

City of Gainesville Diversity Work Plan

This work plan should be completed by Directors and who do not report directly to a Charter Officer.

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Department: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs

Title: Nature Manager

Date Completed: October 24, 2015

I. Introductory statement describing your department/division.

The Nature Operations Division consists of two sections; Urban Forestry and Natural Resource Management. The Nature Operations Division staff is responsible for the planning, development, maintenance and operations of the City's nature parks and the urban forest canopy within Gainesville City limits.

Natural Resource Management is responsible for the acquisition, planning, development, and maintenance of the City's nature parks including public access, security, monitoring, invasive plant control, general maintenance, and prescribed fire.

The Urban Forestry Section ensures the continuation of a safe and sustainable tree canopy for our community by enforcing tree protection measures in the Land Development Code, and educating the public regarding proper pruning, right-tree, right-place planting, protection of sturdy, healthy trees, and assisting with removal of hazardous trees.

A. Based on the demographics of your department, list any diversity issues specific or unique to the areas in your span of control.

The Nature Operations Division has a diverse work force consisting of 27.75% female, 5.55% female and minority, 11.1% minority, 33.3 % white male employees, and 22.2% vacant positions. There is also diversity in age ranges among Division employees. Based upon a list I received of the City's Affirmative Action (AA) Goals several positions within the Division have either a female or minority placement goal.

B. List any barriers or other concerns you have for your entire span of control.

- Traditionally labor-oriented positions such as Labor Crew Leader and Parks Maintenance Worker attract more qualified male than female applicants.
- The minority applicant pool is very limited for natural resource related careers.

I. What were your efforts to address diversity issues in the area(s) under your span of control in the last (evaluation) year?

A. List recruitment efforts/strategies employed for issues identified above.

- Recruitment plans were developed for all positions that had AA goals. For positions having a female goal, positions were specifically advertised in the following places in addition to usual advertising: Careerwomen.com, womensjoblist.com, The Feminist Majority Foundation's Jobs Board. For those positions having a minority goal they were advertised at employdiversity.com, diversityworking.com, FAMU, and direct contact with UF's Natural Resource Diversity Initiative. Most positions were also

advertised via Florida Park and Recreation Association, governmentjobs.com, FL League of Cities, and University of Florida. One of the most successful recruiting tools has been direct contact with a network of local government land management entities from around the state.

- Twice during the fiscal year staff worked a tabling event through UF's Natural Resource Diversity Initiative, an organization devoted to attracting a more diverse group to natural resource careers.
- We ensured that a diverse panel was assembled when conducting all interviews and evaluating bids.
- Staff attended the City's Job Fair to promote open and soon-to-be-open positions.
- The Department participates in "More Kids in the Woods" in partnership with Westwood Middle School. This program specifically targets middle school students to get them outdoors and interested in natural resource-related careers. Student demographics at Westwood Middle School are diverse and include Asian (2%), Black (35.91%), Hispanic (8.21%), Native American (0.19%) and White (47.28%).

B. List Retention and Personnel Development Strategies you employed.

A greater effort was made this year to cross-train staff and be more inclusive:

- The entire Natural Resource Management team, including maintenance staff, held herbicide work days once/week where, side by side, they all learned how to treat invasive non-native vegetation with herbicide.
- Division staff was also encouraged to attend courses on prescribed fire and become a part of the prescribed burn team.
- All staff were invited and encouraged to participate in tabling events at job fairs and other events.
- All Division staff was trained to assist at Sweetwater Wetlands Park with Park Ranger duties.
- Staff has been engaged in making operational improvement decisions.
- Supervisors work hard to develop staff to reach their full potential through on the job coaching, mentoring, and training.

These efforts, in conjunction with other things, have improved morale, built a team atmosphere, and readied the staff for promotional opportunities. Six of thirteen positions were filled with internal candidates during the fiscal year.

II. Were those efforts successful?

A. Why/Why Not?

Yes, our efforts were successful. Six of the ten completed Division hires this year were internal promotions (60%). Two of the positions hired were minorities (20%). Five of the hires were females (50%).

B. How did you measure your efforts?

By the number of female and minority candidates hired and promoted.

III. What were your efforts to make employees aware of the benefits of diversity?

A. List your efforts here. The Department established a Diversity working group dedicated to developing a work plan to address diversity issues. All of our staff was afforded an opportunity to participate on this team. The team reports their progress during Departmental Quarterly Meetings. One member of the Nature Operations Division serves on this team. Further, the Department's Diversity Team administered a Department-wide diversity survey. The results were distributed and all staff discussed results at their monthly staff meetings. I also remind staff every time we have a staff meeting, in preparing for the advertising/interviewing process, in preparing for and during the RFP process. The Department's Diversity working group developed an internal training campaign where Department staff watched diversity related video in small groups and then discusses the issues.

The Department holds quarterly meetings and all staff from the different divisions get to know each other better.

The Division holds periodic appreciation luncheons for staff.

If the Division employee desires, we take them out to lunch on their birthdays.

IV. What were your Women/Minority-Owned Small Business efforts last year?

A. List your efforts here?

Staff has worked hard to encourage and recruit minority businesses when RFPs are solicited. Minority owned small businesses were invited to participate in RFP processes during the year. We have several minority contractors that I am aware of due to these efforts. We have minority contract firms who provide mowing and landscape maintenance services, and cleaning services.

B. What can you do differently next year to improve?

We will continue to encourage and recruit minority businesses when RFPs are solicited.

V. Your Component of the Overall Departmental Strategic Plan

Your Department Head will work with his or her direct reports to develop a Departmental Strategic Plan to address diversity issues this evaluation year. In this section you will outline your assignment for the department's overall Strategic Plan. You will use this component as the basis for the Diversity objective on your Performance Evaluation Plan.

List one or more components of the overall Departmental Plan outlined by your Department Head in the appropriate sections below. You might not have an element in each of the areas.

A. Recruitment Strategies

- Work with HR and EO to locate additional listing sites and organizations to post vacancies.

B. Retention Strategies

(1) Professional Development for all Employees

- UF/IFAS Restricted Use Pesticide training
- UF/IFAS Invasive Plant training
- ISA Certified Arborist training
- Prescribed burn training and Certified Burn Manager
- Annual Ag Expo held in Moultrie, Georgia
- Park Maintenance Workshop and Skills Challenge - FRPA
- Natural Area Training Academy – Professional development training
- North Florida Prescribed Fire Council meetings
- Florida Native Plant Society membership and conferences
- National Recreation and Park Association – membership, conferences and training
- Florida Recreation and Parks Association – membership, conferences and training
- Gainesville Corporate University

- Special assignment training for departmental staff
- Cross-training within the Department

(2) Strategies to Foster an Environment of Diversity and Inclusion

- Update staff regularly on the importance of, and efforts made to address our departmental diversity including progress toward the departmental Diversity Action Plan.
- Encourage participation in the Department's Diversity working group sessions.

C. Women/Minority-Owned Small Business Strategies

Work with the EO Office Small & Minority Development & Procurement Coordinator to identify and reach more MBE and WBE.

C. How will you measure your department's success?

Re-evaluate our efforts each year; work with EO, HR, the City Manager's office and departmental staff; and continue training opportunities with staff. Discuss and measure increases or decreases as the results of staff positions filled, vendors hired, and contractual services awarded.