

Recruitment & Retention Workgroup

Final Report

August 30, 2019



Seattle
Innovation & Performance

Table of Contents

I. Executive Summary	1
II. Introduction	4
III. Understanding the Problem	5
IV. Recommended Initiatives	11
Recruitment.....	11
Initiative 1: Civilian to Sworn Pathway	12
Initiative 2: Recruitment Ambassadors	14
Initiative 3: Ride-Along Program	16
Hiring	19
Initiative 4: Leave No Candidate Behind	20
Initiative 5: Speedy Background Checks.....	22
Initiative 6: Flexible Testing	24
Initiative 7: Seattle Sampler	26
Retention.....	29
Initiative 8: Clear My Card	30
Initiative 9: Bureau Advisory Councils	32
Initiative 10: Step Into Our Shoes.....	34
Initiative 11: Develop Our People Leaders	36
Initiative 12: Wellness-First Schedules	38
V. Guiding Principles	40
VI. Conclusion	41
VII. Acknowledgements	42
VIII. Appendices	43
APPENDIX A: Design Approach	43
APPENDIX B: Research Summary.....	44
APPENDIX C: Key Findings.....	45
APPENDIX D: Alignment of Initiatives and Key Findings.....	53
APPENDIX E: Measurement Framework.....	54
APPENDIX F: Additional Initiatives.....	55

I. Executive Summary

America’s growing officer shortage is a recognized national crisis.¹ As the nation’s population has increased, the number of sworn officers has failed to keep pace. From 1997 to 2016, the total U.S. population increased by about 56 million (up 21%), the number of full-time sworn officers in law enforcement failed to keep pace - increasing by about 52,000 (up only 8%).² Across the nation, police agencies are seeking to understand and address the root causes of staffing issues.

The Seattle Police Department (SPD) is no exception in struggling to keep up with population growth. Whereas nationally the average number of full-time sworn officers per 1,000 U.S. residents registered 2.17 in 2016 (down 7% from 2.32 in 2007), Seattle’s comparable sworn officers per capita rate was only 2.00 for the same time period.³ In late 2018, the issue of SPD’s workforce was identified as a priority when the total number of sworn officers declined and SPD failed to meet hiring targets, creating a net loss in officers. Having fewer officers has implications for how SPD meets service goals and maintains its presence in the community.



The Mayor’s Office convened a Recruitment and Retention Workgroup (the “workgroup”) comprised of staff from the Innovation & Performance (IP) team, SPD, Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR), City Budget Office (CBO), City Council, and others to:

1. Better understand why new hires and overall sworn officer counts are declining
2. Identify short- and long-term strategies to improve recruitment and retention outcomes

Supporting near-term actions on this issue by SPD, the workgroup reviewed national best practices, analyzed SPD’s staffing trends, and extensively interviewed and surveyed stakeholders to understand the challenges facing SPD’s recruitment, hiring, and retention efforts. This document summarizes those findings and makes recommendations for potential solutions. Stakeholders included prospective and current applicants, recruits, sworn and civilian staff, and the workgroup and members of the Community Police Commission, Office of Police Accountability, Seattle Office of the Inspector General, Seattle Police Officers’ Guild, Seattle Police Management Association, other City departments, and the community.

The workgroup proposes SPD implement 12 initiatives to address challenges the organization faces in meeting its service goals:

- **Recruitment:** Three initiatives that seek to increase the number and diversity of applicants.
- **Hiring:** Four initiatives that seek to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the hiring process.

¹ Kaste, Martin, and Lori Mack. “Shortage of Officers Fuels Police Recruiting Crisis.” *NPR*, NPR, 11 Dec. 2018, www.npr.org/2018/12/11/675505052/shortage-of-officers-fuels-police-recruiting-crisis.

² Hyland, Shelley. “Full-Time Employees in Law Enforcement Agencies, 1997-2016.” *Bureau of Justice Statistics*, August 2018, p.1. Note: General-purpose law enforcement agencies include municipal, county, and regional police departments. Data updated every four years.

³ Ibid. Seattle Police Department. *2016 SPD Staffing Report*. Provided February 2019.

- **Retention:** Five initiatives that seek to retain our talented, well-trained staff.

In developing these initiatives, the workgroup sought to be data-informed, person-centered, and innovative. The workgroup embraced the interconnections of officers’ motivations for joining or leaving the force, the influence of community perceptions on policing, and the changing nature of police work to understand the complexities underpinning high-level trends. The recommended initiatives set forth in this report are intended to be implemented in coordination with one another to amplify the impact of individual efforts. We recommend that the City take a phased approach that allows for continued stakeholder engagement to ensure that solutions are designed and implemented to serve the needs of applicants, new hires, and current officers.

Implementation Scope and Schedule

Where possible estimates included in this plan leverage existing resources to accomplish initiative goals. In some cases, we have included recommendations for redeploying existing resources to enable successful achievement of desired outcomes. For those initiatives that cannot be achieved with existing resources estimates for new resources have been informed by previous projects of similar scope. For all initiatives, the project team advises SPD to develop and implement a measurement framework to assess whether efforts are helping to achieve the desired outcomes of increased applications, hires, and officers retained.⁴

Proposed Implementation Start Date	2019	2020				Resources Required*
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Recruitment						Sub-Total: \$105,000
1. Civilian to Sworn Pathway						\$30,000
2. Recruitment Rotations						\$75,000
3. Ride-Along Program						N/A
Hiring						Sub-Total: \$205,000
4. Leave No Candidate Behind						\$10,000
5. Speedy Background Checks						\$90,000
6. Flexible Testing						\$80,000
7. Seattle Sampler						\$25,000
Retention						Sub-Total: \$870,000
8. Clear My Card						\$10,000
9. Bureau Advisory Councils						\$50,000
10. Step Into Our Shoes						N/A
11. Develop Our People Leaders						\$800,000
12. Wellness-First Schedules						\$10,000
Staffing						Sub-Total: \$550,000
A. Project Manager (Term-Limited)						\$190,000
B. Administrative Staff Analyst						\$140,000
C. Web Development Specialist (Term-Limited)						\$70,000
D. Training Coordinator (Term-Limited)						\$150,000
TOTAL						\$1,730,000
*Amounts provided are estimates for 2019 and 2020, a combination of one-time and recurring costs, and subject to change based on results from initiative prototyping and testing.						

⁴ See Appendix E for a proposed high-level measurement framework.

Moving Forward

SPD will leverage the workgroup’s insights and recommendations to inform a Strategic Hiring and Retention plan. SPD is in the process of forming an implementation team consisting of a project manager, part-time design consultant, initiative sponsors, and key collaborators from SDHR and other City departments to move forward with the recommendations. The SPD-led project team will be best positioned to set up initiatives for success, monitor their implementation, and evaluate their effectiveness. SPD will continue to provide monthly and quarterly staffing updates to City Council in accordance with Statement of Legislative Intent 38-6-A-2. Given many of the recruitment, hiring, and retention initiatives and ideas outlined in this report are likely transferable, we recommend sharing implementation results with SDHR and other City partners to ensure these ideas can be leveraged across departments.

How to read this document

This document is designed to provide a high-level overview of the proposed initiatives for improving SPD’s recruitment, hiring, and retention processes. Within each workstream are initiatives that aim to make a measurable and sustained impact on SPD’s staffing levels. The recommended initiatives and proposed high-level implementation plans are the result of our data analysis, research, and feedback from stakeholders. For any of the initiatives to be successful, a designated lead and support team must be assigned, adequate resourcing must be provided, an iterative design and testing process must be implemented, feedback from end users (i.e., prospective applicants, in-process candidates, and current officers) must inform implementation, and information must be timely communicated to stakeholders.

II. Introduction

Background

The Seattle Police Department (SPD) is no exception in struggling to keep pace with population growth. Whereas nationally the average number of full-time sworn officers per 1,000 U.S. residents registered 2.17 in 2016 (down 7% from 2.32 in 2007), Seattle’s comparable per capita rate was only 2.00.⁵ In late 2018 the issue of SPD’s workforce was identified as a priority when the total number of sworn officers declined and hiring targets were not met, creating a net loss in officers. Fewer officers have implications for how SPD meets service goals and maintains its presence in the community.

The objectives of the Recruitment and Retention Project were to:

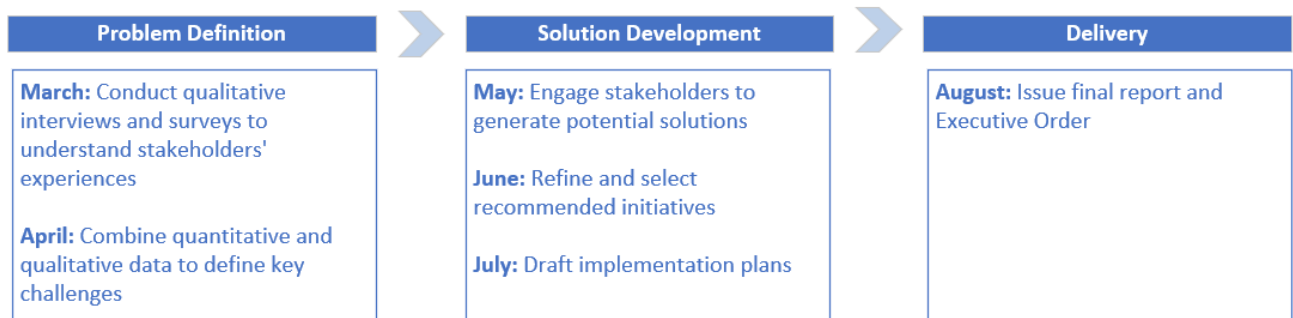
1. Better understand why new hires and overall sworn officer counts are declining
2. Identify short- and long-term strategies to improve hiring and retention outcomes

The Mayor’s Office convened a workgroup comprised of staff from the Mayor’s Office, Seattle Police Department (SPD), Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR), City Budget Office (CBO), City Council, and others to perform a deep dive into the challenges SPD is currently facing recruiting and retaining officers. The workgroup met monthly to review national best practices, study SPD’s performance using available internal and public data, and to develop long-term strategies to meet recruitment and retention goals informed by this research.

This project was led by Innovation & Performance, a team within the City Budget Office. The Innovation & Performance team’s mission is to partner with City departments using data and design to creatively solve problems. The core project team created a research plan, conducted research activities, facilitated workshops to generate ideas, and developed recommendations by combining quantitative analysis and design thinking.

Methodology

This six-month project used a data-driven and design thinking approach to explore opportunities and challenges associated with SPD’s current recruitment, hiring, and retention processes. The project was sequenced into three key phases: problem definition, solution development, and delivery.



⁵ Hyland, Shelley. “Full-Time Employees in Law Enforcement Agencies, 1997-2016.” *Bureau of Justice Statistics*, August 2018, p.1. Note: General-purpose law enforcement agencies include municipal, county, and regional police departments. Data updated every four years. Seattle Police Department. *2016 SPD Staffing Report*. Provided February 2019.

III. Understanding the Problem

The problem definition phase consisted of two parts: quantitative trend analysis and qualitative ethnographic research.

Phase I: Quantitative Trend Analysis

To better understand recruitment and retention challenges, the project team first sought to deconstruct the growth of sworn officer numbers into five simple, mechanical drivers:



SPD personnel data showed that the aggregate picture - 2018's decline in the number of sworn officers – was driven by underperformance across each of these drivers; 2018 had lower rates of entry level officer hiring, lower rates of lateral hiring, higher rates of student separations, higher rates of trainee separations, and higher rates of fully-trained officer separations than in the five previous years.⁶ In particular, higher rates of separation by fully-trained officers alone accounted for 50% of 2018's deviation from the 2012-2017 trend. One positive trend among joiners - in 2018, 36% of new hires identified as people of color, up from 29% of new hires in 2015.

Examining these determinants

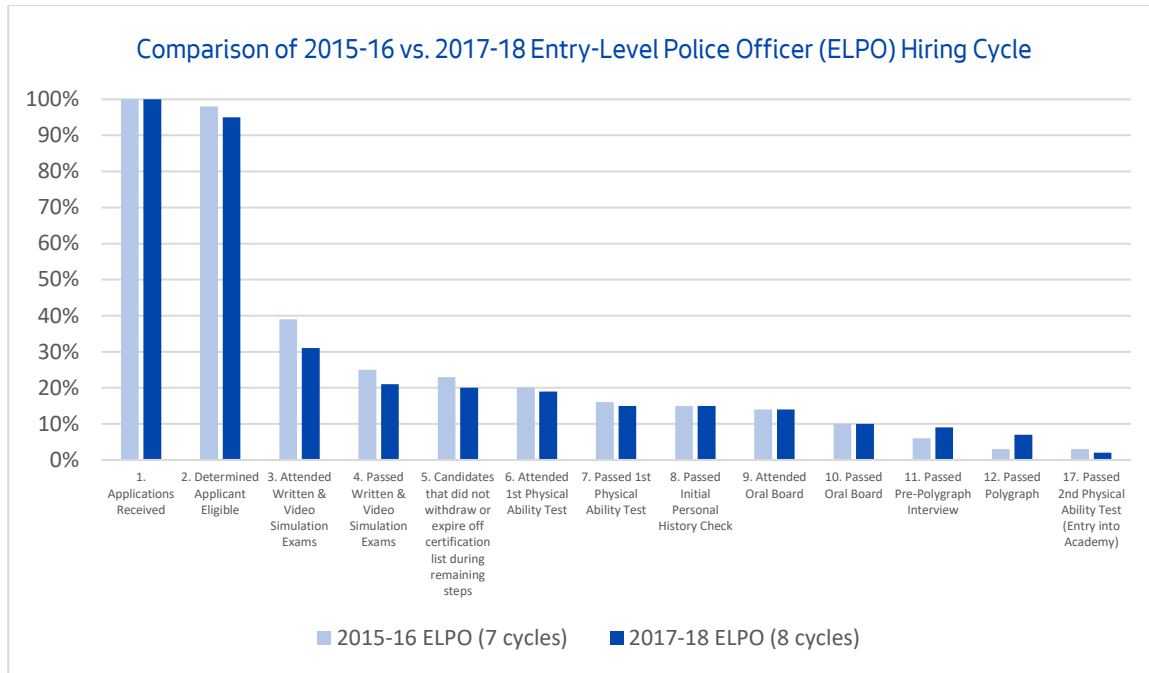
The higher level of separations by fully trained officers was driven by resignation. Accounting for 60% of the 2018 deviation from trend levels in fully trained officer separations, those who resigned in 2017-18 were disproportionately police officers leaving patrol assignments, younger and with fewer years of service than those who remained. They were also disproportionately residents of cities other than Seattle; compared to other large forces, a relatively low proportion of SPD's officers live within the City of Seattle. Where information was recorded, around 70% of those who resigned left to join another force, typically forces within 100 miles of Seattle. These officers were leaving SPD, but not leaving policing or even the region. Additionally, the rate of retirements had increased in 2018 – reflecting historic cycles of recruitment – but only ~11-12% of those eligible to retire in 2017 and 2018 retired each year.

Building on previous work, we divided the SPD entry-level hiring process into 17 stages. Only 31% of initial applicants attended written and video simulation exams – the first contact point in the entry-level hiring process.

⁶ Unless otherwise specified, all Seattle Police Department (SPD) staffing and personnel data provided by SPD Human Resources in February and March 2019.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Recruitment data is not encouraging. Entry-level applications have trended down since 2015, with 2018 applications 20% below 2015. SPD’s demanding recruitment process meant that in the 2017-18 hiring cycle 6,328 applicants generated only 114 academy entrants, a conversion rate of less than 2% (slightly less than 2015-16). Recent data suggest that the average time between application and hiring was 184 days, higher than other local cities interviewed. While the conversion rate of lateral applications was higher than for entry-level applications, the decline was more severe over the same period; 2018 applications were 50% below 2015 levels⁷.



Points of leverage

An initial quantitative survey suggested some potential points of leverage for the project. Web activity on the SPD applications portal suggested that some marketing efforts had been particularly effective in driving traffic to the application portal. In recent application cycles, increased application rates were not associated with lower rates of scheduling initial exams, suggesting that incremental applicants were as engaged in the process as others. Out-of-state candidates progressed through the hiring process at a comparable rate to in-state candidates, suggesting potential to expand recruiting efforts. Reported attendance at an SPD hiring workshop was shown to be a strong predictor of success in early stages of hiring process, suggesting that additional hiring workshops could support higher hiring conversion rates.

From application to passing written exam, we tested the association of candidate-reported variables with hiring success. After controlling for referral pathway, gender, race and previous exam attendance, workshop attendance was associated with a 19% greater chance of success.

⁷ Steps 13-16 (not shown) include background check, pre-hiring medical, and psychological examinations.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Limitations

The quantitative analysis had some limitations. In particular, comparable analysis of other jurisdictions was hampered by the lack of publicly available force-level data and the publication cycles of key Federal datasets.

Phase II: Qualitative Research

Outreach

The second phase of the research focused on ethnographic research, which draws upon observations and interviews. The findings from the quantitative analysis – particularly the decrease in entry-level applications, continuing low hiring conversion rate, and increase in young officers resigning – clarified what was happening and who was leaving, but didn't address why. To better understand the context, trends, and experiences of SPD applicants and officers, the project team interviewed more than 10 prospective applicants, 20 recruits, 60 officers, and 30 subject matter experts from command staff, City, and other police agencies during a six-week period. In addition to interviews, the project team attended workshops for prospective applicants, observed recruit training activities, participated in ride-alongs, and conducted surveys of applicants and officers to better understand individuals' motivations and experiences as they engaged with SPD and its systems, processes, and staff. The qualitative phase built upon the quantitative findings by addressing the following research questions:

Recruitment	Hiring	Retention
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Who is applying?What motivates individuals to apply?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">How well are we supporting candidates during the hiring process?Where are opportunities for improvement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">What is the current experience of officers?Why are some leaving?How might retention issues be linked to recruitment?

Key findings

The project team then analyzed trends, interview notes, and survey data collected during the quantitative and qualitative research phases to better understand the challenges facing SPD applicants and officers. The team's synthesis identified seven key findings for consideration in developing potential solutions to address recruitment, hiring, and retention challenges:

- 1. Expand recruiting efforts to reach new types of candidates:** Increase the pool of applicants by sourcing quality candidates who otherwise would not apply because they do not know about the profession or hiring opportunities.
- 2. Make recruiting a team sport:** Tap into existing networks to identify quality candidates through current employees. Police officers can be our most effective recruiters.
- 3. Optimize the hiring process:** Find ways to ease and shorten the length of the recruitment and hiring process to maximize chances of catching valuable talent. Once in the door continue to set candidates up for success.
- 4. Refine the way we show support for officers:** Police officers want to feel supported and valued by city leadership and command staff.
- 5. Ensure that systems of accountability produce intended results:** Take time to evaluate and refine accountability systems to achieve performance goals while minimizing unintended consequences such as decreased engagement and morale.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

6. **Help officers navigate their role:** Police officers want to help people and to make a difference through their primary role as law enforcers. As societal expectations change, officers need a clear sense of purpose and opportunities to do meaningful work.
7. **Tell the story of the good work:** The general public is not aware of many aspects of police work. Create more opportunities to share stories of police work and celebrate department successes.

Developing Solutions

Process

The project team used the seven key findings informed by the quantitative and qualitative research phase as a framework to re-engage stakeholders in the solution development process. In total, nearly 1,000 ideas emerged from a facilitated ideation session with the workgroup, idea solicitation activities at the precincts, an SPD all-staff survey, and interviews with subject matter experts and other local and national police jurisdictions. The project team created a master list of potential solutions, grouped similar ideas, and then noted the level of support for each and the key finding(s) (e.g., “Help officers to navigate their role”) the idea addressed.

Selection

The project team’s quantitative and qualitative research made clear that the selected portfolio of initiatives must:

- Focus on retention as well as recruitment to stabilize staffing levels
- Include both “quick wins” to garner initial support and longer-term, more strategic efforts to effect system-level change
- Address all seven key findings to maximize collective impact

To achieve this, the project team applied the following design criteria assessing the anticipated impact and feasibility of each idea to the portfolio of potential solutions:

Impact	Feasibility
Extent to which ideas support key findings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Expand recruiting efforts to reach new types of candidates▪ Make recruiting a team sport▪ Optimize the hiring process▪ Show support for officers▪ Ensure systems of accountability produce intended results▪ Help officers to navigate their role▪ Tell the story of the good work	Likelihood of success: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Departmental support▪ Political will▪ Funding▪ Staffing requirements▪ Labor bargaining implications▪ Implementation time▪ Measurable impact

The selection process resulted in 12 initiatives prioritized for implementation⁸:

⁸ See Appendix F for a list of initiatives the workgroup considered but ultimately did not select.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Recruitment	Hiring	Retention
1. Civilian to Sworn Pathway 2. Recruitment Rotations 3. Ride-Along Program	4. Leave No Candidate Behind 5. Speedy Background Checks 6. Flexible Testing 7. Seattle Sampler	8. Clear My Card 9. Bureau Advisory Councils 10. Step Into Our Shoes 11. Develop Our People Leaders 12. Wellness-First Schedules

Proposed Implementation Timeline and Resourcing

Where possible estimates included in this plan leverage existing resources to accomplish initiative goals. In some cases, we have included recommendations for redeploying existing resources to achieve desired outcomes. For those initiatives that cannot be achieved with existing resources estimates for new resources have been informed by previous projects of similar scope. For all initiatives the project team advises SPD to identify and implement a measurement framework to assess whether efforts are helping to achieve the desired outcomes of increased applications, hires, and officers retained.⁹

Proposed Implementation Start Date	2019		2020			Resources Required
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Recruitment						Sub-Total: \$105,000
1. Civilian to Sworn Pathway						\$30,000
2. Recruitment Rotations						\$75,000
3. Ride-Along Program						N/A
Hiring						Sub-Total: \$205,000
4. Leave No Candidate Behind						\$10,000
5. Speedy Background Checks						\$90,000
6. Flexible Testing						\$80,000
7. Seattle Sampler						\$25,000
Retention						Sub-Total: \$870,000
8. Clear My Card						\$10,000
9. Bureau Advisory Councils						\$50,000
10. Step Into Our Shoes						N/A
11. Develop Our People Leaders						\$800,000
12. Wellness-First Schedules						\$10,000
Staffing to Support Initiatives						Sub-Total: \$550,000
A. Project Manager (Term-Limited SA-2)						\$190,000
B. Administrative Staff Analyst						\$140,000
C. Web Development Specialist (Term-Limited)						\$70,000
D. Training Coordinator (Term-Limited SA-2)						\$150,000
TOTAL						\$1,730,000
Note: Amounts provided are estimates and are subject to change based on results from initiative prototyping and testing.						

⁹ See Appendix E for a proposed high-level measurement framework, to be further developed by SPD.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Race & Social Justice Initiative

Through the project methodology, we involved representative samples of impacted stakeholders (i.e., prospective applicants, candidates, and current officers) in the problem definition and the design of this plan's recommended initiatives. The project team disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data to better understand the disparate impact of current recruitment, hiring, and retention efforts on historically underrepresented populations, particularly people of color and women. The process emphasized participation from historically underrepresented populations and individuals connected to police work to expand the knowledge base and to inform the recommended initiatives. This project did not include a formal Racial Equity Toolkit analysis.

We recommend that SPD work closely with its Change Team during the implementation of each initiative to collect and analyze data to evaluate whether the strategy is having unintended consequences and/or disparate impacts. SPD must hold itself accountable in sharing information learned from its analyses with internal and external stakeholders.

IV. Recommended Initiatives

Recruitment

Police departments nationally are struggling to recruit talent. A recent workforce study found that the percentage of state and local governments rating police officers as “hard to recruit” positions has grown from 3.3 percent in 2009 to 26.5 percent in 2018.¹⁰ A strong job market, heightened public skepticism of policing, and changes in generational preferences have been blamed for reducing the pool of interested candidates.

Many of these factors ring true in Seattle where the unemployment rate is low and wages and salaries have been increasing at a rate greater than the national trend.¹¹ While public perceptions overall remain steady with high approval rates, younger residents who may be potential hires are less likely to approve of SPD than their older counterparts: 68% of residents under the age 35 approve of SPD, compared with 77% of those over the age of 35.¹² Jurisdictions nationally and regionally are all aggressively hiring from the same limited pool of applicants. Local police agencies, including Seattle, have made appeals to prospective candidates by offering competitive wages, incentives, and hiring bonuses. In March 2019, City Council approved and the Mayor signed a bill authorizing \$15,000 signing bonuses for lateral applicants (commiserate with several other jurisdictions) and \$7,500 signing bonuses for entry-level applicants (unique to Seattle).

While it is too early to assess the impact of these new signing bonuses on SPD’s recruitment results, our research suggests that SPD would benefit from additional initiatives aimed at increasing application rates. Given 2018 entry-level applications were down 20% and lateral applications were down 50% from 2015 levels, we recommend additional strategies focused on expanding and amplifying recruitment efforts.

The workgroup proposes three recruitment initiatives to increase the number and diversity of applicants. It is important to note that while SPD has made progress in hiring a more diverse force (e.g., 36% of new hires in 2018 identified as people of color compared to 34% of Seattle’s general population), there is still room for improvement in attracting more women (only 22% of new hires in 2018 were female compared to 50% of Seattle’s general population) and underrepresented racial subgroups to the force.¹³ The three recruitment initiatives aim to attract applicants by targeting new sources of talent, leveraging officers’ networks, and providing applicants with first-hand knowledge about Seattle policing.

¹⁰ *State and Local Government Workforce: 2018 Data and 10 Year Trends*, Center for State and Local Government Excellence, 2018.

¹¹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. “Seattle Area Economic Summary”. February 2019.

¹² Seattle Police Monitor. “Community Survey”. January 2019.

¹³ *U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Seattle City, Washington*.
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/seattlecitywashington/PST045218>.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Initiative 1: Civilian to Sworn Pathway

Problem

SPD seeks to expand the size and diversity of its force while retaining high standards. Local competition for candidates is fierce and departments are challenged to think creatively for how to recruit applicants who are mission-aligned and have strong work values. One untapped market for talent is City of Seattle employees. SPD does not currently directly recruit from other departments or leverage City staff to help with recruitment efforts, yet there is vast potential to better leverage our internal talent. For example, there are over 600 employees aged 20-34 (common age-range of applicants) who are employed in public-facing, service-related jobs in Seattle City Light, Parks & Recreation, Seattle Department of Transportation, and Seattle Public Utilities who may be interested in a career as an officer. Given the City workforce is more diverse than the current police force, City employees could provide a strong candidate pool for consideration.

“I would look for people that have the passion. Make them aware of the struggles of the job and make sure that they are up to that task. People who also didn't necessarily focus on enforcement, but focused on developing a sense of community with the people in the jurisdiction that they're working in.” – Civilian

*“If we keep using the same recruitment format we've always used, we'll get the same candidates.”
– SPD Command Staff Member*

Recommendation

Create pathways for City employees and connected youth to become sworn officers.¹⁴ Encourage permanent employees, temporary employees, and interns with exposure to law enforcement and social service fields (e.g., Parking Enforcement, 911 Dispatch, Community Policing Officers, Seattle Public Utilities, Parks and Recreation) to consider a future career as a sworn officer. Appeal to potential second career candidates by making connections between the desirable elements of employees' current City experiences (e.g., serving the community, exhibiting effective communication skills, engaging in problem-solving behavior) and the roles and responsibilities of officers. Consider expanding preference points awarded during the exam process to include all City employees, not just 911 dispatchers and parking enforcers. Additionally, increase efforts to acquaint youth with department employment opportunities by forging partnership with City-funded programs like Seattle Promise and the Explorers program. Targeting recruitment efforts to service-oriented civilian employees and program connected youth may also help diversify the police force as these populations are more diverse than the current police force.

Desired Outcomes

- Increase the number of City employees and connected youth applying for officer employment opportunities within SPD.
- Increase the number of applicants referred to SPD by City employees and connected youth.

¹⁴ “Connected youth” defined as young adults participating in City-funded programs and opportunities (e.g., Seattle Promise, SPD Explorers, Seattle Youth Employment Program, etc.).

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Indicators of Success

- #/% of targeted City employees and connected youth receiving direct outreach/messaging regarding SPD hiring needs and process
- #/% of targeted City employees and connected youth applying for officer positions in SPD
- #/% of targeted City employees and connected youth hired as officers in SPD
- #/% of applicants referred by City employees and connected youth

Implementation Plan

<p>Suggested Owners <i>Lead:</i> SPD Recruitment Team <i>Support:</i> SPD Collaborative Policing Bureau, Seattle Department of Human Resources, human resource leads from various City departments, Department of Education and Early Learning’s Seattle Promise program manager</p>	<p>Activities</p> <p>First 3 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assign SPD lead recruiter ▪ Conduct focus groups of City employees to understand perceptions of SPD officers and current knowledge of SPD’s hiring process ▪ Meet with City departments’ human resource leads to identify opportunities for collaboration ▪ Develop targeted recruitment strategy based on insights gleaned from focus groups to appeal to City employees <p>In 3-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pilot outreach to employees of targeted departments ▪ Connect with pathway program managers (e.g., SPD Explorers, SPD Community Policing, and Seattle Promise) to develop an SPD employment pipeline for prospective applicants <p>In 6+ months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor data to observe changes in applications received from or referred by City employees ▪ Send follow-up surveys to sample of SPD employees who expressed interest in applying/applied to understand motivations and challenges ▪ Pilot internship or other training opportunities for Seattle Promise participants to promote civilian to sworn pathways ▪ Integrate feedback from program staff and applicants ▪ Refine recruitment strategy accordingly
<p>Resources Required</p> <p><i>People:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruiters ▪ Administrative Staff Analyst ▪ Design Consultant ▪ Marketer/Brand manager <p><i>Materials/Tools:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Branding message ▪ Direct outreach materials ▪ In-person recruitment events ▪ Software management or other tool to track recruitment leads <p><i>Funds:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$30,000 annually 	
<p>Key Testable Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of knowledge about the application and hiring process is currently deterring 911 Dispatchers, Parking Enforcement, etc. from applying to be an officer. ▪ Participants in SPD’s Explorers Program would pursue a career in policing if certain barriers (e.g., lack of paid internships) were removed. 	

Initiative 2: Recruitment Ambassadors

Problem

SPD does not currently view recruitment as a department-wide effort. While the department has made efforts to identify and appoint officers to assist with recruitment efforts, a broader internal strategy that encourages greater staff participation would help SPD market itself to a new generation of workers. Research has shown that the best recruiters for a department are often its own personnel – more than 60 percent of law enforcement officers were drawn to their professions by friends or family within law enforcement.¹⁵ SPD could increase the quantity and diversity of individuals hired if everyone, not just the two designated recruiters, viewed themselves as recruiters. Internal strategies that emphasize relationship-building and partnerships with the public boost hiring of women and people of color.¹⁶ Increasing the public’s exposure to officers of different backgrounds and different lived experiences helps increase applicant pools and balance other recruitment strategies that are less focused on human interaction.

“Our officers have been very helpful in generating leads. They see the value in getting our department fully staffed. Thanks to them, 50% of our entry-level police officers have come from internal referrals.”
– Bellevue Police Department Recruiter

Recommendation

Build upon current department efforts to train a cadre of officers to act as recruitment ambassadors. Actively recruit across the department to attract ambassadors with different interests, areas of expertise, and networks to represent the department in new markets. Selected officers complete a brief training to learn about the recruitment and hiring process, strategies for successful recruitment, and the desired qualities and competencies of potential recruits. Recruitment ambassadors attend recruitment events as well as leverage their alumni, social, and professional networks and day-to-day interactions with the public to directly recruit prospective applicants. They conduct recruitment activities during regular shifts or as part of approved overtime activities. By making recruitment a team effort, SPD positions itself to both increase the number of contacts made and diversity of the networks used to recruit talent. Efforts to engage staff in recruitment must be tied to the implementation of the five retention initiatives. Staff must agree that SPD is a desirable place to work in order to actively recruit their networks. Finally, to help further incentivize all members of the agency to engage in recruitment activities, SPD should award a cash bonus to officers who refer a candidate who successfully completes field training. The cash incentive would replace the current paid day off incentive which can be operationally challenging given current staffing levels.

Desired Outcomes

- Expand outreach to different talent pipelines to attract qualified, diverse applicants not targeted by existing recruitment efforts.
- Increase officer engagement by valuing their expertise and networks in recruiting future cohorts.

¹⁵ Langham, Lt. Ben. “Millennials and Improving Recruitment in Law Enforcement.” *The Police Chief*, 24 May 2017, www.policechiefmagazine.org/millennials-and-improving-recruitment/. Accessed 22 April 2019.

¹⁶ Wilson, Jeremy, et al. “Police Recruitment and Retention for the New Millennium: The State of Knowledge,” *RAND Center on Quality Policing*, 2010, p. 71.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Indicators of Success

- #/% of applicants referred by a recruitment ambassador
- #/% of female/people of color applicants referred by a recruitment ambassador
- #/% of SPD staff trained as recruitment ambassadors
- #/% of SPD officers reporting they would recommend SPD to a friend or colleague

Implementation Plan

<p>Suggested Owners <i>Lead:</i> SPD Recruitment Team <i>Support:</i> Seattle Department of Human Resources</p>	<p>Activities</p> <p>First 3 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hire Administrative Staff Analyst to support project implementation ▪ Document current SPD officer recruitment programming ▪ Research best practices for developing officer recruiter programs ▪ Interview prospective and recent applicants to identify opportunities for Recruitment Ambassadors to meaningfully connect with prospective applicants ▪ Devise potential recruitment assignments (e.g., speak at alumni events, visit SYEP interns) based on research and feedback ▪ Create and test messaging to determine what attracts officers to serve as recruitment ambassadors ▪ Determine meaningful referral bonus (e.g., \$2,000) thresholds based on market analysis and officer feedback ▪ Document ideal future state <p>In 3-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Secure financial resources for proposed referral bonus (target 10 referrals in year one) ▪ Design tracking system for Recruitment Ambassadors to self-report their recruitment activities to help assess impact ▪ Design officer selection process, including identifying desired traits of quality participants ▪ Design, test, and deploy Recruitment Ambassador training curriculum ▪ Communicate Recruitment Ambassador opportunity within SPD ▪ Select and train first cohort of Recruitment Ambassadors
<p>Resources Required</p> <p><i>People:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Administrative Staff Analyst ▪ Design Consultant ▪ Officers Recruitment Ambassadors <p><i>Materials/Tools:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruitment fliers/handouts ▪ Recruitment Ambassador training curriculum ▪ Internal recruitment activity tracking system <p><i>Funds:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$20,000 annually for referral bonuses ▪ \$55,000 annually for recruitment ambassador overtime 	
<p>Key Testable Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Potential candidates are more likely to apply if recruited by those from similar backgrounds. ▪ Having an opportunity to participate in recruiting efforts increases officer engagement. 	

	<p>In 6+ months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Communicate opportunities for Recruitment Ambassadors to engage with prospective applicants▪ Monitor Recruitment Ambassadors activity levels and connections to application trends▪ Check-in with applicants and Recruitment Ambassadors to see what is working and what needs to be improved
--	---

Initiative 3: Ride-Along Program

Problem

Prospective applicants want first-hand experience to help determine if policing is the right fit for them. Entry-level applicants, particularly those with no prior connection to law enforcement, want low-barrier opportunities to learn more about law enforcement. Lateral candidates want first-hand exposure to the realities of policing in Seattle to confirm or disprove information they may have received. The current recruitment and hiring process does not consistently promote or provide opportunities for prospective applicants to speak with current officers and to observe the realities of the job. Instead individuals often must apply and complete the hiring process before they complete a ride-along or have a chance to speak with sworn officers. The lack of exposure to Seattle policing limits the number of interested individuals applying to SPD (particularly among laterals) and leads to some candidates engaging in the lengthy hiring process only to realize at the academy or early in their career that Seattle policing is not for them.

"I think one of the biggest drawbacks to the Seattle application process is that you can't go on a ride along. When I finished my oral boards the first time and I failed, my moderator straight up told me to go on a ride along - 'you will get an idea of what it's like and you'll get answers to the things you struggled with [during your boards]'. So, I called almost every precinct and I was like 'Hello, I'd like to go on a ride along,' and they said 'oh, we don't do them. You'll have to call x, y, z.' and they would send me to another precinct. Finally, I talked to someone who was actually new to the department at one of the precincts and he said 'actually, you can't do them anywhere right now. We're not doing any ride-alongs unless you're x months along in the hiring process.' This was very frustrating."
-Post-BLEA Recruit

Recommendation

Develop and promote a ride-along experience for prospective applicants (priority) and members of the community to gain first-hand knowledge of Seattle policing. Streamline the existing process for requesting and scheduling a ride-along to be more user friendly. Promote opportunities for officers to train to become "Ride-Along Certified" officers to ensure SPD can provide a consistent, high-quality experience for applicants. As staffing accommodates, consider opening ride-along opportunities to the general public to promote understanding and interest in Seattle policing. Increasing community exposure to and engagement with SPD could also help the department build its brand and promote recruitment efforts.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Desired Outcomes

- Decrease the number of candidates who resign later in the process, during academy, or upon entering the force by exposing applicants to Seattle policing early in the hiring process.
- Increase officer engagement by valuing their expertise and networks in recruiting future cohorts.

Indicators of Success

- #/% of applicants participating in a ride-along experience
- #/% of applicants completing a ride-along experience who remain engaged in SPD's hiring process to point of hiring decision made
- #/% of applicants completing a ride-along experience who withdraw from the hiring process, Academy, and/or Field Training experience
- #/% of "Ride-Along Certified" officers reporting they would recommend SPD to a friend or colleague

Implementation Plan

<p>Suggested Owners <i>Lead:</i> SPD Patrol Operations Bureau <i>Support:</i> SPD Recruitment Team</p>	<p>Activities</p> <p>First 3 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Map current process for requesting ride-alongs ▪ Identify operational elements required to create a more effective ride-along request process ▪ Assess demand for ride-alongs from prospective applicants and in-process hires ▪ Interview applicants, recently hired officers, and tenured staff to identify critical information about Seattle police work that should be imparted during a ride-along ▪ Gain insights from recent recruits regarding the “ideal” ride-along experience ▪ Prototype the ride-along experience <p>In 3-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct several test ride-along experiences with recent hires and gather feedback ▪ Refine the ride-along experience (from request to participation) based on user feedback ▪ Identify and train first cohort of “Ride-Along Certified” officers <p>In 6+ months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pilot new ride-along experience
<p>Resources Required</p> <p><i>People:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design Consultant ▪ Recruitment program staff ▪ Administrative Staff Analyst ▪ Patrol Operations staff ▪ Applicants/candidates ▪ Ride-Along Certified Officers <p><i>Materials/Tools:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ride-Along request form and process ▪ Ride-Along experience guide and protocol ▪ Ride-Along participant feedback form <p><i>Funds:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N/A – Existing Resources 	
<p>Key Testable Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participating in ride-alongs will provide applicants with unique knowledge that will encourage them to either complete the hiring process or withdraw prior to academy (increase persistence or decrease early resignations because applicants are informed of the realities of the job). 	

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Requisite number of “Ride-Along-Certified” officers will participate given the proper incentive. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Analyze feedback from applicants and officers participating in ride-alongs▪ Refine processes, documents, and training accordingly |
|--|--|

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Hiring

Hiring officers remains a challenge for police agencies across the country. A 2019 national survey of government human resources departments found that 32 percent had struggled to fill police positions, more than any other field.¹⁷ According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the 2016 rate of full-time sworn officers per 1,000 residents was lower than the rates in 2000 (down 7%), 2003 (down 8%) and 2007 (down 7%).¹⁸ Regionally, the competition for talent is fierce with 80% of the 25 largest police forces in Washington budgeting for growth in the last 5 years.¹⁹

Seattle has tried to not only maintain but expand its force in this highly competitive hiring environment. After several years of consistently hiring ~90-105 officers annually, 2018 marked a significant departure. The number of new officers hired by SPD decreased by one-third from the previous year (102 in 2017 to 68 in 2018) – the lowest level of new hires in at least the prior six years. Seattle’s downward trend occurred at the same point that other local agencies reported increasing their number of new hires. For example, Bellevue hired more officers in 2018 than the prior year and Kent hired nearly double the typical number of officers.²⁰

While local agencies still report being operationally understaffed, many have successfully adapted to maintain and increase their hiring rates in this competitive market. Recruiters credit their candidate communication and engagement strategies, streamlined and dynamic hiring processes, and strong reputations for enabling them to hire quality candidates in a hypercompetitive market.

A comparison of SPD’s current hiring and candidate engagement efforts to local and national peers’ processes reveals several opportunities for improvement. In light of these findings, the workgroup proposes four hiring initiatives for SPD to prioritize to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their hiring process. These four hiring initiatives focus on leveraging technological solutions and revised business practices to engage candidates during the hiring process, advance top talent quickly through the process, and extend offers in a more competitive time frame.

¹⁷ “State and Local Government Workforce: 2019 Survey.” *Center for State & Local Government Excellence*, July 2019, p. 3.

¹⁸ Hyland, Shelley. “Full-Time Employees in Law Enforcement Agencies, 1997-2016.” *Bureau of Justice Statistics*, August 2018, p.1.

¹⁹ FBI *Crime in the United States – Police Employee Data*, part of the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/>. Accessed 8 February 2019.

²⁰ Sergeant Buckley. Personal Interview. March 28, 2019.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Initiative 4: Leave No Candidate Behind

Problem

Applicants are requesting more consistent engagement from SPD during the lengthy hiring process to keep them informed of their status and to make them feel included as part of the SPD organization. Candidates currently may wait weeks or even months after completing their testing to hear whether SPD will advance them in the hiring process. Once assigned a detective, candidates may then wait weeks for their investigator to contact references and complete their background check. During the process candidates report having to contact their background investigator to receive status updates and track their progress through the 10+ steps of the hiring process, which takes on average six months to complete. No tool or system currently exists to provide systematic updates to candidates or to provide them with transparency into their status in the hiring process. In contrast, other local agencies credit the integration of technology tools with revised business process to promote consistent, engaging candidate hiring experiences.

"I would have appreciated more communication here and there along the way. It would have been helpful to hear about what to expect with the different portions of the testing and hiring process."

- Recruit

Recommendation

Create a more customer-focused hiring process that promotes transparency and builds connections with candidates. Regularly communicate status updates to candidates to keep them engaged with our process and to clarify next steps and action needed. Leverage a variety of communication tools including email, text, and our website to disseminate key information and to foster connections with applicants.

Desired Outcomes

- Standardize a first-class hiring experience for candidates.
- Build candidates' loyalty to SPD.

Indicators of Success

- #/% of candidates recommending their friends or family apply to SPD
- #/% of candidates completing the hiring process
- #/% of candidates withdrawing from SPD's hiring process to accept an offer with another agency

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Implementation Plan

<p>Suggested Owners <i>Lead:</i> SPD Backgrounding Unit <i>Support:</i> Seattle Department of Human Resources, Seattle IT</p>	<p>Activities</p> <p>First 3 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document current SDHR and SPD HR business processes to determine opportunities for additional engagement with candidates ▪ Survey former applicants and recent hires on preferred engagement approach ▪ Contact peer police agencies to identify best practices ▪ Identify low-cost, simple ways to increase communication frequency and to improve content ▪ Identify potential technology solutions to assist with candidate engagement (e.g., event scheduling and texting) <p>In 3-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collaborate with SPD’s Communications and Recruitment teams to develop content aligned with SPD messaging and branding ▪ Deploy low-fidelity prototype and test content with application cohort <p>In 6+ months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gather feedback from applicants ▪ Measure changes in hiring conversion rates ▪ Refine candidate engagement content based on feedback and data analysis ▪ Review market research of technology solutions and select products to integrate into revised business practices ▪ Monitor and refine processes and content based on user feedback and results achieved
<p>Resources Required</p> <p><i>People:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design Consultant ▪ Background Investigators ▪ Former applicants ▪ Recent hires <p><i>Materials/Tools:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NeoGov ▪ Event scheduling software ▪ Texting software <p><i>Funds:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$10,000 	
<p>Assumptions to Test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing variety and frequency of communication with recruits will lead to a measurable improvement in percent of applicants advancing through the hiring process. 	

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Initiative 5: Speedy Background Checks

Problem

The current background check process is heavily paper based, making it time-consuming and burdensome to administer. Background detectives collect and process lengthy paper-based personal history forms from candidates. Detectives then physically mail personal reference forms and key backgrounding documents to recipients (email contact information is not collected). Responses, if received, are then completed and returned via mail where they are reviewed, cataloged, and manually updated in spreadsheets. Processes that could easily be automated by email or electronic fax take days or even weeks to complete. The lack of software solutions to send, receive, and process documents makes it challenging to quickly advance candidates through the hiring process. The high variability in length of time to complete the multitude of steps also makes it challenging to manage candidate expectations and to create a more consistent candidate engagement experience. Creating efficiencies in the backgrounding process will help SPD retain high-quality candidates in our hiring process.

“The long waits in between [hiring milestones] was killing me. I thought I was doing well on most things. I felt like I excelled in a lot of them. But it was just you take tests and now you just wait for a call. And then you take another test and then you wait for a call. It's part of the process I guess, it just takes a long time and it ended up being worth it in the end. But it was the waiting in between and figuring out what if this doesn't work out, what do I then?”

– Post-BLEA Recruit

Recommendation

Modernize the current background investigation process. Adopt software solutions to automate the transmission and collection of key documents, the scheduling of reference checks interviews, and the tracking of candidate advancement through the hiring process. Review current documents to identify language that can be clarified, streamlined, and ideally transmitted electronically. Replace paper-based data collection methods with electronic systems to increase the turnaround time for completing documents and decrease time spent on manual data entry. Finally, implement a case management system to monitor candidates' progression through the hiring process and more holistically manage the end-to-end pre-employment background investigation process.

Desired Outcome

- Reduce the length of time to complete background investigations.
- More quickly extend offers to quality candidates.
- Decrease the number of quality candidates accepting positions with other agencies.

Indicators of Success

- Avg. # of days for references to complete requested forms
- Avg. # of days for SPD to complete candidate background investigation
- #/% of candidates withdrawing from SPD's hiring process to accept an offer with another agency

Implementation Plan

<p>Suggested Owners <i>Lead:</i> SPD Backgrounding Unit <i>Support:</i> SDHR, Seattle IT, FAS</p>	<p>Activities</p> <p>First 3 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document current SPD Background Unit business processes and length of time to complete milestones ▪ Solicit feedback from SPD Background Unit on opportunities to improve backgrounding process ▪ Interview recent hires and candidates who withdrew from the process to inform the preferred candidate experience ▪ Contact peer police agencies to identify best practices and preferred technologies for streamlining and automating the backgrounding process ▪ Identify low-cost, easy-to-implement ways to improve usability of existing Personal History Information (PHI) packet and Reference Check forms and to schedule reference checks ▪ Develop low-fidelity prototypes of revised forms and proposed reference check scheduling system ▪ Train staff on new forms and system ▪ Deploy revised forms and new scheduling system with next candidate cohort ▪ Research software solutions for processing pre-employment background investigations and coordinating reference checks <p>In 3-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measure changes in length of time to submit PHI and reference check materials ▪ Gather feedback from candidates and background investigators on new forms and reference check scheduling processes ▪ Refine forms and processes based on feedback received ▪ Update documented business needs to inform acquisition of software solution(s) ▪ Collaborate with Procurement and Seattle IT to determine process for purchasing and implementing new software <p>In 6+ months:</p>
<p>Resources Required</p> <p><i>People:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design Consultant ▪ Administrative Staff Analyst ▪ Background Investigators ▪ Former applicants ▪ Recent hires <p><i>Materials/Tools:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NeoGov ▪ Background automation software solution (e.g., eSOPH) ▪ Reference check software ▪ Online scheduling tool (e.g., Calendly) <p><i>Funds:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$90,000 	
<p>Key Testable Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adopting a software system will decrease length of time to complete a background check. ▪ Decreasing length of time to hire will increase yield of eventual hires. ▪ Decreasing length of time to hire will increase diversity of eventual hires. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Develop and release RFP (or direct purchase) for new software systems▪ Select preferred system(s)▪ Revise internal business processes and train staff on new technology and protocols▪ Deploy new systems▪ Monitor and refine processes and content based on user feedback and results achieved
--	---

Initiative 6: Flexible Testing

Problem

Routinely only 30-35% of candidates who apply to SPD subsequently complete the entry-level exam, leading to a significant drop-off in viable candidates early in the hiring pipeline. According to a survey of SPD applicants invited to the July 2019 testing cycle, respondents cite scheduling conflicts and challenges reaching the test location as key reasons for not testing. SPD is one of the few local jurisdictions administering its own entry-level testing process (conducted four times annually). Neighboring agencies partner with national testing organizations which administer public safety entry-level tests on various test dates at multiple locations throughout the country, providing flexibility in when and where candidates test. Neighboring agencies benefit by being able to access candidates' scores on a rolling basis, enabling them to engage quality applicants within days of applicants testing versus SPD where a candidate may apply and wait more than two months for the opportunity to test.

Applicant responses for how SPD might improve the application and testing process:

“Let candidates have a choice in time and date for testing.”

“Offer other testing dates/times for the physical agility test. If someone misses the test due to an emergency or illness, they have to wait another six months to apply and are required to take the written and physical tests again. It seems as though you would have alternate times for those who have conflicting schedules, emergencies, etc.”

Recommendation

Explore ways to increase flexibility around how and when candidates complete certain hiring milestones to be more competitive with neighboring agencies. Some considerations to explore include allowing applicants to complete their entry-level and physical ability tests with a third-party vendor (e.g., National Testing Network), offering SPD-administered tests more often, and allowing flexibility in the order in which candidates complete the entry-level and physical ability tests.

SPD could reimburse applicant fees associated with third-party testing or score transfers (ranging from \$9 - \$50) to minimize financial costs to applicants. More frequent and varied testing options would enable SPD to access new candidates on a much more frequent basis, thereby decreasing wait time and increasing the likelihood that SPD retains access to top talent. All potential changes should be explored in a way that consider Public Safety Civil Service Commission rules, the applicant experience, and the resources and staffing needed to move large volumes of candidates through the exam, the physical ability test, the oral board, and the background interview in a timely and efficient manner.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Desired Outcomes

- Increase the quantity and quality of applicants by expanding testing options.
- More effectively compete for talent by quickly identifying and advancing high-quality candidates through the hiring process.

Indicators of Success

- # of applications received
- #/% of applicants completing entry-level tests (i.e., written, video, and PAT)
- Avg. # of days between application received and testing complete
- Avg. # of days between application received and case reviewed by Background Investigation Unit
- #/% of candidates withdrawing from SPD's hiring process to accept an offer with another agency

Implementation Plan

<p>Suggested Owners <i>Lead:</i> SPD Backgrounding Unit <i>Support:</i> Seattle Department of Human Resources, Seattle IT, National Testing Network (NTN)</p>	<p>Activities</p> <p>First 3 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survey recent and prospective applicants to determine prior experience testing with NTN, interest in potentially testing with NTN, and interest in testing with SPD if additional test dates were offered ▪ Survey applicants who withdrew from SPD’s hiring process to assess whether our testing process and/or hiring timeline influenced their decision ▪ Confirm with NTN the suite of services they could provide to assist with recruitment, testing, and scheduling physical ability testing sessions ▪ Connect with NTN and SDHR to determine logistics for enabling dual testing options ▪ Identify cost estimates ▪ Develop projections for expected impact on increasing the quantity and quality of SPD applicants based on survey data ▪ Coordinate with SPD Backgrounding Unit and SDHR to prototype a dual testing system <p>In 3-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Present proposed dual testing system to SPD and SDHR leadership for approval (advise one-year pilot) ▪ Document business processes and confirm roles and responsibilities among NTN, SDHR, and SPD
<p>Resources Required</p> <p><i>People:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design Consultant ▪ Background Investigators ▪ Former applicants ▪ Recent hires <p><i>Materials/Tools:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National Testing Network ▪ NeoGov ▪ Event scheduling service (e.g., Eventbrite) ▪ Survey <p><i>Funds:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$80,000 	
<p>Key Testable Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offering a dual-testing model is preferable to merely increasing the number of SPD-facilitated test sessions. ▪ Altering the order of the PAT in the hiring process will not compromise candidate’s likelihood of successfully passing the PAT upon entry to the academy. ▪ SPD will advance candidates through the process at a faster rate if it gains access to scores on a more frequent basis. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Train staff on new flexible testing approach▪ Revise SPD recruitment materials and website content to reflect new process <p>In 6+ months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Launch new flexible testing process▪ Track changes in number of applications received and length of time to advance candidates in the initial hiring steps▪ Gather feedback from applicants and SDHR staff on new NTN process▪ Refine processes based on user feedback and results achieved
--	---

Initiative 7: Seattle Sampler

Problem

Many recruits want to feel a part of the community they serve, but opportunities for meaningful engagement with residents during training is currently limited. Given that fewer than one-quarter of officers reside in Seattle, many recruits are hired with limited knowledge of and exposure to the different communities they will serve as officers. Recruits’ current training focuses on tactics, policies, and procedures to promote effective community policing, de-escalation, and communication skills in a clinical setting. Recruits have limited opportunities to process this newfound knowledge with members of the community to better understand how policies practices affect them and their communities. Increased exposure to different experiences and mindsets would help recruits make more explicit connections between their desire to help the community and their actions to accomplish this goal.

“Officers need to realize that processing and being aware doesn’t make officers more vulnerable, it makes them more protected by the community they serve.” – Community education advocate

“Basic communication and creative problem solving...What I heard from patrol is that it's mostly dealing with just everyday people issues, sometimes extreme but usually not...[On] most calls the focus is going to be just having this conversation with a human being and treating them like a human being and listening to them...[yet] we didn't do a whole of training [on how to best have these conversations], but we did get some.” – SPD recruit

Recommendation

Take advantage of SPD’s new approach of “pre-hiring” candidates to foster recruits’ knowledge of and sense of connection to Seattle and the work of SPD in community. Adopt a community-led initiative in which civilian community experts from community-based organizations and City departments lead trainings for recruits to enhance their knowledge of Seattle and to create relationships with communities. Programming would provide opportunities for recruits to learn the history of Seattle’s neighborhoods and communities, to develop their cultural literacy, and to better understand how they can support the goals of the City’s vibrant communities they serve. Opportunities for recruits to spend time in different neighborhoods and meeting community members would be highly valued. All trainings

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

would be in addition and complementary to race and social justice trainings currently supported by the department.

Desired Outcomes

- Promote recruits’ knowledge and understanding of the Seattle communities they will serve.
- Promote recruits’ positive self-identity as Seattle Police Officers.
- Decrease resignations among recruits during their first years of service.
- Strengthen relationships between SPD and community partners.
- Increase community partners’ willingness to refer SPD as an employer.

Indicators of Success

- #/% of participating recruits reporting increased knowledge of Seattle and communities served
- #/% of participating recruits who successfully complete FTO
- #/% of participating officers retained by SPD
- #/% of applicants referred by a community partner

Implementation Plan

<p>Suggested Owners <i>Lead:</i> Assistant Chief – Professional Standards Bureau <i>Support:</i> Assistant Chief – Collaborative Policing, SPD Human Resources, Department of Neighborhoods, Seattle Department of Human Resources, Seattle Office of Civil Rights, Seattle Office of Refugee and Immigrant Affairs, Community Police Commission, and other interested community partners</p>	<p>Activities</p> <p>First 3 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review SPD’s previous efforts to institute community-led trainings to understand successes and challenges ▪ Connect with NYPD to gather information on their Citizens Academy Interview cadets and recently hired officers to understand training topics and experiences that would have been useful during their onboarding experience ▪ Interview SPD training leads, DON, SDHR, OCR, OIRA, CPC, community partners, etc. to outline a proposed training curriculum and to identify potential partners <p>In 3-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop curriculum materials ▪ Identify trainers to facilitate sessions ▪ Execute Memoranda of Understanding (MOAs) with City departments and/or contracts with community organizations to execute trainings ▪ Coordinate with SPD and partners to schedule training sessions <p>In 6+ months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deploy pilot “Seattle Sampler” training
<p>Resources Required</p> <p><i>People:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training Lead ▪ Administrative Staff Analyst ▪ Design Consultant ▪ Former recruits ▪ Current officers ▪ Trainers <p><i>Materials/Tools:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survey <p><i>Funds:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$25,000 	
<p>Key Testable Assumptions</p>	

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Recruits will feel more connected to SPD if they are able to engage directly with and/or represent their community.▪ Community groups are interested in partnering with SPD to organize and lead recurring recruit trainings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Gather feedback from recruits on the perceived value and efficacy of the trainings immediately after the sessions and after they have completed six months on patrol▪ Refine course content and delivery methods based on participants' feedback |
|--|---|

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Retention

Law enforcement agencies invest significant time and resources to recruit, hire, and retain officers. An agency's ability to maintain and grow operational staffing levels depends not only on the inflow of talent, but the ability to retain staff. While some turnover is healthy to allow agencies to rid themselves of poor performers and to introduce new ideas and increase productivity, high rates of voluntary turnover can adversely affect an organization in both reputation and costs.²¹ Annual voluntary turnover rates in law enforcement agencies are considered excessive when they surpass the ten-percent mark.²² In 2018, SPD's voluntary attrition rate among students, recruits, and patrol officers registered 10 percent with the percent of total sworn officers resigning increasing five-fold over the past four years. A closer look at SPD's quantitative data reveals several troubling trends, namely that the 2018 increase in separations was driven primarily by resignations, not retirements, and that those resigning were overwhelmingly younger and with five or fewer years on the force.

The quantitative findings greatly informed the qualitative research conducted by the project team. Current recruits, students, and officers provided many insights driving staff frustration and low morale. Common issues included a perceived lack of support and understanding from City leadership and command staff, frustration with accountability systems, limited opportunities to provide feedback on policies and procedures that affect their work, and confusion with the role of law enforcement and how success is defined in today's political climate.

In addition to frustrations, many of the officers interviewed expressed a deep connection to their fellow officers and a desire to make SPD a more tenable place to work. Staff affirmed that SPD must address retention issues first to truly stabilize and grow the force. Given operational constraints around hiring (e.g., SPD currently can send 80 entry-level officers to the police academy annually) and challenges competing with local jurisdictions for top talent, SPD must focus on retaining talent to stabilize staffing levels. By improving staff engagement and morale, recruitment will follow.

The workgroup proposes five retention initiatives for SPD to prioritize to retain talented staff, particularly patrol officers. The five initiatives outlined below focus on leveraging technological solutions and revised business practices to mitigate unintended consequences of the accountability system, leverage the expertise of staff, increase leadership's understanding of the realities of patrol work, develop supervisors' leadership skills, and promote officers' health and well-being.

²¹ Wilson, Jeremy, et al. "Police Recruitment and Retention for the New Millennium: The State of Knowledge," *RAND Center on Quality Policing*, 2010, p. 28-29.

²² Ibid 31.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Initiative 8: Clear My Card²³

Problem

Officers are frustrated that all investigated complaints are retained on their “officer card” in perpetuity even if the findings are not sustained.²⁴ Given that OPA must investigate any complaint alleging bias, excessive force, or criminal conduct even if the allegation is demonstrably erroneous, it is possible for officers to accumulate a fair number of not sustained complaints on their cards. In 2018, 60-65% of police officers in the Patrol Operations Bureau received at least one complaint, yet the vast majority of allegations (91%) were not sustained.²⁵ There is a perception by some that mere association with a complaint implies guilt. Some officers expressed concern that they will be unfairly judged when their officer cards are reviewed by senior SPD leadership during promotional reviews, by recruiters when lateraling to other police agencies, and by OPA staff during case reviews. To mitigate unintended consequences, officers request OPA clarify not sustained complaint findings on officer cards and then remove them once the required document retention period has ended.

"Say I try to go be a detective or want to get promoted. They look at your OPA [card], they look at the discipline you received and what you've been investigated for. So no matter what you do, they can still have the thought that, oh you've had seven bias complaints, I don't want him working for me because he gets a lot of bias complaints... or he's had four excessive force complaints when he did absolutely nothing wrong. That's the consequence of having all of that oversight and all of that scrutiny where people think you may have done something when you haven't and it can still be held against you." - Officer

Recommendation

Request that OPA enact two changes to their officer card protocol: add the standard, more detailed qualifier to all “Not Sustained” findings and remove “Not Sustained” findings from officers' cards after the requisite document retention period has ended. The additional information clarifying complaint findings would benefit officers by more clearly exonerating those who received not sustained findings because the complaint was deemed “Unfounded” or “Lawful and Proper” versus if there were mitigating factors that resulted in the officer receiving additional training (i.e., “Training Referral”). The proposed recommendations could be implemented by building a new report within OPA’s existing IA-Pro system. By connecting directly to IA-Pro, the new report would reflect real-time data, eliminate current redundant human-entry data processes, and make it feasible for OPA to manage which data elements were displayed in accordance with mandated retention requirements.

²³ The “Clear My Card” initiative is the only workgroup recommendation that is going to be implemented by a non-SPD entity. OPA Director Andrew Myerberg and Deputy Director of Public Affairs Anne Bettsworth participated in the research, ideation, and solution development of this initiative.

²⁴ “Officer Card” refers to the Word document maintained by OPA on each officer that lists the findings of all complaints investigated by OPA, regardless of whether they were sustained or not sustained.

²⁵ Office of Police Accountability. “2018 Annual Report.” April 2019, www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OPA/Reports/2018-Annual-Report.pdf. Caputo, Lauren. “Re: OPA Requested Data.” Message to Kathryn Aisenberg. 28 March 2019. Email.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Desired Outcomes

- Improve officer perception that accountability systems are fair and unbiased.
- Retain officers by strengthening their confidence in accountability systems.

Indicators of Success

- % of officers informed of new Officer Card protocol
- % of officers reporting that OPA's Officer Cards accurately present officers' information
- % of officers reporting OPA leadership is responsive to their feedback
- # of officers resigning

Implementation Plan

<p>Suggested Owners <i>Lead:</i> Office of Police Accountability (OPA) <i>Support:</i> Seattle Police Department</p>	<p>Activities</p> <p>First 3 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clarify retention plan with accountability stakeholders and draft new protocol ▪ Draft proposed new officer card report ▪ Solicit officer and OPA feedback on new Officer Card Report prototype to confirm utility ▪ Refine prototype based on feedback ▪ Confirm IT resources and timing to execute IA-Pro changes <p>In 3-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build new office card report functionality in IA-Pro based on revised prototype ▪ Test new report with OPA and SPD stakeholders ▪ Refine new Officer Card Report based on user feedback <p>In 6+ months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide training to OPA staff on new Officer Card Report and data management ▪ Launch new officer card report in IA-Pro ▪ Communicate new report and retention protocol to SPD staff
<p>Resources Required</p> <p><i>People:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accountability stakeholders ▪ Business Owner ▪ IT Developer ▪ Officers <p><i>Materials/Tools:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IA-Pro <p><i>Funds:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$10,000 (Funding amount and source to be determined) 	
<p>Key Testable Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OPA may alter its current business processes for maintaining “Officer Cards”. ▪ Implementing a new Officer Card protocol will improve morale. 	

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Initiative 9: Bureau Advisory Councils

Problem

Policies and decisions are often perceived as being made in isolation by the Chief's Office. Formal structures to leverage the expertise of rank and file staff are limited. Officers lament that lack of communication up and down the chain makes it difficult to offer recommendations and to confirm whether decisions have been made or action has been taken as result of their feedback. Officers want to strengthen the Department's policies and procedures by providing their voice in the development and implementation of decisions affecting their work.

Question: What do you enjoy least about SPD?

"Policies and [Command] not consulting with patrol when policies are created. A lot of the expectations aren't reasonable and that's frustrating." - Officer

"Command staff can't take the attitude that we'll just pat officers on the head and they'll do what we want to do. Command needs to cede a bit of our deliberative process. We need to recognize that there's a lot of expertise in the entry-level roles that we need to leverage." - Lieutenant

Recommendation

Establish Bureau Advisory Councils (BACs) as formal structures for staff within each of the SPD Bureaus to provide guidance and feedback on current and proposed policies, procedures, and operational elements. BACs meet separately to address issues and concerns central to their area of expertise as well as periodically convene as a collective to discuss cross-cutting items. BAC representatives serve as critical links between front-line staff and leadership by bringing questions and recommendations to the advisory group for consideration while also supporting communication of decisions from leadership back to staff. Bureau Advisors are nominated by their peers or supervisors and would be selected based on demonstrated experience and knowledge. The Patrol Advisory Council should be implemented first to address concerns and frustrations from the sector of SPD most prone to resignations currently.

Desired Outcome

- Retain patrol officers by valuing their expertise and insights.

Indicators of Success

- #/% of department policies, protocols, and decisions informed by BACs
- #/% of officers reporting satisfaction with SPD's decision-making processes
- #/% of SPD officers reporting they would recommend SPD to a friend or colleague
- #/% of officer resigning

Implementation Plan

<p>Suggested Owners <i>Lead:</i> Chief, Professional Standards <i>Support:</i> Patrol Operations Bureau, Professional Standards Bureau, Investigations Bureau</p>	<p>Activities</p> <p>First 3 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Solicit feedback from officers and command staff regarding proposed council goals, meeting structure/format, communication tools, and member selection process ▪ Prototype Patrol Bureau Advisory Council structure and member selection process based on stakeholder input and desire to select council members representative of the force and the communities they serve to the extent possible served ▪ Obtain approval from command staff <p>In 3-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Select patrol officer advisory members ▪ Conduct first Patrol Bureau Advisory Council meeting to develop charter, identify council goals, and confirm methods for communicating between patrol and command staff ▪ Schedule recurring meetings ▪ Implement tool to solicit feedback from patrol officers on issues and recommendations for Patrol Bureau Advisory Council to address (recurring) <p>In 6+ months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct monthly Patrol Bureau Advisory Council meetings ▪ Survey council members to identify areas for improvement in meeting facilitation, issue resolution, and communicating up and down the chain of command ▪ Survey patrol members to see if advisory council is helping to answer their questions and address their recommendations and concerns ▪ Refine Patrol Bureau Advisory Council format and structure based on participants’ feedback ▪ Launch Professional Standards and Investigations Advisory Councils
<p>Resources Required</p> <p><i>People:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bureau Executive Sponsors ▪ Design Consultant ▪ Administrative Staff Analyst ▪ Officers <p><i>Materials/Tools:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bureau Charter ▪ Agendas ▪ Issue/Question Tracker ▪ Tool to collect officer feedback <p><i>Funds:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$50,000 	
<p>Key Testable Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rank and file will utilize their Bureau Advisory Council to ask questions, raise concerns, and propose recommendations. ▪ Providing structures for two-way communication between patrol and Command will improve officer retention. 	

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Initiative 10: Step Into Our Shoes

Problem

Officers perceive Command staff and elected leadership to be disconnected from the realities of their day-to-day work. Officers want their leaders to have knowledge and understanding of their duties and experiences to inform their decision-making and rhetoric. Some officers remark that they only see leadership during promotional opportunities or moments of crisis. More informal opportunities for interaction between officers and leaders are limited.

Question: What do you enjoy least about working at SPD?

“That the City Council, City Attorney, and civic leaders regularly bash the department with little if any actual knowledge of what we do on an everyday basis.” – Officer

“Why haven't city council members come out and done ride-alongs? It makes no sense. If they are going to be in charge of the city, why are they not doing it?” – Officer

Recommendation

Create opportunities for SPD and elected leaders to gain first-hand exposure to patrol officers' experiences. Schedule Command staff to answer calls with a patrol officer each quarter to gain credibility and to better understand how department policies and procedures are impacting officers' work. Establish "Precinct Office Days" in which Command staff spend one day a month at different precincts to build relationships with staff, answer questions, and celebrate the good work. For civilian leaders, arrange for all elected officials and relevant Mayor's Office staff to complete an SPD facilities tour, observe an officer training, and complete a ride-along within their first six months of hire.

Desired Outcomes

- Increase Command and City leadership's understanding of patrol officers' experiences.
- Retain officers by increasing feelings of support by Command and City leadership.
- Increase lateral applications received.

Indicators of Success

- #/% of Command Leadership participating in ride-alongs
- #/% of officers reporting feeling supported by SPD leadership
- #/% of elected officials completing a ride-along
- #/% of officers reporting feeling supported by City leadership
- #/% of SPD officers reporting they would recommend SPD to a friend or colleague
- #/% of officers resigning

Implementation Plan

Suggested Owners <i>Lead:</i> SPD Deputy Chief <i>Support:</i> Patrol Operations Bureau, Professional Standards Bureau, Mayor's Office	Activities First 3 months: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Secure commitment from Chief to schedule 2-3 command staff to pilot ride-alongs and precinct visits
Resources Required <i>People:</i>	

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business Owner ▪ Design Consultant ▪ Administrative Staff Analyst ▪ Trainers ▪ Command Staff ▪ Mayor’s Office Staff ▪ Field Training Officer <p><i>Materials/Tools:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ride-along protocol ▪ Pre-post surveys <p><i>Funds:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ N/A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Speak with Baltimore Innovation Team to learn about their ride-along participant protocols and documents ▪ Brief the selected command staff participants on the goals and expectations of the pilot ▪ Provide any required refresher training for selected command staff participants ▪ Create a schedule for selected command staff to work office hours aligned to shift changes and to participate in 4-hour patrol ride-alongs <p>In 3-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Launch command staff ride-alongs and precinct visit pilot ▪ Solicit feedback from command and precinct staff to assess utility, helpfulness of pilot ▪ Select 2-3 Mayor’s Office and City Council staff members to serve as test subjects in civilian leadership ride-along experience ▪ Interview selected Mayor’s Office and City Council staff to understand elements of police work interested in learning about, assumptions held, etc. ▪ Identify Field Training Officers to lead civilian leadership ride-alongs <p>In 6+ months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schedule civilian leadership ride-alongs ▪ Administer pre/post-survey to civilian participants to gauge knowledge gained, changes in perceptions, etc. to inform usefulness of program ▪ Solicit feedback from command and precinct staff to assess utility, helpfulness of command ride-along and precinct office hours pilot ▪ Determine whether to continue both pilots (i.e., command staff and civilian leadership) based on testing ▪ If continuing command staff effort, schedule recurring ride-along and precinct office hours for all chiefs and captains ▪ If continuing elected leadership effort, schedule ride-alongs and training visits for City Council members and key Mayor’s Office staff
<p>Key Testable Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exposing elected officials to police work early in their tenure will improve their perceptions of policing and lead to more favorable public commentary. ▪ Increasing SPD command staff’s exposure to police officers will improve officer morale. 	

Initiative 11: Develop Our People Leaders

Problem

Patrol officers are managed by individuals who may have little or no experience effectively managing people. Sergeants are promoted to their supervisory role by successfully passing a test that assesses their content and technical knowledge, but not necessarily by their ability or predilection to be an effective people manager and leader. This despite research showing that the single most important variable in building successful teams is the quality of the manager.²⁶ Sergeants face multiple demands on their time with increased responsibility for reviews and reports stemming from policy and procedure changes. The technical responsibilities of the work make it challenging for sergeants, especially without training and strategies, to provide the support and encouragement that many officers desire. Given the retention challenges facing patrol, influencing the quality of officers' direct supervisors is critical to increasing officer engagement and sense of connection to the organization.

"A more revised supervisor program would be good because I understand the way it works is you take a test and then the highest score and the lowest serial numbers on those on those tests are the ones that get promoted whether or not they are of good caliber to actually be supervisors. They might have just taken a test really well instead hey, this is actually someone who deserves to be in charge of this group of people and be their leader, to have their back, make sure that they're performing the way they should be, but then also being there to support them and encourage them."- Officer

Recommendation

Add new modules to new sergeant training to promote engagement-based leadership principles. Implement a leadership development curriculum that addresses topics such as growth mindset, leading change, developing others, and communicating effectively. Stagger training modules so that sergeants receive ongoing development throughout their first few years in the role. Create opportunities for sergeants to convene in smaller cohorts to reflect upon information learned, share best practices, and discuss problems of practice. Acting and current sergeants receive differentiated training to set them up for success in their roles and to ensure a degree of consistency in officer experience across squads. Finally, coordinate with SDHR and the Public Safety Civil Service Commission (PSCSC) to revise the civil service promotional process for sergeants to assess candidates' potential to be an effective people leader. Identify the key competencies SPD values in its leaders and incorporate methods to evaluate (e.g., 360° reviews, behavioral interview questions) in the sergeant promotional process. Include all SPD employees on related subjects to support a highly engaged workplace that attracts and retains good people to collaboratively build a great place to work for everyone.

Desired Outcomes

- Better equip sergeants to lead
- Increase patrol officer engagement and productivity
- Retain talent in patrol

²⁶ Clifton, Jim, and James K. Harter. *It's the Manager: Gallup Finds the Quality of Managers and Team Leaders Is the Single Biggest Factor in Your Organizations Long-Term Success*. Gallup Press, 2019.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

Indicators of Success

- #/% of sergeants completing leadership training within first year of promotion
- # of requested squad transfers
- #/% of patrol officers reporting they would recommend SPD to a friend or colleague
- #/% of patrol officers resigning

Implementation Plan

<p>Suggested Owners <i>Lead:</i> Training Coordinator, SPD HR <i>Support:</i> SPD Professional Standards Bureau, Seattle Department of Human Resources, other City department training coordinators</p>	<p>Activities</p> <p>First 3 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document sergeant school training curriculum ▪ Administer a survey to better understand officers' levels of engagement, perceptions of department engagement, etc. to establish a baseline ▪ Partner with SDHR, SPD training coordinators, and other interested parties to identify potential trainings to augment the existing sergeant supervisory curriculum ▪ Coordinate with SDHR to determine logistics involved with updating the promotional process for sergeants <p>In 3-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gather feedback from officers, sergeants, and command staff on revised promotional process ▪ Prototype new promotional process and present to decision makers ▪ Determine supplementary sergeants' training topics and facilitators ▪ Identify costs for materials, facilitation, and additional staff time ▪ Propose training plan and budget to SPD leadership for approval <p>In 6+ months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If pursuing, develop timeline for implementing new promotional process ▪ Execute contracts with training consultants (as applicable) ▪ Pilot new sergeant school curriculum ▪ Solicit feedback from sergeants on curriculum content and delivery ▪ Refine trainings based on sergeant feedback
<p>Resources Required</p> <p><i>People:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training coordinator ▪ Design consultant ▪ Training facilitators ▪ Sergeants ▪ Officers ▪ All SPD employees <p><i>Materials/Tools:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training curricula ▪ Surveys <p><i>Funds:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$800,000 for training materials and delivery ▪ \$150,000 for term-limited Strategic Advisor to augment capacity in SPD Human Resources 	
<p>Key Testable Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhanced training for Sergeants will make them more effective supervisors. ▪ Having more effective supervisors will enhance officer engagement and promote officer retention. 	

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Survey patrol squads 6 – 12 months after their sergeants complete training▪ Refine content and delivery based on officers' feedback▪ Monitor the retention rates of officers
--	--

Initiative 12: Wellness-First Schedules

Problem

Current schedules are not conducive to providing patrol officers with requisite time to decompress between shifts. Patrol officers work a 9-hour shift with four days on and two days off. Officers lament that the limited days off do not provide adequate time for rest and recuperation. Research shows that 10-hour shifts offer numerous benefits over the traditionally used 8-hour shifts. Officers on a 10-hour compressed shift schedule experience significantly more sleep (more than 30 minutes), report significantly higher quality of work life, and work less overtime than those working 8-hour shifts.²⁷ Additionally, the rotating schedule is challenging for parents arranging child care or for officers who require a set schedule.

Officers also report that shift start times are inconvenient and do not align with operational needs. SPD shift schedule is comprised of First Watch (3:00 am – 12:00 pm), Second Watch (11:00 am – 8:00 pm), and Third Watch (7:00 pm – 4:00 am). The First and Third Watch both disrupt officers' circadian rhythms and their start/end times fall during peak activity on weekends. The Second Watch was criticized by some for making it challenging to see family during awake, non-school hours. Changes to the patrol schedule and shift times were the most common request from officers during the idea generation process.

"I know a lot of the guys that have left here and gone to other departments. They're working with four days off in a row. Their schedules are so much better than ours. If I could do that it would be so much easier for me. It's hard to go from a 3 to noon to a normal schedule then back to a 3 to noon. Two days off is definitely not enough." – Officer

"We could do something better with our shifts. The hours are pretty horrible...They don't really line up with the crime data that we're showing. So it's really not beneficial to the job we're doing or to the people." - Officer

Recommendation

Adopt a compressed shift schedule of four 10-hour shifts to provide Patrol Officers with at least three consecutive days for enhanced rest and recuperation. Move shift start times to better accommodate officers' desire to see their families during waking hours, align with preferred sleep/wake times, and align with operationally heavy call times. Moving to a more beneficial shift schedule will help promote

²⁷ "Sleep Disorders, Work Shifts and Officer Wellness." *National Institute of Justice*, <https://nij.gov/journals/270/pages/officer-wellness.aspx>.

SPD Recruitment & Retention Final Workgroup Report

officers' health and well-being and may reduce the odds of fatigue hindering their performance or threatening their safety or that of the public.

Desired Outcomes

- Retain patrol officers by supporting their health and wellbeing.
- Make SPD a more attractive place to work to prospective applicants.

Indicators of Success

- % of officers reporting improved health/wellbeing as a result of new shift schedules/times
- % of officers absent during shifts
- # of applications received
- # of patrol officers resigning and citing shift schedules/times as a motivating factor in their decision

Implementation Plan

<p>Suggested Owners <i>Lead:</i> SPD Deputy Chief <i>Support:</i> Patrol Operations, Human Resources, Seattle Police Officer Guild (SPOG)</p>	<p>Activities</p> <p>First 3 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employ staffing consultant to model impact of different shift schedules and shift start times ▪ Review officer feedback on requested shift schedules and shift start times ▪ Identify preferred shift schedule and shift times ▪ Determine approach and timeline for engaging SPOG in contract discussions <p>In 3-6 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initiate conversations with SPOG <p>In 6+ months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negotiate contract changes ▪ Communicate shift changes, timeline for implementing, and logistics to department ▪ Update internal operations based on shift changes ▪ Institute new shift schedule and shift time
<p>Resources Required</p> <p><i>People:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business lead ▪ Staffing consultant <p><i>Materials/Tools:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schedule cards ▪ Staffing management software ▪ Revised SPOG contract <p><i>Funds:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$10,000 	
<p>Key Testable Assumptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current staffing levels and funding can support a schedule change. ▪ A change in schedules will improve morale and wellbeing for patrol officers. 	

V. Guiding Principles

As these initiatives are implemented, we encourage City leadership to keep in mind the following guiding principles that build on the foundation of stakeholder engagement and design thinking to ensure alignment with those we seek to serve.

<p>Communicate to build trust</p>	<p>Too often government solicits feedback and then does not follow-up on action taken or results achieved. Ensure that stakeholders are kept abreast of initiative implementation progress. Engaging stakeholders throughout the process to promote two-way accountability and trust.</p>
<p>Continuously test, refine, and improve our solutions</p>	<p>Solutions cannot be created and launched without iterating and checking in with beneficiaries to make sure that the solutions are meeting their needs.</p>
<p>Lean into innovation</p>	<p>Be open to new and different ways of doing business. Propose big ideas and then work through the “what ifs” and “how might we”.</p>
<p>Leverage partnerships</p>	<p>Take advantage of the knowledge and expertise residing within connected community and accountability groups. Leverage others’ perspectives and solicit critical feedback to improve the quality and effectiveness of proposed initiatives.</p>
<p>Measure progress</p>	<p>Measure the impact of initiatives by analyzing quantitative and qualitative data. Integrate the ongoing measurement of these initiatives into existing accountability systems such as SeaStat to ensure visibility and to collectively identify opportunities for improvement.</p>
<p>Use design thinking throughout the process</p>	<p>Ideas are only solutions if they address users’ needs. Leverage the power of human-centered design thinking by ensuring applicants, candidates, and staff members’ voices are heard in the design, delivery, and improvement of the initiatives.</p>

VI. Conclusion

This report is not intended as a final and definitive statement on talent management for the Seattle Police Department. Rather, we see it as a starting point for City leadership to respond to the needs of current and future SPD officers on an ongoing basis. Seattle's continued prosperity depends on a safe city environment and expanding the force to keep pace with Seattle's growth is not a luxury – it is an imperative.

In our analysis and observations, we found a shared commitment across SPD to deliver respectful, professional, and dependable police services. We spoke with SPD applicants, recruits, and officers who described their passion for keeping their community safe, and this report is in part a testament to the tremendous work they do every day to prevent crime, enforce the law, and support quality public safety. To the officers that shared their experiences and needs with us, we say **thank you**. We are committed to serving you as you serve all Seattle residents every day.

The community that supports SPD – elected officials, their staff, and community members – brought deep expertise and passion to this effort. Policing work is uniquely intimate as it provides safety and peace of mind for those it serves, and having the voice of the community as a part of this work was critical. To the individuals that lent their time and expertise to this body of work – listed on the following page – we say **thank you**.

As cities across America grapple with officer shortages, we hope this report shares promising ideas that yield better results than the usual police recruiting and retention practices. In doing so we demonstrate Seattle's approach to innovation – disrupting the status quo in the service of improved outcomes – and our belief that innovation inherently depends upon each and every one of us engaging and lending our voices to finding solutions.

VII. Acknowledgements

Police recruiting, hiring, and retention are complex issues. We appreciate the contributions of everyone who participated. Workgroup members are denoted by an *. Thank you!

City's Attorney's Office

Tamera Van Ness

City Budget Office

Kathryn Aisenberg*

Jennifer Devore*

Kara Main-Hester*

Ben Noble*

Amie Thao*

Leah Tivoli*

Richard Todd*

Joseph Russell

Tina Walha*

City Council

Cody Reiter*

Greg Doss*

Council Member González

Community Police Commission

Jesse Franz

Roxana Garcia

Bessie Scott

Department of Neighborhoods

Jenifer Chao

Office of Immigrant & Refugee Affairs

Joaquin Uy

Office of Police Accountability

Anne Bettesworth

Andrew Myerberg

Seattle Office of Inspector General

Lisa Judge

Alexandra McGehee

Amy Tsai

Mayor's Office

Kyla Blair

Michelle Chen

Senior Deputy Mayor Fong*

Stephanie Formas

Kamaria Hightower

Julie Kline*

Mark Prentice

Adrienne Thompson*

Seattle Fire Department

Battalion Chief Amy Bannister

Sue Scaggs

Dori Towler

Seattle Police Department

Habtamu Abdi

Lieutenant Anderson

Chief Best*

Carrie Brazil

Lieutenant Britt

Lieutenant Calder

Tracy Clayton

Shanna Christie

Assistant Chief Cordner

Assistant Chief Diaz

Mike Fields*

Chris Fisher

Deputy Chief Garth Green

Assistant Chief Greening

Lieutenant Leung

Detective McNally*

Lieutenant Moss

Sergeant Nicholson

Detective Sinn*

Angela Socci*

Lieutenant Strand

Jennifer Sullivan

Captain Teeter

Casey Thompson

Vaughn Thompson

Cam Tripp

Lieutenant Verhoff

Sergeant Whitcomb

Emily White

Detective Wilson

Seattle Police Officers Guild

President, Officer Kevin Stuckey

Director of Labor and Media

Relations, Sergeant Richard

O'Neill

Seattle Police Management Association

President, Lieutenant Scott
Bachler

Seattle Department of Human Resources

Aisha Foster

Keith Gulley

Peter Nguyen

Andrea Ramirez

Rachael Schade

Debbie White

Dave Wright*

Police Recruitment Teams

Bellevue Police Department

Everett Police Department

Honolulu Police Department

Kent Police Department

Portland Police Department

Port of Seattle

Innovation & Performance Teams

Baltimore, MD

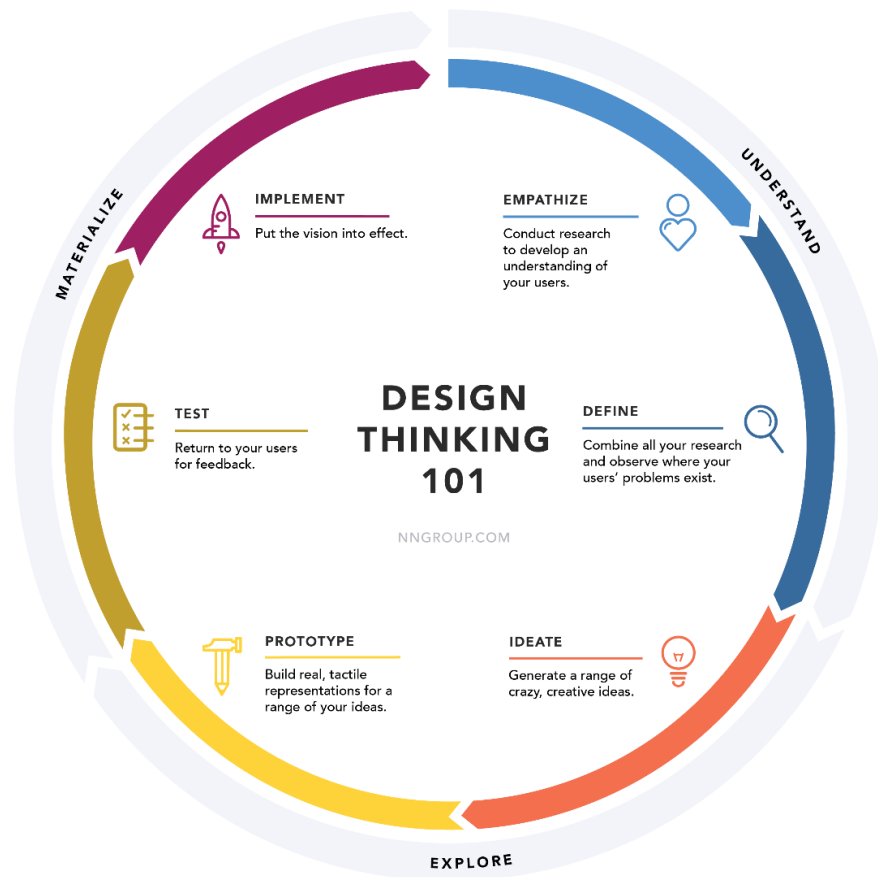
Los Angeles, CA

Tacoma, WA

VIII. Appendices

APPENDIX A: Design Approach

Design thinking is a methodology for creative problem solving that is anchored on insights about the experiences of those affected by services – in this case, SPD officers and the community they serve. The design thinking framework aims to provide a user-centric approach to problem solving that fosters innovation and more effective solutions. The framework consists of three phases: understand, explore, and materialize, with subphases contained within. The SPD Recruitment and Retention project completed the empathize, define, and ideate phases of the cycle which resulted in the identification of 12 recommended initiatives. SPD will now prototype and test the ideas to confirm underlying assumptions and verify that the ideas will likely achieve their intended outcomes.



Source: Design Thinking 101 by Sarah Gibbons on July 31, 2016, <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/design-thinking/>.

APPENDIX B: Research Summary

The key research questions we aimed to answer were:

Recruitment	Hiring	Retention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who is applying? ▪ What motivates individuals to apply? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How well are we supporting candidates during the hiring process? ▪ Where are opportunities for improvement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is the current experience of officers? ▪ Why are some leaving? ▪ How might retention issues be linked to recruitment?

To explore these questions, the team conducted research described below to understand the perspectives of SPD applicants, recruits, and officers.

Activities	Interviews	Surveys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attended SPD Applicant Workshops ▪ Observed training activities ▪ Participated in ride-alongs ▪ Visited all 5 precincts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 45 subject matter experts ▪ 60+ officers across 5 precincts and the SPD training facility ▪ 20 pre/post academy recruits ▪ 4 prospective applicants (from SPD workshop) ▪ 14 community members ▪ 1 former officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ >75 Officers ▪ >40 Applicants

The team utilized three types of research to define the problem and generate solutions: organizational, contextual, and landscape to understand how the system works, how individuals experience and interact with the system, and how peer organizations may operate in a similar or different fashion.

Organizational Research <i>Purpose: Obtain information about the organization and its systems and processes.</i>	Contextual Research <i>Purpose: Understand the actions and motivations of people interacting with the organization and its systems.</i>	Landscape Scan <i>Purpose: Understand what other cities are doing or have tried to inform our work.</i>
45 staff, 60 hours of interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ City Budget Office (CBO) ▪ City Attorney (LAW) ▪ City Council ▪ Department of Neighborhoods (DON) ▪ Human Services Department (HSD) ▪ Mayor’s Office (MO) ▪ Office of Economic Development ▪ Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA) ▪ Seattle Fire Department (SFD) ▪ Seattle Police Department (SPD) 	100 individuals, 9 locations, 140 hours of interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Park 90/5 Training Facility ▪ Seattle Central Community College ▪ Seattle Police Department Headquarters ▪ Seattle Police Department Precincts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ East Precinct ○ North Precinct ○ South Precinct ○ Southwest Precinct ○ West Precinct 	10 individuals, 11 hours of interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Baltimore Innovation & Performance Team ▪ Bellevue Police Department ▪ Everett Police Department ▪ Honolulu Police Department ▪ Long Beach Innovation & Performance Team ▪ Los Angeles Innovation & Performance Team ▪ Kent Police Department ▪ Port of Seattle ▪ Portland Police Department ▪ Tacoma Innovation & Performance Team

[APPENDIX C: Key Findings](#)

The project team synthesized insights gleaned from the quantitative and qualitative research phases into seven key findings. The team then used these key findings as a framework to engage stakeholders in brainstorming potential solutions (e.g., “How might we expand recruiting efforts to reach new types of candidates?”). The following detailed handouts were used in solution development design workshops, posted in SPD’s precincts and training facility, and distributed via the employee survey.

7 Key Findings

1. Expand recruiting efforts to reach new types of candidates
2. Make recruiting a team sport
3. Optimize the hiring process
4. Refine the way we show support for officers
5. Ensure that systems of accountability produce intended results
6. Help officers to navigate their role
7. Tell the story of the good work



Expand recruiting efforts to reach new types of candidates

Increase pool of applicants by sourcing quality candidates who otherwise wouldn't apply because they don't know about the profession or open opportunities.

Selection of relevant data points to spark new ideas

“ What makes a great officer is that desire to help mankind. That willingness to love the community, to love a person regardless of whether you've met them or not. Regardless of how ugly they might be at the time you meet them. To have compassion to do better and to better the world they live in. That's really nowadays what drives all officers.
”

Police Officer (Male, 30s)

Officers joining SPD are more diverse than the current workforce. In 2018, 35% of new hires identified as people of color and 22% identified as female. Women and certain racial subgroups are still underrepresented compared to the general population.

(SPD Data, 2019)

“ I would feel proud to work for Seattle. It seems like their standards are so much higher than a lot of the places. With just the way they carry themselves. You can tell the difference in practices and attitudes. SPD has higher standards. That is important to me.
”

Prospective Applicant (Female, 20s)

“ When I got hired on, the chief and the deputy chief were both females. It was really attractive to me seeing that the two highest positions in our department were females. I thought, oh wow, if they can do that, I can do it too.
”

New Police Officer (Female, 20s)

45% of SPD's annual recruitment efforts are traditional career fairs, fewer than 20% are community events. 25% of events are focused on a military audience, 18% on education-related institutions.

(SPD Data, 2019)

“ If we keep using the same recruitment format we've always used, we'll get the same candidates.
”

SPD Command Staff

Nearly half of officers surveyed (n=76) had a connection to policing (i.e. friend or family member who was an officer) prior to joining.

(SPD Survey, 2019)

“ People have the wrong perception of us. People still think, you just got to be tough and ready to fight... nah, not so much. I tell my friends all the time, I can fight with the best of them, however I pride myself on being able to talk a person into handcuffs because I think that's the better way to go.
”

Police Officer (Male, 50s)

“ Everyone brings a unique set of skills and perspectives. We're so much stronger together. As police officers in today's society, we wear so many different hats.
”

New Police Officer (Male, 20s)



Make recruiting a team sport

Tap into existing networks and find quality candidates by recruiting through current employees. Police officers can potentially be our most effective recruiters.

Selection of relevant data points to spark new ideas

Referrals by family, friends, and employees strongly influence individual decisions to apply for careers in public service. Furthermore, applicants who are referred and sponsored by an existing employee are more likely to complete the hiring process.

(RAND Center on Quality Policing, 2010)

“ We try to involve current staff in our hiring process to give opportunities for officers to reflect upon their personal experiences and say positive things about the department. The more practice they have to say good things, the more these positive thoughts stay top of mind and help boost morale.

Recruiter (Neighboring Police Agency)

“ I offer the contact information for our recruiting office to people that I know. But then they go do a ride along with other agencies and they hear the stories from those officers and they're like, man, I can't do Seattle.

Police Officer (Male, 60s)

When officers (n=74) were asked if they would refer a friend or family member to work at SPD, only 14% of respondents said yes.

(SPD Survey, 2019)



“ SPD was my first choice because they're a progressive department. They have so much training and so many opportunities. I figured this would probably be one of the best departments that I could work for.

Post-Academy Student Officer (Female, 20s)

“ My buddy came to SPD in 2015-ish. He said it is good department to work for. Everyone looks out for each other and there are a lot of good officers. I trust him so I'm here now.

Post-Academy Student Officer (Male, 20s)



Optimize the hiring process

Find ways to ease and shorten the length of the recruitment and hiring process to maximize chances of catching valuable talent. Once in the door, continue to set candidates up for success.

Selection of relevant data points to spark new ideas

“ We do such a great job of screening people to come into this job, we don't have a lot of bad apples. I truly trust everybody I get the chance to work with.

New Police Officer (Male, 20s)

We aim to be very responsive to any prospect. We've seen our hiring numbers increase due to our personal touch.

Recruiter (Neighboring Agency)

Current applicants (n:43) were asked 'How can SPD better support you during the hiring process?' Responses included:

Have a holistic approach • Provide a mentor • Hold mentoring workshops/seminars to talk to current SPD personnel • Keep me informed of the process and what to expect

(SPD Survey, 2019)

“ These test prep workshop are really helpful. I wish there was a class for every step of the way.

Prospective Applicant (Male, 20s)

It takes roughly 100 applicants to produce 2 hires.

“ Out here they know you by name. They know where you come from, what you've done, what you are doing. It's more like a family than anything else. I haven't been on the streets yet but I can already see that the department really cares about how you function as both an officer and a civilian outside of work.

Post-Academy Lateral Officer (Female, 20s)

“ The long waits in between was killing me. It ended up being worth it in the end. But it was the waiting in between and wondering what if this doesn't work out, what do I do then?

Post-Academy Student Officer (Male, 20s)





Refine the way we show support for officers

Police officers want to feel supported by city leadership and command staff.

Selection of relevant data points to spark new ideas

How can we make SPD better? Answers from officers included:

More vocal support from elected officials and leadership • Change patrol shifts • More opportunities to provide input on policies • Better training facilities • Medical coverage during retirement • Incentive pay for language skills and schooling • Change probation period for laterals • Have all training for 3rd watch officers at night • Uniforms and equipment for different body types • Allow beards

(SPD Survey, 2019)

“ You can say all day long, we support staff, but if you don't show it... You have to demonstrate it at the hard times when you have to reach inside and say it's going to be tough, I'm going to make the guy who doesn't like the police over here—who I have to deal with every day—mad when I go out and say I stand behind our officers. But if you don't stand behind them, you're going to lose them. I guarantee that you're not going to get laterals in here because they're not going to come when they see that.

Police Officer (Male, 50s)

Multiple officers cited a council member's reference to police officers as "murderers" and "racists" as having a negative impact on morale.

(SPD Survey, 2019)

“ It's not just that a city council member said something horrible about police officers and it's a closed incident. These kind of things get around the country. We have social networks. We have friends, we have family. These things spread nationwide. And we wonder why we can't hire people.

Police Officer (Male, 30s)

“ I want less focus on the money and more focus on showing people we care and we value them as employees. Millennials really want that to be communicated to them. For those who have been here for a while—especially people who have been here for 15, 20, 30 years—they want to know that they're still valued employees of the city.

New Police Officer (Male, 20s)

Recruits today have more higher-order needs of belongingness, love, self-esteem, and self-actualization. As curious and nebulous as such needs might seem to police management, departments must meet them if they expect to retain younger officers. Research suggests that employee turnover is an emotional issue and that workers quit because they feel that their need for trust, hope, worth, or competence is not met.

(RAND Center on Quality Policing, 2010)

“ We use a shotgun approach when it comes to police officers in this nation. We treat everyone the same. There are bad officers and they need to be dealt with, but not everyone is guilty and we should stop treating them all as one. Officers would appreciate someone on the outside standing up for them.

Command Staff (Neighboring Agency)

“ It appears as though the "backbone" of the department—patrol—is continually asked to do more, but are scrutinized the most, given the most policies to remember and follow without support.

Police Officer (Female, 40s)



Ensure that systems of accountability produce intended results

Take time to evaluate and refine accountability systems to achieve performance goals while minimizing unintended consequences such as decreased engagement and morale.

Selection of relevant data points to spark new ideas

“ The constant oversight and distrust despite overwhelming evidence of the department’s progress and changes is extremely discouraging.
Police Officer (Female, 30s)

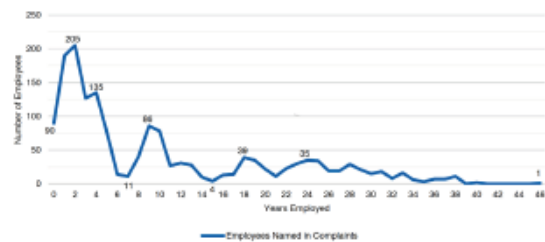
“ I have trouble coming into work. The only thing that keeps me going is that I’m close to retirement. We get paid well, great benefits, but if I had less than 10 years, I seriously would be looking for somewhere else to go. I would not stick around here. It’s not worth it. I would put my job, my family, myself at risk by getting in trouble, by getting sued, by being put on administrative leave. It doesn’t make any sense.
Police Officer (Male, 50s)

“ Very confusing policies that are contrary to one another. A friend of mine goes to a burglary, he gets there first and is waiting for another unit. People are loading up stuff out of the house. They take off, he chases them. He got a commendation for catching the bad guy, he got a day off for the pursuit. He left and went to King County.
Police Officer (Male, 30s)

“ The culture has changed. There are officers out there that still do a lot of proactive work and I commend it. Me personally, I’ll leave it for the newer officers. They enjoy the hunt for lack of a better word, to find the stuff, to dig it out. To get the good call. To get the bad guys off the street. For me, from past experience— it’s just more of a headache. I just like to handle my 911 calls, clean up the board, stuff like that.
Police Officer (Male, 30s)

In 2018, 1,172 complaint were filed with OPA. Roughly 60-65% of officers in the Patrol Ops Bureau received a complaint. 47% of people receiving complaints are in their first 4 years of employment.

Number of Employees Named in Complaints by Years of Experience (2018)



OPA opened a full investigation into 44% of complaints received in 2018. This was a 10% increase over the percent of total complaints investigated in 2017. OPA also referred fewer cases back to employees’ supervisors than in 2017.
(Office of Police Accountability Annual Report, 2018)

“ It’s stressful when you have complaints that should have been handled at your first point supervisor. When you’re talking about retention, that’s one of the biggest things.
Police Officer (Male, 30s)

Of complaints investigated in 2018, 91% were “not sustained”.



Help officers to navigate their role

Police officers want to help people and to make a difference through their primary role as law enforcers. As societal expectations change, officers need a clear sense of purpose and opportunities to do meaningful work.

Selection of relevant data points to spark new ideas



On the challenges with homelessness:

A lot of these folks are making a lot of decisions without talking to the people who deal with it the most. Leadership has totally left us out of the conversation and they made these decisions on their own on how to do things.

Police Officer (Male, 50s)



The main problem that I have is the lack of prosecution that results from the hard work that we do as a department. It is beyond frustrating to put hours of work into a case to find that they either dismissed the charges or gave them a very easy plea deal. Many of these cases involve dangerous felons which we as officers put ourselves in danger to apprehend.

Police Officer (10+ years with SPD)



City leaders, media, the public, command staff, the court systems all need to get on the same page. It seems like harm reduction and law enforcement is not even on the first page of priorities.

Police Officer (20+ years with SPD)



A lot of what police do is they handle people situations that are out of control for them. Especially with the new policing way versus when my dad came on. There's times that you need to be firm with people and take measures, but a lot of it is communication.

New Recruit (Male, 40s)



We put the citizens and the community at the forefront, which is what we are supposed to do. However, one of the problems is that everyone has forgotten that the officers are also part of the community. What Seattle has done effectively is pretty much alienated the officers into feeling they are just an entity, just a uniform. They haven't had a voice for a long time.

Police Officer (Male, 50s)



I'm not out here because I want pats on the back and thank yous. It's just impossible to do the work sometimes. I can't tell you how many times I have to say, I'm sorry I can't help you.

Police Officer (Male, 30s)



People expect that cops can do so much and that we do all of it so well. I'm amazed at how well we actually do it, but it's not that idealized world. It's not the television cop that people see. We are human beings.

Veteran Police Officer (Male, 50s)





Tell the story of the good work

The general public is not aware of many aspects of police work. Create more opportunities to share stories of police work and celebrate department successes.

Selection of relevant data points to spark new ideas

“ We don't show good work. It's the opposite of transparency. Everybody I work with has done absolutely amazing work and it never hits the news.

Police Officer (Male, 30s)

“ Social media is the biggest way to capture people's eyes because when someone hears something negative on social media, it gets put out there to everyone. When something good happens, it gets put on the back burner. But the more people talk about it, the more people tweet about it, it becomes known.

Prospective Applicant (Male, 20s)

“ You can talk about the high standards of the Seattle Police Department and the benefits of it. Instead all we hear is police reform and accountability. It makes it sound like there is a problem here and this is not something you want to join because we're trying to fix it. Instead of saying, we are in a good place and you should be a part of this. There seems to be too much focus on the negative and not enough on the positive.

Police Officer (Male)

“ I have friends from the past who just spew a ton of hate on police officers even though they've never had an actual encounter with police officers. It's just how media has portrayed them. Media always picks the very big, bad cases. You'd never hear about something that I did yesterday. There were two females here from Alaska and they couldn't order any food because everything was closed. I drove by Starbucks and bought them some sandwiches. I'm not the only officer who does that. People don't realize that police officers are people too. We're humans and we're nice and we get into the job because we actually do care about people.

New Police Officer (Female, 20s)

“ We need to more public support from both the command staff and the City when we make right decisions. There's so little public support for our good decisions and so much criticism of either bad decisions or the decisions that are good, but the public perceives them as bad. There isn't an explanation: this is police work, this is lawful, this is proper, this is morally correct, sometimes this job is gross, this is what it is. There's no standing by that in the public eye which is pretty demoralizing.

Police Officer (Male, 30s)

“ If you had access to all the great things that are being done every day by the police officers—just take any 24 hour period on any day of any week you want—and okay, these officers just saved this guy's life with Narcan, this officer just pulled this guy off a bridge; all these great things that happened. Yet the thing that ends up in the media is something negative. We have all these awesome examples of all the great things that are being done but we choose to respond only to the negative ones.

Command Staff (Male, 60s)

“ We need to bring a new realm of understanding to the community to see that we aren't just writing tickets, we aren't just arresting people. We do so much more. It's the underlying story that never gets told.

Police Officer (Male, 30s)

SPD Recruitment & Retention Workgroup Report

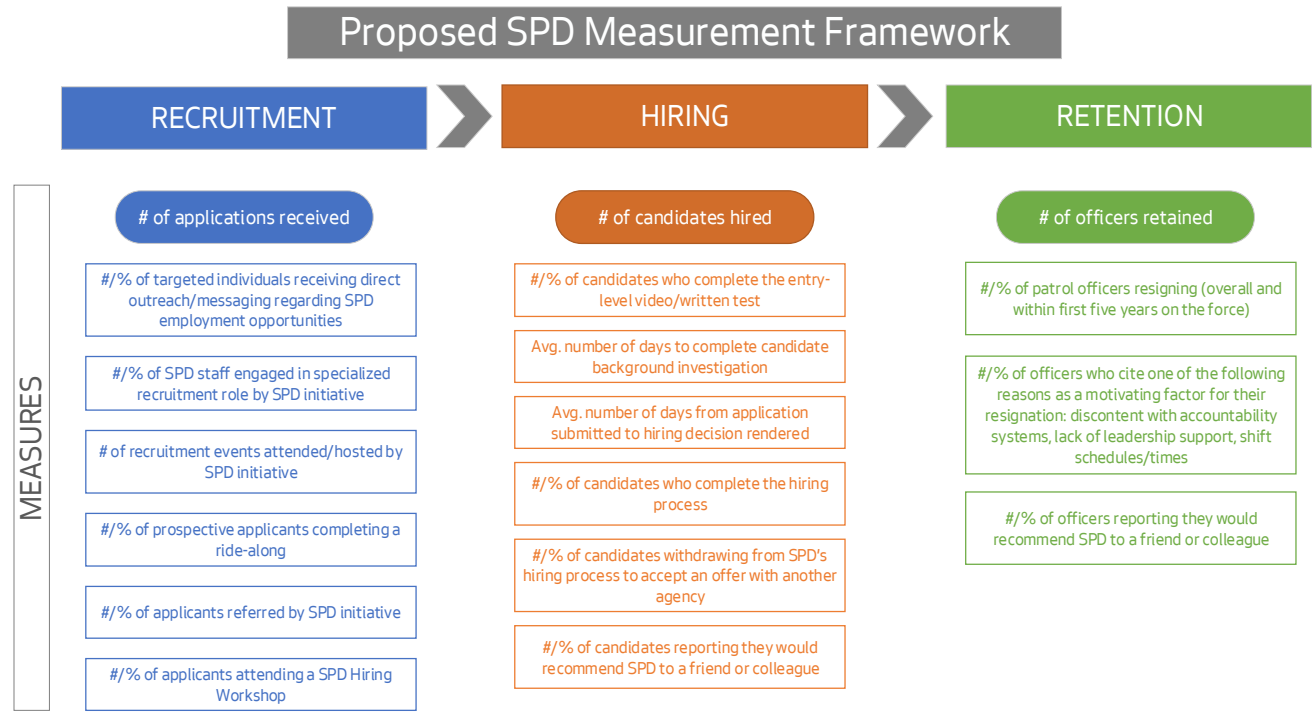
[APPENDIX D: Alignment of Initiatives and Key Findings](#)

The quantitative and qualitative research made clear that SPD must focus on both recruiting and retaining staff in order to stabilize and expand the number of sworn officers on the force. The seven key findings from the research phase highlighted the need to identify a portfolio of initiatives that expand recruitment, improve the hiring process, and better support staff, particularly patrol officers in their first five years of service. The following provides a crosswalk between the 12 recommended initiatives and the key findings they aim to address.

Initiatives	Key Findings						
	1. Expand recruitment by reaching new candidates	2. Make recruiting a team sport	3. Optimize the hiring process	4. Refine the ways we show support for officers	5. Ensure that systems of accountability produce intended results	6. Help officers to navigate their role	7. Tell the story of the good work
1. Civilian to Sworn Pathways							
2. Recruitment Rotations							
3. Ride-Along Program							
4. Leave No Candidate Behind							
5. Speedy Background Checks							
6. Flexible Testing							
7. Seattle Sampler							
8. Clear My Card							
9. Bureau Advisory Councils							
10. Step Into Our Shoes							
11. Develop Our People Leaders							
12. Wellness-First Schedules							

APPENDIX E: Measurement Framework

The project team encourages SPD to establish a measurement framework to assess the impact of implemented initiatives and to inform ongoing course corrections. While SPD will not be able to draw causal links between initiatives and outcomes achieved, key measures, such as those displayed below, are imperative to evaluating whether efforts are helping to turn the curve. The project team advises SPD to identify key measures and develop data collection tools to establish baselines and routinely monitor progress. Results should be shared with key internal and external stakeholders to inform ongoing improvement efforts.



APPENDIX F: Additional Initiatives

The project team received nearly 1,000 ideas from stakeholders for how SPD might improve recruitment, hiring, and retention efforts. The 14 initiatives below comprise the second tier of potential solutions that were discussed by the workgroup, but ultimately not prioritized for the first round of implementation because they were comparatively more challenging to implement and/or perceived to be less impactful. The workgroup strongly encourages SPD to consider the additional initiatives in the future when developing the strategic hiring and retention plan. There may be opportunities to incorporate tenets of ideas outlined below that could be impactful.

#	Impact Area	Initiative Description
1	Recruitment/Retention	Life Credits. Provide language, education, and physical fitness incentives to officers to value differing abilities and skill sets and to make Seattle more competitive with neighboring agencies.
2	Recruitment	“Who are We” Campaign. Humanize SPD officers and help tell the story of the good work they do by profiling brief video and/or print stories of officers. Efforts could include sharing stories of officers and the individuals they have helped in the community. Stories would highlight the many ways officers go above and beyond in their roles to support our city.
3	Recruitment	Find My Agency. Find my agency gives people interested in law enforcement a sampler of local agencies. It creates clarity about the positioning of the department to help candidates self-select into our way of policing.
4	Hiring	Monthly Workshops. Conduct a 2- or 3-hour monthly workshop for prospective/current applicants to connect with officers, learn about the hiring process, receive assistance completing hiring paperwork, and/or physically prepare for the Physical Ability Test (PAT).
5	Hiring	Seattle Academy. Ensure we can accommodate BLEA training for all new hires by either negotiating with the state to expand number of session seats or by seeking approval to administer our own SPD-led academy.
6	Retention	Tours of Service. Create “internships” or “out-of-class” experiences for recruits and current officers. Expose individuals to different units within the organization to expand skill sets, develop employee expertise, and promote collaboration across the department. Additionally, impose term-limits on some or all of specialty units to create more opportunities for officers within the organization.
7	Retention	Public Complaint Toolkit & Guidelines. Collaborate with OPA to draft a public-facing document to define different types of complaints, provide information on how complaints are investigated, and discuss evidence reviewed for sustained vs. unstained investigation determinations.
8	Retention	Best Dressed in Blue. Accommodate officers’ desire to be comfortable, wear high-quality and durable fabrics, and appear more approachable. Provide summer uniforms, allow some expression of individuality, de-militarize the look of officers, etc. Convene a taskforce to propose uniform improvements.
9	Retention	Significant Event Toolkit. Create a standard template and protocol (i.e., respond within 4 hours) conveying information to the public following a significant event. Create documents and videos explaining SPD policies and procedures that can be referenced to further educate the public on the duties and realities of police work.
10	Retention	Ideas Forum. Create an electronic, always open feedback form for SPD staff to propose ideas and offer feedback on policies and procedures, organizational development, etc. Ideas would be reviewed regularly (e.g., quarterly) by an

SPD Recruitment & Retention Workgroup Report

		SPD committee (perhaps Patrol Advisory Board) and updates/decisions would be openly communicated back to staff on a routine basis.
11	Retention	Report Drive-Thru. Customize the ways in which the public submits report. Options for residents include submit a report online or schedule a phone call, FaceTime, or in-person meeting with an SPD representative. Send CSOs or other non-sworn staff to resolve as many report requests as possible. Aim is to be responsive to community while freeing up officers to respond to emergency patrol calls.
12	Retention	Form-a-Palooza for Police. Sponsor a hack-a-thon with designers, behavioral scientists, and police officers to redesign and streamline policing forms starting with those most time-intensive and frequently used (e.g., Traffic Contact Report) to reduce the daily frustration felt by patrol officers.
13	Recruitment/Retention	*Retirement Medical Benefits. Offer a retirement medical benefit package similar to the Port of Seattle to attract and retain officers.
14	Recruitment/Retention	*Take Home Vehicle Fleet. Offer police officers the option for a take home car to maximize time on shift responding to calls, improve vehicle care, and make officers' commute easier.

**Included due to popularity among officers surveyed, but likely not financially feasible.*