



Agenda Item No. (3)

To: Rules, Policy and Industrial Relations Committee/Committee of the Whole  
Meeting of July 27, 2023

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

Subject: **APPROVE ACTIONS RELATIVE TO THE DISTRICT'S EMPLOYMENT  
RECRUITMENT PROGRAM**

### **Recommendation**

The Rules, Policy and Industrial Relations Committee recommends the Board of Directors approve the following actions, effective through September 2024, relative to the District's Employment Recruitment Program:

1. Approve continuation of an enhanced employment recruitment program for all regular, full-time positions;
2. Approve continuation of the incentive payment for the Bus Operator Pre-Apprenticeship and Student Bus Operators (Apprenticeship) Programs;
3. Approve continuation of the employee referral program; and,
4. Update applicable District policies accordingly,

with the understanding that the cost of the positions authorized as part of this item will be funded with salary savings.

This matter will be presented to the Board of Directors at its July 28, 2023, meeting for appropriate action.

### **Background**

In March 2022, the Board of Directors approved a pilot program to incentivize new candidates to work for the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District (District), and for employees to provide referrals to potential candidates. The Board approved the pilot program through September 2023.

This pilot was originally recommended as the District was finding it difficult to attract robust pools of candidates for many positions. In certain classifications, such as engineering, finance, information systems, bus operators, and skilled trade positions, the District is often having continuous posting of positions to attract candidates.

The program offers all full-time regular new hires (except for Bus Operators which have a separate program) an incentive bonus after successful completion of the introductory period and an additional \$1,000 on the one-year anniversary of District employment. Part-time, temporary, casual or provisional employees are not eligible for the signing incentive.

Bus Operators are eligible for \$1,000 incentive bonus upon successful completion of the training program and another \$1,000 on their one-year anniversary of District employment (i.e., one-year anniversary of bus operators shall be counted from the date after successful completion of the training program).

For the Bus Operator pre-apprentices enrolled in the program with Santa Rosa Junior College, we currently provide students a payment of \$1,000 upon successful completion of the program. We find that these incentives are attractive in recruiting candidates and may help offset other college expenses during the pre-apprenticeship period. It is recommended that we continue this incentive program.

Since the pilot programs were approved by the Board of Directors, we have experienced a modicum of success. To date, 71 candidates have been hired under the pilot program for the signing incentive. Further, there have been four candidates hired through the employee referral program pilot. As context, in November 2022 the regional unemployment rate in the Bay Area was 2.8 percent.

It is further recommended that we continue the \$500 referral incentive provided to any regular employee who refers a candidate who is hired by the District. Payment of the referral incentive would be paid after the candidate reaches their one-year service anniversary with the District.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The net estimated annual salary cost for this recommendation will depend on a number of factors, principally the number of people hired under this pilot program, which stage they are in their service time at the District, and the number of employees who are eligible for the referral incentive. Staff estimates that an additional year of the program could include approximately 75 new hires with a third referred by District employees. Given that assumption, the additional year salary cost and potentially committed payments would be an estimated \$175,000. At the conclusion of the extended pilot, if the Bay Area unemployment rate remains low and staff determines it to be a continued successful tool, the matter will be brought before the Board of Directors for further action. At that time, any ongoing participation in subsequent years will be funded through the annual budget process.