



pwc

Retention and

Employee Experience

Key Findings

November 2023



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1. Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The labour market has shifted significantly post-pandemic. Across industries, employee needs have evolved as employees seek greater flexibility, career development opportunities, equitable pay and work-life balance. Understanding the needs of its employees and turning current talent challenges into opportunities will enable the City of Windsor (the City) to gain an edge in the “war for talent”.



Scope

PwC was engaged to help the City **identify activities** to **address and improve employee experience and retention** in the short, medium and long term.

Activities

In order to understand the current employee needs, the engagement team conducted **internal stakeholder interviews** (with Corporate Leadership Team (CLT), Senior Management Team (SMT) and union heads), **focus groups** (front line staff, supervisors and managers) and **a retention and employee experience survey**.

Next, an **environmental scan** was conducted to analyze industry best practices and workshops were facilitated with the Chief Administrative Office (CAO) and Human Resources (HR) Executive Director to **co-create a roadmap** of suggested activities to implement.

Solution

Five **key themes** were identified as areas of opportunity for the City: **Culture and Leadership, Talent and Career Development, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), Recognition and Rewards and Workplace Flexibility**. In addition, two enabling factors (HR Processes and Technology) were identified to support the key themes. Each theme was broken down into **actionable initiatives** and an **implementation roadmap** was developed to prioritize these initiatives over the short, medium and long term.

Objectives

The key objective of this engagement is to understand and assess the City's current challenges related to employee experience and suggest improvements in order for the City to retain its workforce. **This report is a summary of the current state assessment** (i.e. Focus 1).

Focus 1

Assess Current State

Conduct a **current state assessment** through focus groups, interviews and a survey to understand employee sentiment and reasons for attrition.

Focus 2

Identify Opportunities

Identify **recommendations** from 2019 findings related to employee experience and retention and any **new activities/initiatives** to **address challenges** from the current state assessment.

Focus 3

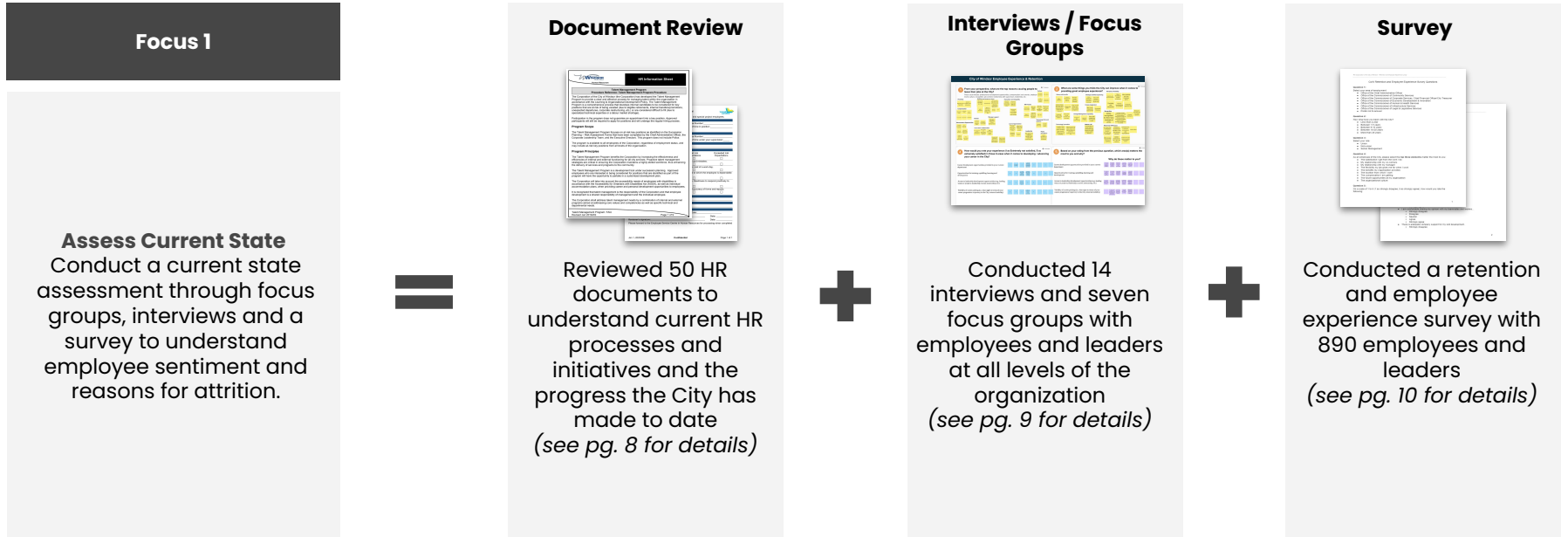
Co-create Implementation Roadmap

Co-create a **roadmap** with the **prioritized activities** and understand dependencies and factors to support the implementation of the activities.

2. Approach

Approach and Inputs

The following are the inputs used to complete the current state assessment:



Document Review Summary

Documents related to current practices in talent management, exit interviews, performance management and employee wellness programs at the City were reviewed. In addition, previous survey results on employee engagement and DEI were also assessed. The insights from these documents were used to support interviews and focus group sessions. The insights obtained were as follows:

Strengths



- Robust catalog of training programs and learning opportunities
- Innovative approach of partnering with educational institutions to offer leadership training
- Well defined talent management program outlining the key procedures, processes, roles and responsibilities
- Wellness resources available to staff including fitness membership discounts, counseling and wellness initiatives throughout the calendar year
- Communication within departments is efficient and effective

Opportunities



- Evolve talent management program to address talent needs across the organization
- Investigate opportunities to enhance DEI among employees (e.g. racialized individuals, LGBTQ+ individuals and those with mental health conditions)
- Proactively define skills needs and identify gaps (skills are fluid and flexible and can be trained easily) to hire/offer upskilling opportunities
- Opportunities to improve communication across the organization

Stakeholder Interviews Summary

Listed below are 21 departments/business units that stakeholders and focus groups were involved in. 14 interviews were conducted with members of the CLT, department heads and union heads. Seven focus group interview sessions were held with four to ten employees per group. Participants in the focus groups included both union and non-union employees from various departments.

These sessions were designed to identify employee sentiments and perceptions about their experience with City while maintaining anonymity; as a result, they were not filtered by department or type of employment and are reflective of commonly shared employee sentiments and perceptions.

Employment and Social Services	Communications and Customer Services	Parks and Facilities	CAO	Infrastructure Services	Operations	Building Services
Finance	Legal Services	Council Services	Human Resources	Recreation and Culture	Information Technology	Community Services
Huron Lodge	Engineering	Housing and Children Services	Legal and Legislative Services	Fire and Rescue Services	Planning and Development	Unions
Pollution control	Front line staff	Transit	By-Law Enforcement		Economic Development	

Survey Summary

The survey was completed by 890 participants across eight different departments. Approximately 50% of the participants have worked for the organization for 10+ years and 61% of the participants are employed in unionized roles. The survey sought perspectives on the current state of retention and employee experience. Additional details of the survey can be found in the Appendix. Below are the summary results:

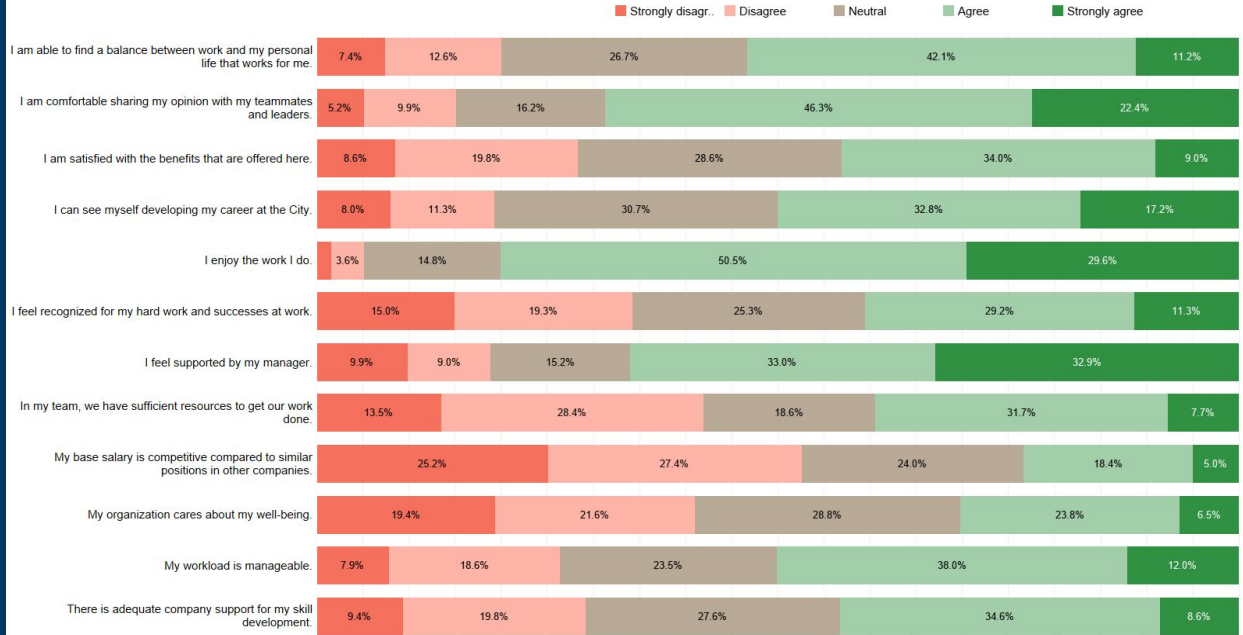
Strengths:

- ✓ Employees enjoy the work they do (80%)
- ✓ Employees are comfortable sharing opinions (69%)
- ✓ Employees feel supported by their managers (66%)

Opportunities:

- ! More competitive base pay (77%)
- ! More wellness support (70%)
- ! Improved workforce planning strategy for resource/workload issues (61%)
- ! Opportunity to improve rewards and recognition strategy (59%)

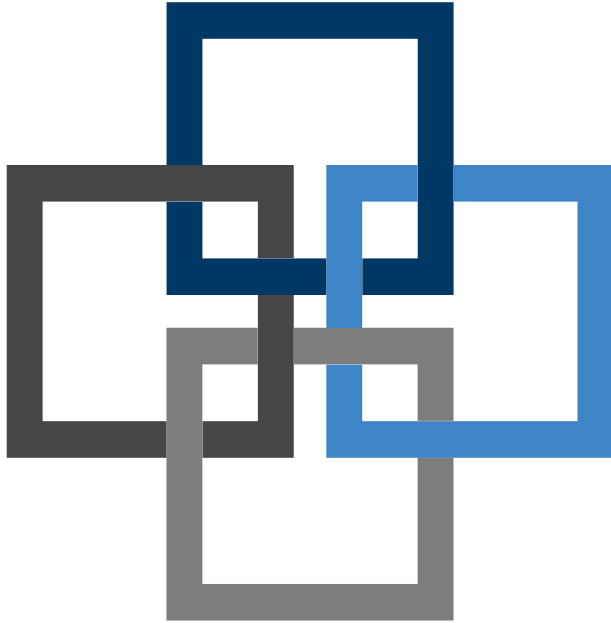
Note: Survey data is consistent with CUPE L82 Union survey results, especially around the topics of "feeling valued and recognized", "salary", and "wellness/caring".



3. Identified Opportunities

What's Going Well

Based on the interviews, focus groups and survey, we learned about motivation factors that current employees value. The City can continue its efforts in these areas to improve its employee experience.



- Employees are open to change and want to contribute to making the City a great place to work
- Employees enjoy the work they do and the impact it has on the community
- Employees see the value in current talent programs
- The sense of purpose serving the community is a distinctive employee value proposition

Key Themes: Areas of Opportunities

The insights from the current state assessment are summarized into five key themes and two enabling factors. The following pages detail these themes and factors based on the findings from the current state assessment.

Culture and Leadership

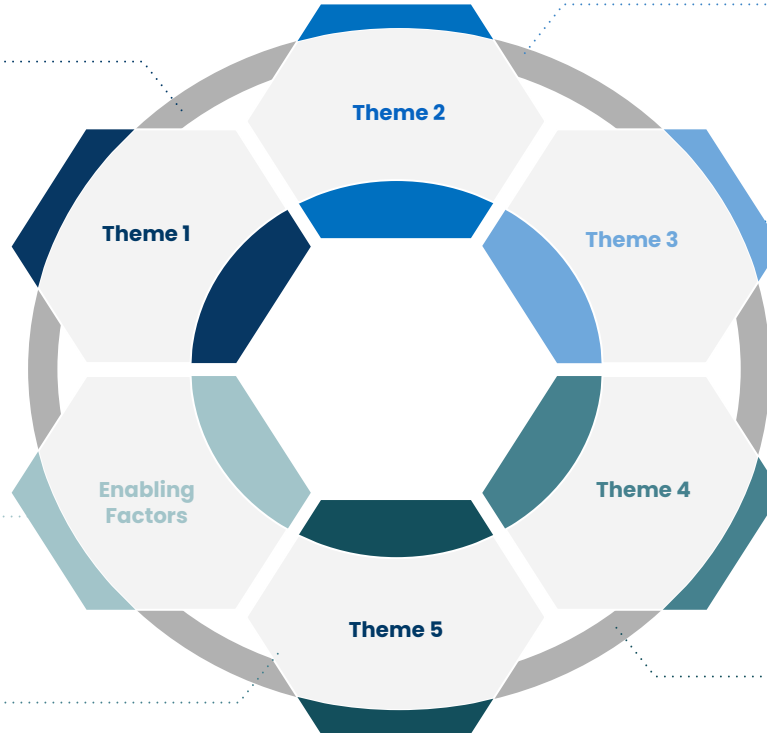
Establish a distinctive organizational culture that serves as the cornerstone of retention and employee experience. Encourage leaders to promote a psychologically safe environment to foster collaboration and innovation and breathe life into the organizational strategy.

HR Process and Technology

Update and optimize technology platforms to streamline HR processes to support focus areas outlined above.

Recognition and Rewards

Provide a holistic set of financial and non-financial rewards to retain the employees.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Continue to create a diverse and an inclusive work environment that minimizes unconscious bias and enables equality of opportunity through fairness and transparency.

Talent and Career Development

Emphasize a skills-first approach that unlocks the full potential of talent by providing upskilling opportunities and new career pathways.

Workplace Flexibility

Expand the hybrid work model and improve implementation to empower employees with the flexibility on when and where they work.

Culture and Leadership (Theme 1) Findings

Cross-functional collaboration

As often seen in organizations of similar size as the City, each department is perceived to have its own identity, ways of working and policies. It is important to understand any subcultures within the City to enhance interaction and collaboration between departments and levels of the organization. “Us-them” discourse was used frequently during the interview process as interviewees felt there is a disconnect between siloed departments and employees. This divide may also be one of the causes of tension between union and non-unionized employees.

Approach to employee discipline

The survey conducted for this engagement found 68% responded favourably to “I am comfortable sharing my opinion with my teammates and leaders”. However, in a survey conducted by Local 82, 64% of respondents felt that “there is reprisal when reporting claims against management,” indicating that this is felt predominantly by union employees. This has also caused some employees to avoid taking informed risks that may be beneficial and meaningful to the organization. These concerns highlight the need for enhanced psychological safety in the workplace and further amplifying a culture of positive safety where all employees feel empathy, are encouraged to speak up, model curiosity and avoid blaming to build trust.

Perceptions of preferential treatment

Although the city has processes in place to encourage fairness and equity, some employees shared accounts of situations they deemed inconsistent and unfair. Many employees emphasized the need for transparency where opportunities for promotion or advancement to higher/leadership roles. Some employees noted that preferential treatment has been observed where employment opportunities are granted to individuals based on advantageous connections. In six out of seven focus groups and several times in the survey, favoritism was raised as a factor affecting employee experience. However, many employees commented that there is organizational support for advancement across departments and divisions.

What does this mean for the City?

Focus on a people-first culture: From multiple comments from the engagement sessions, employees wish to be treated with more empathy and understanding of their individual circumstances. Before disciplinary action is taken, they want leaders to seek more understanding of the root of the issue, to practice active-listening and to provide different ways employees can be supported going forward. A well-supported employee increases work productivity, thereby driving forward overall efficiency of the workforce.

Ensure consistency and fairness in process: Employees also want transparency and consistency in processes to improve current ways of working. There is an opportunity for clearer communication on job positions being posted in a consistent manner and a fair chance for any qualified employee during selection process. This will help build trust between staff and management and improve employee morale and perception of fairness.

Culture and Leadership (Theme 1) Findings (cont.)

The City offers leadership and management training to potential and existing supervisors and managers (e.g. Management Windsor Certificate, Emerging Leader Program). Employees that have taken these training programs spoke highly of the value they offer. To develop impactful leaders, there is an opportunity for the city to combine essential course work with additional leadership effectiveness training across all levels of the organization. Employees commented that they value the impact of compassionate, empathetic and engaging leaders and emphasized the importance of investing in effective leadership training.

Perceived organizational and leadership support

From the org-wide and the L82 surveys, employees (66% and 55%, respectively) feel supported by their managers. This changes when employees are asked about their perception of the organization, with 30% responding positively to “my organization cares about my wellbeing”, and 40% of L82 respondents agreeing that management cares about their wellbeing. These sentiments were echoed in focus groups, interviews and survey comments. While most employees acknowledge support from their managers, some noted their desire for leaders to enhance their support towards employee wellbeing, adequate resources to do work effectively, workload balance, support for career development, increased support for onboarding and on-the-job training support for new hires, etc. These actions would increase the positive perception of organizational and leadership support.

Leadership styles and effectiveness

Employees want to see more active listening from management and leaders continuing to lead with empathy and compassion to foster a sense of belonging across the organization.

According to some employees there are concerns with speaking up and expressing thoughts freely. Employees have expressed the continued need for leaders to engage meaningfully and provide a safe environment for staff to share diverse perspectives. Some employees commented on the desire to see more trust and be provided with an increase in autonomy from leaders. While most employees feel supported by their managers, some employees commented on feeling micromanaged.

Employees acknowledge the benefits of the current mentorship programs. Some employees mentioned the need to continue to offer adequate and consistent coaching and mentorship and ensure leaders have sufficient capacity for mentorship. There is an opportunity to assess the mentorship program, better communicate its presence and purpose and prioritize creating the capacity for leaders and employees to participate in the program.

What does this mean for the City?

Perceived organizational support: Leadership plays a crucial role in contributing to employees’ perceptions of support within the organization. Leadership practices that prioritize open and transparent communication, active listening, empathy, fairness, equitable access to growth opportunities, etc. are most effective at creating environments where employees feel valued and supported. This will ultimately lead to increased employee satisfaction, engagement and commitment to the organization

Psychological safety is a must-have: One of the causes of attrition is lack of psychological safety, where employees are afraid of repercussions when speaking up. Leaders play an important role in fostering psychological safety and with the right training, skills and tools, can improve the sense of equity and belonging, build trust and empower employees, resulting in a more engaged and productive workforce.

Visible leadership is imperative: Leaders at all levels are in a unique position to create and sustain a better employee experience at the City. Today’s leaders must move from managing work and directing people, to creating an environment where employees are engaged and empowered. There is an opportunity for the City to re-evaluate its leadership training programs to ensure they meet the development needs of leaders in today’s workforce. The City should focus its effort on leadership development that enables leaders to build motivation, inspiration, pride, inclusion and trust in employees.

DEI (Theme 2) Findings

There is a general awareness of the importance of DEI among employees and a desire to be more diverse and equitable. The City has taken significant steps in addressing DEI, including the DEI initiative that was launched in 2018. There is an opportunity to revisit the initiative, evaluate it and proceed with relevant actions to advance DEI.

Inclusive leadership and behaviours

- Some employees reported feelings of discrimination (including microaggressions) and favoritism impacting their psychological safety.
- Some employees reported not feeling comfortable or supported when sharing sensitive topics or voicing their concerns (e.g. about harassment, bullying or other unfair treatment) to leadership. Based on the L82 survey, some employees are not confident that their concerns would result in a fair and serious investigation.

Pay equity and compensation:

- Pay inequity seems to exist between non-union internal and external hires. External candidates are often able to negotiate their compensation, while internal hires are limited to The 5% Rule.
- There are perceptions of wage disparity between women and men in similar roles; however, it is important to note that the City is bound by equity standards, and there are channels through which employees can challenge issues of perceived inequity. The City should ensure that employees are aware of and use these channels.
- Certain biases are also factors perceived to be affecting career development and advancement of female employees. The City has made considerable progress advancing women. It was noted that several women are managers, department heads and members of the CLT. Through mentorship programs and frequent communication about initiatives, the City will be able to address perceived bias in advancement.



Equitable career management

- There is a traditional perspective embedded into hiring decisions around the importance of formal post-secondary education, academic credentials and other formal training/certification. This is a concern felt mostly by union employees. They feel there is little consideration given for work experience and acquired skills/competence. This process creates a barrier to cognitive diversity (e.g. during focus group discussions, we commonly heard issues around being passed up for roles because of a lack of degrees/academic credentials despite the proven ability to fulfill job requirements). This results in limited career opportunities for employees.

Proactive and transparent communication:

- Many employees feel that there are limited feedback loops between senior leadership/management and employees, and across departments. This can lead to assumptions that DEI concerns may not be addressed equally and consistently. In order to build trust and drive change that is sustained and expansive, accountability and transparency will be required.

What does this mean for the City?

Enable equality of opportunity through fairness and transparency: Perceived inequality in advancement and lack of transparency lead to employee dissatisfaction and turnover at the City. Leveraging analytics tools to show transparency and fairness in promotions and other corporate processes can be considered.

Strengthen leadership accountability and capabilities for DEI: Making DEI part of the mandate of the senior leadership team and effectively putting business leaders, beyond the HR team, at the core of DEI efforts strengthens the inclusive-leadership capabilities. Emphatically holding all leaders to account for progress on DEI is critical.

Create openness and tackle microaggression: There is an opportunity to make existing procedures regarding reports of discrimination more well known and utilized and to encourage staff and managers to have more open discussions to address the concerns. An open environment should be established to welcome feedback and ask leaders and employees to assess each other on how they are living up to the City's standards.

Career and Talent Development (Theme 3)

Findings

Employees spoke highly about the value of existing training and development programs, and those that have taken the programs had positive experiences. 43% of org-wide survey respondents acknowledged that there is adequate support for their skill development while others mentioned the need to improve transparency and access as well as offer more advanced skills development training. Most employees stated that increased access to training and development would improve employee job satisfaction.

Heavily invested in training: There was positive feedback about the City's progress in providing employees with training and development opportunities; employees recognize the City's investment in learning and development (e.g. partnership with educational institutions). The City provides educational assistance and skilled trade apprenticeship programs, among other learning and development programs, contributing positively to employee experience.

Unequal access and lack of transparency: While the City invests in training and internal mobility is encouraged, some employees feel talent programs are made available to employees who are more visible. Greater transparency and visibility towards the selection process would lead to a positive experience and increased trust in the workforce.

Limited upward mobility: Flat organizational structure results in limited upward mobility for people who have reached the managerial level. Some employees mentioned they have reached a career "ceiling" or limited career advancement as the ability to be promoted was contingent upon a senior leader's retirement. However, most acknowledged the need to balance career advancement with a perceived top-heavy organizational structure.

Improvement in career pathing: Employees spoke highly about the value in current training and development; however, some noted that improvements need to be made in advancing career pathways that allow individuals to grow. This poses an opportunity for the City to consider agile career management built on a skills-based pathway.

What does this mean for the City?

Focus on a skills-first approach: Some employees expressed frustration on being limited to advancement opportunities based on degree requirements. The current talent development approach (particularly for unionized positions) focuses heavily on the role and post-secondary degree requirements. This increases barriers to entry and discourages candidates with non-traditional backgrounds from applying for roles and other advancement opportunities. Shifting to a skills-first approach focuses on whether a person has the right skills and competencies for a particular role. It democratizes access to good jobs for people who have the competencies but not the right formal credentials for a role. By focusing on each individual's diverse skills, potential and motivation, the City can help remove unintended bias from the talent development process. Although this is already often practiced for non-union positions, it may be more difficult to accomplish with union positions as it may receive push back from unions. However, a case can be made for it as it appears to have a significant influence on employee experience at the City.

Promote fairness: Some front line workers feel that they are not treated equitably at work relative to colleagues. This presents an opportunity for the City to review current processes to ensure equal access to opportunities, promote engagement and keep employee cynicism at bay.

Workplace Flexibility (Theme 4) Findings

Creating a flexible work environment has been rated as one of the top three elements that matter most to the City. Although the current “work from home” model has been adopted, there are opportunities for the City to continuously improve and optimize when it comes to implementation.

Mixed feedback on implementation of hybrid work from home program

The City has initiated a hybrid working model, which has been welcomed by employees. However, when it comes to the implementation of the program, employees express challenges with the application and approval process. There is also inconsistency across departments with respect to application approval timelines.



Lack of autonomy in work

Employees desire more autonomy, control and freedom over when, where and how they do their work. Some employees feel like they have no control over their schedule/calendar, which makes it difficult to manage their caseload as individual schedules are constantly changing.

More emphasis on employee wellness by “walking the talk”

The City has made progress highlighting the value of employee wellness, and the annual wellness survey suggests that employees see value in the Workplace Wellness Program. However, increased communication and promotion of what is available is needed to improve participation in the programs. From our analysis, employees believe that more could be done with regard to the actual execution of the wellness program and initiatives. They raised the issue of burnout from increasing workload and expressed dissatisfaction in the mental health resources and wellness benefits available to support the workforce.

What does this mean for the City?

Take a systematic approach to improving employee mental health and wellbeing:

Research shows that the most powerful drivers of burnout are systematic organizational imbalances across job demands and job resources. The City can view high rates of burnout as a sign that there is a need for a reassessment of the utilization of existing mental health and wellness programs being offered as well as meaningful systematic change within the organization

Taking a systemic approach means addressing root causes of burnout. Often, root causes relate to poor workplace behaviors that can be addressed through an improvement of culture, leadership and employee upskilling, among other factors. It can also mean reimagining organizational systems, processes and incentives to redesign work, job expectations and team environments.

Recognition and Rewards (Theme 5) Findings

The current state assessment indicates a need to refresh both financial rewards and non-financial recognition. The City should focus on providing a holistic employee experience that puts equal emphasis on benefits, career growth and wellbeing.

External Factors

Living in the “fishbowl”: Some employees want to be mindful while celebrating successes due to the risk of negative perceptions externally.

Lean budget model: The organization has been operating under a lean approach, which aims to minimize overhead and stay focused on delivering strategic objectives and customer value in a more iterative and continuous manner. However, this has resulted in some employees feeling that they are working more hours with less resources available.

Internal Factors

Lack of appreciation and recognition culture: Low staff morale can be attributed to a lack of recognition for hard work. The role of recognition and rewards was mentioned as an important retaining factor for employees, in addition to motivating individuals to maximize their performance.

Total rewards: Employees reported that the current work schedule of 33.75 hrs/week does not meet requirements when applying for loans and mortgages, and forces employees to take on supplementary employment. The union is actively looking at ways to increase hours worked to 35 hrs/week. Employees also raised a need to improve other benefits (e.g. more mental health support and flex benefits based on individual needs) as these may help mitigate burnout.

Joint job evaluation (JJE) and non-union job evaluation (NUJE) as barriers: Several employees mentioned JJE and NUJE as barriers to progression. According to employees, it is a long and onerous process that hinders them from earning more money based on limited criteria. Additionally, some employees reported evaluation questions are often impertinent and do not allow for adequate consideration in alignment with the full scope of job requirements.

What does this mean for the City?

Highlight opportunities for informal recognition with “moments that matter”: Many participants agreed acknowledgment in the moment is something that needs to happen within departments. While many participants acknowledge the importance of financial rewards, it was recognized that small gestures of appreciation are similarly meaningful and motivating.

Shift gears to intrinsic and non-monetary rewards: Intrinsic rewards come from the internal factors and enjoyment an individual receives. Managers and leaders should recognize the needs of workers where possible and enable them to find meaning in their work by giving them more autonomy and freedom to work, thereby enhancing creativity, innovation and productivity.

HR Processes (Enabling Factor 1) Findings

Findings from our analysis suggest that investment in key HR processes will allow for better employee experience and retention. Below we have summarized the key areas of improvement opportunities.

Talent acquisition

- Long and cumbersome recruitment processes negatively impacts talent attraction.
- The perception of unfairness and unequal consideration in the recruitment process leads to a negative employer brand. Employees reported events where jobs were filled based on connections as opposed to a standard recruiting process.
- Due to restrictions in the collective agreement, permanent employees are given priority over temps equally or better qualified for roles. This limits the opportunities for temps to get into permanent roles and adds to the perception of unfairness.
- Employees feel the interview process is inconsistent and suggest a revamp of the process. Although testing for jobs is supported by the union, employees feel the tests may not appropriately reflect the responsibilities expected for associated positions.

Onboarding

- There is an opportunity to reimagine the existing process. There were accounts of events where it took a while for new hires to obtain employee numbers, access to the City's intranet, email, etc.
- There is an opportunity to improve the level of support provided to new hires when settling in including orientation on internal systems and processes. Employees reported additional workload due to the absence of supporting documents (e.g., manuals) for new employees to read.
- In multiple departments, there is lack of relevant formal training for new hires, resulting in current team members spending a lot of time doing knowledge transfers.

HR partnership and effectiveness

- Employees and managers raised a concern around long response time from the HR team. This might be related to a shortage of HR resources and increased service demand within the department. There is an opportunity for the corporation to conduct a review to understand current workloads and response times.
- There is also an opportunity for HR to support and drive employee relations when it comes to managing relationships between union and non-union employees and to be a business partner for departments across the organization.

What does this mean for the City?

Attract the right talent and build trust through the recruitment process: The employee experience begins with the recruitment process. When employees feel that the process is fair, transparent and efficient, it enhances their overall experience from the beginning. For internal candidates, it builds trust in the organization and improves retention.

Rethink the onboarding process: A well designed onboarding process that provides necessary information, training and support will ensure that new employees feel welcomed, understand their roles and have the resources needed to succeed. It will set the stage for the employee's journey with the City. When designed with input from managers and teams, it can also alleviate the burden on existing employees to onboard new joiners.

Improve employee relations and communication: HR plays a significant role in creating safe spaces for communication, addressing concerns or grievances and fostering a supportive work environment. Effective employee relations, HR collaboration and timely communication will increase loyalty and contribute to a positive experience for employees.

Technology Enablement (Enabling Factor 2) Findings

With concerns raised around constrained employee capacity, there is an opportunity for the City to harness the benefits of existing or new technology to streamline workflows and improve process efficiencies. Through interviews, focus groups and surveys, employees have expressed the need for the right tools and technology to do their jobs. They want the City to modernize (i.e. to update and optimize technology platforms to streamline existing processes to improve their on-the-job experience).

There was progress made by moving to paperless during the COVID-19 pandemic; however, there are more opportunities to embed the use of technology within the City.

Employees voiced the need to accelerate the modernization of processes that improve efficiencies in their work. It was mentioned that support areas are often stuck in administrative and repetitive tasks instead of spending time on their core work. Across the organization, there is heavy reliance on manual and paper-based processes, which results in less time spent on more meaningful and value-add work.

Employees want the opportunity to upskill and have access to more advanced technology to improve the quality of their work and provide better service to the public.

Presently, the process of requesting technology updates, software and hardware needed for work and fulfillment can take weeks or months to complete. Employees seek easier access to up-to-date technology and tools relevant for their roles.

What does this mean for the City?

Enhance productivity: Adopting an organization-wide technology enablement strategy and vision prioritizes system upgrades and optimizes processes, helping alleviate workload and improve productivity through automation.

Increase knowledge-sharing, communication and collaboration: Technology enables employees to collaborate more effectively, regardless of physical location, reducing silos within the organization, fostering a sense of teamwork and improving overall employee experience.

Improve flexibility and work-life balance: With the right technology in place, employees will have greater flexibility in terms of where and when they work. This can result in better work-life balance and increased job satisfaction.

Make data-driven decisions: By leveraging data on DEI, employee engagement, performance and satisfaction, the City can identify areas of improvement and implement targeted interventions to enhance the employee experience.

4. Environmental Scan Summary

Summary of Environmental Scan

An environmental scan was conducted to provide additional context on talent retention and employee experience best practices in the public sector. The environmental scan looked into the practices of the City of Toronto and the City of Kitchener, both cities in Ontario, to validate the City of Windsor's present practices as well as identify new opportunities related to retaining talent and providing great employee experience at the City. Some of the practices listed might already exist at the City of Windsor. However, those listed in the best practices for the City to take away are to be viewed as ideas for the City to consider going forward.

City of Windsor	City Profile: Kitchener		City Profile: Toronto	
<p>With a population of 229,660 residents (32.4% of whom identify as a visible minority and 2.1% of whom identify as Indigenous), the City of Windsor ranks in the top 25 of Canada's largest municipalities.</p> <p>Corporation size: 2300+ employees (2022) for Full-Time Equivalent</p>	Population	256, 885	Population	3,025,647
	Demographics	21.8% visible minority, 1.9% Indigenous	Demographics	55.7% visible minority, <1% Indigenous (2016)
	Corporation size	1000+ employees	Corporation size	41000+ employees
	Relevance to the City of Windsor	Similar in size and location to the City of Windsor, the City of Kitchener is a comparable organization to provide insights into how a corporation of the City of Windsor's size will execute a revamped talent and employee experience strategy.	Relevance to the City of Windsor	Although a much larger city, Toronto is a hub for diversity and inclusion, which means there are many DEI practices to draw upon. In addition, the City of Toronto has been building and reworking its talent initiatives for the past few years.

Data sources: City of Windsor 2023 Approved Operating Budget (2022); Statistics Canada (2016, 2021); Toronto at a Glance (2022); City of Toronto Workforce Statistics (2023)

The City of Kitchener



Best Practices from the City of Kitchener

Current Practices

Training and Career Development

- Bi-annual employee-manager sessions to discuss performance and development opportunities
- Different methods of training on a broad range of topics e.g., personal/professional development, corporate health and safety, information technology and more
- Clear succession and career path planning

Culture

- Wellness programs covering topics such as nutrition, fitness, mental health awareness and more
- Sponsorship of organizational culture initiatives focused on talent recruitment and retention and workplace wellness and wellbeing
- Dedicated recognition programs to celebrate both individual and team contributions
- Seasonal team building initiatives

DEI

- Implemented corporate equity and anti-racism training
- Established a full-time team to lead equity, anti-racism and indigenous initiatives
- Dedicated equity, inclusion and anti-racism policy that outlines expectations from leadership and employees
- Developed an equity and anti-racism communications guide
- Conducted an equity audit of HR policies and practices in the area of recruitment and promotion

Takeaways for the City

Expand targeted DEI initiatives

Appoint a team to develop and implement DEI initiatives. This will ensure that DEI initiatives are prioritized and monitored within the City.

Establish clear succession management and career pathing

Create clear succession and career pathing opportunities to enable internal mobility within the City. Foster mentorship between employees and leaders in an equitable way to enhance visibility of career pathing and prepare employees to enter into leadership roles.

Create a culture that empowers employees to perform at their best

Initiatives such as mental health and wellbeing programs as well as in-the-moment recognition are needed to demonstrate a strong appreciation culture across all levels. To shift the current culture, the City should consider implementing initiatives that are supported by leadership and driven by employees.

The City of Toronto



Best Practices from the City of Toronto

Current Practices	Takeaways for the City
<p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training opportunities in priority areas such as customer service, change management, effective supervision and process improvement • Implemented an enterprise Learning Management System (LMS) to increase access to learning for all employees • Established an annual needs assessment to identify emerging corporate-wide learning needs 	<p>Equip employees with the tools they need Use new technologies to optimize processes (including but not limited to the creation of developmental opportunity positions) across the organization.</p> <p>Increase access to leadership training Providing effective leadership training (e.g. inclusive leadership training) to all employees will enable employees to transition into management positions.</p> <p>Embed DEI throughout the employee life cycle Embed inclusive practices into the employee life cycle from talent acquisition and onboarding to succession management. Broaden the City's outreach to diverse communities to tap into diverse talent pools. Develop a DEI capability framework that will define the skills and behaviours needed to create an inclusive culture.</p>
<p>Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions of employees across the organization are recognized through recognition programs • Cross-collaboration across all levels and divisions is encouraged to achieve common goals and provide support to each other in the process 	
<p>DEI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Equity Division that implements and monitors DEI policies and partners with clients • Collaborate with city divisions to support areas that have below average scores in DEI by developing action plans to create a more inclusive work environment 	
<p>Leadership Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented a leadership development program to support employees in transitioning to management positions • Created specific Learning and Development (L&D) strategies for union and non-union employees and managers and above • Established a corporate talent assessment tool that integrates performance and career aspirations 	
<p>Talent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted recruitment and HR policies to reach diverse candidates (e.g. Aboriginal Employment Strategy, Accommodation Policies for Disabilities and more) • Simplified process that allows divisions to create developmental opportunities that are time bound to meet the talent needs and that are reflective of diversity goals 	

5. Appendix

Appendix A: Document Review

The following documents were reviewed to better understand employee experience within the City.

Folder	Documents
Talent Strategy	City of Windsor Corporate Training and Development Guide – January to June, 2023
	Learning and Development Opportunities Program
	Learning and Development Opportunities Policy (Procedure)
	Learning and Organizational Development Policy
	Succession Planning Program Reserve Fund Procedure
	Succession Planning Reserve Fund FAQ
	Talent Management Program (HR Information Sheet)
	Talent Management Program: Frequently Asked Questions
	Talent Management Program Procedure
Employee Engagement Survey / Pulse Check Data	Working Environment Policy
	2021 Annual Wellness Feedback Survey
	2022 Wellness Annual Feedback Survey
	2022 Gord Smith Health Workplace Award Application – Platinum Level (2022 Wellness Evaluation Evidence)
2022 Wellness/EFAP Initiatives Summary	

Appendix A: Document Review (cont.)

The following documents were reviewed to better understand employee experience within the City.

Folder	Documents
Employee Engagement Survey / Pulse Check Data	2020 Annual Wellness Feedback Survey (Summary of Suggestions)
	City of Windsor Employee Mental Health Survey – May 2021
	Mental Health Month Survey Results
Performance Management	Performance Appraisal and Development Plan Procedure – May 2005
	Performance Appraisal – Casual
	Performance Appraisal and Development Plan – Non-Supervisory Performance Appraisal and Development Plan – Supervisory and Management
DEI Data	The City of Windsor Diversity and Inclusion Initiative
	City of Windsor Workforce Census (Consultant Report)
	Results of the Corporation of the City of Windsor’s 2018 Workforce Census
	Workforce Census Information Workforce Census Report (Presentation for City Council)
HR Reports and Analytics	Windsor MBNC – 2019
	Windsor MBNC – 2020
	Windsor MBNC – 2021
	Windsor MBNC – 2022

Appendix A: Document Review (cont.)

The following documents were reviewed to better understand employee experience within the City.

Folder	Documents
Employee Wellness Program	City of Windsor Wellness Program - 2022 Work Plan
	City of Windsor Wellness Program - 2023 Wellness Work Plan
	Disconnecting from Work (Wellness Strategies)
	Disconnecting from Work HR Information Sheet
	Disconnecting from Work Procedure
	Healthy Eating at Work Guideline
	Healthy Workplace Policy
	Municipal MBNC Comparative Data 2018-2021 re Turnover
	Windsor Wellness Information Sheet
	The Corporation of the City of Windsor Wellness Program Terms of Reference
	Workplace Mental Health Survey 2021 Workplace Report: The Corporation of the City of Windsor
Union Survey	Workplace Physical Activity Guideline
	Local 82 Survey Results - March 2023
Exit Interview Data	Local 82 Survey Comments - March 2023
	Exit Interviews Procedure
	Exit Interview Questionnaire
	Eight (8) Completed Exit Interview Questionnaires

Appendix B: Survey Questions

Listed below are the retention and employee experience survey questions. The survey included a list of rating-scale and open-ended questions.

The Corporation of the City of Windsor - Retention and Employee Experience survey

CoW Retention and Employee Experience Survey Questions

Question 1:
Select your area of employment

- Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
- Office of the Commissioner of Community Services
- Office of the Commissioner of Corporate Services, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer
- Office of the Commissioner of Economic Development & Innovation
- Office of the Commissioner of Human & Health Services
- Office of the Commissioner of Infrastructure Services
- Office of the Commissioner of Legal & Legislative Services
- Prefer not to answer

Question 2:
How long have you been with the City?

- Less than a year
- Between 1-5 years
- Between 5-10 years
- Between 10-20 years
- More than 20 years

Question 3:
Select your role:

- Union
- Non-union
- Senior Management

Question 4:
As an employee of the City, please select the top three elements matter the most to you:

- The satisfaction I get from the work I do
- My relationship with my co-workers
- My relationship with my manager
- The flexibility my job gives me for when I work
- The benefits my organization provides
- The location from which I work
- The compensation I am getting
- The future opportunities at my organization
- The organizational culture

Question 5:
On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 as strongly disagree, 5 as strongly agree), how would you rate the following:

1

The Corporation of the City of Windsor - Retention and Employee Experience survey

- I feel supported by my manager.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
- My workload is manageable.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
- In my team, we have sufficient resources to get our work done.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
- I can see myself developing my career at the City.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
- I feel recognized for my hard work and successes at work.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
- I enjoy the work I do.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
- I am comfortable sharing my opinion with my teammates and leaders.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
- There is adequate company support for my skill development.
 - Strongly disagree

2

The Corporation of the City of Windsor - Retention and Employee Experience survey

- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree
- My organization cares about my well-being.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
- My base salary is competitive compared to similar positions in other companies.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
- I am satisfied with the benefits that are offered here.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
- I am able to find a balance between work and my personal life that works for me.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

Question 6:
Please select the top 3 ways you would like to be recognized:

- Spot bonus
- Base pay increase
- Performance bonus
- Progression / advancement
- Verbal recognition
- Challenging work
- New development opportunities (e.g., learning new skills)
- Opportunity to coach / mentor
- Other (if other, please specify)

Question 7:
On a scale of 0-10, with 0 being "not at all likely" and 10 being "extremely likely," ... How likely are you to recommend this organization to your friends/colleagues?

3

The Corporation of the City of Windsor - Retention and Employee Experience survey

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

Question 8:
In your opinion, what are some elements that you think the City can improve when it comes to providing great employee experience and retaining people?

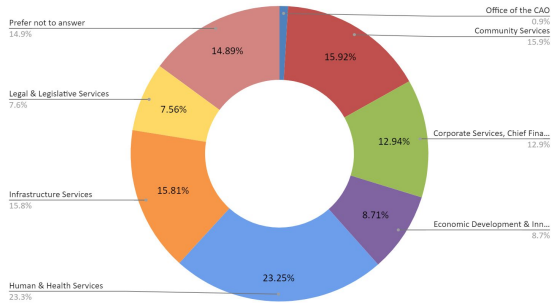
4

Appendix C: Survey Results

The survey was completed by 890 participants across eight different departments. Almost half of the participants have worked for the organization for 10+ years. The majority of the participants work in a unionized environment.

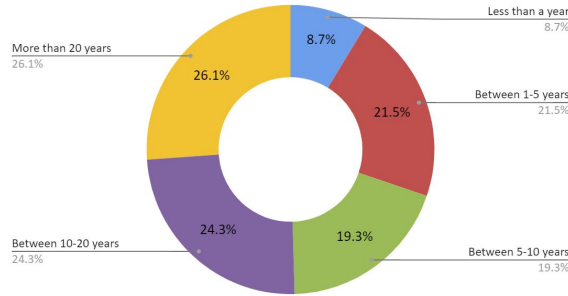
Area of employment

Select your area of employment:



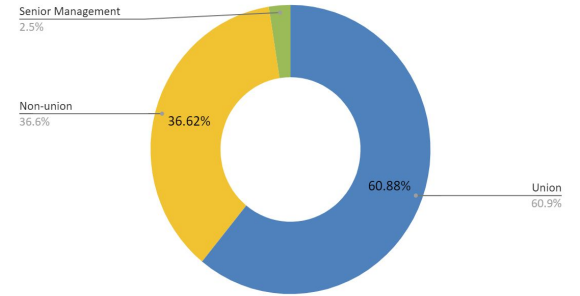
Tenure

How long have you been with the City?



Role

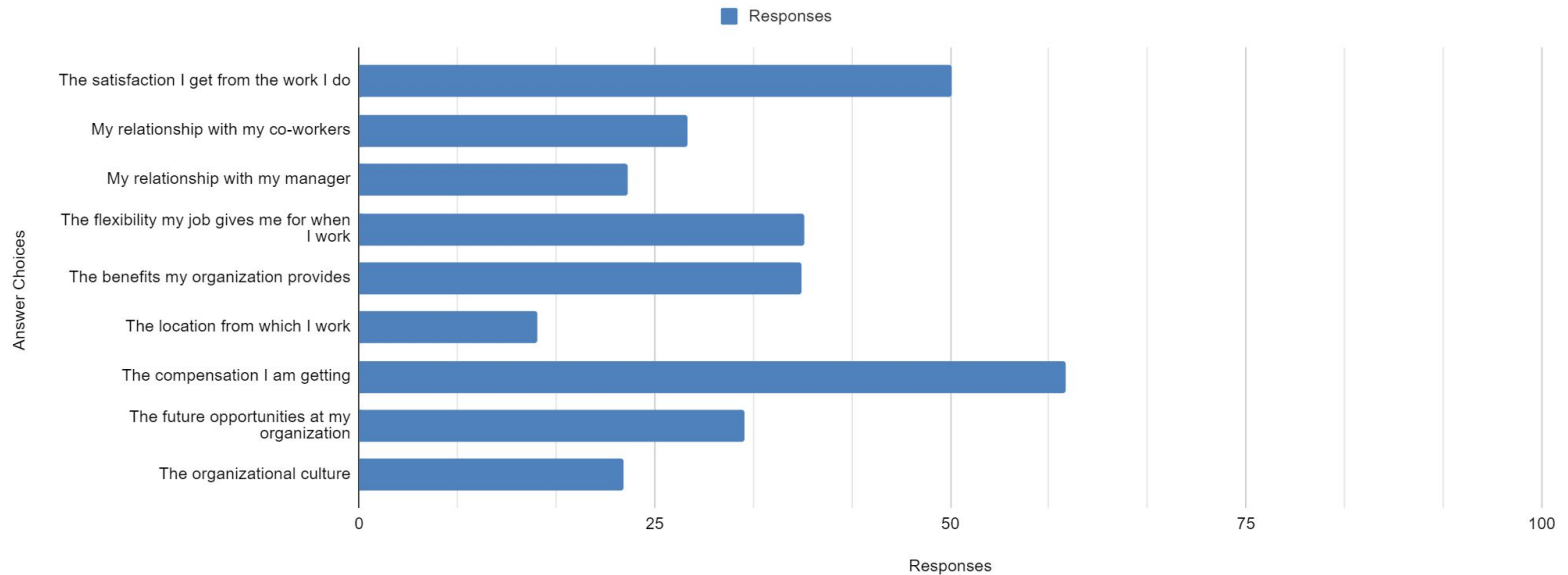
Select your role:



Appendix C: Survey Results (cont.)

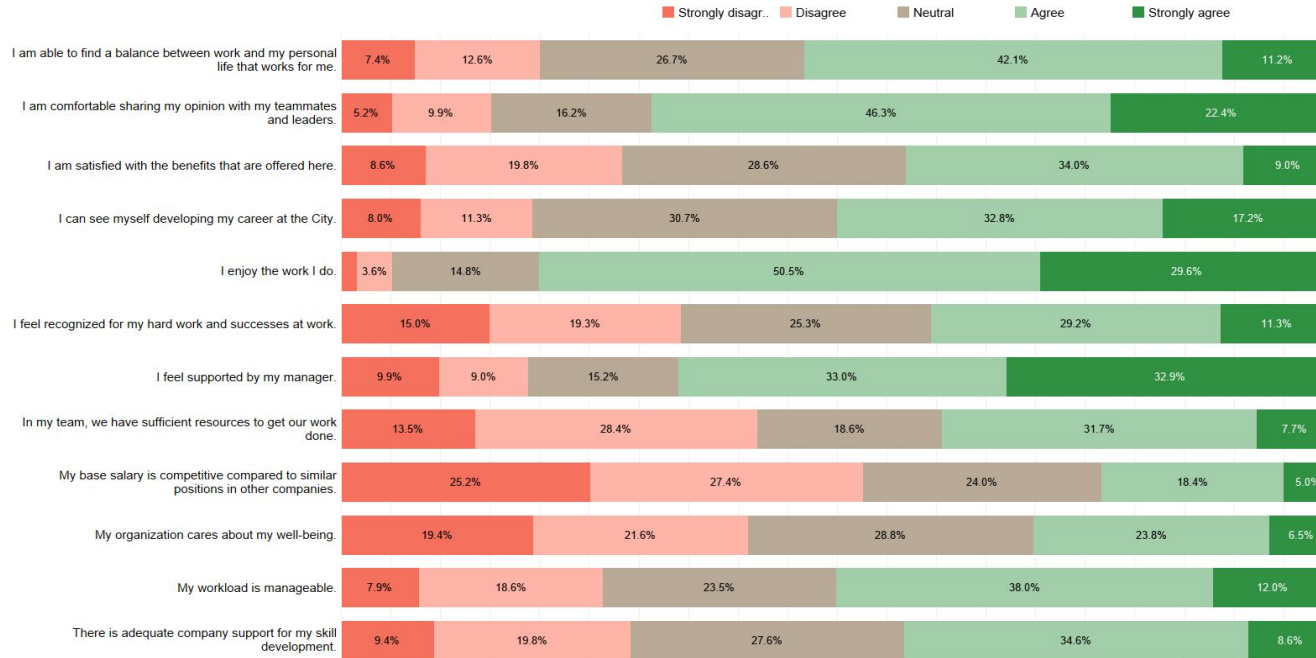
The survey indicates elements that matter the most to current employees. The findings suggest that compensation, job satisfaction, workplace flexibility and benefits are key drivers of retention.

As an employee of the City, please select the top three elements that matter the most to you:



Appendix C: Survey Results (cont.)

The survey also includes different perspectives on retention and employee experience. There is greater opportunity to improve current approaches in rewards and recognition, employee wellness and strategic workforce planning for future staffing needs.



Appendix D: Environmental Scan

The following resources were reviewed as part of the environmental scan exercise to support the development of best practices of retention and employee experience.

Data Sources

People and Equity Division

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/city-administration/staff-directory-divisions-and-customer-service/people-equity/>

Talent Blueprint (2014–2018)

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/8ed1-Final-Talent-Blueprint-AODA-compliant.compressed.pdf>

Workforce Equity and Inclusion Plan

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accessibility-human-rights/equity-diversity-inclusion/workforce-equity-inclusion-plan/>

Human Resources Management and Ethical Framework for Members' Staff

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/council/policies-and-guidelines/human-resources-management-and-ethical-framework-for-members-staff/>

Fostering Diversity in the Toronto Public Service

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2019/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-137175.pdf>

Employee Talent, Retention and Attraction

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2022/ph/bgrd/backgroundfile-227742.pdf>

Hiring Policies and Statements

https://jobs.toronto.ca/jobsatcity/content/Hiring-Policies-and-Statements/?locale=en_US

Long-Term Vision, Plans and Strategies

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/long-term-vision-plans-and-strategies/>

Appendix D: Environmental Scan (cont.)

The following resources were reviewed as part of the environmental scan exercise to support the development of best practices of retention and employee experience.

Data Sources

Accommodation

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/city-administration/corporate-policies/people-equity-policies/accommodation/>

Aboriginal Employment Strategy

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/long-term-vision-plans-and-strategies/aboriginal-employment-strategy/>

People Plan

<https://www.kitchener.ca/en/jobs-and-volunteering/people-plan.aspx#Mental-health-and-resilience-and-wellness-programs>

Corporate Strategy on Equity and Anti-Racism

<https://www.kitchener.ca/en/strategic-plans-and-projects/corporate-strategy-on-equity-and-anti-racism.aspx#2023-2026-Strategic-Plan>

Canada's fastest growing and decreasing municipalities from 2016 to 2021

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/as-sa/98-200-x/2021001/98-200-x2021001-eng.cfm>

Culture and People – Top Reasons to Work for Us

<https://www.kitchener.ca/en/jobs-and-volunteering/top-reasons-to-work-for-us.aspx>

Population Demographics

https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/99b4-TOHealthCheck_2019Chapter1.pdf

Talent Blueprint Progress Update

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-99114.pdf>

Appendix E: Acronyms and Definitions

Below is the list of acronyms used in this document:

CAO	Chief Administrative Office
CLT	Corporate Leadership Team
DEI	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
EFAP	Employee and Family Assistance Program
HR	Human Resources
JJE	Joint Job Evaluation
L&D	Learning and Development
LMS	Learning Management System
NUJE	Non-Union Job Evaluation
SMT	Senior Management Team

Below is the list of defined terms used in this document:

Employee Value Proposition	The unique benefits and values employees can expect to receive by working for a particular organization
Psychological Safety	An environment or setting where individuals feel comfortable, accepted, and empowered to express themselves, take risks, and contribute without fear of negative consequences
Microaggression	A subtle, often unintentional, comment, action, or behavior that communicates derogatory or negative attitudes toward individuals based on their marginalized or underrepresented identity characteristics
North Star	Represents the overarching, aspirational goal or guiding principle that aligns and directs the organization's strategy and decisions towards its ultimate vision and purpose

Our Services were performed and this Report was developed in accordance with our engagement letter dated March 6, 2023 and are subject to the terms and conditions included therein. Our role is advisory only. The Corporation of City of Windsor is responsible for all management functions and decisions relating to this engagement, including establishing and maintaining internal controls, evaluating and accepting the adequacy of the scope of the Services in addressing The Corporation of City of Windsor needs and making decisions regarding whether to proceed with recommendations. The Corporation of City of Windsor is also responsible for the results achieved from using the Services or deliverables.

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