidential employee survey conducted for this review identified disunity within the department, low trust and low morale. Teamwork is essential to the effective functioning of any department, and especially to a public safety department. Effective teamwork at the top of the organization is important in modeling the values and behaviors that are expected throughout the organization. Teams are strengthened through a variety of means, such as:

- Training exercises that focus both on tactical readiness and team skills,
- Clear norms for working together and a set of defined values that everyone understands and accepts as important,
- Accountability for one's actions and performance,
- Clarity of each team members' roles to reduce ambiguity,
- Effective problem solving techniques,
- Team projects assigned to members in various divisions and positions within the organization,
- Effective communications vertically and horizontally,
- Command staff who are perceived as leading by example,
- Clarity about the department's direction and constancy of purpose.

Teambuilding workshops can be helpful in identifying ways to strengthen the team and creating agreements for how the team will work together. Designing the workshops can be a way to engage members of the department at all levels. There may be multiple workshops with representation from throughout the department.

Recommendation 23. Conduct teambuilding workshops and training exercises focused on team skills that involve members from throughout the department. Engage members at all ranks in creating workshops and training exercises.

Implementation of Improvement Recommendations

Many of the recommendations included in this report are ones that would be appropriate for employee participation and teams being assigned to create implementation action plans. Engaging members of the department in creating the future is both a professional development opportunity for individuals and an effective means of ensuring that the final result is largely supported by employees. Management Partners suggests establishing a series of teams comprised of individuals at all levels of the organization, labor association representatives, and Human Resources staff in creating implementation action plans. Such plans would involve discussions about the objectives of the change, interests of stakeholders, implementation steps, timelines and assignments.

Recommendation 24. Establish teams comprised of members of the department and Human Resources to create action plans for implementing recommendations in the Management Partners report.

Conclusion

The Beverly Hills Police Department's vision is, "to become the model organization of the law enforcement profession through an uncompromising dedication to public service and continuous improvement in hiring, technology and law enforcement techniques." The department has been hampered from fully realizing its vision because sworn officer vacancies have been filled slowly. As with other law enforcement agencies in the region and the state, attracting quality talent is a challenge. Beverly Hills is in a fortunate position of having a significantly high number of applicants for positions and is viewed as a desirable community for law enforcement professionals.

Through a review of the department's hiring processes, Management Partners has developed recommendations intended to assist the department in improving the results of its hiring without compromising its high standards. We have also identified several ways to improve the department's disciplinary processes and to strengthen the organization's effectiveness. Implementation of the recommendations will better enable the Police Department to achieve its mission of safeguarding the lives and property of the Beverly Hills community.

Attachment A – List of Recommendations

- Recommendation 1.** Prepare a formal recruitment plan that contains goals, milestones and timetables for achievement.
- Recommendation 2.** Establish a formal recruitment team comprised of a diverse representation of officers and sergeants, along with staff from the Office of Human Resources.
- Recommendation 3.** Assign members of the department to provide coaching to individuals close to passing the physical ability test to prepare them to pass at a later time.
- Recommendation 4.** Modify the composition of the first interview panel to include a lieutenant, a senior experienced police officer, and a staff member from the City's Office of Human Resources in each interview.
- Recommendation 5.** Develop a training program to teach interviewing and assessment skills to Police Department employees who will serve on interview panels.
- Recommendation 6.** Develop written standards, including qualities and characteristics, for assessing police officer candidates.
- Recommendation 7.** Revise the questions used in the first interview to focus on job-related competencies.
- Recommendation 8.** Create a short pre-screening questionnaire to obtain information about disqualifying factors (e.g., prior drug use, criminal history, traffic citations) to be given to candidates at the time of application.
- Recommendation 9.** Develop a rating sheet that incorporates the written standards for an ideal candidate into rating factors upon which candidates can be objectively assessed.
- Recommendation 10.** Establish categories for rating candidates in the first interview.
- Recommendation 11.** Create a summary sheet that combines the results of interview panel members for each candidate and establish a rating level that a candidate must achieve to move forward to management-level interviews.
- Recommendation 12.** Initiate a review of the promotional process and involve employees in discussions.
- Recommendation 13.** Establish written competencies and associated success factors for the position of sergeant, lieutenant and captain for promotional purposes.
- Recommendation 14.** Create a tiered ranking system for promotions and eliminate precise scores.
- Recommendation 15.** Develop a comprehensive succession plan that engages all employees within the department. Once developed, communicate the plan to all employees.
- Recommendation 16.** Rotate special assignments on a three to four year basis to provide professional development opportunities to a variety of personnel.
- Recommendation 17.** Incorporate the support of the Office of Human Resources as a strategic partner throughout the entire recruitment and hiring process.

Recommendation 18. Revise the BHPD department manual to incorporate standards related to disciplinary practices published by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.

Recommendation 19. Explore the development of a disciplinary matrix to guide discipline based on offense.

Recommendation 20. Assign additional resources to the Professional Standards Unit to complete investigations in a timely manner.

Recommendation 21. Improve communications within the department through a variety of formal and informal communications channels.

Recommendation 22. Initiate a strategic planning process for the department.

Recommendation 23. Conduct teambuilding workshops and training exercises focused on team skills that involve members from throughout the department.

Recommendation 24. Establish teams comprised of members of the department and Human Resources to create action plans for implementing recommendations in the Management Partners report.

Attachment B – Hiring Process Map

This process map was prepared based on Management Partners’ review of documents received from the City and stakeholder

Beverly Hills Police Department
 Hiring Process Map, February 2015

