# Succession Planning Policy

## POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Hamilton (“the City”) Senior Management Team will on an annual basis perform succession planning to ensure that high potential employees are appropriately identified and developed for key positions.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the desired results and overarching framework for the City's succession planning program are clearly defined. The end goal of succession planning is to:

1. Identify high-potential employees capable of rapid advancement to key positions of higher responsibility than those they presently occupy.
2. Ensure the systematic and long-term development of high potentials to replace incumbents in key positions as the need arises due to retirement, attrition, and other unexpected losses.
3. Provide a continuous flow of talented high potential employees ready to move into key positions that are available to enable achievement of the City’s strategic business objectives.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all full time permanent employees. Succession planning will be performed for key positions only, while talent development applies to all job levels.

## DEFINITIONS

### Succession Planning

A systematic process for defining key positions and identifying high potential employees who may be suitable successors for key positions. Succession Planning involves creating and executing a career development plan for high potentials so they are ready to move into key positions when there is an opening. Succession planning is necessary to ensure business continuity, operational readiness, and to promote individual career development. It is a critical part of retaining intellectual capital for the future and developing leadership capacity.

### Key Position

Positions that have significant impact on the strategic and operational decisions that affect the City’s success. Key positions are involved in mission critical projects which have significant impact or expose the City to significant risk. Key positions include senior positions such as the City Manager, General Manager, City Clerk, Fire Chief, City Solicitor, Executive Director of Human Resources, and also include some key Director positions. Key...
Talent Development

Formal and informal learning and development opportunities available to all employees to develop in their existing role, and grow into their next position. Continuous learning and development is important to stay current with changing trends, technical knowledge, technology and constant changes in the day-to-day operations.

High Potential

Identified potential successors for key positions at the City. High potentials are identified based on having the necessary competency levels, performance ratings, learning ability, leadership potential, and have demonstrated corporate values. These employees are identified by senior management as capable of advancing to more senior roles and are employees who have not yet reached a career plateau. Confidence exists that these individuals can move into a more senior leadership role, supported by performance assessments, development plans and organizational commitment.

Workforce Planning

Workforce Planning ensures that the City has a workforce capable of delivering on its strategic business objectives today as well as in the future. It is particularly critical for key positions, but applies to positions at all levels in the organization.

Learning & Development Plan

Completed by an employee together with his or her manager or supervisor. It outlines what competencies require improvement or further development, what action needs to be taken, and the target completion date. A learning and development plan may also include what future roles the employee would like to move towards at the City. The overall employee’s career goals will guide parts of the learning and development plan. See the Learning & Development Framework for more information.

PRINCIPLES

Effective Succession Planning:

- recognizes the critical importance of Senior Management Team support and leading of succession planning to prepare the City for the future. Leadership rewards managers for promoting rather than keeping their best employees for themselves.
- requires cross-divisional and cross-departmental sharing of employees and information.
- recognizes that career paths do not always move up a
specialized ladder, but across the organization
- ensures that employee development and monetary investments are aligned with strategic objectives.
- commits to integration of succession planning with overall workforce planning, performance accountability and development, learning & development and the business planning process.

**PROCESS**

The Succession Planning process:
- identifies key people and key positions
- identifies competencies for the key positions
- identifies and assesses competencies of potential candidates
- integrates with performance management and the leadership development framework
- develops performance goals and provides development opportunities i.e. creates a learning and development plan/strategy
- provides coaching and frequently assesses and provides feedback against objectives
- evaluates effectiveness and reaffirms readiness of identified people

The key to success is to have a management team which is actively engaged in the succession planning process.

**Budget Considerations**

Any related costs for training, development, certifications will be identified and planned for during the budget process. This may also include identification of funding for special projects allowing for growth opportunities as aligned with the strategic business objectives. Not all development activities will require additional budget.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Employee**
- Express interest in pursuing opportunities to Manager
- Actively participate in creating and progressing career development plan
- Work with Manager to identify development opportunities
- Be open to and act on performance feedback provided
- Work to achieve performance accountability and development goals
- Model behaviours which demonstrate organizational commitment
Manager

- Regularly coach, provide growth opportunities, and career development of direct reports
- Conduct fair and objective performance reviews of direct reports as per the Performance Management Policy
- Actively participate and provide input into the talent review meetings on such details as competency levels, leadership capacity, on employees who have career aspirations to move into key positions
- Have open and courageous conversations with employees
- Participate in discussions with individuals on career aspirations and possible career paths.

Senior Management Team

- Conduct formalized annual talent review meetings to identify high potential employees as potential successors for key positions
- Identify and maximize growth opportunities aligned with the business objectives
- Provide timely and honest feedback to high potentials on their performance and development progress
- Create a culture which supports the investment and development of employees

Human Resources

- Manage and coordinate the Succession Planning Program
- Facilitate the Senior Management Team’s talent review meetings
- Maintain records of identified high potentials development plans, performance assessment and progression toward higher competency
- Facilitate movement of high potentials to development opportunities which provide growth opportunities
- Assist in the attraction and retention of candidates for possible promotions and/or assignments
- Consult in the creation of a career development plan including defining the appropriate development and training to reach a certain competency level
- Prioritize the departments/divisions in need of succession planning most urgently, and begin with those areas.

Department Management Team

- Identify what positions within their department are key positions based on the criteria provided
- Answer employees’ questions about the succession planning
process so employees understand that it is a fair process, implemented in an objective way, where multiple stakeholders have input into the decision process and identification of high potential employees

- Consult with Human Resources for any clarification on this Policy, the succession planning process, or any related materials
- Ensure employees understand that if they are identified as high potentials, this does not guarantee that they will be selected for a key position once there is an opening.

### RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Recruitment & Selection Policy
- Learning & Development Framework
- Tuition & Professional Fees Reimbursement Policy
- Performance Management Policy
- Salary Administration Policy
- Acting Transfers & Secondment Policy
- Manager’s Guidebook on Succession Planning
- Manager’s Guidebook on Workforce Planning

### HISTORY

This policy was developed by Human Resources 2011-10-14

This policy was reviewed and approved in principle by Senior Management Team 2012-01-12

The policy was updated by Human Resources 2014-01-21.

Final policy was approved by Senior Management Team 2014-04-10