

## Design Rationale

Multi-coloured and multi-sized circles were selected as the People Plan's main design element to represent the diversity of the people of our organization. The smaller circles which flow organically throughout the document are intended to represent both the organic origins of the People Plan itself, as well as the many staff the city employs. Many of the circles, large and small, spotlight real City of Kitchener employees, the intended focus of the document.



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*You can't sum up the spirit of an organization's people in a mission statement. Or in a list of corporate values. Those things are important to the life of a corporation. But without good people behind them, they can't be lived.*



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# 'This is Where We Want to Work'

*We are the "people" of this organization. Not simply city workers – people. People who are honoured to serve this community.*

*We are proud of what we do. And what we do is every bit as important as how we do it.*

*We strive to understand and appreciate the needs of those we serve. One of the most important measures of our success is how we treat other people.*

*We walk in their shoes. We listen. And we respond.*

*We treat one another with the same respect and fairness. We build trust together. We talk openly. We hear and consider multiple interests. And we share the information that we need to do our jobs well.*

*Sometimes we debate. We don't always make popular decisions. But we always stand behind them.*

*We are diverse. We all see and experience differently. We are who we are. We believe that we all have value. We embrace and build upon our unique histories, expertise and aspirations.*

*We seek the best people and promote continued development. We encourage and mentor one another to reach our full potential. We have fun. And we know the power of "thank you."*

*We don't work in silos. We work together. Because our success depends on all of us.*

*We are honest. We are humble. We do what we say we're going to do. We do the right thing. For our citizens and our community. And for ourselves.*

*We can all be leaders – leading by example. Through attitude and action. From out front or from behind.*

*We stand up for what we believe in. And we don't do things just because that's the way they've always been done.*

*But the point is that we do things. We don't just talk about them. We finish what we start.*

*Sometimes we make mistakes. Sometimes we have to start over. That's okay. That's how we learn. We change. We grow.*

*We share an unwavering commitment to excellence in everything that we do. We go the extra mile. Because our work makes a difference in the lives of citizens. Everyday.*

*We make history happen. We are helping to build the world – one neighbourhood at a time.*

# 365 Words to Live By Everyday of the Year

The words on the adjacent page belong to us as the employees of the City of Kitchener. Whether we're full-time, part-time, contract, brand new, been here 30 years – or we're somewhere in between.

"*This is Where We Want to Work*" represents what we've said would make this a great place to work. It identifies our shared values – and knits them together to create the big picture of our ideal corporate culture.

We created this big picture by reflecting back on what we've said about leadership and corporate culture in recent years through various staff forums, focus groups, staff town hall meetings, informal discussions, consultations and the Employee Culture Survey.

A draft of "*This is Where We Want to Work*" was created in the spring of 2008 by a group of our coworkers, based on all of our previous feedback. Subsequently, many of us participated in a staff consultation process that saw the draft vision refined to the words we see today. Some of the lines are direct snippets and suggestions from the feedback we received.

The vast majority of those of us who took the time to respond during the consultation on the draft vision statement

agreed that the words of "*This is Where We Want to Work*" describe the place we want to come to every day.

Some of us said we already work there. Some of us said our work unit still has a long way to go to get there. And many others said that we saw bits and pieces in the vision that are real to us right now – and others that aren't.

At the very least, our "*This is Where We Want to Work*" vision, gets us all on the same page.

It embodies the shared values that we want to guide our work with the community, and with one another – **respect, compassion, trust, collaboration, innovation, accountability, diversity, integrity, self-awareness, humility, change and growth, equity, engagement and community mindedness.**

"*This is Where We Want to Work*" is the foundation of our People Plan – it's a touchstone for the kind of corporate culture we will strive to create for ourselves.

It describes our ideal destination – but just as importantly, it describes the way we have to travel if we're ever going to get there.

# What is The People Plan?

In recent years, we've supported the priorities of our community through A Plan for a Healthy Kitchener. We've supported the business of the corporation through the development of our Corporate Plan.

The People Plan supports us, as employees. It is the strategy for how the organization will support us so that we can be successful in the work we do each day.

It's a picture we've painted together, as employees, of the organizational culture and workplace environment that we want to be part of each day. It finally pulls everything we've done – all of those initiatives that have been introduced for staff over the past several years – together under one cover.

It identifies our collective values through "*This is Where We Want to Work.*"

It outlines five specific priority areas of future focus including: **A Culture of Learning, A Culture of Safety and Wellbeing; A Culture of Inclusion, A Culture of Appreciation and Fun and A Culture of Community Stewardship.**

It builds on the significant work we, as staff, are already doing toward creating our ideal workplace, and it identifies areas we'll need to continue to work on to get us all the way there.

It makes recommendations for what we can all do to ensure that we're contributing to creating a great place to work.

And finally, it provides an implementation strategy that has **accountability** as its foundation.



# Why do we need a People Plan?

The People Plan is about making our organization the best place to work. That's our goal.

It's about enabling us to keep the best people – and recruit the best people. We know that a Canadian labour shortage is looming. Over the next 15 years, as much as 63 per cent of our current management team alone will likely retire.

It goes without saying then that we should be planning for how we will attract and retain the best and brightest.

As employees, we are the strength of this organization. Keeping and attracting top talent will always be critical to how well we are able to deliver on the priorities of Council and the community. It will always be critical to how well we are able to build our community; how well we are able to serve our community, and how well we are able to protect our community.

Each of us, no matter what our title or where we work, contributes to the overall success of our organization, and our community. The work we all do each day makes a difference in the lives of citizens. We're united in our service to them.

The People Plan unites us in another important way. It identifies our shared vision for our future – and it provides a road map for how we can realize that vision together.

# Creating the People Plan

We didn't start out with a plan for a People Plan. Getting here has been an organic process that began in 2004 as we continued to grapple with the idea of creating a "different future for city government and public service" which was the major objective of our Corporate Plan.

In 2002, we had clearly defined council's vision and priorities for the organization – through the development of the Corporate Plan. By 2004, we had begun the process of developing the community piece of the plan. We've come to know the process that clearly defined the community's vision and priorities, as Who-are-you-Kitchener. Those priorities are now found in A Plan for a Healthy Kitchener.

Still, something was missing. Even though we had done a lot of work to create the corporate and community plans, we struggled to bring that work to life. We realized that it was because we hadn't paid attention to the most important piece – the people.

We needed a People Plan.

The People Plan actually began on the basis of exploring leadership in our organization. You might recall some of those discussions. Through various staff forums and consultations, focus groups, staff town hall meetings and

informal discussions, we talked a lot about what leadership is, where it shows up, and whether or not we could use it as a word to describe our workplace culture.

Early in the process to define leadership, the Senior Leadership team developed Leadership Agreements – you may have seen them as a plaque on the wall in your work unit. They quickly learned that while staff didn't necessarily disagree with what the agreements said, we didn't feel that they were representative of everyone's feelings on the subject – because everyone hadn't been involved in their development. They started again.

While developing the Leadership Agreements was a very important first step in trying to define the underlying values and corporate culture of the place we want to work, the People Plan is now the definitive expression of those values and our culture.

It was clear that we needed to work together to define our collective values and vision for our workplace culture.

So we developed an aggressive program for staff involvement in the development of the kind of place we want to work. At its core was our first-ever Employee Culture Survey, completed in early 2007. More than 1,300 of us took the time

to share our feedback about our workplace which helped us to learn a lot about our successes – and as much about what areas of the organization we want to improve.

In April of 2008, a group of our coworkers took all of our feedback from the past four years and created the first draft of "This is Where We Want to Work". Subsequently, many of us participated in a staff consultation process that saw the draft vision refined to the words we see today.

In developing the plan, we also inventoried all of the many initiatives for staff – the things we are already doing toward creating a great work environment – and we took a look at priority areas for future focus based on our feedback and current workplace trends.

Finally, we put recommendations to our priorities so that we can continue to move forward in creating our ideal corporate culture. You'll see that the recommendations from the work we've done with the results of the Employee Culture Survey have been moved into this plan.

It makes sense to marry these two initiatives at this point because we've come full circle. The People Plan now becomes our road map to the future; the Employee Culture Survey becomes our Global Positioning System – our GPS – always carefully gauging whether we're headed in the right direction.



# Our Corporate Culture

Corporate culture defines our personality as an organization and spells out how we do things.

Our culture is important to each of us because, let's face it, we spend a lot of time at work, and the culture here affects just about everything related to that time – right down to the hours worked per day; the availability of options such as flex time and telecommuting; how we interact with each other in the workplace; how we dress; our benefits; our office space and training and professional development opportunities.

For a long time, we struggled to describe our corporate culture. It's the kind of thing that almost always evolves organically. It can be easy to feel, easy to see, but difficult to define. It can be influenced by many things, including not paying attention to it.

We knew we needed to pay attention to it and we made a commitment to do so.

But it wasn't until we pulled all of the pieces together for the People Plan – until we looked at the sum of the many parts – that we realized that our own made-in-Kitchener culture was no longer difficult to identify.

Through the organic process of looking at leadership and developing the People Plan, we did a lot of work that focused on our collective identity as an organization – and we realized that our actions are grounded in the values we collectively hold – that what we are trying to achieve is a value based culture.

Some call it value-based while others refer to it as principled leadership. It's loosely based on those concepts but in the end – it's ours. No matter what you call it, for the first time in our history, we've defined our shared set of attitudes and beliefs about who we are as an organization – and who we want to be.

*"This is Where We Want to Work"* embodies our collective values and provides the foundation of our corporate culture.

*Respect, compassion, trust, collaboration, innovation, accountability, diversity, integrity, self-awareness, humility, change and growth, equity, engagement and community mindedness.*

These are the values that we want to guide our work and which underpin the way we want to interact with each other

and with the community. We are united by them. They give us focus so that we are all pulling in the same direction.

By acting on our values, we can continue to make progress toward our ideal corporate culture. We can attract and keep the best and brightest. We can ensure that we all have pride in our workplace and more importantly, that each day we are living the corporate mission statement of "Proudly Providing Valued Service" – which was originally set out in our Corporate Plan in 2002.

These values, and this picture of where we want to work, are touchstones to guide our actions and decisions as we move forward.

But making the picture a reality won't just happen on its own. It will take the hard work and commitment of all of us to achieve it.

We will be moving forward strategically – working to create that ideal culture through action in the five key priority areas that follow.



# A Culture of Learning

*“We seek the best people and promote continued development. We encourage and mentor one another to reach our full potential.”*

Growing staff isn't just about ensuring that we have the skills that we need to do our jobs effectively. That's just one piece of the equation. We also grow staff because it is our job to position our city for the future. We have a civic responsibility to take personal and professional development, and creating opportunities for career advancement, very seriously.

Each day, 210,000 citizens count on us to do our jobs, and to do them well. We need to continue to grow, develop and advance in our careers because the skills and experience we each bring to the job is critical to how well we are able to build our community; how well we serve our community, and how well we protect our citizens.

It is imperative that we continue our commitment to learning so that we are always ready to adapt and shift gears in the face of a rapidly and constantly changing municipal environment – one that will always be at the whim of political and legislative changes.

And we need to keep a steady focus on opening the door to human potential because as employees, we need to stay motivated and challenged – and because the competition for the best talent is increasing everyday. Opportunities for career growth and advancement will not only bring us the

best talent – but they will also help us keep the great people we have already.

## What are we doing already?

The city offers a wide and continuously growing range of personal and professional development opportunities to staff including:

- **TED programs:** Range of personal and professional development courses for all staff.
- **Management and Leadership Training programs:** Training opportunities about key competencies for managing and leading.
- **Certified Municipal Manager:** Designation earned through Ontario Municipal Manager Institute.
- Tuition Assistance Program: Potential financial reimbursement for approved courses toward a degree.
- **Health and Safety Training Programs:** Enables compliance with regulations related to protecting the safety and health of employees.
- **Apprenticeship Programs:** Helping staff to develop skills to earn certification in a skilled trade.
- **Orientation Programs:** Assists new employees in learning about the corporation, key departments, initiatives and programs for staff.
- **Mentoring Program:** Connects staff who want to learn new skills or roles with staff willing to share their knowledge.

- **Succession Planning Program:** Further training and mentoring for employees identified for potential succession in management roles.
- **Secondment positions:** Opportunities for employees to put skills to work in areas outside of our own.
- **Self-funded leaves of absence:** Enables employees to fund up to a year off to study, travel, try something new.
- **IT training:** Computer training on everything from Microsoft Word, Power Point and Excel, to how to manage your inbox.
- **Global partnerships:** Opportunities for staff with specific expertise to make a difference in developing nations.
- **“Opportunities for Advancement:”** A key corporate priority identified through the Employee Culture Survey. Work continues to identify other opportunities for continued staff growth and development.

## What do we need to do and how will we get there?

It is imperative that we create significant opportunities to continue our personal and professional growth so that we are motivated, adaptable and knowledgeable. With this in sight, it is recommended that:

- A comprehensive corporate review of current training and development programs, including such initiatives as the Tuition Assistance Program, be completed to ensure

that they align with and support the objectives of the People Plan.

- We increase staff participation in training and development programs through such initiatives as:
  - The development of a comprehensive annual “continuing education” style catalogue of all training and development opportunities available to staff.
  - The development of a comprehensive annual communications plan aimed at letting staff know about available training and development opportunities and encouraging staff participation in them.
- We continue to promote opportunities for growth across the corporation – not just “up” – through initiatives such as consideration of a proposal for cross training and job shadowing opportunities across the corporation.
- We increase management's understanding and use of Let's Talk sessions as a tool for planning individual growth and development.

## What can each of us do?

We're fortunate to be supported by a comprehensive program of challenging and rewarding development and advancement opportunities. We can take advantage of these and other opportunities. We can teach others what we know. We can be careful not to limit ourselves to what's comfortable – because that's when learning ends.

# A Culture of Safety & Wellbeing

*"We do the right thing. For our citizens and our community. And for ourselves."*

Live well. Work well. Be safe.

We highly value personal, organizational and community health, safety and wellbeing. And we recognize that as employees, we need to be well and safe to be effective and productive in our work and in our personal lives.

Wellness embraces the best of who we are in body, mind, and spirit. It's proactive and preventive. It touches every part of our life by emphasizing good health care, cultivating self-awareness, living according to our values and beliefs, being our own best friend, and realizing the value of family, friends, and coworkers.

Wellness also embraces working and living safely. Working and living safely is the right thing to do. More importantly, it's the smart thing to do. We're not only responsible for our own safety, but also that of our coworkers – and our citizens.

We also foster and encourage work-life balance. We know that we can't do the work that we do each day developing and maintaining a healthy community for citizens, without developing and maintaining a balanced lifestyle that will keep us well, too. It's that's simple.

## What are we doing already?

It's an important mission – keeping and recruiting the right people and taking good care of them. Over the past few years, staff has been doing good work to gradually expand

programs and services meant to inspire and educate us about building and maintaining a healthy lifestyle on the job and at home. These programs currently include:

- **Lunch and Learns on wellness topics:** Variety of wellness topics covered in sessions held over the lunch hour.
- **Wellness Fair:** Day long event for all City staff featuring a wide range of community health and wellness exhibitors, held annually in the Rotunda at City Hall.
- **Employee Assistance Program:** Free, confidential benefit enabling employees to seek various forms of counseling.
- **Flexible hours of work:** Alternatives available to the traditional 9-5 workday.
- **Joint health and safety committees:** Five separate committees, representing groups of workers, who deal with health and safety issues.
- **Telework opportunities:** Potential to work from home with access to your desktop and files.
- **"Benefits Satisfaction:"** A key corporate priority identified through the Employee Culture Survey. Work continues to identify other opportunities for improving staff benefits.
- **Family Days:** Employees can use up to 5 of their 18 sick days per year to care for an ailing family member.
- **Regulatory Compliance Management System:** Ensures continuous monitoring and improvement in regards to regulatory compliance for vehicle and equipment operation and maintenance.
- **Wellness Newsletter:** Produced four times a year.



## What do we need and how will we get there?

Programs and initiatives that educate, inspire and motivate us to take greater responsibility for our health and wellness, and to make healthier choices everyday, provide us with benefits that extend far outside of the work environment. Ensuring that we are well and safe is directly tied into the future of the corporation and the community. To this end, it is recommended that:

- The corporation further promote the development of a culture of safety within the organization through the development of a comprehensive corporate health and safety strategy with goals that include: promoting excellence in health and safety across all departments of the corporation; increasing staff participation in health and safety training; reducing risk, lost-time injuries and incidents involving vehicles; continuously improving safety procedures, and the identification and adoption of health and safety best practices.
- Building on the success of the current programming, a comprehensive corporate wellness program be developed where programming reflects current trends and best practices in corporate wellness programs, as well as employee input and where we look to our community partners for assistance in both the development and delivery of programs.

- An innovative, competitive, attractive and financially viable total compensation package be investigated and developed. Key considerations include:
  - A review of current polices and practices related to flex time, sick time, vacation time, maternity leave and job sharing.
  - A review of policies and practices concerning transportation related benefits including staff paid parking, telework, flexible work hours, bus passes and bicycle storage.
  - A full-scale review of current benefits provisions including a comparison to other municipalities; a review of current benefits usage by the union; further consideration by unions of flexible benefits; staff input and incorporation into union contracts.

## What can each of us do?

A healthy lifestyle impacts every part of our day-to-day life, including our work environment. Taking advantage of the wellness and health and safety programs we're offered will not only help us succeed more during work hours, it will give us more energy and patience at home and in our personal lives as well.



# A Culture of Inclusion

*“We talk openly. We hear and consider multiple interests. We share the information that we all need to do our jobs well. We don’t work in silos. We are diverse. We all see and experience differently. We are who we are. And we believe that we all have value. We embrace and build upon our unique histories, expertise and aspirations.”*

We want a work environment that includes us. Where we put as much effort into working with staff and engaging them in identifying issues and actions as we do with citizens.

Where we interact with each other. Where we exchange ideas and information. Where we become engaged through being involved and working together. And where we know what’s happening not just in our own areas.

We also want to be part of a workplace where individual differences are valued, supported and encouraged. As our team of coworkers evolves to reflect the growing diversity of our community, our efforts to understand, value and incorporate differences – and to include everyone – are going to be increasingly important.

Collaboration, equity, fairness, meaningful inclusion and two-way communication are the keys to progress toward our “*This is Where We Want to Work*” vision.

## What are we doing already?

We are committed to a work environment that ensures that each of our perspectives is heard and that every person has

the opportunity to contribute, and to reach her or his full potential. There are currently several initiatives underway which focus on these areas including:

- **Employee Culture Survey:** Completed by staff every 18-24 months; results determine and measure change and progress in employee satisfaction with corporate culture.
- **Employee consultations:** Various opportunities throughout the year for staff to get involved and comment on internal initiatives and programs.
- **Cross-departmental work teams:** Established on significant corporate initiatives and include representation from across the city. Examples include: website redesign, People Plan, Employee Culture Survey.
- **Open Door:** Online forum where employees can ask anonymous questions of senior management.
- **Let’s Talk:** Mandatory, twice yearly two-way discussion between employees and their managers about performance and development opportunities.
- **Employee Advisory Committee:** Cross-departmental committee of staff who proactively deal with employee concerns and questions.
- **Diversity in the Workplace Committee:** Cross-departmental committee of staff devoted to developing internal diversity policies and programs.
- **Diversity training:** Anti-oppression training for all staff.

- **“Organizational Communication”:** A key corporate priority identified through the Employee Culture Survey. Work continues to identify other opportunities for improving internal communication with staff.
- **TV monitors at outside facilities:** Enables staff to receive internal communications via TVs installed at Elmsdale, Bramm and Chandler facilities.
- **Increased computer access:** Introduced more computers for staff at sites outside of city hall.
- **GM Twinning Program:** Pairs GMs with departments other than their own to provide opportunity for staff to get to know them and discuss issues.
- **Protégé Program:** Pairs current staff with new staff who act as a guide during their first weeks.
- **Workplace Language Coaching:** Assisting co-workers for whom English is a second language.

## What do we need and how will we get there?

At the City of Kitchener, we always need to be actively thinking, working and behaving inclusively and valuing and respecting our differences. We also need to work very hard to build programs to ensure that each and every employee has the tools and the opportunity to contribute fully to our success therefore, it is recommended that :

- A corporate internal communications policy and guidelines for staff be developed.

- A toolbox of communication methods accessible to all staff, but with a particular emphasis on facilitating effective, efficient two-way communications with staff at locations outside of City Hall, be developed and that a plan and training be established to implement use of the tools throughout the corporation.
- During the development phase of the Consolidated Maintenance Facility, consideration be given to the most effective methods of communicating to staff who will make the facility their home – and subsequently, that any technology required for internal communications to staff be installed in the facility as it is being constructed.
- Improvements be made to the city’s Intranet site, including:
  - A redesign of the Intranet site focusing on increased user-friendliness and ease of navigation.
  - Increased access for staff from home to areas of the Intranet without security requirements.
- The framework for the Community Engagement Strategy which is currently under development for use within the community be explored for use as our framework for engaging staff.
- Workshops and/or training on facilitation, employee engagement and team building be developed and presented in an effort to broaden the understanding of their importance and role in fostering an inclusive work environment.

- Explore and implement new methods of sharing corporate and departmental information more effectively with all staff.
- The work of the corporation Diversity in the Workplace Committee focuses attention on developing a comprehensive employee education and awareness program for all staff aimed at embedding our corporate commitment to diversity, its importance, and the diversity issues we face as a corporation, within the corporate culture. And further, that measurement tools be explored to monitor our progress and determine our success.

### What can each of us do?

It's simple. As our workforce continues to change and grow, we can make it a point to consider each others' differences and the perspectives we all bring to the table. We can ensure that everyone has opportunity to contribute to our successes through encouraging others to get involved – and through getting involved ourselves. Open and frequent communication through regular staff meetings, cross-departmental project teams, brainstorming sessions and team building opportunities will also ensure that everyone has an opportunity to contribute.



# A Culture of Appreciation & Fun

*We have fun. And we know the power of “thank you.”*

Never underestimate the power of “thank you.”

Studies show that “thank you – those two little words – can make a world of positive difference to a work environment and to our motivation and satisfaction on the job. We all want to know that we are making a valuable contribution.

Remember too, the impact of having fun at work.

Physiologically, our brain thrives on fun. Research indicates that when we’re having fun, we develop new neural cells in areas devoted to learning and memory.

An atmosphere of fun and appreciation at work helps us all be more flexible, open to change and better at communicating. The bottom line is that our work atmosphere is key to keeping us happy and healthy. And when we’re happy and healthy, we’re more creative, more productive, we have better relationships with co-workers and family, and we have a healthier work-life balance.

## What are we doing already?

We know that some work areas are doing a better job of creating an atmosphere of fun and appreciation than others, but a number of things are happening across the corporation and our efforts in this area are growing. They include:

- **Staff organized events:** Social events for staff organized by staff.
- **Holiday season staff events:** Annual holiday season “thank you” to staff that takes various forms.
- **City Talk newsletter:** Created by staff for staff – not your typical corporate newsletter!
- **Civic Employee Recognition Dinner:** Annual dinner where long serving and retiring employees are recognized.
- **Bravo Cards:** Pre-printed cards that can be personalized with a message and given to a coworker who has done a great job.
- **Corporate Recognition Program:** Staff nominates other staff, either teams or individuals, for tiered recognition awards celebrating outstanding achievement and attitude.
- **Dress Down Fridays:** Donate \$2 per pay to charity and those not required to be in uniform can dress down one day a week.
- **PC Purchase Plan:** Permanent full and part-time employees have the opportunity to purchase a personal computer via an interest-free loan from the city.
- **Ken Currier Award:** For members of operations staff – nominated by other staff for leadership in operations

## What do we need and how will we get there?

We’re all accountable for ensuring that fun and appreciation happen in our work areas, but we recognize that for the most part, they’ll happen spontaneously. To ensure that we continue our efforts in this area corporation wide, it is recommended that:

- Everyone acknowledges and takes responsibility for contributing to an enjoyable work environment. We recognize that we can’t mandate or program “fun” or “appreciation” into our work environments, but we can all play a role in supporting and fostering a work environment where these things happen naturally. (It’s an atypical recommendation, but one that still needs to be made.)
- A flexible and substantive Corporate Recognition Program strategy be developed that allows for different kinds of recognition as our organization grows and develops; which provides direct programming at the corporate level and supports efforts at both the departmental and divisional levels; and which includes a toolkit of recognition best practices and ideas for staff to use.

## What can each of us do?

When it comes to saying thanks and having fun, a little goes a long way. There are lots of things we can do to create or

promote fun in our work areas – look for those opportunities.

Everyday we’re also presented with situations that allow us to show common courtesy and the best thing we can do is to take the opportunity to do so. Pass on a sincere thank you to, or personally congratulate colleagues, especially when they go above and beyond.



# A Culture of Community Stewardship

*“We are proud of what we do. And what we do is every bit as important as how we do it. We do the right thing. For our citizens and our community. And for ourselves. And we share an unwavering commitment to excellence in everything that we do. We go the extra mile.”*

Corporate and community stewardship is at the very core of what we do, and who we are as an organization. We’re proud to lead by example. A strong tradition of corporate citizenship exists naturally because we believe in doing the right thing for our citizens and our community. And for ourselves.

To us, good corporate citizenship means that we have the highest level of regard for citizens, community partners and one another. It means contributing to a safe, healthy, and fair workplace. It means delivering the best customer service and timely, accurate, and consistent information to our citizens.

For our partners, our corporate citizenship is reflected in the way that we create business relationships that are fair, honest, and mutually beneficial.

Being good corporate citizens speaks to the pride we share in our workplace. We’re here because we’re proud of what we do and because we go home at night knowing that the work we do each day makes a real difference to the 210,000 citizens who count on us. We are proud to work for the City of Kitchener.

We are ambassadors in our community and our commitment to the community we serve means that we are often willing to do more, go further and give more.

## What are we doing already?

As responsible community and municipal leaders, we are committed to conducting our business in an environmentally sound manner, with care for the health and safety of one another – and the best customer service to meet the needs of our citizens. We currently meet our commitment through initiatives including:

- **Customer Service Strategy:** Our customer service roadmap with goals, objectives and related strategies to become a leader in customer service.
- **Green City:** Group of staff from across the corporation whose goal is to reduce the amount of waste produced starting with City Hall, then growing to all city facilities.
- **Civic Contribution Program:** Our official corporate giving program.
- **Brownfield remediation and adaptive reuse:** We promote brownfield redevelopment and adaptive reuse as part of our economic development strategy but also walk the talk – for example, the new CMF site is a former brownfield.

- **Team charity work:** Some divisions and staff groups throughout the corporation support local and global charities on their own either during the holiday season, or year-round.
- **Commuter Challenge:** Our annual participation in the national program that encourages Canadians to walk, cycle, take transit, carpool or tele-work instead of driving alone to work.
- **Green Gears:** Cycle to work program run by staff each spring.
- **Energy Management:** We have implemented energy conservation measures and green technology within city facilities that saves money and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Community Investment Program:** Invests municipal funding from the City in support of local community organizations.
- **Corporate Call Centre:** Initiative to improve customer service to residents; ensures a live person to speak to.

## What do we need and how do we get there?

Give the proper tools to people who like to make a difference, and they will.

We are constantly expanding our understanding of what we must do to be responsible leaders and good corporate

citizens, and we are always seeking new ways to develop partnerships and great ideas to really make a difference.

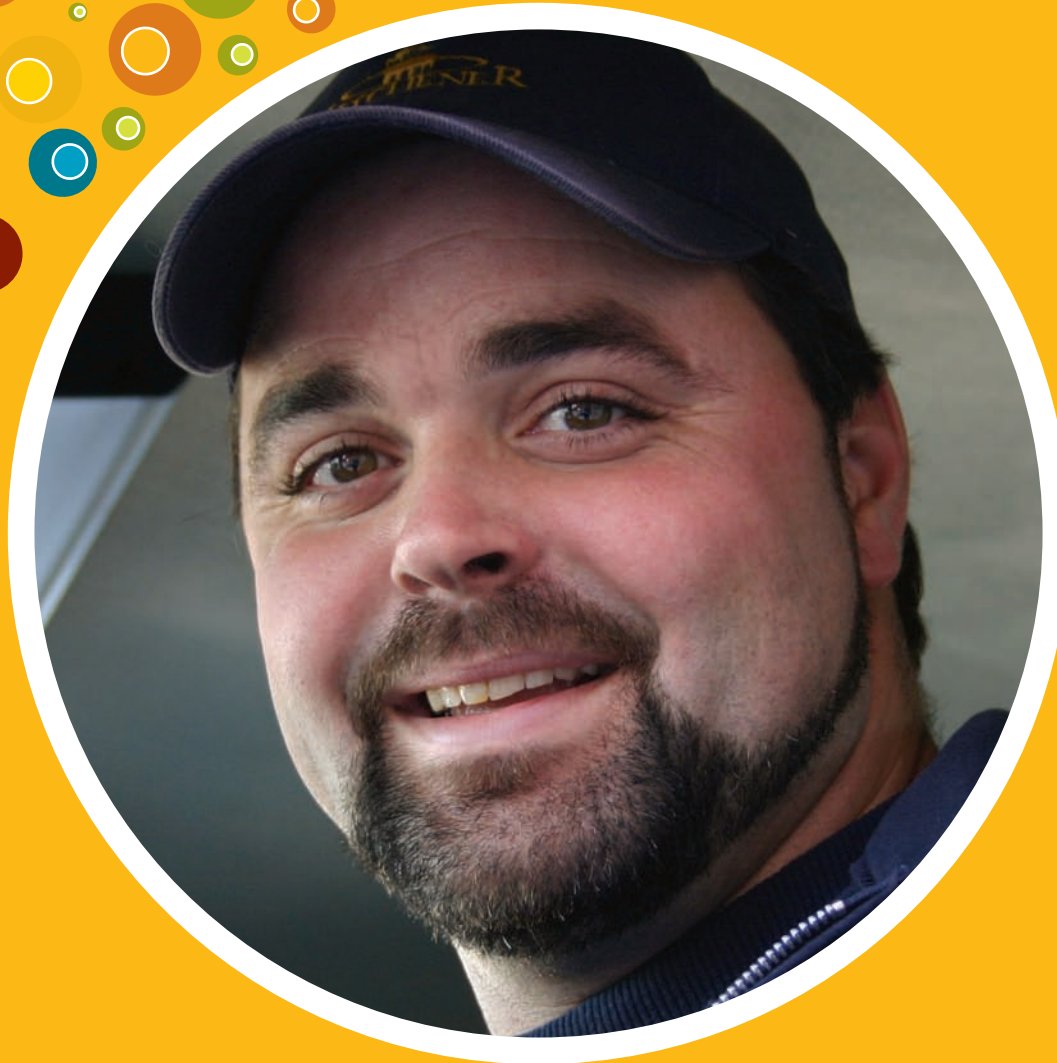
To further our efforts today at being good corporate citizens, it is recommended that:

- In recognizing that city staff are our very best ambassadors and link to the community, the city develop systems and resources whereby staff can excel in that ambassador role.
- In continuing our tradition of being environmental stewards with an important role in supporting the Environmental Strategic Plan and reducing our carbon footprint, efforts be continued through further work on such initiatives as the Green City group’s review of the corporation’s waste management and recycling program.
- The City reviews its current Civic Contribution Program to determine opportunities for future growth and expansion based on community trends and opportunities.
- In recognition that we are part of a customer service culture – whether we are serving our citizens or working co-operatively with one another – the City continue to evolve and implement its customer service strategy through such initiatives as growing our corporate contact centre; exploring increased access for our citizens; and developing a comprehensive resource for citizens about city services and contact information.

- The City investigate partnerships with local school boards to develop and implement an education program for elementary and/or secondary school students with the intention of providing students with fun, hands-on tools and learning opportunities to help them better understand how local municipal government works – with an eye toward developing future adult voters, volunteers and City staff.

### What can each of us do?

Good corporate citizens maintain high ethical standards, decrease the negative effects they have on the environment, and they give back to their community. We can do something as simple as giving up our office garbage can in an effort to reduce our waste. We can carpool even once a week, help plant trees on Earth Day or look for opportunities where we can apply our skills and experience in the wider community through volunteering with local charities and organizations.



# The Implementation Strategy

The People Plan is a living document that will change and grow as environmental influences – like new legislation and new findings of future Employee Culture Surveys – occur. Because it will be informed by culture survey results it will always reflect what we, as employees, see as important for our future.

Going forward, future Employee Culture Surveys will be aligned with the People Plan with questions reorganized under each of the five priority areas that the plan identifies, including: **A Culture of Learning, A Culture of Safety and Wellbeing; A Culture of Inclusion, A Culture of Appreciation and Fun and A Culture of Community Stewardship.**

In other words, the results of future Employee Culture Surveys will tell us whether our efforts to change and grow are indeed focused in the right areas, and whether or not we're making progress toward that ideal corporate culture we're striving for. We'll be able to adjust our efforts as required.

In terms of ensuring continued action on the strategic directions in the People Plan, we're planning to take a three-pronged approach to implementation.

We're going to be **accountable**.

We're going to take **action** through the ongoing development of new programs and initiatives to support us in a constantly changing municipal environment as we go forward.

And we're going to **measure and monitor** our progress to ensure that we're always moving in the right direction.



# Accountability, Action, Measuring our Progress

## Accountability

The responsibility for creating a great place to work doesn't rest with any one person, work unit or department. Nor does it rest with management alone.

*We all have a role to play.*

If we want to make our "This is Where We Want to Work" vision a reality and not just words on a page then our challenge as employees – no matter what our title – is to "walk the talk" and be accountable for what we do, or do not, contribute to our corporate culture and our work environment. It's not a new concept – individual responsibility, collective accountability" are the original corporate values contained in our 2002 Corporate Plan.

Still, to ensure that the work of the People Plan gets done, accountability for its implementation and effectiveness will also be specifically assigned. Looking ahead:

- The Human Resources Division has operational oversight for the People Plan.
- CMT is accountable for monitoring both its implementation and its effectiveness at a corporate level.
- GMs are accountable for monitoring its implementation at a departmental level.
- Directors and managers are accountable for monitoring its implementation at a divisional level.
- All of us – as individual employees – are accountable for

our words and actions, and for ensuring that we act in accordance with our shared values – everyday. That's the essence of the People Plan.

## Introduction of new programs, initiatives and strategies

We can't rest on our laurels. We recognize that the rapidly and constantly changing face of municipal government requires that as employees, we always be at the top of our game. Shifting political environments and legislative changes mean that we need to be able to effectively and quickly adapt and move on seamlessly.

Continuing to exploring and implement new programs, initiatives and strategies that will fill any gaps and support us in our efforts to become more flexible and adaptable in the workplace will ensure that we will always be leaders in municipal government administration.

## Measuring, monitoring and reporting

If the People Plan is the road map that will get us to where we want to go, then the Employee Culture Survey is our GPS. The survey's results are the tool that will enable us to ensure that we're always headed in the right direction.

Consistent re-surveying will provide us with a report card on progress – a status report about whether the work we're doing is advancing the priorities we've identified together as critical to creating our ideal corporate culture.

# Strategic Directions for Implementation:

To ensure that the strategic directions in the People Plan are acted upon, it is imperative that we focus on accountability, action on the ongoing development of new programs and initiatives and measuring our progress, therefore it is recommended that:

- The implementation of the recommendations coming forward from the 2008 strategic review of the Human Resources division – and implementation of new and current programs or initiatives – are aligned with and support the objectives of the People Plan.
- Because every staff member is responsible for understanding the framework of how we do our work, a comprehensive staff training program be developed and implemented which ensures that all City of Kitchener employees are aware of, and understand, the values and priorities outlined in its three components and how they are interconnected: The Corporate Plan, A Plan for a Healthy Kitchener and The People Plan all of which are soon to be combined in a comprehensive City of Kitchener Strategic Plan.
- Every division and department will have responsibility for aligning their own work to the objectives of the People Plan – and those objectives should be built in to annual work plans.
- A project lead be identified and assigned for each of the strategic directions within the People Plan.



- In the ever-changing face of the municipal environment, we continue progressively to explore and implement new programs and initiatives, so that we can effectively and quickly adapt to those changes and continue to be leaders in municipal government administration.
- To continue to measure, monitor and report back progress, the City undertake two more Employee Culture Surveys prior to re-evaluating their use and effectiveness and determining our future course of action in regards to furthering our strategy for supporting employees.



*We make history happen. We are helping to build the world - one neighbourhood at a time.*