



Agenda Item No. (3)

To: Rules, Policy and Industrial Relations Committee/Committee of the Whole
Meeting of November 14, 2024

From: Kellee J. Hopper, Deputy General Manager, Administration and Development
Denis J. Mulligan, General Manager

Subject: **APPROVE ACTIONS RELATIVE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR NON-
REPRESENTED JOB CLASSIFICATIONS**

Recommendation

The Rules, Policy and Industrial Relations Committee recommends the Board of Directors approve a Professional Development Program for non-represented job classifications, and have the General Manager implement the program in accordance with the guidelines discussed below. This action will not increase the number of positions in the District but is intended to provide ladders of growth and opportunity for staff.

This matter will be presented to the Board of Directors at its November 15, 2024, meeting for appropriate action.

Summary

The Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District's ("District") Engineering Department has had a Professional Development Program (PDP) in place for about twenty years. Under this program, the District can hire an engineer at either the Junior, Assistant, Associate or Senior Civil Engineer classification based on the individual's skills and the District's needs. The number of positions in the Department is approved by the Board, while the General Manager has the authority to hire and/or promote staff within the above-mentioned classifications. As employees progress in their professional development and assume greater responsibility, perform more complex work, and obtain the requisite professional credentials and licenses (as appropriate), they can be promoted to the next level in the classification series.

This item would provide a similar PDP for non-represented employees in the other District Departments.

In today's highly competitive workforce environment, the District – like other employers – has difficulty attracting a robust pool of candidates for some professional positions, particularly at the senior or more experienced level. Having the flexibility to sometimes fill positions at lower levels, and growing staff, would assist in accomplishing the work of the District, as well as providing opportunities to current and future employees.

Goals for the PDP include:

- Providing ladders of opportunity for high-performing staff wishing to continue and grow as they progress in their careers;
- Increasing staff retention to make long-term employment at the District even more attractive to employees;
- Developing strong District succession infrastructure by strengthening in-house knowledge and skills development; and,
- Providing opportunities for new staff to be placed appropriately on the ladder based on the skills they bring to the District.

Key Program Categories

The District needs staff with varying levels of technical expertise, as well as staff willing to manage others. Employees have individualized career desires and aspirations. Some desire to become managers. Others wish to progress based on their technical expertise but do not desire to manage others. For that reason, staff proposes three distinct pathways:

- ***Leadership Pathway*** refers to a career path that involves taking on leadership roles and responsibilities.
- ***Senior Level Development Pathway (non-managerial)*** refers to a career progression path where an employee progresses to a high level of responsibility and expertise, typically characterized by extensive experience in their field, advanced skills and/or mentoring responsibilities.
- ***Individual Contributor Pathway (non-managerial)*** refers to a career path for employees that focuses on completing tasks and projects. The track focus will see to increase one's own productivity and developing specialized skills over time.

These three pathways will overlap and provide an employee the opportunity to update their goals as their skills grow. Individual departments will consider their roles along with succession goals and operational requirements and develop proposed pathway tracks. These proposals will be submitted to the appropriate Officer or Deputy General Manager for concurrence before being submitted to Human Resources Department for concurrence and then the General Manager for consideration and approval.

Many of our departments are structured with classifications and titles that best fit their needs. For instance, some departments may have Coordinators, while others may start at the Specialist level. That makes it difficult to homogenize title progression. For that reason, staff proposes that the Officer or Deputy General Manager develop individualized programs for their Departments and submit them to Human Resources for review and approval and then to the General Manager for final approval.

The program will not result in a situation where every employee in that department advances to the top of the PDP ladder, unless there is a unique circumstance that so requires. For example, it would not be operationally expedient to have all Principal or Senior Level staff within a department and no lower-level classifications. When considering a professional development request, the

Deputy General Manager/Officer, Human Resources Department and the General Manager will review each department’s needs and justification for its proposed program.

The table below shows examples of potential PDP programs for some departments in the District that have indicated a desire to develop programs for staff development and succession planning efforts.

Examples of Potential PDP Programs at the Department Level

PAYROLL DEPARTMENT	HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT	ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT
Specialist Technician I Technician II Technician III Supervisor/Manager	Coordinator Technician I Technician II Analyst Senior Analyst Administrator	Specialist Associate Accountant Accounting Analyst Senior Accounting Analyst Supervisor/Manager
	PLANNING DEPARTMENT	
	Associate Planner Planner Senior Planner Principal Planner	

Other departments may develop similar ladders and pathways for consideration and approval.

Program Details

At the time the PDP path is being proposed for a work unit, that unit must develop a proposed Professional Development Plan chart and job descriptions to account for each position and progression. A statement of justification must also be developed. This information then will be submitted to Human Resources and the General Manager for approval. The PDP will not increase the salary of the existing positions that will be the top rung of the ladder, such as Senior and Principal levels.

The PDP will be a competency-based program. Specific parameters will govern the program. Each employee plan would require stated milestones that must be attained along the path of career progression.

The PDP will not result in any managers and/or directors receiving compensation increases.

The program will focus on creating ladders of growth and opportunity for staff progression and development along the three proposed careers tracks for those staff reporting to the managers and directors. Importantly, each employee program would also include a training component, especially for those eligible for senior-level or leadership roles. The District has a cloud-based Learning Management System in place that offers pertinent training modules that will assist employees as they progress in their careers. Managers will work with Human Resources to develop applicable training milestones for the individual departments PDP, including both internally and externally available training opportunities.

Upon approval of the department's PDP plan, a manager may select an employee to participate in the program. Employee eligibility shall be based on the following requirements:

- Satisfactory performance review(s) on record; and,
- Regular and reliable attendance.

The PDP process for a Department is as follows:

- Manager recognizes an operational need for a PDP within their department.
- Manager works with the Officer or Deputy General Manager and Human Resources to create a justification for array of classifications (ladder) for the position in the department. This justification would include things like succession planning opportunities, growing and changing business needs, or resolution of compression issues, etc.
- Manager would create an applicable professional development plan. This plan must include things like:
 - Training Development – courses and trainings required as part of the career progression goals of the departments program.
 - Goals– milestones and identifying deliverables that must be satisfactorily achieved before being eligible to progress to the next level.
- Manager submits the proposed PDP to the Human Resources Department for review, assessment of proposed salary levels within the existing salary levels, and concurrence.
- HR submits the Proposed Plan to the General Manager for review and approval.

The General Manager will have the authority to place new hires on the PDP at the level commensurate with the skills they bring to the District, as well as the District's current needs. At that point, the new hire would be able to progress up the ladder as they learn new skills and meet the District's needs. Compensation will be controlled by the Board's salary compensation policy.

Compensation Structure

Human Resource staff will use existing salary ranges within the Department to develop proposed salary benchmarks for the new positions in the ladder for approval by the General Manager. District staff realizes that the introduction of additional classifications within a department may create potential compensation compression issues between new and old classifications. The creation of a PDP within a Department will not resolve any such compression issues, and the creation of a PDP will not result in any Senior, Principal and Director level staff receiving any change in compensation.

Fiscal Impact

Sufficient funds for staff to develop and implement the PDP plans are available in the FY 2024/25 District Division budget. Any costs associated with employees progressing to higher classifications on the PDP ladders during the current fiscal year will be funded from salary savings arising from vacant positions.