



**JOBS WITH  
PURPOSE**  
MUNICIPAL WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

# Jobs with Purpose Needs Assessment Update

February 8, 2022



**Carl Vinson  
Institute of Government  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

# Goals and Application



Better understand the current situation



Roadmap for GCS, GMA, cities, and partner organizations



Generate sustained interest and investment in the topic



Ensure local governments have a sustainable and high-quality workforce



# Jobs with Purpose Needs Assessment Takeaways



# Needs Assessment Report

## Municipal Workforce Survey Data Report

January 2022



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ More than 85% of municipalities reported difficulty attracting applications.</li> <li>+ Difficulty attracting applications varies by function.</li> <li>+ About half of municipal governments currently have skill shortages or anticipate them in the next 12–24 months.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Municipal government workers are slightly older than the US average but have a lower turnover rate.</li> <li>+ Smaller cities reported the fewest challenges retaining employees.</li> <li>+ Employees reported leaving municipal service for a variety of reasons.</li> <li>+ Employee retention and development programs are hit and miss.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Municipalities are typically less competitive with wages than other benefits.</li> <li>+ Regardless of municipality size, most respondents shared that they cannot pay what applicants demand.</li> <li>+ Flexible work options are not common in Georgia municipalities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ In 2021, municipalities were significantly more likely to hire employees and increase pay than to cut either.</li> <li>+ The positive employment trend is expected to continue in 2022.</li> <li>+ Succession and workforce planning may need more attention.</li> <li>+ Municipalities vary in their diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.</li> </ul>



# Survey Overview

- Survey sent to 528 HR points of contact for Georgia municipalities on August 17 and two follow-up reminders
- 200 municipalities returned a survey for a response rate of 38%.
- Survey responses included 15,000 total employees (full-time, part-time, and seasonal)
- Response rate by GMA district varied from 28% to 61%



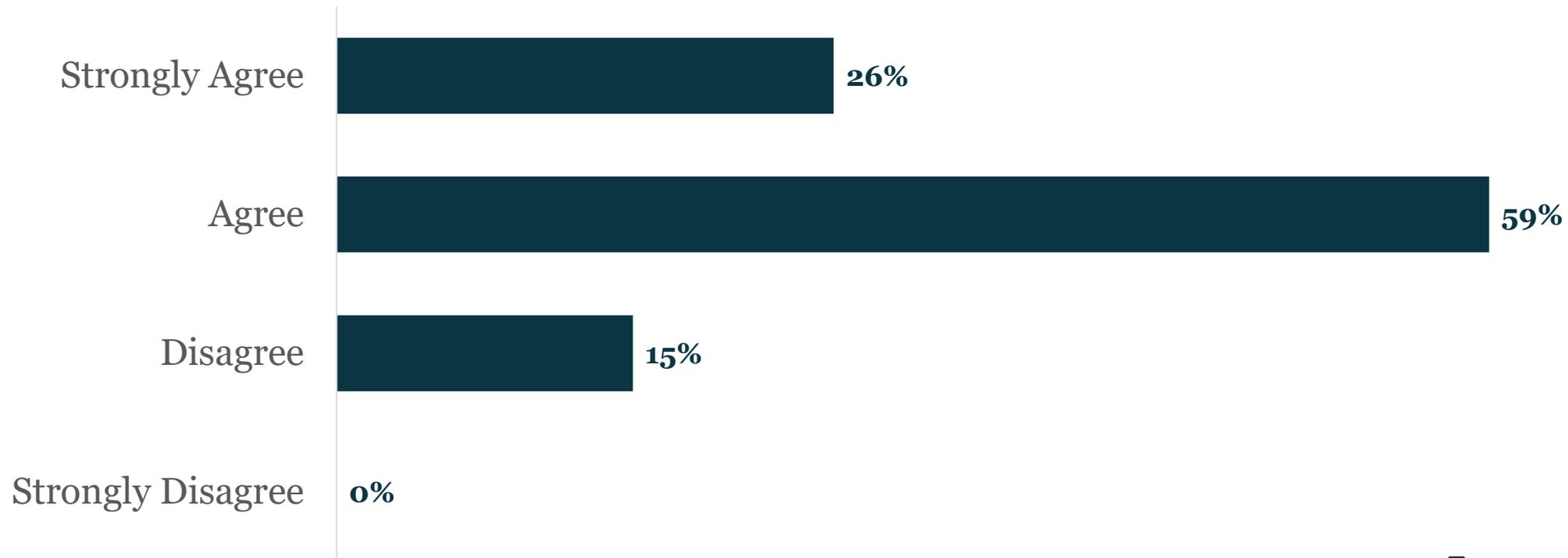
# Top Takeaways from the Needs Assessment Phase (1/2)

- 1. Georgia cities face challenges attracting applicants**
2. The level of difficult for attracting and retaining employees varies significantly by function and size
3. Half of Georgia municipalities have a skill shortage or anticipate one in the next 12-24 months
4. Traditional recruitment strategies reign supreme in municipal government
5. Common reasons for leaving include career changes, compensation, opportunity with other public sector employer, retirement, and opportunity with a private sector employer.



# Over 85% of responding municipalities reported that it is **difficult** to attract applicants with the skills their municipal government needs

It is difficult to attract applicants with the skills our municipal government needs



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### Easiest Functions to Fill

Occupation	% Not Challenging	# of Total Respondents
Human Resources	74%	86
Administration	64%	113
Animal Control	63%	27
Finance	62%	98
Telecomm (internet, cable, phone)	62%	26

### Hardest Functions to Fill

Occupation	% Very Challenging	# of Total Respondents
Electricity	42%	24
Police	38%	121
Sanitation/ Landfill	30%	60
Water/ Wastewater	28%	112
Natural Gas	21%	29

*Note: Not all municipalities offer all functions. For example, only 24 of responding cities reported offering electricity.*



# Top 5 Most Challenging Functions to Fill by Municipality Size

	Large	Medium	Small
1	Police	Electricity	Electricity
2	Electricity	Police	Animal Control
3	Finance	Sanitation/Landfill	Transportation Planning
4	Sanitation/Landfill	Water/Wastewater	Natural Gas
5	Water/Wastewater	Natural Gas	Sanitation/Landfill


  
**Electricity and sanitation/landfill  
positions were hard for cities  
of all sizes to fill.**



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# Of the following statements, which best describes the overall availability of skills of new hires in your municipal government?

I don't know 7%

We have the skills needed for today and for the next 12 to 24 months 43%

We have the skills needed for today, but may not have the skills needed for the next 12 to 24 months 35%

We don't have the skills needed for today 14%



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**31% of cities reported not using any common recruitment strategies.**

## Top 3 most common strategies



Social media  
(48%)



Online advertising  
(45%)



Employee referrals  
(44%)

## Top 3 least common strategies



Building a communications campaign around public service  
(11%)



Postsecondary education outreach  
(11%)



K-12 outreach/civics curriculum  
(5%)



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# Top reasons for leaving municipal government



**Career change**  
**(25%)**



**Compensation**  
**(24%)**



**Opportunity with another public employer**  
**(21%)**



**Retirement**  
**(21%)**



**Opportunity with a private employer**  
**(19%)**

**34% of respondents did not conduct exit interviews**

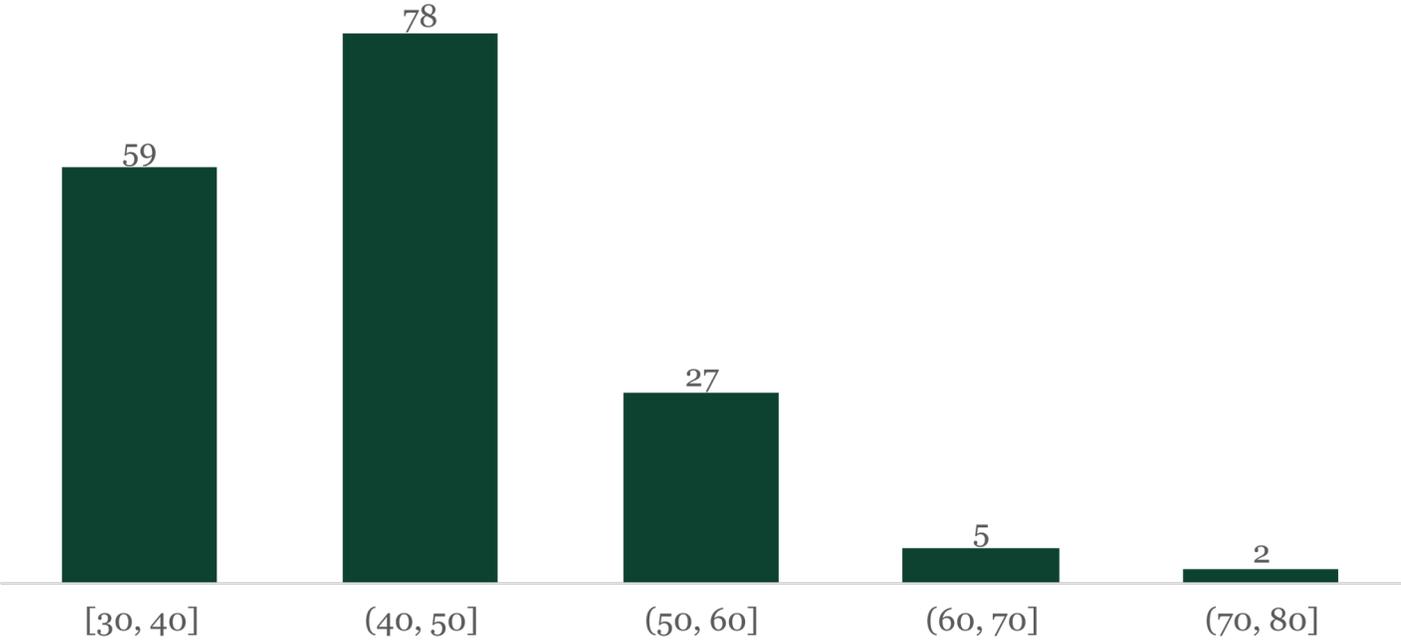
# Top Takeaways from the Needs Assessment Phase (2/2)

- 6. Municipal workers are slightly older than the Georgia average, but have a much lower turnover rate**
7. Pay is a top challenge. Other benefits are very competitive
8. Few municipalities employ flexible work options
9. Most municipalities do not have succession plans or workforce plans in place



# Workers in municipal government are slightly older than the US average

What is your average employee age?



Georgia Municipal Government Average Age: **45.2**

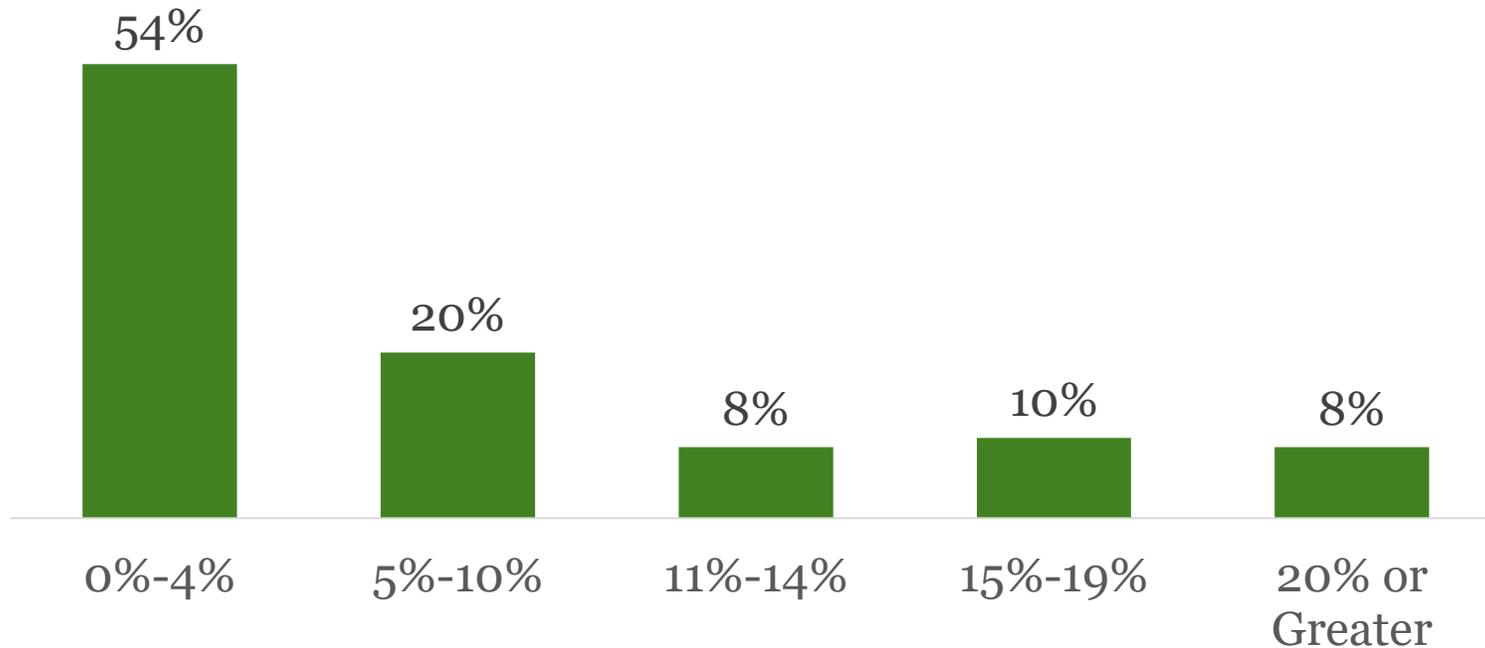
US Workforce Average Age\*: **42.8**

\*US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections



# Turnover rates in municipal government are lower than the economy as a whole

What was your employee turnover rate in 2020?



Estimated\* Georgia  
Municipal Government  
2020 Turnover Rate: 7.3%

\*Estimated using a midpoint method

Estimated US Economy  
Turnover Rate\*\*: 57.3%

\*\*US Bureau of Labor Statistics, JOLTS

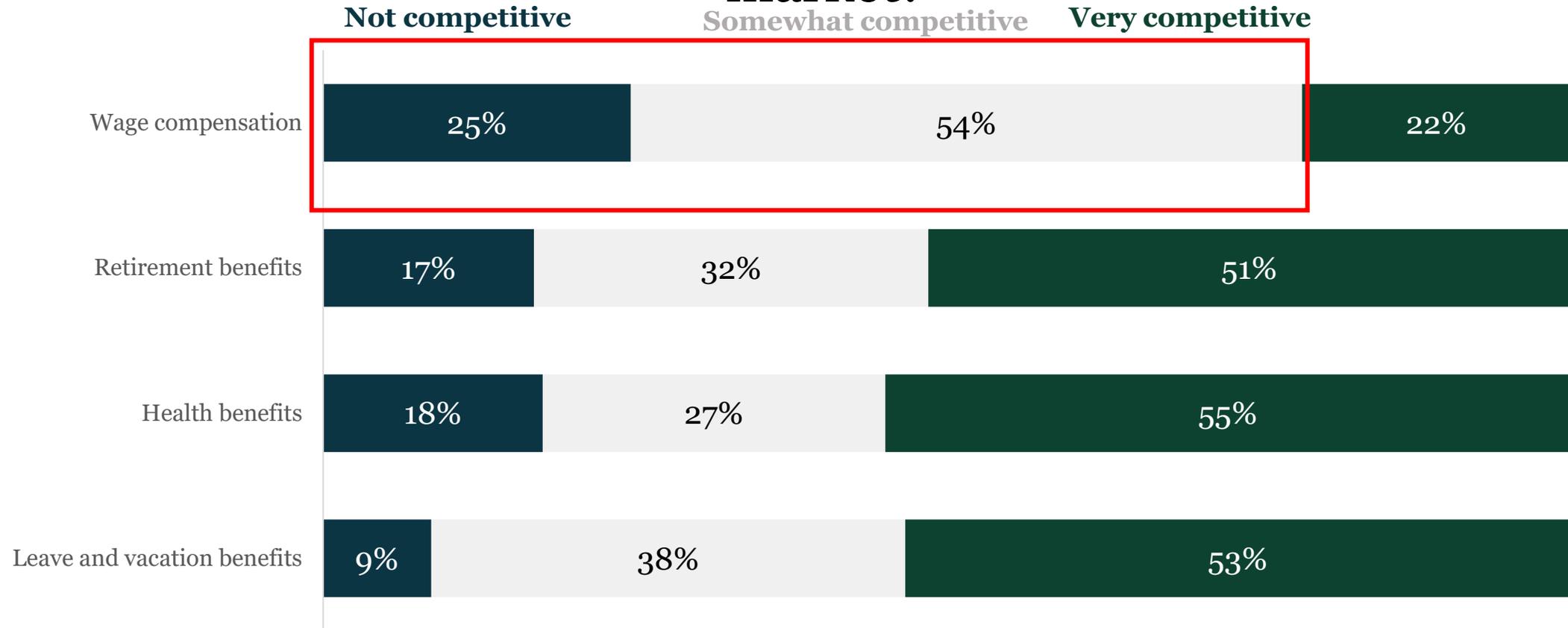


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# To what extent do you believe the total rewards you offer your employees are competitive with the labor market?



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## What flexible work practices does your organization offer?

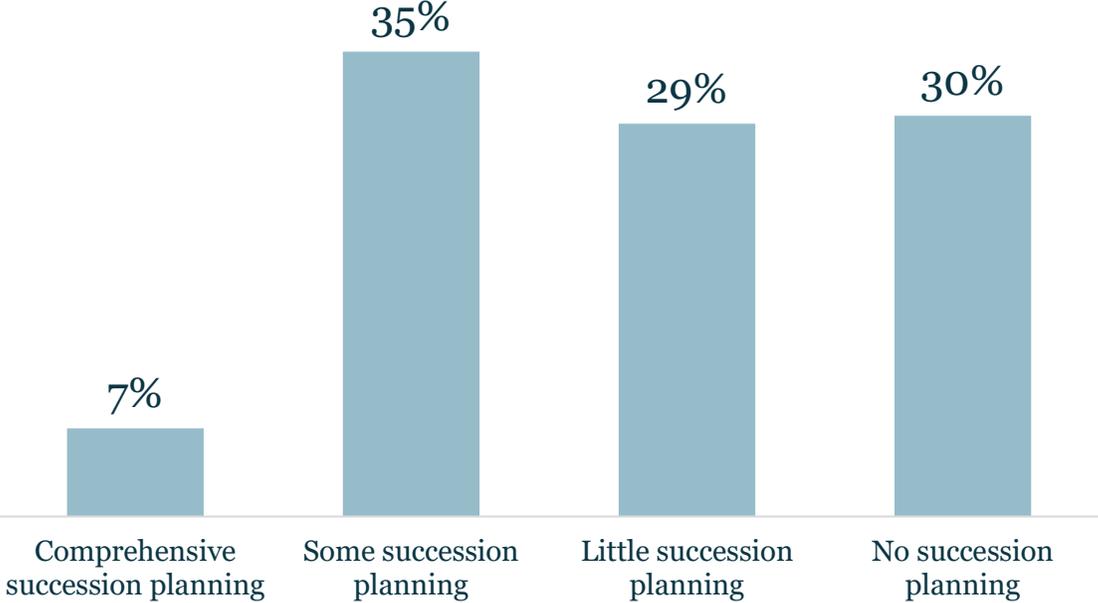


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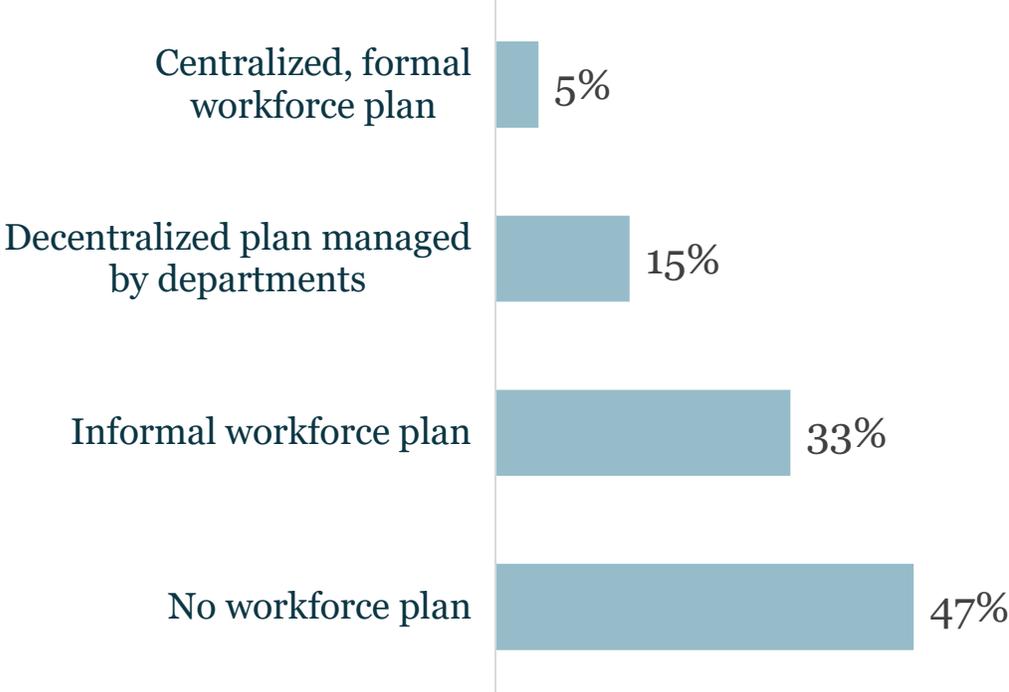
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Which of the following best describes your municipal government's succession planning process?



What type of workforce plan, if any, does your municipal government have?



# Jobs with Purpose Scope of Work

## Phase 1: Needs Assessment

*June-December 2021*

- Survey of municipal government HR professionals
- Interviews and listening sessions with city leaders
- Review of prior research and national data
- Develop the municipal workforce needs assessment report

## Phase 2: Strategy Development

*January-June 2022*

- Facilitate municipal workforce steering committee meetings
- Identify best practices and resources for potential adoption by GCS, GMA, and partner organization
- Conceptualize and write the GCS/GMA Municipal Workforce Strategy



# Thank You!

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