

Performance Audit Final Report

COVENTRY, RHODE ISLAND

April 24, 2022

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1. Executive Summary

The Matrix Consulting Group was retained by the Town of Coventry to conduct an organizational assessment that analyzed the business practices, organizational structure, and staffing levels of the Town. This study was designed to provide an understanding of the organizational structure, the efficiency and effectiveness of the overall processes, operations, and technology utilization and to identify appropriate changes to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of business practices. This report summarizes the study's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

1. Study Scope and Methodologies

In this study, the Matrix Consulting Group's project team utilized a wide variety of data collection and analytical techniques, including the following:

- **Staff Interviews and Data Collection.** Developed an understanding of operational approaches and challenges facing the Town of Coventry and the Coventry Public Schools through interviews and data collection. Interviews focused on determining roles and responsibilities of staff, levels of services provided, resources available to perform said services, and current or potential issues. Data collection efforts were undertaken to develop an understanding of workload levels and other important documentation practices.
- **Employee Survey.** An online employee survey was distributed to all employees to understand their perspective of the organization. The employee survey included a combination of agree/disagree statements, ranking statements, and open-ended questions for the respondent to share viewpoints in their own words.
- **Best Practices and Comparative Assessment.** The project team conducted a best practices assessment to identify areas of strength and improvement opportunities within each functional area under review. This was supplemented with a comparison of organizational structure, budgets and staffing with other communities.
- **Recommendations.** Based on the project team's activities and initial findings, the team analyzed issues, explored alternative service delivery options, and developed recommendations that focused on organizational needs, business processes and practices, staffing, and technology needs.

2. Listing of Recommendations

Based on the project team's assessment and analysis, there are a variety of recommendations for each service area covered in this assessment. These recommendations are discussed in detail throughout this report. Please note that recommendations are presented in the order they are discussed in the body of the report and not listed in order of priority. The final report will contain priority and implementation timeframes for the recommendations.

#	Recommendation	Priority	Implementation Timeframe
1	The Town's strategic plan should be reviewed and updated as appropriate annually.	High	Ongoing
2	Annual workplans for each department should be adopted as guiding documents that are considered a part of performance evaluations and developed in alignment with overall Town priorities and budget with specific goals for the year included within the budget.	High	2023
3	Each department should develop a slate of meaningful, measurable performance targets and should require departments to report on progress towards meeting these targets on a regular (quarterly or annual) basis. These reports should also be shared with the Town Council to allow for fact-based and objective assessments of department workloads and performance.	Medium	2023
4	An Assistant Town Manager position should be added to the Town Manager's Office and tasked with oversight of the annual work plan program, the Town's performance management program, overseeing the development and implementation of an asset management program and providing analytical support to the entire organization on special projects.	High	2022
5	The Town and School should negotiate an agreement or memorandum of understanding clearly laying out the current financial status of both as well as how accounting will work in the future to ensure consistency with the approved budget, compliance with local government and school finance laws, and maximum transparency to elected officials and residents.	High	2022, ongoing effort
6	Broaden the budget process to focus on meeting the community's strategic and operational goals within the financial constraints faced by the Town.	High	2023

#	Recommendation	Priority	Implementation Timeframe
7	Implement a Capital Planning Improvement Process to assess and fund ongoing maintenance of existing Capital assets.	High	2023
8	The Finance department should draft, and the Council approve, financial policies governing all aspects of the Town's finances.	High	2022-2023
9	Prepare an updated purchasing policy, clearly spelling out the roles and responsibilities of the department originating the purchase, Finance employees, the Town Manager, and Council. Ensure that regular training is held, and a proper electronic or paper-based record is created.	Medium	2023
10	A Municipal-Schools Committee should be developed to assess the capabilities and use of the current Municipal Finance software system.	High	2022
11	Add a Budget and Finance Manager position to the department.	High	2022/23
12	Relocate the HR function physically and organizationally to the Town Manager's office and expand the capacity of this function by contracting for a .5 position (half-time) Human Resources generalist.	Medium	2023
13	Monitor and report on turnover rates in each Town department and develop and implement strategies to improve employee retention.	Medium	2023
14	Involve all departments in an IT strategic planning process resulting in a planning document that is updated every year that highlights the most critical and prioritized IT projects for the coming year.	High	2022/23
15	Authorize a contract or full-time staff person to assist in IT efforts across the town's municipal operations.	High	2023
16	The Town should hire one additional Special Purpose Clerk for the Town Clerk's Office.	Medium	2023
17	The Town Clerk's Office should use the additional staffing resources from hiring a new Clerk to prioritize same-day entry of land records and complete the electronic documentation of past land and vital records.	High	2023
18	The Town Clerk's Office should consult with the Finance Director to develop and enforce a set of clear guidelines for the segregation of financial duties.	Medium	2023
19	The Town should procure and implement a commercially available cloud-based land records system to replace Avenue.	High	2023

#	Recommendation	Priority	Implementation Timeframe
20	The Town should eliminate the existing purpose-built dog licensing system and administer the dog licensing program with its existing license software.	Medium	2023
21	The Town should complete its personnel policy handbook for non-union staff and implement it as soon as possible.	High	2022
22	The Human Services Department should obtain and implement a commercially available social work case management system.	High	2023/24
23	The Parks & Recreation Department should restore the positions of Recreation Supervisor, Athletics/Adaptive Sports/Beach Coordinator and Beach Manager.	High	ASAP
24	Reallocate half of the time of the Parks & Recreation Department's Mechanic to the maintenance of parks and fields.	High	2022
25	Longer-term, the Town should consider consolidation of all mechanic operations into a single central shop.	High	2023
26	Planning should provide more proactive long range planning efforts and provide proactive minimum housing and code enforcement services to the Town.	High	2023
27	A Long-Range Planner / Code Enforcement Officer position should be added to Planning.	High	2023
28	Planning should transition to the OpenGov permitting software system for application submittal and utilize as an application/permit database.	High	ASAP
29	Maintain the current allocation of a Building Official, Alternate Building Official, Permit Technician, Clerk, Electrical Inspector (PT), and Plumbing/Mechanical Inspector (PT) positions in Building.	n/a	n/a
30	Formalize contractual agreements with part time inspectors.	Medium	2022
31	Maintain the current allocation of 30 officers, six sergeants, and three lieutenants assigned to Patrol.	n/a	n/a
32	Maintain authorized staffing of 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 2 Sergeant and 7 Detective positions.	n/a	n/a
33	Maintain the current allocation of five dispatcher positions	n/a	n/a
34	Maintain the current allocation of 8.5 positions assigned to Police Department Administration.	n/a	n/a

#	Recommendation	Priority	Implementation Timeframe
35	The Public Works Department should eliminate one Driver position.	Medium	2023
36	The Public Works Garage should assume responsibility for the maintenance and repair of the Police Department's fleet with the current contingent of four mechanic positions.	High	2023
37	Eliminate the current contract with the private engineering firm providing part-time engineering services and create and fill the position of Town Engineer.	High	2023
38	Begin the process of defining the information requirements of a new computerized maintenance management system that incorporates the input of each of the divisions in the Public Works Department.	High	2023
39	In the interim period, instruct the employees of each division to manually record the attributes of the work accomplished.	Medium	2022
40	In the longer term, begin to accumulate data and information related to times per task, material usage, equipment usage and other important elements of work that will allow for a more precise definition of time and expenses necessary to accomplish work.	High	Ongoing
41	As the issues outlined for the Public Works Department apply equally to the maintenance functions performed in the Parks and Recreation Department and Coventry Public Schools, it is recommended that these two departments be included in the requirements definition of the new CMMS, and that they implement the system concurrently with the Public Works Department.	High	2022/23
42	Define the roles of the Public Works Department in the repair, maintenance, management and inspection of the Town's sewer line.	High	2022
43	The Public Works Department should develop a preventive maintenance plan for the sewer system.	High	2023
44	Strongly consider the creation of a Sewer Maintenance Division within the Public Works Department.	High	2023
45	The Town and Schools should jointly conduct a study to determine the feasibility of consolidating their currently separate facilities maintenance services.	Medium	2023
46	The Town should consolidate the provision of custodial services by transferring the Human Services Department's Custodian to the Facilities Maintenance Division of Public Works.	Medium	2023

#	Recommendation	Priority	Implementation Timeframe
47	As part of the recommended analysis of the feasibility of consolidating Town and Schools facilities maintenance services, the custodial functions should be included in this analysis as well.	Medium	2023
48	Incorporate stakeholders (including the Town Council and public) earlier in the budgeting process and incorporate long term strategic and financial planning into the budget process.	High	2022/23
49	Implement a Capital Planning Improvement Process to assess and fund ongoing maintenance of existing Capital assets including ensuring that the required annual maintenance contribution is allocated.	High	2023
50	The Schools Finance department should provide input into and comply with new financial policies governing all aspects of the Town's finances in accordance with Title 16.	High	2022
51	The School Administration should be involved in an effort to assess the capabilities and use of the current Municipal Finance software system.	High	2022
52	Conduct a salary survey to assess how salaries in Coventry schools compare with those in other organizations.	Medium	2022/23
53	Establish priorities for simplifying union contracts in upcoming negotiations cycles.	High	2023
54	Monitor and report on turnover rates by job category, and if warranted develop and implement strategies to improve employee retention in the schools.	Medium	Ongoing
55	Work with Municipal leadership to either improve implementation of the Keystone system or identify a new system that will better meet the needs of the organization.	High	2022
56	Examine feasibility of using Aspen for Special Education documentation and tracking.	High	2022
57	Continue to review low-enrollment classes annually for consolidation or elimination and seek average enrollment efficiency of at least 80% for core, elective, and vocational classes.	High	2022
58	Examine the feasibility of managing MTSS data with an existing information system and implement a new system to administer this framework if the current systems are insufficient.	High	2022
59	Establish a grant application process which includes administrative procedures for routine processes under the direction of the Assistant Superintendent.	High	2022

#	Recommendation	Priority	Implementation Timeframe
60	Examine feasibility of using Aspen as the primary system for special education IEP management and reporting.	High	2022
61	The Schools' Facilities and Transportation Division should hire three additional facilities maintenance workers to enable the implementation of a comprehensive preventive maintenance plan for its nine facilities.	High	2023
62	As noted in the Town section of the report, the Schools should be involved in the evaluation of an Asset Management / CMMS system to manage facility maintenance operations and a single system should be acquired and implemented.	High	2022
63	The Schools' Facilities and Transportation Division should initiate a facilities condition assessment and ensure that these are continued once every five years.	High	2023

As the recommendations table indicates, there are several opportunities for improvement for both the Town of Coventry and the Coventry Public Schools. Additionally, there are some staffing modifications required to align staffing allocations with workload and service levels. The following chapters provide context and more details regarding each recommendation.

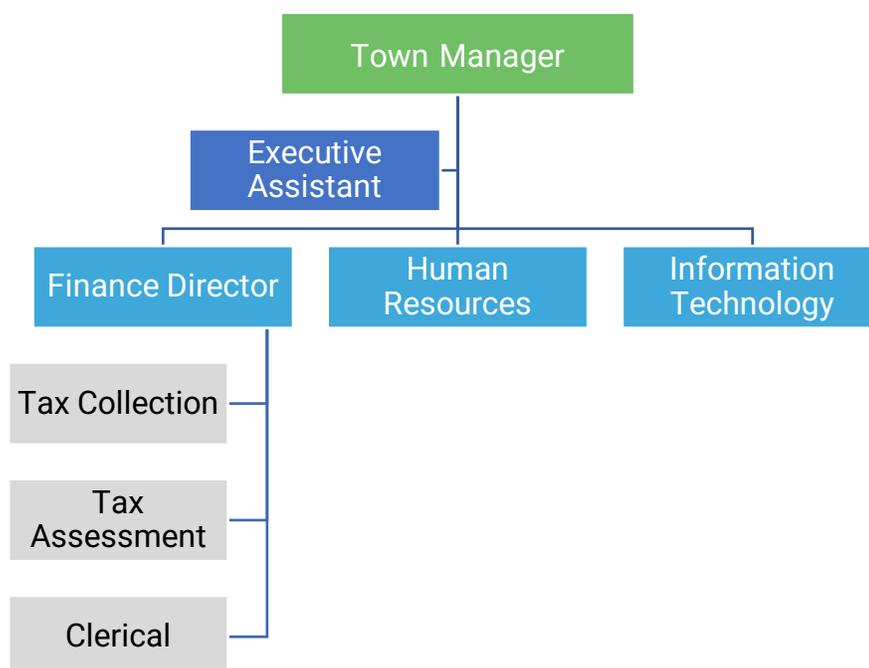
2. Municipal Administrative Support Functions

This section of the report details findings and recommendations related to Coventry's municipal administrative and support functions: Town Manager, Finance and Budgeting, Human Resources, and Information Technology. These functions are critical to ensure the effective implementation of Coventry's statutory obligations and have a major impact on all operational elements of the municipal government. Effective administrative support ensures that:

- Municipal operations are in-line with the priorities of the governing body
- Individual departments can operate effectively and efficiently
- The governing body and municipal leadership can be strategic in decision-making

These departments are also primarily responsible for ensuring that Coventry's operations are consistent with Rhode Island statutes related to revenue collection, expenditures, employment, and reporting. As a result, while they represent a relatively small portion of the workforce, their potential impact – whether positive or negative – is significant.

The current state organization of these functions is as follows:



Outside of the Town Manager's office, the main functions and duties of these departments are summarized as follows:

Position Title	Authorized Positions	Key Roles and Responsibilities
FINANCE		
Finance Director	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees all financial operations, manages budgeting process, establishes and enforces financial management policies. Prepares financial analyses for Manager and Council.
Deputy Treasurer	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees clerical staff, including accounts payable, accounts receivable, cash reconciliations, and reporting
Finance Clerk	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for payroll, timekeeping, benefits, accounts payable, accounts receivable, accounts payable.
Assessor	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees property assessment process, including revaluations, updating of values based on new construction / development. Maintains data in CAD system.
Tax Collector	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculates and issues tax bills. Takes in tax payments. Manages sales for delinquent taxes.
Human Resources		
Human Resources Director	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages on-boarding and off-boarding of staff. Administers pensions. Enters changes to pensions. Maintains employee files and policies. Coordinates with unions. Tracks FMLA, leaves of absence, and sick leave. Participates in union negotiations.
Information Technology		
IT Director	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acts as systems administrator for all hardware and software across 7 municipal buildings. Manages all in-house servers, phone systems, security systems, and software systems (non-police). Limited coordination and cross-trains with police and school IT. Manages municipal web site. Oversees broadcast of public meetings.

1. Summary of Recommended Changes to Staffing for Administrative Functions.

The following sub-chapters provide our key findings and recommendations related to each administrative support area (budget and finance, HR, and IT). Each sub-chapter will address specific findings related to that subject area. In total, they will include the following recommendations for organizational change:

- Add 1 Deputy Town Manager

- Add 1 Budget and Finance Manager with expertise in financial modeling and projections
- Add ½ Human Resources Specialist and relocate the Human Resources function to the Town Manager's Office
- Add 1 Information Technology Specialist

The following sections spell out the findings and analysis behind these recommendations, as well as additional findings and recommendations related to administrative operations in Coventry.

2. Town Manager's Office.

(a) Town Strategic Plan is Critical to Future Success.

Over the last six months, Town staff along with the Town Council, have undertaken the development of a formal strategic plan for the Town. This effort is critical to identifying the highest priorities for the organization and providing the direction to staff on key areas of focus for the coming years. The Town Council should review and update the strategic plan annually to ensure it represents the collective direction of the Town Council for staff implementation. This document will provide not only a framework for guiding future operations but the ability of the organization to develop annual workplans and deploy resources in alignment with the Council's priorities.

Recommendation: The Town's strategic plan should be reviewed and updated as appropriate annually.

(b) Departmental Annual Workplans Should be Developed.

The effectiveness of the Town's service delivery can be enhanced by ensuring that the key efforts of each department are well delineated and that these are used as the basis for on-going policy and management decisions. Annually, departments should develop their annual workplan and notate the key efforts that will further or support the achievement of the strategic goals – or position the Town operations to move closer to the achievement of the goals so that there is alignment between these annual workplans and the budget process. In particular, the Town Manager should adopt annual departmental workplans that are in alignment with the budget and the highest priorities identified for the coming year and that identify appropriate performance metrics to be utilized to track and manage operations. The budget document should highlight and include the specific goals for the coming year necessary to achieve the adopted annual workplan.

Annual workplans should be a guiding effort for each department's focus during the year, and a portion of the performance evaluation for staff in that department should be linked to accomplishing the workplan. Progress on the workplans should be reviewed at least quarterly between the Town Manager, Deputy Town Manager and the respective department head. A semi-annual update on progress should be provided to the Town Council.

Recommendation: Annual workplans for each department should be adopted as guiding documents that are considered a part of performance evaluations and developed in alignment with overall Town priorities and budget with specific goals for the year included within the budget.

(c) Performance Metrics should be adopted for each Town Department.

The Town of Coventry should implement a more data-informed decision-making framework to more effectively document existing performance and provide data for future decision-making regarding service levels and, in some cases, staffing levels needed to maintain or change service levels. By collecting, analyzing and utilizing data regarding service provision, the town can improve decision-making and education of the public regarding Town overall performance and ensure transparency for the organization regarding service levels.

Ideally, the Town will identify a small number of critical performance metrics for each department with the Town's performance in meeting these measures widely reported – both to the Town Council and the public – and published in a dashboard approach on the Town's website. The Town should attempt to identify performance metrics that report on outcomes achieved from the services provided and which are linked to the overall adopted strategic goals of the Town.

An effective and robust performance measurement program is designed to meet many organizational needs. Some common aspects include:

- Serving as a tool to assist in the evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of operations. It is accomplished by collecting, analyzing, and reporting performance-related data.
- Measures can be based on inputs (resources used), outputs (activities performed), efficiency measures (ratio between inputs and outputs), or outcomes (results achieved). Efficiency and outcome measures are often the most difficult to effectively measure or quantify but provide more useful data than simple input/output counts.

- Government accountability is often a driving factor in local government use of performance measurement. Effective use of performance measures can enhance transparency and public trust.
- Measures should ideally be aligned with adopted strategic goals. Is progress being made toward the highest-level goals? What has the greatest effect on the people served?
- The performance measure should be easily understood by the general public. Overly complicated or obscure measures, even if providing great data on performance, will not be effective if the public cannot understand what it is showing. Some measures are more important for use by managers to make decisions but aren't appropriate for public reporting.
- A department may monitor more performance measures than those reported as part of the Town's dashboard. Public facing measures should be ones that inform on overall service outcomes, when possible, and that provide insight to the public and policy makers regarding Town performance. Additional measures may be utilized internally, only by the Town Manager and Department Heads, as indicators of staff or process efficiency and/or effectiveness.

Ideally, the performance measures would be provided on the Town's website with frequent updating (to maintain relevancy) at least quarterly or monthly.

While some departments provide data reporting on their activities, there is no consistent process for measuring performance by the departments, which could be used to assess their effectiveness. Performance metrics need to be developed carefully, to ensure that they don't inadvertently distort incentives and should not merely illustrate workload. Good performance measures reflect SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-sensitive).

DEPARTMENT	EXAMPLES OF PERFORMANCE METRICS
Police	Case Clearance rates Response times
Permitting	Time frame from intake to completion of first review Average number of revisions required for a permit % of inspections provided within one business day of request Number of open permits
Court	Total collections # of cases that are repeat offenders
Public Works	% of catch basins cleaned annually Average response time to pothole complaints Tons of recyclable materials collected / resident
Recreation	% of costs recovered through fees for programs # of unique participants in rec programs by type
Assessor	% of properties inspected in the past 3 years Equalization ratio Coefficient of deviation of assessed value to market value

DEPARTMENT	EXAMPLES OF PERFORMANCE METRICS
Tax	Collection rate Delinquency rate
Human Resources	Time frame from job posting to hiring Staff attrition/turnover

Recommendation: Each department should develop a slate of meaningful, measurable performance targets and should require departments to report on progress towards meeting these targets on a regular (quarterly or annual) basis. These reports should also be shared with the Town Council to allow for fact-based and objective assessments of department workloads and performance.

(d) An Assistant Town Manager Position should be Authorized.

The Town Manager's Office has limited staffing to conduct internal special projects and data analysis. There is little capacity at present to easily expand the efforts needed to enhance strategic efforts on planning services and implementing a revised and enhanced performance management program or adoption of annual work plans for operating departments. Additionally, as will be noted elsewhere in the report, there are significant foundational activities, such as improving personnel rules, policies and procedures, and operational analysis, that require additional town resources. These can be handled by an Assistant Town Manager position.

It is recommended that an Assistant Town Manager be added to the Town Manager's Office to staff these important initiatives. Given the position's location in the Town Manager's Office and the high priority that should be placed on data analysis, data-informed decision-making and the need to fully implement a performance measurement program, it is recommended that the principal duty of this position be allocated to development, implementation and coordination of the performance measurement program, oversight of the annual work plan development and monitoring, and other special projects as assigned by the Town Manager. This will take close cooperation and interaction with all departments. This position will also provide analytical support as departments work to enhance their internal data analytical abilities. Key in this area would be developing a Town approach and philosophy regarding asset management. Currently there is virtually no effort being spent on addressing asset management or developing the long-range planning efforts needed to develop a long-range strategic infrastructure maintenance program. This position can assist in ensuring all departments are working towards a common vision and approach. In addition, this position should be tasked with conducting special studies, analysis, and analytical activities to support projects and duties performed by the Town Manager.

Recommendation: An Assistant Town Manager position should be added to the Town Manager's Office and tasked with oversight of the annual work plan program,

the Town's performance management program, overseeing the development and implementation of an asset management program and providing analytical support to the entire organization on special projects.

3. Budget and Finance Operations.

- (a) Developing a clear agreement and understanding regarding the fiscal relationship between the Municipal Department and the Schools Department should be given highest priority.**

While the assessment of most school (as opposed to municipal) functions will be provided in a separate chapter, it is critical to note here that ongoing disagreements between the municipal government and the schools related to budgets, funds allocation, cash flow management, capital investment, and even financial statements and bank balances is significantly handicapping both entities' abilities to operate effectively and serve the residents of Coventry.

Fundamentally, the disagreements appear to be a result of significant historical turnover in finance and budget roles in both the Town and School System, leaving both with almost no institutional knowledge of past practices with regards to budgeting and financial management.

However, the consultants also identified a number of cases where issues of a relatively minor nature were becoming enormously time consuming for current leaders in both entities. One example relates to the fees that the schools may be owed in rental for equipment on the roof of one of their buildings – the argument is over a fraction of a decimal of either organization's budget but has consumed considerable time and energy on both sides.

Both the School and Town management have indicated that the School is struggling with cash flow issues though the reasoning differs. It stems in part from the timing of when state disbursements are made to the schools and the Town's approach to allocating prior year fund reserves. This issue, and any other fiscal challenges faced by either party, should be seen as issues to be solved cooperatively for the sake of the town's residents.

The current leadership (Town Council, School Committee, Town Manager, and Schools Superintendent) must make it a priority to find a new starting point and a positive basis on which to move forward – a written agreement based on the auditors' reports laying out the current financial standing of each entity, including bank accounts, fund balances, funds owed, cash positions, appropriations, and approved expenditures.

In addition, the budget and fund accounting process going forward must clearly be established in both the Town and Schools budgets to ensure that the beginning of the fiscal year clearly and accurately reflects the fund balance of each, and clearly identifies all projected revenues, approved expenditures, and how they will be accounted for.

Finally, both the School and Town management have indicated that the School is struggling with cash flow issues, stemming in part from the timing of when state disbursements are made to the schools. This issue, and any other fiscal challenges faced by either party, should be seen as an issue to be solved cooperatively for the sake of the town's residents.

Recommendation: The Town and School should negotiate an agreement or memorandum of understanding clearly laying out the current financial status of both as well as how accounting will work in the future to ensure consistency with the approved budget, compliance with local government and school finance laws, and maximum transparency to elected officials and residents.

(b) The budget process should include more discussion of the town's strategic priorities and long-term needs

The Manager, Finance Director, and Department Directors undertake a detailed process of developing and obtaining approval for the annual budget. However, the current process would benefit from a more strategic focus on the Town's priorities and how they can be met. The National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting provides five key principles that should be considered in establishing a budget process:

- Incorporates a long-term perspective,
- Establishes linkages to broad organizational goals,
- Focuses budget decisions on results and outcomes,
- Involves and promotes effective communication with stakeholders, and
- Provide[s] incentives to government management and employees.

Coventry's process has in the past lacked this broader strategic focus, which would help both elected officials and managers ensure that the Town's limited resources are being used to help meet the community's goals. More details on recommended budget processes are provided by the Government Financial Officers Association:

<http://www.gfoa.org/sites/default/files/RecommendedBudgetPractices.pdf>

It is noteworthy that the current Town Manager has been working to transition the budget process to focus more on strategic issues. This effort should be continued and expanded upon.

One area of particular weakness in the current budgeting process is Capital Planning. While the Town does go through a process of identifying and rating potential capital projects, there is no formal Capital Improvement Program, and the municipal capital improvement line item in the budget reflects only a relatively small amount paid into the CIP reserve (between 0 and \$500,000). Debt service, presumably funding capital projects, is another roughly \$2.7 million, with this amount projected to decline in coming years as bonds are paid off.

Before new debt is incurred, the Town should undertake a true Capital Planning process to assess the current condition of Town assets (from roads to roofs) and identify future capital improvement needs of the community. This assessment should establish a minimum expectation of maintaining all existing infrastructure and buildings on an ongoing basis (e.g., if roads have a 10-year expected life after repaving, the Town should have a funding plan in place to repave 1/10th of the roads each year).

Recommendation: Broaden the budget process to focus on meeting the community's strategic and operational goals within the financial constraints faced by the Town.

Recommendation: Implement a Capital Planning Improvement Process to assess and fund ongoing maintenance of existing Capital assets.

(c) Coventry Lacks Written Financial Policies Needed to Ensure Proper Good Governance

The Town's Finance department was not able to provide copies of any policies governing key financial practices. (Such policies may exist, but if so, have been lost due to turnover in the department.)

Financial policies – drafted by the Finance Department, approved by the Council, and consistently applied - are critical to ensure that sound financial practices are maintained over time, even as personnel and leadership changes.

Specific policies that should be drafted and adopted include:

- Asset Management
- Cost Allocation
- Debt Management
- Fund Balance and Reserve
- Investment

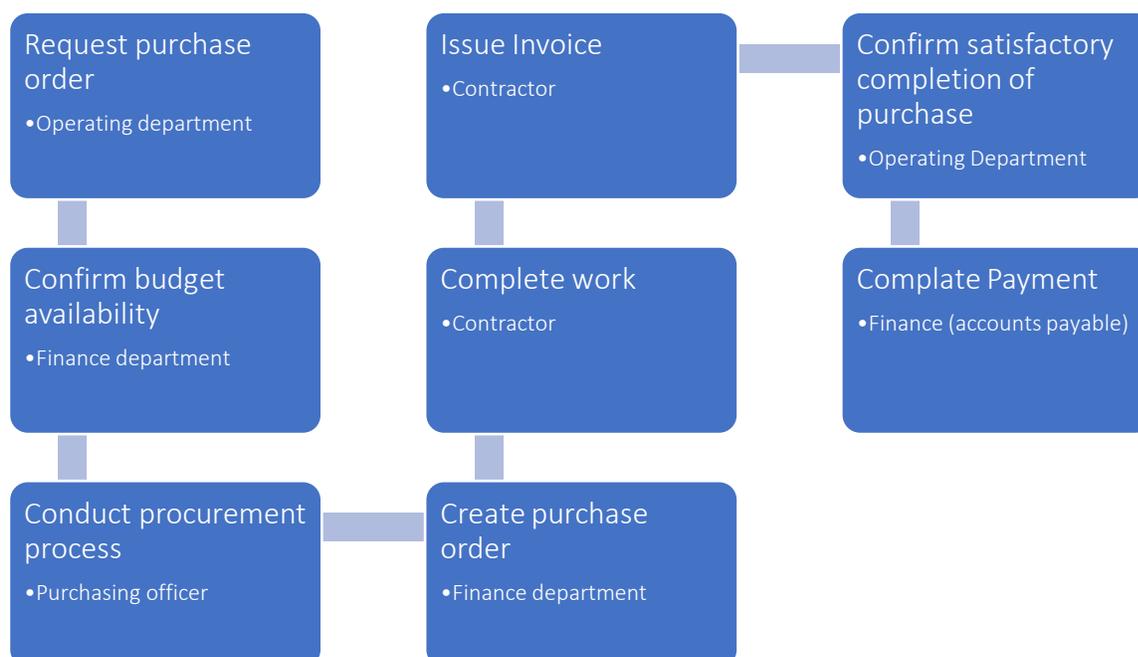
Recommendation: The Finance department should draft, and the Council approve, financial policies governing all aspects of the Town's finances.

(d) Coventry lacks oversight or the ability to properly track the procurement and purchasing process

Public purchasing in Rhode Island is governed by Title 45, Chapter 55 of the Rhode Island General Laws, which establishes requirements for the use of a bid (or other competitive) process and describes exceptions to these requirements (such as the use of cooperative contracts). Section 56-4 of the Town Code sets forth the town’s purchasing policies, creates a Purchasing Division within the Finance Department, and indicates that a Purchasing Agent must be designated for the town.

In reality, however, the actual purchasing process in Coventry is heavily decentralized, with no clear oversight to ensure that these requirements are being met. The Town Council approves some municipal purchases during meetings, but a review of recent agendas indicates that the Council is not always informed about what process was used in the purchasing selection. As standard practice, all authorizations to purchase goods or services should identify the selection process used and confirm that this process is consistent with both state and municipal purchasing requirements.

One barrier to effective oversight of purchasing is that the town’s finance and budgeting software does not allow for a “best practices” workflow in the procurement and purchasing of goods and services in the town. Specifically, a best practice would include the following:



However, according to the Finance Director, the software system does now allow for the creation of purchase orders and Finance is not able to ensure that funds are available before a department enters into a contract for the purchase of a good or service.

Recommendation: Prepare an updated purchasing policy, clearly spelling out the roles and responsibilities of the department originating the purchase, Finance employees, the Town Manager, and Council. Ensure that regular training is held, and a proper electronic or paper-based record is created.

(e) **As currently deployed, the software system used for budgeting and finance is not meeting the needs of the Town or Schools. However, it may be possible to address these deficiencies without the costly process of replacing the system.**

Coventry switched to Keystone Information Systems for budgeting and financial management software in January 2020. The system is more heavily used in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina but does have local government and school customers in other states. It appears that Coventry is its only Rhode Island user.

Coventry continues to struggle with the Keystone deployment, and within the town some staff are advocating moving to a different software system more commonly utilized in Rhode Island. A review of the software's deployment in Coventry confirmed significant issues; however, more analysis should be done before deciding to abandon the software.

Major deficiencies include:

- The lack of a deployed Purchasing Order system that generates a PO once Finance confirms that sufficient funds are available
- Lack of timekeeping and payroll capabilities, requiring complex timekeeping and tracking of leave to be done by hand
- Ongoing issues with the proper assignment of expenses to the proper fund categories as well as proper payroll issuance
- Lack of interface with on-line payment systems and with other systems deployed in Coventry

The selection and deployment of budget and finance software is extremely time intensive. Therefore, the Town should carefully examine whether Keystone can be better deployed or whether the system should be replaced. In either case, it is critical that the Town and Schools deploy the same software system. This analysis should involve leadership in both Municipal and Schools operations as well as the IT department.

Recommendation: A Municipal-Schools Committee should be developed to assess the capabilities and use of the current Municipal Finance software system.

- (f) **To Implement the above recommendations, the Finance Department requires one additional staff member, who should have expertise in financial modeling and projections.**

Given the extensive additional work needed to help address Coventry's financial management deficiencies, it is recommended that the department add one staff member, if possible one who has experience in strategic financial management as well as municipal government.

Recommendation: Add a Budget and Finance Manager position to the department.

4. Human Resources

The Human Resources Department consists of a single person, who is located physically away from most other municipal functions, and across the street from the Town Manager and other Support functions. Interviews with operating departments indicate that the HR staff person plays a very minor role in their functions as well.

A robust HR function can be instrumental in ensuring a productive, effective workforce, reducing risks associated with employment actions, and keeping personnel costs low by conducting analysis in support of contract negotiations and personnel decisions. Key functions that are currently missing in Coventry include:

- Designing and overseeing processes for hiring, review, evaluation, and discipline of employees
- Helping managers address issues related to poor performance
- Ensuring compliance with HR regulations
- Analyzing major cost drivers related to personnel
- Reviewing and updating policies
- Comprehensive training program
- Addressing workplace morale and other employee concerns.

One area of priority for the HR function is to address what appears to be an extremely high level of turnover in some key positions within the Town government. This turnover has led to an almost complete loss in institutional memory for the Town, and has affected the continuity of some business practices, particularly in finance. Unless turnover is monitored, analyzed, and reported on, it is difficult to put in place a strategy for addressing this issue.

To fulfill these functions, the HR Department should be more closely integrated into the Town Manager's office and should be expanded by adding additional capacity. Because a one- or 1.5-person department may not be able to operate effectively, the Town should consider bringing this function under the umbrella of the Town Manager's office.

One noted deficiency that is being addressed currently is the lack of a town-wide personnel manual. While this has not been reviewed by the consultants, a manual is currently being prepared and is under legal review as of March 2022.

Recommendation: Relocate the HR function physically and organizationally to the Town Manager's office and expand the capacity of this function by contracting for a .5 position (half-time) Human Resources generalist.

Recommendation: Monitor and report on turnover rates in each Town department and develop and implement strategies to improve employee retention.

5. Information Technology.

(a) The Department should lead a Town-Wide IT Strategic Assessment

Coventry's IT needs are relatively well supported, but to increase the effectiveness of operations across the municipality it needs to take a more holistic approach to implementing and deploying software, as well as take advantage of newer software systems that can lead to greater efficiency, consistency, and better communication across disciplines.

To this effect, the IT manager should work with the Town Manager's office to undertake a comprehensive IT planning effort and develop a 5-year IT strategic plan. This effort would look at individual departmental and town-wide technology needs and provide a roadmap to meeting these needs. The technology plan should focus on seeking systems that have wide application across departments where possible and should incorporate the following principles:

- Standardization – Standardize IT solutions across the town where feasible to decrease costs and improve information sharing.
- Create interfaces – Where separate systems are required, interfaces among them may reduce the need for manual data entry and improve communication and access to information. Common interfaces in municipal IT include linking assessor data with GIS and permitting software. Additional interfaces can link payment systems (e.g., tax collection, permitting payments, and utility payments)

with the town's finance system.

- **Business Process Support** – Ensure that the technology deployments include an examination of business processes and automate these to the greatest degree possible. This includes ensuring comprehensive training for all employees so that the software's capabilities can be fully utilized.
- **Enable on-line transactions** – One goal for the town should be to allow residents and businesses to conduct as many transactions as possible on-line, without having to visit town hall.
- **Maintenance and Support** – Once systems are procured and deployed, resources should be in place to maintain and support them, including training new employees.

Following these principles, the technology plan needs to be developed and implemented based on a needs assessment of each department, examining what systems are currently in place and whether they may be candidates for replacement or upgrading in future years, and sound business practices.

Specific technology recommendations related to individual departments are provided throughout this report. As a summary, the below table highlights key findings with regard to technology currently being used by Coventry's municipal government.

COVENTRY MAJOR IT FINDINGS		
Functional Area	Strengths	Weaknesses
Budget and finance	Using the same system in the schools and municipal departments – which should be continued. Assessor database is moving to a cloud-based version which when fully deployed should improve efficiency and communications across departments.	Lacks integration / automation of payroll functions. Lacks integration with other municipal systems (tax, payment) No purchase order system.
Human Resources	Use same budget platform as the Finance department.	Personnel management system is needed to manage on-boarding, off-boarding, HR records, and to track leave, pensions, etc. Automated cloud-based timekeeping system would streamline operations across the municipality.

COVENTRY MAJOR IT FINDINGS		
Functional Area	Strengths	Weaknesses
Clerk	Meeting, agenda management, and web site programs are working well.	Land records information system should be updated to a cloud-based program and linked (where possible) with other data sources – GIS, OpenGov. In-house pet licensing system should be replaced with a cloud-based system already being utilized in Coventry – OpenGov.
Permitting.	Relatively new, flexible, cloud-based system.	Use of OpenGov should be expanded to Planning and Zoning permits. Staff would benefit from more training on the system. GIS (which is maintained by the assessor) appears under-utilized in this department.
Asset management	None.	The town should explore using an asset management program to create and implement an asset management plan.
Human Services	None	The department would benefit from a case management program.
Police	Embedded staff provides a high level of service.	None identified.

Recommendation: Involve all departments in an IT strategic planning process resulting in a planning document that is updated every year that highlights the most critical and prioritized IT projects for the coming year.

(b) **The Department is understaffed with only one position and limited backup available from the Police or Schools.**

In recent years the IT department staffing was reduced from 2 to 1. The current staff member has managed with remarkable effectiveness to juggle a wide range of responsibilities, including data security, hardware and software support, training, physical security (cameras and building access), telephones, and the assessment, procurement, and implementation of new systems. However, to meet the current needs of the Town, additional IT capacity is required.

The department's sole employee is working with IT staff in the Police Department and Schools to create more backup capability and economies of scale, keeping the department functioning effectively with only a single employee is likely not sustainable in the long run:

- It leaves the town vulnerable that staff member becomes ill, takes leave, or leaves the organization.
- All municipal improvement projects in this era involve a technology element. Hence, many of the recommendations in this report will require some support from the IT department.
- Better deployment of IT systems could allow other departments to function more effectively and efficiently, reducing the need for staff in other areas.

Because of the extreme shortage of qualified IT candidates right now, the Town should look at multiple options: sharing IT personnel from a neighboring municipality, contracting for additional IT support, or hiring an additional IT specialist.

Recommendation: Authorize a contract or full-time staff person to assist in IT efforts across the town's municipal operations.

3. Town Clerk

The Town Clerk's Office is responsible for a variety of core municipal government functions which include maintaining property records, providing staffing and record-keeping support to probate court, providing staffing and record-keeping support to the Town Council and other boards and commissions, advertising and overseeing the opening of bids, providing notary public services and maintaining custody of the Town seal, handling public records requests delivered to the Town, and administering various licenses such as dog licenses, fishing licenses, and business licenses. The following describes some key workload metrics of the Department for 2021:

Metric	Workload Type
10,345	Land Records Created
68	Public Records Request
40	Town Council Meetings Staffed

1. Analysis of Staffing

The Office currently operates with four staff. These are the Town Clerk, a Deputy Town Clerk, and 2 Special Purpose Clerks. While there is considerable overlap between the duties of the four personnel as a result of the office's small size and the necessity of multi-tasking, the Town Clerk generally handles support for the Town Council, the Deputy Clerk supports probate court, and the Special Purpose Clerks specialize in licensing and vital records processing.

Within the last six months, a number of additional duties have been added to the Town Clerk's office. These include conducting daily financial reconciliations of payments made to the Office, supporting three new boards and committees (charter review commission, economic development committee, and sewer subcommittee), and serving as the intake and distribution point for the Town's mail. The following table shows existing duties and those added within the last 6 months.

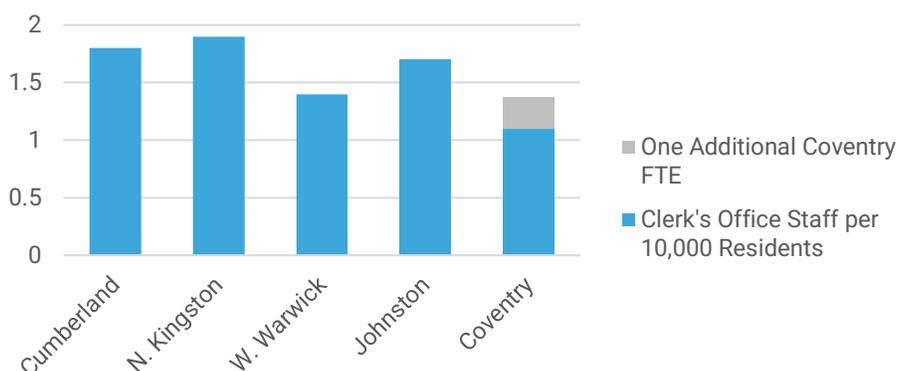
Town Clerk Responsibilities	Added within last 6 months
Enter and maintain property records	
Enter and maintain vital records	
Handle public records requests	
Open, stamp, and distribute incoming mail	✓
Staff support to town council	

Town Clerk Responsibilities	Added within last 6 months
Staff support to sewer subcommittee	✓
Staff support to charter review commission	✓
Staff support to economic development committee	✓
Staff support to probate court	
Manage business license program	
Manage activity and pet licenses	
Perform daily financial reconciliations	✓
Coordinate public bidding process	
Provide notary public services	
Administer town seal	

While accommodating this additional workload, the Office has fewer staff per capita than many other municipalities in Rhode Island. A comparative survey illustrates four nearby municipalities in the State and the number of Clerk’s Office staff per 10,000 residents in each of them.

Municipality	Clerk's Office Staff per 10,000 Residents
Cumberland	1.8
N. Kingstown	1.9
W. Warwick	1.4
Johnston	1.7
Coventry	1.1

Coventry has fewest staff in the Clerk’s office of the five municipalities on a per-capita basis. As the chart below illustrates using the same data, the Office would still have the fewest staff per capita even if an additional full-time employee were added.



Given the additional duties placed on the Office's longtime staff of four, and the comparative under-staffing of the office compared to other jurisdictions, the Town Clerk's Office should hire one additional Special Purpose Clerk. This position should be focused on processing incoming mail, ensuring the timely entry of land records (mailed and otherwise), and facilitating the Office's switch to a new land records system and backing up pre-1976 records to a searchable electronic format. As the new employee progresses, they may also be assigned a committee to staff.

The addition of a new Clerk will staff the Coventry Town Clerk's Office comparably with the leanest clerk's offices in the area, allow improved timeliness in the recording of land records, and ease some pressure on the rest of staff by allowing them to focus on their core roles and committee assignments. It will also make it easier to segregate financial responsibilities, as discussed later in this section.

Recommendation: The Town should hire one additional Special Purpose Clerk for the Town Clerk's Office.

2. Analysis of Operations

The Town Clerk's Office exhibits a number of strengths in its operations, despite its sub-optimal staffing levels as discussed above. For example:

- The Office follows its procedures and the statutory requirements of the State of Rhode Island in supporting the Town Council with agenda preparation and advertisement, packet development, and processing ordinances and resolutions. The office also supports the probate court by preparing and advertising the docket, staffing court proceedings, and documenting and publishing court actions in a timely manner after court. The office uses its software systems effectively in both of these functions.
- The Office follows an established bidding procedure, coordinating with department directors, the Town Manager, and the Council when necessary to develop specifications, and securely and fairly collect and open bids.

In contrast with these strengths, however, the Town Clerk's Office should address the following issues to improve its security and level of service.

2.1 Electronic Documentation of Pre-1976 Records

Among the Office's key responsibilities is maintaining land records (mortgages, liens, deeds, etc.) and vital records (births, marriages, deaths, etc.). Physical records are kept in a locked fireproof vault. Many documents are also backed up on microfilm and sent to Iron Mountain for retention.

The office is making progress toward records automation. Records created since 1976 are available online for public requisition. The Office would like to be able to continue electronic recording of past records from before 1976, but this endeavor will require additional staff time which is not currently available. Once an additional clerk is hired, the Office should seek to complete the electronic documentation of past land and vital records.

2.2 Same-Day Entry of Mailed Records

Another of the Office's primary responsibilities is to process incoming mail for the Town and to enter land records into the Avenue system when they are received by mail. While the Clerk's Office generally processes incoming mail on a daily basis, mailed land records are not always processed and entered quickly. This delay causes frustration for the attorneys and title companies who rely on up-to-date land records. With additional staff resources from the hiring of a new Clerk, the Office should prioritize same-day entry of land records into the digital system.

2.3 Segregation of Financial Duties

The Town Clerk's Office staff are cross trained well enough that there is a primary and backup role for each of their primary functions. For some key functions, however, segregation of duties is important for financial security.

Currently staff are cross trained to perform all functions, and procedures do not specify that cash handling and accounting duties should be performed with a segregation of roles. For example, each of the clerks is able to receive payments, and they are also all able to perform reconciliations. These duties may be performed by the same staff member on the same day, when best practice would require that the individuals responsible for recording payments should be different from those responsible for reconciling them. Likewise, the individual who opens the mail should not be the same one who then makes deposits of funds received through the mail – but the Office does not currently make these distinctions. To some degree this is a function of the small number of staff in the Office, since each member of the team must multi-task and fill in to help

the others. However, the Office should ensure a degree of security and accountability in their financial management by enforcing best practices for financial cashing and accounting. In consultation with the Finance Director, the Office should develop a set of clear guidelines for the segregation of financial duties.

Recommendations:

The Town Clerk’s Office should use the additional staffing resources from hiring a new Clerk to prioritize same-day entry of land records and complete the electronic documentation of past land and vital records.

The Town Clerk’s Office should consult the Finance Director to develop and enforce a set of clear guidelines for the segregation of financial duties.

3. Analysis of Technology

The Town Clerk’s Office uses a variety of systems to perform its functions across multiple areas of responsibility. These include the following:

Software	Use
iCompass	Meeting and agenda management system for Town Council and other boards/commissions.
Rhode Island Vital Records System (RIVRS)	Online State repository of vital records including birth, marriage, and death certificates.
Avenue	Land records information system used to create, update, and maintain property records, liens, surveys, and titles.
LL Data	Legal records information system for licensing and probate court.

The Office makes effective use of the State’s vital records system and uses iCompass to efficiently develop and publish documents related to the Town Council and other boards and committees. There are two areas where the Office should adjust or consolidate its use of its software systems:

3.1 Replacement of Avenue Land Management System

The land records management system, Avenue, is a locally hosted system which contains the Town’s records of title, deeds, mortgages, liens, HOA covenants, subdivisions, and any other records regarding real property in the Town. The Town’s data shows more than 10,000 land records entries in 2021. This system is public-facing and allows lookup of records dating back to 1976. The system has a number of issues, however. It has not been updated in several years, and it periodically crashes or freezes, requiring a re-boot

and costing the Office time. It also is not cloud-based or GIS-integrated and has no mapping function.

Considering the importance of the property records function to the Town Clerk's Office and the volume of the office's work which is related to land records, the Town should seek a replacement system. The new system should be an off-the-shelf solution which is cloud-based and GIS-integrated, allowing for mapping and automatic updates.

3.2 Elimination of Separate Dog License System

The Town uses its LL Data system to manage licenses for all types of activity including business operations, mobile homes, fireworks, yard sales, and fishing. It has a separate system, however, for dog licenses. This is an internally developed database which operates separately from the Town's other systems and has no function other than managing dog licenses. The system is old and creates inefficiency by requiring staff to use multiple systems for similar functions which could be performed and recorded in a single system. The Town should include dog licensing with its other licensing functions and eliminate the existing purpose-built system.

Recommendations:

The Town should procure and implement a commercially available cloud-based land records system to replace Avenue.

The Town should eliminate the existing purpose-built dog licensing system and administer the dog licensing program with its existing license software.

4. Library

The Coventry public library system consists of two branches – a main location and a secondary auxiliary branch – serving all residents of Coventry. It is led by a director who reports to a board of trustees appointed by the Town Council. The Library holds a collection of just over 280,000 materials, including text, audio, and video materials in both physical and electronic formats, as well as access to electronic databases. The Library runs numerous clubs and programs, hosts presentations and events, and partners with the schools and the Literacy Volunteers of Kent County (LVKC) to promote reading and education objectives. The library is part of Rhode Island’s Ocean State Libraries Consortium and uses its digital collection management system, Sierra. The following describes some key metrics for the Library in 2021:

Metric	Workload Type
42,275	Library visitors
109,436	Physical materials circulation
33,745	Digital materials circulation
288	Total programs (in-person and virtual)

1. Analysis of Staffing

The Library’s current authorized staffing includes 2 full-time and 1 part-time administrative staff, 5 full-time and 18 part-time staff at the main branch, and 3 part-time staff at the satellite branch. The following table shows these positions.

Position	Count
Administration	
Library Director	1
Assistant Director	1
PT Aide/Page	1
Main Branch	
Sr. Librarian	4
Young Adult Librarian	1
PT Circulation Assistant	8
PT Librarian	5
PT Library Assistant	2
PT Library Technician	3

Position	Count
Greene Branch	
PT Branch Manager	1
PT Librarian	1
PT Library Assistant	2

Staffing at the Library is configured to meet the requirements of the state for maintaining licensure and grant funding. While the Library has experienced some turnover in recent years, the Department is currently fully staffed. Most staff turnover is among circulation staff, because those part-time positions are the most entry-level jobs. The Library has been able to fill these positions quickly when they become vacant. Current staffing levels are sufficient for the Library to fill its scheduled shifts and meet the state requirements.

2. Analysis of Operations

The Library's operations exhibit a number of strengths. Among these:

- The Library attains re-certification with the State each year and maintains programming and hours of operation which sustain its eligibility for grant funding.
- Librarians are highly qualified and remain up to date on library science literature, selecting materials and weeding the collection according to an established policy and their acquired expertise.
- The Library conducts outreach to the schools and to members of the community who are not able to physically visit.

One area where the Library stands in need of improvement is the development of personnel policies. Unlike the rest of the Town, the Library's staff are at-will employees rather than union members. As such, the rules for employee conduct and personnel management are different from the unionized departments. The Town has begun developing a personnel handbook for non-represented employees; this document should be completed and implemented as soon as possible. The section on administration functions addresses this issue more completely.

Recommendation: The Town should complete its personnel policy handbook for non-union staff and implement it as soon as possible.

3. Analysis of Technology

The Library is equipped with the current technology that it needs to provide a high level of services to patrons, and it prioritizes a digital library service. Through its membership in the Ocean State Libraries Consortium, the Library has access to the Sierra materials management system, which also provides digital access to a selection of materials for patrons. Additionally, the Library subscribes to Hoopla, another digital materials repository.

The Library's application management and cybersecurity are handled by the Town's IT Department. The Library does not currently face any technology-related issues which need to be addressed in the scope of this audit.

5. Human Services

The Department of Human Services seeks to coordinate and assist the community in meeting the social, economic, psychological and physical needs of all Coventry residents. The Department coordinates a volunteer-led community garden and operates a food bank and clothing bank, as well as providing meals on wheels for elderly residents and operating a senior center which averages about 80 visitors daily. The Department also provides services to more than 20 adults with disabilities through its Project FRIENDS initiative and provides youth and family services in the form of trauma-informed interventions, training, and case management services. The Department's operations are funded by a combination of grants, donations, and the Town's general fund. The following describes some key metrics for the Department in 2021:

Metric	Workload Type
8,681	Social work contacts
5,432	Food bank distributions
6,787	Senior center sign-ins
5,194	Volunteer hours

1. Analysis of Staffing

The Department is led by a Director and consists of 9 full-time and 1 part-time position. The following table shows the currently authorized positions in the Department.

Position	Count
Director	1
Lead Social Worker	1
Social Worker	2
Food Bank Coordinator	1
Program Coordinator	1
Program Assistant	1
Receptionist	1
Bookkeeper	1
Custodian	1

As described in the following section, the Human Services Department operates a wide range of programs focused on meeting the needs of community members at every stage of life, fighting resource insecurity and social isolation, and coordinating the resources of other agencies and service providers in the area. The Department's staffing is directly aligned with its programming objectives; each employee has a dedicated focus in one of

the Department's core operational areas. A number of the Department's initiatives rely at least partially on donations and grant funding. As a result, the number of staff appropriate to run these programs is dependent on the availability of funding.

While staffing is appropriate for the Department's workload, there is one position which should be considered for re-organization. The custodian at the senior center is an employee of the Human Services Department. As discussed further in the facilities section of our report, support services such as custodial positions should be consolidated and centrally administered.

2. Analysis of Operations

The Human Services Department has a well-developed set of programs which serve residents at all stages of life and are focused on meeting core needs and providing services which improve quality of life outcomes. They focus on integrating their programs with other Town departments, the Schools, volunteers, and other agencies and service providers in the area. The following points are examples:

- The Senior Center is co-located with the Town's police headquarters and provides programs and resources to older residents, many of which are led by these residents themselves. The center also functions as the hub of the Department's volunteer-staffed meal delivery service for homebound residents.
- The Department has an established system for handling social work referrals from various sources – the schools, the police department, or others in the community. Staff assess initial needs and identify service recipients' broader needs and provide training to Town and School staff regarding trauma-informed care.
- The Department works closely with local banks, businesses, and community partners. They run a "t'is the season" donation program involving the police, fire, and other municipal departments, as well as the assistance of local families.
- The Department consistently pursues fundraising and grants and seeks to maximize its resources and impact through initiatives like the Rhode Island Health Equity Zone designation. The Department communicates effectively through a newsletter which contains a listing of community resources.

The breadth of the Department's services and resources, and its effectiveness and professionalism in delivering them, are consistent with best practice. We recommend no operational changes at this time.

3. Analysis of Technology

The Department uses a number of software systems to support its operations. These include the MySeniorCenter system which has been used to great effect for recording visits to the senior center and distributions from the food bank.

The Department does not, however, have an effective software system for managing social work caseload. The existing case management system is a customized Access database which has been used for years. It is used to record every referral, phone call, contact, action, and intervention associated with the Department's social work services. It can also be used to generate reports on these recorded interactions. The system is not as capable or nimble, however, as a purpose-built, commercially available system for managing social work and social services provision caseloads. It cannot be used to assign cases to a specific provider, generate reminders, or produce a list of current cases and their status.

The Department should procure a commercially available case management system. It should be designed specifically for social services work, and its specifications should be developed in consultation with the Town's IT Department to suit the specific program needs of the Department. Following its procurement, the existing Access database should be shut down and its information transferred to the new system.

Recommendation: The Department should obtain and implement a commercially available social work case management system.

6. Parks and Recreation

The mission of the Parks and Recreation Department is to enhance the quality of life of Town residents by providing safe and well-maintained parks and public spaces, to create a sense of place, to strengthen the bonds of the community and to create opportunities for enrichment and recreation. It accomplishes this through the provision of youth and adult sports programming, educational classes, fitness instruction, youth camps, family activities and special events. It is further responsible for the maintenance of parks and athletic fields, as well as the equipment and machinery utilized in this maintenance.

1. Analysis of Parks and Recreation Staffing Needs

(a) Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Department has experienced staffing reductions in the past several years that have not only required remaining staff to assume multiple duties that were once performed by other full time and part time staff but have reduced its ability to generate revenues to offset operating expenses as well.

The staffing reductions have included an Athletics/Adaptive Sports/Beach Coordinator position, a Beach Manager and a Recreation Supervisor position which was responsible for overseeing and coordinating the activities of these two positions. The remaining staff in the recreational division include a Basketball Manager, a Teen Center Supervisor and a Program Manager in addition to the Department Director, who has assumed most of the duties of the vacated positions.

The absence of both the Beach Coordinator and Beach Manager has resulted in the loss of approximately 250 children, or approximately half of the usual totals, at summer camps. This has further resulted in the loss of about \$15,000 annually.

The assumption of the duties of the vacated positions has created a requirement for the Department Director to focus on the provision of daily operational duties rather than on the provision of oversight of operations and strategic direction for the Department. Further, since the vacated positions were all recreational in nature, this has meant that there is little oversight by the Director in the areas of park and field maintenance.

The Department Director should be focused, not on daily operational duties, but rather on grants, fundraising, sponsorships, visioning and capital improvement needs. These strategic duties have been severely restricted due to staffing reductions, and the project team recommends that the eliminated positions of Recreation Supervisor, Athletics/Adaptive Sports/Beach Coordinator and Beach Manager be restored. The recapture of approximately \$15,000 through the ability to accommodate more summer

campers will not fully offset the cost of these positions, but it will mitigate the cost somewhat. However, the main benefits of these positions will be a more complete fulfillment of the Department's stated mission, and to allow for a more strategic focus on the part of the Department Director.

Recommendation: The Department should restore the positions of Recreation Supervisor, Athletics/Adaptive Sports/Beach Coordinator and Beach Manager.

(b) Fleet and Park Maintenance

The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the maintenance of approximately 590 acres located in 37 parks, athletic fields, playgrounds, cemeteries, boat ramps, beach and pond areas, as well as conservation areas. It accomplishes its maintenance duties with a contingent of a Park Foreman and five (5) Maintenance Workers. In addition, the Department is responsible for the maintenance and repair of 32 pieces of equipment that range from utility trailers, chippers and wood cutters to mowers, heavy pickups, vans, tractors and excavators. The repair and maintenance of this equipment is performed by a single Mechanic position.

Although the project team obtained a spreadsheet that outlined the parks and the amenities located at each, the spreadsheet provided only gross acreage total, rather than a breakdown of maintainable acreage. Therefore, in the case of Memorial Park, for example, its listed size is 100.6 acres, however much of this acreage is not maintained, but rather left in a natural state. Similarly, other park assets may have acreage that is listed in the gross totals but is not maintained. The result is that this prohibits any definitive assessment of the sufficiency of staff since these would be based on the areas that are actually maintained, as opposed to the gross area of 590 acres. However, although it is unlikely that as much as two-thirds of this acreage is in a natural or non-maintained state, if the Maintenance Division were, in fact, responsible for the maintenance of only one-third of the total, or about 197 acres, then this would indicate that each of the six maintenance employees was responsible for an average of 32 acres, which is insufficient to provide anything more than a minimal level of maintenance.

The equipment mechanic, as noted above, is responsible for repairing and maintaining 32 pieces of light and heavy equipment. However, as was described in the fleet maintenance discussion in the Public Works chapter of this report, the project team utilizes the "Vehicle Equivalent Unit" (VEU) method to assess the sufficiency of staff for equipment maintenance functions. Assigning VEUs to the Department's equipment indicates that the VEU total is 28.5, which is far less than the typical range of 90 to 110 VEUs per mechanic position that would indicate full utilization of the capacity of the mechanic.

Given the relative imbalance of workloads between the Department's Mechanic and its Maintenance Workers, the project team recommends that the Mechanic be allocated only half time to the equipment maintenance functions, and half to park and field maintenance. Longer-term, the Town should consider consolidation of all mechanic operations into a central shop.

Recommendation: Reallocate half of the time of the Department's Mechanic to the maintenance of parks and fields.

Longer-term, the Town should consider consolidation of all mechanic operations into a single central shop.

7. Planning and Development

Planning and Development is responsible for processing development related applications, issuing building permits, and conducting inspections for construction and development that occurs in the Town. Planning and Development is comprised of the Building and Planning functions.

1. Analysis of Planning Staffing Needs

Planning is comprised of the Planning and Development Director, Associate Planner, and two Clerks. Planning is responsible for administering the Town's land development regulations. This includes the review of applications for subdivisions, new construction, variances, rezoning, and zoning compliance. They are also tasked with long range planning efforts and implementation.

Application workload for Planning Commission and Zoning Board were provided for 2021. A total of 58 Planning Commission applications and 34 Zoning Board applications were processed by Planning. This is a significant number of applications processed and taken to a public meeting by the current allocation of four staff. As a result, there are several functional areas where staff are limited or have no time to provide proactive services. This includes conducting long range planning studies and special projects.

Staff indicated they do not have time to focus on long range planning efforts such as updating the comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is an important planning tool to guide future development within the Town. There has also been a push for other forward looking planning projects such as transportation planning, affordable housing study, updating the zoning ordinance, and design standards. Even with the use of outside consultants, Town staff do not have available time to manage special projects.

The Town indicated a desire to provide enhanced code enforcement services, especially related to minimum housing standards. Code enforcement is mostly reactive and based on community generated complaints. To provide proactive code enforcement services and to focus on minimum housing standards a part time position would be appropriate for a community the size of Coventry.

With the Town's desire to provide enhanced code enforcement services and the need to for several long-range planning studies, the project team recommends the addition of a Long-Range Planner / Code Enforcement Officer. This would be a full-time position that would primarily focus on managing and assisting long range planning studies/special projects and serves as the primary code enforcement/minimum housing officer for the

Town. These duties may also be shared with the Associate Planner and Zoning Clerk depending on staff's expertise and current planning workload.

Recommendations:

Planning should provide more proactive long range planning efforts and provide proactive minimum housing and code enforcement services to the Town.

A Long-Range Planner / Code Enforcement Officer position should be added to Planning.

2. Planning Technology Analysis

Planning and Building functions were recently consolidated into a single department. While this transition has provided enhanced services and operational efficiencies, there has not been a full consolidation of technology systems. Building uses the OpenGov software system for building application submittal, plan review, permit issuance, inspection request and results. Planning still has a paper-based application process.

Planning should transition to the OpenGov system for their application submittals, review, and permitting database.

Consolidating Planning and Building operations to OpenGov will improve operational efficiencies internally and serve as a single system for the public to submit development applications.

Recommendation: Planning should transition to the OpenGov permitting software system for application submittal and utilize as an application/permit database.

3. Building Analysis

Building is responsible for accepting, processing, and issuing building permits for the Town. Also, they perform building inspection related to construction activity. Building is comprised of a Building Official, Alternate Building Official, Permit Technician, Clerk, Electrical Inspector (PT), and Plumbing/Mechanical Inspector (PT). The following outline primary roles and responsibilities for staff.

- The Building Official and Alternate Building Official conduct plan review and provide building inspections as needed.
- The Electrical and Plumbing/Mechanical Inspectors provide respective inspections on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday as needed.
- The Permit Technician is responsible for the intake, processing, and routing of all building applications. Also, transmits review comments and issues permits.

- Clerk provides departmental wide customer service and is tasked with determining and collecting review and permit fees.

The following table summarizes the number of Building Permits issued.

Building Permits Issued

Permit Type	2020	2021*	Average
Building	1,104	1,393	1,254
Electrical	692	751	709
Plumbing	305	255	264
Mechanical	499	642	575
Solar		98	93
Demolition	10	21	17
Wells	18	14	15
Total	2,628	3,175	2,896

Note: Extrapolated based on data through 11/22/21

An average of nearly 2,900 permits were issued the last two years.

The following table summarizes the workload hours for permit review and inspections.

Workload Hours

Permit Type	Average Permits Issued	Plan Review		Inspections	
		Avg Time Per (HR)	Total Hours	Avg Time Per (HR)	Total Hours
Building	1,254	1.5	1,881	2	2,508
Electrical	709	0.2	142	0.5	354
Plumbing	264	0.2	53	0.5	132
Mechanical	575	0.2	115	0.5	288
Solar	93	1	93	0.5	47
Demolition	17	0.5	8	0.5	8
Wells	15	0.5	8	0.5	8
Total	2,927		2,300		3,345

A total of 5,645 hours of work is associated with application review and inspections. Many of the electrical, plumbing, and mechanical permits are issued by the Permit Technician or Clerk and do not require plan review. Building permits typically require a review by the Building Official or Alternate Building Official. Based on 1,881 hours of plan review and staff's availability of 75%, approximately 1.2 plans examiners are needed.

This allows approximately 1,200 hours annually for the Building Official and Alternate Building Official to perform inspections and other administrative duties in addition to conduct application plan review.

The approach to contracted Electrical and Plumbing/Mechanical Inspectors is appropriate. It provides the Town with flexibility to conduct specialized inspections without requiring additional full-time employees who may only have a singular focus. It is the understanding of the project team that part time inspectors are paid by the number of inspections completed. It was noted that there was limited documentation on contractual agreements between the Town and part time inspectors. Part time inspectors should have a contract that outlines expectation of duties, general work hours, and cost associated with providing services. The Town should formalize agreements with part time inspectors.

The current allocation of a Building Official, Alternate Building Official, Permit Technician, Clerk, Electrical Inspector (PT), and Plumbing/Mechanical Inspector (PT) is appropriate. Part time inspection staff should scale their hours as needed to meet workload fluctuations throughout the year.

Recommendations:

Maintain the current allocation of a Building Official, Alternate Building Official, Permit Technician, Clerk, Electrical Inspector (PT), and Plumbing/Mechanical Inspector (PT) positions in Building.

Formalize contractual agreements with part time inspectors.

8. Police Department

The Coventry Police Department (CPD) is responsible for providing law enforcement and emergency communications for Coventry. This chapter will analyze the workload, staffing, and organizational needs of the Police Department.

1. Patrol Workload Analysis

The following sections provide analysis of patrol workload and other issues relating to the effectiveness of field services.

(1) CAD Analysis Methodology

Our project team has calculated the community-generated workload of the Police Department by analyzing incident records in the computer aided dispatch (CAD) database, covering the entirety of a year. CAD used for this study was from 2019. 2019 data was used versus 2020 or 2021. 2020 calls for services was a historic low due to the Covid-19 pandemic and at the time of the data collection, a complete year for 2021 was not available.

For incidents to be identified as community-generated calls for service and included in our analysis of patrol, each of the following conditions needed to be met:

- The incident must have been unique.
- The incident must have been first created between January 1 and December 31, 2019.
- The incident must have involved at least one officer/sergeant/lieutenant assigned to patrol, as identified by the individual unit codes of each response to the call.
- There must have been no major irregularities or issues with the data recorded for the incident that would prevent sufficient analysis, such as having no unit code or lack of any time stamps.

After filtering through the data using the methodology outlined above, the remaining incidents represent the community-generated calls for service handled by CPD patrol units.

(2) Calls for Service by Hour and Weekday

The following tables display the total number of calls for service handled by patrol units by each hour and day of the week:

Calls for Service by Hour and Weekday

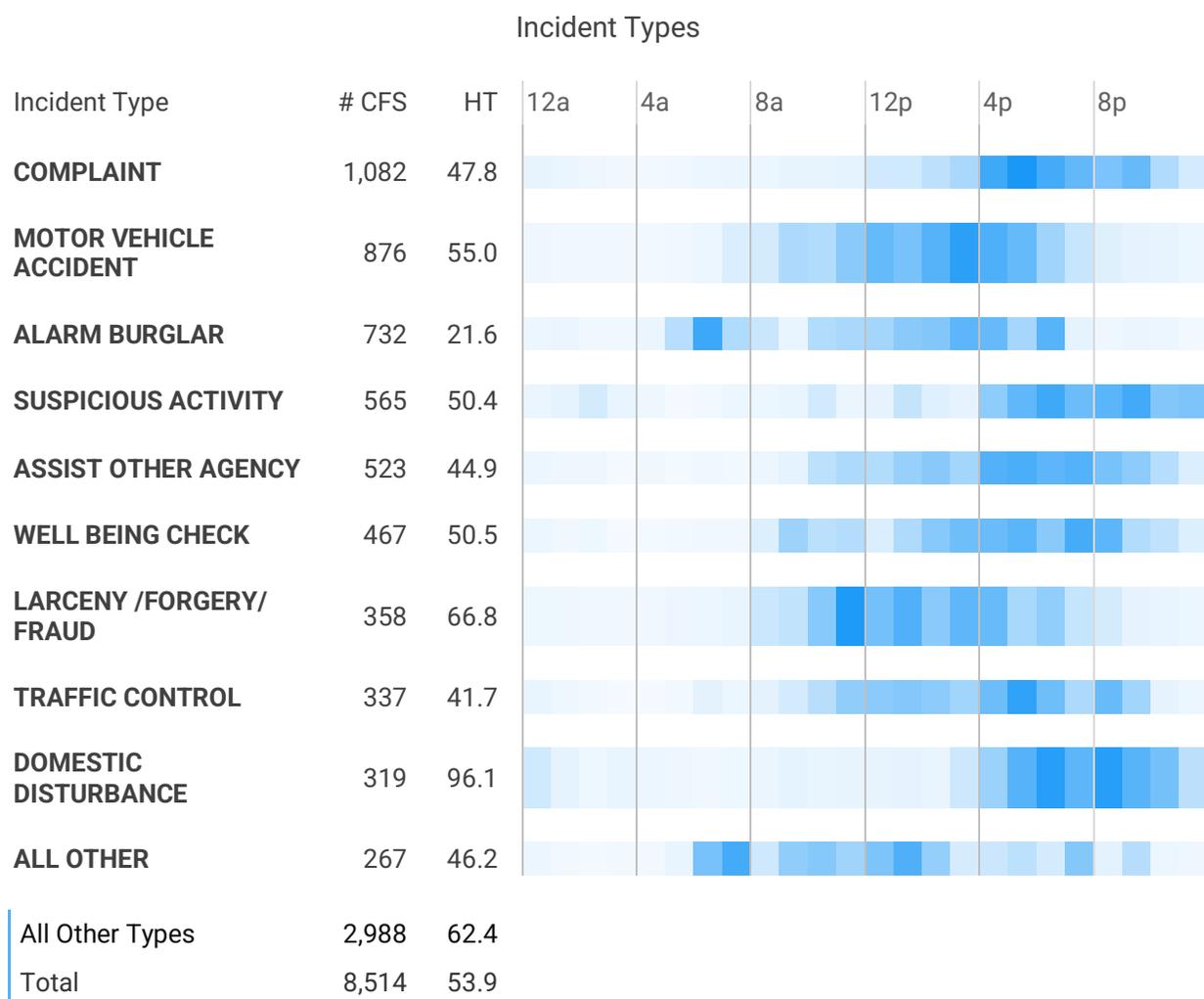
Hour	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Total
12a	43	27	23	17	27	25	33	195
1am	40	15	10	20	19	22	35	161
2am	29	19	16	9	15	24	22	134
3am	14	13	11	9	12	20	24	103
4am	15	14	13	10	14	12	16	94
5am	10	20	15	11	15	17	15	103
6am	23	32	37	24	27	40	20	203
7am	23	31	38	41	57	47	36	273
8am	23	59	51	45	69	74	38	359
9am	42	68	49	53	61	64	46	383
10am	54	65	52	52	63	53	59	398
11am	53	54	53	69	56	67	59	411
12pm	77	76	64	60	63	62	65	467
1pm	49	82	71	60	65	80	67	474
2pm	64	82	69	73	70	68	67	493
3pm	52	83	72	69	66	67	60	469
4pm	49	90	86	96	113	78	101	613
5pm	77	86	89	95	94	92	80	613
6pm	77	95	87	82	88	86	76	591
7pm	66	74	73	67	67	78	67	492
8pm	55	59	66	63	76	81	67	467
9pm	58	53	51	53	81	68	80	444
10pm	47	42	41	27	64	51	44	316
11pm	40	23	24	43	38	44	46	258
Total	1,080	1,262	1,161	1,148	1,320	1,320	1,223	8,514

Call activity increases steadily throughout the day and begins to plateau early afternoon and tapers off between 7 and 9 p.m.

(3) Most Common Types of Calls for Service

The following table provides the ten most common incident categories of calls for service in 2019 as well as the average call handling time (HT)¹ for each:

¹ Handling time is defined as the total time in which a patrol unit was assigned to an incident. It is calculated as the difference between the recorded time stamps the unit being dispatched and cleared from the incident.



“Complaint” incidents are the most common incident types, representing 12.7% of all calls followed, by “Motor Vehicle Accident” at 10.2% of calls.

2. Analysis of Patrol Resource Needs

Analysis of the community-generated workload is at the core of analyzing field staffing needs. Developing an understanding of where, when, and what types of calls are received provides a detailed account of the service needs of the community, and by measuring the time used in responding and handling these calls, the staffing requirements for meeting the community’s services can then be determined.

Coventry provides a high level of service to the community and responds to all requests for service. To provide this level of service, it is not enough for patrol officers to function as call responders. Instead, officers must have sufficient time outside of the community-driven workload to proactively address community issues, conduct problem-oriented

policing, engage with community members, and perform other self-direct activities throughout the community. As a result, patrol staffing needs are calculated not only from a standpoint of the capacity of current resources to handle workloads, but also their ability to provide a certain level of service beyond responding to calls.

With this focus in mind, the following sections examine process used by the project team to determine the patrol resource needs of CPD based on current workloads, staff availability, and continuation of high service level objectives.

(1) Overview of the Resource Needs Analysis

An objective and accurate assessment of patrol staffing requires analysis of the following three factors:

- i. The number of community-generated workload hours handled by patrol.
- ii. The total number of hours that a patrol officer is on-duty and able to handle those workloads, based on current staffing numbers and net availability factors (e.g., leave, administrative time, etc.).
- iii. The remaining amount of time that patrol has to be proactive, which can also be referred to as “uncommitted” time.

This study defines the result of this process as, **patrol proactivity**, or the percentage of patrol officers’ time in which they are *available and on-duty* that is *not* spent responding to community-generated calls for service. This calculation can also be expressed visually as an equation:

$$\frac{\text{Total Net Available Hours} - \text{Total CFS Workload Hours}}{\text{Total Net Available Hours}} = \% \text{ Proactivity}$$

The result of this equation is the overall level of proactivity in patrol, which in turn provides a model for the ability of patrol units to be proactive given current resources and community-generated workloads. There are some qualifications to this, which include the following:

- Optimal proactivity levels are a generalized target, and a single percentage should be applied to every agency. The actual needs of an individual Police Department vary based on a number of factors, including:
 - Other resources the Police Department has to proactively engage with the community and address issues, such as a dedicated proactive unit.

- Community expectations and ability to support a certain level of service.
- Whether fluctuations in the workload levels throughout the day require additional or fewer resources to be staffed to provide adequate coverage.
- Sufficient proactivity at an overall level does not guarantee, based on workload patterns, and deployment schedules, that resources are sufficient throughout all times of the day and week.

Overall, given the large geographic response area to cover, CPD should generally target an overall proactivity level of at least 50% as an effective benchmark of patrol coverage.

(2) Patrol Unit Net Availability

While the staffing levels provided in the descriptive profile provide the scheduled staffing levels, it does not reflect the numbers that are actually on-duty and available to work on at any given time. Out of the 2,008 hours per year that officers are scheduled to work in a year (excluding overtime), a large percentage is not actually spent on-duty and available in the field.

As a result, it is critical to understand the amount of time that officers are on leave – including vacation, sick, injury, military, or any other type of leave – as well as any hours dedicated to on-duty court or training time, and all time spent on administrative tasks such as attending shift briefings. The impact of each of these factors is determined through calculations made from CPD data (2019 – 2021), which are then subtracted from the base number of annual work hours per position. The result represents the total **net available hours** of patrol officers, or the time in which they are on-duty and available to complete workloads and other activities in the field.

The following table summarizes this calculation process, displaying how each net availability factor contributes to the overall net availability of patrol officers:

Breakdown of Unit Availability

Base Annual Work Hours		2,008
Total Leave Hours	-	361
On-Duty Training Hours	-	62
On-Duty Court Time Hours	-	20
Administrative Hours	-	206
Net Available Hours Per Officer	=	1,359
<i>Number of Officer Positions (filled)</i>	×	26
Total Net Available Hours	=	35,341

Overall, officers combine for 35,341 net available hours per year, representing the total time in which they are on duty and able to respond to community-generated incidents and be proactive.

(3) Overview of Call for Service Workload Factors

The previous section examined various trends in patrol workload, including variations by time of day and of week, common incident types, as well as a number of other methods. This section advances this analysis, detailing the full extent of the resource demands that these incidents create for responding patrol personnel.

Each call for service represents a certain amount of workload, much of which is not captured within the handling time of the primary unit. Some of these factors can be calculated directly from data provided by the Police Department, while others must be estimated due to limitations in their measurability.

The following table outlines the factors that must be considered in order to capture the full scope of community-generated workload, and provides an explanation of the process used to calculate each factor:

Factors Used to Calculate Total Patrol Workload

Number of Community-Generated Calls for Service

Data obtained from an export of CAD data covering a period of an entire year (2019) that has been analyzed and filtered in order to determine the number and characteristics of all community-generated activity handled by patrol officers.

*Calculated from CPD data: **8,514 community-generated calls for service.***

Primary Unit Handling Time (multiplied by the number of calls)

The time used by the primary unit to handle a community-generated call for service, including time spent traveling to the scene of the incident and the duration of on-scene time. For each incident, this number is calculated as the difference between 'call cleared' time stamp and the 'unit dispatched' time stamp.

*Calculated from CPD data: **53.9 minutes of handling time per call for service.***

Number of Backup Unit Responses

The total number of backup unit responses to community-generated calls for service. This number often varies based on the severity of the call, as well as the geographical density of the area being served.

This number can also be expressed as the *rate* of backup unit responses to calls for service and is inclusive of any additional backup units beyond the first.

*Estimated: **0.50 backup units per call for service.***

Backup Unit Handling Time (multiplied by the rate)

The handling time for backup units responding to calls for service is calculated using the same process that was used for primary units, representing the time from the unit being dispatched to the unit clearing the call.

Because backup unit data was not available, the project team used a backup handling time of 75% of the average call handling time.

*Estimated: **40.4 minutes of handling time per backup unit.***

Number of Reports Written

The total number of reports and other assignments relating to calls for service that have been completed by patrol units. This includes any supporting work completed by backup units.

*From CPD data: **0.30 reports written per call for service.***

Report Writing Time (multiplied by the report writing rate)

The average amount of time it takes to complete a report or other assignment in relation to a call for service. Without any data detailing this specifically, report writing time must be estimated based on the experience of the project team. It is assumed that 45 minutes are spent per written report, including the time spent by backup units on supporting work assignments.

Estimated: 45 minutes per report

Total Workload Per Call for Service

The total time involved in handling a community-generated call for service, including the factors calculated for primary and backup unit handling time, reporting writing time, and jail transport/booking time.

Calculated from previously listed factors: 87.7 total minutes of workload per call for service.

Each of the factors summarized in this section contribute to the overall picture of patrol workload – the total number of hours required for patrol units to handle community-generated calls for service, including primary and backup unit handling times, report writing time, and jail transport time.

These factors are summarized in the following table:

Summary of Patrol Workload Factors

Total Calls for Service	8,514] 61%
Avg. Primary Unit Handling Time	53.9 min.	
Backup Units Per CFS	0.50] 23%
Avg. Backup Unit Handling Time	40.4 min.	
Reports Written Per CFS	0.30] 16%
Time Per Report	45.0 min.	
<hr/>		
Avg. Workload Per Call	87.7 min.	
Total Workload	12,444 hrs.	

Overall, each call represents an average workload of 87.7 minutes. This includes all time spent by the primary unit handling the call, the time spent by any backup units attached

to the call, as well as reports or other assignments completed in relation to the incident.

(4) Calculation of Overall Patrol Proactivity and Staffing Needs

Using the results of the analysis of both patrol workloads and staff availability, proactivity can be calculated. The result can then function as a barometer from which to gauge the capacity of current resources to handle call workload demands, given objectives for meeting a certain service level. It is important to note that overall proactivity is calculated based on patrol officers only, as field sergeant was excluded.

The following table shows the calculation process used by the project team to determine overall proactivity levels, representing the percentage of time that patrol officers have available outside of handling community-generated workloads:

Overall Patrol Proactivity		
Total Patrol Net Available Hours		35,341
Total Patrol Workload Hours	–	12,444
<hr/>		
Resulting # of Uncommitted Hours	=	22,896
Divided by Total Net Available Hours	÷	35,341
<hr/>		
Overall Proactive Time Level	=	64.8%

At an overall level, CPD patrol officers have 64.8% of time available to be proactive, after factoring in community-generated workload. This is above the minimum target threshold of 50% overall proactivity.

The following charts show this analysis at a more detailed level, providing proactivity levels in four-hour blocks throughout the week by service area:

Proactivity by Hour and Weekday

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Overall
2am–6am	86%	92%	91%	93%	91%	91%	83%	89%
6am–10am	78%	72%	72%	76%	70%	70%	78%	74%
10am–2pm	64%	60%	68%	68%	67%	66%	65%	65%
2pm–6pm	69%	53%	53%	42%	47%	55%	58%	54%
6pm–10pm	64%	55%	61%	64%	54%	59%	60%	60%
10pm–2am	71%	85%	82%	80%	71%	69%	69%	76%
Overall	72%	70%	71%	70%	67%	68%	69%	65%

At 65%, proactivity is more than adequate to provide excellent law enforcement services. However, during the 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. patrol resources have a higher call volume that may impact officer availability. While a proactive time in the low 40% is sufficient to handle most calls for services, there may be times when lower priority calls may not be responded to immediately due to less officer availability.

To determine patrol officer staffing needs the following metrics were used:

- 2019 calls for service (8,514) and associated workload hours (12,444)
- Net Annual Work Hours of 1,359 per officer (based on 2019, 2020, and 2021 averages).
- Turnover rate of 9% (based on sworn turnover from 2019 – 2021).
- Proactive target of 60%.

The following table summarizes the patrol officer staffing calculation.

Staffing Analysis

Total Workload Hours		12,444
Proactivity Target		60%
Staffed Hours Needed	=	31,110
Net Available Hours Per Officer	÷	1,359
Turnover Factor	+	9%
Patrol Officer FTEs Needed	=	25

A total of 25 patrol officers are needed to maintain a 60% proactive level. Based on the challenges associated with recruitment and retention of law enforcement personnel, it is recommended to maintain the current authorized level of 30 officers, six sergeants, and three lieutenants assigned to Patrol.

Recommendation:

Maintain the current allocation of 30 officers, six sergeants, and three lieutenants assigned to Patrol.

3. Analysis of Investigation Resource Needs

Detectives are responsible for the investigation of criminal activity and reported crimes. They are also tasked with processing crime scenes for evidence, processing and maintaining evidence, and proactive narcotic investigations. Detectives consist of (when fully staffed) 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 2 Sergeants (1 vacancy) and 7 Detectives (3 vacancies). 1 detective is assigned to crime scenes, 1 detective is partially assigned to the DEA leaving 4 detectives to work the assigned caseloads. 1 sergeant and 1 detective assigned to nights for proactive narcotic investigations are currently vacant.

To conduct the analysis of staffing needs for detectives the 2019 caseload data provided by the department was used. The 2019 data was used because 2020 and 2021 had lower caseloads due to the impact of Covid.

Caseload data was filtered by case type to determine approximate caseload hours because of the variance in investigative hours needed based on caseload type. Three types of case types were used: Person Crimes, Property Crimes and General Crimes. Each of these case types are detailed in the following sections:

(1) Person Crime Case Hours

Person crimes are complicated and treated more seriously within the judicial system. These tend to have more witnesses and evidence, thus requiring more time spent in interviews and recovering / processing evidence compared to property crimes. Approximate hours per case are presented below based on interviews with detectives as well as our experience. To determine case workload hours an average of 22.6 hours per solvable case is used for person crimes.

(2) Property Crime Caseload Hours

Property crimes are typically much less complex and therefore require less investigative work. They also tend to have much lower solvability rates. These types of cases typically do not require a detective to respond to a scene and are often handled as follow up a day

or more after the occurrence. Approximate hours per case are presented below based on numerous interviews with detectives as well as our team's experience. To determine case workload hours an average of **16.9 hours** per solvable case is used for property crimes.

(3) General Crimes / Case Follow up Workload Hours

General crimes are typically much less complex and therefore require less investigative work. They also tend to have much lower solvability rates. Case follow up and other low-level offenses require less investigative effort. These types of cases typically do not require a detective to respond to a scene and are often handled as follow up a day or more after the occurrence. To determine case workload hours an average of **6 hours** per solvable case is used. Note: background investigations for new hires are also included under the General Crimes category.

(4) Caseload Data

The Coventry Police Department reported a total of 355 cases assigned in 2019. The following table notes the hours associated with each case type and the number of cases assigned:

2019 Investigative Caseload

Case Type	#	Avg. Hours per Case	Total Case load Hours
Person Crimes	28	22.6	632.8
Property Crimes	229	16.9	3,870.1
General Crimes	98	6	588
Total	355		5,090.9

(5) Summary of Workload Hours for Detectives

As mentioned above there are a total of 4 authorized detective positions assigned to work cases. Two detectives have specialties of sex crimes, juveniles, and financial crimes and 2 are generalist detectives. Using the previous calculation of net available hours for sworn staff and total 2019 caseload the number of detectives needed to investigate the caseload can be determined:

Calculation of Detective Staffing Needs

Total Caseload Hours		5,091
<i>Divided by total net available hours for 1 detective (1,359)</i>	÷	1,359
Number of Detectives Needed	=	3.74

As the chart indicates the number of detectives recommended to work the assigned caseload hours assigned is 3.74 and there are a total of 4 detectives currently assigned. Some detectives have collateral duties which limit their time available to investigate cases. Caseload work hours closely match the net hours available to work cases with four assigned detectives to work these cases.

(6) Night Sergeant and Detective

The night sergeant and detective were focused on proactive narcotics investigations. These two positions are currently vacant due to staffing shortages. Drug related crime and overdoses continue to be an issue in the community. Patrol officers can investigate some street level narcotic cases; however, many of these types of cases are complex and require surveillance or the use of human intelligence which cannot be successfully accomplished while working a patrol shift.

(7) BCI Detective

The BCI detective responds to major crimes, processes crime scenes and evidence. The detective can also handle cases when needed. The position allows CPD to professionally process crimes scenes and recover evidence.

(8) Administration

CPD currently has a Captain and Lieutenant assigned to oversee detectives and they are supported by 2 sergeants (1 vacancy). The captain and lieutenant oversee the two Detective Sergeants and serve as the Legal Team for the department. They generally do not carry a caseload and primarily focus on administrative and legal work. Which is appropriate.

Recommendation: Maintain authorized staffing of 1 Captain, 1 Lieutenant, 2 Sergeant and 7 Detective positions.

4. Analysis of Dispatch

Dispatch is responsible for receiving calls from the regional dispatch agency and dispatching officers to calls for service and assisting officers' inquiries. Dispatchers are

assigned to 8-hour shifts, with dedicated schedules each week. Generally, there is only one dispatcher assigned per shift, except there are 2 dispatchers assigned to the 0800 – 1600 hour shift, Wednesday – Friday. The Desk Sergeant/Lieutenant serves as the backup for the dispatch center, but they have additional ancillary duties such as arrestee booking/supervision, assisting with VIN checks, and taking walk-in reports. The current approach works well as there is generally no backup Dispatcher on duty.

With the incorporation of the Desk Sergeant/Lieutenant in the dispatch center and the fact that Coventry does not provide emergency call taking service, the approach to having only one dispatcher for the majority of the week works well. Having the second dispatcher scheduled Wednesday through Friday provides coverage during some of the busiest calls for service times. Consideration should be given to shifting dispatcher schedules to provide two dispatchers until 1900 hours later in the workweek, which are historically the highest call volume times.

It is recommended to maintain the current allocation of five dispatchers and having the Desk Sergeant/Lieutenant serve as the second/backup dispatcher. Consideration should be given to adjusting shift start times to have greater overlap of two dispatchers on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday to correspond with the busiest call volume times.

Recommendation: Maintain the current allocation of five dispatcher positions.

5. Analysis of Administration

Administration is responsible for training, accreditation, information technology, records management, departmental payroll, finance, and other administrative duties. The following points outline the individual roles and responsibilities of staff.

- Captain and Lieutenant oversee the training and accreditation programs of the PD. They also provide administrative oversight and direction to the team and support other operations as needed. (e.g., Captain is SWAT team commander.)
- Office Manager and Clerk provide administrative oversight to the PD and is responsible for processing time sheets and payrolls, maintain staff records, accounts payable/receivables, and apply for and administer grants.
- MIS Coordinator is tasked with implementation and maintenance of all technology systems of the PD and provides backup support to the Town's MIS staff.
- Data Clerk (2) are responsible for processing and maintaining departmental records, serve as the public counter, and conducting VIN checks.
- Custodian (1.5) are responsible for providing janitorial services in the Police Department Building. The part time position works weekday evenings.

The current allocation of responsibilities for the various functions under Administration

align with industry prevailing practices and is similar to similar size law enforcement agencies.

A law enforcement agency of approximately 50 sworn staff should have a dedicated training staff member. CPD has a dedicated Lieutenant assigned to Training and is supported by the Captain. The Lieutenant also serves as an accreditation manager, which requires dedicated staff to help ensure compliance with accreditation standards and facilitating the accreditation process on behalf of the department. The current allocation of one Lieutenant to training and accreditation is appropriate.

The Office Manager and Clerk provide a wide variety of administrative support to the Department and serve as liaison with Town wide finance and human resource teams. The Police Department is the largest department in the Town and for the department to have internal resources for payroll and human resource functions is appropriate. One area where increased efficiencies may be gained is through the use of a software platform for time reporting and payroll functions. The Office Manager maintains a manual and Excel based log of overtime, vacation, and calculates payroll manually. The Town should implement a payroll software system that automates payroll functions for all Town staff. This would increase operational efficiencies and improve internal controls.

The MIS Coordinator serves as the Police Department's internal information technology specialist. Law enforcement agencies have significant technology support needs with the CAD/RMS systems, radios, training software system, and use of force early detection software systems. Embedding information technology staff in the police department provides exceptional service and is highly appropriate. Especially since support is needed 24/7. The MIS Coordinator position should remain as a dedicated employee within the Police Department.

There are two Data Clerks that are primarily responsible for departmental record keeping, conducting VIN checks, and staffing the public counter during business hours. The allocation of two staff for these services is appropriate. Current staffing levels prevents dispatch staff or the Desk Sergeant/Lieutenant from having to serve as the first point of contact during normal business hours and allows them to focus on their primary duties.

Recommendation:

Maintain the current allocation of 8.5 positions assigned to Police Department Administration.

9. Public Works

The Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the Town's public infrastructure, including paved surfaces, sidewalks, signs, vehicles and equipment, facilities and sewer line. The Department is also responsible for snow and ice removal from Town roadways. In addition, the Department provides curbside collection of solid waste and recycled materials, as well as a drop off station for recyclables.

1. Analysis of Public Works Staffing Needs

(a) Roads and Bridges

The Roads and Bridges Division of the Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance and repair of 456 lane miles of roadway. This includes approximately 18 miles of unpaved gravel roads. Although the number of center line miles in the system is not precisely known, it is not unreasonable that this is likely to be approximately half of the 456 lane miles, or 228 linear miles. As is noted elsewhere in this report, the Public Works Department does not record data in sufficient form to facilitate a quantitative analysis of individual employee or divisional workloads related to activities in maintaining the Town's roadways. However, in the project team's experience, well-functioning public works organizations allocate one dedicated maintenance worker for every 15 to 20 linear miles of roadway. Excluding one full time equivalent (FTE) employee assigned to sign maintenance, and approximately 0.5 FTE for street sweeping, there are 18.5 FTE maintenance workers in the Roads and Bridges Division. This equates to approximately one worker for every 12.3 linear miles, which is somewhat below the low end of the range of 15 to 20 noted above.

The ratio of 12.3 miles per maintenance worker indicates that there is excess capacity in the Division, with a calculated need for 15 employees rather than the available 18.5 FTE. However, there are mitigating factors, including the fact that 18 miles of roadway are relatively time and labor intensive to maintain, and that the Town has allocated no additional funding for the replacement of its paved surfaces since 2016, when the last of the \$10.6 million infrastructure bond was expended for this purpose. In addition, the Department reports that no funding for crack filling of roads has been allocated since 2016. These factors, if allowed to continue, will result in failures of the roadways, but will at the same time create maintenance events for which the Division must be prepared to address.

The project team recommends the elimination of one Driver position. This may be accomplished either through attrition, however in a separate discussion, the project team

recommends the study of the feasibility of establishing a new division for sewer maintenance, and this eliminated position may be transferred into that new division, should it be established.

Recommendation: The Public Works Department should eliminate one Driver position.

(b) Vehicle Maintenance

The Vehicle Maintenance Division is responsible for the preventive and corrective maintenance and repair of 70 pieces of light and heavy equipment, as well as 185 pieces of hand tools, attachments and other small motorized and non-motorized equipment. The light and heavy equipment includes sedans, pickups, vans, graders, dump trucks, loaders, sanitation trucks, air compressors, trailers, and others. Although the light and heavy equipment is less numerous than the smaller, supplementary element of the total inventory, it composes the most maintenance-intensive element. The fleet contains Public Works vehicles and equipment as well as a few sedans used by the Town Manager and the Building Inspections Department. The Police and Parks and Recreation either maintain their own fleets or outsource this service. The Division maintains its fleet with a contingent of four (4) mechanics and a variable amount of time of the Division's Working Foreman.

In calculating the adequacy of fleet maintenance staffing levels, the project team utilizes the Vehicle Equivalent Unit (VEU). This approach acknowledges the varying levels of maintenance and repair intensity required of different types of vehicles and equipment. Therefore, although the arithmetic computation of the average number of vehicles and equipment per mechanic is 63.8 to 1 (i.e., 255 units divided by 4 mechanics) in the Public Works Department's Vehicle Maintenance Division, this ratio gives equal weight to, for example, the maintenance requirements for an air compressor and a grader. The VEU approach, however, assigns numerical weights to the various pieces of equipment in the fleet. The standard VEU is an administrative sedan, which is assigned a weight of one (1) VEU. An air compressor or trailer, which require far less maintenance and repair expenditures on the parts of mechanics during a typical year, are assigned VEUs of 0.5. On the other hand, motor graders and sweepers are assigned higher VEUs, as they require far greater maintenance expenditures than sedans, air compressors and trailers.

The project team assigned VEUs to each of the 255 pieces of equipment for which the Vehicle Maintenance Division is responsible and calculated the VEU total at 217.5. Therefore, the ratio of VEUs per mechanic is roughly 54 to 1 before considering any of the time expended by the Working Foreman. This ratio is much less than the typical ratio of between 90 and 110 per mechanic, indicating that the Division is currently over-staffed. To some degree, this over-staffing situation is explained by the relative lack of space for parts inventory, which may periodically delay repairs due to travel time to and from parts providers. However, this is likely not a strong contributing factor to any repair delays, as the project team noted that the high-turnover parts do appear to be available in the small parts room. However, an additional factor which may explain at least part of the over-

staffing in the Division is the fact that the fleet for which mechanics are responsible is relatively old. In addition, there are some pieces of equipment that are beyond their typical replacement periods, which also adds to the time required for their maintenance and repair. The average age of the 70 units in the fleet is 12.7 years, which is considered old by almost any comparative measure with which the project team has experience. In fact, 15 of the 70 units (21%) are at least 20 years old, and another 15 are between 15 and 19 years old. Given this relatively advanced fleet age, this likely contributes to the need for more mechanics than might be the case with a younger fleet.

The age of the fleet, although it does result in the average unit requiring more frequent repair than would otherwise be the case, it is highly unlikely that it fully explains the need for four mechanics. The project team recommends that three full time mechanics be allocated to the Division, with the Working Foreman being utilized as needed during any peak workloads. The ratio of VEUs per mechanic would be about 72 to 1 after the elimination of one mechanic, even before the consideration of any time expended by the Working Foreman. The ratio of 72 to 1 is below the lower end of the typical range of 90 to 110 VEUs' per mechanic, so even accounting for the relatively advanced age of the fleet, the presence of three mechanics in the garage is sufficient to adequately maintain the fleet.

One potential use of the excess capacity in the Vehicle Maintenance garage is the assumption of the responsibility for maintaining the 61 units in the Coventry Police Department fleet. This fleet is composed primarily of sport utility vehicles and vans, with some sedans and trailers. The project team has calculated that there is a total of 93.5 VEUs in the Police fleet. If the responsibility for this fleet were assumed by the Public Works Department, the total VEUs would be 311, which would require between 2.8 and 3.4 mechanics.

One potential use of the excess capacity in the Vehicle Maintenance garage is the assumption of the responsibility for maintaining the Coventry Police Department fleet.

Recommendation:

The Public Works Garage should assume responsibility for the maintenance and repair of the Police Department's fleet with the current contingent of four mechanic positions

(c) Engineering

The Town currently contracts for engineering services with a private engineering firm for 20 hours of service per week. The incumbent has provided these services for the Town for several years on two different occasions, with these services interrupted briefly several years ago when the Town had the services of a full time Town employee in the position.

The current contracted engineer reviews sewer connection applications, responds to erosion control issues, inspect subdivisions and roadways, and generally responds to requests for services, which results in a reactive form of engineering response.

The reactive mode by which engineering services are administered in Coventry is resulting in several deficiencies, as outlined below.

- The Town has no centralized organization with the technical experience to assemble its capital improvements needs. This has several elements, including the ability to provide accurate cost estimates for capital projects as well as their ongoing maintenance requirements; as well as the ability to challenge assumptions made by the various requesting departments whose personnel may not have the in-house expertise to consider all technical dimensions of a proposed project.
- There is no central organization responsible for the assessment of facility conditions. This particular function is generally outsourced to private firms that have specific expertise in structural engineering, however it is important that an engineer be able to challenge any statements made in the structural assessment report.
- The Town has no central organization to determine the maintenance requirements of its sewer system. This is an issue that is addressed elsewhere in the report, but the current method of maintaining this underground infrastructure is to rely upon the private engineering firm to identify, and even procure, needed maintenance services for the sewer system. Additionally, interviews indicate that little oversight is exercised currently over either the identified maintenance needs, or the payment for these services.

The project team recommends the elimination of the private, part-time engineering service, and the hiring of a full time Town Engineer for the oversight of all services currently provided by the contractor, but in addition, the more proactively oriented services outlined above. Although the project team recommends, in a separate section of this report, the establishment of a Sewer Administrative Division in Public Works, the Town Engineer should oversee this organization, and the requirements for the position of Town Engineer should include some experience in hydraulic engineering to enable to incumbent to identify maintenance requirements of the sewer system, and to communicate these to private providers.

Recommendation: Eliminate the current contract with the private engineering firm providing part-time engineering services and create and fill the position of Town Engineer.

2. Analysis of Public Works Management Information Needs

(a) Computerized Management Information System

Recording and reporting the activities of an organization allows it to analyze many elements of its work and workforce. Although this may be accomplished manually, the availability and relatively low cost of computerized management systems facilitate this task to a degree that most modern public works departments recognize their value as a force multiplier in enabling staff to analyze and report, as well as to plan and manage work.

The Coventry Public Works Department does not currently possess a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS). The Director has issued instructions to each division in the Department to record their respective work accomplishments on a manual form, however this has not been uniformly implemented. The project team did obtain a copy of a completed "Employee Work Sheet" filled out by the Facilities Maintenance Division, however it only records dates, employee names, a brief description of the work accomplished for the entire day (e.g., "Open Town Hall," "Remove a bunch of items from Library and throw away at transfer station", etc.), and some brief notes. However, the times listed on the work sheet are not specific to any one activity completed by the employee, but rather give an indication of the activities completed in the workday. Further, the work is not recorded or summarized, but rather the Employee Work Sheet is filed in a folder, and not referred to unless there are circumstances that require a reference back to a specific date.

The absence of a CMMS deprives supervisors and ultimately the Director of the ability to assess productivity, and to determine how much work can be accomplished with a given set of resources. For example, in the case of the Employee Work Sheet referenced above for Facilities Maintenance, the instruction to the employee to remove items from the Library and to throw them away at the transfer station is not defined in terms of how much time should be allocated to the task, and effectively allows the employee to determine this while on site.

The illustration above is not intended to single out the Facilities Maintenance Division, as it is the one division that is reliably conforming to the instructions by the Director to record work. Rather, this is intended to identify the general deficiencies and limitations of any manual system that relies, not on quantifiable and historical time estimates of previous work and productivity, but on vague estimates of the amount of time required for any particular task. Critically, though, it ultimately relies on the employee performing the work to determine the time required to perform it.

The Public Works Department should begin the process of defining the specifications required of a new CMMS. Then, the Town should allocate funding for the procurement of a CMMS through a public bid process. In the interim period, however, the Department Director, working with the Foremen, should require all employees to record time expended on particular tasks to enable the identification of the services provided (e.g. pothole patching, drainage repair, street sweeping, etc.), the levels of service (e.g., each street segment should be swept once annually, with downtown areas swept twice weekly in fall months), the outputs of each of these services (e.g., the tonnage of asphalt laid in place), and the cost of those services in terms of the total cost and the cost per unit of output.

The CMMS should be used to incorporate the following basic elements:

- The ability to plan and schedule preventive maintenance. Preventive maintenance should constitute a significant portion of the divisions of Roads and Bridges, Vehicle Maintenance and Building Maintenance work.
- The ability to monitor and report on the inventory and procurement processes of the Department. Currently, the Public Works Department only records the procurement of parts and supplies on manual forms, but there is no formal inventory of current levels of materials in any division, nor any formal documentation of materials that are disbursed. The CMMS should provide the ability of the Department to electronically track the inventory on hand, and to reconcile this against purchase orders, as well as do routine physical inventory counts.
- The ability to record and manage the work performed in the Department. Work activities should be defined for the significant maintenance work that is performed. There is a definable set of work activities for each division, and they should be entered into the CMMS. As work is accomplished against these work activity codes, data such as the employee, date, labor hours, equipment hours and materials used should be entered as well.
- The ability to generate and analyze reports on the maintenance of an asset, and on the productivity of the staff in maintaining it. Analysis of trends in maintaining an asset may indicate either a need to replace the asset, or the need for greater skills and training of the staff who maintain it. Anecdotal reports of these trends may suffice when there are relatively few assets being maintained by a few number of staff, however they are insufficient in providing meaningful analysis of the number of assets under management by the Town's Public Works Department. The CMMS should be used to isolate these trends and to assist in making decisions regarding asset replacement as well as skills development.
- The ability to measure performance. Currently, the Department has established no performance measures, and has no ability to accumulate and report performance against a set of measures in any case. Redesigning work practices

to ensure that all work, materials and equipment are associated with specific jobs and categories of work will allow the Department to analyze and report on the efficiency with which the work was accomplished.

It is unrealistic to expect that the crews will immediately begin to report work in the consistent and comprehensive manner that will ultimately be necessary to maximize the usefulness of the CMMS once it is procured and installed. For this reason, the Department should begin to require employees in all divisions to report time on manual forms (not only in Building Maintenance) as an interim step in acclimating them to the requirements of the new system. The basic information that should be required on each work order should include the following:

- Crew Member Name (or Numeric identifier).
- Location of Work. The specific location of the asset should be identified in the work order. Similarly, for Vehicle Maintenance, an identifier for each unit should be developed; for Roads and Bridges, a numeric identifier for the specific roadway section should be developed, and similar identifiers for other assets such as signs, street trees, etc., and for Building Maintenance, an identifier for the building and the specific piece of machinery being maintained. In each case, this should be identified in the CMMs for the work performed by both internal crews and contractors.
- Job Number. This should be a unique numeric assignment associated with a definable activity. Should the work activity span multiple days, the same numeric identifier should be used, however different dates of activity should be noted, as in the next category.
- Date of Work.
- Equipment Used. This should reflect the number of hours a specific piece of equipment was used. It should reflect the total time at the work site, and not simply the number of engine hours or mileage accumulated.
- Materials Used. This should reflect the quantities and their costs.
- Contracted Costs. Bills from contractors should be reflected in the work order and should reflect the dates of accomplishment, hours, materials and equipment billed, and total labor hours.
- Activity Code. For example, the Roads and Bridges Division should develop activity codes that describe the work accomplished, such as an alpha numeric code like, "RB-001" may describe pothole repair work, whereas "BM-001" may describe a particular maintenance activity for building maintenance such as changing air filters.

In the early stages of development, the Department Director and Foremen should analyze each crew member's input on these work orders to ensure a proper and consistent understanding and completion of each element. Any remedial instructions should be made at the earliest possible time to ensure that incorrect procedures are not ingrained into the process.

As the CMMS is brought online, the addition of mobile technology would greatly enhance not only deployment, but also the effective tracking of activities and costs. The purchase and deployment of tablets or smart phones in the field would facilitate the input of work as it is accomplished and will allow crews to note locations of needed repairs while in the field as well.

In many deployments, it is preferable to roll out a "pilot program" to test the technology across the Department and with a variety of mobile technology platforms. A pilot program allows for a small segment of the workforce to test training, tools, and accuracy before making full team deployment decisions and provides an opportunity to discover any successes or pitfalls before full investment and roll-out.

Recommendations:

Begin the process of defining the information requirements of a new computerized maintenance management system that incorporates the input of each of the divisions in the Public Works Department.

In the interim period, instruct the employees of each division to manually record the attributes of the work accomplished.

In the longer term, begin to accumulate data and information related to times per task, material usage, equipment usage and other important elements of work that will allow for a more precise definition of time and expenses necessary to accomplish work.

As the issues outlined for the Public Works Department apply equally to the maintenance functions performed in the Parks and Recreation Department and Coventry Public Schools, it is recommended that that these two departments be included in the requirements definition of the new CMMS, and that they implement the system concurrently with the Public Works Department.

(b) Policies and Procedures

The Public Works Department is operating without a full set of formal policies and procedures to guide employees in areas such as personnel rules, risk assessment, snow removal, and more. The Department should take a more structured and comprehensive approach to the development of policies and procedures. In many ways, policies and

procedures simply codify work rules and practices that have come to be understood and followed by most employees. However, as there are new employees entering the workforce on a regular basis, it is important to outline these policies and procedures so that all employees have a common understanding, and present themselves to the public, and even to other operating departments, in a standardized manner.

In developing policies and procedures for the Department, the following approach should be utilized.

- Minimize. The policies and procedures should be kept to a minimum.
- Best Methods. Make certain the procedure represents the “best method”. This means the procedure has undergone detailed analysis and is continually challenged.
- Review and Revise. All policies and procedures should be reviewed annually.
- Keep Current. The problem with many policies and procedures is that they have long ago outlived their usefulness, and no one remembers why the policies and procedures were created in the first place. Sometimes they contradict each other and create even more confusion. Responsibility for updating these policies and procedures should be clear.
- Short is better than long. It is not the quantity, but the quality of information that is the essential problem of the information age.
- Be ready to change. The key to organizational effectiveness and efficiency is finding a better way. The Department must always be ready to challenge current policy or change it.
- The policies should be readily available to employees, supervisors, support staff and managers.

The project team has provided below the broad general topics that should be considered in a policies and procedures manual that are based on the American Public Works Association’s (APWA) Management Practices Manual. These should be adapted for applicability to the working environment in Coventry.

- Bid Process
- Cemeteries
- Communications
- Emergency Management
- Engineering Design
- Environmental Compliance
- Equipment and Fleet Management

- Facilities Management
- Finance
- Human Resource Management
- Information Technology and Telecommunications
- Occupied Facilities (Security, Risk Assessment, Environmental Controls, etc.)
- Organization and Strategic Planning
- Parking
- Right-of-Way Management
- Risk Management
- Safety
- Snow Removal and Ice Control
- Solid Waste Collection
- Solid Waste Disposal
- Solid Waste Management
- Solid Waste Recycling and Reuse
- Storm Water and Flood Management Service Levels
- Street Cleaning Management
- Street Maintenance
- Traffic Operations
- Utility Coordination
- Vector Control
- Wastewater Collection and Conveyance

The Public Works Department should establish a policies and procedures committee to identify the appropriate topics for coverage in a policies and procedures manual. Perhaps using the above suggested topics as a guide, the committee should develop standard policies and procedures for these topics. Sample policies and procedures may be purchased through APWA or other providers. Other policies may be borrowed from other cities and towns either within or outside Rhode Island and may be modified to suit the particular operating environment in Coventry.

3. Analysis of Public Works Organization

(a) Sewer Maintenance

Interviews indicate that the maintenance of the Town's sewer infrastructure is performed on a reactive basis, meaning that as problems occur and are recognized, they are repaired, rather than proactively maintaining the sewer line.

In 1982, the Town contracted to use 25% of the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) capacity in West Warwick, however it has historically used only about 18% to 20% of this capacity. The Town also pays for about 25% of the maintenance of the sewer line that connects to the WWTP. Interviews indicate that very little investment in sewer infrastructure was made between 1982 and 1999, and this resulted in numerous

breakages and the need to replace much of the underground infrastructure that had been delayed for years.

In 2004, a large industrial user ran its sewer line through the Town of Coventry, which allowed the Town to extend its sewer line to many other Town residents, however, it failed to increase sewer rates commensurate with the payment of debt. Therefore, the Sewer Fund is carrying a heavy debt load, and receives loans from the Town's General Fund to support it.

The relative lack of funding over an extended period of time has not only resulted in a failure to replace sewer line on a regular basis, but also resulted in numerous maintenance problems as well. The current method of addressing these problems is to report them to the State Department of Environmental Management, and then to contact a private engineering firm that has been responsible for the repair of the system since 1992. This outsourcing of the identification of sewer infrastructure issues has resulted in not only a failure to perform preventive maintenance, but in some confusion as to the role of the Public Works Department in the maintenance of a critical asset.

The contract with the engineering firm states that its responsibilities to the Town include reviewing wastewater project information for completed contracts, change orders and related documents, and to discuss the findings with the Town. Further, it is required to attend meetings to discuss the planning and management of wastewater projects, review and prepare information and cost data related to the planning and implementation of future wastewater projects, assist with inter-party agreements related to sewer connections and use, and to provide other general engineering and technical assistance at the request of the Town. Notably, the contract does not specifically refer to its responsibilities for the maintenance of the sewer infrastructure, however the understood protocol is for the engineering firm to subcontract for any necessary repairs, and that these are to be paid by the Town when they are incurred. The responsibilities of the Town are also outlined in the contract, and broadly include the responsibilities to provide to the engineering firm pertinent data related to any projects, access to the appropriate premises, maps and digital files, and to pay the engineering firm for services rendered.

As noted above, this contractual arrangement has created some confusion in the Public Works Department regarding its responsibilities for identifying sewer line maintenance, repair, replacement and environmental issues. The result has been that Public Works is serving as a pass-through organization for the payment of invoices submitted to the Town's Finance Department for payment. As the Finance Department has no technical expertise in determining whether the invoiced work has been completed in accordance with the contract, it is the Public Works Department's responsibility to perform this

function. However, there is no formal inspection procedure in place, and invoices are generally passed to Finance for payment.

The issue of organizational accountability for the maintenance and repair of the sewer system should be resolved. At a minimum, the responsibilities for the maintenance and repair of the sewer system should be defined, and the project team strongly recommends that the Public Works Department be responsible for the following functions:

- The development of a preventive maintenance plan for the sewer system.
- Inspection of any work performed on the sewer system.
- In consultation with the engineer, identification of capital requirements to ensure the viability and structural integrity of the system.

These functions and services should be provided by the Public Works Department in any case; however, it is recommended that the Town consider the establishment of a Sewer Maintenance Division within the Department that is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the system. The project team was unable to obtain the precise attributes of the system relating to its current condition, materials and linear mileage. However, if the number of center line miles of roadways can be used as a proxy for the length of the system there are likely between 200 and 250 linear miles for which the Town is responsible. This would require a contingent of between 13 and 23 crew members in addition to a Supervisor and two (2) Working Foremen.

The project team recommends further study of this issue to determine the feasibility of creating a new division in Public Works for the maintenance, repair and management of the Town's sewer line. However, it is strongly recommended that it more clearly define the role and responsibility of the Public Works Department, as well as the accountability mechanisms for ensuring that maintenance and repair are performed in accordance with a plan, and that all work is inspected before invoices are signed and forwarded to the Finance Department for payment.

Recommendations:

Define the roles of the Public Works Department in the repair, maintenance, management and inspection of the Town's sewer line.

The Public Works Department should develop a preventive maintenance plan for the sewer system.

Strongly consider the creation of a Sewer Maintenance Division within the Public Works Department.

(b) Facilities Maintenance

The facilities maintenance function in the Public Works Department is staffed by a Working Foreman and two (2) Building Maintenance Technicians, as well as two (2) Custodians who are assigned to the Public Works building, the Annex, Town Hall and the Library. The Division provided a manual listing of 27 different locations at which some level of maintenance is performed, of which 25 are actually visited from time to time.² However, the large majority of the effort expended by the non-custodial staff in the Division is for the maintenance of grounds at these locations. The Division does not possess data that indicates the actual maintainable square footage at those locations which have buildings on their sites.

The Facilities Maintenance Division, unlike the Schools, does not have certified trades workers on staff. As unlicensed technicians they are not qualified to perform repairs beyond simple plumbing, carpentry, door locks, temperature adjustments and similar services. For more complex maintenance and repair needs, the Division either contracts with a certified contractor or, on occasion, contacts the Schools for this work. It is not known how frequently either of these occurs, as all data maintained by the Division is in manual form and not summarized for analysis.

The performance of facilities maintenance and repair is approached in very different manners in the Public Works Department and the Schools. While neither organization is conducting sufficient levels of preventive maintenance, this is due primarily to lack of staffing at the Schools rather than a lack of certification, as is the case in Public Works. As the facilities are supported by all residents, it is reasonable to expect that all should be maintained in a similar manner, and for this reason, the project team recommends that the repair and maintenance of facilities should be standardized.

The project team has recommended, in the discussion of Schools issues, the implementation of both a preventive maintenance plan and a building condition assessment. This is also recommended for Town facilities, and economies of scale would mitigate in favor of combining efforts in these initiatives. It is further recommended that the Town and Schools analyze the feasibility of consolidating their currently separate facilities maintenance organizations, as the approaches differ in significant ways. Consolidation of facilities maintenance organizations provides many advantages related to standardization of maintenance approaches, economies of scale, streamlined management structures, standardization of management information

² Although the Oak Haven building and the Green Library were listed on the form, interviews indicated that they were not actually owned by the Town, and that no maintenance or grounds work was performed at these two locations.

systems, and others. However, consolidation also present many challenges, such as ensuring the equity of distribution of facilities maintenance labor efforts between the Town and Schools, identification and prioritization of capital expenditures for Town buildings and School buildings, overcoming possible differences in compensation structures, and others. For these reasons, it is beyond the scope of this report to thoroughly analyze the feasibility of consolidation of Town and Schools facilities maintenance organizations, however it is recommended that this be analyzed in a future joint effort.

Recommendation: The Town and Schools should jointly conduct a study to determine the feasibility of consolidating their currently separate facilities maintenance services.

(c) Custodial Services

The Public Works Department's Facilities Maintenance Division is responsible for the provision of custodial services at the Public Works building, Town Hall, the Library and the Annex. These services are provided by two (2) Custodians who work from 3:00 pm till 11:00 pm. Minor custodial services before 3:00 pm may be performed by the Division's Building Maintenance Technicians. In addition, the Town's Human Services Department has one (1) Custodian at the Senior Center.

The project team recommends that custodial services be consolidated between Public Works and Human Services, through the transfer of the latter Department's Custodian to Public Works' Facilities Maintenance Division. This will not only standardize the approach to the provision of custodial services throughout the Town but will also allow for the flexibility of transferring custodial staff to buildings to cover for absences or for instances of increased needs to address peaks in workloads in the various buildings.

The project team has recommended, elsewhere in this report, that the Town and Schools jointly analyze the feasibility of consolidating their separate facilities maintenance organizations, and this recommendation is reiterated here. However, it is also recommended that this feasibility study incorporate custodial services as well.

Recommendations: The Town should consolidate the provision of custodial services by transferring the Human Services Department's Custodian to the Facilities Maintenance Division of Public Works.

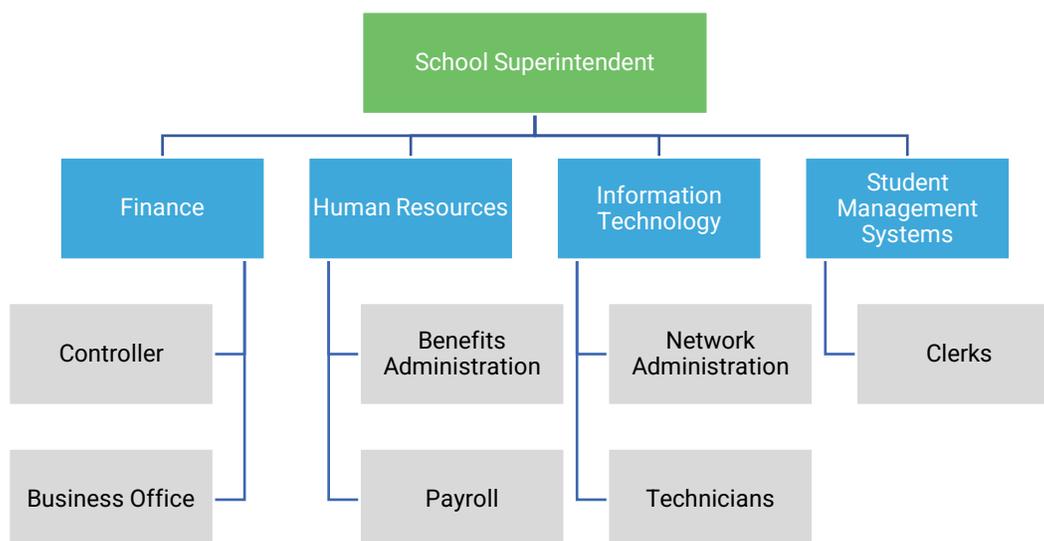
As part of the recommended analysis of the feasibility of consolidating Town and Schools facilities maintenance services, the custodial functions should be included in this analysis as well.

10. School Administrative Support Functions

This section of the report details findings and recommendations related to the Coventry schools' administrative and support functions: Finance and Budgeting, Human Resources, Information Technology, and Student Management Systems. All areas were reviewed in terms of comparative staffing with other entities, but recommended staffing adjustments were principally made based upon our discussion with staff and our assessment of work requirements. While overall staffing levels are lean in most administrative functions, the District was generally handling work duties appropriately and in compliance with basic requirements.

These functions are critical to ensure the effective implementation of the Coventry Schools' statutory obligations and have a major impact on all operational elements of the school system.

The Schools' administrative functions are organized as described in the following chart.



Outside of the superintendent's office, the main functions and duties of these departments are summarized as follows:

Position Title	Authorized Positions	Key Roles and Responsibilities
MANAGEMENT		
Superintendent	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish goals, priorities, objectives, and strategic direction for the District, and execute programs and functions accordingly.
Assistant Superintendent	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet monthly with the Town Manager, represent the District to the Town Council, School Committee, PTA Council, and other Town Departments. Provide oversight and support to all building principals and administrators within the District. Develop, review, maintain, and apply district policies such as the handbook. Handle decisions about inclement weather, school crises, press and public relations matters.
FINANCE		
Finance Director	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees all financial operations, manages budgeting process, oversees all financial management across schools.
Finance Deputy Director	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, present, and manage the District budget and its financial and accounting functions, including auditing.
Confidential Clerk	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply for private, state, and federal grant funds. Oversee purchasing, contracting, and bids, and manage contracts with vendors. Handle payroll and benefits for District employees, wellness program, safety and worker's compensation functions. Provide oversight and support to all building principals and administrators within the District.
Human Resources		
Human Resources Director	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages recruitment, payroll, transportation, performance management, performance issues. Administers benefits. Participates in union negotiating process and ensures provisions are complied with.
Human Resources Clerical / Administrative Support	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide general clerical support on HR functions. Track FMLA, sick leave, and time. Coordinates with individual school on data collection, timekeeping, leave management. Administer benefits. Administer payroll.
Information Technology		
Director of Technology and Information Systems	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems administrator for all hardware and software across all schools. Oversees IT security. Oversees "computers in classrooms" program including distribution of chromebook computers to all 4,700 students. Coordinates with software vendors and troubleshoots software issues. Develops and implements IT strategy for school system. Oversee phone and security systems.

Position Title	Authorized Positions	Key Roles and Responsibilities
Network Administrator	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains all wired and wireless networks.
Technician	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide technical support for hardware and software; address technical issues.
Student Management Systems		
Student Management Systems Manager	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages all mandatory reporting related to student attendance, absences, enrollment. Coordinates with vendor (Aspen). Ensures effective use of student information systems in schools.
Confidential Clerks	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee reception area including entry/exit controls. Assist with student registration. Assist with non-public school textbook program.

1. Budget and Finance Functions.

- (a) **Developing a clear agreement and understanding regarding the fiscal relationship between the Municipal Department and the Schools Department should be given highest priority.**

While the budget and finance processes in local government are often contentious, the level of disagreement, conflict, and confusion between Coventry's municipal government and the Coventry Public Schools department is an outlier in its intensity.

Ongoing disagreements between the municipal government and the schools related to budgets, funds allocation, cash flow management, capital investment, and even financial statements and bank balances is handicapping both entities' abilities to operate effectively and serve the residents of Coventry.

Fundamentally, the disagreements appear to be a result of significant historical turnover in finance and budget roles in both the Town and School System, leaving both with almost no institutional knowledge of past practices with regards to budgeting and financial management.

Exacerbating this issue is the fact that previous personnel did not leave clear documentation regarding policies and procedures and that a new budget and finance software system was implemented during the time of high turnover. While many root causes of the current issues are in the past, the conflict continues to the detriment of the residents of Coventry.

Addressing this issue should be of the highest priority for the Town of Coventry. The current leadership (Town Council, School Committee, Town Manager, and Schools

Superintendent) must find a new starting point and a positive basis on which to move forward – a written agreement based on the auditors’ reports laying out the current financial standing of each entity, including bank accounts, fund balances, funds owed, cash positions, appropriations, and approved expenditures. The parties should also collaboratively review Title 16 of Rhode Island General Laws which outlines the fiscal relationship between the Town and Schools.

In addition, the budget and fund accounting process going forward must clearly be established in both the Town and Schools budgets to ensure that the beginning of the fiscal year clearly and accurately reflects the fund balance of each, and clearly identifies all projected revenues, approved expenditures, and how they will be accounted for.

Recommendation: The Town and School should negotiate an agreement or memorandum of understanding clearly laying out the current financial status of both as well as how accounting will work in the future to ensure consistency with the approved budget, compliance with local government and school finance laws, and maximum transparency to elected officials and residents.

(b) The budget process should include more discussion of the school system’s strategic priorities and long-term needs

Traditionally the school budget process has focused largely on looking just one year into the future. Beyond that, the School budget has been developed somewhat in a vacuum, with no buy-in from the Town Council or residents, who are ultimately responsible for approving the local revenue portion of the budget. While the Schools have implemented a comprehensive public input process during the School Committee budget development process, the input and discussion between the Schools and the Town has been less collaborative and fruitful. Further defining and expanding collaboration when the School budget is under consideration by the Town Council would be beneficial. Additionally, the Town Manager and Town Finance Director should be meeting regularly with the School Superintendent and School Finance Director during budget development as they do with other Town departments.

One area of particular weakness in the current budgeting process is Capital Planning. The school did undertake a detailed “Facility Condition Assessment” in 2017 which identified \$22 million in 5 year needs just to maintain existing infrastructure. Additionally, over the last two years, the School Building Committee and JAED (Colliers) conducted additional research to develop an updated listing of improvements to all schools. This latest effort was approved by RIDE and the Town Council. However, these needs do not appear to have been funded adequately, and there does not appear to be a plan to do so in the future. Despite the considerable need for current facility improvements, schools have focused on funding construction for a new building. This building may be badly needed,

but such an analysis must be done in the context of plans to maintain the schools' existing plant and equipment as well.

Additionally, a high priority focus of the Schools should be working with the Town to develop a long-range plan to ensure the allocation of sufficient funds to meet the State of Rhode Island's required allocation of funds annually for school maintenance. Historically, over the last 13 years, very limited funds – estimated at around \$200,000 – has been allocated to the Coventry Public Schools for capital investment. To achieve compliance with the required 3% allocation, budget adjustments, either reallocation of existing resources or the allocation of new funds, must be identified to address a major budget deficiency at present.

Recommendation: Incorporate stakeholders (including the Town Council and public) earlier in the budgeting process and incorporate long term strategic and financial planning into the budget process.

Recommendation: Implement a Capital Planning Improvement Process to assess and fund ongoing maintenance of existing Capital assets including ensuring that the required annual maintenance contribution is allocated.

(c) **The Schools and Town should follow agreed upon financial policies to ensure proper good governance and required monthly reports.**

The Town's Finance department was not able to provide copies of any policies governing key financial practices, and the Schools department was similarly not aware of such written policies. One recommendation for the Municipal Finance Department is to draft and implement these Financial policies. The Schools must be involved in this process and be held responsible for following the same policies.

Specific policies that should be drafted and adopted include:

- Asset Management
- Cost Allocation
- Debt Management
- Fund Balance and Reserve
- Investment

Of most importance as an immediate need, is for the Town and Schools to agree upon the number and type of monthly reports that will be provided to the Town Council regarding budgetary performance. To increase transparency of budget, spend and to increase accountability, the Town Council should be provided monthly budget reports

that clearly outline the financial condition of the Coventry Public Schools and where the largest department of the Town is financially each month. While there are some limitations in reporting due to the current set up of financial system, these must be quickly overcome, and detailed reports developed that accurately and clearly denote the financial position of the Schools Department.

Recommendation: The Schools Finance department should provide input into and comply with new financial policies governing all aspects of the Town's finances in accordance with Title 16.

(d) As currently deployed, the software system used for budgeting and finance is not meeting the needs of the Town or Schools. However, it may be possible to address these deficiencies without the costly process of replacing the system.

Coventry switched to Keystone Information Systems for budgeting and financial management software in January 2020. The system is more heavily used in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina but does have local government and school customers in other states. It appears that Coventry is its only Rhode Island user.

Coventry continues to struggle with the Keystone deployment. Within the municipal government, some staff are advocating moving to a different software system more commonly utilized in Rhode Island. The School finance employees expressed concerns about the upheaval that such a change would involve.

A review of the software's deployment in Coventry confirmed significant issues; however, more analysis should be done before deciding to abandon the software.

The School Administration should be involved in a careful examination of whether Keystone can be better deployed or whether the system should be replaced. In either case, it is critical that the Town and Schools deploy the same software system.

Recommendation: The School Administration should be involved in an effort to assess the capabilities and use of the current Municipal Finance software system.

2. Human Resources.

The Human Resources Department includes a director and three support staff. This central department then interacts with administrative staff at individual schools on matters of hiring, retention, training, and discipline.

A robust HR function can be instrumental in ensuring a productive, effective workforce, reducing risks associated with employment actions, and keeping personnel costs low by conducting analysis in support of contract negotiations and personnel decisions.

Based on feedback provided from a number of employees, the HR department should focus on three new strategic areas in addition to the work it currently does:

- Obtain a salary survey to assess how the pay rates at the school compare with comparable organizations, including the Municipality where work is comparable (e.g., janitors). The comparison should be against comparable Districts and similar bargaining units. The work conducted annually by the Rhode Island Association of School Committees and the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council may provide the majority of information needed. This information should be shared with the Town for review and consideration.
- Identify opportunities to simplify union contracts, in particular so that the contracts focus primarily on compensation but allow for greater flexibility in assigning duties and responsibilities.
- Track and monitor staff hiring and turnover and identify problem areas with attracting and retaining quality staff.

Recommendations: Conduct a salary survey to assess how salaries in Coventry schools compare with those in other organizations.

Establish priorities for increasing management flexibility in union contracts in upcoming negotiations cycles.

Monitor and report on turnover rates by job category, and if warranted develop and implement strategies to improve employee retention in the schools.

3. Information Technology.

The following table summarizes the key technology solutions utilized in the Coventry Public Schools administrative departments.

Functional Area	Software Name	Summary of how utilized
Finance and Budgeting	Keystone	Budgeting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll
Timekeeping	Frontline	Track hours, leave requests
Classroom management	Google Classroom	E-mail, student/teacher workspace

Student management	Aspen	Student enrollment, attendance, state reporting
School Lunch	Mosaic	Student lunch management
Special Education	Tienet	Manages IEP and other special education documentation and tracking

The IT department has worked diligently to address security issues in response to a recent ransomware incident.

As mentioned above, the Keystone budget and finance system as implemented has a number of deficiencies which should be addressed either by switching to a new system or working with Keystone to expand the capabilities of the software as deployed in Coventry. If Keystone is retained, the deficiencies identified under the Municipal portion of this report should also be addressed for the schools – in particular, purchase order management and greater automation of the payroll process.

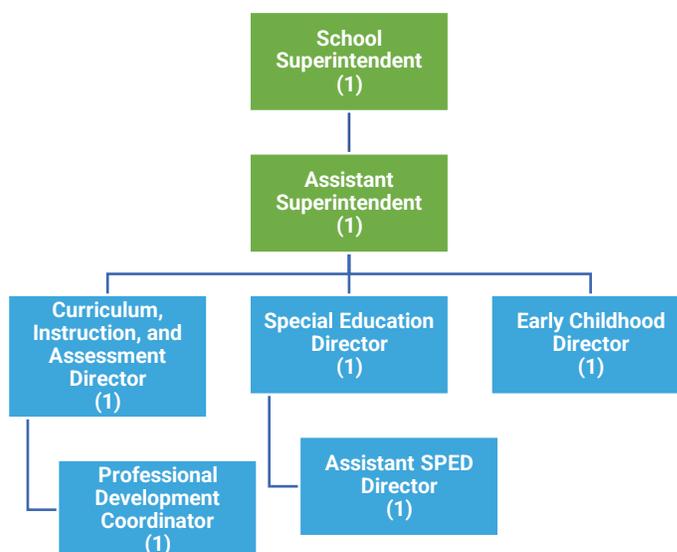
Most of the remaining systems being used by the schools are best-in-class. One area to explore is whether the Tienet system could be phased out and replaced by Aspen for Special Education tracking. The School Department has initiated efforts to build out their system with Aspen and should continue to be explored in future years to see if the reporting and census tracking conducted by Tienet can be fully replaced by Aspen. This will allow the consolidation of platforms, centralize data and integrate systems.

Recommendations: Work with Municipal leadership to either improve implementation of the Keystone system or identify a new system that will better meet the needs of the organization.

Examine feasibility of using Aspen for Special Education documentation and tracking.

11. School Operations

The education services provided by the Schools are overseen by the Assistant Superintendent, who manages the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, the Special Education Director, and the Early Childhood Director. The below chart documents the organizational structure of these departments.



1. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

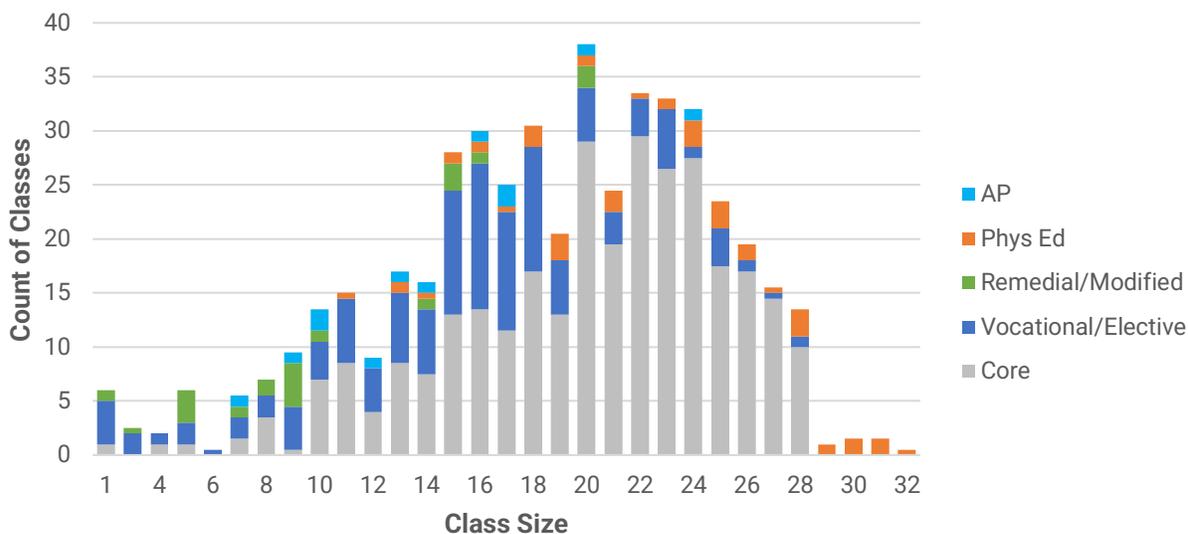
The School's teaching and testing practices are led by the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, with assistance from a Professional Development Coordinator. The scope of this area includes curriculum selection and design for all subject areas, professional training and development of educators, and the facilitation and data tracking of standardized testing.

1.1 Enrollment and Class Size

The following table summarizes the classes offered at Coventry High School by their type and the average enrollment of that type. Classes include both full-year and single semester classes. They are classified into core classes such as Geometry and French, AP classes, remedial and modified classes for students with additional needs, vocation-specific classes such as Criminal Justice Studies and Cosmetology, and electives such as Band and Photography.

Class Type	Count	Average
AP	12	14.1
Core	317	20.1
Elective	83	15.3
Physical Education	55	22.8
Vocational	109	16.3
Remedial/Modified	22	9.6
All Classes	598	18.5

The following chart shows a histogram of class enrollment by class type. As it illustrates, the majority of the Schools’ classes have between 15-25 students. The only classes exceeding 28 students are Physical Education classes, in accordance with the State’s requirement for high school class sizes. Classes with fewer than 15 students are disproportionately remedial and modified classes, although there are a number of electives, AP classes, and core classes in this group as well.



The average class sizes for core classes, as well as electives, vocational courses, and AP classes, fall well below the 28 students permitted per class. While targeting the maximum enrollment in every class is not feasible or advisable, average enrollment of 20.1 students for core classes suggests an efficiency rate of 72%. For AP classes and elective and vocational classes (as well as about 24% of core classes), the efficiency rate falls below 60%. The Schools should review low-enrollment classes regularly and seek an average enrollment efficiency of 80% (22.4 students) across the secondary campuses (with the exception of physical education and remedial/modified classes).

The District has historically conducted enrollment reviews each March as part of the budget process. This should continue to be a high priority review item each year to maximize the utilization of resources.

Recommendation: Continue to review low-enrollment classes annually for consolidation or elimination and seek average enrollment efficiency of at least 80% for core, elective, and vocational classes.

1.2 Assessment Methodology

One of the Schools' strengths is the use of a consistent, formalized methodology for tracking student growth and mastery during the year and from year to year. CPS administers the Renaissance Learning STAR 360 Assessment three times per year in reading and math. This is a computer-based adaptive test which quickly produces electronic reports that are provided to the schools, the school committee, and parents. The results of these tests are directed to teachers and are explicitly used to make instructional decisions. The following images show reporting on proficiency levels over the last three school years in reading and math.

READING BY GRADE (% Proficient):			
Grade:	Winter 2020	Winter 2021	Winter 2022
K	80%	78%	78%
1	70%	60%	70%
2	82%	74%	73%
3	79%	76%	76%
4	79%	76%	74%
5	72%	68%	70%
6	71%	62%	64%
7	65%	61%	53%
8	59%	66%	57%
9	57%	56%	51%
10	58%	57%	55%
11	n/a	55%	52%

MATH BY GRADE (% Proficient):			
Grade:	Winter 2020	Winter 2021	Winter 2022
1	93%	83%	91%
2	88%	76%	79%
3	84%	77%	86%
4	80%	71%	80%
5	80%	69%	76%
6	73%	54%	60%
7	70%	65%	55%
8	69%	68%	62%
9	75%	74%	64%
10	80%	78%	75%
11	n/a	73%	73%

1.3 Selection of Curriculum

Until 2019, the Schools did not have an established curriculum for instruction delivery across all campuses. Instead, the schools developed their own curriculum in a home-grown fashion, with in-house curriculum teams at each grade level assigned to review state learning standards and find or create a set of materials which could be taught to meet those standards.

In 2019, the State legislature passed R.I. General Laws § 16.22.30-33 which outlines curriculum frameworks, adopts academic standards for schools, and requires that districts implement high quality curriculum materials as defined by the findings of the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. In compliance with this law, Coventry Public Schools have undertaken a schedule of curriculum selection and implementation from K-12 grade levels across ELA, Math, and Science subjects, using edreports.org determinations of “high quality” materials to make selections. The following table shows the Schools’ timeline for this effort.

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
ELA*					
Grades K-2	Selection		Implementation		
Grades 3-5	Selection	Implementation			
Middle School	Implementation				
High School		Selection	Implementation		
Math					
Grades K-2		Selection		Implementation	
Grades 3-5		Selection	Implementation		
Middle School	Selection	Implementation			
High School		Selection	Implementation		
Science					
Grades K-2				Selection	Implementation
Grades 3-5				Selection	Implementation
Middle School			Selection	Implementation	
High School			Selection	Implementation	

* ELA curriculum at the middle school level has already been selected.

Each grade level and subject area has a curriculum committee composed of new and experienced teachers as well as SPED teachers. They review the available curricula which include the courses they intend to offer, then narrow down the choices based on factors like pacing, differentiation, available digital instruction components, etc. They may also consult the publisher of a particular curriculum to help them understand its specific nuances. One unit from each of the top 2-3 curriculum candidates is then selected and taught, and teachers compare notes afterward. Following this step, the committee makes a selection, weighing the merits of each of the top options with the cost of acquisition and implementation.

In addition to ensuring compliance with State law, the School's approach to curriculum selection and implementation is methodical and includes thoughtful input from educators. The selection process considers how teachers can be trained to deliver content, its degree of alignment with standardized tests and the common core requirements, and its compliance with other State education laws such as the Right to Read Act.

In addition to the core subject areas, the Schools' curriculum for electives will also be adjusted to align with the legislation's standards. And certain classes are already standardized such as AP classes, computing, and financial literacy classes for which state or national requirements already exist.

1.4 Educator Evaluation and Development

The district has established standards for regularly viewing instruction and providing feedback as part of a professional development and educator assessment program. Teacher assessments are administered informally by curriculum coordinators and formally by administrators at the building level. A 1-4 scale across four domains (Planning and prep, implementation, classroom management, and professional responsibility) is used, with a rubric set for each of them. Viewing instruction and feedback is a required component of the process, and formal evaluations include a pre-conference and a reflection as well.

The Schools have a mentorship and professional development program specifically for new teachers. Each of them must be mentored by a National Board-Certified teacher, and all must obtain 45 professional learning units within their first five years (a figure which will soon be escalated to 100 PLU's) in order to re-certify. New teachers also receive a special monthly professional development series which is largely district specific. This training, which is teacher-led, is mandatory in the first year, and may be recommended for second- or third-year teachers.

The Schools have a methodology for tracking educators' professional development activities and their teacher certification deadlines, and for generating reminders regarding CEU's. The Aspen student information system tracks educator certification status and expiration dates, as well as professional development plans and the completion of professional development events.

1.5 Management of MTSS Framework and Data

In replacement of the former Response to Intervention (RTI) approach to supporting students with additional academic and behavioral needs, the School employ a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). This framework exists across all campuses and is led by the Professional Development Coordinator, who assists interventionists at each school site in screening kids for MTSS needs, deciding on interventions, and collecting and managing data from these actions.

The schools do not currently have a capable district-wide platform for compiling and reporting on MTSS data, and the Aspen student information system does not have this capability. As a result, the schools struggle in some cases to meaningfully track students' progress, particularly during the transition from the elementary to secondary (middle school) level. The schools should review the functionality of their current information systems and either formalize the use of an existing system to track MTSS interventions or obtain a dedicated system for this purpose. The replacement of this system is part of the School District's approved plan for use of ESSER III funds.

Recommendation: Examine the feasibility of managing MTSS data with an existing information system and implement a new system to administer this framework if the current systems are insufficient.

1.6 Pursuit of Grant Funding

The Schools currently have a bifurcated approach to grant applications. At the classroom level, teachers can apply for grants from local institutions (banks, nonprofits, etc.) for their own classrooms and professional development. At the district level, the administrative team applies for competitive grants from the Department of Education which are won or lost based on strength of application. The Schools do not currently have a dedicated grant writer; the assistant superintendent typically writes grant applications with help from the Finance Director, Curriculum and Assessment Director, etc. as applicable. While this approach has seen some success, it also places an undue burden on the Assistant Superintendent whose job is intended to be focused on the educational program provided by the Schools. The District should instead establish a procedure which involves more administrative support in the development of grant applications. The Assistant Superintendent should still take leadership and oversight of the process and be responsible for application content, but much of the routine creation of formatted documents and collection of input from District staff and submission of online forms should be handled by another administrator.

Recommendation: Establish a grant application process which includes administrative procedures for routine processes under the direction of the Assistant Superintendent.

2. Early Childhood and Special Education

Coventry Public Schools offers both full-day and half-day pre-kindergarten for students who will turn 5 years old during the year. The two types of pre-k classes have a number of distinctives:

	Full Day	Half Day
Count	2	4 mornings 4 afternoon
Entry	Lottery	First come
Funding Source	4-year State grant	Tuition and State special education funds
Class Size	20	15
Oversight	1 Teacher 1 TA	1 Teacher 1-2 TA's
SPED Ratio	No requirement	No more than 50% SPED

All classes are offered at Washington Oak elementary school, where pre-k teachers report to the building principal. The Director of Early Childhood Education make on-site visits multiple times per week, and a part-time Education Coordinator is also present at the campus per state requirements. The schools currently serve nearly 150 students, with dozens more who do not attend pre-k classes but receive speech therapy services at district headquarters.

2.1 Parent Outreach and Marketing of Early Childhood Services

The Schools' early childhood program includes a robust outreach and marketing program to parents within Coventry. In order to maintain eligibility for State early childhood funding, the schools submit an annual plan to the Department of Education which includes advertising, and that program is then executed. The Early Childhood Outreach Coordinator largely leads this effort, which involves screening children for special needs. Parents of eligible children may respond to the schools' advertising, or they may be located through the State of Rhode Island KidsNet system which allows the schools to locate each child with a Rhode Island birth certificate and any child with an in-state pediatrician record.

2.2 Special Education Program

The Schools' Special Education (SPED) programs are led by a Director of Special Education with help from an Assistant Director. They oversee delivery of special education services at the secondary and primary level respectively, coordinating testing, IEP development and management, service delivery, and student placement. In June 2021 the schools had a total of 792 special education students receiving services, with the following breakdown:

Disability	Count
Autism	100
Developmentally Delayed	77
Emotionally Disordered	68
Health Impairment	128
Intellectual Disability	33
Learning Disability	235
Multiple Handicapped	13
Speech/Language Impairment	131
Other	7
Total	792

2.3 Early Childhood Outreach and Identification

The Assistant Director of Special Education coordinates closely with the early Childhood Director to identify young students who may be candidates for special education services. Those who are referred are processed within 60 days to determine whether they require services, per State law. The pre-k program teachers are SPED-certified, and the schools keep detailed records on age 3-5 SPED students.

2.4 Provision of Services in the Least Restrictive Environment

The schools seek to provide the necessary services and accommodations in the least restrictive environment possible. There is an established decision-making process for determining when to provide special education services in the general classroom setting, in a separate classroom, or through a placement outside the district if necessary. The Schools provide integrated services when staffing and logistics permit, and self-contained services when staffing, funding, and liability risks require it.

2.5 Use of Software for IEP Development and Tracking

A crucial function of special education services is the development and tracking of individualized education plans (IEP's) for students requiring accommodations. The

Schools currently use their Powerschool software suite (formerly TieNet) for this function, but it lacks the ability to construct IEP's and track service delivery for compliance with their conditions. The Aspen student information system used for enrollment, attendance, scheduling and grades also has a module which allows for IEP development and the tracking of services delivered. The Schools should examine whether this system may be used as the primary special education and IEP system. The further build out of Aspen, which the School Department is working on and will take some time, should enable further integration of the systems.

Recommendation: Examine feasibility of using Aspen as the primary system for special education IEP management and reporting.

12. Schools Facility Maintenance

1. Analysis of Schools Staffing Needs

The Facilities and Transportation Division of the Schools is responsible for the repair, maintenance and custodial care of seven (7) school building and two (2) administrative buildings that collectively comprise 679,080 square feet of maintainable space. It accomplishes these tasks with the following staffing contingent:

- 2 Master Electricians
- 1 Master Plumber
- 1 HVAC Technician
- 1 Carpenter
- 2 Laborers
- 7 Head Custodians
- 28.5 Custodians

An analysis of the Facilities and Transportation budget and expenditures report for FY 2022 indicates that relatively few dollars are allocated for contractual repairs, as is shown below:

Account Description	FY 22 Budget
Buildings and Fixed Equipment	\$200.00
Repair and Maintenance – Annex	\$45,000
Repair and Maintenance – Oak Have	\$8,000.00
Repair and Maintenance – Old P. St.	\$16,330.00
Repair and Maintenance - Historic	\$2,500.00
TOTAL	\$72,030

The FY 22 budgeted expenditures for contractual maintenance and repairs are minimal, at a little over \$72,000. Contractual expenditures are typically an important element in the maintenance of facilities, as they supplement internal technical needs, and can provide access to immediate repair needs during peak workloads. However, the budgeted amount of \$72,030 equates to less than that which is expended on one full time equivalent employee.

In determining the adequacy of staffing for facilities maintenance operations, the project team typically utilizes a standard of between 45,000 and 50,000 square feet of maintainable space per full time equivalent (FTE) Technician. This range is derived from the International Facilities Management Association (IFMA) survey of 650 public and private members of the organization. The Facilities and Transportation Division allocates seven (7) trades staff and laborers to the repair and maintenance of Schools facilities. As noted above, the efforts of this staff are supplemented with about \$72,000 per year. In addition, the Custodial staff does, on occasion, provide some light maintenance

support at the nine (9) buildings for which they are responsible. If these supplementary resources can be assumed to constitute two (2) FTEs in addition to the seven (7) dedicated facilities maintenance workers on staff, there are nine (9) total FTEs allocated to facilities maintenance in the Schools. This equates to a ratio of about 75,400 square feet of maintainable space per equivalent maintenance worker, which is well above the 45,000 to 50,000 square feet per worker which is the average for the 650 facilities organizations in the IFMA survey.

Interviews indicate that the Facilities and Transportation Division performs little preventive maintenance, as staffing levels have prohibited any significant maintenance efforts beyond the repair of immediate breakdowns of equipment. Although this is only anecdotal, it is nevertheless supported by the calculations provided above. Therefore, the staffing levels should be increased primarily for the purpose of instituting a comprehensive preventive maintenance plan. This plan should incorporate the findings of a full building condition assessment, as will be discussed in the next issue, below.

The project team recommends that the Schools' Facilities and Transportation Division add three (3) maintenance workers to the current contingent of seven (7) trades workers and laborers, and the estimated two (2) contractual workers and Schools Custodians, for a total of 12 total equivalent staff dedicated to facilities maintenance and repair efforts. The three additional staff should be a combination of two (2) trades staff and a laborer, with the proper "mix" of trades staff being a product of analysis of workloads and of the types of fixtures in the schools that require routine maintenance.

Recommendation: The Schools' Facilities and Transportation Division should hire three additional facilities maintenance workers to enable the implementation of a comprehensive preventive maintenance plan for its nine facilities.

As noted in the Town section of the report, the Schools should be involved in the evaluation of an Asset Management / CMMS system to manage facility maintenance operations and a single system should be acquired and implemented.

2. Analysis of Schools Operational Needs

Interviews indicate that, although the School System adopts a capital budget each year, the Facilities and Transportation Division has received little CIP funding for the past several years. If this trend continues, facilities will require increasing amounts of repair and replacement, and possibly result in unsafe conditions. It is therefore vital that the Schools identify both critical and ongoing repair needs, and this can be accomplished, importantly, through daily inspections of major operating machinery and equipment, but also through periodic condition assessments by qualified structural engineers.

Facilities condition assessments of facilities are important for a number of reasons. These include the following:

- They help in identifying deferred maintenance and their costs. This is especially important for the Schools since few expenditures have been made in recent years for replacement.
- They assist in prioritizing expenditures for replacement. Although inoperable equipment must be repaired or replaced first, there are frequently other needs that may be anticipated by a certified structural engineer that will avoid critical breakdowns in the future.
- They may identify potential safety hazards. These may include tripping hazards, poor illumination of exit signs, poor door designs that may swing in the wrong direction, or even poor energy consumption.
- They can assist in maximizing parking area efficiency. Structural assessments can identify structural damage, moisture intrusion in paved surfaces in parking lots, concrete beam distress, and corroded steel. These assessments can also ensure that parking areas are accessible and safe for pedestrians and all types of vehicles.
- They can assist in complying with building code requirements. These may include such factors as stairways with improper railing heights, entrances and exits that have inadequate accessibility, doors that have improper clearance, restrooms with improper fixtures, and others.

The importance of proactively identifying structural needs for School facilities cannot be over-stressed. For this reason, the project team recommends that the Schools conduct a condition assessment of its buildings immediately, and once every five years thereafter. The most recent condition assessment conducted in the Jacobs report in 2021 provide a good basis for use in the future.

Recommendation: The Schools' Facilities and Transportation Division should initiate a facilities condition assessment and ensure that these are continued once every five years.

Appendix A - Employee Survey Analysis

As part of the Matrix Consulting Group's study of Coventry a survey of the town and school staff was conducted to gauge the opinions of employees on a number of topics relevant to the study. The survey was conducted online through SurveyMonkey from 2/2 to 2/24 of 2022. In addition to the electronic distribution of the survey, 48 paper copies were provided to Town employees in the Public Works Department that do not have access to email. In total, 364 responses were received out of a total of 961 email invitations sent for a response rate of 37.9%.

1. Key Findings

Later sections discuss the survey responses in more depth, however the key takeaways from the survey are summarized in the following bullet points. The key findings summarize the main differences between the town's organization and the school's organization.

- **Differences from Agree/Disagree Questions:** When asked if employees can easily sign and work with electronic documents, most town employees disagreed while the school had a majority that agreed. Town employees stated they were not kept informed of townwide goals, while the school employees did. The town employees did not think they were clearly working toward a similar goal while the school employees did. Half of respondents from the town said it was not a great place to work, while school employees overwhelming thought they worked in a great place. The school employees seemed to think they could make their job a career more than town employees thought they would. School employees do feel overworked more that the town employees reported.
- **Strengths:** School employees reported that some of their top strengths were great/knowledgeable staff, a great team environment, and good leadership. The town employees reported strengths were great/knowledgeable staff and great customer service.
- **Needs:** The school employees said their greatest needs are; better infrastructure/buildings, more support staff, and better technology. The town employees said their greatest needs are; better leadership, new technology/equipment, and more staff.

- **How to Improve School/Town Relations:** The town employees repeatedly stated that the budget was a point of contention, they believe the school gets an unfair amount of funding and have overpaid staff. The school employees reported that they want the town and residents to understand what it takes to run a school and the level of work the staff provides. They also want to lose the “School vs. The Town” mentality.

2. Respondent Demographics

While the survey was anonymous, it asked employees to identify various demographic questions about themselves to allow insight into whether perceptions were organization-wide or impacted only certain employee groupings. The first question asked respondents to identify whether they work for the Town or the School. The following table shows the responses received to these demographic questions. There were 361 respondents who indicated their affiliation, 63 were from the Town and 298 from the School.

Town: Which Department are you currently assigned to?	Percent
Administration	6%
Town Clerk	5%
Police	34%
Planning & Development	5%
Public Works & Parks	21%
Finance & Taxes	10%
Human Services	15%

Town: How long have you worked for the Town of Coventry?	Percent
0-2 years	13%
3 to 5 years	13%
6-10 years	15%
11-20 years	27%
More than 20 years	32%

Schools: Which best describes your position?	Percent
Teaching Assistants/Supervisory	13%
Teachers/Therapists/Clinicians (District/Building)	61%
Administration (District/Building-based)	5%
Custodial/Facilities/Maintenance	4%
Central Office Clerks	3%
Building-based Clerks/Secretaries	5%
Assistants/SRP Nurses/Behavior Specialists	9%

Schools: How long have you worked for Coventry Public Schools?	Percent
0-2 years	11%
3 to 5 years	10%
6-10 years	16%
11-20 years	20%
More than 20 years	42%

3. Multiple-Choice Responses (Town)

The first set of statements asked participants to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of 27 statements. The available responses were “strongly agree”, “agree”, “strongly disagree”, and “disagree”. The following table and chart show the levels of agreement and disagreement with each of the statements.

#	Statement	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
1	There is good teamwork between my department and other departments within the Town.	76%	22%
2	I have the technology/software necessary to complete my job efficiently and effectively.	60%	36%
3	I have the appropriate resources and equipment I need to function at a high level.	50%	50%
4	I am able to complete internal paperwork (e.g., benefits-related paperwork, finance or procurement paperwork, etc.) electronically without having to print or manually sign papers.	15%	69%
5	I am empowered to make decisions within my professional judgement.	74%	24%
6	I am kept informed of what is happening in the Town.	29%	71%
7	Everyone at the Town is working toward the same strategic goals.	27%	73%
8	The Town is a good place to work.	48%	46%
9	I feel that I can make a career with this organization.	64%	23%
10	My department provides a high level of service to the residents (or other employees if an internal services department).	94%	6%
11	The people directly impacted by the work of my department are satisfied with the level of service we provide.	88%	8%
12	Providing high-quality work is a priority for my department.	94%	6%
13	My department places a high priority on cost-effective methods of providing services.	74%	20%

#	Statement	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
14	My immediate supervisor does an effective job of coaching and mentoring me.	75%	23%
15	In my department, employees in similar classifications are assigned a similar amount of work.	62%	25%
16	In my department, we do a good job of planning ahead and scheduling our work.	69%	29%
17	The organizational structure of my department promotes the efficient delivery of services.	64%	35%
18	Staffing levels in my department promote efficiency for the work being performed.	28%	68%
19	Our internal policies and procedures are effective at helping me perform my job.	62%	36%
20	I am encouraged by my managers and supervisors to identify better ways to provide services.	69%	28%
21	Managers and supervisors in my department communicate a clearly defined strategic direction.	61%	37%
22	We have high performance expectations in my department.	81%	17%
23	Performance issues in my department are dealt with appropriately.	64%	34%
24	Managers and supervisors in my department do a good job of communicating important information to me in a timely manner.	63%	35%
25	My department effectively manages workload so that all individuals are well-utilized.	62%	35%
26	My department explores new and innovative ways to provide services.	63%	28%
27	My department's facilities are adequate for us to function at a high level.	54%	44%

The following table displays the level of disagreement of each statement by department.

Statement #	Town Clerk	Police	Planning & Development	Public Works & Parks and Rec	Admin/ HR	Finance & Taxes	Human Services
1	0%	33%	50%	30%	25%	17%	0%
2	67%	33%	50%	50%	25%	33%	0%
3	67%	38%	100%	80%	50%	50%	0%
4	33%	81%	50%	60%	100%	67%	25%
5	33%	13%	50%	40%	33%	33%	13%
6	67%	67%	100%	70%	66%	50%	38%
7	67%	71%	50%	70%	66%	83%	25%
8	67%	38%	0%	60%	33%	50%	14%
9	33%	18%	0%	40%	0%	17%	0%
10	0%	6%	50%	50%	0%	17%	0%
11	0%	0%	50%	0%	33%	17%	0%
12	0%	0%	50%	10%	0%	0%	0%
13	0%	6%	50%	50%	0%	17%	0%
14	0%	6%	50%	40%	33%	33%	0%
15	33%	6%	50%	40%	66%	20%	0%
16	33%	29%	50%	30%	25%	17%	0%
17	0%	29%	50%	50%	50%	33%	0%
18	100%	29%	100%	70%	33%	100%	0%
19	0%	18%	50%	60%	67%	67%	0%
20	0%	12%	100%	60%	0%	33%	0%
21	33%	24%	50%	70%	0%	50%	0%
22	0%	12%	50%	50%	0%	17%	0%
23	67%	29%	0%	60%	0%	50%	0%
24	33%	18%	50%	60%	33%	33%	0%
25	33%	29%	100%	50%	0%	33%	0%
26	33%	18%	100%	60%	0%	33%	0%
27	0%	12%	50%	70%	100%	67%	14%

The following sections describe areas of agreement and disagreement in survey responses, as well as variation in responses based on employees' demographic indicators.

1) Areas of Strong Agreement

8 of the 27 statements in this section received more than 70% agreement ("agree" or "strongly agree"). These included the following:

- Statements #1 and #5 focused on good teamwork within departments and between departments, as well as effectively empowering employees.
- Statements #10-14 and #22 each dealt with the strengths of their own department and mentorship. There is a clear correlation between the feelings of employee's own departments and higher levels of agreement. This would infer that employees have a better feeling towards their own department than the town organization as a whole.

2) Areas of Mixed Agreement and Disagreement

14 statements in this section received 30% or more disagreement. They are shown in the following points.

- Statements #2-4 addressed the equipment and technology available to employees.
- Statements #6-8 focused on the distribution of communication, the focus of goals, and whether the town was a good place to work. 46% of respondents did not agree with the statement that the Town was a good place to work.
- Statements #17-19 discussed the organizational structure, staffing levels, and good internal policies. 68% of respondents did not think they had adequate staffing levels for the work being performed.
- Statement #21 was concerning the effective communication of strategic plans and goals to employees, 37% disagreed.
- Statement #23-25 and #27 discussed issues being dealt with correctly, effective communication, efficiently utilized staff, and adequate infrastructure to enhance performance.

3) Differences by Department

Responses varied in many cases from one department within the town to another. The following points explain.

- Human Services was overwhelming higher in agreement levels of every statement. There were only a few questions that any of the employees disagreed with any of the statements.

- Statements #6 and #7 had the highest levels of disagreement, each above 70%. #6 stated that the employee feels they know what is going on in the town and #7 stated that the employee felt the town was working toward the same goals. Human Services was the only department with a majority in agreement with each of those statements.
- Statement #3 stated that employees had enough resources to produce at a high level. Public Works, Parks, and Planning & Development each were in a majority disagreement.
- Statement #8 stated that the town was a good place to work. Finance and Tax departments had over a 50% disagreement level.

4) Differences by Tenure Length

- Statement #3 said that employees had the resources and equipment to perform at a high level. Overall, the respondents were split 50% agree and disagree. Yet, those with 0-2 years of experience responded with 83% in agreement with the statement.
- Statement #6 stated that employees were kept informed of what was happening in the town. Overall, there was a 29% agreement of this statement. Yet, those with 0-2 years of experience responded with 83% in agreement with the statement.
- Statement #8 stated that the town was a good place to work. Only 48% of respondents agreed with this, yet those with 3-5 years of tenure with the town had a 71% agreement level.

5) Workload

Employees were asked to indicate their current workload by selecting one of four statements. The following table shows the responses received.

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Count</u>
I am always busy and can never catch up.	31%
I am often busy but can usually keep up.	56%
I have the right balance of workload and available time.	11%
I feel under-utilized and could take on additional work.	2%

4. Open-Ended Responses (Town)

The final section in the survey asked participants to respond in their own words to several open-ended questions. The following subsections summarize the responses received.

“Are there any services that are currently provided by your organization (the Town or Coventry Public Schools) that could be evaluated for discontinuance or provided at a lower service level? Please provide specific details if possible.”

- **No Changes:** There were only a few comments made for this question. None of the answers were overlapping. Employees do not see any specific services that should be cut or downsized.

“Are there any services that are not currently provided by your organization (the Town or Coventry Public Schools) that should be provided for the community? Please provide specific details if possible.”

- **Online Services:** Multiple comments concerned the lack of user interface for residents online. Several employees stated that there could be easier access of records and other information online for residents. Some answers included, “More online services” and “Online dog licensing and payment by debit/credit”.
- **Police Services:** Several comments from the police department suggested there should be more policing services. Specifically, comments read, “We no longer have a Drug Enforcement squad due to low staffing issues” and “Need more officers to provide School Resource Officers, Community Policing Unit, Traffic Unit”.

“What opportunities exist for the Town of Coventry and Coventry Public Schools to jointly provide or share services to increase efficiency or reduce costs to the organizations?”

- **Public Works Services:** All comments given for this question regarded the sharing of certain public works or parks services. This included sharing asset/equipment storage, facility maintenance, landscaping services, supplies, and snow plowing. *One comment did mention that finance could be combined.

“What are the greatest staffing-related challenges facing your organization?”

- **Understaffed:** Almost every department discussed the lack of staff they had. Comments that were made included, “Short staffed” and “Usually understaffed”.

- **Retention:** Multiple comments were made about the inability to hire qualified candidates due to the Town not being competitive in salaries. “Wages too low to have some move from another city or town” and “Not being able to retain employees because wages are comparable with other communities”

“What do you see as the three greatest strengths of your organization?”

- **Great Staff:** Employees stated consistently that the knowledgeable and hardworking staff was a great strength. People responded with “Employees” and “There are a lot of capable individuals” and “People”.
- **Customer Service:** This comment was made several times as a strength of multiple departments. They commented, “Commitment to the people” and “Customer service” and “Level of service”.
- **Teamwork:** Another comment that was repeated was the amount of effective teamwork that takes place. We saw comments like, “Teamwork” and “We have people from within actively trying to make things better”.

“What do you see as the three greatest needs of your organization?”

- **Leadership:** One overarching theme has been the need or improvement of effective leadership and communication from those leaders. Multiple employees, in different departments, made comments about the Town’s poor leadership. Things like, “Top Administration that actual cares about the town” and “Appreciation by the Town Manager” and “Actual leadership with a vision”. There were several more comments that were similar to those stated here.
- **Technology / Equipment:** Several employees mentioned needing better technology and equipment. They stated things like, “Reliable safe vehicles” and “Better software programs” and “New technology”.
- **Staff:** The next repeated comment had to do with staffing needs. Multiple departments made comments like, “Staffing” and “More manpower” and “More people”.

“Please list any resources, equipment or technology that would enable you to perform your duties more effectively or efficiently.”

- Most of the comments made in this section were echoing what was said when asked about the needs of the organization. Some additional comments were made about needing new computers, new vehicles, better management software, and better workspaces.

“What could be done to improve the relationship between the Town of Coventry and Coventry Public Schools?”

- **Budget:** Many employees stated that they believe the school takes an unfair portion of the budget. Many suggest for separate budgets to be voted on by residents. Comments were made such as, “The school dept takes 90% of the Town's budget and the municipal side suffers” and “Separate the budgets” and “They take up an unfair amount of the Town budget”.
- **Others:** The budget was the only truly consistent comment made. Other comments included better communication, better leadership on both sides, and to educate the residents on what the school and town employees do.

Key Findings:

Some clear topics were brought out from the survey. The last question in the survey asked for any extra comments and multiple employees were blunt in their opinions. Some of the key findings from these comments and the survey were a need for better leadership, a feeling of a toxic environment, and comments about specific leaders being the issue.

5. Multiple-Choice Responses (School)

The first set of statements asked participants to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of 24 statements. The available responses were “strongly agree”, “agree”, “strongly disagree”, and “disagree”. The following table and chart show the levels of agreement and disagreement with each of the statements.

#	Statement	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
1	There is good teamwork between my office or building and others within Coventry Public Schools.	72%	23%
2	I have the technology/software necessary to complete my job efficiently and effectively.	63%	35%
3	I have the appropriate resources and equipment I need to function at a high level.	52%	46%
4	I am able to complete internal paperwork (e.g., benefits-related paperwork, finance or procurement paperwork, etc.) electronically without having to print or manually sign papers.	65%	22%
5	I am empowered to make decisions within my professional judgement.	74%	26%
6	I am kept informed of what is happening in Coventry Public Schools.	70%	30%
7	Everyone at Coventry Public Schools is working toward the same strategic goals.	63%	33%
8	Coventry Public Schools is a good place to work.	84%	15%
9	I feel that I can make a career with this organization.	87%	9%
10	My office or building provides a high level of service to the students and/or to Coventry Public Schools.	91%	9%
11	The people directly impacted by the work of my department are satisfied with the level of service we provide.	87%	9%
12	Providing high-quality work is a priority for Coventry Public Schools.	89%	9%
13	My office or building places a high priority on cost effective methods of providing services.	74%	14%
14	In my office or building, we do a good job of planning ahead and scheduling our work.	81%	16%
15	The organizational structure of my office or building promotes the efficient delivery of services.	73%	19%
16	Staffing levels in my office or building promote efficiency for the work being performed.	43%	51%
17	Our internal policies and procedures are effective at helping me perform my job.	73%	22%
18	I am encouraged by my managers and supervisors to identify better ways to provide services.	76%	17%
19	Managers and supervisors in my department communicate a clearly defined strategic direction.	71%	25%
20	We have high performance expectations in my office or building.	89%	9%
21	Managers and supervisors in my office or building do a good job of communicating important information to me in a timely manner.	75%	23%

#	Statement	Agree or Strongly Agree	Disagree or Strongly Disagree
22	My office or building effectively manages workload so that all individuals are well-utilized.	65%	30%
23	My office or building explores new and innovative ways to provide services.	75%	18%
24	My office or building's facilities are adequate for us to function at a high level.	39%	58%

The following table displays the level of disagreement of each statement by function.

Statement #	Assistants / SRP Nurses/ Behavior Specialists	Building-based Admin	Building-based Clerks/ Secretaries	Custodial/ Facilities/ Maintenance	Central Office Clerks	District Admin	Teachers/ Therapists / Clinicians (Building-based)	Teachers/ Therapists / Clinicians (District)	Teaching Assistants / Supervisory
1	10%	33%	20%	23%		0%	22%	35%	4%
2	10%	17%	20%	15%	38%	11%	37%	40%	22%
3	15%	67%	40%	38%	25%	11%	46%	55%	29%
4	25%	17%	27%	15%	13%	11%	22%	15%	11%
5	25%	50%	40%	23%	38%	0%	25%	30%	7%
6	35%	17%	53%	15%	100%	0%	28%	22%	15%
7	25%	17%	27%	31%	87%	11%	35%	55%	15%
8	5%	17%	27%	8%	38%	11%	17%	17%	0%
9	5%	17%	13%	15%	13%	11%	7%	5%	4%
10	0%	17%	13%	0%	0%	0%	11%	10%	7%
11	5%	17%	0%	8%	0%	0%	10%	25%	0%
12	0%	0%	0%	0%	13%	11%	11%	20%	4%
13	5%	0%	0%	8%	25%	0%	17%	17%	8%
14	5%	17%	7%	8%	38%	0%	19%	26%	4%
15	5%	0%	7%	0%	50%	0%	23%	32%	4%
16	25%	83%	33%	8%	50%	33%	57%	55%	52%
17	5%	33%	13%	8%	0%	0%	27%	40%	7%
18	5%	17%	20%	15%	38%	0%	18%	20%	7%
19	0%	17%	20%	15%	38%	0%	31%	30%	8%
20	15%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	11%	10%	4%
21	0%	17%	33%	8%	63%	11%	24%	21%	15%
22	5%	17%	27%	23%	25%	22%	33%	55%	15%
23	5%	0%	20%	8%	25%	0%	20%	28%	8%
24	45%	67%	27%	31%	13%	55%	64%	72%	52%

1) Areas of Strong Agreement

17 of the 27 statements in this section received 70% or more agreement (“agree” or “strongly agree”). These included the following:

- Statements #1 and #5-6 stated there was good teamwork, the employee was empowered to make decisions, and the employee is kept in the loop on things happening at the school.

- Statements #8 and #9 said that Coventry Schools is a good place to work, and that the employee could make a career in that organization. Both were over 80% in agreement.
- Statements #10-15 discuss the level of service provided by the employees building or office, as well as organizational efficiency.
- Statements #17-21 state that the managers are efficient, the policies are good, and there is good communication.
- Statement #23 state that the employee's office or building explores new and innovative ways to provide service.

2) Areas of Mixed Agreement and Disagreement

6 statements in this section received 30% or more disagreement. They are shown in the following points.

- Statements #2-3 state that the employee has the efficient equipment or technology to do their job at a high level.
- Statement #7 said that everyone at Coventry Public Schools was working toward the same goals.
- Statement #16 state that the employee's office or building have adequate staffing levels to perform the needed work.
- Statement #22 state that the employee's office or building effectively utilizes staff for workloads.
- Statement #24 state that the employee's facilities are adequate for them to perform at a high level. There was only 39% agreement for this statement.

3) Differences by Department

Responses varied in many cases from one department within the schools to another. The following points explain.

- Statement #3 stated that the employee had the appropriate equipment and resources to function at a high level. While overall the statement earned 52% agreement, the District Administration team agreed at 83%
- Statement #16 discussed staffing levels being appropriate to handle the work being done efficiently. The statement had a 51% disagreement level while the Building Based Administration had an 83% disagreement level.

4) Differences by Tenure Length

- Statement #3 stated that employees had an appropriate amount of resources and equipment to perform at a high level. Overall, this received a 52% agreement level, but among those with 0-2 years of experience, it received a 71% agreement level.
- Statement #3 stated that employees had an appropriate amount of resources and equipment to perform at a high level. Overall, this received a 52% agreement level, but among those with 0-2 years of experience, it received a 71% agreement level.

5) Workload

Employees were asked to indicate their current workload by selecting one of four statements. The following table shows the responses received.

Statement	Count
I am always busy and can never catch up.	44%
I am often busy but can usually keep up.	44%
I have the right balance of workload and available time.	11%
I feel under-utilized and could take on additional work.	1%

6. Open-Ended Responses (School)

The final section in the survey asked participants to respond in their own words to several open-ended questions. The following subsections summarize the responses received.

“Are there any services that are currently provided by your organization (the Town or Coventry Public Schools) that could be evaluated for discontinuance or provided at a lower service level? Please provide specific details if possible.”

- **No Changes:** There were only a few comments made for this question. None of the answers were overlapping. Employees do not see any specific services that

should be cut or downsized. The only consistent comment was that there are no services that should be cut.

“Are there any services that are not currently provided by your organization (the Town or Coventry Public Schools) that should be provided for the community? Please provide specific details if possible.”

- **After School Programs:** Multiple comments were made about the need for more after school activities. Some of the comments included, “After school programs” and “More clubs and activities for students” and “Before and after school care for families”.
- **Parent Education Services:** Several comments were made about the lack of programs to help parents assist their kids at home. Comments were, “Parent engagement and at home support” and “Parent workshops” and “Parent training”.
- **Social Workers:** Employees suggested that there was a need of mental health and social worker type positions. Some of the comments included, “More social workers for school dept and the town” and “We need more mental health professionals in the schools”.

“What opportunities exist for the Town of Coventry and Coventry Public Schools to jointly provide or share services to increase efficiency or reduce costs to the organizations?”

- **Public Works Services:** Just as the Town employee comments suggested, a need to share maintenance, grounds, equipment, snow plowing, and other public works related services. *Again, there was a comment made about combining purchasing or financial resources.

“What are the greatest staffing-related challenges facing your organization?”

- **Substitute Teachers:** Several comments were made about the lack of overall staff but especially the lack of substitute teachers that could backfill when teachers are off. Some comments were, “Lack of staff” and “Substitutes” and “Pay for substitutes”.
- **Burn Out:** Some comments mentioned that employees are leaving due to being overworked. Comments were made such as, “Teacher burn out” and “Smaller classes”.

“What do you see as the three greatest strengths of your organization?”

- **Great Staff:** Employees stated consistently that the knowledgeable and committed staff was a strength. They commented, “Teachers and assistants work hard every day” and “All of the staff is passionate and puts the students first”.
- **Teamwork:** This comment was made several times about the sense of teamwork and community environment. Some comments included, “Helpful coworkers” and “Sense of community”.

“What do you see as the three greatest needs of your organization?”

- **Leadership:** A clear topic that was repeatedly brought up was the need for better buildings and infrastructure. Many comments sounded like, “Facility updates” and “New buildings” and “Facilities improvements”.
- **Staff:** The next repeated comment had to do with staffing needs. Multiple departments made comments like, “Staffing” and “More staff to manage needs of running huge organization”.

“Please list any resources, equipment or technology that would enable you to perform your duties more effectively or efficiently.”

- **Technology:** Several comments alluded to a need for technology updates, such as computers, projectors, etc. Some comments included, “Updated laptops” and “Computers” and “Working Smartboards”.
- **Student Equipment:** Some comments brought attention to the need for new desks and chairs for students and classrooms. Comments made were, “Many student desks are in need of replacement” and “Chairs and desks”.

“What could be done to improve the relationship between the Town of Coventry and Coventry Public Schools?”

- **Appreciation:** Many of the school employees feel that if the residents and town employees understood the amount of effort they put into their jobs, there would be less animosity. Comments included, “Know what our program does and let community know what our program does” and “There needs to be a common respect for the profession of teaching”.

- **Communication:** School employees see a need for better communication between the school and town administration. Comments included, “Better communication. Sharing Resources. Working as a team.” and “Ongoing communication to work together”.

Key Findings:

There was a section for employees to add any additional comments. Some of the key themes included a clear need for better Town/School relations, a focus on fiscal responsibility, and a need for residents to understand what exactly the schools do.

Appendix B – Best Practices Assessment

As part of the project teams analytical efforts, a screening assessment was conducted of major service areas against a series of best practices. This effort enabled the project team to identify areas of strength with the organizations and to identify gaps for analysis to determine if operations, technological or staffing changes were warranted to enable the organizations to meet the standard. Not every area where the target was not met resulted in a specific recommendation in the main report.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
Municipal Finance Department		
<p>Clear written policies have been established for operational and strategic decision-making related to financial matters, identifying acceptable or unacceptable courses of action, establishing parameters in which the government can operate, and providing standards against which a government's fiscal performance can be judged.</p> <p>Policies should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Asset Management ● Cost Allocation ● Debt Management ● Fund Balance and Reserve ● Investment 	No	Clear financial policies should be drafted, approved by the Council, and enforced by Finance.
The department has metrics in place to measure the Town's current fiscal health as well as whether that health is improving or declining.	No	The department should develop a report card of key indicators of fiscal health and include historical trend data and projections related to these indicators. Examples include: Total Revenues Per Capita - Ratio of Total Intergovernmental Aid to Total Revenue Ratio of Total Taxes to Total Revenue - Ratio of Deficit to Total Revenue - Ratio of Debt to Total Equalized Assessed Value
The Town has clear policies related to the management of capital assets, including capital improvement planning, capital budgeting, project management, and asset maintenance.	No	The town should establish an inventory of all capital assets, policies related to their maintenance and replacement, and use this as a basis for Capital Improvement planning.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
Town investments in capital improvements are tracked separately and are adequate to ensure that infrastructure and buildings are properly maintained and/or replaced as needed.	No	Capital improvement program for municipal equipment is funded at only \$200,000 per year (and zero in 2021). Debt service schedule in budget indicates \$2.0 - \$2.7 million in payments but does not specify what projects are being funded by bonds.
The Town annually produces an updated 5-year capital improvement plan based on condition assessments of buildings, infrastructure, and equipment.	Partial	<p>As part of the budget process, departments submit capital improvement requests with estimated 5-year costs of each project. Projects are given weight based on priority.</p> <p>The Town should develop a collaborative, ongoing process to assess capital improvement needs and create a 5-to-10-year capital improvement plan covering all assets. This should include a realistic plan to fund capital investments agreed upon in the CIP process.</p>
The Town has a medium- and long-term financial projection process in place.	Partial	<p>The Town Manager has begun a process of educating the Council on the fiscal position given the current budget.</p> <p>The Finance Department should work with the Town Manager and elected officials on a long-term financial planning process that combines financial forecasting with strategic planning.</p>
The town has clear procurement policies in place and appropriate workflows and separation of duties to ensure that these are complied with.	No	Town lacks oversight over the purchasing / procurement process. Current computer software system workflows do not allow for creation of purchase orders prior to contracting for goods and services. Checks and balances to ensure work was required, budgeted, completed, and approved are not in place
Tax assessments are updated to reflect property improvements including additions and renovations	Yes	Assessor / Building Department communication would benefit from improvement to streamline this process.
Uncollected taxes debts are recouped through a tax sale process.	Yes	
Residents can pay taxes on-line or in person	Yes	

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
Municipal Information Technology		
The town has an IT strategic plan that aims to maximize the ability of information systems to streamline operations, improve communications, and increase efficiency.	No	IT issues are addressed as needed, but no strategic plan is in place to identify opportunities or to look at systems that can be applied across multiple divisions or departments.
Adequate staff are in place to ensure continuity of service and rapid response to emergencies.	Partial	Department has one employee only but does work with the Police Department IT personnel and school IT to create some duplication / backup capabilities. Scope of work responsibilities under a single staff person may not be sustainable.
Security standards have been developed to include diagnostic tools, monitoring tools, intrusion detection systems, firewalls, encryption, secure e-mail, and anti-virus.	Yes	Security has been made a high priority.
Town software systems are current, consistently updated, and not at risk of obsolescence. Where possible, Town uses cloud based SAAS (software as a service) systems in lieu of static, locally hosted systems.	Partial	Have recently upgraded or are in the process of upgrading assessor and permitting software. Should explore options for expanding permitting software for other permits and licenses (e.g., pets) to replace in-house system. Current building permitting system may be expanded to other functions.
Department provides regular training on all systems for employees.	No	Systems may be under-utilized or incorrectly utilized because of lack of training. Training should be built into the IT budget or individual department budgets.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
Municipal Human Resources		
Employee turnover is tracked by department, and HR department helps identify reasons for high turnover and recommend measures to retain quality staff.	No	Departments report that the town has experienced very high levels of turnover in senior positions, which often have a crippling effect on operations, efficiency, consistency, and service levels However, there is no quantification of this metric and HR is not tasked with reducing turnover where possible. Department should begin producing turnover reports, conducting exit interviews, and report on findings to the Town Manager.
Department maintains current job descriptions and qualifications for all permitted positions.	No	While flexibility on job descriptions is limited due to union contracts, these should be updated as possible to ensure they match the current responsibilities of each position and to provide flexibility to managers and employees.
Department has conducted a salary study to assess whether salaries are in-line with those of comparable organizations.	No	The town should commission a compensation study and develop a plan to bring salaries in line with the market, to attract high quality employees while ensuring that the
Department provides expertise and oversight for complaints, employee discipline issues, and grievances.	Partial	Very limited HR involvement in employee discipline or handling of grievances. To protect the town and ensure consistent handling of employee issues there should be a central point of contact to guide these processes.
The HR department works with departments to ensure that succession planning is in place in the event that key personnel leave the town.	No	No formal succession planning process is in place although some departments may do this informally.
The HR department maintains records to ensure that employees receive mandated training (sexual harassment prevention, cybersecurity)	No	The HR department plays no role in training of employees.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
The HR director is an integral part of the Town management team	No	The HR department (1 staff person) is physically isolated from other administrative departments and has limited interaction with the manager's office, Finance department, or other department directors.
The town has adopted an HR manual with outlining policies for times like timekeeping, leave, FMLA, as well as processes related to hiring, performance management, performance improvement, and discipline.	Partial	A draft manual is currently in process.
Town Clerk		
Document management system has been widely implemented and has appropriate security measures (individual staff credentials, etc.)	Partial	There are multiple systems: land records, vital records, licensing, etc. Each Clerks' staff member has a unique login to each system, but multiple staff may make changes under the same login, since they leave them logged in throughout the day. This saves time but is less secure.
The Town Clerk's Office has a records automation plan.	Partial	The office is making progress toward automation. Records since 1976 are available online. Continuing this effort for prior years would be a matter of staffing and funding availability.
Effective disaster recovery and contingency planning procedures are in place to protect vital public records and land records.	Partial	The records are in a fireproof, locked vault. Many documents are also backed up on microfilm and sent to Iron Mountain for retention. No off-site digital backups.
The Town Clerk's Office adheres to established procedures and timelines for license renewals, including a cycle of reminders when appropriate.	Yes	The Clerk tracks this information by spreadsheet and is able to generate reports by type of license when they are due for expiration. Re-application notices for business licenses are sent when it is time for renewal.
The Town Clerk's Office has a procedure for identifying unlicensed activity and coordinates with law enforcement to assure compliance.	No	If staff hear about an unlicensed business, they tell the Town Manager, who decides what to do. No fines or fees in place currently.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
The Town Clerk's Office adheres to established timelines and procedures for compiling and publishing agendas for the Town Council and its committees, staffing their meetings, and publishing meeting records afterward.	Yes	Clerk compiles council agenda and provides to Town Manager for approval. Once approved, posted to SOS website 48hr prior to meeting. Receives incoming documents for attachment and sends out full packet (typically the Friday before a Monday meeting). Minutes must be published within 35 days after meeting. No formal timeline for ordinances/ resolutions but try to finish as fast as possible.
The Town Clerk's Office adheres to established timelines and procedures for compiling and publishing probate court packets, staffing probate court, producing court records afterward, and entering all information into the legal records system.	Yes	Probate court documents are published 2-3 days before the Thursday meeting. Records are typically published on Friday or the following Monday. Some probate court proceedings must be advertised 2 Wednesdays before the hearing.
The Town Clerk's Office makes full use of its software for compiling and publishing materials in support of the Town Council and probate Court.	Yes	The office uses iCompass to efficiently compile and publish agendas for Town Council and other boards/commissions.
The financial responsibilities required of each position are clearly identified, and those who handle cash (including opening mail) are separate from those who record/authorize transactions.	No	Each of the clerks is able to receive payments, but they all also perform reconciliations. They are all able to open mail, and all able to stamp it and make deposits.
The Clerk's Office website provides information about its functions and allows visitors to access forms and file requests.	Partial	The website provides forms for public records requests, dog license applications, marriage licenses, death certificates, birth certificates, trade names, etc. Also has information on how to obtain land records, and council minutes. Does not show information about bidding procedures.
The Town Clerk's Office has a mechanism for receiving and centralizing public records requests.	Partial	Requests typically come to the Clerk's office first and are then sent to the appropriate department to handle them. Reminders are placed on the calendar for when it is due, and the department is reminded if they don't respond. The Clerk involves the Town Attorney if needed. Sends eventual response to the requestor and keeps a copy of the response electronically. A few departments handle their own requests. No formal criteria for when to involve counsel.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
The Town Clerk's Office has established procedures for ensuring compliance and impartiality in the bidding and procurement process.	Yes	Department puts together specifications, then sent to Town Manager for approval. Clerk's office then advertises bids on the Town website, the State website, and the local newspaper. Questions are directed to the department director. Bids usually received in physical copy, which are scanned in. Department director and Clerk open them in council chambers in front of the public and read them aloud.
The Town Clerk's Office has established procedures for providing notary public services.	N/A	All 4 clerks are notaries and handle walk-in appointments. This is a free service to the Town.
Library		
The library participates in regional consortia for materials and programs.	Yes	The Library is part of Ocean State Libraries and governed by the Office of Library and Information Services.
Grants are sought and secured for new technology and programs or to assist with the delivery of existing programs and services.	Yes	The Coventry Library Association does fundraising for the library, and the library also receives grant assistance from the State. They must re-certify each year to show that they meet the minimum state standards. The State formula is based on library expenditures from the prior year. The Library has also secured technology grants for computers and a checkout machine and replaced carpeting with grant funding a few years ago.
Staff receive professional development which includes annual training on new developments in library service.	Yes	Librarians all keep up with the industry by attending conferences, participating in literary panels and committees, the state library association, etc.
The library emphasizes electronic media, and its digital resources are available and advertised to online users.	Yes	The Library maintains an extensive electronic collection and advertises digital subscriptions which are available to cardholders.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
The library has a strategy for ensuring that their collection meets the needs and desires of the service population.	Yes	Librarians read the peer-reviewed professional association publications. They also follow a collection development policy which includes materials which generate high volumes of holds and checkouts. Materials are weeded according to weeding policy (the Crew Method). Includes those which have not been checked out in 5 years, or are in poor condition, etc.
The library runs programs designed to reach numerous target audiences (children, adults, seniors, etc.).	Yes	The Library hosts events for all age ranges and in a wide variety of topics and interest areas.
The library conducts outreach efforts to schools and audiences who cannot get to the library (homebound, etc.)	Yes	The YA librarian staffs outreach events at the schools. The library had a bookmobile during Covid. Another employee also makes regular visits to homebound people. They also partner with Parks and Recreation to supply materials to their summer camps.
A volunteer program is in place to augment and support staff efforts.	Yes	The library partners and supports the Literacy Volunteers of Kent County, which coordinates volunteer tutors for adults. They also have a teen volunteer program.
Human Services		
The Department has an on-call rotation or a procedure for responding as quickly as possible to community calls for service which require social services.	Yes	After-hours calls from the police, etc. usually come to the Director or Assistant Director if urgent. During working hours, the police department comes next door to Human Services, or calls come to the Department's front desk.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
<p>The Department has an information system for tracking and assigning social work contacts, caseloads, and appointments, recording activities and interventions, and producing reports on workload and outcomes.</p> <p>The system maintains and updates profiles of service recipients, including service recipients of Project FRIENDS.</p> <p>The system tracks visits to the senior center and participation in its individual programs or assistance programs such as the food bank.</p>	Partial	<p>The department's case management system is a custom-built application which is old. It is an Access database which tracks every interaction and intervention, phone calls, etc. It can produce certain reports but is not a sophisticated solution. The Department is interested in a replacement.</p> <p>Projects FRIENDS is tracked in Therap because it's required for any program which is licensed by the state. Includes annual plans, every interaction, referral, outreach, etc. so that the State can track. This is specific to developmental disabilities.</p> <p>Using MySeniorCenter to track visitors (and volunteers) at the senior center and the food bank.</p>
<p>The Department has safety procedures in place (location notifications, buddy system, etc.) for visits to homes, shelters, and other locations in the field.</p>	Yes	<p>Social workers in the field often work in teams, or in tandem with police / fire personnel. They also keep a database in their Access system with notifications about problem properties.</p>
<p>The Department has clearly assigned responsibility for searching for grant funding opportunities, compiling and assessing them, developing applications, and positioning the agency for eligibility.</p>	Yes	<p>Director searches for grants, partners with aging-focused agencies, private foundations, State Dept. of Health, etc. The Director also develops the applications and then leads and tracks the implementation.</p>
<p>The Department has a fundraising program which follows a clearly established strategy and includes ongoing development of messaging and marketing materials.</p>	Yes	<p>The Department works closely with local banks, businesses, and community partners. An annual "tis the season" program with the police/fire and municipal departments, as well as local families, is another fundraising effort.</p>
<p>The Department maintains a donor and volunteer mailing list, and has an established procedure for onboarding, directing, and following up with volunteers at routine and one-off events.</p>	Yes	<p>The Department maintains a list of donors and businesses who are frequent or past contributors, and they send mailings at holiday season.</p> <p>The Department also does background checks on all volunteers, matches them to the appropriate opportunities, and onboards them. They track all volunteers through the MySeniorCenter program.</p>

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
The Department has established points of contact or a system in place for receiving referrals from the school system, the police department, or other Town agencies.	Yes	Intake receptionist handles simple requests like food bank, heating assistance, SNAP benefits, etc. and meets with individual. Social work cases usually come through Director or Assistant, and they review the case along with the experienced social workers to determine the approach and assignment for handling them. Most cases begin as a phone call, and they set an appointment.
The Department has regular programming for educating teachers, police officers, and other Town employees on social service needs and trauma-informed care.	Yes	The Department provides education to Town staff (including the police department) and the schools. Grant funding is also used to support this.
The Department maintains and regularly updates a list of <i>other</i> service providers and assistance programs, and they publicize this list in printed materials and on their website.	Yes	The department partners with other assistance providers, and these are listed in the monthly newsletter which is also available on the website.
The Department has a procedure for approving programming at the senior center, scheduling, promoting, and tracking attendance.	Yes	Program Director and their assistant develop the schedule. They promote programs at the center, on Facebook, in the newsletter, and in the local paper. They also track attendance. The Department polls residents and also seeks to apply evidence-based practices to focus on things that promote wellness for seniors. They also have an advisory board of people who represent seniors. And they refer to best practices from organizations like the National Council on Aging.
The Department has a training program for food service and runs background checks for employees and on-site volunteers.	Yes	The Department must have all staff food safety certified and licensed by the State. All volunteers also get trained on temperature control, safety protocols, importance of thoroughly cooking food, etc.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
The Department makes use of a community survey and other tools for determining the interests and needs of Coventry residents.	Yes	Community need measured based on the number of calls received, and services are adjusted accordingly. The Department is developing a community resiliency survey re: covid-related needs and are also seeking to implement a "health equity zone" in Coventry which will include an ongoing community need survey.
Police Department		
An Early Warning System is in place to help identify a pattern of issues/complaints and provide early intervention regarding potential behavioral problems.	Yes	Department deploys Guardian as their early warning system.
A training program is in place for sworn and civilian personnel.	Yes	A more defined training program for civilian staff should be created and implemented.
Field units operate with an appropriate mix of supervisory and line positions (with a ratio of approximately 1:6 to 1:9).	Yes	
Field supervisors assist in making recommendations about how cases are ultimately assigned for investigative follow-up.	Yes	Sergeants work with responding officers to identify cases that should be assigned to Detectives.
Proactive patrol time nears a range of 40% to 50% after subtracting time handling calls for service and administrative tasks.	Yes	Proactive time for 2021 was 65%.
Officers' use of proactive time is directed based on crime analysis, intelligence-led policing initiatives, problem-oriented policing plans, or other formal work direction.	No	There is no formal proactive directive. Officers direct their proactive efforts based on citizens' complaints and recent criminal activity.
Investigators use a case ranking system to assign cases.	No	Cases are generally assigned based on the type of case and staff's availability.
Investigations use a case management software solution.	No	Currently utilizing an Excel workbook to manage investigative caseload.
Planning and Development		
Codes and ordinances are updated on a consistent basis.	No	The Town's comprehensive plan is not up to date.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
Permit Intake staff are certified ICC Permit Technicians.	Yes	Building staff are ICC certified.
Applications are submitted electronically.	Partial	Only Building applications are submitted electronically. Planning applications are paper.
Applications are routed and reviewed electronically.	Partial	Building applications are routed and reviewed electronically.
Performance metrics are established and tracked.	Yes	
A development review meeting with internal reviewers is conducted for large/complex applications.		Informal meetings between review staff are held for unique or complex projects.
Building Inspections that are received by 5pm are conducted the next business day.	Yes	
Building Inspection requests are received electronically.	Yes	
Public Works		
The Department's activities are tracked and reported on using a set of performance measures.	No	The Department does not report performance against a defined set of measures.
Employees have ready access to a useful employee handbook, the CBA and information on the Town's personnel policies and procedures.	Yes	All employees are provided copies of policies at the time of hire. When a new or revised policy is developed all employees receive a copy. The Town is in the process of developing an employee handbook
The Department has a robust computerized maintenance management system that allows managers to track divisional performance and individual productivity.	No	There is no automated CMMS in the DPW. Reporting of work is done unevenly across divisions but is in all cases a manual effort.
An up-to-date computerized geographic information system is available that provides records of the components of the infrastructure system directly on laptops and/or maps.	Yes	Primarily used for ROW boundaries and stormwater structure locations.
Levels of service have been developed that define the frequency with which maintenance tasks are to be performed.	No	Levels of service are generally known; however, they are not codified, with associated levels of effort and related costs assigned.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
The Department has a clear formal written outsourcing strategy that focuses on core competencies and service improvements.	No	Outsourcing is accomplished primarily on an ad hoc basis. Engineering and underground infrastructure repair and maintenance services are outsourced in their entirety. Others, such as facilities maintenance, signal maintenance, lane striping, etc., are outsourced as needed.
A five-year fleet equipment replacement plan has been developed to identify future peak year funding requirements so that this can be dealt with in a planned manner.	No	The DPW's strategic plan identifies the need to "replace vehicles and equipment at regular intervals..." however, there is no formal multi-year replacement plan that identifies specific units for replacement, and projected costs.
Equipment maintenance staffing levels are reasonable with a ratio of 1 mechanic to every 90 to 110 Vehicle Equivalent Units, depending on fleet composition, age, annual use, and other factors.	Yes	The Division is very sufficiently staffed to provide a very high level of service, with 39.4 vehicle equivalent units per mechanic. Can more of the Town's fleet be serviced by this division of DPW?
Work orders are used to record all maintenance activities. Work is performed within reasonable timeframes.	No	Time and materials expenditures are not recorded by mechanics. All records are manual.
A comprehensive PM program is in place that complies with manufacturer recommendations. Customers receive notification of scheduled service dates and compliance levels are 90% or better.	Yes	This is likely the case as all equipment serviced is contained with the DPW. However, compliance metrics are not recorded or reported.
Vehicles and equipment in the fleet are evaluated regularly for adequate utilization.	No	Odometer readings are available through the Fuel Master fueling system; however, it is neither analyzed by DPW nor reported to user departments.
Facilities Maintenance staff receive training in the areas of energy conservation, new facility technologies, assessing building and component condition and analyzing the useful life of building components.	No	The two maintenance technicians are not skilled tradespersons, but rather are qualified to perform only minor repairs to structures. No formal energy system training is provided, however the DPW did commission an energy audit by National Grid, which identified several capital needs, and the Town allocated \$5M for energy efficiencies.
Annual surveys are conducted to assess customer satisfaction with facilities maintenance services	No	No satisfaction surveys are distributed. Feedback is in verbal form only.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
A five-year facility equipment replacement plan has been developed to identify future peak year funding requirements so that this can be dealt with in a planned manner.	No	Building mechanics assess building conditions each quarter to determine what repairs need to occur, however there is no formal structural Town-wide assessment of facilities.
A comprehensive list of building systems and equipment is maintained with information, such as location, model type, warranty information, age and replacement parts are maintained for all buildings and mechanical systems.	No	There is no central repository of building systems.
Building components are inspected once every five years for condition and maintenance needs.	No	There is no routine and formal condition or structural assessment of facilities maintained by the Town's facilities maintenance division.
Work orders are used to record all facilities maintenance activities.	Yes	This is partially the case, as building mechanics do record names, description of work, start and end times, materials used on each repair. However, these data are not summarized in any way to facilitate an analysis of productivity.
The focus of the Facilities section is clearly on preventive maintenance services. At least 30% of work orders are allocated to preventive maintenance.	No	The Division outsources much of the PM work on major maintenance systems, so the extent of PM versus corrective maintenance is not known.
The Division's staffing levels are within the range of 45,000 to 50,000 square feet of maintainable space per Technician	No	The project team does not possess data relating to the maintainable space of the facilities.
Have household waste collection routes been evaluated in the past five years?	No	This is partially done. The Department last formally evaluated route efficiency was in 2016, however it reviews routes every year as new subdivisions are added.
Solid waste collection and disposal rates promote cost recognition and waste control.	No	There are many rates and fees for a la carte services such as for tires, mattresses, etc., as well as for passes to the dump site, and others. However, charges are not necessarily based on actual costs.
The Division minimizes costs by utilizing automated side loaders where possible.	Yes	All residential accounts are serviced with ASL equipment which minimizes overall costs of services.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
The Town has a robust curbside recycling program that achieves a minimum of 30% waste stream diversion from the landfill.	Yes	This is a particular strength of the Department. The focus on this program has resulted in a curbside diversion rate of 44%.
Parks and Recreation		
A centralized volunteer program is in place to augment and support staff efforts.	Yes	
The Recreation Division offers a variety of unduplicated programs and services for all ages, skills levels and interests in the community.	Yes	Due at least in part to recent budget reductions, the Department offers a relatively limited number of programs, and virtually no beach-oriented programming. Therefore, the issue is less that there are unduplicated programs being offered, but that there are potentially too few.
The organizational structure makes authority, responsibility and accountability clear.	Yes	Recent staff reductions have "flattened" the organizational structure, with most recreational staff reporting directly to the Director. Although this may clarify reporting relationships, it also dilutes the focus of the roles and duties of some positions, including the Director.
Adequate full and part-time positions are in place to ensure effective operations and program implementation.	No	The Director's duties are mostly oriented toward direct service provision. Further, reductions in staffing have resulted in most beach programming being eliminated.
Appropriate office space and equipment are available for employees carry out the roles and responsibilities of their positions.	Yes	The Department's administrative staff has ample office and indoor recreational space. The space available to equipment maintenance, however, is inadequate.
A cost recovery plan, policy and procedure are in place for recreation programs.	No	Fees have been established; however, these are not based on actual costs that include both direct and indirect costs, and in accordance with a policy that guides percentages of cost recovery.
Registration systems make program registration as easy as possible for participants and encourage program participation.	Yes	The Department uses the MyRec system for registration, program descriptions, participation levels, fee recovery, etc.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
An advisory committee is in place to provide input on programs and services.	No	Town Ordinance established the Parks and Recreation Committee; however, it has not met in some time. The Director indicates that the committee will be re-established this year, however as of the date of this writing, it has not yet been.
Performance measures exist to evaluate the effectiveness of work performed.	No	
All park technician time is recorded and monitored on a daily basis.	No	Work is not recorded against any set of task codes.
The Parks Maintenance Division maintains and updates a comprehensive list of park-related inventory such as the square feet of turf, linear feet of edging, square feet of sidewalks, number of picnic areas, etc.	Yes	This is partially the case, as there is an overall inventory listing of parks and their basic areas. However, there is no further inventory of, for example, square feet of turf, linear feet of edging, etc.
Sufficient resources have been provided to maintain at least a "B" level of maintenance such as weekly mowing, bi-weekly edging, weekly inspection of playground equipment, daily restroom cleaning, aeration 2 to 3 times annually, fertilization once annually, etc.	No	
A computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) is in place to handle and schedule preventive, routine, and emergency maintenance service requests.	No	
SCHOOLS		
SCHOOLS – Organization and Management		
The District has a multi-year capital investment plan informed by facility condition assessments.	Partial	2017 RIDE report provided a detailed assessment of facility needs, but there is no plan in place to fund and implement improvements. District does put together capital requests based on priority, but there is considerable uncertainty and inconsistency in funding.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
Clear written policies have been established for operational and strategic decision-making related to financial matters, identifying acceptable or unacceptable courses of action, establishing parameters in which the government can operate, and providing standards against which the school's fiscal performance can be judged.	No	School district and municipality must work collaboratively to establish clear parameters for financial planning and management in accordance with Town policies, the Town Charter, and Title 16 of Rhode Island General laws. Current confusion and disconnects between the town and the school on financial management policies and the actual financial standing of each is inhibiting effective management of resources.
The department prepares 5- and 10-year financial plans to guide budgeting and operational decisions	No	Budgeting process focuses primarily on current year, with minimal long-term planning. The schools should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage a demographer to predict how the student body will change over time - Conduct a financial analysis of the next 5 and 10 years, exploring a variety of scenarios related to revenues, student body size, and costs. - Work collaboratively with the town to develop a combined 5- and 10-year financial plan - Use this planning to inform union negotiations and decisions that may impact future costs.
School investments in capital improvements are tracked separately and are adequate to ensure that infrastructure and buildings are properly maintained and/or replaced as needed.	No	Current investment are inadequate to appropriately maintain the condition of existing buildings and replace them at the end of their useful life.
The school has clear procurement policies in place and appropriate workflows and separation of duties to ensure that these are complied with.	Partial	
School software systems are current, consistently updated, and not at risk of obsolescence. Where possible, Town uses cloud based SAAS (software as a service) systems in lieu of static, locally hosted systems.	Yes, partial	Recent ransomware attacks highlighted risks associated with school computers. School has focused heavily on security to prevent a repeat of this event. Software systems are current and consistent with best practices. Some consolidation could be beneficial.
Department provides expertise and oversight for complaints, employee discipline issues, and grievances.	Yes	HR department is involved in any employee complaints and grievances, as well as discipline issues.
Employee turnover is tracked by department, and HR department helps identify reasons for high turnover and recommend measures to retain quality staff.	No	Department should produce regular reports on turnover and vacancies to identify potential issues with employee retention.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
The HR department works with departments to ensure that succession planning is in place in the event that key personnel leave the town.	No	No succession planning is in place at the senior management level.
The HR department maintains records to ensure that employees receive mandated training (sexual harassment prevention, cybersecurity)	Partial	Training is tracked but
The HR director is an integral part of the school management team	Partial	
SCHOOLS – Education Program		
The district’s curriculum is aligned with its teacher development and assessment practices, student testing protocols, and State standards such as R.I. Gen. Laws § 16-22	Yes	<p>The district has not had a defined curriculum until recently but is in the process of selecting and implementing “high quality materials” in compliance with State law. Math, ELA, and Science curricula are scheduled for selection and implementation at every grade level within the respective statutory deadlines for each subject area.</p> <p>Curriculum is selected with consideration for how teachers will be trained to deliver content, how well it is aligned with the State standardized tests and common core, and alignment with the Right to Read act (requires phonics, etc.).</p> <p>Title 1 and special education programs are already aligned with structured literacy practices per the Right to Read Act.</p>
The process of evaluating and selecting curriculum is systematic and involves input from experienced experts in the topic, the district’s faculty, and community or parent committees if applicable.	Yes	The process is systematic and guided by expert criteria from EdReports and a clear scoring system. It considers the needs of learners and teachers, it involves new and experienced educators, and it requires the approval of the school committee.
The district has an educator curriculum committee assigned to develop resources and strategies for delivering curriculum to students.	Yes	There are curriculum committees for each grade level and subject area. These are composed of new and experienced teachers as well as SPED teachers. The committee considers implementation feasibility from the start, and they review strengths and weaknesses in the data afterward to help make corrections and adaptations.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
The District's elective classes are aligned with the core curriculum and supported by student demand/enrollment.	Partial	No criteria or alignment standards yet with the rest of the curriculum for electives. A few exceptions like AP classes, computing, financial literacy classes, etc. where state or national standards for the subject area must be met.
The District has a mentorship and professional development program specifically for new teachers.	Yes	All new teachers are mentored by a National Board-Certified teacher, and NBC teachers also must mentor a new teacher. All teachers must get 45 PLUs within their first five years (in process of being escalated to 100 PLU's In the next few years) in order to re-certify. Must recertify every 5 years. New teachers have to get additional PLUs within first THREE years. New teachers also receive a special teacher-led monthly professional development series which is largely district-specific. Mandatory in 1 st year and may be recommended for 2 nd or 3 rd year.
The district has established standards for regularly viewing instruction and providing feedback as part of a professional development and educator assessment program.	Yes	Teacher assessments use a 1-4 scale across four domains. (Planning and prep, implementation, classroom management, and professional responsibility.) Rubric set for each of them. Tenured teachers get 1 formal and 1 informal eval per year. Can test out of evaluation cycle for 2 yrs if they score 3, and 3 yrs if they score 4. Non-tenured get 2 formal and 1 informal eval per year, every year. Viewing instruction and feedback is a required component. Formal evals include a pre-conference and a reflection as well.
The district has a methodology for tracking educators' professional development activities and their teacher certification deadlines, and for generating reminders regarding CEU's.	Yes	The Schools' student information system, Aspen, tracks educator certification status and expiration dates, as well as professional development plan and completion of PD events.
The district uses a consistent, formalized methodology for tracking student growth and mastery during the year and from year to year. It is digital and capable of producing electronic reports, and it is provided to teachers for use in instructional decision-making and interventions.	Yes	The District administers Renaissance Learning's <i>STAR 360 Assessment</i> 3 times per year in reading and math. It is a computer-based adaptive test which quickly produces electronic reports. It is provided to the schools, the school committee, and parents. It is explicitly used to make instructional decisions.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
The District uses a Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS) approach for students showing the signs of additional learning or behavior modulation needs.	Yes	<p>The Professional Development Coordinator leads the MTSS program. This is a CBA position, the CBA provides for one teacher per year to serve as the PDC to help schools with screening kids for MTSS, deciding on interventions, and managing the platforms that collect the data.</p> <p>The schools have staff who administer MTSS interventions. These are reading specialists for ELA and select teachers who do this work for Math.</p> <p>There is no good platform for tracking students' progress currently especially across levels (e.g., from elementary to middle). The SIS has no module for this.</p>
The District has a student information system which allows the development and updating of IEP's and recording compliance with their provisions.	Yes	The Schools are currently using Powerschool but are transitioning to their Aspen student information system, which allows IEP development and tracking of services delivered.
The District has an established decision-making process for when to provide special education services in the general classroom setting, in a separate classroom, or outside the district.	Yes	The Schools provide integrated services when staffing and logistics permit, and self-contained services when staffing, funding, and liability risks permit.
The District's special education and early childhood directors frequently visit and liaison with building principals at applicable sites.	Yes	<p>All pre-K classes are held at a single elementary school due to space needs and better economy of scale at a single location. EC Director visits 2-3 times per week, and there is also a PT Education Coordinator (partially state-funded) at that location. The building principal is the primary oversight for space, staffing, etc. while EC programming, curriculum, assessment, etc. fall to the EC Director.</p> <p>SPED Director and Assistant Director actively oversee SPED programs and services at each school building, and services are highly integrated into the general education population.</p>
The District's special education and early childhood directors coordinate to identify young students who may be candidates for special education services.	Yes	A child outreach coordinator screens all students for SPED needs, and those who are referred are processed within 60 days to determine whether they require services. Half-day pre-k program teachers are SPED-certified. The schools keep detailed records on age 3-5 SPED students.

Best Practice Target	Target Met (Yes/No)	Action Needed to Meet Best Practice or Improve Current Approach
The District has an established early childhood parent outreach program.	Yes	The schools can locate every child born in RI or who has been seen by a RI pediatrician, using Kidsnet. The Child Outreach Coordinator makes contact and also offers screening for special needs/services. The schools also submit a plan to the State for advertising pre-K programs and run this program in order to be eligible for pre-K funding.
The district's staff and student handbook are reviewed and updated on an annual basis.	Yes	The schools produce an updated policy handbook on an annual basis.
The District has a central point of contact for grants, who coordinates and equips staff and administrators to pursue grant funding relevant to their respective areas and disciplines.	Partial	<p>At classroom level, teachers can apply for grants from local institutions (banks, nonprofits, etc.).</p> <p>The schools also apply for competitive grants from RIDE which are won/lost based on strength of application. Some of these are federal funds which have trickled down and are being redistributed by the State.</p> <p>There is no dedicated grant writer or systematic grant application program. The Assistant Superintendent typically writes and coordinates major grants, with help from the finance, curriculum, or other department leadership as applicable.</p>
The District gathers parent satisfaction data and determines reasons for parents removing their students from the District and responds accordingly.	Yes	<p>The State Dept of Education conducts "SurveyWorks" annually through a company called Panorama. They anonymously survey parents, students in grades 3-12, and all staff. They collect this data and use it to make decisions. A version of the data is also available publicly:</p> <p>https://secure.panoramaed.com/ride/understand/1302995/summary</p> <p>The schools also conduct informal surveys on a case by case as-needed basis (Covid, etc.)</p>