



## City of Vernon Human Resource Strategic Plan

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Moving the organization forward using consistent, predictable, and contemporary practice.

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## Message from the Director of Human Resources

The Human Resources (HR) Division, on behalf of the City of Vernon has developed this Human Resource Strategic Plan to assist us as we continue to develop and maintain our ability to deliver high-quality services to our stakeholders, at a time when the job market is in a state of significant transition. This Plan is a blueprint for the future. It is often stated that people are our most important resource. If this axiom holds true, and I am confident that it does, then how crucial is it that we have the tools in place to do something about it.

As an organization, the City of Vernon has a strong commitment to sound, service-based planning. The City has developed strategic divisional work plans to ensure that we are focused on results. The organization has established an overall action plan, to ensure that every division within the City is advancing Council's strategic priorities. This Human Resource Strategic Plan puts into place the next logical step – ensuring the development of our workforce. This Plan will ensure that City of Vernon workforce development is consistent with Council's vision and that its skills are consistent with the tasks Council sets before us.

The competition for skilled employees is made more intense in an environment where, nationally, many baby boomers see their retirement on the near horizon; where today's workers (Generation X, Generation Y, and Generation Z "Linksters") place a higher value on achieving harmony between their home and work lives; where employees seek meaningful and rewarding work; and where citizens demand high-quality and responsive public services.

As you read through these pages, you will discover a single theme: we are committed to building a vibrant and diverse workforce of highly skilled people who are working together to deliver service excellence to the community of Vernon. Local government can deliver the services expected by our citizens, in a cost effective and efficient manner, only by attracting and retaining employees who are truly committed to the public service. This Plan will enable the City of Vernon to achieve these goals by helping us place the right people in the right positions in a positive and challenging work environment.

The City of Vernon is committed to becoming a true *employer of choice*. We will do this by creating a workplace that encourages public servants to take pride in their work while balancing the day-to-day challenges inherent in their professional and personal lives; by focusing on the development of a safe, supportive, and diverse workplace, and by providing a rewarding work experience. We will do this through a consistent and predictable application of processes that are both meaningful and measurable. As implementation of this Plan proceeds, we will be revising areas of our human resource practice. This will provide an opportunity to shore up our organizational strength and flexibility while providing employees the opportunities they deserve.

I want to thank everyone involved in developing the Human Resource Strategic Plan. I know its successful implementation will benefit those who have chosen a career in the public service and will contribute to the well-being of the community we serve.



Dr. Raeleen Manjak, DM/OL, ΔΜΔ  
Director, Human Resources  
City of Vernon

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## CITY of VERNON HUMAN RESOURCE DIVISION MISSION:

Moving the organization forward using consistent, predictable, and contemporary practice.  
...in other words, ***Success through People!***

This mission is about making a **meaningful, measureable contribution to our stakeholders.**

### Introduction

The City of Vernon's Mission Statement clearly articulates the goal of our local government.

"To deliver effective and efficient, local government services that benefit our citizens, our businesses, our environment and our future."

Mayor and Council continue to support this commitment.

Within this overarching context and building on a sustained commitment to public service excellence, a strategy is required to guide the development and availability of skilled, dedicated, and responsive public servants framed within a consistent and predictable practice.




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# The City of Vernon Human Resource Strategic Plan

## What Is It?

The City of Vernon Human Resource Strategic Plan provides a framework that guides the application of all aspects of the organization's human resource practice. This Plan not only identifies a long-term vision and supporting success factors, but also the immediate priorities needed to achieve the business strategy. This Plan defines what needs to happen within the City of Vernon to ensure a positive impact on the effectiveness of people and the organization, as a whole.

This Plan is intended to assist the City of Vernon as it systematically improves its organizational effectiveness and addresses priority issues. Additionally, this Plan assists in developing the messaging necessary to achieve a corporate shift. This shift is targeted and of great significance. The City of Vernon values its people and is committed to becoming an *employer of choice*.

This Plan is comprised of both organizational and human resource elements. Why is it necessary to look at both? Strategic human resource practice focuses on predicting and increasing performance and ensuring that within the City of Vernon, people are placed in roles where they will achieve success. Current employees will improve productivity in their current roles, and overall, the City of Vernon will strive to build capabilities for future roles. It is clear that the human resource elements require alignment with the organizational elements. This bilateral alignment is not only a necessity, but is a requirement for future long-term organizational success. The Human Resource Strategic Plan addresses broad people effectiveness, not just the human resource function.



**\*Elements addressed through the human resource strategic planning process**

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## Why Have One?

Many challenges and opportunities drive the demand for a comprehensive Human Resource Strategic Plan for the City of Vernon. These include:

- The City of Vernon's workforce has decreased to 311.8 full time equivalents (2015 FTE's); down from 321.3 at the highest level in 2012. The expectations are increasing while human resources are decreasing;
- Two unions (CUPE and IAFF) represent City of Vernon employees; 45.5% are represented by CUPE. Collective agreements significantly impact and shape the work environment;
- Salaries and benefits total approximately \$27 million dollars per year;
- The average age of City of Vernon employees is 42.5 years;
- There is a potential for significant turnover within the City of Vernon;
  - 24% of the workforce were eligible for retirement in 2015;
  - 35.5% of the workforce are eligible to retire by the end of 2019.
- The City of Vernon delivers a broad range of public services requiring a diverse skill set. Changing practices, technology, standards, statutory requirements, materials and equipment, and client expectations all impact the current and future work environment;
- The City of Vernon faces issues regarding affordability and the delivery of service. Specifically, these issues relate to responsiveness within ever-changing business needs and service demands;
- Many City of Vernon policies and procedures dealing with human resource matters were developed over time, usually in reaction to a particular issue, challenge, or event. Many components of the City of Vernon's human resource systems (classification methodologies, job descriptions, compensation methodologies, etc) are dated and require a more contemporary approach. Others, such as the City of Vernon's performance planning system require consultation, re-design, and implementation to provide the flexibility required to manage our human resources and respond in a consistent and timely manner to changing workforce conditions;
- Until now, human resource program or policy initiatives have lacked a comprehensive strategic framework that aligns them with Council's strategic priorities; and
- The City of Vernon needs to begin to design and implement areas of workforce planning that focus on developing leadership to manage performance planning, human resource (succession) planning, and learning and development in order to prepare for turnover, retirements, and knowledge loss.

The challenges and opportunities specific to the City of Vernon are addressed in this Plan.

This Plan creates a long-term vision for the City of Vernon's workforce and identifies strategic priorities.

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# Organizational Framework

## Vision, Mission, Values

If this Human Resource Strategic Plan is to complement the broader goals and objectives of the City of Vernon, it is important that our individual actions as public servants be focused on a common vision and mission. This singular focus is the cornerstone for the development of vision and success factors for human resources. This is the foundation for the aspects of human resource management in the City of Vernon. The process of aligning all human resource activity within the City of Vernon will not occur today or tomorrow, it will evolve over time as attitudes and behaviours change and the culture of the organization shifts.

### CITY OF VERNON VISION:

“To deliver effective and efficient, local government services that benefit our citizens, our businesses, our environment and our future.”

### HUMAN RESOURCE MISSION:

Moving the organization forward using consistent, predictable, and contemporary practice.

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This mission is about making **a meaningful, measureable contribution to our stakeholders.**

### HUMAN RESOURCE VALUES:

To complement the core values expressed throughout the City of Vernon’s strategic priorities as set by Mayor and Council, it is important to identify corporate human resource values that will guide decision-making actions, as well as the way we interact with one another and with those we seek to serve. We seek to maximize efficiencies while implementing the strategic priorities of Mayor and Council and to improve the quality of information presented for strategic decision-making. We strive to ensure a skilled, productive, and flexible workforce through innovation in service delivery. These values are:

#### RESPECT

We value a workplace culture where people **respect** one another in their interactions with co-workers and members of the public.

#### INTEGRITY

We value a workplace culture where personal and professional **integrity** cause us to behave in a

principled way to make the best use of the resources entrusted to us.

#### DIVERSITY

We value a workplace where **diversity**, in all its forms, is encouraged and recognized for its contribution to a more creative, rewarding, and productive public service.

#### ACCOUNTABILITY

We value a workplace where **accountability** for our actions and our interactions, the objective and wise use of resources, and the assumption of responsibilities for our successes and failures is reflected in how we conduct ourselves. We are accountable to the citizens of Vernon, to our co-workers, and to our many partners throughout the organization and greater community.

#### QUALITY

Providing **quality** services that are consistent, predictable, efficient, and effective.

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## PRINCIPLES:

In the delivery of services, the City of Vernon endeavours to:

- Strive for a consistent and predictable application of process that engages employees;
- Focus on sustainability; and
- Bring together value and results.

## ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS:

### AFFORDABLE

- Maximize efficiency and implementation related to Council's strategic priorities and to work within the budget direction of Council; and
- To provide quality information for Council during strategic planning sessions.

### INNOVATIVE

- Work to ensure that a skilled, productive, and flexible workforce is in place that is encouraged and supported to bring innovative solutions into the work environment.

### RESPONSIVE

- Work to maintain a consistent high level of stakeholder satisfaction.




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## A Vision

### For Human Resource/Organizational Effectiveness

**A vibrant and diverse workforce of highly skilled people, working together to deliver extraordinary customer service to the citizens of Vernon.**

Human resource issues and opportunities are central to all activities undertaken within the City of Vernon. It is the employees, working at all levels within the organization, who accomplish all that we do. The citizens are the people we serve. Management of human resources is not limited to the human resource professionals working within specialized portfolio areas. The responsibilities of human resource management is spread throughout the City of Vernon and involves all levels of personnel – front line staff, specialists, management, and supervisors.

This Human Resource Strategic Plan seeks to establish the vision and foundation, which propels this Plan forward. This is not just directed toward human resource effectiveness, but also toward overall organizational effectiveness.

A vibrant workforce is one that is adaptable and flexible. The workforce needs to respond quickly to changing workplace demands and requirements. It is a workforce that is dynamic, energetic, and motivated. A diverse workforce reflects a more creative, rewarding, and productive public service that beckons to a variety of talents, skills, and perspectives.

The City of Vernon employees are skilled employees, but the workforce of the future City of Vernon requires supplementary and distinct skills that will effectively meet the work challenges of tomorrow. Employees will require a variety of skills, knowledge, and abilities to accomplish a greater variety of tasks than what may currently be required. It is projected that highly skilled employees will be compelled to seek not only formal education qualifications, but also on-the-job experience and training in order to have the skills to accomplish assigned tasks and to permit an opportunity to pursue future opportunities.

This Plan emphasizes the necessity for divisional, departmental, cross-departmental, and cross-divisional work opportunities. Working together to build depth and capacity will permit an opportunity for employees to work together, to transfer and share knowledge, to gain essential on-the-job experience, and to reduce duplication of effort in order to achieve efficiencies and effectiveness in all organizational goals and activities.

The City of Vernon's guiding objective is to deliver high quality services imbedded within a mandate of extraordinary customer service.

**Doing it Right the First Time** ensures that the City of Vernon is building a goal-driven organization.

**Doing Things the Right Way** permits a consistent and predictable application of performance planning to increase business execution.

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## City of Vernon Success Factors

An important component of this Human Resource Strategic Plan is the definition and application of success factors that will support and reflect the achievement of its vision. These factors represent factors that are critical to the successful achievement of our corporate vision, mission, and organizational goals. This list is not in priority order.

It is through the execution of this Plan that the human resource strategy requires having the right people, doing the right things, the right way, the first time. It is about building internal depth and capacity and ensuring that over time, the execution of this Plan develops employees to meet the changing business demands. Emphasis is placed on integrating the City of Vernon Success Factors to maximize business impact and to address, in a consistent and predictable manner, the process design, organizational issues, and opportunities that will ensure success.




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## Strategic (Organizational) Priorities

We have identified four (4) strategic (organizational) priorities that support the vision for human resource/ organizational effectiveness.

The priorities were identified as those issues or opportunities that require immediate attention, based on a divisional analysis of the current state of the human resource practice and the strategic options for moving forward.

The priorities are:

- Corporate Wide Performance Planning;
- Human Resource (Succession) Planning;
- Learning and Development; and
- *Employer of Choice* Designation.

The value of setting strategic (organizational) priorities is vested in their ability to guide and support Administration in achieving the strategic priorities, as set by Council. In each priority area, specific deliverables are set and leadership is directed to expend the effort and resources toward specific activities and projects that have been deemed priority issues, or are of particular importance. As the Human Resource Strategic Plan is implemented throughout the City of Vernon, these priorities can and will evolve. This is simply a living document, meant to be updated and amended. Flexibility, resilience, and innovation are key components as the organizational needs shift and reshape themselves to become more effective and efficient.

### CORPORATE WIDE PERFORMANCE PLANNING

Performance planning assists the City of Vernon in ensuring that there is a meaningful alignment between organizational goals, objectives, employees' day-to-day work plans (as set by division), accountabilities, and career objectives. Initially, the focus will be on consulting, designing, and implementing an exempt performance planning program. Once the program has been piloted, revisited, and revised, consultation between Labour and Management will be undertaken to roll out the program to the bargained work environment.

The City of Vernon is committed to ensuring that there are clear and measureable expectations communicated to each employee. Employees need to know what is expected of them, they require the right teaching, training, coaching, and mentoring. They need the right skills, tools, equipment, direction, and authority to do their work. Most importantly, they require formal and informal feedback on their performance. This communication is essential as the City of Vernon aligns their systems and processes to permit the highest level of employee success.

This Plan defines performance planning as a developmental tool. It is not a quick fix. This intent is to have Directors, Managers, and Supervisors step into the conversation and to encourage a dialogue. The intent is to encourage employee ideas and input, to value innovation, creativity, and risk-taking, and to promote and demonstrate that employee contributions are important and that they are valued. Performance planning must be linked and aligned with human resource (succession) planning and learning and development initiatives.

### HUMAN RESOURCE (SUCCESSION) PLANNING

Proactive management and planning within the realm of human resources permits the City of Vernon to be better prepared to meet the demands and future requirements of the workforce. This Human Resource Strategic Plan seeks to ensure that effective delivery of services to the public continues at a highly effective customer service level. The initiative directed to human resource (succession) planning will develop and implement a framework that flows from the performance planning program to facilitate and identify areas of change, risk, and opportunity.

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Further, preparation of human resource (succession) plans to meet future needs will be initiated. Initially, the focus will be on improving information gathering through the performance planning program. Aligned with this data gathering phase will be a proactive management of the City of Vernon's human resources through improved understanding of the workforce, future needs through demographic analysis, career planning requirements, workforce needs forecasting, and deployment initiatives. By identifying workforce requirements, the City of Vernon will be strategically placed to explore opportunities for corporate wide cooperation. This is a long-term objective and will involve extensive consultation with all stakeholders, including a focus on those areas of the City of Vernon that may have the greatest exposure or risk.

## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The City of Vernon is committed to development of their employees. Ongoing training and capacity building is critical to ensure a vibrant, skilled, and knowledgeable workforce. Initially, our focus is on strategic capacity development. As demographics shift, the City of Vernon may experience a crisis at the management level. This crisis and human resource challenge consists of demographic changes, technological, and societal shifts. The aging and retiring workforce is exacerbated at senior management levels and within key line positions. Therefore, it is essential for a future focused organization to embed performance leadership into the very fabric of the organization.

Leaders throughout the organization must be skilled and capable of setting clear direction, determining priorities, ensuring that employees and resources are aligned to achieve organizational goals, and to provide quality information to Council for its decision-making. This is about the City of Vernon's organizational readiness, our inherent ability to evolve and respond to change. Either we are focused to meet the challenges regarding workforce stability, or we are not.

Following this initial focus, a program will be set

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for the bargained environment to focus future leaders within the organization and to ensure that the City of Vernon is creating the desired organizational culture supported by senior management. This focus will assist the City of Vernon in their preparation for potential knowledge loss and the leadership transition that will result from upcoming retirements and attrition. The intent is to develop skills and build depth and capacity, knowledge, and ability at all levels throughout the City of Vernon.

## EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

The phrase *employer of choice* is more than a buzzword; it is representative of a new design of corporate culture. It means that people choose to work for the City of Vernon, they dedicate themselves to our success, they choose to stay, even when they are being courted by recruiters...many of whom can pay more than we can. The *employer of choice* designation is NOT about pay. Though fair and reasonable compensation is important, it fulfills only a short-term requirement and a lack of fair compensation is a strong de-motivator. On the other hand, non-monetary benefits, such as intellectual challenge, autonomy, flexibility, and professional development opportunities are strong motivators.

Employers who create the right environment demonstrate that they care about their employees and this fosters a strong sense of loyalty. When people see an organization that supports their workforce it is easy to secure leaders, to talk about cost effective delivery of services, and to see it realized. To attract top talent and maintain employee morale, we cannot take leadership and/or capacity building for granted. Building strategic capacity is building a foundation that is not only based on technical competence, but also on people management. It is about making the commitment and focusing resources.

The single most important determinant of job satisfaction is the employer-employee relationship. If depth and capacity are not built within the leadership stream... with a clear focus on cost effective delivery, then we will not succeed in the end we are trying to achieve.

...in other words, ***Success through People!***

# Moving Forward

## For Human Resource/Organizational Effectiveness

A vibrant and diverse workforce of highly skilled people, working together to deliver extraordinary customer service to the citizens of Vernon.

### SUCCESS FACTORS

- Accountable Leadership;
- Clear Roles, Responsibilities, and Accountabilities;
- Collaborative and Contemporary Labour/Management Partnerships;
- A Respectful, Safe, and Healthy Work Environment;
- Application of Contemporary, Cost Effective, and Efficient Practices;
- Shared Employer/Employee Commitment for Career and Self-Development;
- Knowledge Growth and Transfer Grounded in an Open Communication Framework; and
- Value and Recognize Employee Contributions.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Corporate Wide Performance Planning Program for the City of Vernon (exempt and bargained environments);
- Human Resource (Succession) Plan;
- Learning and Development; and
- *Employer of Choice* Designation.

**KEY ELEMENTS of this HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGIC PLAN** lay in the continued and ongoing communication of its vision and success factors. As this is a living document, delivery of the strategic priorities will work together to produce a balanced divisional strategy with a long-term focus on the future of the organization. These priorities require alignment with Council's strategic priorities and the administrative priorities of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

This framework is the cornerstone for a long-term direction focused on human resource and organizational effectiveness. This Plan is not focused on one item or another, but is concerned with all aspects of human resource management within the City of Vernon.

Approaching this Plan from a holistic, interconnected level will contribute to a multi-layered integration... instead of thinking of factors in isolation. Then, and only then, will the City of Vernon be able to leverage multiple stages of transformation to drive the positive workforce change forward.

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