



Workforce Refresh: Plan, Grow, Go!

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**Texas Municipal Utilities
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Today's Learning Objectives

▲ Learning Objective 1

Demonstrate the ability to recruit the right team members

▲ Learning Objective 2

Stabilize your employee base with key retention approaches

▲ Learning Objective 3

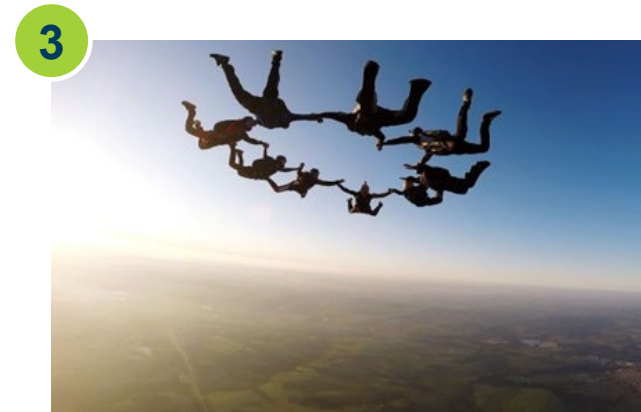
Achieve the goal of a refreshed workforce through succession planning





Recruit the right team members

Which photo reminds you of your team and why?



Recruit the right team members

SO, You have a VACANCY...



- ▲ Separate the position from the person
- ▲ What is the current role
- ▲ Update the job description
- ▲ Revise to add required skills, qualifications and experience
- ▲ Survey postings by other city employers (the competition) to review postings to note what stands out

Recruit the right team members

Use effective advertising and sourcing strategies

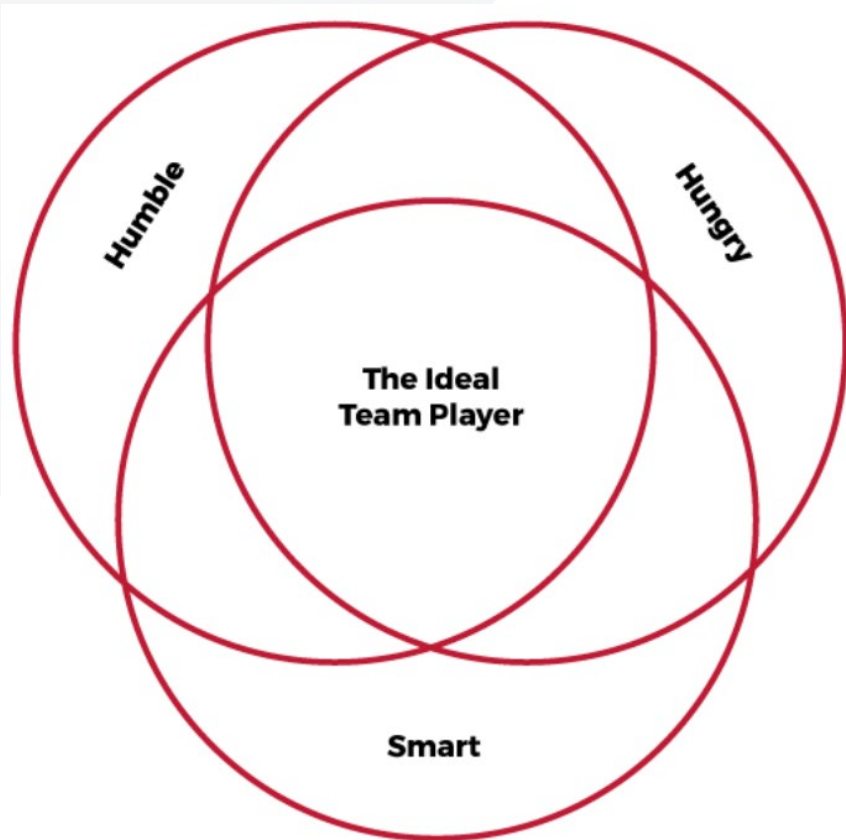


- ▶ **Tell the story about why working for your city and your department is AWESOME!**
- ▶ Step outside the box and showcase your stuff
- ▶ Utilize employee referrals
- ▶ Partner with recruitment and staffing agencies
- ▶ Goal: establish a consistent pipeline



Recruit the right team members

SO, You have a VACANCY... Get the right match for the work and the team



- ▲ Stay true to the role.... not personal traits
- ▲ Prepare a list of standardized questions, update regularly
- ▲ Focus on behavioral and situational questions
- ▲ Involve multiple interviewers
- ▲ Use a scoring system to evaluate responses
- ▲ Plan time to debrief as soon as possible after everyone has interviewed the candidate



Fill it SMART...by interviewing for the teachable, trainable and the team player



Retention: What staff retention programs are you using?

What strategies are you using and what works best?



Work recognition



Open lines of communication



Market competitiveness



Longevity pay



Positive culture building



Retention approaches to stabilize the work group

How can our retention strategies be proactive and supportive?



- ▲ Ask what factors matter to your staff right now?
- ▲ Update the titles/duties in job descriptions to reflect today's work
- ▲ Revise to add required skills, qualifications, and experience
- ▲ Benchmark against peer utilities
- ▲ Tailor messaging and retention efforts to different career stages

Stabilize the employee base through retention

Key actions to drive retention



- ▲ Cultivate a culture of belonging
- ▲ Offer leadership opportunities, including short-term stints
- ▲ Encourage striving for “the next level”
- ▲ Make time for employee development and training
- ▲ Build connection through team engagement and shared wins

A Case Study: Cedar Park Public Works and Utilities

A Future Look meant a pause to revisit the Vision, Purpose and Goals

- ▲ The back story
- ▲ The goal
- ▲ The work





A Case Study: Cedar Park Public Works and Utilities

Revisit Vision, Purpose and Goals

What are department goals and essential services...?

Are these currently in place?

Who is working on these today?

Does/ will it make a difference to residents, businesses or the organization?



Mission:

The Cedar Park Public Works & Utilities Department ensures a quality public works infrastructure and safe environment for our customers by providing high quality technical regulatory and advisory services, construction compliance monitoring and information services on water conservation and engineering issues in a professional and responsive manner.

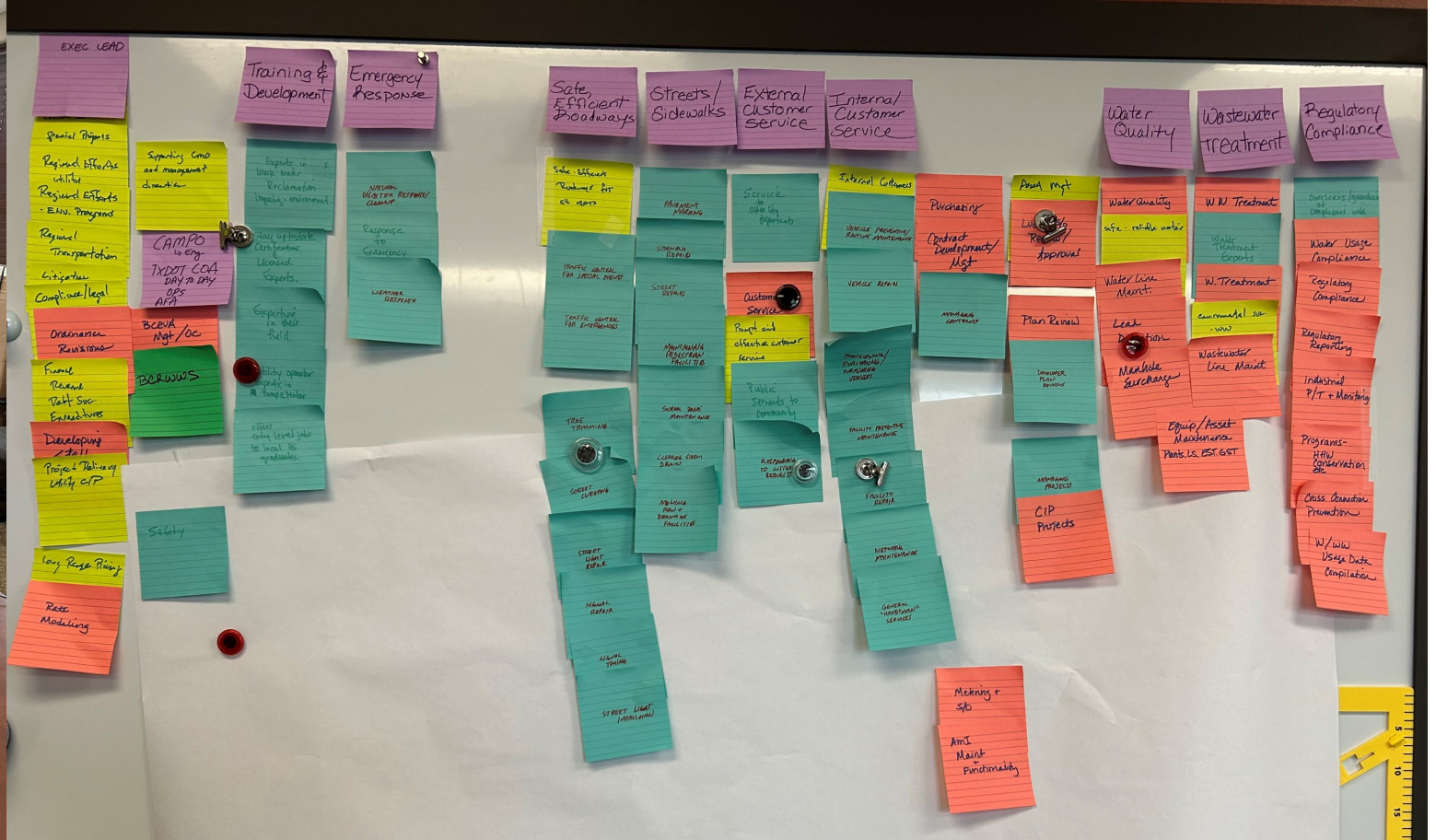


Revisiting the Vision and Goals Led to Strategic Initiatives



What are the programs central to our department, and do they need to be updated to remain effective?

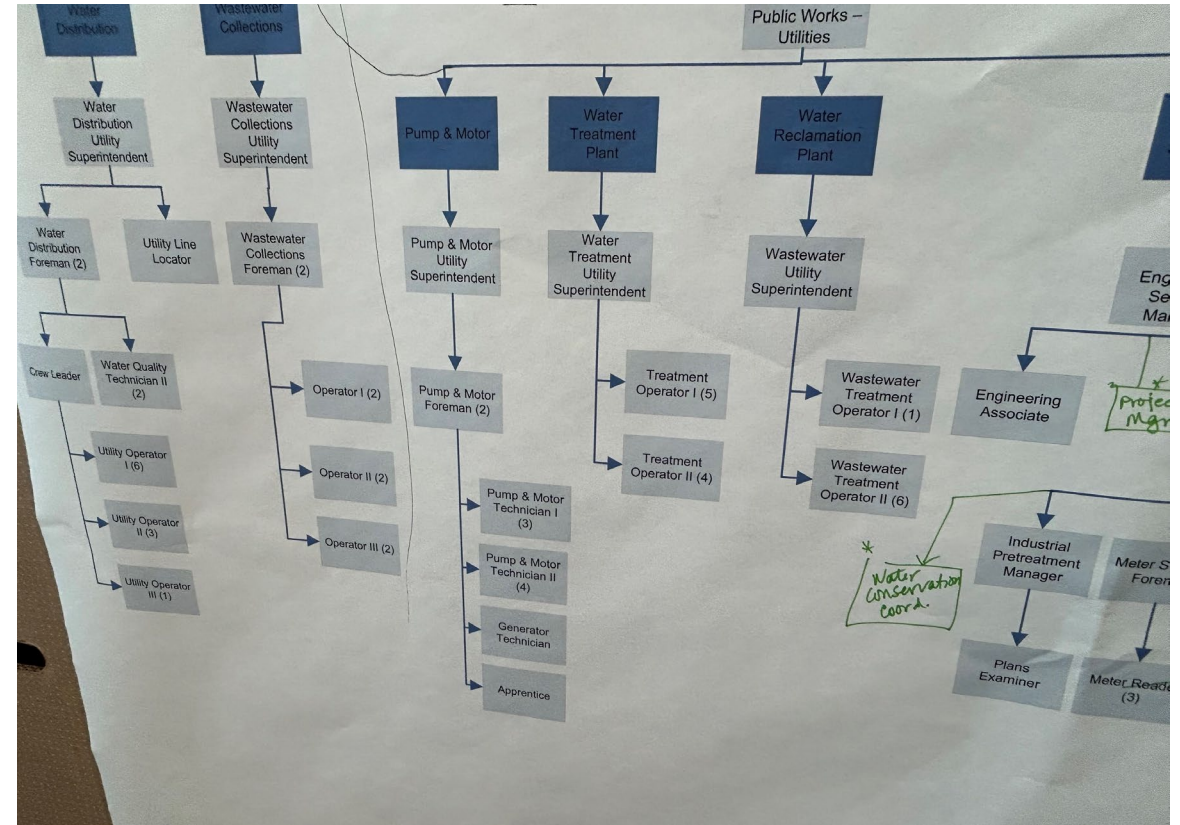
Identifying the essential services delivered by the department



Assessing if Strategic Services were staffed

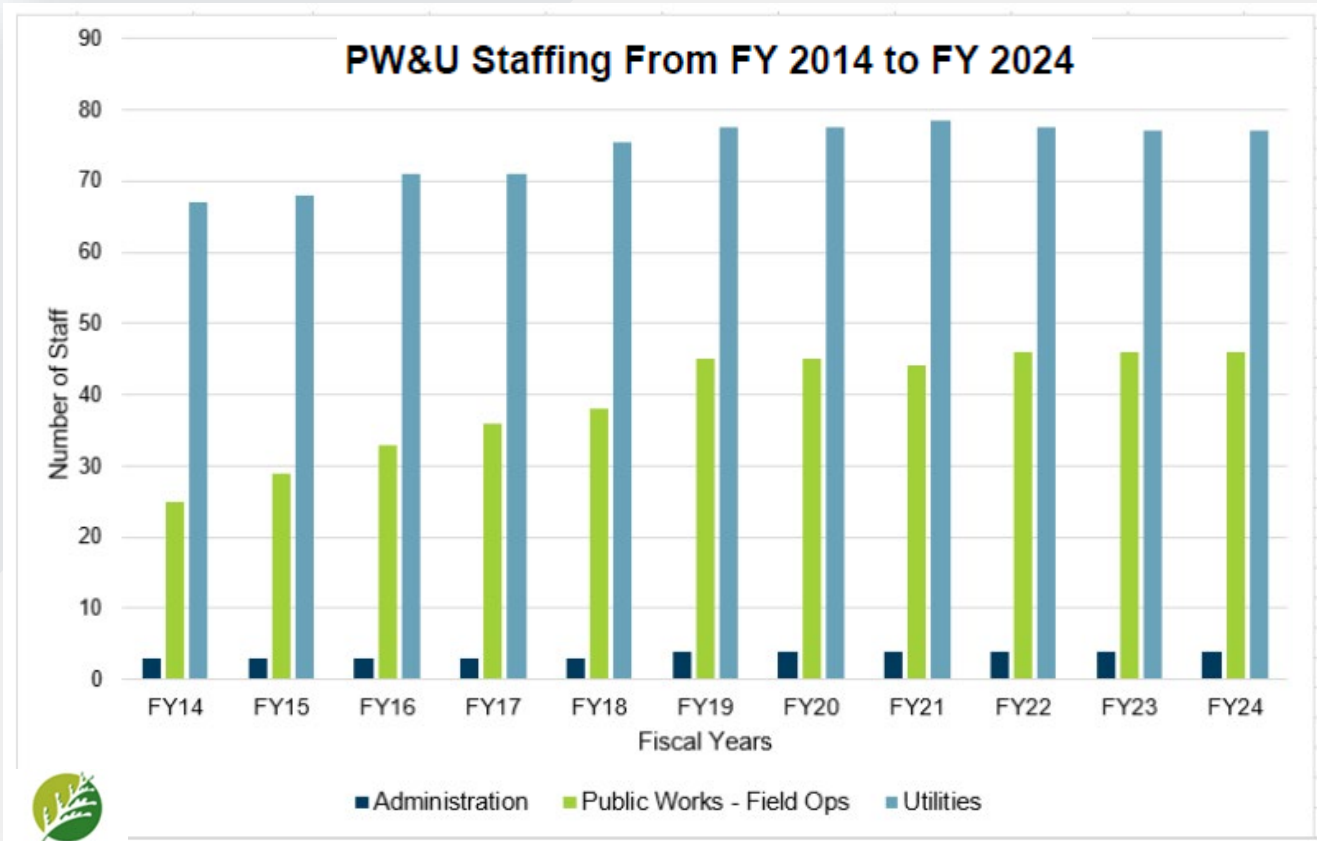
Reflect, Analyze

- Assessing what has changed
- Identifying what challenges are ahead
- Identifying gaps in service focus
- Reviewing current staffing
- Aligning people to the strategic services
- Buy in from HR and partnership



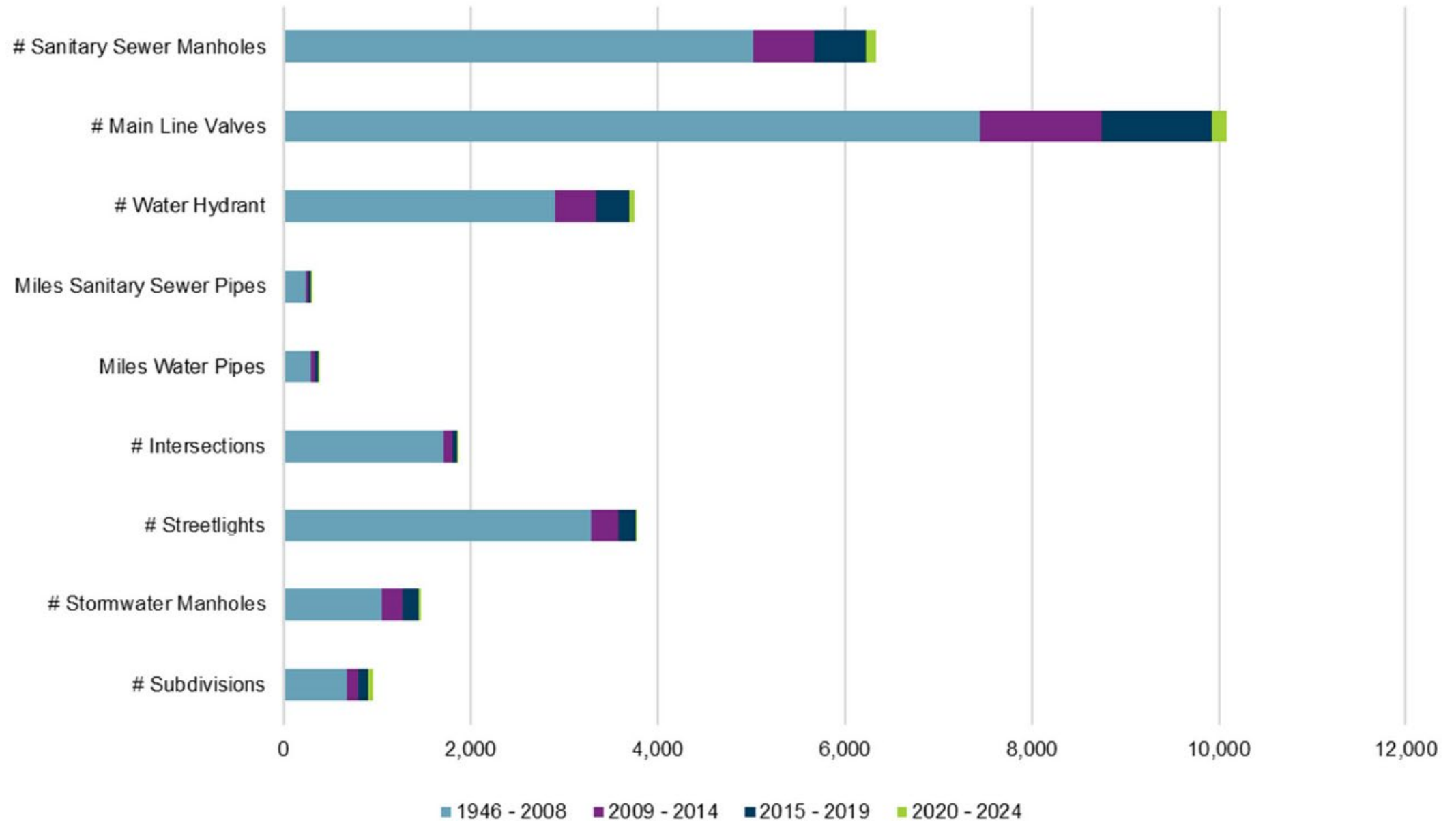
Department Workforce Data Reviewed

Data helps to tell the story!



- ▲ Staff turn over: reasons from exit interviews
- ▲ Staffing level history over last 10 years
- ▲ Vacancy rates by division and position
- ▲ Work order history and age of infrastructure
- ▲ Staffing history vs. maintenance need

City Development and Infrastructure Assets Added Over Time



Applying the Data



Human Capital:

- Enhance Public Works & Utilities focused recruiting strategies
- Build employee retention via career advancement pathways: training and career ladders
- Develop a succession plan to ensure continuity of operations



Organizational Structure:

- Realign & adapt the department organizational structure to deliver present and future essential services



Operational Effectiveness:

- Expand the core business operations of the department
- Maintain regulatory compliance and enhance regulatory and resiliency operations
- Expand and operationalize the implementation of Asset Management Plan
- Seek APWA accreditation

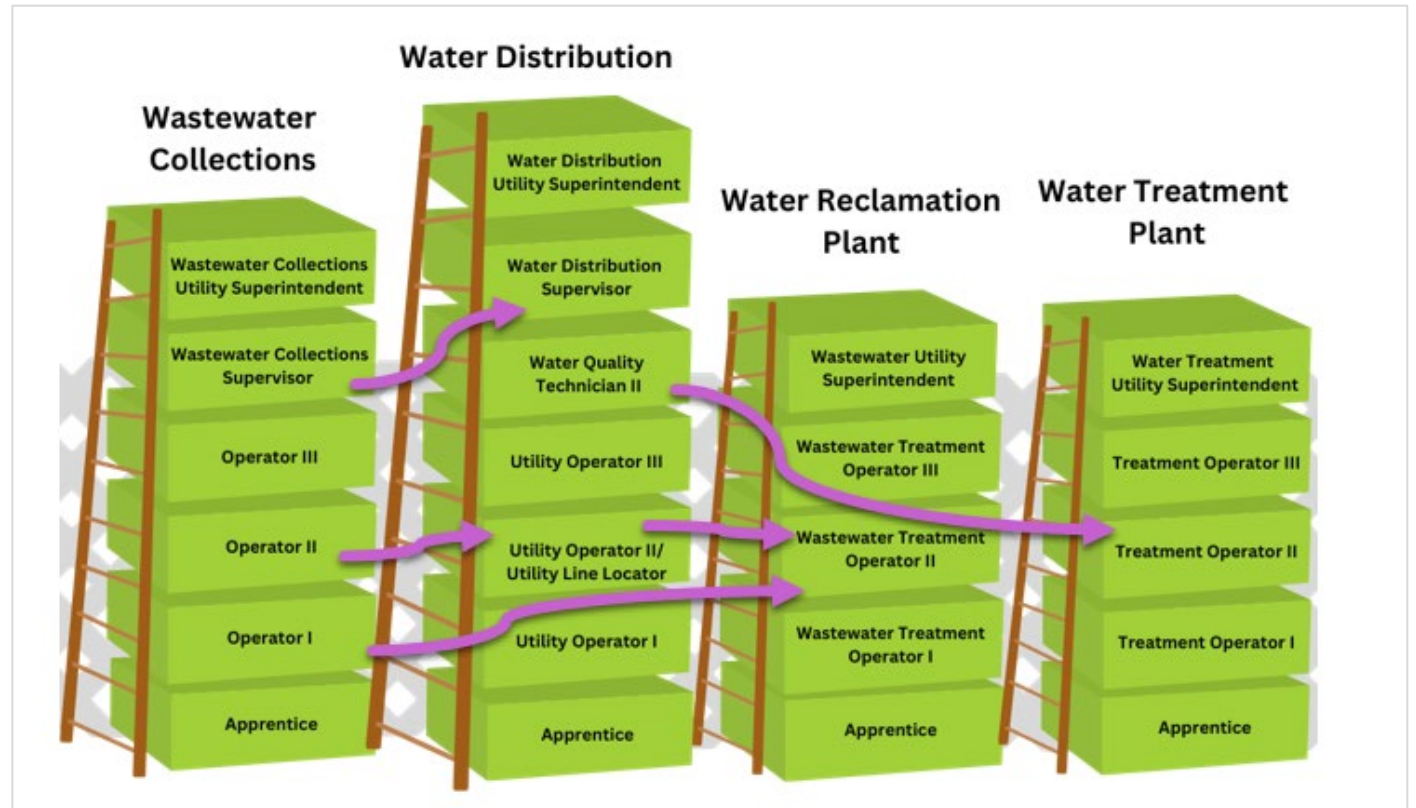
- ▲ Reviewed and updated job descriptions
- ▲ Reviewed existing staff responsibilities and future needs

- ▲ Identified positions that are frequently vacated and shored up
- ▲ Filled vacancies

Career progression is key to retention

Plan well, tell the story with data, get results!

- ▶ Career progression for all positions
- ▶ Job family progression for all position groups:
 - Utility Operator
 - Plant Operator
 - Pump and Motor Technician
 - Traffic Signal and Street Lights Technician
 - Facility Maintenance Technician
 - Equipment Mechanic
 - Equipment Operator



What Cedar Park identified as mission critical

The story: It takes work!



The change

Aging infrastructure and maintenance



The challenges

Drought, resiliency, more assets, regional partnerships



Mission critical

Recruit and retain; effectiveness depends on people to carry out



Recruiting wins

Staffing agency and high school internship/apprentice program



Retention wins

Cross-training program, recognized and promoted staff as part of succession planning



Lessons Learned and Key Takeaways

- ▲ Change must be planned and managed
- ▲ Establish a realistic time frame
- ▲ Find early wins
- ▲ There will be setbacks, plan to course correct and carry through
- ▲ Keep telling the story
- ▲ Align new hires to the organization with extensive training and onboarding

Figure 7.1: Implementation Timeline

Years									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Enhance Recruiting									
2. Build Employee Retention									
3. Develop a Succession Plan									
4. Realign & Readapt the Organizational Structure									
5. Expand Core Business Operations									
6. Enhance Resiliency Operations									
7. Expand Asset Management									
8. Seek APWA Accreditation									

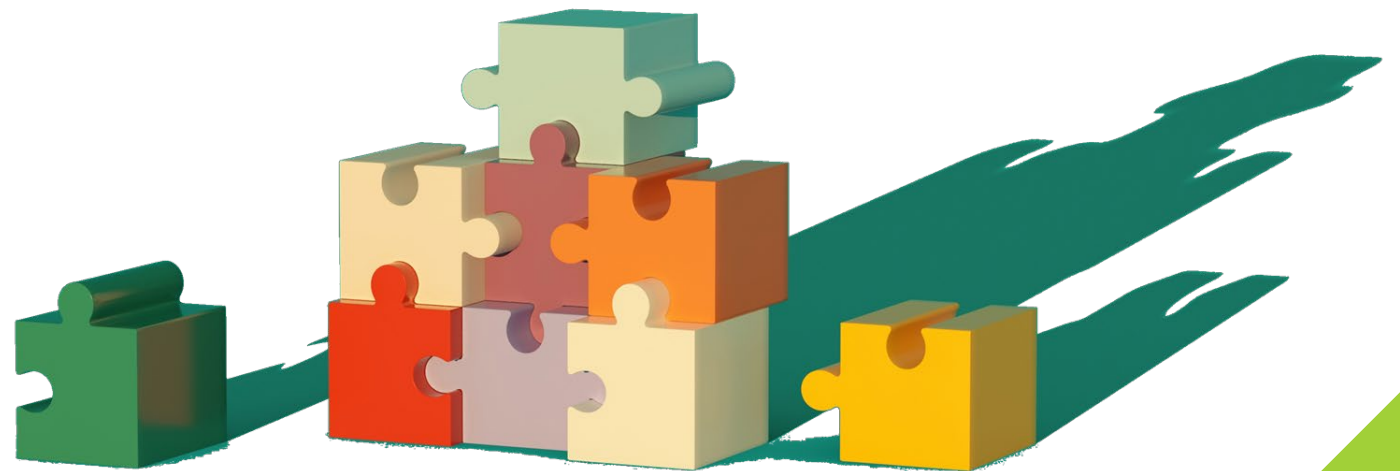


- In FY25, approved eight staff to meet infrastructure maintenance needs and realigned the organizational structure
- In FY26, Conservation Programs Manager, GIS Analyst

Refine our understanding of succession planning

Plan today for tomorrow will be here too soon

- ▲ Succession planning **IS NOT** replacement hiring
- ▲ **Succession planning requires planning and patience**
- ▲ Identify difficult to retain and difficult to hire for positions and adjust the approach
- ▲ Identify “mission critical” positions



What IS and is NOT succession planning

Plan today for tomorrow will be here too soon

- ▲ Succession planning should not be a secret
- ▲ It is intentional – staff should know there are training opportunities
- ▲ It is objective: Make sure the selection of internal candidates is objective, involves assessment of the technical, knowledge and judgement aspects of the job
- ▲ It is not about seniority or time in position





Key steps in succession planning

The conversation with staff should include:



Identify future service needs



Identify potential internal candidates for future positions and key roles



Update or create a training and development program



Engage staff supervisors and managers at all levels in the succession plan - build from the ground floor up!



Create development plans for potential candidates



Succession planning activities

Plan today, for tomorrow will be here too soon

- 1 Provide training and development opportunities: technical, management, leadership, strategic
- 2 Place staff on projects that will require growth skills
- 3 Communicate the succession planning process through supervisors
- 4 Monitor progress
- 5 Implement mentorship to boost candidate skills acquisition





Monitor and adjust the succession plan



Monitor the succession plan and remember to be transparent



Accept feedback from staff and supervisors



Provide feedback for staff in development roles



Update the succession plan periodically

Questions?

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