

Diversity & Inclusion in the Workplace



A Project by the Contra Costa Local Government Leadership Academy

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Diversity & Inclusion in the Workplace: A Toolkit

Prepared for:

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In Partnership with:

The Contra Costa Local Government Leadership Academy

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INTRODUCTION

“In diversity there is beauty and there is strength.”

-*Maya Angelou*

Executive Summary:

As part of the Contra Costa Local Government Leadership Academy (“CCLGA”), students are assigned a real-world concern for a local government agency, where the project is focused on a key deliverable for the agency. Although developed at the request of the City of Walnut Creek, the intention is for any local government public agency to find the “Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit” beneficial to their organization. Diversity is a living entity, constantly evolving. Organizations actively involved in diversifying their workforce reap many benefits including increased innovation, growing their talent, and improved employee performance. Due to the breadth and depth of the topic, our approach was to create a “Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit” with a variety of implementation measures that can be applied or adapted depending on the organizations’ existing or anticipated needs. To best organize all of the provided resources, the Toolkit was divided into three sections to successfully create and maintain a diverse workplace - Recruitment, Retention, and Reflection. Cost and difficulty of implementation are rated for each implementation measure and ‘hot topics’ are identified.

Process:

Our group met with Fran Robustelli, Former Assistant City Manager of the City of Walnut Creek, our project sponsor, to learn more about her vision. It was important to her that this project translate to other jurisdictions. None of the resources are specific to the City of Walnut Creek. Diversity and inclusion are broad topics, so the team narrowed the focus to three primary categories for a successful program; recruitment, retention, and reflection. With those categories in mind, our group gathered resources through contact with cities and organizations known to have diversity and inclusion programs, as well as internet research. The resources are organized, summarized, and rated in the Toolkit.

Recommendation:

The team recommends each organization consider its needs and use the Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit as a starting point. The Toolkit is a living document, and is designed to be flexible and adaptable to changing needs, challenges, and social climate. We hope City leadership throughout Contra Costa County commits to this proactive approach to creating and fostering a culture of diversity and inclusion.

A Call to Action:

Can you identify at least one tool that will work for your City right now?

TOOLKIT

Using the Toolkit:

As discussed above, the “Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit” is organized into the following three categories:

- **Recruitment** is the first critical step in building a dynamic workforce. Recruiting, hiring, and on-boarding new employees creates an opportunity for an organization to reveal its inclusive culture and diversity embracement. Notable implementation measures in this category include adopting a Welcome Ordinance, seating a Search Committee to help meet diversity goals, and creating an Immigrant Resource Guide.
- **Retention** is a challenge for every organization. High employee turnover is costly and negatively impacts the delivery of services and affects morale. Notable implementation measures in this category include delivering training, forming a Diversity Committee, creating an Equity and Empowerment Commission, converting facilities to unisex, establishing an Employee Engagement Program, and launching a film and speaker series.
- **Reflection** is necessary to foster and nurture a culture of inclusion. Because diversity and inclusion is a living entity, it must be continually evaluated and adapted. Notable implementation measures in this category include hosting Equity and Empowerment town halls, issuing an Equity Climate survey, and preparing a Race and Equity Annual Report.

The Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit also includes a video library and links to websites and articles related to diversity and inclusion, as well as model examples implemented by other jurisdictions.

The items contained in the Toolkit were rated on a simplified scale to allow the agency to classify the items pursuant to the following factors: cost, difficulty of implementation, and potential for controversy and/or politically challenging.

Cost:	\$	= Inexpensive
	\$\$	= Moderately expensive
	\$\$\$	= Costly
Difficulty of Implementation:		= Easy: Implemented with less resources.
		= Difficult: Involves time, staff, surveys, and various resources to implement.
Hot Topic:		= Potentially controversial and/or political.

RECRUITMENT

1.1 Provide a List of ‘Welcoming Resources’ on City Website



The City may identify and provide contact information for resources, including but not limited to, City departments, employment assistance, educational services, housing assistance programs, immigration services, and legal assistance. This webpage requires only periodic updating, and could be marketed to faith-based groups, legal services, government offices, and at City events.

🔗 [Welcoming Resources Webpage \(Evanston, Illinois\)](#)

1.2 Adopt a City ‘Welcoming Ordinance’



The City may adopt an ordinance outlining its dedication to welcoming all people to its community and recognizing the importance of diversity and inclusion. This could be as simple as identifying the goals of the City to increase diversity and inclusion in its hiring process, or as extensive as outlining policies on citizenship and immigration status. The City could implement a signed pledge agreement for all new staff to complete during employment onboarding.

🔗 [Welcoming Ordinance \(Evanston, Illinois\)](#)

1.3 Provide Incentives to Employees Who Speak a Foreign Language



By providing a financial incentive (pay differential), additional vacation days, or other incentives to employees who speak a foreign language and agree to provide translation services, the City would: 1) make non-English speakers more comfortable at City Hall and in community meetings; 2) increase participation of non-English speakers in public forums; and 3) expand outreach efforts. Prior to receiving this incentive, employees must pass a bilingual proficiency assessment exam.

1.4 Create a Guide to Combat Height and Weight Discrimination



This guide would ensure non-discrimination in the hiring process, prevent a hostile work environment, and ensure equitable access to facilities for all people. The guide should be referred to during all hiring exercises, provided to new employees during their orientation, as well as during the design of public facilities.

🔗 [Guidelines to Prevent Height and Weight Discrimination \(San Francisco, California\)](#)

1.5 Create a Search Committee to Help Meet Diversity Goals



The City could create a Search Committee of internal staff tasked with identifying diversity needs, resources and outreach strategies that may be employed to reach pre-identified communities. Outreach strategies could include posting job recruitment flyers with faith-based organizations, social clubs, educational institutions, or senior facilities. Diversity goals could be established by Equity and Empowerment Commission, and monitored by a designated equity officer or diversity coordinator.

🔗 [UC Berkeley Human Resources \(Berkeley, California\)](#)

1.6 Create an Immigrant Resource Guide



The Guide would address hate, (implicit or intentional) bias, and discrimination; provide resources to those who live in fear stemming from their immigration status; and educate and inform their allies. The Guide should include information about City laws, referral resources for legal education, immigration legal defense, pathways to citizenship, and other resources to help support immigrants, undocumented immigrants, and immigrant families.

🔗 [Respect and Love Toolkit and Resource Guide](#) (San Francisco, California)

1.7 Establish a Second Chance Policy for People with Criminal Records



A ‘Fair Chance’ policy would give people with arrest and/or conviction records the opportunity to be considered for employment on a case-by-case basis, giving them a “fair chance” to effectively reintegrate into the community, and help to reduce the recidivism (tendency of a convicted criminal to reoffend) rate. Beyond legal requirements, the City could partner with correctional facilities to foster a rehabilitation program.

🔗 [Fair Chance Ordinance](#) (San Francisco, California)

1.8 Establish a Pledge of Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion



The City could implement a signed pledge agreement for all new staff to complete during employment onboarding. By having all staff sign on to this commitment, the entire organization is agreeing to take action to cultivate environments where diverse experiences and perspectives are welcomed and where employees feel comfortable and encouraged to discuss diversity and inclusion.

🔗 [New Hire Pledge](#)

RETENTION

2.1 Hire a Chief Equity Officer, Diversity Coordinator, or Equivalent



The City may hire a new employee or designate an existing employee to oversee efforts to ensure the local jurisdiction adequately addresses diversity and inclusion within the workplace. This employee would primarily be responsible for identifying and eliminating drivers of inequity; training staff on engagement and inclusivity; and guide all other departments in the development, implementation, and evaluation of policies, practices, budget allocations, and programs to address equity.

[Example Job Description \(San Antonio, Texas\)](#)

2.2 Form an Internal Diversity Committee



Establish an internal advisory committee consisting of representatives designated by each department or functional group, moderated by the Director of Human Resources. The Committee could meet monthly, bimonthly, or quarterly. The Committee would assist the Director of Human Resources on the implementation of the “Diversity Toolkit” and other diversity goals, policies, and programs.

2.3 Create an Equity & Empowerment Commission



The City could establish an Equity & Empowerment Commission, comprised of residents or other professionals appointed by the City Council. The Commission’s purpose is to identify and eradicate inequities in City services, programs, policies, and human resources practices. The Commission would evaluate job descriptions and decision-making processes, and advise the Council and staff on recommended changes. The Commission could be designed as a permanent body or as an ad hoc committee.

[Example Commission Webpage \(Evanston, Illinois\)](#)

2.4 Install or Convert Restrooms/Locker Rooms to Unisex Facilities



Unisex toilets and locker rooms can be used by people of any gender, or gender identity. Unisex facilities can benefit transgender populations and people outside the gender binary. The unisex facilities would need to address the differences between men and women, including urinals for males and sanitary receptacles for the disposal of hygiene products for females. Larger facilities may increase the cost and difficulty of implementation. In certain situations, the consolidation of facilities may result in a cost savings.

2.5 Establish and Implement an Employee Engagement Program



The City can create an employee led engagement program to foster diversity and inclusion. The program would offer employees the opportunity to develop and implement strategies that support employee career development, health and wellness, as well as community engagement. The program can offer a broad range of activities and resources for employees that improve connections, well-being, and work-life balance.

[CARE Employee Engagement Initiative \(City of Walnut Creek\)](#)

2.5.1 Launch a Diversity Documentary Film Series



Create a “brown bag” film series where employees can view documentary films on race, religion, gender, and other marginalized populations. Documentaries have a film rating from the Motion Picture Association of America of G, PG, PG-13, or R (not NC-17) to advise the viewer of suitability in terms of issues such as sex, violence, substance abuse, profanity, or other types of mature content. Announce all documentaries in the series in advance of the screening. Establish a process to recommend films to the Director of Human Resources for review and approval. Refer to the Internet Movie Database for an inventory of potential films.

- ❑ [Example Film Series Poster](#) (City & County of San Francisco)
- ❑ [List of Documentaries on Race & Ethnicity](#) (IMDB)

2.5.2 Host a Diversity & Inclusion Speaker Series



The City can identify and invite speakers who have had a significant experience or impact on improving diversity and inclusion in the workplace to conduct a series of lectures, trainings, or seminars for staff. The series could focus in on the topics of diversity, inclusion, and implicit bias that would help to improve collaborative thinking and action on these topics.

- ❑ [Implicit Bias Training](#) (Contra Costa County)
- ❑ [Equity Speaker Series](#) (Diablo Valley College)
- ❑ [Diversity Speaker Series](#) (University of California, Berkeley)

2.5.3 Stream Monthly TED Talks (see “Video Library” below)



TED Talks are short influential videos from expert speakers on various topics. The City can incorporate TED Talk videos on the topics of diversity and inclusion into regular staff communication, such as staff meetings, newsletters, intranets, or emails. TED Talks could also be incorporated to complement the Film Series (Implementation Measure 2.5.1) if an agency chose to implement that strategy.

- ❑ [TED Talks](#)

2.5.4 Encourage Participation in Continuing Education Program



Create or expand existing Continuing Education Program to include topics on diversity and inclusion to encourage employees to take additional professional development training courses with tuition reimbursement or other incentives. Require employees that participate to report back to the Director of Human Resources on any implementation measures that would be appropriate for their organization.

2.5.5 Work with CCLGLA Organizing Committee to Add “Diversity & Inclusion” Curriculum to the Leadership Academy



The Contra Costa Local Government Leadership Academy could devote a session (or part of a session) of the program to diversity and inclusion in the workplace. One day of the Academy could focus presentations, exercises, and sharing case studies of other City Managers that have experienced benefits and enhanced their leadership by advancing diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

- ❑ [Website](#) (Contra Costa Local Government Leadership Academy)

2.5.6 Require Biannual Diversity & Implicit Bias Training



Expand the mandatory Sexual Harassment Training to also include focus on diversity, inclusion, and implicit bias. Merging these topics will serve to educate and empower the workforce and ensure that these topics are integral goals of the organization, while being financially prudent with the City's resources.

2.6 Launch a Mentorship Program



This career development initiative involves one-on-one mentorship matching between employees in various stages of their careers ("Mentees") and experienced professionals ("Mentors"). The program aims to improve the professional practice of the City by benefiting individual practitioners at all experience levels. The program should be designed to provide adequate structure to facilitate meaningful relationships, while maximizing flexibility to meet the professional interests and schedules of participants. Each Mentor/Mentee pair is welcome to customize the program to meet individual needs. Mentors and mentees should agree to meet quarterly at a minimum.

[Mentorship Program Website](#) (American Planning Association California - Northern)

2.7 Launch a Good Will & Wellness Program



The City can create a "Good Will and Wellness" Program to convey to employees that the City is invested in supporting and providing for their diverse needs. The Program would offer employees the opportunity to develop relationships with other employees they might not normally gravitate to, and provide a variety of venues for them to learn. The Program can offer a broad range of activities and resources for employees that improve connections, well-being, and work-life balance.

2.7.1 Highlight and Celebrate Different Cultures at Employee Events



Use regularly-scheduled staff events to highlight and celebrate different ethnic groups. This may be done by providing food, games, and other activities representative of the culture being celebrated, and would allow employees to learn about others without sacrificing additional personal time. Utilizing local vendors would encourage employees to continually frequent new restaurants they may have avoided due to unfamiliarity with the cuisine.

2.7.2 Host Mental and Physical Health Classes



Employees' diverse needs go beyond their ethnicity, sexual-orientation, and background, and include mental and physical health as well. Providing resources for employees to continue to maintain their mindfulness, as well as their mental and physical health would help employee morale and increase patience and willingness to accept others. Aspects of this program could include yoga and/or meditation classes and trainings, as well as dedication of City facilities to hold these classes on certain days. Consider incentives for employees that participate in the program, such as subsidized health club memberships or credits towards workout attire. Healthy employees miss less work and are more productive.

2.7.3 Launch a Lunch Buddy Program



An optional lunch buddy program that pairs employees interested in sharing their culture and learning about others would help build employee bonds and allow participants to learn in a more intimate setting, where those less comfortable speaking to large groups will have an opportunity to teach and be taught. This Program would not require any City funds; however, participation could be enhanced if the City provided some reimbursement or other incentive for participants who visited local restaurants.

2.7.4 Host a City Manager Breakfast



A monthly or quarterly “Breakfast with the City Manager,” would provide a venue for the City Manager and other senior city staff to get to know staff members outside of their departments and have non-work-related conversations about their families, background, and hobbies. As a theme, these events could also highlight and celebrate different cultures with informal presentations or informational booths. This would help foster good will between first line employees, mid-managers, and senior staff.

2.8 Develop and Utilize a Non-Discriminatory Terminology Guide



Work with a team of employees that represent a diverse cross-section of the organization, to develop a “Non-Discriminatory & Inclusive Terminology Guide” to educate their fellow co-workers on the appropriate/generally acceptable terminology to be used in the workplace. The Guide will require periodic updates and should be evaluated on an annual basis.

[An Incomplete Guide to Inclusive Language for Startups & Tech](#)

REFLECTION

3.1 Host Equity & Empowerment Town Hall Meetings



The City may wish to intentionally address issues of access, equity, and empowerment in its community through a series of Equity and Empowerment Town Hall meetings, where community members are invited to hear what "equity" means for the community and share their ideas.

 [News Article \(ICMA\) \(Evanston, Illinois\)](#)

3.2 Create a Race and Equity Department



In October 2016, the City of Oakland launched the Department of Race and Equity to ensure identity (race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, and/or expression) has no detrimental effect on distribution of resources, opportunities and outcomes for residents. The City may want to follow the steps of Oakland on its effort to equity and fairness and establish an interdepartmental team and facilitate coordination by all City department regarding implementation of the fair and just principles of equity. The interdepartmental team would be responsible for leading the effort and support the development and assessment of policies and actions that improve fairness and opportunity in all City government employment practices (such as hiring, training, retention, and promotion) and business practices (such as contracting, procurement, and grant writing).

 [Race & Equity Department Website \(Oakland, California\)](#)

3.3 Participate in the Human Rights Campaign's "Municipal Equality Index"



The City may participate in the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index, a nationwide third-party evaluation of municipal regulations regarding LGBTQ+ equality and inclusivity. The Index evaluates more than 500 cities across the United States on a scale of 0-100, based on the city's laws, policies, benefits, and services. In Contra Costa County, currently the cities of Concord and Richmond participate.

 [Human Rights Campaign - Municipal Equality Index 2018](#)

3.4 Issue Equity Climate Survey



The City may create and invite residents, visitors, and employees to participate in an anonymous online survey that measures the sense of inclusiveness in the City. The survey should be designed to highlight areas that are working well and areas where improvement is warranted. Survey may be issued online through a third-party website to protect the privacy of respondents.

 [Resident Survey \(Evanston, Illinois\)](#)

 [Employee Survey \(Richmond, California\)](#)

3.5 Provide an Anonymous Feedback System



Enable employees to anonymously report any situations that may be of concern. This may be accomplished through a variety of ways: online, email, notes in Dropbox, or in person. Periodic short surveys may be sent to all employees via online survey (i.e. Survey Monkey) to measure how they view the workplace in terms of diversity and inclusion. Results may be analyzed by the Director of Human Resources, Chief Equity Officer, Internal Diversity Committee, and/or Equity & Empowerment Commission to guide future policy or program initiatives or enforcement.

3.6 Prepare an Annual Employee Demographics Report



The City may provide an annual year-end workforce report to the City Council. The report could include an analysis of workforce statistical information based on race, ethnicity, gender, occupational groups, or other demographics. The annual report should demonstrate how demographics change over time and should highlight inclusion efforts from the past year.

 [Year End Work Force Report](#) (Berkeley, California)

APPENDIX

Video Library

- [Be Bold. Be Brave. Be You. Women Leaders in Law Enforcement](#) (8:22)
- [Do One Thing for Diversity and Inclusion](#) (1:00)
- [Apple - Inclusion & Diversity](#) (2:03)
- [Inclusion Starts with "I"](#) (3:27)
- [It's About Time We Challenge Our Unconscious Biases](#) (15:41)
- [Are You Biased? I am.](#) (8:48)
- [How to Get Serious about Diversity & Inclusion in the Workplace](#) (11:04)
- [The historic women's suffrage march on Washington](#) (4:34)
- [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion](#) (3:13)
- [Love Has No Labels | Diversity & Inclusion | Ad Council](#) (3:19)
- [Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#) (1:34)
- [Pixar Diversity \(Yarn\)](#) (8:43)

Additional Resources

- Website: [Local & Regional Government Alliance on Race & Equity](#)
- Website: [United States' Stop Bullying Resources](#)
- Article: [Workplace Bullying: Causes, Effects, and Prevention](#)
- Website: [Healthy Workplace Bill](#)

BIOGRAPHIES



(Left to Right) Tawfic Halaby, Slava Gospodchikov, Ana Bernardes, Beth Johnson,
ZeeLaura Page, Jordan Davis, Michael Cass

Ana Bernardes, City of El Cerrito

Engineering Manager / Senior Engineer, Public Works Department

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Ana is descended of Spaniards and Italians, was born in Sao Paulo-Brazil, and is a United States citizen. She lived in California for the last 30 years. Ana has 33+ years experience in Civil and Structural Engineering and she is a licensed Professional Civil Engineer in California and a licensed Civil/Structural engineer in Brazil. For the last 3 years, Ana has worked for the City of El Cerrito as a Engineering Manager/Senior Engineer; she previously worked at the City of Albany, San Rafael Sanitary District, Ross Valley Sanitary District, MWH Global, and other Engineering Consultant Companies in the US and In Brazil. Ana's most prominent project in Brazil was the design and construction of a 7-floor office building in monolithic precast concrete columns and a precast/pre-stressed sectioned pedestrian bridge. In the US, Ana has worked on four Parks Restoration Projects in the City of Albany and El Cerrito, and the Restoration of Codornices Creek Project between City of Albany and Berkeley. Ana also oversaw the replacement of several miles of pipelines, restoration of pump stations, replacement of miles of asphalt and concrete pavement streets, and installation of bike lanes and curb ramps.

Michael P. Cass, City of Concord

Principal Planner, Planning Division, Community & Economic Development Department

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Michael Cass is a lifelong Contra Costa County resident and he holds a BA in Communication from Saint Mary's College of California and a Certificate in Land Use & Environmental Planning from the University of California, Davis Extension. He has spent more than fifteen years as a planner, both in Lafayette and Concord. He currently is a Principal Planner of long-range and sustainability policy for the City of Concord. Michael has managed a number of high profile projects, such as serving as the project lead on the controversial "Crosses of Lafayette" project, leading the investigation of joining a community choice energy program for both cities, drafting the inaugural Lafayette Downtown Design Guidelines, and developing regulations for wireless communications facilities and cannabis uses for both cities. Michael is an Advisory Board Member with Sustainable Contra Costa and a Board Member and Treasurer with the American Planning Association California – Northern Section.

Jordan Davis, City of Pittsburg

Assistant to the City Manager

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During his time with Pittsburg, Jordan Davis has overseen several Planning and Economic Development-related projects, including the City's adoption of commercial cannabis regulations and permitting of cannabis businesses. Jordan holds a Bachelor's Degree in City and Regional Planning from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and a Master's Degree in Public Policy and Administration from Northwestern University.

Slava Gospodchikov, Contra Costa County

Engineering Services Division Manager, Public Works Department

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Slava Gospodchikov grew up and received his engineering training in Nizhny Novgorod, Russia. During his 20+ years with Contra Costa County Public Works Department, Slava worked on many flood control, road and transportation, and land development projects, including the Dougherty Valley master-planned development in the San Ramon area. Slava received the 2017 Manager of Year Award from the APWA for his work on the Alhambra Valley Road Washout Repair, which included construction of a new bridge over Pinole Creek in record time.

Tawfic Halaby, City of Richmond

Senior Civil Engineer, Engineering & CIP Department

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Tawfic Halaby was born in Kuwait to a Palestinian-American family, was raised in Saudi Arabia, attended high school in Greece, and university in the United States. Earlier in his career, Tawfic spent several years providing municipal engineering and consulting services to public agencies. Currently, at the City of Richmond, Tawfic works on budgeting and delivering complex engineering and capital projects, including current and recent FEMA-funded landslide emergency repairs, creek restoration, trail construction, complete streets, urban greening, pavement rehabilitation and reconstruction, and bicycle/pedestrian projects. Tawfic's pastimes include singing in a chorus and an ensemble, volunteering with refugees, and producing a music program on KPFA radio.

Beth Johnson, City of Walnut Creek

Lieutenant, Patrol Division, Police Department

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Beth Johnson's career in law enforcement began in 1994 working as a dispatcher for the Arcata Police Department while attending Humboldt State University. She returned to the Bay Area, where she grew up, in 1999, to take a job as a police officer for the Walnut Creek Police Department. Beth worked a variety of assignments as an officer including Patrol, Detectives, and Community Policing. With a passion for teaching, Beth has served as a Field Training Officer, Firearms Instructor, Academy Instructor, and DARE Officer over the years. She was promoted to Sergeant in 2012 and worked in Patrol and Investigations before being promoted to Lieutenant in 2017. Beth is currently assigned to the Patrol Division as a Watch Commander. Alongside of her regular duty assignments, Beth is the Co-Chair of the Women Leaders in Law Enforcement Training Symposium. Beth has a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice Management and a Master's in Business Administration. The profound experience of being a detective investigating crimes against children led Beth to adopting her daughter and son almost ten years ago. When she is not at work, you will likely find her at the ballfields cheering on her two teenagers who are her inspiration.

ZeeLaura Page, City of Concord

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ZeeLaura Page, a Bay Area native has 15 years of experience in Public Administration working for a variety of government agencies. For the City of Concord, ZeeLaura currently oversees the administrative management functions for the Engineering Division; including the Capital Improvement Program budget, supervision, contracts administration, preparing federal grant applications and monitoring compliance. ZeeLaura holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from California State University, Fresno and a Master of Public Administration, Public Management and Policy Analysis from California State University, East Bay. ZeeLaura enjoys her role in managing administration for public service because it allow her to be a silent warrior toward responsible social change.