

# Department of Community Development

January 14, 2021

Ad Hoc Committee on Equity & Inclusion



# Operational Areas – What we do

The Community Development Department is comprised of four divisions:

- Building & Safety
  - Plan check, permitting, and inspection
- Neighborhood & Business Services
  - Code Enforcement, Business License & MAP
- Planning
  - Current and Advanced Planning, Neighborhood Compatibility, & Historic Preservation.
- Administration
  - Budget, Staff Training, Art in Public Places, Commission Support

# Community Development Staff

The Department is made up of professional, technical and administrative staff with a varying degree of formal education. The majority of staff have professional certification.

Budgeted positions                      23 FTE + 3 PT = 26

Current staff                                21 FTE + 2 PT = 23



# MONROVIA

CALIFORNIA

Department of Community Development

**Director**  
Craig Jimenez

**Project Coordinator**  
Kerri Zessau

**Building**

**Neighborhood & Business Services**

**Planning**

**Division Manager**  
Evan Nuckles

**Division Manager**  
Justin Edson

**Division Manager**  
Sheri Bermejo

**Plans Examiner**  
Greg Boyajian

**CE Officer (east)**  
Vacant

**NS Coordinator**  
Aleks Akopyan

**Senior Planner**  
John Mayer

**Sr. Combo Inspector**  
Shady Badie

**CE Officer (west)**  
Ken True

**NS Assistant**  
Lauren Davidsmeier

**Senior Planner (PT)**  
Barbara Lynch (20 hr)

**Combo Inspector**  
Alfredo Nuño

**CE Officer (com'l)**  
Krystina Livraga

**Associate Planner**  
Teresa Santilena

**CE Officer (weekend)**  
Cassie Pinada

**Assistant Planner**  
Austin Arnold

### COUNTER TEAM:

**Building Technician**  
Vanessa Mrakich

**Admin Assistant (BL)**  
Yurhe Lim

**Planning Technician**  
Vincent Gillespie

**Office Aide (2 PT)**  
David Castillo (28 hr)  
Vacant (15 hr)

**Dev. Services Tech**  
Charlotte Cush

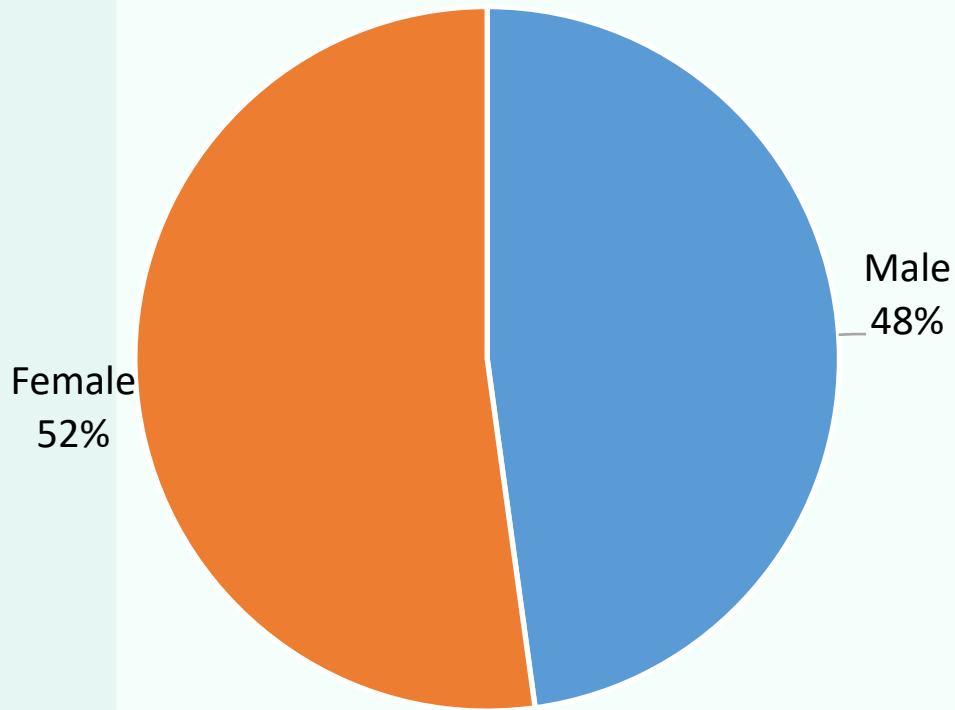
**Planning Technician**  
Brenda Quesada

**Sr. Admin Assistant**  
Vacant

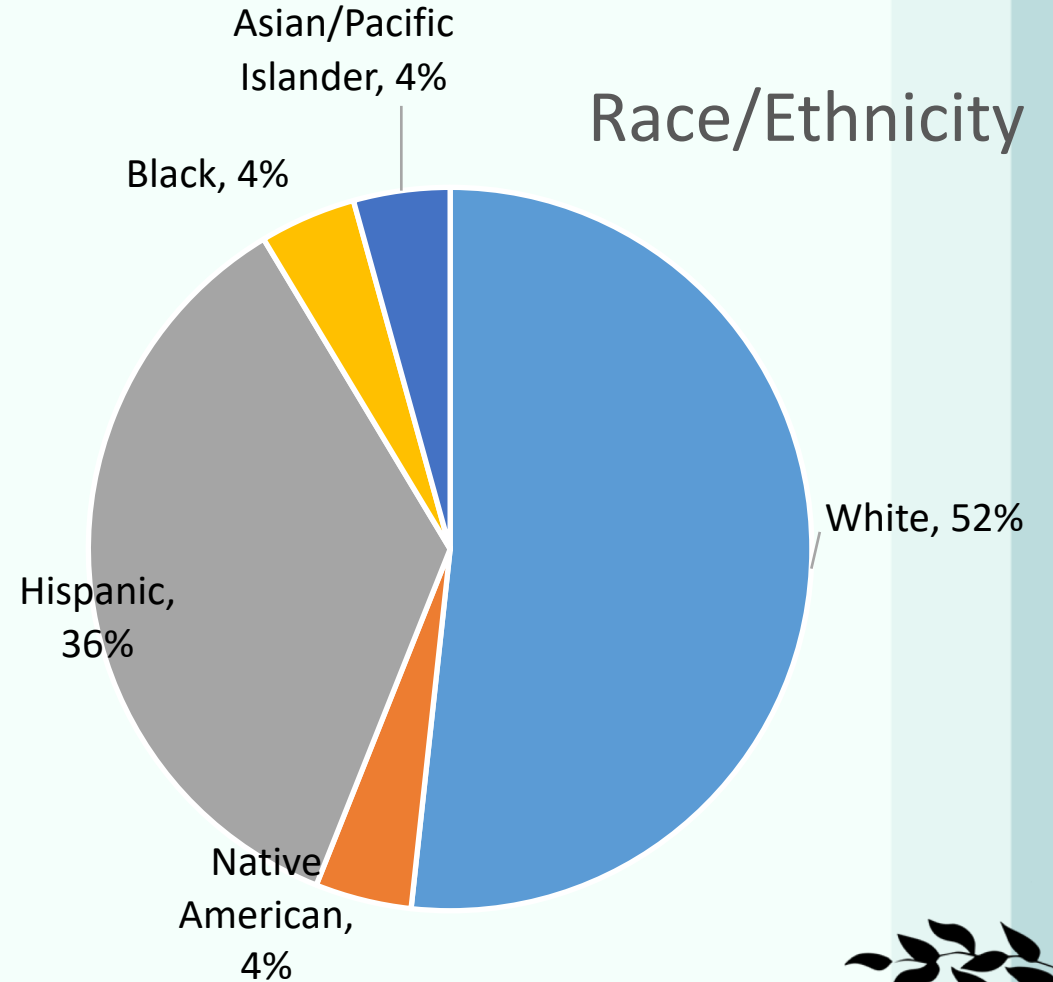


# Community Development Staff

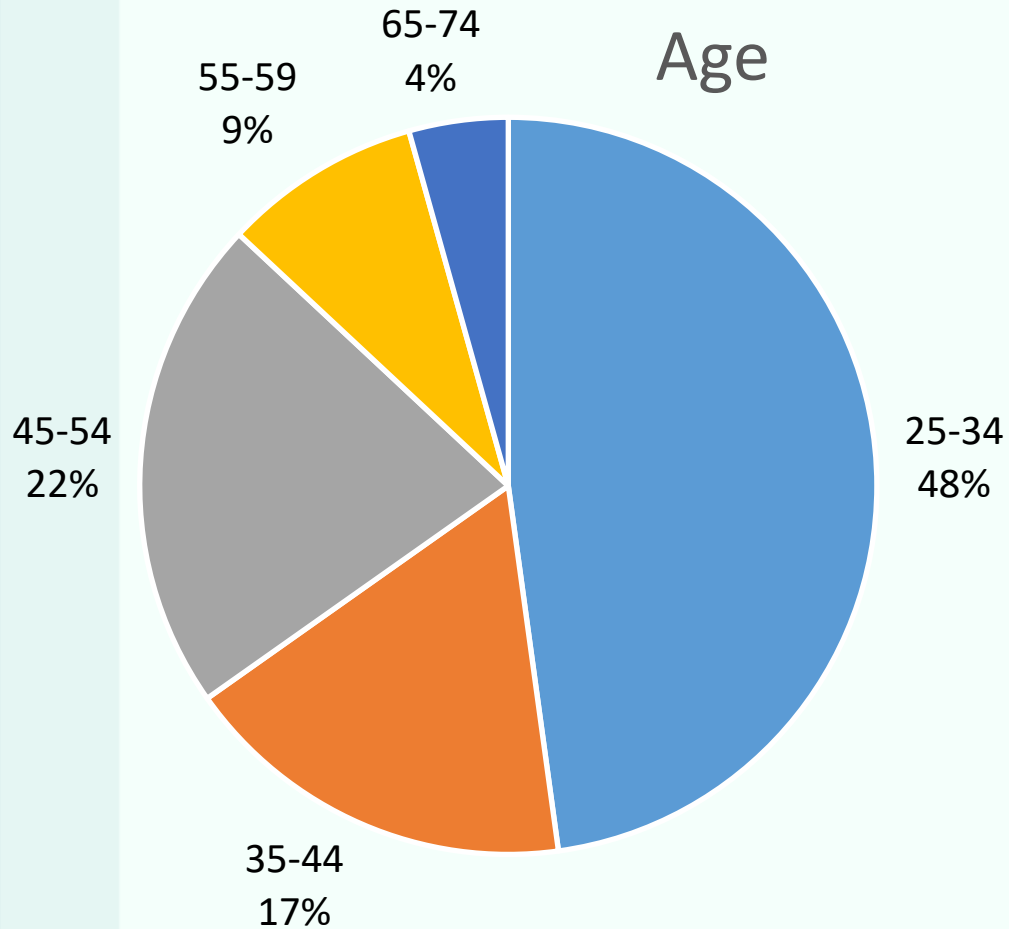
## Gender



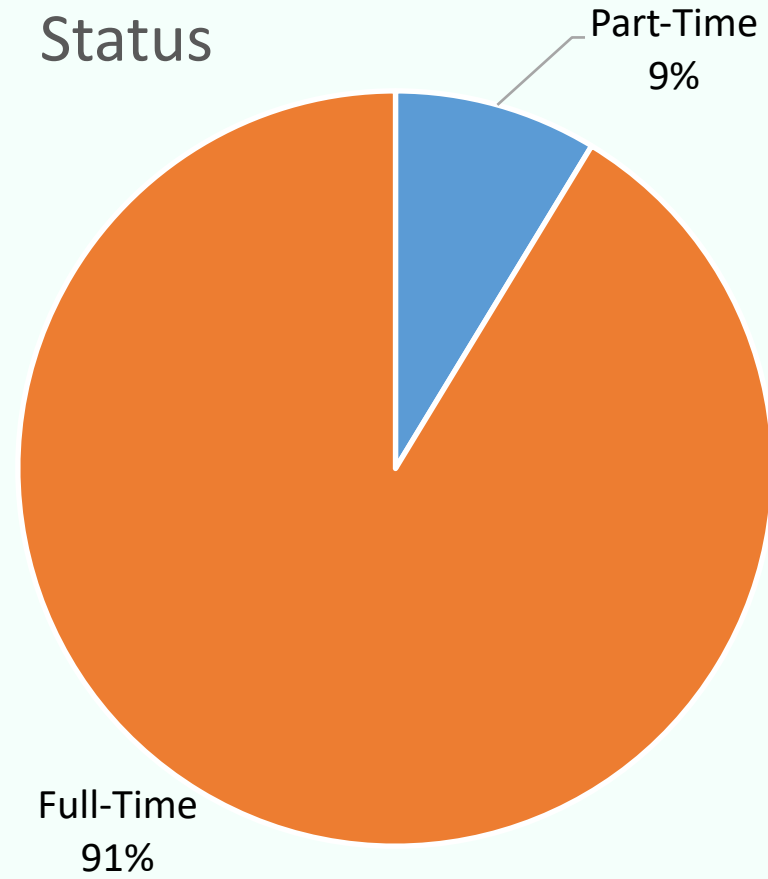
## Race/Ethnicity



# Community Development Staff



### Employment Status



Source = City's Personnel Files

# Creating a Safe Work Environment

- Emphasize that all managers in the department maintain an open door policy. Utilize an informal mentoring.
- Address situations appropriately and timely. Nip it in the bud.
- Weekly CD Management team meetings start with discussion of our staff. Encourage input from all managers.
- Weekly department staff meeting to provide updates, training and celebrate successes.

# Creating a Safe Work Environment

- Team approach to solving problems or tackling big projects fosters trust and understanding among staff. There are a number of specific project teams in the Department including:
  - Counter Team
  - TRAKiT Admin Team
  - Webmaster Team
  - Development Services Team (cross-departmental)
- Cross training across divisions increases understanding and awareness (and better customer service!)
- Brainstorming approach to problem solving...Staff is encouraged to “think outside the box...but stay in the room.”



# Training

- Managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff complete all required training, including:
  - Non-harassment Training every two years
  - “Building a Workplace of Mutual Respect”
  - Customer Service Training
  - Weekly “Training Topics”.
- Many of our professional organizations also provide, encourage and/or require training that include the topics of ethics, diversity and non-discrimination.

# Our Customers

- **External Customers**

- Residents
- Business Community
- Development Community
- Construction Community

- **Internal Customers**

- Environmental Review (CEQA & NEPA)
- ADA compliance
- Provide staff support to 5 commissions, boards and committees

# Addressing Needs of Marginalized Communities

## Planning Housing Opportunities for Monrovia (Planning HOME)

The purpose of this program is to identify and modify regulations to reduce or remove governmental constraints to the production of housing.

- Reasonable Accommodations Ordinance – Streamlines requests for deviations from zoning requirements to allow to accommodate needs related to disabilities.
- Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance – Allows for smaller dwelling units to encourage the production of affordable housing.
- Streamlined Fee Structure – Aligns the cost of providing the service with the fee charged. Predictable, reasonable, and fair.

# Addressing Needs of Marginalized Communities

## General Plan Update

- Housing Element – Assesses the housing needs of the community and establishes goals, policies and objectives to address those needs to encourage housing for all segments of the population.
- Safety Element – Ensure safety considerations are included in the planning processes by establishing policies to minimize the risk of injury, loss of life, property and environmental damage associated with natural and man-made hazards.
- Environmental Justice Element – Includes policies to reduce health risks in disadvantaged communities including improvements to air quality, access to public facilities, food access, safe and sanitary homes, and physical activity.

# Addressing Needs of Marginalized Communities

## **Monrovia Area Partnership (MAP)**

Established in 2006, MAP encourages collaboration and developing partnerships to create strategies to help neighborhoods thrive. To address apathy, MAP focuses on education to engage with and empower residents to become active citizens. Some of the programs include:

- MAP-edu quarterly meetings
- Annual Neighborhood Conference
- Care for Your Neighbor

## **Certified Access Specialist (CASp)**

- Training and staff certification in federal construction-related accessibility standards, including ADA.



# Department Boasts and Concerns

- Community Development has a high level of camaraderie and pride in working for the City of Monrovia. This translates into:
  - Strong customer service orientation focused on the mission to serve the community.
  - Solution oriented – Only say “no” when all options have been explored
  - Teamwork across divisions and departments
- The nature of our duties gives us the opportunity to work with and develop relationships with community members. This allows us to give a “personal touch” to our interactions.
- YES! Program Mentoring Successes

# Department Boasts and Concerns

## Areas for we continue to focus on:

- Staying abreast of ever changing new laws and regulations and evaluate impacts.
- Exploring new ways to communicate with and engage the community.
  - Cultural and language barriers
  - Perception and role of government
- Improvements to the community will increase property values which can cause housing costs making Monrovia unaffordable for many people.

# Focus Areas

- **Communication.** Ongoing dialog and training among department staff. Continue to look for opportunities for collaboration and mentoring with staff as well as opportunities to bridge gap with the public. Keep the conversation going.
- **Awareness of Impacts.** Review regulations and policies that may have unintended consequences, especially as they may constrain production of a diverse housing stock for all segments of the community.
- **MAP as conduit.** Expand role of MAP to help “partner” with the community to educate, engage and empower neighborhoods.



# Questions and Discussion