

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the City's Diversity Plan Initiatives, including goals, objectives, strategies and draft revisions to the City's Employment Policy. This report is in response to concerns raised by numerous Harrisonburg citizens and Virginia Organizing (VO). Expressed concerns included the adequacy of City policies and procedures and management oversight to ensure that all applicants were provided equitable opportunities for employment and advancement to supervisory and managerial positions.

Harrisonburg Human Resources staff members have contacted multiple localities and human resource institutions to learn of best practices related to diversity initiatives. I have had multiple conversations with Galloway Beck, the Human Resources Director with the City of Charlottesville on this topic. According to the Human Resources Director, the City of Charlottesville has struggled for a number of years to find an effective approach to attracting and retaining a diverse workforce. Many different variables affect an applicant's choice of employment and employer, including cost of living in the area, undocumented skills and abilities, lifestyle needs and so forth. Through this research process I have learned that Harrisonburg's goal of becoming a more diverse workforce will take time, commitment, perseverance and funding.

Initiatives for further exploration:

- Expand notice and advertisement of City positions openings by outreach to various institutions. This would include partnering with specific City departments to conduct outreaches to faith-based organizations and other minority group affiliates to market careers/positions that may have an underrepresentation within the City's current work force. This initiative may also include the assistance of professional organizations, civil leagues and technical schools where minorities and women attend or have an affiliation.

Human Resources will actively advertise City positions in publications which have a large readership with minority groups.

- Continue the use of social media as a promotional/recruitment tool.
- Increase recruitment efforts by establishing relationships with career representatives from historically minority-based colleges and universities, including meeting with Career Services directors to discuss participation in job fairs.
- Continue to provide Veteran preference for applicants and attend Veteran-targeted job fairs.
- Market the City and provide job opening information at community and cultural events.

- Develop a formalized mentoring and internship program for both the high school and college level for City of Harrisonburg youth in order to provide real-life job experiences and cultivate a desire for future employment with the City.
- Human Resources will meet with each City department to review revised (draft) hiring processes and procedures. Minimum hiring standards/requirements will be reviewed to ensure that minority groups are not adversely affected.
- Provide education and training for all managers/supervisors regarding workplace and cultural diversity and ensuring these employees understand their roles and responsibilities.