MISSION STATEMENT

The Law Department recognizes the importance of diversity in engendering confidence and trust in the administration of law. The Department shares the American Bar Association’s assessment that a “diverse legal profession is more just, productive and intelligent because diversity, both cognitive and cultural, often leads to better questions, analyses, solutions and processes.”¹ The Department endeavors to hire and retain a diverse and inclusive mix of attorneys, staff, and executive management in order to provide the highest quality legal representation and services to City Departments, agencies, and elected officials.

RECRUITMENT and HIRING

Since the beginning of 2016, the Law Department has taken impressive strides towards recruiting and hiring diverse candidates. Between January 1, 2016 and August 2016, the Law Department hired a total of 35 new employees, 63% (or 22 individuals) of which are diverse. The Law Department will build on these successes in 2017. To continue the positive trend, the Department will implement the following strategies:

- Establish and enhance relationships with local diverse affinity bar associations such as the Barristers’ Association, the Hispanic Bar Association of Pennsylvania, and the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of Pennsylvania. Currently, the Law Department provides job descriptions of all new openings to each organization for dissemination by these member organizations. The Department will also continue to encourage its attorneys to participate, and attain leadership positions within these organizations. The Department will support networking, educational and public service events sponsored by these organizations.
- Require a diverse slate of candidates to be interviewed for each open position (exempt) within the Law Department.
- Commit to a diverse and inclusive summer intern program for the Law Department. The Law Department’s summer intern program provides students with an opportunity for mentoring by seasoned Law Department attorneys and creates a pipeline for future hiring. The Law Department will notify the local chapters of NBLSA when the summer intern application period begins.
- Provide training to new managers and supervisors regarding implicit bias and the Department’s D&I hiring practices.

RETENTION

- Executive support for the work of the Law Department’s Diversity Committee.
- Strengthen mentorship program to ensure that all new attorneys have a Law Department mentor. The Law Department will develop a toolkit for mentors and establish accountability measures for both mentor and mentee.

¹ Diversity In The Legal Profession: The Next Steps, American Bar Association, 2010
• Encourage participation in leadership development training such as Drexel University's Leading for Change Fellowships and Intermediate Leadership Training Workshops provided by the City’s HR Talent Group.

• Foster a work environment where the attorneys can professionally grow and are recognized for their contributions to the City. Recognition includes use of Department email system to announce individual professional accomplishments, and also includes salary adjustments and title promotions.

• Ensure that CLE and other in-house training opportunities include diverse faculty and offer diverse perspectives to challenge implicit bias within the American justice system.

• Provide quarterly updates to the office of Diversity & Inclusion including diversity hiring and retention data for all exempt employees and executive staff of the Law Department.

• Meet quarterly with the City’s Chief D&I officer to review employee metrics; discuss implementation of the 2017 D&I plan; and collaborate on other opportunities to further the Department’s D&I goals.

LEGAL SERVICES CONTRACTS

• Include the Law Department’s D&I objectives in all appropriate Requests for Proposals for legal services.

• Send letters to the ten law firms with the largest share of City legal contracts explaining the Department’s D&I goals and counting policies, and encouraging an increased share of M/WBE participation on existing City contracts.

• Review metrics of M/WBE participation for existing legal services contracts with the offices of D&I and OEO.

ROLL OUT

• After approval from the office of Diversity & Inclusion, present the plan to all Chiefs and Chairs at the next monthly meeting.

• Send the Department’s 2017 D&I plan to the entire staff of the Law Department along with the City Solicitor’s message of commitment to the Plan.

• Post the plan on the Law Department’s web page

• Provide copies of the plan at recruiting events