



# Region of Peel **CultureStrategy**







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# Introduction

## The Peel Story

The Region of Peel is recognized across Canada and around the world as a leader in public service.

To develop the Region's 20-year Strategic Plan, we asked our community to imagine Peel in 2035. We received input online and in person from thousands of individuals and several community organizations. This input was used by Regional Council to develop the plan.

Our Strategic Plan sets out a roadmap that includes a bold vision for our community, a unifying mission for our organization and the outcomes we're collectively striving to achieve.

We define Community for Life as a place where everyone enjoys a sense of belonging and has access to the services and opportunities they need to thrive throughout each stage of their life.

### Living

People's lives are improved  
in their time of need.

### Thriving

Communities are integrated,  
safe, and complete.

### Leading

Government is future-oriented  
and accountable.



# About this Strategy

This document establishes the Region of Peel's first Organizational Culture strategy. Organizational Culture has gained awareness and importance as a key enabler to achieving business outcomes. Broadly speaking, Culture is the personality of an organization. It defines "who we are" and can either hurt or help collaboration, innovation, inclusion and achievement of goals (Aborlo & Edwinah, 2014).



## Culture Journey

The launch of the Region's 20-year strategic plan in 2015 provided an opportunity to examine not just what we do, but how we do it. To achieve **Community for Life** for our residents, we must also achieve it internally as an organization.

In 2017, we introduced Regional Values to the organization and we defined an aspirational culture. These Regional Values are intended to guide the behaviour changes needed to reach our aspirational culture – a culture that is open, dynamic, innovative, collaborative and inclusive.

In 2017 the Office of Culture and Inclusion was established to lead the organization on its culture journey.

As with other organizational priorities, culture must be led, monitored and measured to ensure it reflects the organization and its vision. While appointing a team to lead this work is important, it cannot be lost that the real work of culture change happens through others.



Culture change requires participation and support from everyone. This strategy impacts programs, policies, processes and services across the organization. It connects with planning efforts and strategies across all departments. It is only through the commitment, support and leadership of others that culture change can be realized.

## Background

The Region is engaged in a wide range of activities that contribute to shifting culture. It is important we develop a framework for culture change so we can begin to track, measure and report on the experience of our workforce and of residents who access our programs and services.

The Region has a positive reputation for delivering customer service. However, we recognize there is room to improve how we do the work and the experience that people have at work.

Through this Culture Strategy, the Region stands to build an inclusive work environment where employees experience a sense of belonging and feel safe to say what they think. Engaging in this strategy will also increase trust, team effectiveness, collaboration, empowerment and innovation.

## The Office of Culture and Inclusion

The Office of Culture & Inclusion (“the Office”) plays a key role preparing, equipping and supporting individual and organizational capabilities to drive culture change.

With the help of others across the organization, the Office identifies and mitigates points of tension where “current culture” limits or prevents progress toward culture change.

## Culture is...





## The Office fulfils the following roles:

**Influencer:** provides advice and information to inform decision making and affect the ability of others to incorporate culture as a forethought in the planning, execution and sustainment of work

**Leader:** drives initiatives and matters related to Culture, Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion

**Consultant:** provides expert advice and guidance to inform decision making and to build awareness, knowledge and ability of organizational culture, accessibility, diversity and inclusion

**Coach:** provides one-to-one coaching and advice to build awareness, knowledge and ability of culture, accessibility, diversity and inclusion.

## Overview of Strategy

This Culture Strategy draws insights from best practice literature, employee feedback and current and future opportunities identified within our own organization.

This Strategy creates a foundation to formally shift the Region's culture from one that is rule-driven, hierarchical and risk-averse to one that is open, dynamic, innovative, collaborative and inclusive. This is achieved through applying the change management principles of the *Prosci ADKAR model* (Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, Reinforcement) to guide and influence behavioural change efforts.

The partnership and support of others is critical to this work. It is through the work of internal partners including but not limited to: Human Resources, Organizational Development, Marketing and Communications, Procurement and Digital and Information Services, that we address operational levers such as policies, practices and platforms which in turn improve program and service delivery, and the experience that employees have at work. To this end, the impact of the Region's Culture Strategy is achieved by working with and through others.

## Mandate

The mandate of the Region of Peel's Culture strategy is *Working with you to create a cohesive organizational culture to achieve the outcomes of our strategic plan.*

At the Region of Peel, culture refers to our shared values that define our organization and are reflected in our behaviours.





## Benefits

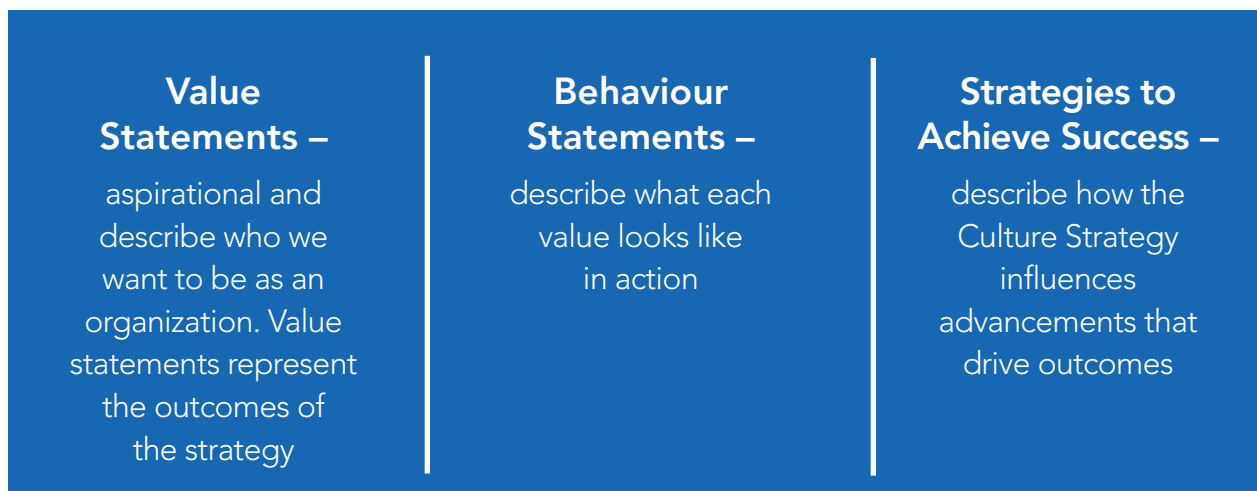
Culture influences and reinforces the way things get done at work. Benefits to a positive organizational culture include: employee engagement, talent attraction and retention, physical and psychological health and well-being, commitment and productivity, performance and effectiveness (Cameron & Quinn, 1999). Culture impacts how members of an organization interact and work with each other, clients and stakeholders.

Implementation of this Strategy creates an infrastructure that will assist us in achieving the Region's strategic outcomes. The Regional Values are the foundation that the organization's vision and mission rest on. By engaging in this Strategy, the Region can manage operational, reputational and financial risks with greater insight and effectiveness while fostering a sense of belonging, trust and safety.

## Strategy Framework

The Culture Strategy (2017-2021) is built upon the Regional Values and guides the behaviour changes needed across the organization to evolve how we work.

The Strategy is comprised of three components:



This Culture Strategy is unique in that its success relies heavily on people changing their behaviour. This strategy can guide the work, but the work itself is driven and achieved through others. All leaders, departments and staff need to support and live the Regional Values and own their role in driving culture change. Sub-cultures will continue to exist as the Region's business is diverse.





From Public Works to Health and Human Services, to Corporate Services, Digital & Information Services and Finance, it is expected that teams, departments and divisions will have their cultural nuances. What unites us (the organization) is our shared vision of Community for Life and our Regional Values that articulate behaviours which enable our ability to successfully achieve Community for Life.

Leading Government is future-oriented and accountable. Thriving Communities are integrated, safe, and complete. Living People's lives are improved in their time of need.

## Strategy Approach

The Culture Strategy guides how our Regional Values will drive the behaviour changes needed to evolve our workplace culture and address the things that impede our ability to be successful. It is through the commitment and work of others (people leaders and staff) that culture becomes a key influencer and enabler to achieving the Region's strategic outcomes.



Strategy execution and sustainment will be driven with in the organization through the following guiding principles:

- Developing a robust change approach to prepare, equip and support all Regional employees to adopt and live our Regional Values
- Collaborating with stakeholders to influence systems, policies, practices, processes and initiatives
- Facilitating and fostering engagement and dialogue related to culture, accessibility, diversity and inclusion
- Remaining connected to other Regional planning efforts and strategies
- Measuring the impact of the Culture Strategy and continue to learn and improve
- Affecting change through the work of others, embedding culture as a forethought



## Strategy Outcomes

The long-term outcome of the Culture Strategy is to create a workplace that is open, dynamic, collaborative, innovative and inclusive. A work environment where everyone experiences a sense of belonging and is unified around our vision, mission and values.

We achieve that by every employee, at every level, living our Regional Values. By establishing Culture as a forethought and embedding it into systems, processes, practices etc.

In this unique way, the Regional Values are the expected outcomes of the Culture Strategy. The outcomes and related behaviour statements, success indicators and strategies to achieve success are described on the following pages.





## Outcome #1:

We are **empowered** to make a difference

- Encourage and introduce new ideas
- Take initiative
- Enable the voice of others
- Feel confident and trusted to make decisions

### Success Indicators

- Increase the percentage of employees who feel their work environment empowers them to make a difference
- Increase the percentage of employees who feel they have the opportunity to grow and develop

### Strategies to Achieve Success

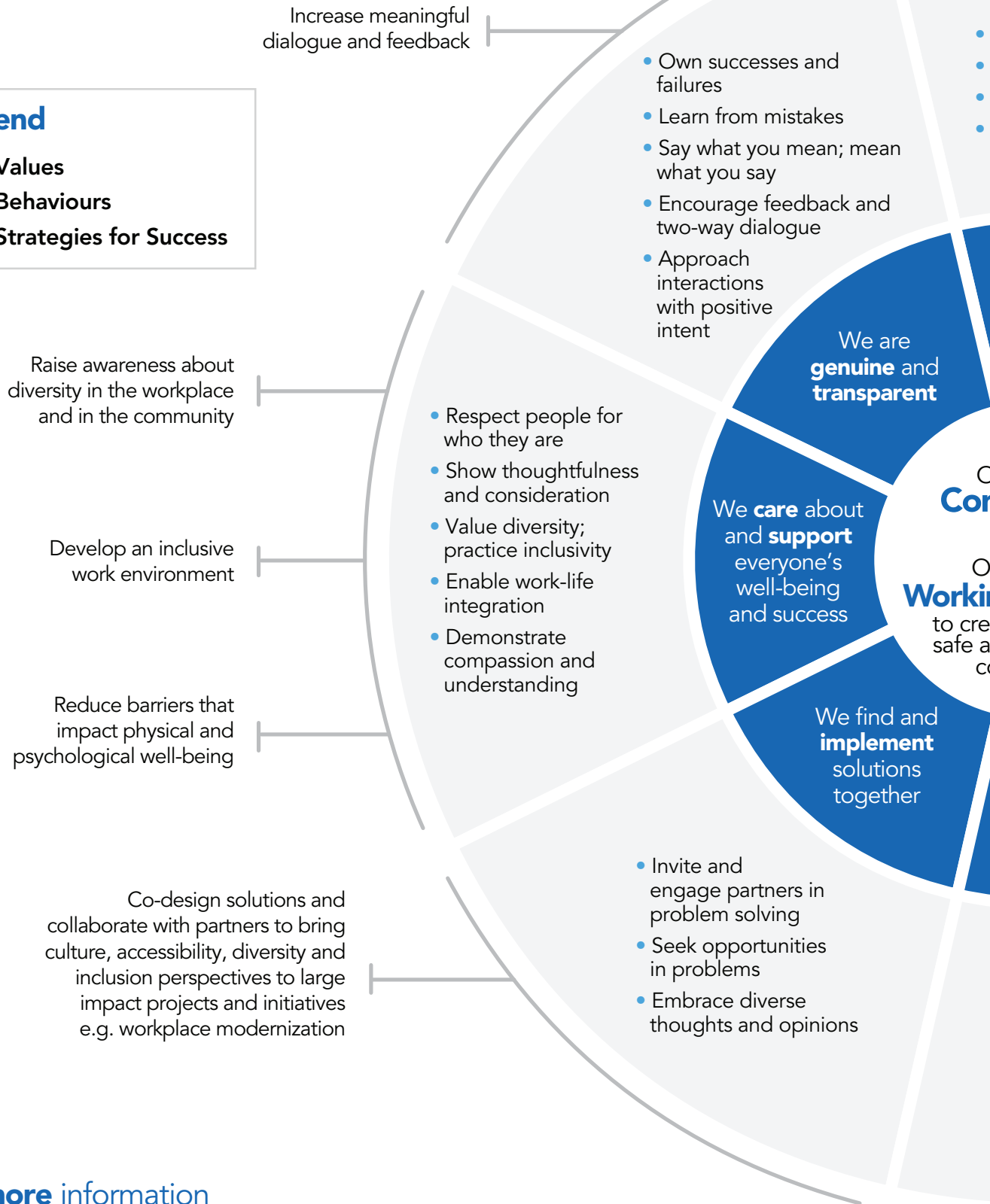
1. Inspire pride and belonging by embedding the Values into organization wide initiatives, systems and practices
2. Invest in learning and development so that employees at all levels feel they have opportunities to grow and develop



# CultureStrategy

**Legend**

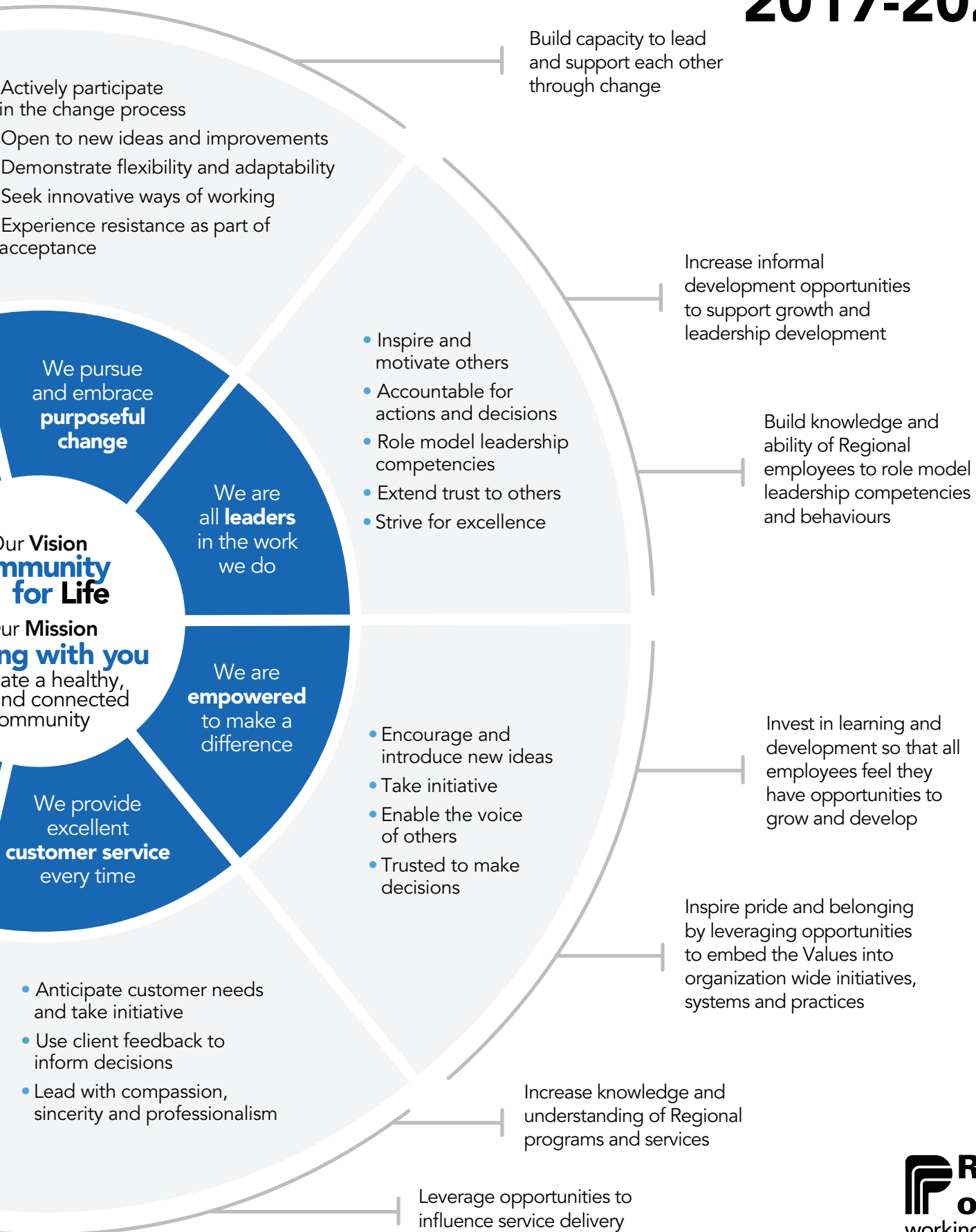
- Values
- Behaviours
- Strategies for Success



**For more information**

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# 2017-2021





## Outcome #2:

### We are all **leaders** in the work we do

- Inspire and motivate others
- Accountable and responsible for actions and decisions
- Role model leadership attributes and competencies
- Extend trust to others
- Strive for excellence in my work

### Success Indicators

- Increase the percentage of employees who feel their work environment is one where people take responsibility for their work
- Increase the percentage of employees who feel trusted to take initiative with their work

### Strategies to Achieve Success

1. Increase informal development opportunities to support individual growth and leadership development
2. Build knowledge and ability of Regional employees to role model leadership competencies and behaviours





### Outcome #3:

## We pursue and embrace **purposeful change**

- Actively participate in the change process
- Open to new ideas, thoughts and improvements
- Demonstrate flexibility and willingness to adapt
- Seek new and innovative ways of doing things
- View resistance as a path to acceptance

### Success Indicators

- Increase the percentage of employees who feel their work environment is flexible and willing to change and adapt
- Increase the percentage of employees who feel their work environment is open to new ideas, thoughts and ways of doing things

### Strategies to Achieve Success

1. Build capacity to lead and support each other through change







## Outcome #4:

### We are **genuine** and **transparent**

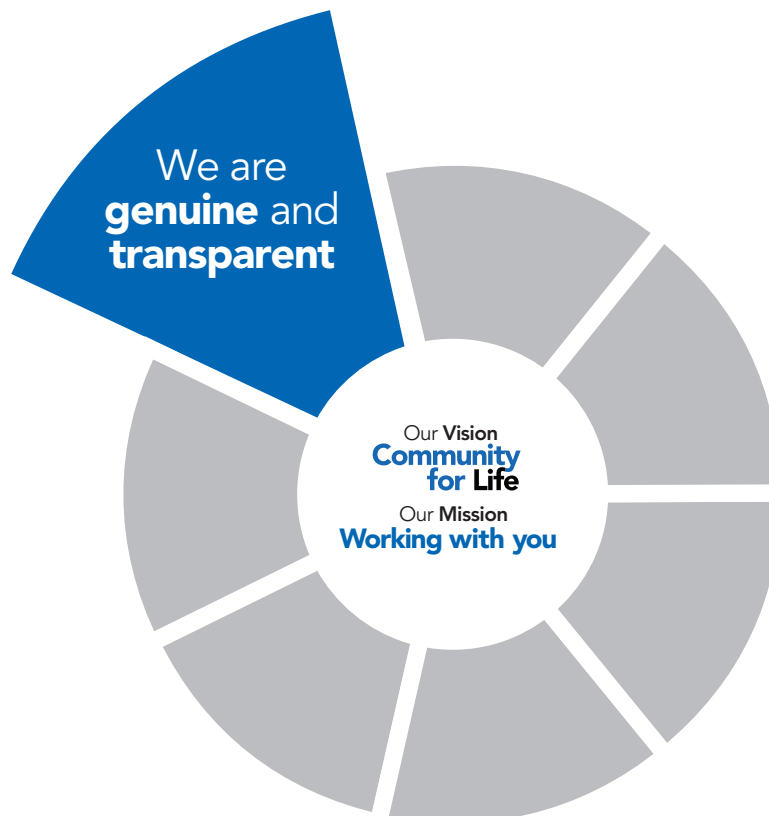
- Own successes and failures
- Learn from mistakes
- Say what you mean; mean what you say
- Engage in frequent feedback and encourage two-way dialogue
- Approach interactions with positive intent

### Success Indicators

- Increase the percentage of employees who feel their work environment encourages open, honest feedback and discussion
- Increase the percentage of employees who feel their work environment is safe to say what they think

### Strategies to Achieve Success

1. Increase meaningful dialogue and feedback





## Outcome #5:

We **care** about and **support** everyone's well-being and success

- Respect every person for who they are
- Exhibit thoughtfulness and consideration
- Value diversity and practice inclusivity
- Enable work-life integration
- Demonstrate compassion and understanding

### Success Indicators

- Increase the percentage of employees who feel their work environment values diversity and welcomes different thoughts and experiences
- Increase the percentage of employees who feel their work environment is respectful and inclusive

### Strategies to Achieve Success

1. Raise awareness about diversity in the workplace and in the community
2. Create and maintain an inclusive work environment
3. Reduce barriers that impact physical and psychological well-being





## Outcome #6:

### We find and **implement** solutions **together**

- Invite and engage our partners to solve problems
- Look for opportunities in problems
- Embrace diversity of thought and opinions

### Success Indicators

- Increase the percentage of employees who feel their work environment solicits and actions input from external partners and stakeholders
- Increase the percentage of employees who feel their work environment collaborates with internal partners and stakeholders

### Strategies to Achieve Success

1. Co-design solutions and collaborate with partners to bring culture, accessibility, diversity and inclusion perspectives to large impact projects and initiatives





## Outcome #7:

We provide excellent **customer service** every time

- Anticipate customer needs and take initiative
- Seek and use client feedback to inform decisions
- Demonstrate compassion, sincerity and professionalism

### Success Indicators

- Increase the percentage of employees who feel they provide service with compassion and empathy
- Increase the percentage of employees who feel they provide a consistently high standard of service to clients and citizens

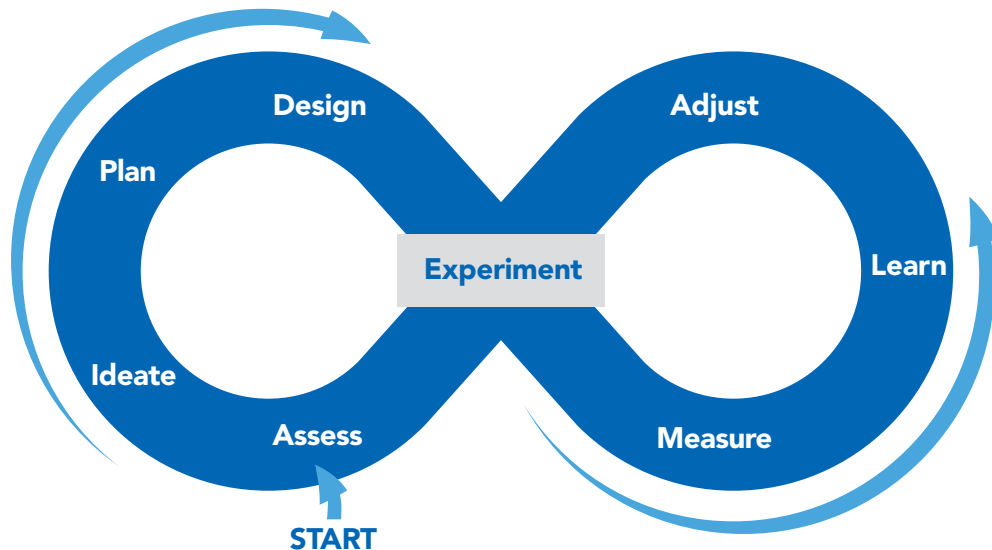
### Strategies to Achieve Success

1. Leverage opportunities to influence service delivery
2. Increase knowledge and understanding of Regional programs and services





# Approach to Culture Change



Change management is about PEOPLE and BEHAVIOUR. The ultimate success of achieving culture change is 100% dependent on people's behaviour. Change management efforts, as they pertain to the Culture Strategy, are focused on preparing, equipping and supporting employees to achieve our (the organization) aspirational culture: a workplace that is open, dynamic, collaborative, innovative and inclusive; where everyone experiences a sense of belonging and is unified around our vision, mission and values.

As key deliverables and activities are planned, Change Management activities will follow the Prosci® methodology and principles of ADKAR (Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, Reinforcement) to support change across the organization. A sustainability plan will ensure continuation and evolution of the Region's culture journey.



## Implementation Framework

The Culture Strategy is comprised of three implementation phases over 5 years which align with the ADKAR change management approach (Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, Reinforcement).

### Phasing



### Phase One: Awareness and Desire (Years 1 and 2 years)

Initiatives in phase 1 focus on increasing staff Awareness and Desire of the Regional Values and the organization's aspirational culture. These include but are not limited to:

- Developing and executing a Culture change management plan, engagement plan and communication plan
- Launching new Regional Values across the organization
- Launching, executing and reviewing a refreshed Employee Ambassador Program (a change management tactic)
- Leading an agenda that builds awareness about culture, accessibility, diversity and inclusion through communications and events (i.e. Speaker Series, Flag Raisings)
- Developing a Culture Index (a measure to track progress of the Regional Values) that is integrated into the biennial Employee Survey
- Developing and implementing tools and resources to prepare and support people leaders with advancing their team's culture



- Collaborating with Human Resources to integrate the Regional Values into the new Performance Management Program and organization wide Onboarding and Recognition Programs
- Working with internal partners to amend existing systems, policies, practices and processes to align with the Regional Values and aspirational culture

## **Phase Two: Education, Knowledge and Ability (Years 2 and 3 years)**

Initiatives in phase 2 facilitate increased education, knowledge and ability of staff related to culture, accessibility, diversity and inclusion. These include but are not limited to:

Building awareness, education and knowledge of different dimensions of diversity, accessibility, mental health, unconscious bias and psychological safety

- Reviewing 2018 culture index findings and developing plans to address the results
- Collaborating with internal partners to influence how culture is integrated into planning, implementation and sustainment of systems, practices, policies and strategic initiatives within all departments
- Overseeing the Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Committee to increase understanding of and influence workforce and community issues
- Overseeing the Accessibility Advisory Committee to increase understanding of accessibility and influence work from an accessibility perspective







## Phase Two-continued

- Developing work approaches with partners to identify where strategies are needed to reinforce accountability and continued progress towards our aspirational culture
- Providing coaching and support to people leaders to identify and address challenges and opportunities related to culture, accessibility, diversity and inclusion
- Developing and implementing a new Inclusion and Diversity Strategy
- Developing and implementing tools and resources to increase the knowledge and ability of people leaders to role model leadership competencies and to advance organizational culture
- Influencing procurement and risk planning processes to ensure culture, accessibility, diversity and inclusion perspectives are considered
- Leveraging partnership with Human Resources to influence formal and informal learning opportunities related to culture, accessibility, diversity and inclusion

- **Phase Three:  
Reinforcement and Sustainment (Years 3 to 5)**

Initiatives in phase 3 support the reinforcement and sustainment of an organizational culture that is open, dynamic, collaborative, innovative and inclusive.

These include but are not limited to:

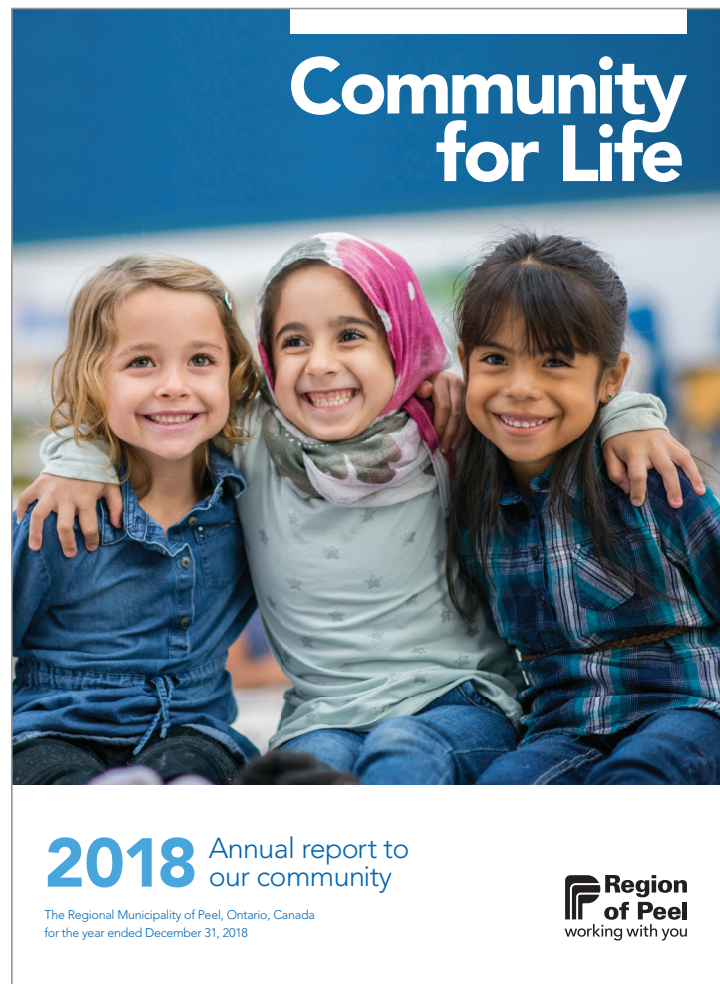
- Collaborating with partners to mitigate the risk of current culture derailing progress and achievement of our aspirational culture
- Introducing and promoting training opportunities related to culture, accessibility, diversity and inclusion
- Influencing the creation of new systems, policies, processes and practices that align with our Regional Values and support our aspirational culture
- Providing advice and coaching to leadership teams to advance organizational culture
- Partnering with stakeholders to reduce barriers that impact physical and psychological well-being
- Working with internal and external partners to understand needs and gaps to influence service delivery, recruitment and other processes
- Monitoring and evaluating progress of the Region's culture journey



# Measurement & Reporting

A Culture Index (CI) is in place to measure culture change progress over time. The Culture Index aligns to the Values and measures specific behaviours associated with each value. The Index is integrated into the Biennial Employee Survey which is completed by Regional employees. An operational measurement framework is also in place to measure the impact and effectiveness of activities, initiatives and tactics to advance culture across the Region. Regular and continuous monitoring of this framework allows for adjustments as needed.

Achievements and progress will be reported several times per year by way of reports to the Executive Leadership Team and Regional Council, as well as annually in the Region's Community for Life report.





# Conclusion

Changing organizational culture is not easy and takes time. It also takes:

- Leadership commitment
- Connected vision, mission and values
- Change management
- Strong partnerships
- Influence through others
- Information, tools and resources that equip and support
- Flexibility and adaptability

It is through the implementation of this Culture Strategy that by 2021, the organization will have made significant shifts in the ways we approach our work and the interactions we have with others. Being intentional about our choices, actions and behaviours and modeling the Regional Values and Leadership Competencies will achieve culture change over time and remove the impediments that get in the way of becoming the organization we aspire to be.

*“If we can connect what we stand for as individuals with what our organization is capable of, there is little we can’t accomplish” – Satya Nadella, CEO of Microsoft*

If you have questions or would like more information about this strategy, email [zzgcultureandinclusion@peelregion.ca](mailto:zzgcultureandinclusion@peelregion.ca)



