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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 are 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. Every day.

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

(Taken from the original People Plan – 2008 to 2013)
“This is where we want to work” remains the North Star for our working life at the City of Kitchener, guiding our decisions and resetting our compass if we get sidetracked. All the work we’ve done in the past year has confirmed this statement: those words still belong to us as municipal employees in this city. They are still 365 words to live by, every day of the year.

Are you in that place? Is the city still the place where you want to work? If not, why? What needs to change? These are questions we asked during 2013. We set out to discover if the City of Kitchener is still the place where we want to work.

During that time, we also gained new appreciation for just how diverse our workforce is. It includes part-timers, full-timers, temporary and permanent positions, students and interns, seasonal workers, people who work shifts and those who work 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. And everyone in between.

A refresh of our People Plan was scheduled as our third Employee Culture Survey. From the energized corporate-wide launch of the refresh project on April 10, 2013 to the completion of the consultations on Aug. 30, 2013, the journey was enlightening, engaging and, yes, exhausting. We connected with 1,200 employees during this phase!

A dedicated team of 15 people from across the organization trained as facilitators to lead the focus group sessions. Together, we explored the People Plan from the view of what is working well, what desired future condition we want and how we can get there. That feedback seeded this refreshed People Plan and it will also fuel ongoing improvements for years to come. Ernest Hemingway said, “It is good to have an end to journey toward, but it is the journey that matters, in the end.”
“This is where we want to work” defines our shared values — and weaves them together to create the fabric of our ideal corporate culture. It’s what we’ve said would make the City of Kitchener a great place to work.

Values are the measuring stick we use every day, personally and corporately. Values influence every decision, from the simplest to the most complex. They frame our reactions and attitudes. They help us stand firm on tough decisions.

Our values shape our language and help us to have safe conversations when we need to ask a colleague to reflect on their actions. They are core beliefs that show themselves in how an employee interacts in a workplace. Values represent an employee’s most significant commitment to what he or she finds most important in life.

Our core values are the core of our organization and what it cherishes. If we, as a collective of public servants, want the values identified throughout our consultation to have an impact, then we as employees also must demonstrate and model them in action — in our personal work behaviours, decision-making, contribution, and personal interactions.

That means more than just words on a page.

“We do have quite an amazing connection with the community through Compass Kitchener or the community engagement — this is very healthy for citizen trust and confidence in government to have that collaboration.”
Our first rendition of the People Plan contained 15 values, all of them valid and all of them shaping who we strive to be as City of Kitchener employees. A shorter list of core values would be easier to commit to living every day, and a distilled list emerged from the facilitated employee consultations held at a number of city facilities and from the hard copy and online workbooks made available during the consultation phase.

We dove deep into the feedback and you will notice a couple of things have changed. First, one of the previous values – Accountability – is now an area of focus. The theme of accountability cropped up so often during our dialogue with employees, it became apparent that it needed to be the way we do our work, as well as something we valued.

Secondly, a value incorporating Collaboration emerged; this embodies many of the values from the plan – such as trust, integrity, equity, self-awareness, change and growth, and humility. These values are still very much a part of the fabric of the way we work, and integral to our work as a team of people who serve the community.

The success of all depends upon the conduct of each. Overcoming barriers that cause us to fall short in our performance is how a group of people who work beside each other becomes a team of people who work together.

“The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.”

— Phil Jackson —

A fresh look at values
OUR PEOPLE TRUST AND RESPECT
- Trust goes hand in hand with respect. Our people care about each other as colleagues and friends. We listen carefully to understand. We share our knowledge openly and gently. We are sincere and kind. We embrace the value of others’ contributions. We are different, and so much stronger because of that. We contribute to a safe, healthy and stimulating dialogue, creating an environment in which we all can participate, without fear or hesitation.

OUR PEOPLE COLLABORATE
- We appreciate different perspectives and engage in positive discussion. Our people create teams that have specific goals to achieve and we wisely use our resources to get the task done. We partner with others when we can. We help each other succeed. We thank each other for the small things, and celebrate jobs well done. Together, we build new knowledge and we innovate. Collaboration and teamwork are, by their nature, inclusive.

OUR PEOPLE CHANGE AND GROW
- Our people find opportunities for fresh ideas, and also analyze our motives for change. We ask first and listen to those who are impacted most by change. We explain the context around change and we ask questions to clarify. We adapt and learn new skills. We coach each other so we can take better care of our citizens. We look toward the future and plan so our services stay relevant and effective.

Distilling from 15 to three core values:

“We...”

“My staff team is very collaborative; they huddle and talk about what needs to happen in the community centre. It doesn’t matter what your job title is, they try to get everyone’s opinion.”
A vision to create a “different future for city government and public service” outlined in our corporate plan in 2002 began an organic process that led to three Employee Culture Surveys, our recurring check-ups on the health of our culture. Council’s vision and priorities for the organization were clearly defined in the corporate plan in 2002.

And then came the People Plan.

In 2008, the plan emerged from an exploration of leadership, through unprecedented organization-wide consultation with city staff. It should come as no surprise that developing leaders is still a priority. We must work together to take regular compass checks to align and define our collective values and vision for our workplace culture.

“We should not judge people by their peak of excellence, but by the distance they have traveled from the point where they started.”

— Henry Ward Beecher —

The journey doesn’t stop here. We will keep evaluating where we are, measuring our progress and assessing our courses of action.

You can count on it.
We committed to investing in employees by connecting them to each other and to the community, and proudly telling the story of their work and workplace. The purpose for the People Plan was two-fold:

- to map our shared vision for our corporate future, AND
- to illustrate our core values and show them in action.

But more importantly, the People Plan is a living document, a guidebook that influences how we work, and also supports and empowers us in our work. As employees of the City of Kitchener, we share the same commitment as public servants and professionals to do the right things to keep our citizens well served and safe. We empower each other, and we expect accountability from each other.

The People Plan has become a benchmark for what is acceptable and expected behaviour for all city employees, no matter what their position. If nothing else, remember this:

- Attitude matters.
- Integrity matters.
- Trust and respect – basic civility and kindness – are non-negotiable.
- Accountability is essential.

How does Our People Plan work?

Having individuals participate in teams and having everyone’s voice heard. Having teams exchange information regularly and being plugged into what all of our colleagues are doing.
That last value—accountability—emerged from the three Employee Culture Surveys. In fact, it was so clear that accountability is valued at all levels that it became a sixth culture, something we embed in our work and the way we deal with others.

A culture of accountability allows risk-taking; we try new ideas or see potential opportunities that are outside the box, and we seek success but we learn when we fail. Accountability takes the fear out of making a mistake through that process, and it ensures we are always thinking, at the very least, one step ahead.

Validating each other reminds us that the work we do has the public’s interest at heart. When we are reminded regularly why we do our work, we are less likely to waver from what is right and good for the community.

If this is where we want to work, we are all accountable for achieving that vision.

The plan has created concrete results across several areas of focus for our culture, such as the CapaCITY learning program and our Open Door forum with senior leaders.

Our People Plan sets us apart as a leader in the public sector. We are proud to be an Employer of Choice, with high employee retention and low turnover. We attract top talent and we create an environment in which we can all thrive. We are an organization committed to learning.

We reflect back on what we’ve said about leadership and corporate culture in recent years through the original People Plan, staff forums, focus groups and the three culture surveys. We heard it through our consultations last year.

Some of us said we already see the values in action.

Some of us said our work unit still has a long way to go to get there.

Others said we saw bits and pieces of the vision, but the desired future state would require a stronger commitment to improvement and to our values.

It’s a journey, but as in so many journeys, it’s not necessarily about the destination as much as it is about how you get there. Each of the following cultures has a number of signposts to help us on that journey. These signposts mark our pathway.
Our accountability as municipal employees is visible, because we are in the community. Our customers and citizens benefit every day because we are accountable. Our colleagues benefit, too; we enable them and other city employees to serve the community through their roles. As public servants, we are held to the highest standard, and when we are prepared, trained, motivated and ready to serve, our work tells the story of who we are to each other and to Kitchener’s citizens.

We are accountable “for” – and “to.” We are responsible for our decisions, our reliability, our behaviour and our attitude. Not because someone tells us to, but because we know we should. We are all accountable for our daily efforts and our impact.

Information technology (IT) donates computers and time to not-for-profit organizations, holds a toy drive, has raised $10,000 for Juvenile Diabetes.

We will invest in more time, resources, learning opportunities and training for our leadership teams, including supervisors, managers and directors. Accountability produces positive outcomes including trust, fairness, pride, equity, teamwork, a shared positivity and a sense of accomplishment.
ACCTOUNTABILITY / SIGNPOSTS

- Introduce a series of learning opportunities for leaders, connecting recognition and competencies with the People Plan to make sure leaders at every level champion the Values and the Plan itself. The result will be more consistent leadership that is supportive and respectful.
- Refresh the Let’s Talk program to produce a two-way dialogue so that it works for everyone in our diverse workforce, which includes part-time staff, staff who don’t work in an office, or who don’t have computers, staff who work shifts, casual staff and volunteers.
- Use business plans to prioritize goals and workload, to measure progress and to commit to the right corporate goals at the right time. Report on progress and the impact of learning in a culture of support and ongoing improvement.
- Build education and tools for accountability into current and future CajaCITY training for employees and all those in supervisory roles.
- Use our values to frame discussions on how to act consistently in support of all of our areas of focus across the People Plan.
- Embed accountability as a key element of daily decision-making within our corporate safety strategy.
- Follow through on flagged issues, and close the loop by keeping staff informed of outcomes. We will work toward developing a corporate-wide system for creating and monitoring performance objectives for individual staff.

“I was asked to join a project team for something I wasn’t especially familiar with, but my supervisor thought it was a growth opportunity for me. He was right.”
ACCOUNTABILITY – WORD OF MOUTH

You told us some things are working well, such as providing customers with the right answer, not the quick answer, and feeling like your management and your team stands up for you when there is a dispute with customers or clients.

You told us you wanted more consistency in expectations, and an accountability framework that is equitable. We also heard that more department support for managers is necessary, as well as more information and knowledge-sharing among departments. While some said they feel like management supports them, others told us they don’t feel that way. They want their management team to wholeheartedly support their employees and ensure they have the education, training and tools required for their job. When bad behaviour is not held accountable, it fosters resentment and negativity in your work environment, so you want increased accountability to help keep things on the right track. You want to feel trusted and empowered as employees.

We also heard that CapaCITY programs can be a tool to teach people what accountability is, and how to be accountable. Clarity of roles and responsibilities is required, as is understanding of the impact on the team and project, if there is a lack of accountability.

“We need to improve communications and clarify responsibilities. We need to remember that different departments are all on the same team and are all working together. We are all trying our best.”
We are rich in knowledge and we should be quick to share our expertise. We are lifelong learners. As part of our accountability to citizens to bring our best efforts to our work every day, we plan our resources to bring new experts into our programs to keep our skills sharp. We must strive to ensure that, across the corporation, we continue learning from each other and about each other.

SIGNPOSTS

- Expand Campus programming with content that helps us to grow as individuals and as teams, so we are able to achieve our strategic goals through our daily work.
- Define new leadership competencies, be committed to continual improvement in our leadership skills using made-in-Kitchener principles. Seek and train leaders who are accountable for living the corporate values. Recognize that all employees can exhibit personal leadership and in so doing, contribute to accountability expectations among our workforce.
- Refresh vital human resources programs including corporate orientation, new leader orientation, recruitment and support of new employees, and succession planning.
- Expand our mentor program.
- Create new methods of training that enable us to reach part-time employees and all those who work at city locations besides city hall and the Kitchener Operations Facility (KOF). Embrace technology and expand e-learning opportunities.
- Create new learning assignments to open up work and educational experiences across divisions and departments.
- Expand courses for corporate software systems, such as AMANDA and SAP.
- Improve fairness in opportunities for participating in learning opportunities.
- Expand professional skills training in key areas as a part of succession planning.
We heard you say that you like what we’re doing with learning and development. You like CapaCITY courses, opportunities for online learning such as webinars, events such as the fleet open house and the Main Event, and diversity lunch-and-learns.

You told us that you’d like to understand what value there is in the training you are asked to take, and how it will impact your work or your personal and career development. You said you’d like more support to take training, or to be offered the same opportunities as other employees. You suggested that being able to access training information online could lead to self-directed learning.

“Since I have started, several departments, including finance, communications, print shop, etc., have gone above and beyond in helping me with my new responsibilities and made me feel welcome.”

You said that many part-time and temporary staff do not have access to training information and job opportunities because they have no computer access. You suggested there should be more cross-training opportunities to grow into other positions or departments, such as a “walk-a-mile” program, where employees should be able to spend a few days with a mentor from another department, allowing employees to see what other positions are like, as well as gain a respect for other departments they work with.
We take pride in working safe because nothing is more important. Everyone owns the responsibility to ensure physical and psychological safety. Our consultations indicated we are doing well when it comes to safety and wellbeing.

But we can’t rest on our laurels.

We believe in and strive for work-life balance, so we support our staff in not just their work, but by allowing them the flexibility they need for the demands on them outside work. We demonstrate that we care, through wellness programming and empathy when another needs support. We will invest more in our extended management team, increasing their abilities to do their job effectively and according to the spirit of the People Plan.

SIGNPOSTS

- Continue to build an understanding of the scope of our Employee and Family Assistance Program (EAP) services.
- Add more skill-specific training to keep up with industry standards and trends.
- Get the city in motion through aligned programs such as biking, walking groups, activities during staff events.
- Build the business case for wellness-related amenities.
- Enhance training on wellbeing for all employees.
- Create a “total rewards” statement for employees and build this into recruitment and orientation. This would identify the things that contribute to employee satisfaction and loyalty, such as attending the Main Event, the Wellness Fair, corporate discounts offered by local businesses, learning and development opportunities, and corporate charity opportunities.
- Introduce information sessions, workshops and formal supervisory training on mental health in the workplace.
SAFETY AND WELLBEING – WORD OF MOUTH
You told us you feel your safety is valued by the corporation. You said there are lots of things that are working as far as keeping you safe and healthy. Those things included the Wellness Fair, safety wardens, our benefits package, ergonomic assessments, and health and safety inspections.

But you also said there should be equitable benefits across all employee groups (part-time, contract, temporary), and that there needs to be more resources, such as floater staff, to deal with increased workload, vacation coverage, and so on. You also said you’d like more wellness or health classes, and more opportunities to telework.

“Great protocol for how to address workplace injuries. Supervisors did a good job to make sure (she) was safe on the job when she came back — very supportive supervisors.”
We are all different and we know that this is a strength. We will never stop campaigning for diversity. We challenge the status quo. We also need to work in a place that champions kindness and civility as foundational behaviours upon which all relationships are built. We have the courage and character to insist on this and to call out behaviour below this standard.

We are a team that believes in collaboration, equity, fairness, diversity, meaningful inclusion and two-way communication. Recognition is an action word.

**SIGNPOSTS**

- Tell our stories of success, including the stories of how our differences contribute to our success.
- Craft an internal communication program to keep all employees in the loop on important work across the organization. Share information with front-line supervisors and managers regarding upcoming events or changes, ensuring they will support their staff as part of a change-management strategy, particularly where change impacts the direct work environment.
- Enhance the mandate of the employee advisory committee (EAC) and the diversity committee regarding existing initiatives like the Human Library, and new initiatives like celebrating Local Government Week.
- Offer more opportunities for a greater number of employees, particularly those outside of city hall, to participate in corporate initiatives.
- Investigate an employee web portal as part of the project to enhance the intranet site to give all employees a place to go to remain connected, to stay current, to learn and to add to the dialogue around our “This is where we want to work” vision.
- Create an electronic library for sharing books and ideas.
- Include front-line workers in change-management planning.

**Culture of Inclusion**

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INCLUSION – WORD OF MOUTH

You told us that there are already lots of social events and activities going on across the corporation, and that these are good opportunities for senior management to engage with front-line staff. Some of these events include potlucks, birthdays, lunches, and include both full-time and part-time staff to foster a better sense of belonging.

You said you liked being included in the consultation, but you’d like to know the value you provided. You need to feel valued and considered.

You also said you need to be consulted about divisional or unit changes, that it wastes money and time because management doesn’t know what you know, and they didn’t ask. You told us you don’t like segregation between full-time and part-time staff.

“Management needs to recognize staff. I cannot stress this one enough. I think management needs to appreciate staff being effective at their jobs. It is appropriate to recognize an employee going above and beyond, but management also has a role to play in validating that the work their staff do day-to-day is integral and important to the corporation.”
Thank you! Good job! Well done! Say it loud, and say it proud. Attitude matters and it is a choice. Decide what kind of day you’re going to have. You are responsible for the energy you bring into the room, and to your job. Being positive about our work, our workplace, our colleagues and our bigger purpose as teams, departments and as the city helps us reconnect with the vision “This is where we want to work.”

We hear it from all corners of our organization – the power of "thank you," is transformational; it genuinely demonstrates our efforts are appreciated. Appreciation and fun are lived in little ways we enjoy our work every day. A smile and hello from a supervisor or manager, a visit from a director or a member of the senior team who shows interest in our work and thanks us for what we do, a spontaneous bit of fun activity to give everyone a laugh - these all make the work lighter.

Let’s begin with the end in mind, and create action items to move us toward that goal. Instead of dwelling on problems and obstacles, see potential and opportunity.

Appreciation says “I like working with you, and this is why.” It makes sure every member of the team is recognized. It sees the good in little actions and short sentences and acknowledges them.

Appreciation is a story waiting to be told.

“We need to make community stewardship part of our everyday language - the stories we tell ourselves as an organization should reflect this.”
APPR ECIATION AND FUN – SIGNPOSTS
☐ Commitment from all management, and especially the senior leadership team, to take more time to interact with staff on a regular basis, particularly at locations other than city hall and the Kitchener Operations Facility (KOF).
☐ Recognize when people have been challenged with workload and thank them. Simple and sincere goes a long way; kind words and actions show them we all appreciate their hard work.
☐ Refresh social events that bring employees together, within divisions and departments, and across the organization.
☐ Revitalize corporate recognition programs so they are exciting and relevant to employees. We need to tell our stories. We need to celebrate our achievements. We need to congratulate our colleagues in ways that are timely and sincere.
☐ Refresh management orientation and include expectations for employee recognition.
☐ Celebrate innovation. Tell the stories of our work and ideas to each other and to the community. Introduce “recognition-in-action” stories to reward and pass along positive attitudes, volunteerism, thoughtful contributions. Recognize our worth and the value of our work as a contribution to the quality of community life, home life and work life.
☐ Use City Talk newsletter and Bravo cards more often when people go the extra mile. In particular, engage frontline and part-time staff because that is where our brand lives every day.
☐ Create forums for sharing ideas about creating fun interaction in the workplace.

W O RD O F M O U T H
You told us lots of things make you feel appreciated, such as Bravo cards, the Ken Currier and Employee Choices awards, and end-of-project thank-you celebrations. You like receiving personal thank-yous, whether it’s in person or by email, and you like quarterly team-building events and summer divisional parties.
You also told us that, while there has been much progress and departments are working together much more than before, you feel the corporation still operates in silos in some areas, and that cross-departmental social activities might help address that. And there can never be too many ways, or too many times, to say “thank you.” You want more appreciation, more acknowledgement, more recognition. Because you work hard to little applause.
Our employees are ambassadors to the community – both on and off the job. Many of us are volunteers or participants in events and programs that happen throughout the city. Nurture this spirit by sharing information and helping them be ambassadors not only encourages them... it empowers them. To encourage community stewardship, people need to have a sense of belonging to a community and create ties to it.

We need to commit to opportunities where a City of Kitchener team adds value, fun and support of community grassroots efforts. Trust and confidence in local government is enhanced when the city steps up, and out, to be an example for others.

We understand the importance of good corporate citizenship. It means running our operations in the most effective and efficient manner possible, and attaining the best possible community impact through our efforts.

It also means setting an example for other organizations, through green initiatives, energy management improvement, supporting new business opportunities, charities and educational institutions.

We are good corporate citizens, and our partners - like corporations, community groups, associations, and other stakeholders - understand that we are fair, transparent and honest.
COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP – SIGNPOSTS
- Work with Compass Kitchener and advisory committees to maintain the dialogue on a healthy and prosperous Kitchener, including both a vital downtown and also safe and thriving neighbourhoods.
- Progress on the Corporate Customer Service Strategy, including more e-business tools on the city’s website, a 24-7 centralized call centre, and organization-wide customer service training.
- Progress on the city’s brand strategy including developing a brand promise and new communications opportunities to reach diverse segments of our community.
- Enhance current communication tools, including the Leisure Guide and Your Kitchener.
- Recognize that the City of Kitchener actively embraces environmental stewardship. We commit to supporting environmental initiatives within the corporation, including revitalizing our Green City team and its mandate to position the city among the best municipalities when it comes to reducing the amount of waste produced.
- Invest in Open Government to help share municipal data with citizens and corporations and to demonstrate transparency and good government.

COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP – WORD OF MOUTH
You observed changes that have happened in your community over the past decade. How people used to not come downtown because they didn’t feel safe, but how different – and vibrant – downtown is now.
How community involvement increased over the last 10 years to where we are now, relying on robust community feedback, and working with groups like Compass Kitchener.
You said you liked the opportunity to give to charities through payroll, and the reward of dressing down on Fridays. You love the community car share and bike share programs. You also suggested that time off could be made available to those who volunteer in the community. Some suggested we create a catch-phrase or tagline for the city, to promote ourselves.
You also recognized we need to respond to each specific community, and suggested that community centres shouldn’t all operate the same way. You like partnership with the community and with the private sector, so that resources aren’t duplicated. You told us not to start something new if it’s already exists somewhere in the community.
We have learned many things since the launch of the first People Plan, and through this process we’ve called the People Plan Refresh. One key lesson is that we must commit to a fresh, visible and real expression of our vision: “This is where we want to work.”

Every day, city staff works on projects and tasks geared to making our community more liveable and to improving quality of life for residents. This is work that is done behind the scenes without any fanfare. The expression, “you can’t manage what you don’t measure” is as true in our operations as it is in relation to our culture. Any culture without a focus and commitment will drift off course.

We used three Employee Culture Surveys to make sure that we knew our culture. Now we know that we need a sustainability program for our People Plan. This will be a series of actions that will take time and will evolve as we learn what initiatives have the best impact and reward in terms of connecting people to each other, and celebrating Our People Plan.

Leisure access cards are for lower income families, so they can get tickets and passes through City of Kitchener... it’s a simple process and confidential.

It’s an old-fashioned analogy in this world of GPSs, but if you think about it like this, it’s clear: the signposts are the way we mark each step of the journey. The sustainability program becomes the map for our journey. “This is where we want to work” is the North Star keeping us headed in the right direction. The commitment will be visible in our boardrooms, in our print publications, our emails, our trucks and tractors.

Our sustainability program includes celebrating milestones and creating opportunities that allow us to move around the corporation, to learn about each other and bring down silos.

Staying on the path
It includes more visible leaders in our workplace who take interest in the daily work and understand the power of “thank you.” To facilitate this, we will open new ways to talk as an expanded leadership team about “how we lead,” in support of our values and our employees’ needs. An ongoing dialogue amongst all levels of leadership will be crucial to reaching each employee along the way. The dialogue takes place in our team meetings, our work assignment meetings, our emails and conversations.

Having the right data on our culture is vital, too. We will engage more often, more informally. We will commit to a series of employee surveys and roundtables for sharing ideas and input. We will augment those with smaller initiatives, such as mini-town hall meetings, to get face-to-face on important changes or celebrations of achievement. We will commit to action-planning, based on everyone’s input.

We’ll check in on our progress, just as we did this time, to see if we are still hitting the mark, staying true to the journey and the goal. This will be done in the first half of 2015.

We all own this People Plan. We are all responsible to take action, to be accountable, to support each other and create a culture that shows the world exactly why “This is where we want to work.” A future where we look back with pride and forward with confidence requires commitment.

Henry Ward Beecher said, “We should not judge people by their peak of excellence, but by the distance they have traveled from the point where they started.”

Participants in our consultation understand that. One said, “I am proud to be part of an organization that is forward looking and apt to respond to change and growth... Improving and growing is a positive thing, and looking forward instead of looking back is important to bettering the community, as well as the environment in which we work.”

So, if this is still the place where you want to work, what are you doing to make it a place where your coworkers and colleagues want to work? What is your story? How do you contribute to a work environment that is stimulating, creative, innovative, open to change, respectful and collaborative?

We all have our moments where we shine.

Help keep the ‘people’ front and centre in Our People Plan.