

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2126



# The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

---

To: Finance and Administration Committee  
From: Commissioner of Corporate Services  
Report: #2025-A-6  
Date: June 10, 2025

---

**Subject:**

Succession Management Biennial Update

---

**Recommendation:**

That the Finance and Administration Committee recommends to Regional Council:

That this report be received for information.

---

**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Finance and Administration Committee and Regional Council with the Council directed biennial update on the retirement forecast for the Region and supporting succession management initiatives.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Succession management is a vital organizational activity requiring the identification of critical positions within the organization and creating a talent pipeline to ensure a state of readiness for a smooth transition in the event of a vacancy. For succession management to be successful, organizations must identify critical positions, project talent retirements, and identify potential future people leaders.

- 2.2 During the employee life cycle, Regional employees are provided with programs and policies which support continuous growth and development. The Human Resources Division of the Corporate Services Department offers an array of professional development learning opportunities for its employees including the Region's: Mentorship program, Leadership Excellence Certificate program, Developing Manager Skills program, Certificate in Public Sector Management (partnership with Ontario Tech). Additionally, the Region offers its employees a variety of competency development certificates and computer courses and software skills training, and leadership-centric development programming, policies to support and promote growth including the Succession Management policy, Employee Feedback and Development Planning policy, Learning and Development policy and the Region's Knowledge Transfer policy.
- 2.3 Succession Management assists with business continuity, mitigates talent shortages, fosters employee engagement and retention, facilitates knowledge transfer, identifies critical roles, offers opportunity to assess the internal talent pipeline and offers opportunity to foster and develop potential people leaders. These initiatives combined with progressive and supportive programs such as the alternative work arrangement options, DEI Working Committees, wellness programming, regularly scheduled CAO communications and Town Hall meetings, and progressive benefits packages help support a multi-generational workforce and support work-life integration.
- 2.4 Notwithstanding the Region's commitment to providing professional growth and development opportunities to existing staff, the Region remains committed to ensuring its workforce is representative of the community it serves. Job opportunities are recommended to be posted both internally and externally to ensure a transparent and accessible process, reaching the Durham community talent pipeline and encouraging interest from underrepresented groups. The Region's commitment to removing barriers to employment and promotion is embedded in its response to the 2023 equity audit in which 86 recommendations have been met, or are in the course of being met, with a commitment to continuous corporate intention to create a culture of inclusiveness. Additionally, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Division of the CAO's office recently engaged a third-party consultant to assist in the development of the Region's Diversity Equity and Inclusion Strategy which will invite input from both community members and staff.
- 2.5 The Region tracks the retirement demographics for its workforce with data from OMERS, the Region's pension provider. The retirement demographics provide an opportunity to cross reference with the Region's succession data to ensure corporate readiness for the potential loss of knowledge with a viable, diverse internal talent pool, in addition to progressive recruiting initiatives such as social media outreach, online job boards, executive search firms, employee testimonials and community outreach including career fairs to generate external interest in employment at the Region.

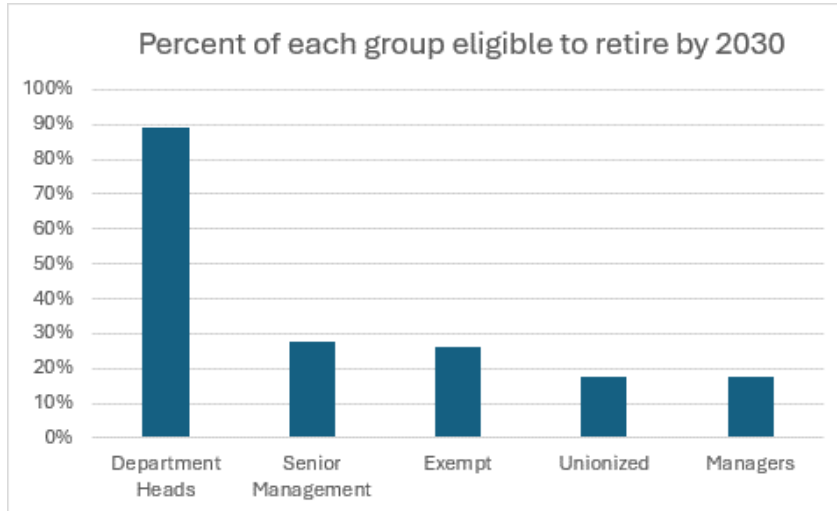
- 2.6 Each Department Head is provided with their five-year forecast for eligible employee retirements, to identify critical jobs within their division and to identify and make recommendations regarding learning opportunities for employees with the potential to fill critical positions which may become vacant at a future date. Additionally, a cross-reference of critical jobs and future people leaders is undertaken to identify opportunities for cross- division or departmental movement and learning opportunities.

### 3. Previous Reports and Decisions

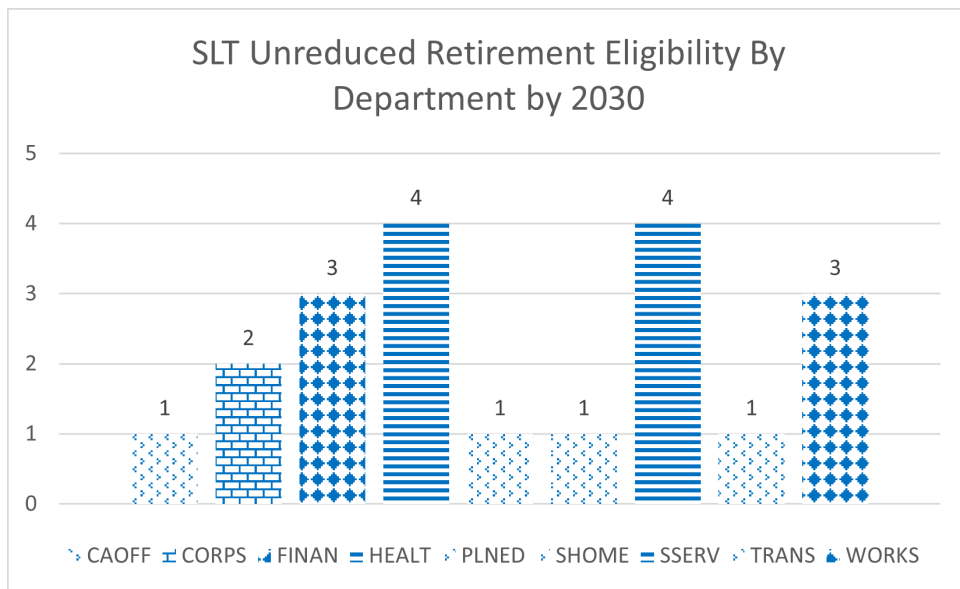
- 3.1 Report [#2023-A-9](#) Succession Management Biennial Update, dated April 11, 2023.

### 4. Region of Durham Retirement Forecast

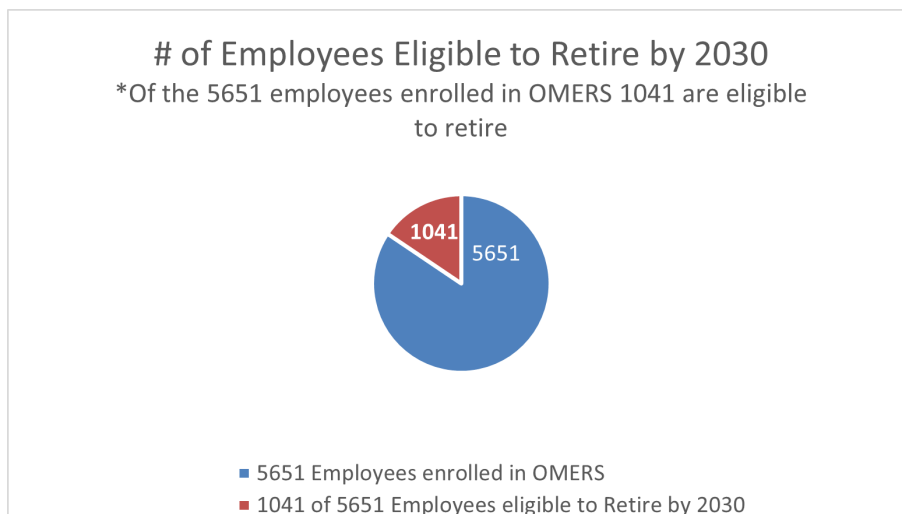
- 4.1 The following is a breakdown, and corresponding graphic, of employee groups eligible to retire within the next five years, as identified by OMERS, notable are the following demographics:
- a. of Department Head employee group will be eligible to retire (89%).
  - b. of the Senior Management employee group will be eligible to retire (28%).
  - c. of the Exempt employee group will be eligible to retire (26%).
  - d. of the Region's unionized employee groups will be eligible to retire (18%).
  - e. of Management employee group will be eligible to retire (17%).



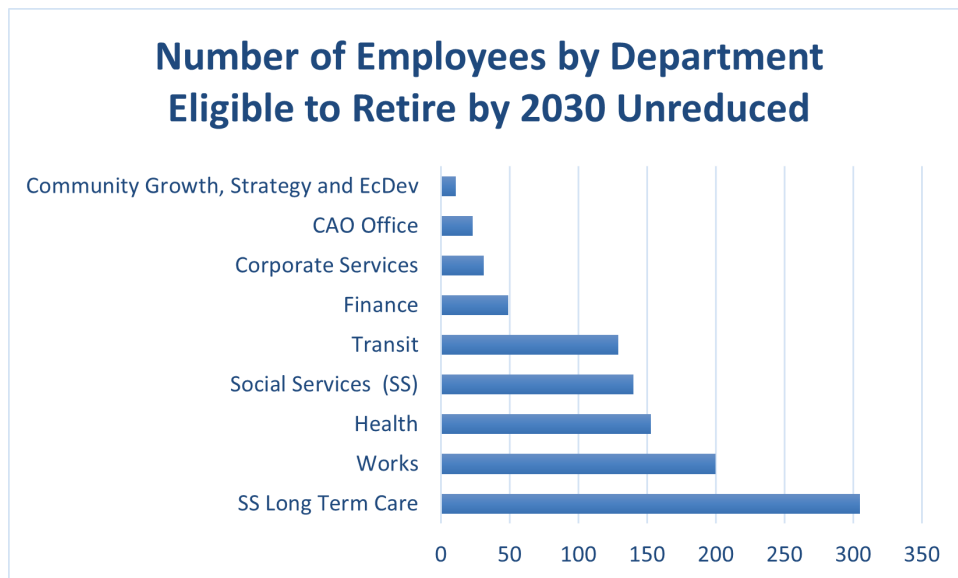
- 4.2 Further to 4.1 a. and b. above, the number of Department Heads and Directors eligible to retire by department, by 2030, is reflected in the chart below.



- 4.3 Approximately 18% of the Region's active workforce is currently eligible to retire by 2030.



- 4.4 The 18% referenced in 4.3 is presented below by number of employees eligible to retire by department/business unit (Total =1041):



## 5. Implications

### Department Heads and Senior Management

- 5.1 The eligibility for retirement demographic is highest amongst Department Heads and Senior Management, exposing the corporation to a potential loss of knowledge, business continuity, corporate memory, expertise and capacity. It is incumbent upon these two groups to develop prospective successors. This involves ensuring access to the full spectrum of issues, legislation, collaboration with surrounding local tiers and partners; and political acuity. Continued diligence in ensuring coaching, mentoring and exposure to professional growth opportunities will minimize corporate liabilities when a vacancy occurs.

## 6. Other Impacts and Opportunities

- 6.1 Social Services, Works, and Health are the top three departments with the highest number of employees eligible to retire in the upcoming five years.
- 6.2 Vacancies in general offer the organization an opportunity to review organizational structure and modernize antiquated structures without displacing staff, which can be costly or prohibitive depending on their group affiliation (union versus non-union). People leaders are encouraged to use vacancies as an opportunity to evaluate current staffing levels and organization structure to assess future staffing needs.

- 6.3 Succession management initiatives ensure corporate readiness for both planned and unplanned staffing opportunities. Further, succession management initiatives allow for conversations with staff to identify professional goals and professional strengths which can be of benefit to the organization and bolster employees' commitment to the organization.
- 6.4 Additionally, retirements and/or vacancies present an opportunity for corporate renewal. Bringing new staff into the Corporation and/or promoting internal staff can further enhance a work environment with innovation, collaboration, new perspectives and provide opportunity for the Region's workforce to expand its outreach to its community talent pipeline, thereby ensuring greater resemblance to the community it serves.

## **7. Future Succession Planning**

- 7.1 Department Heads and the Human Resources Division of the Corporate Services Department will continue to provide leadership and implementation of succession planning initiatives, and we will transition the succession management process to an annual process in the future to align with the employee feedback and development process which is inclusive of learning and development plans. Further, it's the Region's intention to expand its succession planning to include critical positions or highly skilled positions in addition to senior leadership positions.
- 7.2 Finally, it's the Region's intention to engage in workforce planning commencing in 2026 and thereafter. Workforce planning is a process which involves analyzing, forecasting and planning the workforce supply and demand, identify and assessing gaps and determining target talent management interventions to ensure that the organization has the right people, with the right skills in the right place at the right time, to meet its mandate and strategic objectives and forecast deliverables.
- 7.3 Succession Planning and Workforce Planning will work in tandem on an annual basis to ensure corporate readiness to meet the Region's short-, mid- and long-term projects/deliverables.

## **8. Relationship to Strategic Plan**

- 8.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following Foundation(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:
  - a. People: Making the Region of Durham a great place to work, attracting, and retaining talent.
  - b. Processes: Continuously improving processes to ensure we are responsive to community needs.

## 9. Conclusion

- 9.1 Succession planning remains a priority for the Region to protect corporate knowledge, ensure corporate readiness in the event of a loss of a critical position, secure employee engagement, mitigate talent shortages, ensure identification of critical roles, and provide opportunity and growth to valued existing and potential staff.
- 9.2 The Human Resources Division of the Corporate Services Department will continue to support all divisions in ensuring succession planning, workforce planning and performance management planning activities to protect corporate knowledge and ensure the Region's talent pipeline and community talent pipelines are provided with opportunity and growth.
- 9.3 For additional information, contact: Louise O'Dell, Director of Human Resources, at 905-668-4113 at extension 2076 or Crystal Ramdeo, Manager of Talent Acquisition and Organization Development at extension 2058.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

---

Barb Goodwin, MPA, CPA/CGA,  
B.Comm, CPM, CMMIII  
Commissioner of Corporate Services

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

---

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair  
Chief Administrative Officer