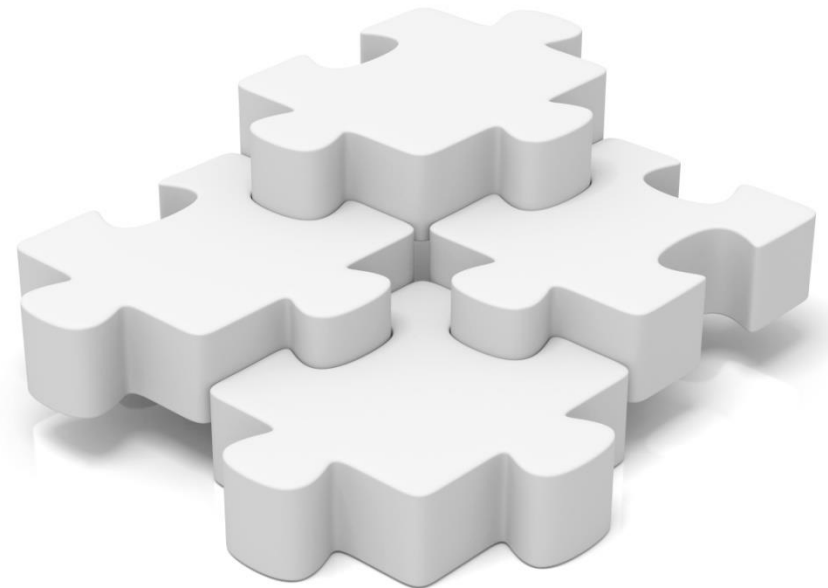




Municipality of Brockton

Organizational/ Operational
Review - Final Report

October 2016



About this Document

- In March 2016, the Municipality of Brockton (“the Municipality” or “Brockton”) engaged StrategyCorp Inc. (“StrategyCorp”) to work with the Municipality in conducting an organizational/operational review.
- The engagement was procured using a public, competitive procurement process.
- This report is the final deliverable in StrategyCorp’s work on this engagement.
- It provides:
 - Details on StrategyCorp’s findings from:
 - consultations with Council, members of the Municipality’s senior management, staff and external stakeholders.
 - results of StrategyCorp’s analysis of relevant municipal comparative data
 - Recommendations for operational and organizational improvements

Statement of Due Diligence

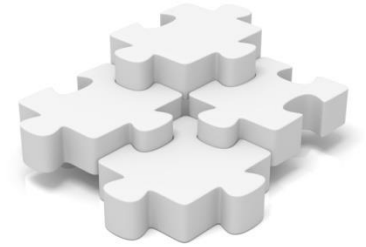
- The recommendations contained within this report were developed using findings from consultations, output from StrategyCorp Operational Productivity Enhancement (“SCOPE”) workshop sessions with staff, appropriate benchmarking, research and analysis within the scope of the engagement and was supported by decades of relevant experience on the part of the StrategyCorp team in working with municipalities and other governments.
- Any final decisions with respect to the recommendations contained in this report properly rest with elected representatives and management. The Municipality of Brockton should conduct its own due diligence and verification in order to ensure optimal outcomes, both in adopting and in implementing any of the report’s recommendations.

Acknowledgements

- StrategyCorp wishes to acknowledge and thank the Mayor and Members of Brockton Council and the CAO for entrusting this important and interesting assignment to StrategyCorp. Without their ongoing support and willingness to participate where requested, the Study's results would not have been as successful.
- StrategyCorp also wishes to acknowledge and thank the important role played by municipal staff at all levels and in all departments, in making this Study successful, and in making it a worthwhile exercise for all concerned.
- Without the involvement and critical inputs of staff in both interviews and the SCOPE Working Group sessions, the Study would not have been able to achieve the volume and significance of the results produced.
- StrategyCorp also wishes to acknowledge that during the course of this study, we noticed many examples assumption of this report is that StrategyCorp also observed examples staff beginning implementation of emerging recommendations that came to light during our work.
- We applaud the commitment to continuous improvement that this reflects.

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Executive Summary

Brockton engaged StrategyCorp to conduct an organizational/operational review

StrategyCorp employed a three-step methodology to target the review on the most important challenges and opportunities facing the Municipality:

1. Assess

What are the operating challenges facing Brockton?

Current State Analysis

Comparative Benchmarking

One-on-One Consultations

2. Evaluate

What underlying factors underpin these challenges?

Narrowing of Focus

SCOPE Workshops

SCI Professional Experience & Expert Analysis

3. Recommend

How can Brockton improve its operations and organizational structure?

SCI Findings & Recommendations

Findings and Recommendations

***Key Finding:** While Brockton faces several challenges, it is generally a well-run organization, with quality services, strong customer service and dedicated and knowledgeable staff. Our recommendations are therefore incremental in nature, and framed in the context of continuous improvement.*

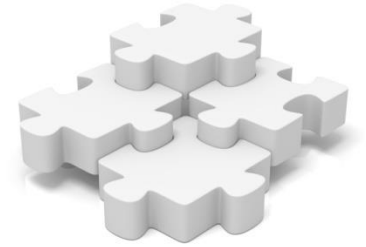
Recommendations: Our recommendations focus on eleven key areas, divided among recommendations that are operational or organizational in nature:

Operational Recommendations

1. Managing Change/Succession Planning
2. Communications
3. Roads
4. Information Technology
5. Policy and Process Enhancement
6. Strategic Management

Organizational Recommendations

- A. Gap in Economic Development
- B. Gap in Health & Safety Adherence
- C. Gap in HR Capacity
- D. Achieving Organizational Efficiencies in Roads and Park and Recreation
- E. Roles and Responsibilities in Parks & Recreation



Operational Recommendations

Operational Recommendations:

1. Managing Change/Succession Planning

Observations

- Significant organizational change, has disrupted long-standing internal communication channels and changed reporting relationships.
 - In some departments, this has roots in unresolved integration issues dating back to the amalgamation.
 - It has been exacerbated by recent staff departures at senior levels.
 - As is common in Ontario municipalities, the overall lean staff level means the urgent crowds out the important.
- Some departments have already begun a process-mapping exercise to resolve these issues.
- In others, notably Roads and Parks & Recreation, this work has yet to be done, and there remain unresolved questions as to “who does what.”
- There is significant concern about the need to plan for succession given the aging cohort.

Recommendations

- 1.1. That the Municipality establish cross-departmental working groups to process map important (or challenging) processes to find opportunities for improvement, and increase staff awareness of municipal processes, particularly for the Roads and Parks & Recreation units.*
- 1.2. That the Municipality establish a succession planning process to appropriately identify and plan for the retirements of key personnel in the future to ensure organizational knowledge and capabilities are not lost.*

Operational Recommendations:

2. Communications

Observations	Recommendations
<p>Internal Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combination of new staff and new lines of communication have changed internal communications channels • The senior management team demonstrates strong team communications, but there is an opportunity to improve communications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from managers to staff and • across departmental staff • Improvement in this area will help to improve overall customer service, raise engagement, reduce inter-departmental friction • We note that internal communications practices have already improved visibly over the term of this study 	<p><i>2.1. That the Municipality promote increased staff participation through:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i) all departments to have regularly scheduled internal team meetings;</i> <i>ii) regular staff “huddles” following the Council meetings to provide any pertinent information to staff; and,</i> <i>iii) creation of additional avenues for cross-departmental communications, such as the establishment of cross-departmental sub-committees, to address challenges impacting multiple departments and to encourage “best practices” and communications across the organization.</i>

Operational Recommendations:

3. Roads

Observations

Capital and Operational Planning

- Over the course of the project, work is being undertaken on a new roads capital plan
- In the absence of a plan, there is concern regarding work-flow optimization on longer-term capital and maintenance objectives
- It is anticipated that nagging concerns about deferred maintenance and long term prioritization will be resolved by the plan, and its implementation

Recommendations

3.1 That roads complete its long-term capital plan. That annual operating plans be created to give effect to its long-term capital plan. That staff be briefed on the long-term capital plan and the operating plans to drive a linkage between daily resource utilization and strategic needs.

Internal Communications within Roads

- Insufficient communications within roads resulting in unclear expectations and prioritization of efforts, and concern that resources may not be fully optimized.

3.2. That Roads implement regular meetings between the Supervisor, Lead Hands and staff to outline the department's long-term objectives, as well as operational and scheduling matters to ensure Roads leadership clearly understands the departmental objectives and actions to be taken.

3.3. That Roads likewise implement regular staff team "Huddles" where staff are informed of longer-term departmental objectives, organizational updates, training opportunities, and short-medium term schedule/operational considerations.

Operational Recommendations:

3. Roads

Observations

Cooperation Among Roads Shops

- The municipality is fortunate to have many experienced employees with a wealth of knowledge and expertise in caring for and maintaining the roads in safe operating condition. This skilled workforce provides operational benefits, but also makes the municipality vulnerable to sudden loss of expertise through retirement.
- “Siloing” of roads shops was reported. It was noted by some that the origins of this date back to legacy issues from amalgamation.
- As a result, challenges were observed with respect to communications, collaboration and sharing of resources between the groups.

Recommendations

3.4. That roads operators be given rotational shifts during summer months, where they are to report to a different shop within the roads department for a period of time.

Implemented properly, this will serve to create a more seamless culture of cooperation between the department’s three shops.

Having individuals learn the “on the ground” conditions in each segment of the municipality will help cross-train operators and provide needed organizational redundancy to mitigate the adverse effect of retirements of its more experienced operators.

Operational Recommendations:

4. Information Technology

Observations	Recommendations
<p>Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to computers and internet is not available to all municipal staff (e.g., roads shops) 	<p><i>4.1. That Brockton invest in providing computers to all facilities, including its shops to allow for efficient sharing of operational information</i></p>
<p>Opportunities for Process Redesign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to save staff time and resources via digital registration and payments processing It was noted that staff have already been investigating software to find a solution that fits with the Municipality’s accounting software 	<p><i>4.2(i). That Brockton invest in digital registration and payments processing to save staff time and improve the customer experience</i></p>
<p>Resident (Customer) service request tracking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to improve on already strong customer service through digital customer service issue tracking and reporting There is no standard mechanism for tracking requests for service, leading to crossed communication, and sometimes incomplete follow up. 	<p><i>4.2(ii). That Brockton invest in appropriate customer service issue tracking and management software to provide a seamless internal experience of raising issues by “opening a ticket,” tracking response completion, cycle time, and customer satisfaction</i></p>

Operational Recommendations:

4. Information Technology

Observations	Recommendations
<p>Information Sharing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some staff report difficulty navigating MyBrockton• IT inquiries regarding use of software limit the technician’s ability to deliver on GIS and TCA, though efforts have been made to remove the majority of day-to-day IT inquiries from the technician’s list of responsibilities	<p><i>4.3. That the Municipality provide ongoing staff training in general use of software and particularly the MyBrockton site.</i></p>
<p>Sharing and Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential to save on IT software or services if packaged with neighbouring municipalities• Potential to benefit from neighbouring municipality knowledge (e.g., GIS)	<p><i>4.4. That the Municipality investigate opportunities to partner with neighbouring municipalities and the County to consider opportunities for:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>sharing IT resources and knowledge, and/ or</i>• <i>procuring IT services jointly to achieve cost savings</i>

Operational Recommendations:

5. Policy & Process Enhancement

Observations	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipment sharing across departments is not consistent or reliable There is no accounting process in place to facilitate equipment sharing (i.e., budgetary sharing of equipment) 	<p><i>5.1. That Brockton establish financial processes to enable the distribution of equipment acquisition, maintenance and replacement costs across multiple departments to facilitate increased cross-departmental equipment sharing.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brockton has an aging volunteer base There is a need to continually engage and retain volunteers to deliver important community services 	<p><i>5.2. That the Municipality establish and implement a proactive volunteer engagement and retention strategy to ensure its volunteer base remains vibrant and engaged for years to come.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants are completed by individual staff/managers with varying degrees of success No specific grant-writing expert at the Municipality Through targeted hiring of contract grant writer for important grant applications, the Municipality can increase its chances at generating significant additional revenues with minimal additional cost 	<p><i>5.3. That the Municipality consider continuing the use of contract grant writers on a case-by-case basis to assist in important grant applications.</i></p>

Operational Recommendations:

5. Policy & Process Enhancement

Observations	Recommendations
<p>Procurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council concerns regarding managerial accountability on spending	<p><i>5.4. That Brockton review and consider reducing the Approval Limits under the procurement policy to enhance procurement value for money and accountability, bring them in line with other local comparator municipalities</i></p>
<p>Finance Committee Oversight on Budget</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managerial concerns regarding degree of Council oversight on budgetary items	<p><i>5.5 That the Municipality establish a policy on permitted variance from budget to allow managers appropriate flexibility to manage.</i></p>

Operational Recommendations:

6. Strategic Management

Observations

Strategic Direction

- Council is providing strong leadership on overall budget direction and cost containment. It provides very detailed operational oversight.
- Council does not appear to be using the previous Council's 2013 Sustainable Strategic Plan, and has not yet set a clear strategic direction of its own.
- The need for strategic direction in other areas was identified, including:
 - Service planning for economic development – to ensure Brockton has jobs;
 - Service planning for young people – to ensure Brockton is attractive to younger families;
 - Service planning to ensure equitable service delivery throughout Brockton;
 - Remaining competitive in provision of services (value for money, not just cost containment).

Recommendations

6.1. That Council review the Strategic Plan and consider conducting a Strategic Plan Update to ensure the 2013 Sustainable Strategic Plan reflects the current Council's desired vision and strategic direction for the Municipality.

Operational Recommendations:

6. Strategic Management

Observations

Corporate Planning Framework

- Long-term capital plan is currently under development (to be complete by Fall 2016)
- Annual Departmental operating plans and budgets were characterized as “incremental” in nature, and have not been driven by long-term capital or strategic planning.
- Through the process, Council, management, and staff would be engaged in identifying and resourcing priorities that are linked to the Municipality’s strategic plan and measuring organization-wide performance in delivering against these priorities.
- The process should allow for formal inputs via key stakeholders and the County.

Recommendations

6.2. That the Municipality complete the long-term capital plan and implement an integrated Corporate Planning Framework.

The framework would formally link

- *the long term capital plan*
- *service standard policies*
- *the annual budget process*
- *annual operating plans, and*
- *a regular, disciplined process and performance measurement regime.*

6.3. That the Municipality’s Long-Term Capital Plan, which is currently under development, be integrated into the Corporate Planning Cycle, and be used as a guide for annual operating plans.

Operational Recommendations:

6. Strategic Management

Observations

Council-Staff Communications

- While customer service response to resident complaints is generally strong, some identified gaps in internal communications. Specifically, where a Councillor conveys a resident concern to staff for action, the feedback loop is sometimes not completed, such that the Councillor is left without knowing if or when the matter has been addressed.
- This challenge can be addressed by establishing a clear reporting mechanism and feedback loop that is followed by both Council and staff.
- The process should deliver clear accountability, minimize duplicate channels of communication, and ensure nothing falls through the cracks.
- The system must include service level expectations, and have regard to the effect it would have on overall departmental work plans.

Recommendations

6.4. That Council and staff continue to invest in strengthening their relationship by:

(i) creating an overall customer service management system, including protocols for initiating service requests, tracking and feedback mechanisms to provide councillors with a means for update on the status and completion of service requests.

- Such a system would be enabled by implementing an “off the shelf” customer relations software module. *(see. Recommendation 4.2(ii) above)*

Operational Recommendations:

6. Strategic Management

Observations

Committees

- Strong community engagement at Brockton through the numerous committees
- Maintaining committees can be taxing on municipal and staff resources
- There is concern that overall, there may be:
 - too many Committees,
 - Committees that require their mandate to be clarified or updated
- Committees would benefit from clearer definition of their role, and additional direction on mandate and performance goals.

Recommendations

6.5. That Brockton undertake a performance review of its committees to evaluate committee outputs (including engagement) versus the cost of participation inputs.

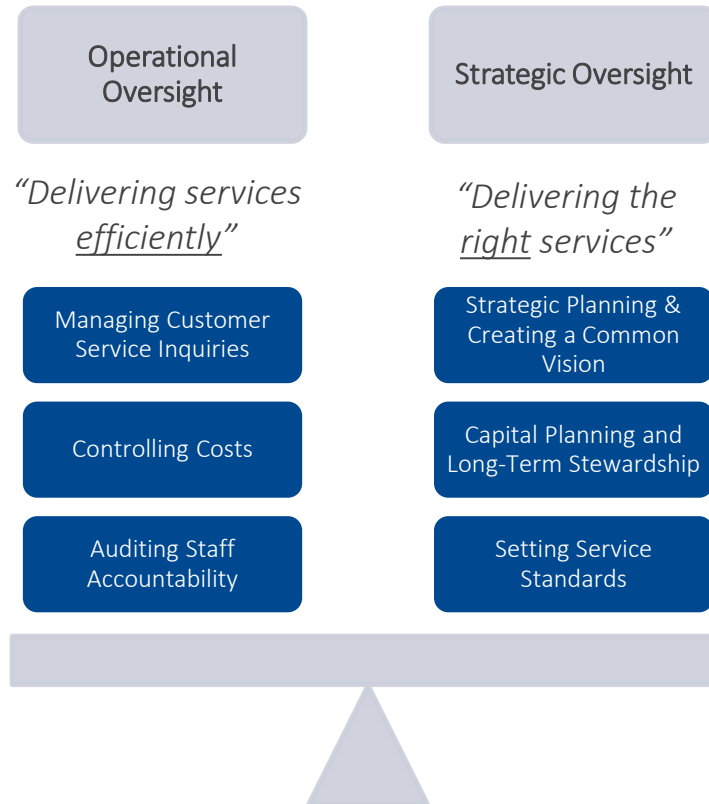
6.6. That Council write updated terms of reference of Committees , including clear mandates and measurable metrics for success upon which Committees must deliver against.

6.7. That Council implement a bi-annual review process for Committee's delivery against stated mandates, and consider change where appropriate.

Operational Recommendations:

6. Strategic Management: Balancing the Roles of Council

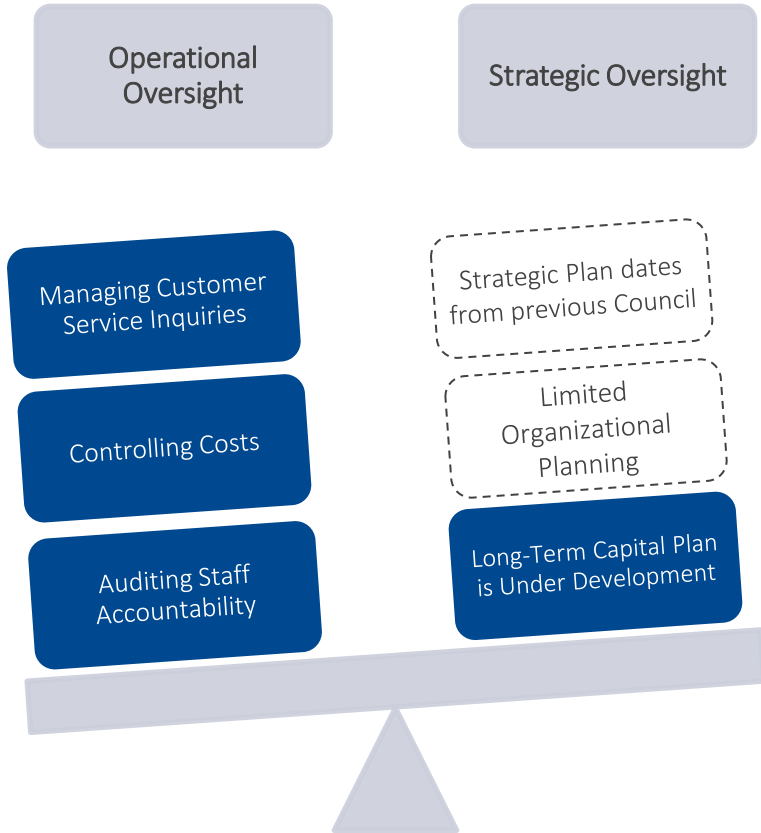
The Two Fundamental Roles of Council



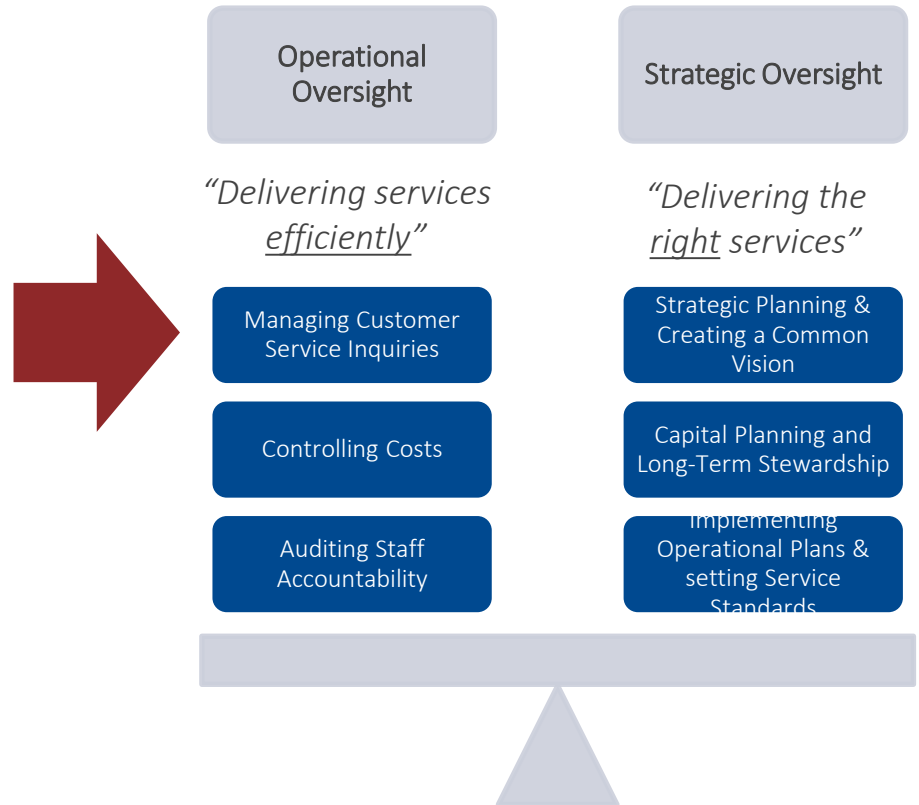
Operational Recommendations:

6. Strategic Management

Brockton's need to Rebalance



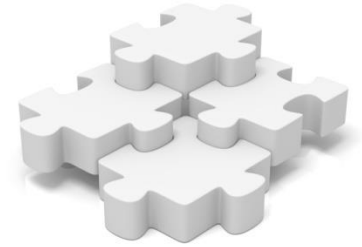
The Two Fundamental Roles of Council



Operational Recommendations:

6. Strategic Management

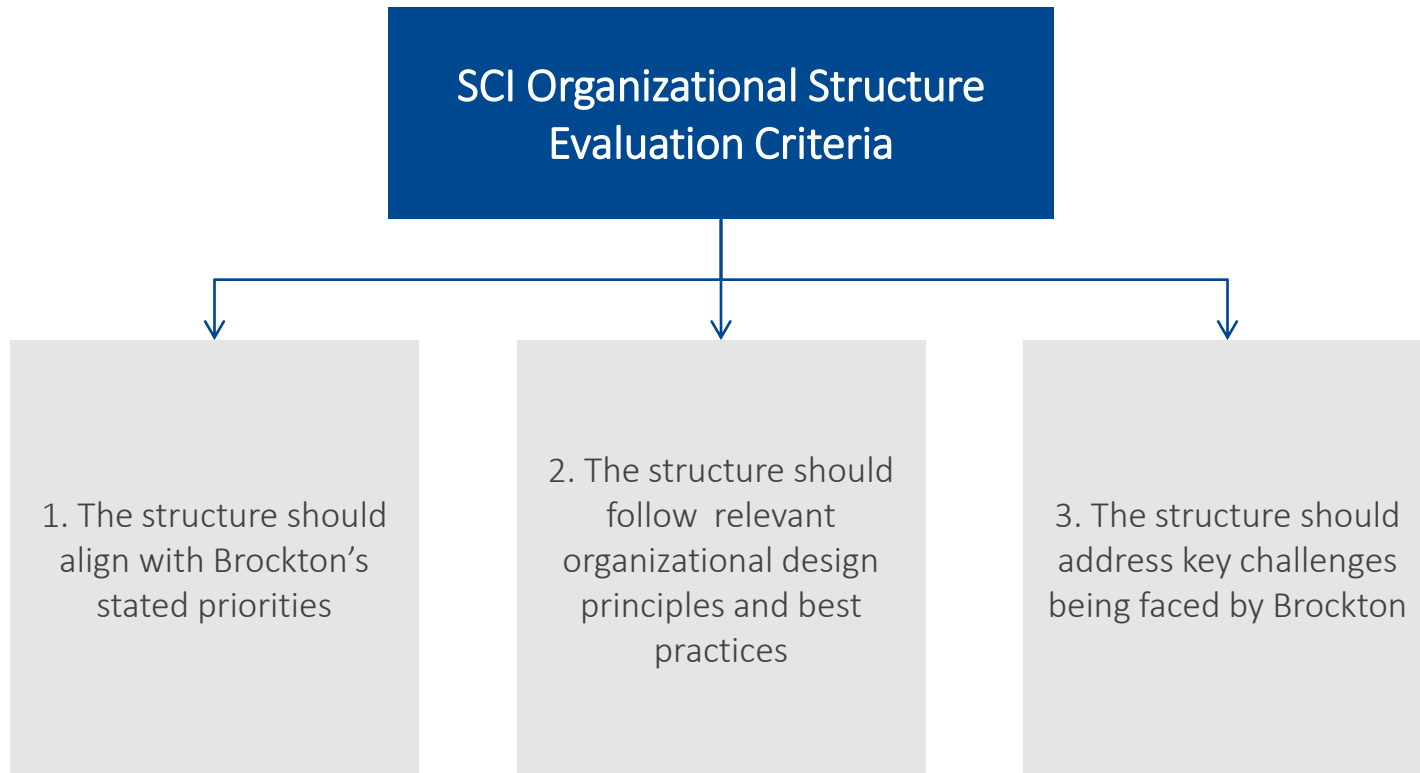
Observations	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need for continuous and incremental improvement in Council-staff relations to ensure open dialogue and trust between Council and staff• It is undeniable that Council has a role in both oversight and in priority setting.• It is a best practice to ensure that Council retains a balance between these two functions.	<p><i>6.8. That Council and staff continue to invest in strengthening their relationship. This should include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>i) Regular training after each election cycle on staff-Council roles</i><i>ii) setting clear expectations for managers and allowing them the flexibility to operate within those expectations.</i>



Organizational Recommendations

StrategyCorp applied a three-pillared approach to evaluating structural recommendations based on organizational design best practices

This review is based on three-pillars:



SCI Organizational Structure Evaluation Criteria:

1. The structure should align with Brockton’s stated priorities

Review Objectives

Results

1. Engage the knowledge and expertise of Municipality employees through a transparent, participative, and inclusive process

StrategyCorp engaged the following in one-on-one and group interviews/workshops:

- a) All of Council
- b) More than 30 staff
- c) External stakeholders

2. Assess existing processes and procedures, practices, staffing, technology and the organization of municipal departments to strengthen Brockton’s ability to deliver on its strategic priorities

StrategyCorp undertook a broad evaluation of processes, procedures, staffing levels, reporting requirements, and technology from across the organization, and in-depth evaluation of areas that were identified as important opportunities for improvement.

3. Foster economical and efficient delivery of service, while being mindful of the financial constraints of the Municipality

StrategyCorp has made recommendations that seek to improve operations while respecting Brockton’s focus on being cost conscious.

SCI Organizational Structure Evaluation Criteria:

2. The structure should follow organizational design principles and best practices

To ensure all recommendations aligned with municipal organizational design best practices, StrategyCorp tested all recommendations against its Municipal Organizational Design Framework:

StrategyCorp Municipal Organizational Design Framework (MODF)

Strategy:

Aligns with Brockton's strategic priorities and directions and eliminates strategic gaps

Structure:

Organizational design aligns "like" functions to foster the cross-pollination of ideas

Process:

Structure facilitates improved process efficiencies and streamlining of services

Staff:

Optimal use of each staff member, ensuring that they are contributing to the objectives of their corresponding department with contingencies in mind through succession planning

Culture:

Structure fosters a culture of dedication to service excellence across the organization

Organizational Recommendations:

A: Gap in Economic Development

Observations	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stakeholders, Council and staff all agreed that Economic Development was a gap at the MunicipalityThis is validated by a variety of data points substantiating the lack of economic growth in the TownEconomic Development has been raised as a key area of opportunity by Brockton's recently completed Service Review, including numerous recommendationsA key issue raised was the lack of engagement by the Municipality in addressing concerns of existing businesses (business retention & expansion)Effective economic development activity can contribute demonstrable results in:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Business retention and expansionBusiness attractionTourism promotion	<p><i>7.1. That the Municipality hire a full-time Economic Development Officer (EDO) as soon as practicable.</i></p> <p><i>7.2. That the new EDO develop a multi-year, Council-approved, economic development strategy that addresses business retention and expansion, investment attraction and tourism.</i></p> <p><i>7.3. That the new EDO work with Council, Committees, and the County's economic development department to seek cost-effective methods of managing business attraction, retention and expansion activity in Brockton, and to ensure its activities on behalf of Brockton are delivering value.</i></p>

Organizational Recommendations:

B: Gap in Health and Safety Adherence

Observations

- Appropriate Health & Safety adherence is vital to a well-functioning and sustainable municipality. It is also a statutory requirement.
- Perceived gaps in the implementation of Health & Safety matters require increased resources, at least temporarily, until they are addressed.
- Currently, there is a shared fire prevention/health & safety position that is divided as follows:
 - Fire Prevention – 4 days a week
 - Health & Safety – 1 day a week
- The Fire Prevention Function is currently judged to be well in hand, and could allow for the diversion of resources to health and safety purposes.

- Health & Safety is a corporate function, but its current position within the Fire Department makes it appear to be a Fire function
- Concerns were raised related to inconsistent implementation of health and safety initiatives across different departments

Recommendations

8.1. *That the change in work allocation between Health and Safety and Fire Prevention be changed so that:*

- *The Fire Prevention position be reduced from 4 days each week to 3, and*
- *One day a week be added to the Health & Safety Officer position to a total of 2 days a week, in order to implement critical Health & Safety measures across the organization.*

8.2. *That the change in work allocation between Health and Safety and Fire Prevention be evaluated after 6 months to re-assess the role change.*

8.3. *That the Health & Safety Officer position report directly to the CAO to provide the position with the corporate-wide authority required to implement important Health & Safety measures across the organization. The employee's Fire Prevention Officer role would still report to the Fire Chief.*

Organizational Recommendations:

C: HR Capacity

Observations	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There has been a great deal of staff turnover and change within the organization, creating a backlog of new, one-time HR issues to be addressed• The age profile of the workforce makes it clear that there will be a significant wave of HR related needs, in regard to planning for succession, recruitment, and training.• The work required exceeds the time available to the CAO/Clerk, given her other responsibilities.• Employee engagement and compliance to legislation could be enhanced through development of a comprehensive staff training program	<p><i>9.1. That the Municipality hire a part-time, contract Human Resources specialist to assist in resolving challenging HR issues, update the Municipality's Human Resources policies and procedures, and provide general training to the Municipality's senior management team in managing HR issues and challenges on an ongoing basis.</i></p> <p><i>9.2. That the Municipality establish a cross-departmental working group, led by the HR specialist, to collaboratively identify and develop an employee training protocol, which sets a budget and identifies specific training programs that are tied into the City's succession plan and employee performance review processes. Staff training should focus on filling current and anticipated future organizational skills gaps and on aligning staff training with compliance requirements.</i></p>

Organizational Recommendations:

D. Achieving Efficiencies in Roads and Park and Recreation

Observations

- Communications between Roads and Parks and Recreation could improve through closer alignment
- There are potential opportunities to enhance the deployment of staff resources and equipment in Roads and Operations through closer structural alignment
- Closer alignment and increased sharing of resources between Roads and Operations could offset the need for future staff and equipment costs, yielding savings over the long-term
- The opportunities inherent in implementing the long term capital plan would be more readily achieved if these departments were under unified direction.

Recommendations

10.1. That Roads be integrated into the Operations Department, with the Roads Superintendent reporting to the Director of Operations.

10.2. That the Director of Operations provide oversight of the Roads unit, particularly in the form of long-term capital planning, scheduling and policy and procedure development, leaving the Roads Superintendent free to provide more direct supervision of the Roads shops.

Organizational Recommendations:

A: Gap in on-site leadership role for Parks & Recreation

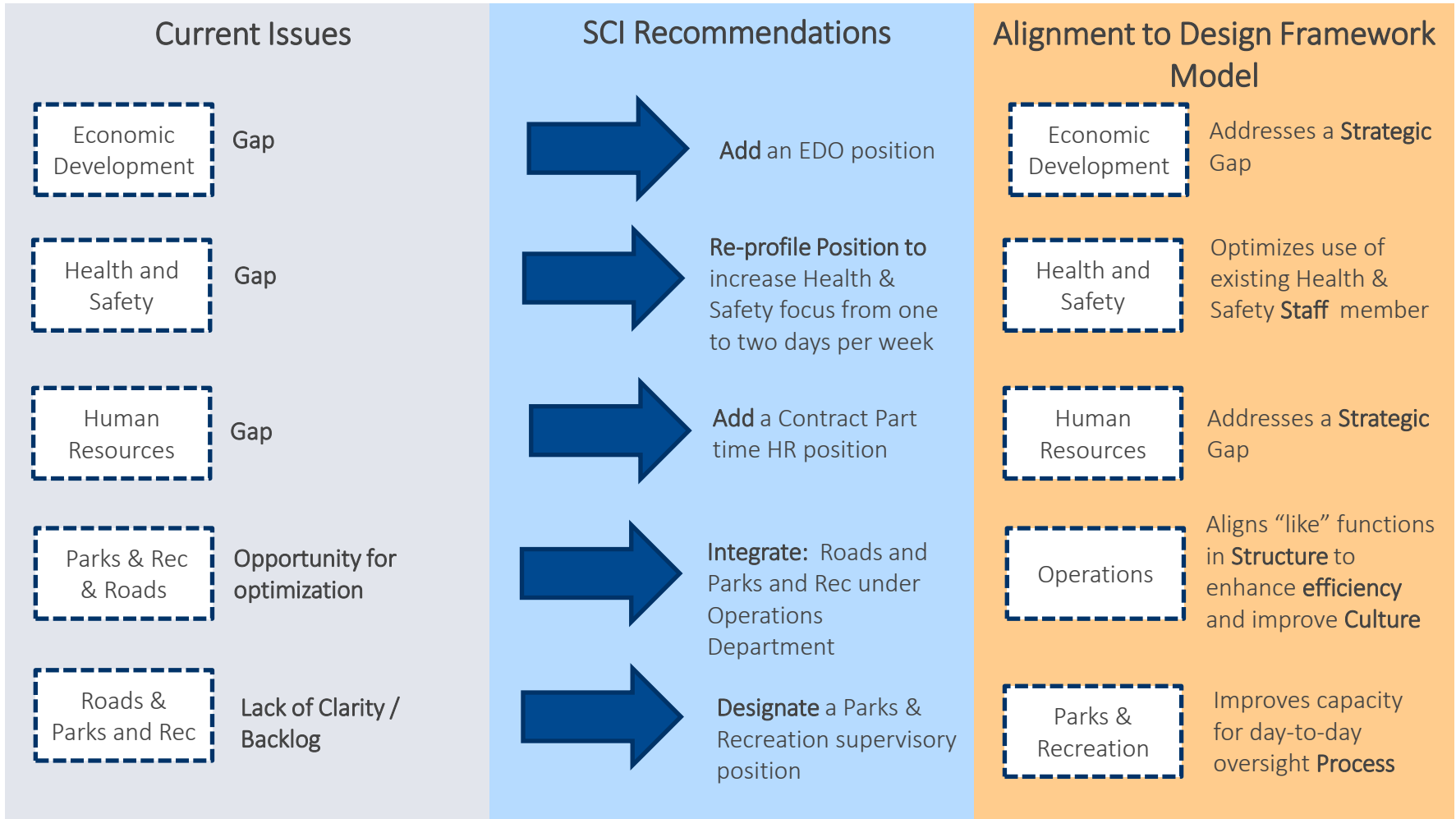
Observations

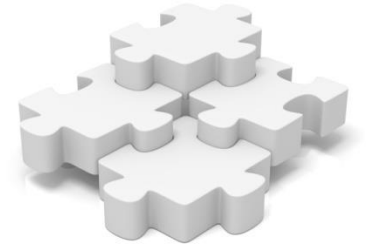
- Brockton created the Director of Operations role , to replace two previous director roles, including the Director of Parks and Recreation Position, which no longer exists.
- This has created cost savings for the Municipality.
- While overall management and leadership is provided by the Operations Director, however, the question of on-site, day-to-day operational oversight for Parks & Recreation staff was left unresolved, and no one has the mandate to fulfill this function at present.
- It was reported that the lack of an on-site lead causes inefficiencies and bottlenecks in assigning tasks and resources.
- As a practical matter, the Parks & Recreation unit requires an on-site lead, although not a return to a full Director position.

Recommendations

- 11. That Brockton designate a Parks & Recreation supervisor to provide day-to-day operational oversight of the Parks & Recreation Unit.*
- *This need not require the creation of an additional position.*

Summary of Organizational Recommendations





Context and Methodology

Project Background

- In 2013, Brockton's Council adopted a sustainability-focused strategic plan which aimed to achieve a balance among culture, the economy, the environment, and society.
- More recently, Brockton completed a municipal services review in February 2016, which outlined recommendations to enhance services at the Municipality.
- The Municipal Services review engaged a wide spectrum of local residents and stakeholders in a collaborative process to identify opportunities for service improvement. Council reviewed the recommendations and adopted various recommendations from that process in a series of meetings in Spring 2016.
- To help facilitate the implementation of the strategic plan and municipal services review, the Municipality retained StrategyCorp through a competitive, transparent procurement process to review its organizational and operational architecture to maximize efficiencies and improve the delivery of services.
- The review was to engage the knowledge and expertise of Municipality employees through a transparent, participative, and inclusive process in order to assess existing processes and procedures, practices, staffing, technology and the organization of municipal departments to strengthen Brockton's ability to deliver on its strategic priorities.
- Recommendations were to foster economical and efficient delivery of service, while being mindful of the financial constraints of the Municipality.



Organizational, Operational and Service Reviews

- StrategyCorp was engaged by the Municipality of Brockton to conduct a combined organizational and operational review.
- While organizational, operational and service delivery reviews seek to achieve similar results (i.e., efficiency and effectiveness), they typically focus on different aspects of the organization to bring about change:

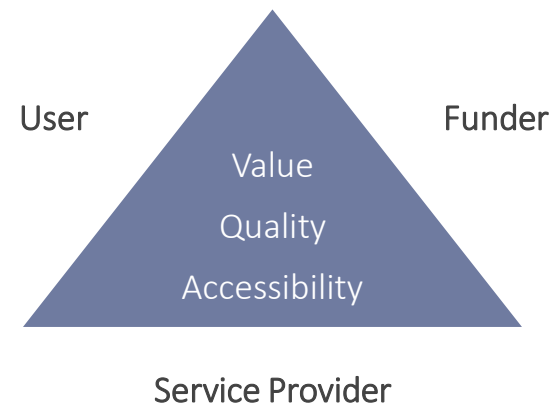
Organizational Reviews	Typically seek to align organizational <u>resources</u> to deliver services in a more efficient and effective manner, generally through focusing on organizational structure and departmental optimization to facilitate improved outcomes.
Operational Reviews	Typically seek to align organizational <u>practices & processes</u> to deliver services in a more efficient and effective manner. Operational reviews typically include a focus on organizational policies, practices and internal work flow processes to facilitate improved outcomes.
Service Delivery Reviews	Typically seek to identify opportunities to deliver municipal services in a new manner or at a different level to achieve greater efficiencies or effectiveness. Unlike organizational and operational reviews, service delivery reviews take an outsider's perspective to the organization, focusing on the service delivery outcomes and whether services are meeting demand appropriately.

- While the focus of this review is different from Brockton's recently completed Service Review, StrategyCorp had regard to all the findings and recommendations of the Service Review in preparing our report. These findings have helped to form our understanding of the areas that need to be improved from the outside, service-delivery perspective, and have provided additional depth to this review.

The diverse interests of Municipal stakeholders

- When reviewing a municipal organization, it is important to note that municipalities impact many diverse groups. While each of these groups has an interest in the municipality's ongoing success, these groups have unique perspectives regarding the municipality, and thus have different ideas as to how to measure the success of an organizational/operational review.
- This review considered the fact that the Municipality of Brockton's stakeholders have three general perspectives, namely the perspectives of:
 - Users;
 - Funders; or
 - Service providers.
- Each of these consider matters of value, quality and accessibility from unique perspectives.
- Through this review, StrategyCorp sought to maximize value to each interest group. As such, while we have thoroughly examined all of the Municipality's operations and the entire organizational structure in detail, we focused on the most important opportunities for improvement for the Municipality of Brockton through this review. That way, we sought to strategically maximize the impact of this review on the Municipality.

The Varying Municipal Perspectives and Considerations



Organizational/Operational Review Project Methodology

To complete the organizational/operational review, StrategyCorp employed a three-step methodology:

1. Assess

What are the challenges facing Brockton?

Current State Analysis

Reviewed and analyzed background documents, including: reports, plans, policies, procedures, processes, staffing levels, organizational structure, etc.

Comparative Benchmarking

Analyzed organizational, financial, operational, service and resourcing metrics versus selected peer municipalities with similar characteristics and service offerings

One-on-One Consultations

Interviews with Council, management, staff & stakeholders

2. Evaluate

What underlying factors underpin these challenges?

Narrowing of Focus

Reported back and received feedback on the core issues to focus the review

SCOPE Workshops

Cross-departmental working groups with managers & staff

SCI Professional Experience & Expert Analysis

Considered municipal best-practices; including an expert panel to challenge and validate findings

3. Recommend

How can Brockton improve?

SCI Findings & Recommendations

Developed recommendations in collaboration with the Municipality and drafted the final report and recommendations

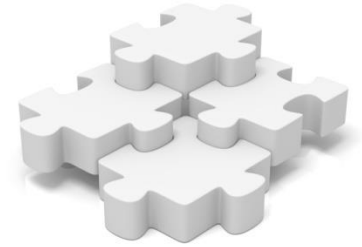
- Given the constraints of budget with this project, we could not examine every process that impacts the organization. Instead we followed a triaging approach. Through extensive interviews with Council members, management and staff, we identified the areas that are both working well and that are in need of improvement. We also had regard to the recent Service Review study that was completed, and made best efforts to focus on areas of highest value, as identified through the interview process and our own independent analysis.

Organizational/Operational Review Format

The remainder of this report outline StrategyCorp’s findings and recommendations to the Municipality of Brockton. It has been divided into two main sections, each of which seeks to address different key questions facing the Municipality:

Report Section	Key Questions
Opportunities for Operational Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are services being delivered? • How do staff, residents and stakeholders view the quality of services being delivered? • Are there any gaps in service? Are services being over-delivered in any areas? • Is this the most effective way to deliver services? • Are there opportunities to improve cost efficiencies without reducing service quality? • Are there opportunities to improve quality without significantly impacting the cost of services?
Organizational Structure Enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are staffing levels appropriate? • Can the organizational structure be realigned to improve outcomes? • Are reporting relationships appropriate? • Is the organization aligned in such a way that facilitates communications and collaboration?

Cost of Services: In addition to organizational and operational recommendations, we have also conducted a comparative cost analysis to evaluate the Municipality against its peers and neighbours in important costing metrics. The results are included in the appendices of this report. We have found that the Municipality is generally in line with its peers and neighbours in terms of cost, and that recent Council efforts to reduce costs have actually placed the Municipality at a competitive advantage to its peers and neighbours from the cost perspective



Opportunities for Operational Improvement

Operational Findings – Key Areas of Exploration

In spite of recent improvements at the Municipality, there are still opportunities to further improve operations.

While our review evaluated many challenges and opportunities facing the Municipality, given the budgetary constraints that are naturally involved in any municipal review of this nature, we focused our efforts on the issues that would bring about the most substantive changes if properly addressed.

From our analysis, we have identified six key operational findings, which will be discussed in detail in this section:

1. Managing Change/Succession Planning
2. Communications
3. Roads
4. Information Technology
5. Policy Enhancement
6. Strategic Management

1. Managing Change/Succession Planning

- Many staff pointed out that the Municipality has faced several years of significant change. Changing senior management, as well as the re-organization of several departments has resulted in a great deal of organizational change.
- In a period of four years, the Municipality saw three different CAOs. In addition, the Municipality saw a great deal of staff turnover. The Director of Parks and Recreation position was removed, and was replaced by a combined director of Operations, with responsibility for water as well as GIS/IT/TCA.
- Furthermore, Brockton elected an almost entirely new Council in 2014, ushering in new political oversight of the organization.
- While most changes at the Municipality have been positive, significant change can be unsettling to staff, who must adapt to a rapidly changing work environment.
- In the past, it may have been the case that things were always done the same, and that everyone “just knew” how things were done. But this cannot and should not be taken for granted. To address challenges related to significant changes and with staff struggling to know how things are done, the suggestion that came from the SCOPE team was the development of a service inventory. This would include for each service, a mapping of the process and communications flows necessary to have the service work properly.
- While process mapping and the mapping of communications flows for each service would require significant staff time and effort, we believe that it would bring about strong benefits to the Municipality. Because it is not an urgent matter, process mapping could be completed incrementally over a long period of time, beginning with the most important processes, or those which provide the most confusion/challenge.
- To this end, we suggest the creation of cross-departmental teams to identify the most important processes (or those that face the most challenges), and map them collaboratively. This will have the dual effect of improving staff understanding of each other’s actions, while also serving to challenge and improve the way things are done.
- It was noted that some departments have already begun mapping processes, namely the Finance, Administration and Fire Departments. In addition, the Day Care Centre is regulated and is already process-oriented as well. The task, then will largely depend on mapping processes within the Parks & Recreation and Roads units, which were found to operate mostly without formalized processes.

1. Managing Change/Succession Planning

Succession Planning

- With a great deal of staff turnover in recent years, Brockton is in better shape than most municipalities with regards to the need for future succession planning. That being said, while previous staffing transitions have addressed the need for succession planning in some areas within the Municipality, there remain some key positions that are due for retirement in the coming years. This will need to be appropriately planned for to ensure the transition is smooth, and that Brockton retains the organizational knowledge held by its more experienced staff.
- The CAO/Clerk is set to retire in the near future. In addition, there are a few key staff members who have been with the organization for several decades, and who retain a great deal of organizational knowledge within their areas of expertise. Efforts must be made to ensure their organizational knowledge and capabilities do not leave Brockton upon their retirements.
- Given that Brockton is a smaller municipality, with a lean staffing complement, many staff across the organization provide multiple service offerings, which in some cases may be difficult to replace with one single replacement. Succession planning is needed to ensure that employee turnover, particularly in the senior management ranks, does not result in lost competencies, corporate knowledge and history, which would adversely impact service efficiency and quality.
- Succession planning is an ongoing and long-term process that does not exist in isolation. It must be intertwined with the Municipality's strategic and organizational objectives in order to reflect desired service delivery goals.
- Brockton should develop a basic corporate "succession plan" to ensure the loss of any single employee would not severely disrupt services at the Municipality. This is a minimum requirement in order to continue to operate as a lean organization.
- Succession plans require personal involvement of senior leaders, and should identify:
 - Staff members with a potential to be cross-trained or promoted to new or more senior responsibilities;
 - Any gaps in the managerial or professional ranks that would need to be filled by external recruiting or training existing staff. This includes both identifying current requirements and also determining any anticipated gaps in the organization;
 - Planning ahead to provide sufficient time to enable knowledge transfer from a retiring or departing senior staff to the incumbent; and
 - Assessment of key position descriptions and the competitiveness of compensation for those duties, in order to be able to recruit and retain capable staff going forward.

1. Managing Change/Succession Planning

- Furthermore, performance reviews could help inform the succession planning process, and could be used to track employee progression towards succession plan goals.
- An innovative practice could include initiatives such as job sharing or job shadowing, which can allow for a more smooth transitioning of senior staff through minimizing the loss of organizational knowledge and competencies.
 - For example, during the lead up to a planned retirement, a “deputy” manager could be designated to job shadow a manager for a period of time. Following retirement of the manager, the deputy manager would become the new manager, and the outgoing manager could provide part-time advisory support to ensure a smooth transition for the new manager.

Recommendations

1.1. That the Municipality establish cross-departmental working groups to process map important (or challenging) processes to find opportunities for improvement, and increase staff awareness of municipal processes, particularly for the Roads and Parks & Recreation units.

1.2. That the Municipality establish a succession planning process to appropriately identify and plan for the retirements of key personnel in the future to ensure organizational knowledge and capabilities are not lost.

StrategyCorp endorses the conclusions of AMCTO’s recent guidebook on the importance and process of succession planning, the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO)’s report entitled: “Human Capital Management – The Need for Succession Planning in Smaller Municipalities.”

2. Communications

- Across the organization, we heard issues of communication.
- With the exception of the senior management team, which regularly communicated with each other, there appears to be a tendency to operate within 'silos' and for communications with staff, and even among managers, to be episodic or delayed. While this is likely symptomatic of the great deal of employee turnover and changing reporting relationships in recent years, it is an issue that should be actively addressed.
- Everyone wants it to improve. The challenge, therefore, appears to lie in systems and procedures.
- We have broken the Municipality's communications issues into three distinct relationships:
 - Council – management/staff communications (Discussed in section 6 – Strategic Management);
 - Management - staff communications; and,
 - Cross-departmental communications.

2. Communications - Management to Staff

- Communications from managers to the front line were raised as a concern by staff across the organization. While department heads communicated well with each other, these communications did not consistently flow down to staff.
- Additionally, some staff observed that they often receive information regarding Council decisions through the community, as opposed to internal communications. This places staff in an uncomfortable position, as they may be unaware of decisions with impact to their own organization, which can be damaging to the municipality's reputation, staff's credibility, and staff's ability to act as ambassadors in the community.
- We heard repeatedly that there was no effective mechanism for staff to learn of recent Council decisions with staff members, outside of staff reading Council minutes (which are not available in a timely manner). While department heads meet to discuss Council decisions and their impacts on the organization, this information oftentimes does not flow down to the staff level.
- To resolve the issue of information sharing with staff, department heads should hold regularly scheduled internal departmental meetings, so that all employees are kept abreast of departmental and organizational happenings, with a more open two-way communication format. In addition, information regarding Council meetings could be shared to staff through a group "huddle" meetings the morning following a Council meeting to briefly inform staff of the recent decisions made by Council.

2. Communications - Internal, Cross-Departmental

- Cross-departmental communications and collaboration were widely considered an area of weakness within the Municipality.
- Brockton’s main administrative office has fostered a supportive and positive culture for staff. Within the municipal office, staff had few complaints regarding the corporate culture, and many saw the collaborative environment as a source of organizational strength.
- There appears to be some challenges in communicating and collaborating between the main municipal office staff and the “non-office” departments operating outside the main municipal office, however. This is most acute in the parks and recreation and the roads departments.
- The co-location of all Municipal departments in a new municipal facility was referred to by some as an opportunity to unite Brockton’s currently separated departments. Some concern was raised, however, regarding the lack of resident support for a past soccer field proposal. It was noted that there is currently limited support for such an expenditure. While it appears that geographical separation plays a role in reducing the amount of interdepartmental collaboration and communications, there are also opportunities to better integrate the Municipality’s main office with its “non-office” departments without relocation.
- In many cases, staff were not fully aware of the roles and responsibilities of their coworkers. With managers having a great deal of responsibility, they are often unavailable to assist staff in resolving issues that require the attention of staff from other departments.
- The communications and cross-departmental challenges facing Brockton are not uncommon in larger organizations. Brockton is not, however, sufficiently large that it should suffer from challenges with cross-departmental communications and collaboration. There is therefore a need for staff to better understand the roles and responsibilities of their peers. This can be achieved through increased staff exposure to one another through cross-departmental working groups.
- By better establishing staff members’ roles and responsibilities through increasing forums for cross-departmental communications, staff, and especially new staff, would be better able to understand and navigate through the organization and seek assistance from experts from other departments within the municipality.
- Avenues for further cross-departmental communications between managers and professional staff should be encouraged to facilitate information sharing on ‘best practices’ across the organization. One such avenue is the development of cross-departmental sub-committees whenever appropriate to work collaboratively on projects that solve problems impacting more than one department.

2. Communications – External

Customer Service Feedback Mechanism

- In addition, there was a reported lack of feedback or confirmation provided to Councilors regarding the resolution of customer-service issues, leaving Councilors to guess as to whether issues had, in fact, been resolved.
 - While some specific recommendations with regards to Council reporting and customer service inquiries will be further discussed in the sections regarding IT productivity enhancements and Council strategic management, this section will discuss general management-council relations and communications.

A Note on Office Facilities

- The limitations of the existing building were raised during consultations. There was a sense that the office space had presented challenges for customer service, and internal communications, namely:
 - There may not be enough counter space to allow staff to optimally function, or to provide residents with the appropriate privacy needed for communications on potentially sensitive matters at the counter;
 - There does not appear to be enough meeting space for internal collaboration and discussion; and,
 - There are challenges associated with getting people together for the purposes of building one collective corporate culture and breaking down silos.
- We understand the constraints on moving to a new building, and that the Municipality has already considered this in previous Councils, but wanted to document the continued concern that the physical plan creates operational limitations.

2. Communications - Recommendations

Recommendations

2.1. That the Municipality promote increased staff participation through:

- i) all departments to have regularly scheduled internal team meetings;*
- ii) regular staff “huddles” following the Council meetings to provide any pertinent information to staff; and,*
- iii) creation of additional avenues for cross-departmental communications, such as the establishment of cross-departmental sub-committees, to address challenges impacting multiple departments and to encourage “best practices” and communications across the organization.*

3. Roads

- The quality of the roads maintenance and winter control were considered highly reliable and an area of strength by interviewees across the municipal organization. It was also considered a strength by stakeholders.
- While Brockton appears to be delivering strong value-for-money in roads, the lack of a completed long-term capital plan at the time of this study means StrategyCorp cannot evaluate this for certain. The overall cost of Brockton’s roads maintenance was in line with peers on a per-kilometer basis, and the cost of winter control (which was considered a particular area of strength) was below the average of its peers.
- In addition, roads operators are seen in the community as helpful. Most believed the roads in Brockton are well maintained year-round, especially when compared to neighboring municipalities. The promptness and quality of winter maintenance was considered a strength by many interviewees, with some commending the roads operators’ flexibility in providing winter maintenance services for residents.
- In spite of delivering a high quality of service to residents, however, the roads department faces several organizational and operational challenges that threaten the effectiveness of the department over the long term, if left unaddressed.
- These include issues within the department around:
 - Internal department communications;
 - Staff morale and engagement;
 - Policies and processes; and
 - Capital and operational planning.

3. Roads - Opportunities for Improvement

Internal Department Communications

- Communications within the roads department were considered a weakness by interviewees.
- It was reported that this results in uncertainty regarding expectations, responsibilities and work schedules.
- Broken lines of communication can result in numerous detrimental effects, many of which are apparent within the roads department.

Policies and Processes

- Strong policies, processes and service level standards can overcome inadequate communications issues.
- Some commented on the need for:
 - More regular performance review
 - Clearer policies
 - More rigorous training in a variety of areas, including health and safety
- Based on our review, we would concur that there are all opportunities that could improve the operations of the Department.

3. Roads - Opportunities for Improvement

Staff Morale and Engagement

- While there were some examples of staff cooperatively working with other departments (e.g., Parks & Recreation), there appear to be unrealized opportunities for increased cooperation.
- Interviews revealed that roads staff feel isolated from other departments in part due to their being “on the road” and based in areas which are remote from Head Office.
- They also revealed the persistence of yard “allegiances” that date back to the pre-amalgamation era, and that appear to still pose a barrier to optimization.

Capital and Operational Planning

- The Town is in the midst of embracing a long term approach to managing its capital plan for roads and other works.
- Interviews revealed that staff did not perceive their work as being driven by a long-term plan within the roads department. Interviews indicated that this lack of awareness may mean that resources are not being fully utilized during “down times” due to a lack of clarity as to the longer-term objectives and requirements of the department.
- In addition, the absence of a policy standard has made it difficult for the municipality to determine if its spend on roads is being optimized or if some of the monies should be redirected to other operating and capital requirements.
- This review did not arrive at a view as to whether the Municipality’s roads are optimally or sub-optimally serviced. However, the lack of a codified service level standard underscores the need for additional service standardization and measurement of a very important spending category for the Municipality – one that would benefit from policy clarity and long-term asset management and capital planning.
- Benchmarking revealed the Municipality spends less on capital expenditures than peers, but without a long-term capital plan and proper measurement of asset condition, it was unclear as to whether this is cause for concern or praise.
- There may also be an opportunity to collaborate and/or share with neighbouring municipalities or the County in delivering on roads capital or maintenance services. Efforts to reach out to neighbouring municipalities should be made to explore any opportunities in this regard.

3. Roads – Moving Forward

- Work must be done to strengthen the roads department.
- At the heart of staff morale issues is a lack of a unified mission and vision to work towards.
 1. Establish a strong operation plan, with very specific goals and performance measurements; and,
 2. Establish a strong capital plan based upon asset management principles that can be brought to Council for support and endorsement (this is currently underway).

3. Roads – Moving Forward

To this end, some potential interim steps could include:

- Providing staff with a longer-term vision of the department’s direction, based in legislative and health & safety requirements, including an understanding of roads operational plans and scheduling. This will give staff a deeper sense of purpose and unity as they work towards common objectives, to improve the community.
- Develop and enforce improved policies and operating procedures. These would serve to address staff concerns and clarify day-to-day responsibilities and service level requirements.
- Complete the long-term capital plan and integrate it with shorter operating plans. Communicate to staff their roles in implementing on these plans.
- Implementing regular team “huddle” meetings to provide staff with updates regarding general departmental and organizational news, but also to provide staff with a feedback mechanism to discuss concerns with the supervisor.
- Once signs of improvement are in place, consider implementation of rotational assignments for lead hands and operators. Through implementing rotational shifts, the department could share organizational knowledge across more operators to ensure adequate service levels upon the retirement of more experienced staff. Rotational shifts would have the added benefit of requiring more direct contact with staff in other shops, which could serve to help break down the barriers between the three siloed departments.
 - Due to the nature of the work in the roads department, these would likely need to be during summer months. Caution would need to be exercised in implementing any such initiative, however, and staff would need to have a strong sense of purpose in the rotational shifts to provide a common goal to work towards.

3. Roads - Recommendations

Recommendations

- 3.1 That roads complete its long-term capital plan. That annual operating plans be created to give effect to its long-term capital plan. That staff be briefed on the long-term capital plan and the operating plans to drive a linkage between daily resource utilization and strategic needs.*
- 3.2. That Roads implement regular meetings between the Supervisor, Lead Hands and staff to outline the department's long-term objectives, as well as operational and scheduling matters to ensure Roads leadership clearly understands the departmental objectives and actions to be taken.*
- 3.3. That Roads likewise implement regular staff team "Huddles" where staff are informed of longer-term departmental objectives, organizational updates, training opportunities, and short-medium term schedule/operational considerations.*
- 3.4. That roads operators be given rotational shifts during summer months, where they are to report to a different shop within the roads department for a period of time. Implemented properly, this will serve to create a more seamless culture of cooperation between the department's three shops. Having individuals learn the "on the ground" conditions in each segment of the municipality will help cross-train operators and provide needed organizational redundancy to mitigate the adverse effect of retirements of its more experienced operators.*

4. Information Technology – Productivity Enhancements

- Until recently, it was difficult for small municipalities to justify expending taxpayers’ money on IT. This trend is reversing, however. With councils’ desire to keep organizations lean, and with residents and businesses demanding prompt services, municipalities must now be increasingly dependent on efficient IT solutions to remain effective.
- Interviews revealed that the Municipality has a fairly robust IT system. While Brockton is ahead of many smaller municipalities in its use of information technology, there may still be opportunity to increase staff capacity through technology.
- Investing in modern software and ongoing training is important in terms of optimizing work flows, ensuring the efficient utilization of scarce staff resources, and where necessary, re-designing work processes to better deploy staff and financial resources and meet stakeholder/resident expectations for service quality and responsiveness.
- It was noted that staff have already been investigating software to find a solution that fits with the Municipality’s accounting software. We believe there are some other areas where additional IT improvements could be made, namely:
 - i. **Access from all Facilities:** Staff in the roads department do not have access to the Municipality’s network. There are no computers in the roads shops. Integrating computers in the shops to provide access to operators and foremen would assist in the planning and rostering of schedules. It would also provide staff with access to MyBrockton and other important communications.
 - ii. **General troubleshooting:** While Brockton’s contracted IT support was available for more severe issues, smaller day-to-day IT support fell to the GIS/TCA/IT Technician. The Municipality’s use of contracted Information Technology services does not appear out of line with its peers, who typically contracted services to external companies. The GIS/TCA/IT technician, however, reported that trouble-shooting IT challenges often pulled capacity from her ability to fulfill the Municipality’s GIS responsibilities (her area of expertise), and from updating the Municipality’s Tangible Capital Assets system. More regular staff training “refreshers” on the use of software may be needed to improve staff comfort with IT and to free the GIS/TCA/IT technician’s time to implement important GIS and TCA initiatives. It was noted that efforts have been made to remove the majority of day-to-day IT inquiries from the technician’s list of responsibilities. We agree with this course of action and would recommend the Municipality continue to make efforts in this, reducing the technician’s day-to-day IT troubleshooting responsibilities.

4. Information Technology – Productivity Enhancements

- iii. **Digital registration and payments processing:** In recreation, program registration currently requires in-person or telephone registration. This takes staff time to manually take telephone and in-person registrations, and is less convenient for residents. Through enabling digital registration of recreation programs, Brockton would benefit from saving staff time and providing its residents with more convenient access to register for municipal programs. The same would apply to other registrations and payments of accounts receivable, including items such as daycare fees, or licenses, dog tags, etc.
- iv. **Use of MyBrockton:** The intention of MyBrockton is to provide all municipal staff with access to information relevant to their work. While the site was considered to be very useful by those that knew how to use it, some staff indicated having never used the site and were unsure as to how to use it. Recent plans to set every staff member's home page to MyBrockton may help in this regard, however there may be need to provide certain staff members with additional training on using the site.
- v. **Customer service issue tracking:** While Brockton's customer service quality is widely considered a strength, there was some concern by Councillors regarding communications and follow-up on customer service inquiries. The Municipality does not use a Customer Relationship Management system to assist in tracking and managing customer data, issues and interactions. Use of such software would enable staff to easily assign issues to relevant staff members, track their progress, and provide regular updates. The Municipality's Keystone software already has a call management system. This should be explored, along with other customer service ticketing software, to see if it would be appropriate in meeting the customer service requirements of the Municipality.
- vi. **Field Technologies:** The use of hand-held technology is revolutionizing traditional inspection and maintenance functions. In many municipalities, mobile phones and tablets are used in the field to pull and input information into GIS and other applications – this streamlines work flows and improves data accuracy for better customer service. The Municipality should continue to explore opportunities to improve field efficiencies through use of technology to ensure its staff remain efficient in the face of increased service pressures and reporting requirements.

4. Information Technology – Recommendations

Recommendations

4.1. That Brockton invest in providing computers to all facilities, including its shops to allow for efficient sharing of operational information

4.2(i). That Brockton invest in digital registration and payments processing to save staff time and improve the customer experience; and,

4.2(ii). That Brockton invest in appropriate customer service issue tracking and management software to provide a seamless internal experience of raising issues by “opening a ticket,” tracking response completion, cycle time, and customer satisfaction

4.3. That the Municipality provide ongoing staff training in general use of software and particularly the MyBrockton site.

4.4. That the Municipality investigate opportunities to partner with neighbouring municipalities and the County to consider opportunities for:

- sharing IT resources and knowledge, and/ or*
- procuring IT services jointly to achieve cost savings.*

5. Policy & Process Enhancement

- There is opportunity to improve the Municipality's suite of bylaws and service level policies, as well as the enforcement of bylaws and policies. Across the organization, staff and managers pointed to operations being conducted based on past experience.
- Through the interview, workshop and secondary research and analysis processes, StrategyCorp uncovered a series of areas where the Municipality would benefit from an enhancement of its policies or processes.

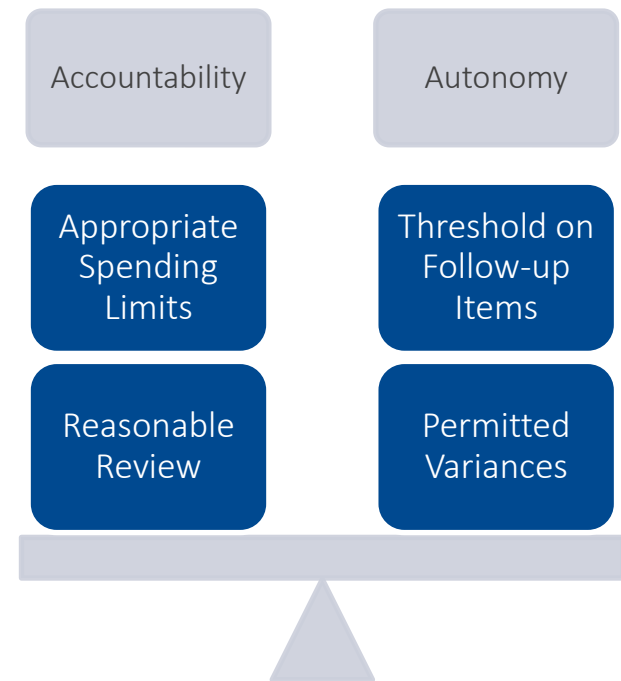
Policies, Procedures and Legal Liability

- Staff raised concern that they were unaware of the required service-levels that they should deliver against, noting that the Municipality did not have recent policies or procedures in place to guide their behaviour. This issue is particularly apparent in roads and parks & recreation, where staff were unaware of the existence of service level policies or standards.
- As society becomes increasingly litigious, it is vital that municipalities operate with prudence and take any legal risks seriously. With the rise of cases where Municipal Joint and Several Liability is applied, municipalities are at risk if they create conditions whereby accidents can happen, even in cases where the municipality may only be ruled to be 1% at fault. In recent legal cases, municipalities have been forced to pay the full amount of damages being claimed when the at-fault party was unable to pay, regardless of the minor share of responsibility held by the municipality.
- To address potential risks facing the Municipality, staff should be provided with clear policies, and a formal feedback mechanism, through which they can raise concerns with managers related to service-levels, policies, procedures, and legal and health & safety risks. Recently implemented management communications meetings, held between department heads and Council, are an excellent example of such a mechanism. These should be expanded to include meetings with middle managers and professional staff to raise concerns, discuss how issues may be addressed, and develop action plans to address them.
- In an effort to facilitate the updating of municipal bylaws, Brockton may wish to consider the support of external offerings. One such offering available is from Municipal World, which has a product called the Municipal Code, which essentially puts all the licensing, regulatory and procedural activities in a single place, by enacting a by-law that standardizes and consolidates all of these activities in a single comprehensive municipal by-law (excluding land-use planning things like zoning and official plan). It also eliminates some regulations or processes that no longer appear relevant or necessary.
- In addition, the bylaw enforcement officer position is currently a shared function with other municipalities. We heard reports that bylaw enforcement issues were not always being consistently or promptly addressed. This may be the result of outdated bylaws, but it could also speak to insufficient bylaw officer capacity. Should bylaw enforcement issues remain a concern following the updating of bylaws, the Municipality should evaluate the business case for increasing its bylaw enforcement capacity, but we were not able to confirm that this was an issue at present.

5. Policy & Process Enhancement - Budgetary and Purchasing Oversight

- During the review, concerns surrounding budgetary oversight were raised both by Council and senior managers.
 - Councillors raised concern regarding management accountabilities, while management were concerned regarding the degree to which Councillors reviewed minor budgetary items.
 - Follow-up on Council inquiries typically takes half a day for her to gather information from department heads to follow-up on the issues raised by Council, which can cost the Municipality a great deal of money in staff time.
- It is therefore considered a best practice in municipal management to day to strike a balance between:
 1. Accountability for spending; and,
 2. Flexibility to manage within budgets to meet program objectives.

The need to balance Accountability with Autonomy



5. Policy & Process Enhancement - Ensuring appropriate managerial accountability for spending

- To enhance managerial accountability, the Municipality may wish to consider a review of its spending authority.
- With regards to the Municipality’s purchasing mechanisms, StrategyCorp undertook a review of the existing Purchasing By-law prepared by staff. The following summarizes the approval authority under the existing procurement policy, compared to the County of Bruce’s 2012 procurement policy, as well as StrategyCorp’s proposed limits:

2012 Limits: Bruce County	
\$ Limit	Procurement Process
< than \$4,999	Department Head Discretion
\$5,000 - \$9,999	3 Written Bids
\$10,000 +	Public Tender or Invitational Tender

Current Limits: Municipality of Brockton	
\$ Limit	Procurement Process
< than \$9,999	Department Head Discretion
\$10,000 - \$24,999	2 Written Bids
\$25,000 +	Public Tender or Invitational Tender

- We believe that the Municipality might benefit from lowering the Levels of Contract Approval Authority, and the Approval Limits under the procurement policy. This would have the benefit of increasing accountability on purchases, ensuring equitable treatment of all vendors, and ensure the best value is being obtained by the Municipality in the procurement of goods and services.
- In addition, whenever possible, departments should seek to achieve cost reductions through volume discounts by procuring items collectively, or through renegotiating existing contracts.
- Coupled with more rigorous spending limits, however, should be a reasonable threshold for Council review. Through requiring review and follow-up by staff on items under a certain dollar threshold, Council is spending valuable staff time and resources to verify items of minimal value. This practice can have unintended detrimental consequences, such as eroding managerial confidence. It can also result in management developing increasingly detailed and time-consuming reports to Council in the effort to justify every minor purchase and avoid scrutiny.
- We note that while Bruce County has had success with its current limits, it is currently reviewing its 2012 procurement policy and spending limits. As such, we recommend that Brockton consult with the County to identify what has worked well, and what is being amended within its policy for improvements (and to adjust for inflation).

5. Policy & Process Enhancement - Providing flexibility to managers to manage within budgets

- Everyone respects the need to be within budget, and to be accountable for purchasing decisions. There is some concern that the current style of oversight exercised by Council may be distorting operational decisions. StrategyCorp found evidence that in some cases, purchasing choices are being distorted by budgetary concerns (e.g., buying things late in year to make sure that the department hits the budget and does not go over). It has the negative impact of potentially leading to suboptimal purchasing decisions.
- To resolve this issue, the Municipality should establish a policy on permitted variance from budget to allow managers flexibility to manage. This would facilitate timely purchases to maximize operational impact, rather than simply “managing to the budget”.
 - The policy should be clear, and should set out permitted variances for both the operating and capital budgets needs to be adopted by council. Provided a Department is within its overall budget, variances at the specific line item and/or program level should be permitted and subsequently reported in the Financial Statement Review reports submitted to Council. The Department should be accountable to explain the need for the variance.
 - Management should recommend the level of variance permitted to Council. Given the size of Brockton’s operations, the following would be a reasonable policy for managing the operating budget:
 - A 10% variance up to a limit of \$2,500 on a specific program could be approved by the Department head, and
 - A 10% variance up to limit of \$5,000 on a specific program could be approved by the CAO, provided this program variance is within the overall Departmental budget.
 - For the management of Capital Projects, a reasonable policy would be:
 - Departmental approval at 10% up to \$20,000, and
 - CAO approval at 10% up to \$40,000 with a subsequent reporting to Council.
 - In addition, there should be no authorization required for Transfers for specific line items providing that the specific program budget has sufficient funds to offset the variance. In all circumstances, departments cannot exceed the overall Departmental Budget without Council approval.

5. Policy & Process Enhancement - Equipment Sharing

- Challenges with equipment sharing across departments, particularly in the more physical services, namely: roads and parks, were raised during interviews and SCOPE workshops.
- While communication and cooperation challenges were considered as the source of this issue, it was revealed during workshop sessions that the Municipality does not have a financial mechanism through which the cost of equipment can be shared or distributed among more than one department. This makes it less viable for risk-adverse managers to share equipment, as the wear and tear on equipment from use by other departments would be a cost borne by the lender, and included in the lender's budget (which, as discussed previously, have been increasingly under scrutiny).
- By establishing a financial mechanism (i.e., journal entry process for allocation of equipment for budgeting purposes that allows the sharing of the cost of equipment acquisitions, maintenance and replacements, the Municipality would facilitate more ready sharing of equipment across departments. While scheduling challenges will always exist in sharing equipment across departments, removing the financial barrier should help reduce the occurrence of cross-departmental equipment sharing issues, and would encourage a more collaborative environment.

5. Policy & Process Enhancement

Volunteer Retention and Engagement

- Interviews revealed that the Municipality is facing troubles in finding new young volunteers to assist the Municipality in its operations. The volunteer base for Brockton was reportedly more senior in age, with numerous volunteers participating in multiple committees.
- Volunteers provide a vital service to municipal governments, especially in smaller and more rural communities. The continued use of volunteer resources is an important method of ensuring municipal operations can continue to remain cost-competitive, while delivering the services that residents have grown to expect.
- With the Municipality's generally older population demographic, proactive efforts must be made to ensure the ongoing vitality of its volunteer base. To this end, Brockton should establish volunteer plans or goals to attract, engage and retain volunteers, with particular focus on younger volunteers. The City of Kitchener Community Services Department's 2010 Volunteer Services Strategy is a comprehensive document that may provide a useful guide to Brockton in establishing its own proactive volunteer engagement plan.

Grant Writing

- Grant writing capabilities was raised during workshops as a gap at the Municipality. The Municipality currently lacks the expertise to effectively write grants, with managers writing grants individually (time permitting), with varying degrees of success.
- Brockton should investigate and consider hiring the services of a contract grant writer on a per-case basis to assist with individual grant applications. Once enough precedent has been built up, Brockton would likely then be able to complete grant applications in-house.
- Rather than a source of additional cost, quality grant writing could potentially pay for itself, as additional revenues through successful grant applications can more than cover the cost of enhancing grant writing capabilities through use of a seasoned grant writer.

5. Policy & Process Enhancement - Recommendations

Recommendations

- 5.1. That Brockton establish financial processes to enable the distribution of equipment acquisition, maintenance and replacement costs across multiple departments to facilitate increased cross-departmental equipment sharing.*
- 5.2. That the Municipality establish and implement a proactive volunteer engagement and retention strategy to ensure its volunteer base remains vibrant and engaged for years to come.*
- 5.3. That the Municipality consider continuing the use of contract grant writers on a case-by-case basis to assist in important grant applications.*
- 5.4. That Brockton review and consider reducing the Approval Limits under the procurement policy to enhance procurement value for money and accountability, bring them in line with other local comparator municipalities*
- 5.5. That the Municipality establish a policy on permitted variance from budget to allow managers appropriate flexibility to manage.*

6. Strategic Management

- Generally speaking, municipal Councils have two fundamental roles, namely:
 - Oversight of Municipal Operations; and
 - Setting the Strategic Direction for the Municipality.
- **Operational Oversight:** ensures the municipality delivers services in an efficient manner. This includes the oversight of spending levels and accountabilities, and ensures costs remain reasonable.
- **Strategic Oversight:** involves guiding municipal operations in a planned and strategic manner. It ensures a municipality is sustainably providing the right services and service levels to its residents



6. Strategic Management – Rebalancing Priorities

- Through the review process, StrategyCorp noted that Council has done an excellent job in overseeing the municipal operations at Brockton:
 - The need to control costs is an important role of Council that is generally agreed-upon. Brockton’s Council has done a good job of ensuring that costs remain competitive in Brockton in recent years.
 - The recently completed Service Review, undertaken in consultation with the community, provides a detailed resource for remaining cost-cutting measures that could be feasible for the Municipality to explore further.
 - In addition to controlling costs, Council has also focused on managing staff accountabilities and in ensuring customer service inquiries are efficiently and effectively resolved.
- While it is true that establishing strong municipal operations is a vital enabler of long-term success, there is a Law of Diminishing Returns on operational improvements:
 - Once the “low hanging fruit” items have been addressed, it becomes increasingly difficult to achieve improvements in cost-effectiveness.
 - In fact, seeking additional cost savings may even reach the point where each incremental dollar saved may actually hinder the municipality’s ability to effectively deliver a service by cutting necessary components of effective service delivery.
- It is therefore important that a municipality balance cost-efficiencies move forward in a planned and systematic manner, which is based in sound strategy. This helps to guide the Municipality in the right direction over the long term, ensuring optimal value-for-money.



6. Strategic Management – The need for an updated Strategic Direction

- Through the course of our review, we have identified several long-term strategic opportunities that face the Municipality, namely:
 - Need for planning economic development services
 - Need for planning services for young people/young families;
 - Need for ensuring equitable service delivery throughout Brockton;
 - Need for value for money
 - Need for long term capital planning and linked operational and budget making
- These are important questions facing the Municipality of Brockton that Council has the opportunity to show leadership on.
- The existing Sustainable Strategic Plan Framework from previous Council does not appear to give staff a functioning road map on these subject areas. As such, Council would benefit from turning its focus towards developing an updated strategic vision for the Municipality, which includes consideration for the above-mentioned key strategic challenges.
- A recent area of marked improvement has been in embracing long-term capital planning. At the time of writing, a draft long-term capital plan for the Municipality is well advanced, and is set for completion in the fall. While StrategyCorp commends this progress, we must reiterate the importance of a long-term capital plan, including the implementation and ongoing measurement of progress against the plan.
- Infrastructure degradation poses a significant risk to all municipalities in Ontario. Proper asset maintenance and replacement require proactive planning and management. Brockton may need to improve upon its current long-term capital asset planning practices to appropriately prepare for future infrastructural challenges.
- At the moment, the Municipality does not have an integrated corporate planning process that links strategy to annual business plans and budgets and clear performance measures.
 - Brockton does have a strategic plan in place, however, the Municipality would benefit from a more formalized corporate planning process. This will involve putting in place four core, inter-connected components under an Integrated Corporate Planning Framework (see figure on following page) that includes more robust performance measurement.

6. Strategic Management –Corporate Planning Framework

- The absence of an Integrated Corporate Planning Framework process leaves an organization vulnerable to:
 - Being overly focused on operational issues to the detriment of planning for, and addressing, longer-term strategic issues such as service delivery transformation, economic development, capital investment strategy; and,
 - An incoherent performance measurement regime that does not provide management or Council with the information needed to assess service and program efficiency and effectiveness relative to strategic and operational objectives.
- The introduction of this type of framework will also:
 - Better position Council to plan the strategic elements of its agenda;
 - Lead to better Council-staff relations because planning, reporting, and timeline expectations for working up, considering, and making decisions on strategic matters is known to everyone; and,
 - Allow staff and Council as part of the Municipality’s continuous improvement agenda, to regularly engage the County in discussing areas of greater collaboration as enhancing and expanding the services and supports to lower-tiers is a core part of the County’s own strategic agenda.
- The next page outlines the components of a strong corporate planning framework. We believe that through developing and implementing a framework such as this on an ongoing basis, Brockton would be able to strategically position itself to tackle the most pressing and important long-term issues facing the Municipality.

6. Strategic Management – Corporate Planning Framework: Core Components

What: Core document that guides the focus, priorities, and measures of the organization over a 3 to 5 year period.

Who: Developed by community, staff and Council

Why: Sets out core strategic directions to focus the organization’s efforts and definition of success. The directions are used by management and Council to arbitrate and select across different activities and opportunities.

What: This document operationalizes the Annual Business Plan at the business division/unit level

Who: Developed by line managers and approved by senior management

Why: Sets work order, rollout, roles, responsibilities, accountabilities, and links to achievement of key performance measures



What: Outlines the long-term forecasted capital requirements of the municipality

Who: Developed by senior management and approved by Council

Why: Provide realistic budgetary restrictions on the municipality, based in its long-term infrastructural requirements, which ensures annual budgets are sustainable over the long-term

What: These documents identify, prioritize, and allocate resources to the specific measures, initiatives, and tactics within a given fiscal year to deliver progress on the strategic plan

Who: Developed by senior management and approved by Council

Why: Plan operationalizes strategy in practical terms over business timeline and sets out key performance measures to be tracked

6. Strategic Management – Council-Staff Communications

- During interviews and workshop sessions, concerns surrounding the reporting relationship between management and Council were raised.
- In StrategyCorp’s experience, the Council-staff relationship always needs attention – this is both appropriate and natural.
- The recommendations provided in this report are largely in the vein of continuous and incremental improvement. A key enabler of a successful continuous improvement agenda is open dialogue and trust between council and staff.

6. Strategic Management – Council-Staff Communications

- Council and staff are encouraged to consider the following best practices to continue to facilitate the strengthening of their relationship:

Best Practice	Description
Clarity of Roles and Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governing vs. Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council responsible for policy direction, and oversight of the public service to ensure effective management - Staff, under leadership of the CAO, provide best policy/program advice to Council, and implement approved policies/programs • Clearly articulate the role of Mayor and Council and role of CAO and staff in intergovernmental relations • Clearly articulate the roles of Councillors and staff in dealing with local and “community as a whole” issues
Code of Conduct for Council and Public Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key values: accountability, transparency, professionalism, integrity • Objective, professional competence of the public service • Provide clear direction to staff – differentiate between the decisions of Council (the decision-making body) vs. directions/suggestions from individual councillors • Hold staff accountable through the organizational structure, the chain of command
Protocol for Issues Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipate, communicate, and respond in timely manner • No surprises on the part of Council and staff – bring up issues before public Council meetings when possible, not during • Clearly articulate the roles of Mayor, councillors and staff in responding to residents’ complaints • Customer service excellence requires effective coordination of timely responses from Council and the staff
Open, honest communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tone from the top is critical - Trust and respect • Own up to mistakes, and timely corrective action to be taken • Clearly articulate the roles of Mayor and councillors, and role of CAO and staff in dealing with the media • Conduct annual Council site visits of municipal facilities to acquaint Councillors with staff and operations

6. Strategic Management - Use of Committees

- Based on its website, the Municipality has 36 committees in total. Committees provide community engagement, which is an important component to effective municipal service provision. However, with 36 separate committees, the requirements on staff to provide secretariat support services is taking time away from more urgent staff responsibilities.
- At best, numerous committees operating in similar subject areas may be redundant in covering similar areas. At worst, they may provide conflicting reports and recommendations to Council, further complicating matters.
- Furthermore, there are reportedly no limits on participation in committees, meaning an active participant could take part in numerous committees, thereby skewing the degree to which the Municipality is receiving community input.
- To establish the degree to which committees are delivering value to Brockton, the Municipality should consider an evaluation of committee outputs (including participation rates and number of unique members) versus their inputs.
- Council should also seek to review and establish clear mandates for committees going forward to help clarify which committees may have potential to be combined with related groups.

6. Strategic Management - Recommendations

Recommendations

6.1. That Council review the Strategic Plan and consider conducting a Strategic Plan Update to ensure the 2013 Sustainable Strategic Plan reflects the current Council's desired vision and strategic direction for the Municipality.

6.2. That the Municipality complete the long-term capital plan and implement an integrated Corporate Planning Framework.

The framework would formally link

- the long term capital plan*
- service standard policies*
- the annual budget process*
- annual operating plans, and*
- a regular, disciplined process and performance measurement regime.*

6.3. That the Municipality's Long-Term Capital Plan, which is currently under development, be integrated into the Corporate Planning Cycle, and be used as a guide for annual operating plans.

6.4. That Council and staff continue to invest in strengthening their relationship by (i) creating an overall customer service management system, including protocols for initiating service requests, tracking and feedback mechanisms to provide councillors with a means for update on the status and completion of service requests.

6. Strategic Management - Recommendations

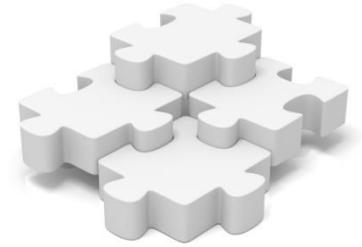
6.5. That Brockton undertake a performance review of its committees to evaluate committee outputs (including engagement) versus the cost of participation inputs.

6.6. That Council write updated terms of reference of Committees , including clear mandates and measurable metrics for success upon which Committees must deliver against.

6.7. That Council implement a bi-annual review process for Committee's delivery against stated mandates, and consider change where appropriate.

6.8. That Council and staff continue to invest in strengthening their relationship. This should include:

- i) Regular training after each election cycle on staff-Council roles*
- ii) setting clear expectations for managers and allowing them the flexibility to operate within those expectations.*



Opportunities for Organizational Improvement

Overview

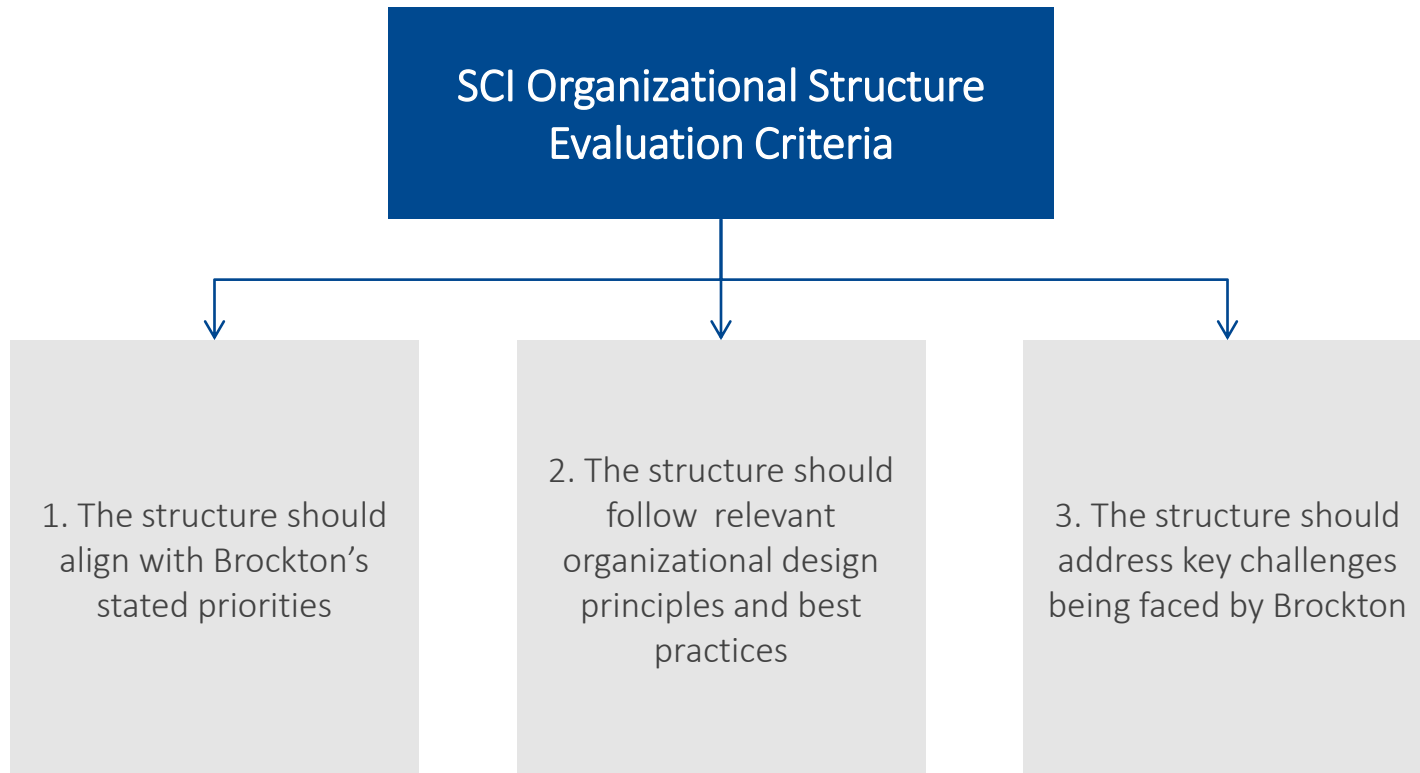
From our analysis, we have identified several key organizational findings, which will be discussed in detail in this section:

- A. Gap in Economic Development
- B. Health & Safety Adherence
- C. HR Capacity
- D. Achieving Efficiencies in Roads and Park and Recreation
- E. Roles and Responsibilities in Parks & Recreation



StrategyCorp applied a three-pillared approach to evaluating structural recommendations based on organizational design best practices

This review is based on three-pillars:



SCI Organizational Structure Evaluation Criteria:

1. The structure should align with Brockton's stated priorities

Review Objectives

Results

1. Engage the knowledge and expertise of Municipality employees through a transparent, participative, and inclusive process

StrategyCorp engaged the following in one-on-one and group interviews/workshops:

- a) All of Council
- b) More than 30 staff
- c) External stakeholders

2. Assess existing processes and procedures, practices, staffing, technology and the organization of municipal departments to strengthen Brockton's ability to deliver on its strategic priorities

StrategyCorp undertook a broad evaluation of processes, procedures, staffing levels, reporting requirements, and technology from across the organization, and in-depth evaluation of areas that were identified as important opportunities for improvement.

3. Foster economical and efficient delivery of service, while being mindful of the financial constraints of the Municipality

StrategyCorp has made recommendations that seek to improve operations while respecting Brockton's focus on being cost conscious.

SCI Organizational Structure Evaluation Criteria:

2. The structure should follow organizational design principles and best practices

To ensure all recommendations aligned with municipal organizational design best practices, StrategyCorp tested all recommendations against its Municipal Organizational Design Framework:

StrategyCorp Municipal Organizational Design Framework (MODF)

Strategy:

Aligns with Brockton's strategic priorities and directions and eliminates strategic gaps

Structure:

Organizational design aligns "like" functions to foster the cross-pollination of ideas

Process:

Structure facilitates improved process efficiencies and streamlining of services

Staff:

Optimal use of each staff member, ensuring that they are contributing to the objectives of their corresponding department with contingencies in mind through succession planning

Culture:

Structure fosters a culture of dedication to service excellence across the organization

A. Gap in Economic Development

- The Municipality of Brockton is facing challenging economic conditions at present. Provincial funding reductions have placed increased pressure on the Municipality to raise revenues through property taxation, or to reduce service levels.
- Many interviewees mentioned that younger residents are leaving Brockton in search of employment opportunities. The Municipality's ability to retain local talent is limited at present, and represents a threat to its future prosperity.
- The Municipality is therefore obligated in some respects to help improve Brockton's economic conditions to ensure the community's long-term viability.
- Economic development was considered a gap by the majority of stakeholders interviewed. Among those interviewed from the business community, it was considered to be, by far, the largest service gap at the Municipality.
- The Municipality of Brockton currently does not have an in-house economic development capacity aside from its CAO. While the CAO technically has responsibility for undertaking economic development responsibilities, the CAO typically does not have sufficient capacity to handle economic development responsibilities, as more urgent requirements of the position, including clerical duties, human resources and management of the organization often crowd out the important, but less urgent, economic development priorities.
- In the absence of a full time economic development officer, Brockton has relied on its Economic Development Committee to provide economic development for the community. While Brockton's Economic Development Committee has done quality work in seeking to attract businesses to the community, a significant gap was identified in the Municipality's business retention and expansion activities.
- Likewise, while the County has an economic development function, Bruce County's economic development focus is on business attraction to the region as a whole. While beneficial to the Municipality, business attraction by the County is not aligned with Brockton's most urgent economic development needs. Brockton's economic development should be focused on ensuring local businesses remain in Brockton, and helping existing and new businesses expand and thrive within the community, creating a better quality of life experience for its residents.

A. Gap in Economic Development - The Case for Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E)

- Business retention and expansion is a vital component to robust economic development.
- For example, a 2011 Economic Developers Association of Canada (EDAC) report on Performance Measurement in Economic Development found that for every 100 jobs created in the private sector, 55 were created through expansion of existing local businesses, 44 were created through local entrepreneurial ventures and start-ups, and only 1 new job was created through corporate greenfield relocations (i.e., typical business attraction targets).
- Other studies have echoed these general findings, finding that business expansion activities account for between 60-90% of new economic growth within a community, depending on its characteristics. Interestingly, studies found that rural areas are actually *more* dependent on business retention and expansion than urban centres.*
- Business retention and expansion provides proactive support for existing businesses of all sizes within the community. Through encouraging a strong connection between the local municipality and its business community, BR&E activities produce important outcomes for the local economy:
 1. They provide a forum to identify urgent business concerns;
 2. They provide businesses with easy access to the municipality to facilitate any challenges;
 3. They ensure that local municipal programs are meeting the needs of local businesses;
 4. They provide advance warning to the municipality of at-risk businesses, as well as opportunity for the municipality to proactively address and prevent local business closures; and,
 5. They provide support for the growth of businesses, and develop strategic actions to improve local business competitiveness.
- These activities, however, require ongoing engagement with the local business community. At present, the Municipality does not have a reliable mechanism by which it can monitor and address business concerns. Staff and Council are often unaware of a business leaving the municipality until the business has announced its plans to leave. This has resulted in high vacancies on main street.

**For more information on these studies, see: EDAC's 2011 report: Performance Measurement in Economic Development.*

A. Gap in Economic Development - The Case for Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E)

- The Municipality's below-average Current Value Assessment (CVA) when compared to both its peers and neighbors is an indication that Brockton is facing difficult economic conditions. Current value assessment measures the value of properties within the municipality, and is an indicator of economic wellbeing.
- If Brockton does not invest in economic development, it will likely continue to suffer from below-average property valuations, hindering Council's ability to reduce tax rates or deliver improved services. By contrast, through increasing the Municipality's economic position, economic development can increase property values, thereby providing residents with relative prosperity and Council with flexibility to improve services without raising taxes.
- The Municipality's recently completed Service Review appropriately identified economic development as a key service gap, listing nearly 30 recommendations related to economic development. Most of these recommendations required the hiring of a dedicated economic development officer.
- Unfortunately, the Municipality's recent RED application to fund an economic development position was not accepted. It is vital, however that the Municipality invest in business retention and expansion activities to grow its economy and maintain the community's economic sustainability over the long-term.
- Successful economic development requires ongoing, multi-year commitment to improving economic conditions. This would require the hiring of a permanent Economic Development Officer (EDO). We believe the importance of the position, and the numerous requirements of the position would necessitate a full-time EDO.
- One avenue to raise funds for an EDO would be to reallocate funds currently dedicated to the Municipality's Visitor Information Centre. Visitor information could be communicated through the Municipality's website, and responsibility to keep visitor information up-to-date could fall on the new Economic Development Officer as one of his/her duties.

A. Gap in Economic Development - Recommendations

- The economic development officer should be:
 - **Accountable:** There needs to be a repeating cycle of priority setting, reporting and performance measurement, to satisfy Council. In our opinion, this can best be achieved through specific accountability measures, including service levels, a reporting mechanism and key performance indicators.
 - **Strategically-Focused:** The EDO should ideally be focused on the highest return opportunity, but sufficiently inclusive to leverage the strength of the community. Development of a multi-year, Council-approved, economic development strategy would assist in this regard. An emphasis should be placed on consistent and incremental improvement opportunities, such as business retention and expansion activities, rather than higher-risk ventures such as business attraction.
- There is some precedent for municipalities of Brockton's size to have an in-house dedicated economic development officer. Three of Brockton's peers currently have an in-house Economic Development employee on staff.

Recommendations

7.1. That the Municipality hire a full-time Economic Development Officer (EDO) as soon as practicable.

7.2. That the new EDO develop a multi-year, Council-approved, economic development strategy that addresses business retention and expansion, investment attraction and tourism.

7.3. That the new EDO work with Council, Committees, and the County's economic development department to seek cost-effective methods of managing business attraction, retention and expansion activity in Brockton, and to ensure its activities on behalf of Brockton are delivering value.

B. Health and Safety Adherence

- While this report has already discussed Training, Policies, Procedures and Legal Liability under section 6: Policy Enhancement of the Operational Findings and Recommendations portion of the report, there are a few issues relating directly to Health and Safety relating to organizational change.
- The Municipality's Health & Safety Officer also serves as its Fire Prevention Officer. The role is split, with Fire Prevention duties taking the majority of the officer's time (4 days each week), and Health and Safety taking a minority share of time (1 days per week).
- Compliance and implementation of Health and Safety requirements is reportedly inconsistent, with some managers acting in a more proactive manner than others. In some cases, busy managers are failing to pass information down to staff regarding Health and Safety requirements.
- As a specialist position that reports to the Fire Chief, the Health & Safety position does not currently have the organizational recognition across the Municipality's non-fire departments. It is possible that through positioning this role within the Fire Department (where the Fire Prevention Officer reports), managers may perceive the position as a part of the Fire Department. As such, it may be perceived as not directly impacting their area of responsibility.
- Health and Safety is the responsibility of the entire municipal organization. While certain staff may be more susceptible to health and safety risks, all staff face the possibility of an accident or damage to someone's health. Safety does not happen by accident; the majority of accidents occur because proper prevention measures were not taken. With the pressures of an increasingly litigious environment, it is important that Health and Safety matters are taken seriously by all departments within the Municipality.

B. Health and Safety Adherence

- Managerial buy-in and support across all departments is necessary to ensure the Municipality remains a safe place. As such, we believe the Health and Safety Officer role should be considered a corporate service, not a Fire service. The position should report directly to the CAO/Clerk, so as to ensure Health and Safety initiatives are treated appropriately by management across the municipal organization. The Health and Safety Officer should be given appropriate authority to work with managers in developing, updating and enforcing necessary health and safety procedures and policies across municipal departments.
- In addition, the Health and Safety position may require additional capacity temporarily to update critical Health and Safety policies and procedures across the Municipality. This may require a temporary realignment of the Health & Safety/Fire Prevention Officer's distribution of labour.
 - For example, a temporary shift over a period of 6 months from 1 Health & Safety day to 4 Fire Prevention days to 2 Health & safety and 3 Fire Prevention days may be sufficient to update critical Health & Safety policies and procedures across the municipal organization.

Recommendations

8.1. That the change in work allocation between Health and Safety and Fire Prevention be changed so that:

The Fire Prevention position be reduced from 4 days each week to 3, and

One day a week be added to the Health & Safety Officer position to a total of 2 days a week, in order to implement critical Health & Safety measures across the organization.

8.2. That the change in work allocation between Health and Safety and Fire Prevention be evaluated after 6 months to re-assess the role change.

8.3. That the Health & Safety Officer position report directly to the CAO to provide the position with the corporate-wide authority required to implement important Health & Safety measures across the organization. The employee's Fire Prevention Officer role would still report to the Fire Chief.

C. HR Capacity

- Throughout the review, we uncovered challenges that relate to unaddressed human resources concerns.
- There has been significant change in Brockton, with staff turnover changing both people and the character of the work required. This has resulted in a backlog of one-time HR work to bring the Municipality up to speed with current realities, which has not yet been completed.
- Given the specialist nature of HR, having access to a contract or part-time HR specialist would help.
- While the CAO/Clerk is widely considered an organizational asset, she is currently burdened with multiple responsibilities that limit her time to perform the HR duties that are needed to address ongoing concerns at the Municipality.
- For example, a review of Brockton’s peers revealed that none had a CAO/Clerk that was also responsible for both HR and Economic Development.

CAO Responsibilities: Brockton vs. Peers

CAO Responsibilities	Clerk	HR	Economic Development
Brockton	✓	✓	✓
Meaford	×	×	×
West Grey	<i>Deputy Clerk</i>	×	×
Minto	✓	✓	×
Huron East	×	✓	×
Central Huron	×	✓	✓
Arran-Elderslie	✓	✓	N/A*

*Arran-Elderslie indicated that it does not perform Economic Development in-house.

C. HR Capacity – Employee Engagement

- Some expressed the view that staff do not always receive sufficient training at the Municipality, and that compliance with safety training requirements is not implemented by all managers in a uniform manner. This was specifically apparent in the roads department.
- Staff within the municipal office reported ample training opportunities were made available to them. In addition, the Fire department offered a comprehensive training program to volunteers.
- It is important that staff hired at any level of the organization feel supported, heard, and challenged.
- Cross training is especially important for a smaller municipality such as Brockton, as most staff and managers must fulfil multiple roles and duties.
- Training not only engages staff, but also becomes a key part of the overall succession plan. Staff training, therefore, should be conducted in a more systematic manner to ensure the Municipality is adequately preparing for its current and future needs.
- As a more heavily scrutinized department, with significant compliance requirements for training, the fire department provides a useful example of rigorous training policy and practices. Brockton’s fire department has robust policies and procedures, including standard operating guidelines that volunteers are required to review annually, and sign off on it. In addition, the fire chief regularly re-evaluates and re-writes procedures and policies to ensure they remain up-to-date and relevant.
 - Similarly, the Daycare Centre has a binder of policies that all staff must review and sign off on annually.
- Given the expertise of the fire chief in training matters, the Municipality should consider leveraging his talents in guiding other departments that may require assistance in bringing training policies and procedures up-to-date and fully compliant with regulations.
- Implementation of a corporate-wide staff training program should be led by an HR expert, and tied in to the succession plan and performance review processes. This would have the benefit of giving staff the impression to staff that Brockton takes the professional development of its staff seriously.
- While efforts should be led by an HR expert, StrategyCorp believes that the Fire Chief could provide assistance in this effort. A working group with the Municipality’s department heads should be established, led by the HR specialist (with support of the Fire Chief), to collaboratively identify training needs, re-write policies and procedures, and ensure they are implemented across the organization. Given much of mandatory training for municipal staff relates to Health & Safety, the Health & Safety Officer should also be involved in this process, participating in the working group as the regulatory expert.

C. HR Capacity – Staff Training

- Some expressed the view that staff do not always receive sufficient training at the Municipality, and that compliance with safety training requirements is not implemented by all managers in a uniform manner. This was specifically apparent in the roads department.
- Staff within the municipal office reported ample training opportunities were made available to them. In addition, the Fire department offered a comprehensive training program to volunteers.
- As a more heavily scrutinized department, with significant compliance requirements for training, the fire department provides a useful example of rigorous training policy and practices. Brockton’s fire department has robust policies and procedures, including standard operating guidelines that volunteers are required to review annually, and sign off on it. In addition, the fire chief regularly re-evaluates and re-writes procedures and policies to ensure they remain up-to-date and relevant.
 - Similarly, the Daycare Centre has a binder of policies that all staff must review and sign off on annually.
- Given the expertise of the fire chief in training matters, the Municipality should consider leveraging his talents in guiding other departments that may require assistance in bringing training policies and procedures up-to-date and fully compliant with regulations.
- StrategyCorp believes that the fire chief could lead a working group with the Municipality’s other managers to collaboratively identify training needs, re-write policies and procedures, and ensure they are implemented across the organization. Given much of mandatory training for municipal staff relates to Health & Safety, the Health & Safety Officer should also be heavily involved in this process, leading the working group as the regulatory expert.

C. HR Capacity – Unresolved Concerns

- With respect to Human Resources, the fact that human resources issues were raised in interviews and during SCOPE workshop meeting is neither surprising nor necessarily a matter of concern. But it does point-out the degree to which workforce concerns have the potential to affect productivity, if left unaddressed. A lack of time to focus on human resources can be detrimental for Brockton's future.
- While the CAO is technically responsible for human resources, all of management should continue to work towards improving employee engagement through opening communications and encouraging employee feedback. This may require additional training for some managers, as well as the integration of human resource requirements into management performance reviews.
- The challenges facing Brockton's Roads department largely relate to challenges in communications and in leaving human resource issues unaddressed. These challenges will require significant time investment by someone with expertise in managing HR challenges. The current supervisor, though he has strengths in some areas, is not appropriately qualified to provide the necessary leadership that is needed in this regard.
- This situation may require additional support beyond what the CAO/Clerk can provide with her busy schedule. To that end, the Municipality may want to consider the hiring of a part-time, contract HR specialist for a period of time. The HR specialist would assist in providing support to the Roads department, updating the Municipality's human resources policies and procedures, and providing general training and assistance to the municipal management team so that HR responsibilities can be effectively maintained following the expiration of the contract position.

C. HR Capacity – Recommendations

- The contract position would report to the CAO/Clerk and would have a few immediate tasks to complete, namely:
 - Development of a comprehensive succession plan for the Municipality;
 - Development and implementation of an enhanced employee recognition program;
 - Development and implementation of a systematic employee training protocol, to be linked into performance review process and the Municipality's succession plan; and,
 - Addressing unresolved HR issues at the Municipality (i.e., assisting with HR challenges in Roads and Parks & Recreation role clarification).

Recommendations

9.1. That the Municipality hire a part-time, contract Human Resources specialist to assist in resolving challenging HR issues, update the Municipality's Human Resources policies and procedures, and provide general training to the Municipality's senior management team in managing HR issues and challenges on an ongoing basis.

9.2. That the Municipality establish a cross-departmental working group, led by the HR specialist, to collaboratively identify and develop an employee training protocol, which sets a budget and identifies specific training programs that are tied into the City's succession plan and employee performance review processes. Staff training should focus on filling current and anticipated future organizational skills gaps and on aligning staff training with compliance requirements.

D. Achieving Efficiencies in Roads and Park and Recreation

- We repeated concern about the
- In our view, a contribution to solving this problem could be made by combining Roads with Parks and Rec into a new combined Operations Department. These units have several overlapping responsibilities, and further integration of the units in one department would enhance collaboration among these two groups.
- Roads already shares the GIS technician with Operations, and there is a historical relationship with both departments because of their alignment as infrastructure-related departments.
- Both departments focus on physical assets creates natural synergies in this regard, and the organizational combination of these functions is common in many smaller Ontario municipalities.
- Cooperation exists between them, albeit the need for improvement in that regard was a constant theme of the interview process.
- We anticipate that the Municipality would benefit from better deployment of equipment and staff between the two currently separate units.
- *We are not prepared to suggest that there would be quantifiable savings from this measure, such as would be sufficient to enable a reduction in the overall budget of this group.*
- In our experience, however, combining Roads with Parks and Rec in this fashion would, however, at the very least allow for:
 - more flexible deployments across seasonal and project needs
 - optimization of use of existing equipment, potentially reducing equipment needs over time
 - Directing resources to strategic needs, under the new combined capital program
- Thus, we anticipate that properly managed, it will help to offset the need for future growth in staffing and equipment levels.
- A major benefit of the new capital plan is its interdepartmental focus. It is desirable to integrate the operating teams responsible for delivering on the plan.

D. Achieving Efficiencies in Roads and Park and Recreation

- We believe the Roads Department should therefore be moved to a unit within the broader Operations Department, with the Superintendent reporting to the Director of Operations. This would enable the Director of Operations to provide ongoing support to the Roads unit in scheduling, policy and procedure development and long-term capital planning. The Roads Superintendent would be free to provide more active supervision on operations, providing more regular site visits and the “hands-on” supervision that the Roads unit requires to improve staff morale, communications and productivity.
- Part of the Roads Superintendents new responsibilities within the Operations Department would be to build up the responsibilities and authority of the roads lead hands. This would help foster a culture of greater accountability within the roads unit.

Recommendations

10.1. That Roads be integrated into the Operations Department, with the Roads Superintendent reporting to the Director of Operations.

10.2. That the Director of Operations provide oversight of the Roads unit, particularly in the form of long-term capital planning, scheduling and policy and procedure development, leaving the Roads Superintendent free to provide more direct supervision of the Roads shops.

- As a side note, the part-time Tax Clerk/Cemetery Clerk currently reports to the CFO. This is appropriate for her Tax Clerk duties, but cemetery duties should be moved to under the Director of Operations.

E. Roles and Responsibilities in Parks & Recreation

- There was some confusion regarding role clarity among staff in the Parks & Recreation department. Staff also pointed out that there are limited standard operating procedures to guide their work, and that the majority of tasks, and how each was undertaken, were “grandfathered in” through more senior staff.
- The creation of the Director of Operations position coincided with the elimination of the Director of Parks and Recreation. The position provides strategic oversight of the parks and recreation unit, but also has responsibility for the Municipality’s water contract and GIS systems (the IT/GIS/TCA Technician reports to the Director of Operations for GIS, and the Chief Financial Officer for IT and TCA). As such, there appears to be a gap in day-to-day operational management of the parks and recreation unit.
- There is a some confusion as to operational direction in this department due to the Director’s limited capacity. In addition, role-confusion has resulted from staff as they are not sure of “who does what”. Staff currently focus on maintaining current operations, but it did not appear as though service level standards were clearly understood or followed.
- All of Brockton’s peers have a standalone Parks & Recreation Department, except for West Grey, which has combined roads and parks and recreation services under the Infrastructure and Public Works Department. Brockton is unique in its combination of Parks & Recreation, water and GIS/IT/TCA in an Operations Department.
- Recreation is led by the Recreation Programmer, while the Parks unit is currently led by a foreman, who is able to retire at any moment. A succession plan for the future retirement of the parks foreman should be put into place to ensure a smooth transition.
- It was suggested that there may be a case for more direct management of the parks and recreation unit beyond the Director’s oversight. This should take the form of a “supervisor” position in parks and recreation, which would be responsible for day-to-day operational leadership, as well as operational planning for the unit.
- StrategyCorp did not believe there was a need for an additional staff member within the Parks & Recreation unit at the supervisory level. Rather, we believe the challenges facing the unit could be addressed from within through realignment of roles and responsibilities. The Municipality has two dedicated staff who would make excellent candidates to take on a greater leadership role in the day-to-day oversight of the Parks & Recreation unit, namely the Working Foreman and Recreation Programmer. Given the Foreman is close to retirement, the Recreation Programmer appears to be a good candidate for promotion to Recreation Supervisor.
- The role of Recreation Supervisor would add day-to-day operational decision-making responsibilities to the position, and would allow for the Director of Operations to have only one direct report from the Parks & Recreations unit. With additional supervisory responsibilities, some of the current roles handled by the Recreation Programmer may need to be passed to the Recreation Administrative Assistant.

E. Roles and Responsibilities in Parks & Recreation

- One of the first responsibilities of the new parks & Recreation Supervisor would be to meet with the Director of Operations to clarify service levels, roles and accountabilities within the unit. Some questions that should be discussed include:

Quantity:

- Are we delivering to appropriate service levels?
- Are we delivering services cost effectively?
- Is there anything we should be doing that we are not doing currently?

Quality:

- Are we meeting all H&S requirements?
- Are we delivering services at all facilities to a level that avoids litigation risks?
- Are we maximizing value through grant applications, user fees?
- How well are we leveraging extra support (e.g., students, community partnerships, etc.)? Could there be opportunity to improve in this?
- Are maintenance activities being completed on time?
- Are maintenance activities and services being delivered at high quality standards?
- Are any required activities falling through the cracks?

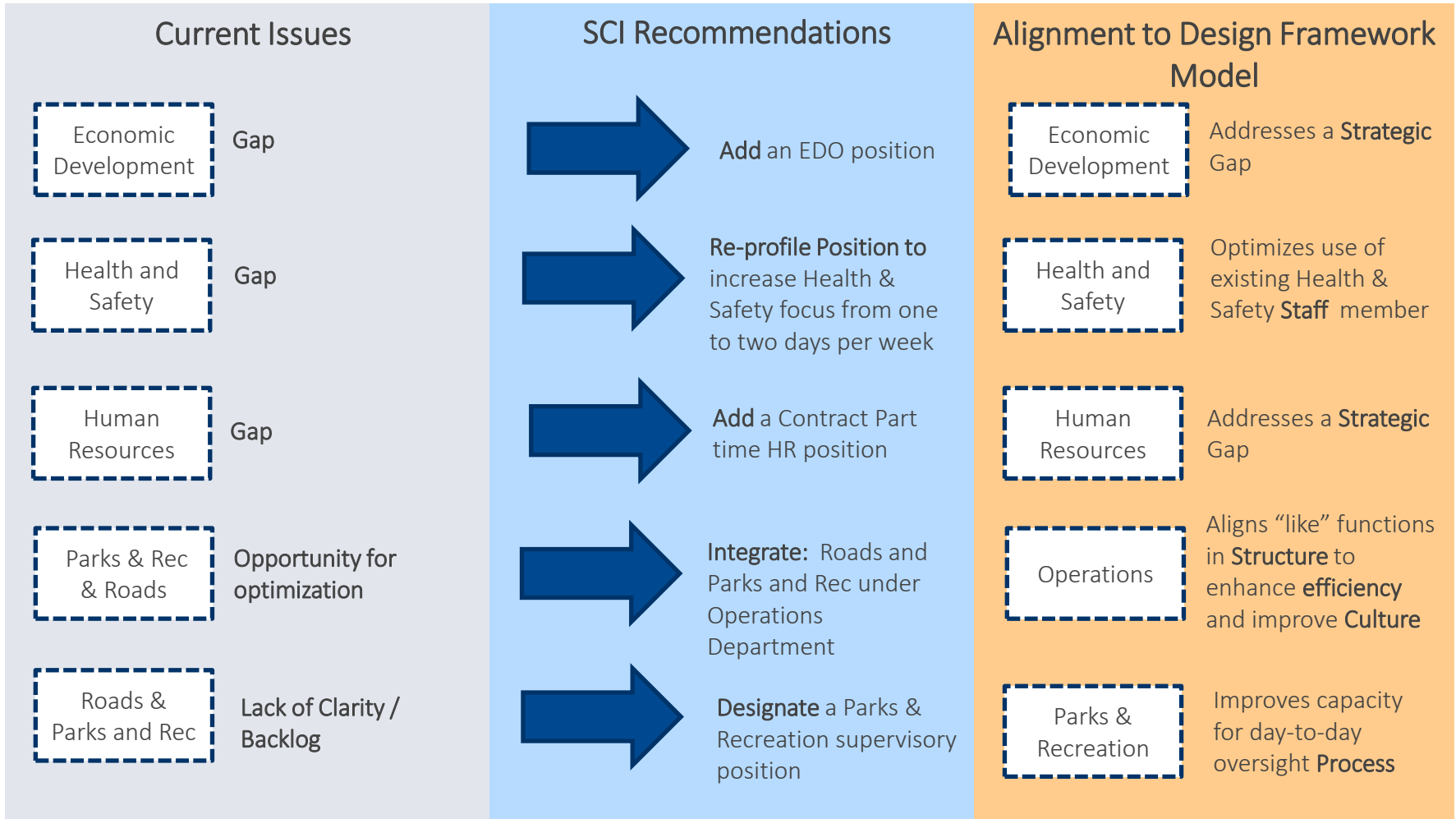
Who does what:

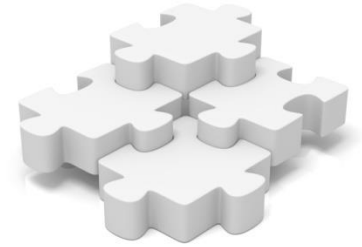
- Who is doing what? Are roles clear? Are responsibilities and accountabilities clear?
- Is staff time being optimized? Are there scheduling “down times” that could be put to better use?
- Are there opportunities to schedule tasks more proactively to avoid last minute scrambling?
- Are communications working? Are additional feedback mechanisms or meetings required? Are there too many meetings?
- Are time expectations being met?

Recommendation

11. That Brockton designate Parks & Recreation Supervisor to provide day-to-day operational oversight of the Parks & Recreation Unit. This need not require the creation of an additional position.

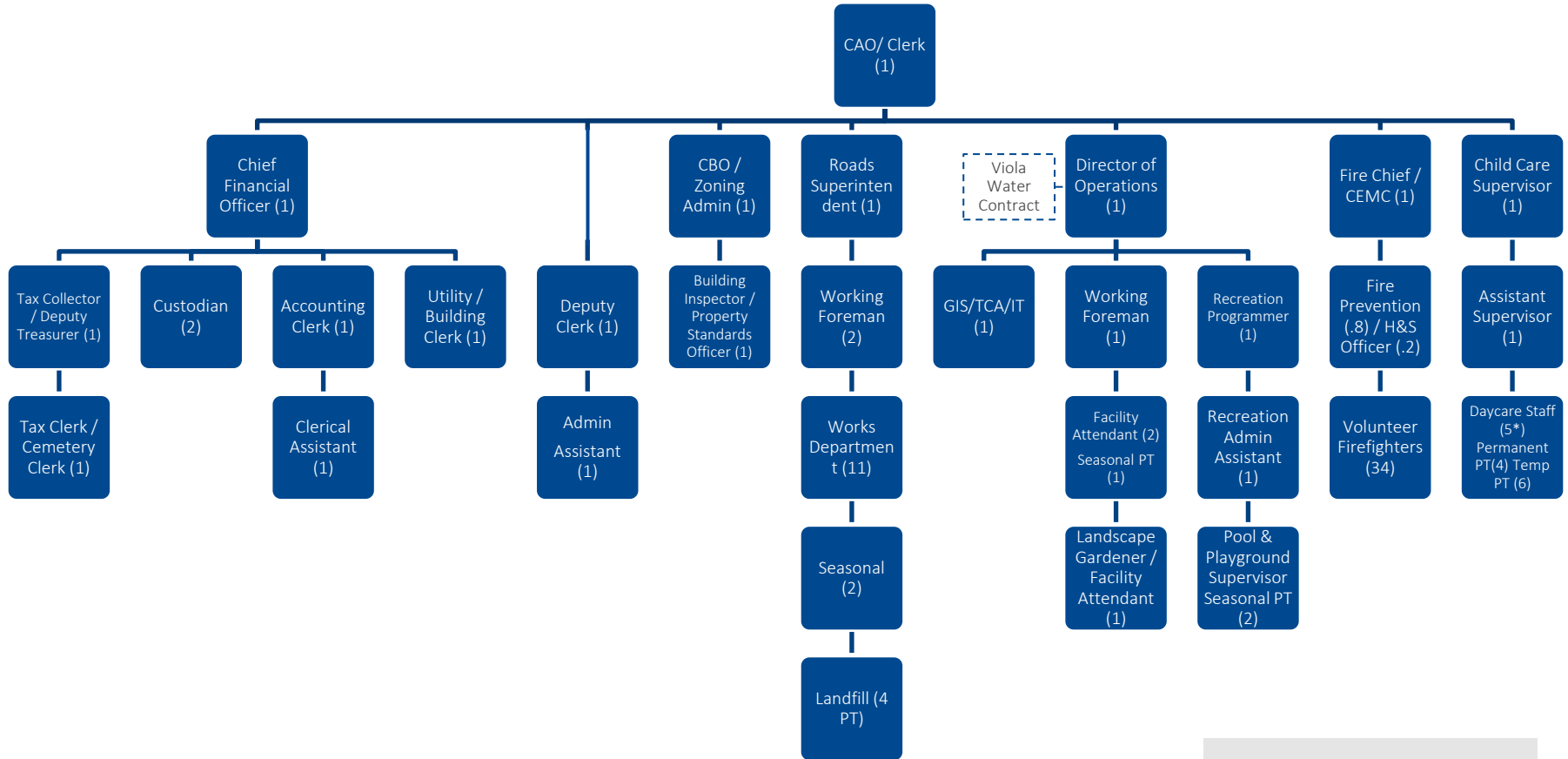
Summary of Organizational Recommendations





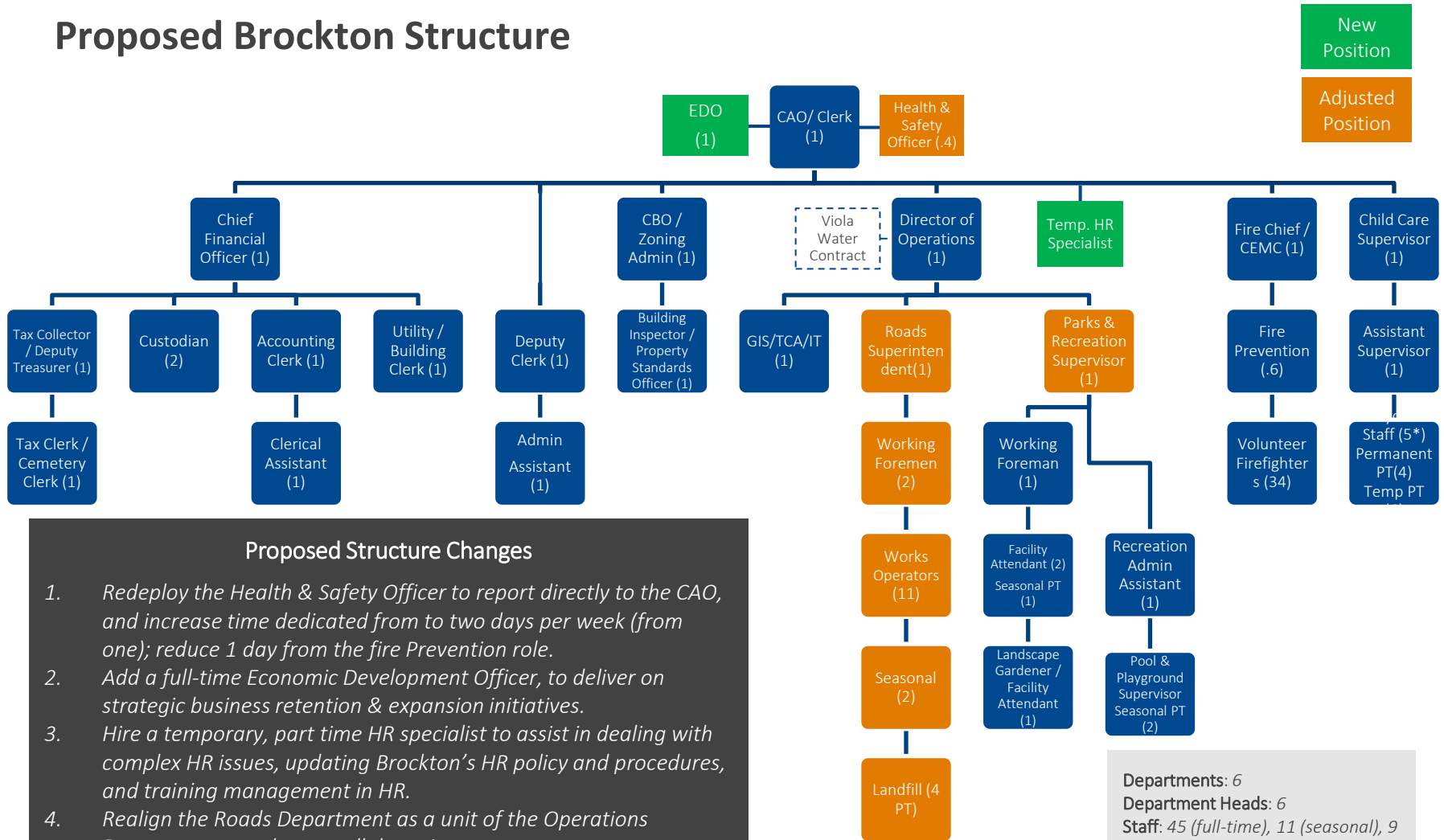
Proposed Organizational Structure

Brockton's Current Structure



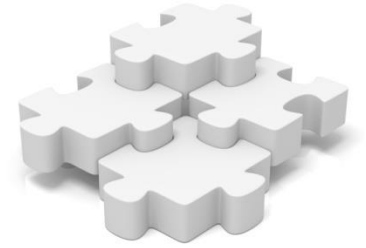
Departments: 7
Department Heads: 7
Staff: 44 (full-time), 11 (seasonal), 8 (part-time), 34 (volunteers)

Proposed Brockton Structure

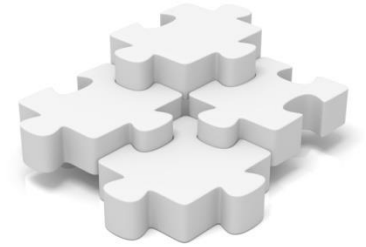


- ### Proposed Structure Changes
1. Redeploy the Health & Safety Officer to report directly to the CAO, and increase time dedicated from to two days per week (from one); reduce 1 day from the fire Prevention role.
 2. Add a full-time Economic Development Officer, to deliver on strategic business retention & expansion initiatives.
 3. Hire a temporary, part time HR specialist to assist in dealing with complex HR issues, updating Brockton's HR policy and procedures, and training management in HR.
 4. Realign the Roads Department as a unit of the Operations Department to enhance collaboration
 5. Designate a Parks & Recreation supervisor to address the day-to-day operational oversight gap

Departments: 6
 Department Heads: 6
 Staff: 45 (full-time), 11 (seasonal), 9 (part-time), 34 (volunteers)



Appendices



Appendix A:

Cost of Services Analysis

Benchmarking Analysis

- As part of the organizational/operational review, StrategyCorp undertook a comparative analysis to benchmark and compare the Municipality of Brockton to municipalities with similar characteristics and service levels.
- The benchmarking analysis leveraged StrategyCorp’s Municipal Benchmarking Tool and included a comprehensive review of more than 2000 data points measured across more than 300 quantitative metrics. The key findings of the benchmarking analysis have been included in this final report.
- This benchmarking process is a thorough and iterative process resulting in data that was used to challenge and/or validate findings from interviews and secondary analysis. The findings of the benchmarking analysis also signalled for additional inquiry into facets of the organization which may have otherwise been overlooked through the review process.
- Inter-municipal benchmarking is not without its challenges. While municipal performance management based on benchmarking comparisons has come a long way in Ontario in the last 15 years, performance measurement is still one part science and one part art:
 - **Different geography, weather, demography and tax base:** The oldest truism in local government administration is “there are no one-size fits all” solutions for Ontario municipalities.
 - **Different goals:** Successive municipal councils use the characteristics of their municipality as a starting point, but choose their own futures to meet the needs of their residents over time. Not everyone wants the same service level or growth pattern.
 - **Limitations in data collection:** Successive efforts have attempted to improve the quality of data collected, nevertheless, they rely on voluntary reporting of complex variables, which may create anomalies.
- At the time of this study, complete financial and service-related data was not available for Brockton and its peers and neighbours for 2015. As such, comparative analysis focused on 2014 information which was available for all peers and neighbours

Information Sources and Interpretation of the Benchmarking Analysis

Information Sources

- StrategyCorp undertook the peer municipal benchmarking exercise using information primarily found in the following sources:
 - The 2014 Municipal Financial Information Return (FIR)
 - 2005-2014 Multi-Year Municipal Financial Information Returns (FIR)
 - Municipal fee by-laws and service level bylaws
 - Water/sewer rate by-laws
 - Current organizational structure charts, departmental breakdowns and staffing compositions, as available

Interpreting the Findings

- Even with the limitations and age of the data sources, the findings are directionally significant
- It is important to note that municipalities in many respects operate in a largely “steady-state” manner
- The benchmarking findings are directionally important, as they identify areas of general strength or weakness for the municipality

The benchmarking analysis involved the careful selection of appropriate peers for Brockton

- In order to select the peer municipalities used in the benchmarking analysis, StrategyCorp undertook a careful selection process, which included both quantitative and qualitative metrics to evaluate the appropriateness of potential peer municipalities. The selection process also included consultations with its expert panel to ensure the selected peer municipalities were appropriate.

Quantitative Criteria	Qualitative Criteria
1. Geographic Type	1. Kilometers of Roads Maintained in Winter: Roads departments are typically one of the largest and most expensive departments in municipal governments. As such, SCI sought to select peers that had a similar number of road kilometers maintained in winter as Brockton.
2. Population in 2011	2. Municipal Tier & Type of Municipality: Given the differences among lower, upper and single tier municipalities, and the degree to which lower and upper tier municipalities share responsibilities, preference was given to lower-tier municipalities. More specifically, SCI emphasized municipalities within a County lower-tier system, since Bruce County does not provide some functions that other upper-tier municipalities provide, although Planning is the reverse exception. In addition, because of the unique characteristics of lower tier municipal types, preference was given to Municipalities (and to a lesser degree, Townships).
3. Population Growth	3. Urban/Rural Mix: Brockton is an amalgamation of former urban and rural municipalities. While simple land area is a reasonably useful measure, the mix of urban and rural is important, as rural areas have different service levels and costs to their urban counterparts. As such, SCI placed emphasis on municipalities with a mix of urban and rural populations.
4. Total Private Dwellings	4. Service Alignment: Municipalities vary widely in the services offered between the lower and upper tier, as well as the delivery mechanism for services. For its short-listed potential peers StrategyCorp therefore included a cursory evaluation of what services are offered by the lower-tier municipality, and whether such services are offered in-house, through external contracts, or a blend of in-house and externally contracted services.
5. Land Area	5. Traditional Comparators: Perhaps the most natural comparators for Bruce municipalities would include the municipalities within neighbouring Grey County. Walkerton has historically been linked to two Grey municipalities, Durham and Hanover, including a shared planning function at one time. As such, StrategyCorp sought to include consideration towards the Municipality's more traditional peers.
6. Population Density	

Following a rigorous evaluation process, SCI selected the following six municipalities as peer comparators for the Municipality of Brockton



Eliminated Municipalities

- Town of Hanover
- Township of Georgian Bluffs
- Municipality of Grey Highlands
- Township of Zorra
- Township of South-West Oxford
- Municipality of Bluewater
- Municipality of South Huron
- Municipality of West Perth
- Municipality of Southwest Middlesex
- Municipality of West Elgin
- Township of Mapleton
- Township of North Glengarry
- Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley
- Municipality of Kincardine
- Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands

Municipality	Upper Tier	Population	Land Area (km ²)	Population Density per km ²	Service Alignment
Municipality of Brockton	Bruce	9,432	565	17	N/A
Municipality of West Grey	Grey	12,286	876	14	High
Municipality of Meaford	Grey	11,100	589	19	High
Town of Minto	Wellington	8,334	300	28	Medium
Municipality of Huron East	Huron	9,264	669	14	Medium
Municipality of Central Huron	Huron	7,591	450	17	High
Municipality of Arran-Elderslie	Bruce	6,810	460	15	High

Cost Analysis - Comparative Benchmarking Overview

- As part of the review process, StrategyCorp undertook a comparative analysis to benchmark and compare the Municipality of Brockton against two groups:
 - Peer Municipalities:** A selected group of municipalities with similar characteristics and service offerings to Brockton. The peers were selected because they are considered to be reasonable comparables for the Municipality of Brockton.
 - Neighbour Municipalities:** Neighbouring municipalities that Brockton is traditionally compared against. While Brockton's neighbours are not necessarily well suited comparators for Brockton in terms of service offerings and characteristics, they were included because they were commonly raised in the interviews as traditional comparables.

1. Peer Municipalities

"Similar Characteristics and Services"

Following a rigorous peer selection criteria StrategyCorp selected the following **six peers** for the benchmarking analysis:



2. Neighbour Municipalities

"Common Comparators (but different)"



SCI also compared Brockton to its most common neighbours, even though they are not the best comparators

- Neighbouring municipalities that Brockton is traditionally compared against. While Brockton’s neighbours are not necessarily well suited comparators for Brockton in terms of service offerings and characteristics, they were included because they were commonly raised in the interviews as traditional comparables.
- For example, while the Town of Hanover was a traditional comparator to the Town of Walkerton due to proximity and similar service levels in the past, including a shared planning function at one time.
- The amalgamation of Walkerton, Greenock and Brant into the Municipality of Brockton has reduced the comparability of the Municipality with the Town of Hanover. **As such, Hanover was ultimately not selected as a suitable peer for this review, but was included in the neighbor grouping, because of its political relevance.**
- Following amalgamation, Brockton now has a mixture of urban and rural populations covering a large land area. It has a similarly large roads network to maintain as well. The Town of Hanover, by contrast, remains a predominantly urban centre, with limited land area and roads coverage.

At the time of this study, complete financial and service-related data was not available for Brockton and its peers and neighbours for 2015. As such, comparative analysis focused on information up to 2014, which was available for all peers and neighbours.

Cost of Services - Comparative and Historical Benchmarking

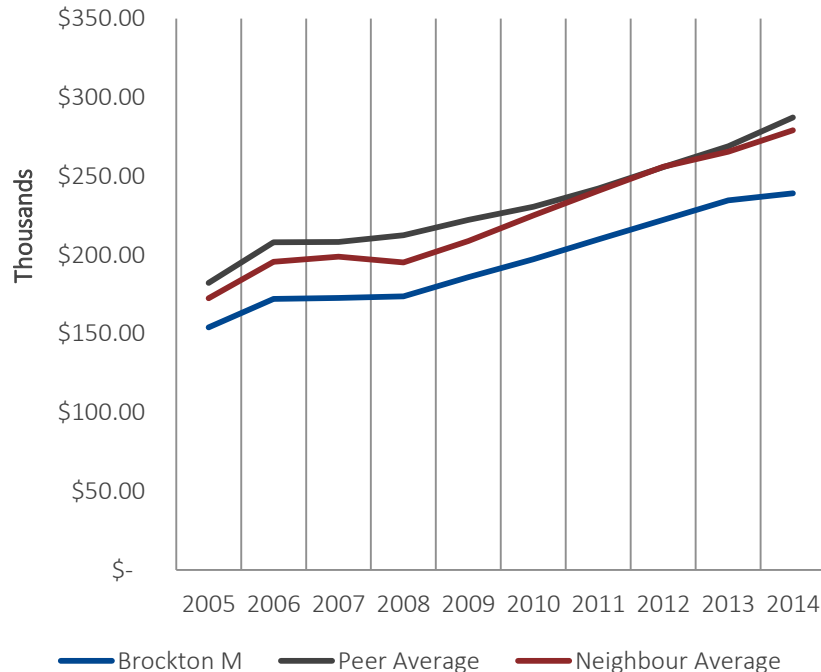
We reviewed the Municipality's financials and costs against its peers and neighbours in four key areas, which will be summarized in the slides that follow:

1. Revenues
2. Operating Expenses
3. Capital Expenses
4. Long-Term Financial Sustainability



Revenues - Current Value Assessment (CVA)

Current Value Assessment per Household (2005-2014)

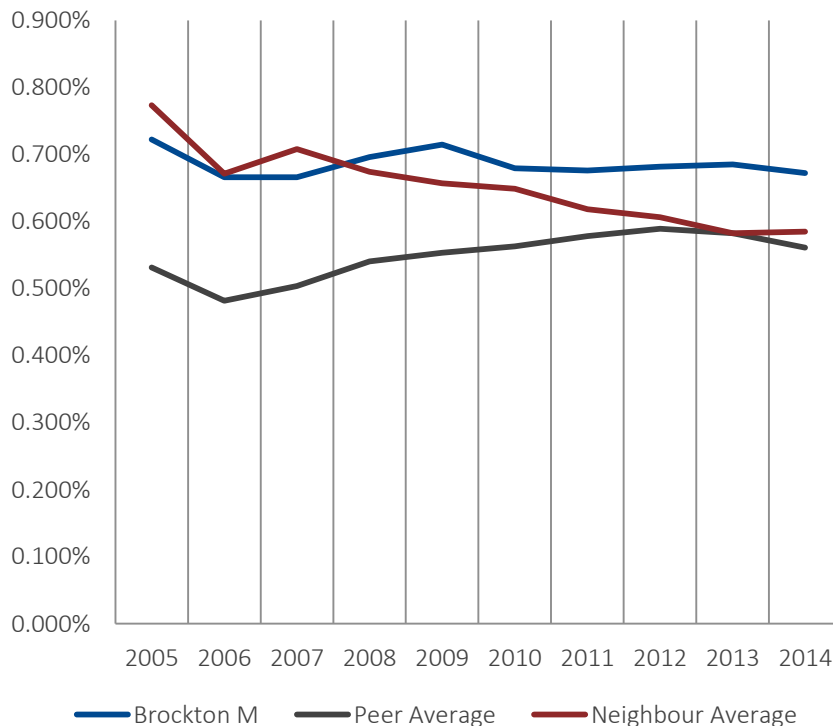


Key Insights

- From 2005-2014, Brockton's CVA per household grew at a similar rate to its peers and neighbours, but was below the average of both groups.
- Property taxes are calculated as the property tax rate, multiplied by the CVA. A below-average CVA per household therefore requires above-average property tax rates to generate the average levels of property tax revenue.
- CVAs are based on recent sales of similar properties in surrounding neighbourhoods, and include features such as:
 - Location;
 - Size of lot and dimensions;
 - Living area;
 - Age of property;
 - Renovations; and,
 - Quality of construction.
- The average CVA for a municipality provides a window into the overall economic conditions and economic development in a community.
- Rising economic activity leads to higher CVA, reducing the need for tax rate increases.

Revenues – Property Tax Rates

Estimated Average Property Tax Rates for All Property Types (2005-2014)

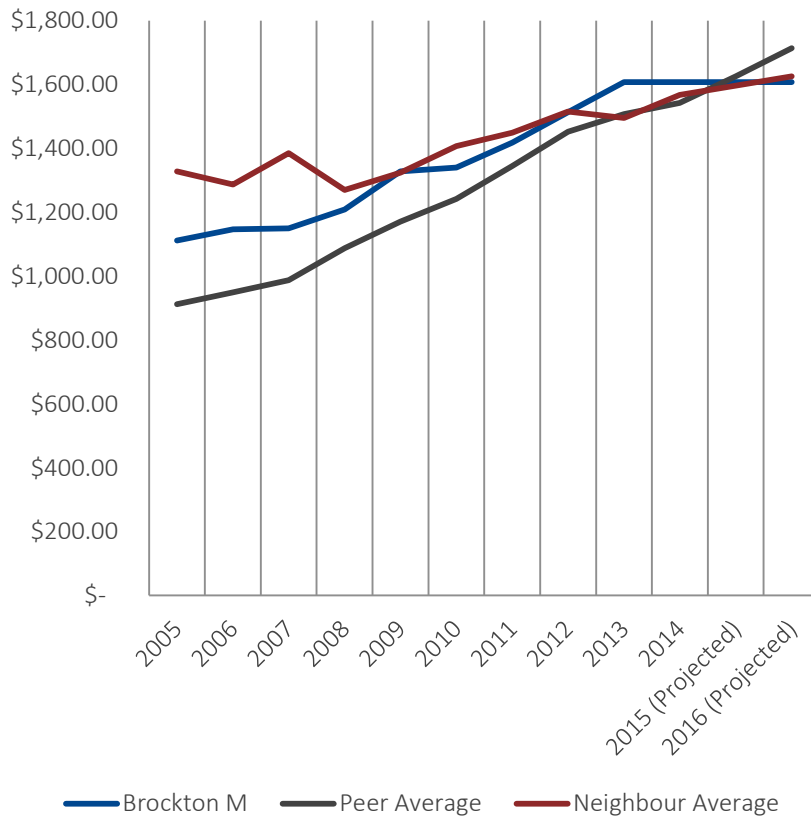


Key Insights

- While it is not drastically different, Brockton has generally had higher average property tax rates than either of its peers or its neighbours over the past decade.
- Maintaining competitive property taxes has been a concern of Council in recent years, and Brockton has made some progress in this regard, as evidenced through the Municipality's declining property tax rates since 2009.
- While Brockton has higher property tax rates, it is important to note that the average property tax rates are typically influenced by the Current Value Assessment (CVA), which is the average assessed value of properties within the municipality.
- Brockton's CVA is below average, requiring higher tax rates to provide similar total tax revenues.
- It should be noted as well that Brockton provides several services that are not normally provided by smaller local municipalities, namely:
 - Child Care Centre;
 - Airport; and
 - Court Security.

Revenues – Average Property Taxes per Household

Total Property Tax Revenue per Household Comparison (2005-2014)



Key Insights

- Brockton’s average property tax revenue per household is fairly in-line with its peers with similar characteristics and service offerings, as well as its neighbours.
- As of 2014, Brockton was slightly above average in average property tax revenue per household, though it was well within the normal range of its peers and neighbours.
 - In total, Brockton’s residents paid an average of \$65 more than peers, and \$40 more than neighbours on a per-household basis in 2014.
- Under previous Council, Brockton was growing in line with peers. Since 2014, however, Council has kept costs flat. Though we can only estimate for Brockton’s peers and neighbours in 2015 and 2016, if Brockton’s peers and neighbours maintained similar growth in property taxes per-household as they have over the past decade, Brockton’s property taxes would be approximately \$106 cheaper than its peers and \$18 cheaper than its neighbours on a per-household basis in 2016.
- The Municipality is largely reliant on residential property tax revenues, which represented approximately 80% of all property tax revenues in 2014. This is not uncommon for municipalities like Brockton with an urban/rural mixture, and is not out of line with the provincial average.
- We noted that Brockton’s ability to collect on taxes owing appears to be superior to its peer average, with less taxes receivable as a percent of the net levy from 2005-2014.

Since 2014, Brockton has reduced its overall budget modestly, though some areas have drastically changed

Operating Budget	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 Budgeted	% Change	\$ Change
Animal Control	(\$5,563)	(\$5,756)	(\$8,700)	56.4%	\$3,137
Cemetery	\$38,415	\$40,037	\$44,296	15.3%	\$5,881
Council	\$117,794	\$122,889	\$122,130	3.7%	\$4,336
Child Care Centre	\$122,901	\$69,285	\$70,000	-43.0%	-\$52,901
East Ridge Business Park	\$76,917	(\$50,088)	\$36,660	-52.3%	-\$40,257
Economic Development	\$0	\$0	\$71,500	100%	\$71,500
Fire	\$880,722	\$791,049	\$639,101	-27.4%	-\$241,621
Materials Management	\$135,377	\$160,404	\$162,810	20.3%	\$27,433
General Government	(\$787,643)	(\$64,870)	(\$334,242)	-57.6%	-\$453,401
Heritage	\$6,224	\$4,696	\$12,090	94.2%	\$5,866
Library	\$15,271	\$27,069	\$24,858	62.8%	\$9,587
Physician Recruitment/Clinic	\$17,550	\$17,250	\$48,000	173.5%	\$30,450
Police	\$2,360,470	\$1,804,354	\$2,034,204	-13.8%	-\$326,266
Planning	\$81,210	\$127,853	\$117,077	44.2%	\$35,867
Conservation Authority	\$140,646	\$136,721	\$150,177	6.8%	\$9,531
Property Inspection	(\$46,468)	(\$41,276)	(\$16,692)	-64.1%	\$29,776
Parks & Recreation	\$674,153	\$760,456	\$770,128	14.2%	\$95,975
Roads	\$3,294,127	\$3,520,316	\$3,168,103	-0.04%	-\$126,024
Totals	\$7,122,103	\$7,420,389	\$7,111,500	-0.15%	-\$10,603

Comparison of Expenses by Department

We evaluated Brockton’s individual service areas and found the following:

	Percent of Brockton’s 2014 Operating Expenses	Brockton as a % of Peer Average Operating Expenses (2014 - per Capita)	Brockton as a % of the Neighbour Average Operating Expenses (2014 - per Capita)
Transportation	28%	Average	Average
Protections to Persons and Property	24%	Significantly Above Average	Above Average
Environment	19%	Average	Below Average
Parks & Recreation	11%	Average	Significantly Below Average
Administration	10%	Above Average	Above Average
Social and Family Services	5%	Significantly Above Average*	Significantly Above Average*
Planning & Development	2%	Average	Significantly Below Average
Health & Emergency Services	1%	Average	Significantly Below Average
Total		Above Average	Below Average

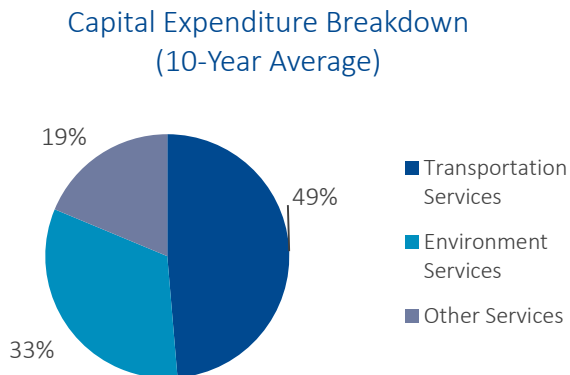
- **Protections to Persons and Property:** In 2014, Brockton’s operating cost for police services was the highest of its peer group, while the cost for fire services were slightly above the average of its peers. The cost for police services has since decreased by 13.8%, however.
- **Administration:** General government expenses in Brockton have been above the peer average since 2011 (33% above average in 2014). The budgeted cost of general government in Brockton has decreased by 57.6% since 2014, however.
- **Social and Family Services:** Social and Family Services costs were significantly above average, though there was a lack of available data (only Huron East offers a Child Care Centre similar to Brockton). Brockton has recently invested in an updated Child Care facility, and has put a financial sustainability plan into place for Child Care services to become self-sufficient in the future. When accounting for revenues, the Child Care Centre cost a budgeted \$70,000 in 2016, representing a 43% reduction in cost since 2014.
- **Total Operating Expenses:** Brockton appears to be operating at a higher cost than the average of its peers (21% above the peer average for total operating expenses in 2014). When excluding the costs of the Child Care Centre, total operating expenses were 17% above the peer average. Since 2014, Brockton’s budget has remained stable

Chart Legend
 +/- 15% = “Average”
 +/- 16-35% = “Above or Below Average”
 +/- 36%+ = “Significantly Above or Below Average”

Capital Expenses

We evaluated the Municipality's capital expenses against its peers along four key criteria:

1. **Total Capital Expenditures:** From 2005-2014, Brockton spent less on capital projects than the average of its peers on a per-household basis. Total capital expenditures remained fairly constant in Brockton.
2. **Capital Expenditure Breakdown:**



- *Transportation:* Nearly half of Brockton's capital expenditures went to transportation-related projects from 2005-2014.
- *Environment:* One-third of the Municipality's capital expenditures from 2005-2014 went towards environment service-related projects (water, wastewater, solid waste).
- *Other:* Nearly one-fifth of the Municipality's capital expenditures from 2005-2014 went towards non-transportation or environment service-related projects.

3. **Capital Grant Funding:** From 2005-2014, approximately one-quarter of Brockton's capital expenditures were funded through capital grants from other governments. This was slightly below the average of its peers, suggesting the Municipality used more of its own funds to support capital projects. This indicates that there may be opportunity for Brockton to increase its grant funding.
4. **Debt Funding:** From 2005-2014, approximately one-tenth of Brockton's capital expenditures were funded through newly-issued debt. This was slightly below the average of its peers.

Long-Term Financial Sustainability

We evaluated the Municipality's long-term financial position against its peers along six key criteria:

- 1. Surpluses:** In total, Brockton ran greater surpluses on a per-capita basis than its peers from 2005-2014. Its peers have been operating with greater surpluses than Brockton since 2010, however.
- 2. Long-Term Debt:** Brockton saw its long-term debt per household decline between 2005-2014. This suggests the Municipality has improved its long-term debt position. Its peers, by contrast, saw significant growth in long-term debt over the same period.
- 3. Non-Obligatory Reserves:** Since 2005, Brockton's non-obligatory reserves have remained fairly stable on a per-household basis. Its peers, by contrast, saw a fairly substantial increase in non-obligatory reserves over the same period.
- 4. Non-Obligatory Reserves vs. Long-Term Debt:** Brockton's non-obligatory reserves as a percent of its long-term debt remained well below the average of its peers from 2005-2014. This suggests that Brockton is less able to service its long-term debts through reserves.*
- 5. Debt Servicing:** Brockton's interest payments on long-term debt decreased significantly compared to total property tax revenues from 2005-2014. This suggests Brockton is in better position to service debt interest payments through current revenues. Its peers, by contrast, worsened in this regard over the ten year period.
- 6. Capital Assets:** The total value of Brockton's capital assets on a per household basis is similar to its peers. Brockton's assets were rated as moderately new. Brockton's assets were in slightly worse condition than its peer group, however, and the condition of its assets worsened from 2009-2014.

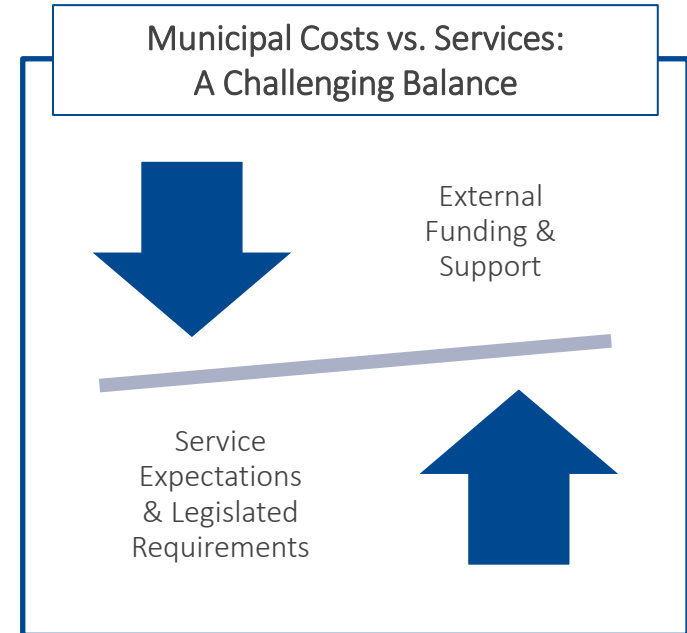
**The exceptionally strong position of Huron East and Arran-Elderslie influenced the peer average score in this metric, however*

Overview of Findings – Cost Analysis

	Metric	Brockton Versus Peers and Neighbours	Comment
Revenues	Average property taxes per household	Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brockton is charging reasonable taxes per household
	Average Property tax rates	Above Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents are being charged at a higher rate, but this is understandable because Brockton has below-average current value assessment
Operating Expenses	Overall Operating Expenses per capita	<p>Above Peer Average</p> <p>Below Neighbour Average</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brockton is generally average or below average for most departments, with a few exceptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police costs were significantly above average and outside the Municipality's control Only one of Brockton's peers offer Child Care services
Capital Expenses	Annual Capital Spend	Below Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's development of a long-term capital plan is vital in understanding whether this is a positive or negative (Brockton may be underinvesting in infrastructure replacement, repair and renewal, or it may simply be more efficient)
	Grant Funding Received	Below Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brockton may have opportunity to earn more grant funds
Long-Term Financial Sustainability	Non-Obligatory Reserves vs. Long-Term Debt	Below Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brockton is less able to service long-term debts through reserves than peers
	Revenues vs. Debt Servicing	Above Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brockton is more able to service debt payments in the short-term
	Long-Term Debt	Below Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brockton has reduced its LT debt in recent years, providing it more room to take on additional debt going forward

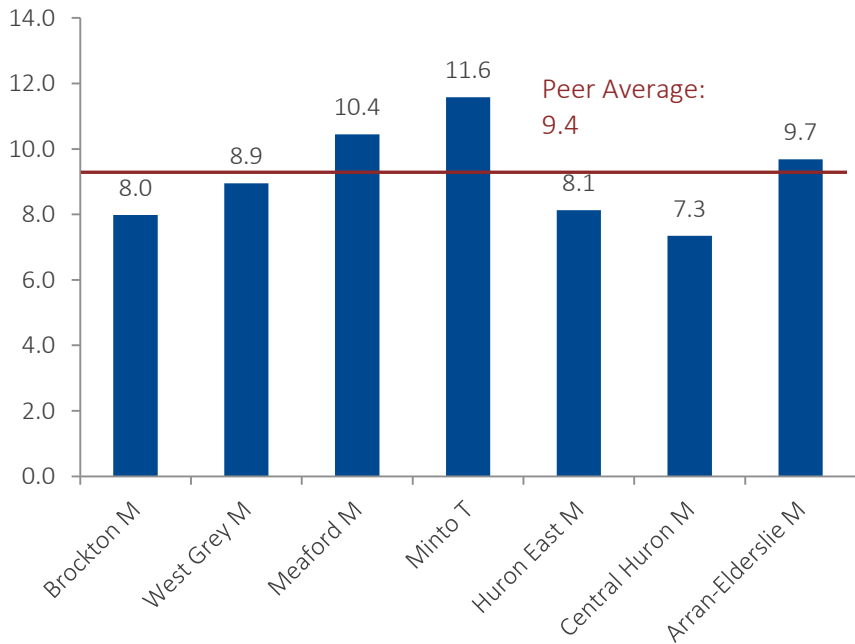
Fiscal Context – Cost of Services

- **Provincial-Municipal Financial Relationships:** Municipalities across Ontario face challenges related to limited funding tools, combined with growing costs and increased fiscal constraints. Over time, provincial and federal governments have reduced support for municipalities, while imposing increased standards and reporting requirements in areas such as water, roads and policing. These changes have resulted in creating additional funding pressures whilst reducing financial support for municipalities across Ontario.*
- **Rural Economic Restructuring:** Much of rural Ontario faces challenging economic conditions, arising from restructuring of the rural economy. In this environment Brockton has struggled to keep local businesses within its community.
- Council is has been interested in planning for the long term prosperity of the community. To this end, it has repeatedly identified economic development as a priority for the Municipality. In recent years, it has also set a clear course for:
 - Tax competitiveness;
 - Cost containment; and,
 - Customer service excellence.
- Council’s priorities around tax competitiveness and cost containment have tended to trump investments in the organization since 2014. This has provided the benefit of bringing Brockton’s costs down relative to its peers in recent years.
- In fact, Council’s focus on cost-containment has resulted in a prudent hesitancy to invest in spending in any area, as evidenced by its decision to defer the hiring of the Economic Development Officer until the results of the organizational/operational review, following the declination of the Municipality’s Rural Economic Development (RED) program grant application to fund a full-time Economic Development Officer position.



Staffing-Levels Comparison

Total Full-Time Staff per 1,000 Households, 2014 (Excluding Child Care)

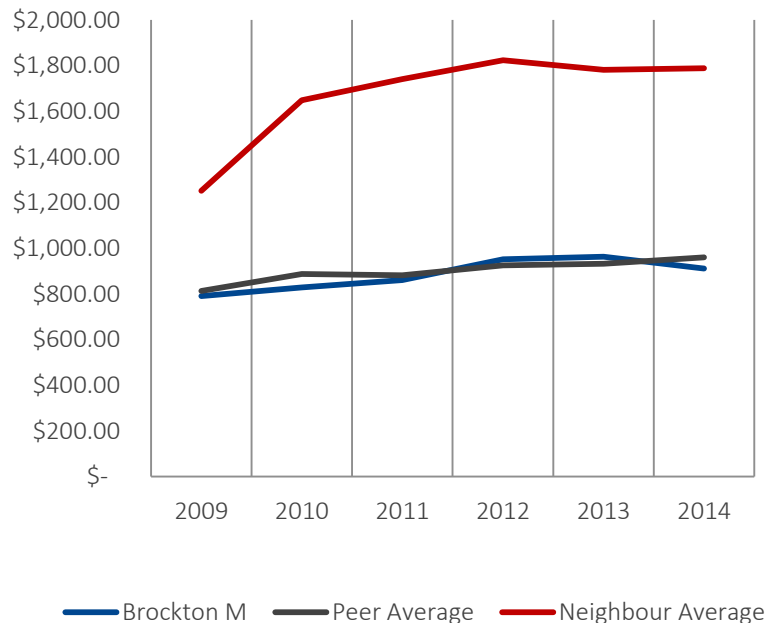


- Aside from Huron East, none of Brockton’s peers offer Child Care Centre.
- When excluding the staff employed at the Child Care Centre (for Brockton and all peers), Brockton employed less full-time staff than its peers on a per 1,000 household basis in 2014, though it is in line with its peers.
- Even when including the Child Care Staff, Brockton was about average when compared to its peer group in 2014 (many of which do not offer Child Care services), with 9.47 employees per 1,000 households versus a peer average of 9.45.
- From 2009 – 2014, Brockton’s Full Time staffing complement increased from 40 to 41 staff.

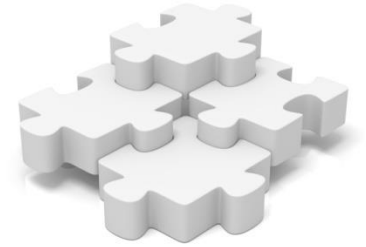
*The chart above displays the number of full time staff employed across all departments except for Child Care Services per 1,000 households

Salaries, Wages & Benefits Comparison

Municipal Salaries, Wages & Benefits per Household (2009-2014)

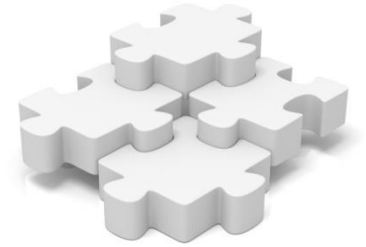


- Brockton’s salaries, wages and benefits were in line with the average of its peers from 2009-2014, and well below the average of its neighbours on a per-household basis.
- Brockton’s salaries, wages and benefits per household grew at a slower rate than both its peers and neighbours from 2009-2014.
 - Brockton’s total salaries, wages and benefits per household grew by a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 2.4% from 2009 – 2014.
 - This compared favorably to both its peers and neighbours, whose salaries, wages and benefits per household grew by a CAGR of 2.8% and 6.1% , respectively.
- These numbers *included* the cost of Brockton’s Child Care Centre, which employed more than 15 employees in 2014, and was a cost driver that its peers and neighbours did not share (with the exception of Arran Elderslie).
- When excluding the Child Care Centre, Brockton’s costs for salaries, wages and benefits was below the average of both its peers and neighbours from 2009-2014.



Appendix B:

Benchmarking Information



Appendix C:

Issue Identification





Issue Identification

- Through the review, StrategyCorp conducted interviews, focus groups, workshops and independent analysis to review and evaluate Brockton's municipal organization and operations.
- To focus the review, StrategyCorp sought to identify the areas of greatest opportunity for the Municipality to improve through adjusting its organizational structure and operational practices. To identify areas in need of further investigation and consideration, we applied several frameworks for issue identification, namely:
 1. Strategic Considerations
 2. Departmental Issue identification

Strategic Considerations - Overview

- As part of the organizational/operational review, StrategyCorp assessed the Municipality's performance in several key strategic areas:
 - Strategic Oversight**– the underlying factors that enable Council and management to manage more effectively and strategically.
 - External Relationships** – the factors that underlie the ability to cooperate and collaborate with other municipal entities.
 - Community Reputation** – the underlying factors that impact the Municipality's reputation in the community.

Category	Metric
Strategic Oversight	Strategic Planning and Operational Planning
	Inter-Council Communications and Meeting Structure
	Council-Management Communications and Reporting
External Relationships	Relationship with the County
	Relationship with Neighbouring Municipalities
Community Reputation	Customer service quality and standards
	Cohesive external communications
	Appropriate level of business community support

Legend	
	Area of strength
	No issues identified
	Minor opportunities for improvement
	Significant opportunities for improvement

Strategic Considerations – Findings from Analysis & Consultations

Category	Metric	Score	Findings
Strategic Oversight	Strategic Planning and Operational Planning	Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While there is a strategic plan in place, the Sustainable Strategic Plan does not appear to fully reflect the current Council's strategic objectives In many cases, operational plans do not appear to flow from the strategic plan or long-term capital plans
	Inter-Council Communications and Meeting Structure	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Councillors generally work well together Number of Council meetings is appropriate
	Council-Management Communications and Reporting	Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some management concern related to Council involvement in more minor issues; some Council concern related to managerial accountability and reporting back on issues raised The number of committees is taxing on staff resources
External Relationships	Relationship with the County	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally strong relationship and good cooperation
	Relationship with Neighbouring Municipalities	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong relationships with neighbours, with some shared service agreements in place that require ongoing management
Community Reputation	Customer service quality and standards	Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall, considered a strength in Brockton Front desk provides good customer service, but some other front-line staff lack clarity regarding customer service roles and procedures
	Cohesive external communications	Yellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality website, but some perceived opportunity to improve external communications via enhanced coordination
	Appropriate level of business community support	Red	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns raised by stakeholders regarding business support and communications Brockton does not have a dedicated economic development position

Strategic Considerations – Conclusions

Areas of Existing Strength

From our evaluation of strategic issues, StrategyCorp identified the following strengths in Brockton:

1. Council works well together and is able to come to decisions in an effective manner. There did not appear to be any evidence of animosity or non-functioning Council relationships that would impede its ability to come to decisions.
2. External relationships with the County and with neighbouring municipalities are strong. Strong external relationships can assist in many ways, including fostering opportunities for shared service agreements, inter-municipal communications and collaboration, and sharing of resources.
3. Customer service is a strength. Front-line staff were considered professional, friendly and competent. Stakeholders did not raise concerns with the quality of customer services.

Strategic Considerations – Conclusions

Opportunities for Improvement

In addition, StrategyCorp identified the following three key issues for further investigation:

1. Economic Development is a critical gap at the Municipality. Stakeholders identified a lack of engagement by the Municipality with businesses, and staff identified a void in any business retention and expansion activities from the Municipality. There is currently no staff member in the municipality who is responsible for economic development beyond the CAO, who is encumbered with numerous job responsibilities beyond leading the municipal organization.
2. Council does not appear to support the 2013 Sustainable Strategic Plan, and operational plans do not appear to flow from the strategic plan.
3. Communications and trust appears to be an area where improvement could be made, particularly in the Council-management reporting relationship.
4. While committees provide useful community engagement, the number of committees is taxing on staff resources.

Departmental Issue Identification - Overview

- From its interviews, StrategyCorp assessed each of the Municipality’s departments in six areas:
 - 1. Perceived Quality of Services** – the reported satisfaction with service levels provided by the department.
 - 2. Organizational Structure** –the degree to which the department’s structure and staffing levels facilitate effective delivery of services.
 - 3. Communications/Collaboration** –the openness of the department’s communication channels, from management to staff, internally, and across the organization.
 - 4. Long-Term Planning** – the department’s long-term sustainability from a planning and human resources perspective.
 - 5. Operational Planning** – the quality and appropriateness of short-term operational policies and processes, and their linkages to long-term plans.
 - 6. Staff Engagement** – the engagement, morale, and training of staff within the department.

Perceived Quality of Services	
Organizational Structure	Appropriate number of managers
	Appropriate managerial span of control
	Clarity of roles
	Appropriate departmental structure
Communications / Collaboration	Appropriate staffing levels
	Appropriate management-staff communications
	Strong intradepartmental collaboration and communication
Long-Term Planning	Strong interdepartmental collaboration and communication
	Departmental succession plan in place
Operational Planning	Long-term departmental plan in place
	Short-term operational plans flowing from long-term plan
Staff Engagement	Appropriate policy and processes in place
	Strong staff morale
	Sufficient training opportunities for staff
	Regular and meaningful staff performance measurement

Departmental Issue Identification - Findings from Analysis & Consultations

		Building	Clerks	Finance	Fire	Childcare	Roads	Operations
Perceived quality of services		Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Organizational Structure	Appropriate number of managers	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	White	Yellow	Yellow
	Appropriate managerial span of control	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	White	Yellow	Yellow
	Clarity of roles	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Dark Red
	Appropriate departmental structure	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
	Appropriate staffing levels	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
Communications / collaboration	Appropriate management-staff communications	Green	Green	Green	Green	White	Dark Red	Yellow
	Understanding of the role and processes of other departments	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
	Strong interdepartmental collaboration and communication	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Dark Red	Yellow
Long-term & operational planning	Departmental succession plan in place	White	Yellow	White	Green	White	White	Yellow
	Long-term departmental plan in place	White	White	White	Green	White	Dark Red	Yellow
	Short-term operational plans flowing from long-term plan	White	White	White	Green	White	Dark Red	Dark Red
	Appropriate policy and processes in place	White	White	White	Green	White	Dark Red	Dark Red
Staff engagement	Strong staff morale	Green	Green	Green	Green	White	Dark Red	Yellow
	Sufficient training opportunities for staff	Green	Green	Green	Green	White	Dark Red	Yellow
	Regular and meaningful staff performance measurement	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	White	Dark Red	White
	Appropriate staff recognition program	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Dark Red	Yellow

Departmental Issue Identification - Conclusions

Areas of Existing Strength

From our evaluation of strategic issues, StrategyCorp identified the following strengths in Brockton:

1. The quality of services was considered a strength for all departments across the organization. Recreation programming, fire, the Child Care Centre and roads winter control in particular were considered excellent.
 - Buildings was a minor exception in this regard, but quality perceptions were lower in part due to factors that were largely outside of the department's control (i.e., conservation authority delays, County planning coordination, etc.)
2. The main municipal office has a strong culture, staff morale, role clarity, training, interdepartmental communications and collaboration.
3. The CAO is considered a strong leader within the organization.
4. The Fire department has a very strong volunteer training and succession planning program in place to keep volunteers engaged. Fire prevention and safety are also areas of strength.

**SCI noted that the Municipality was in the process of completing an updated staff recognition policy while this review was underway.*

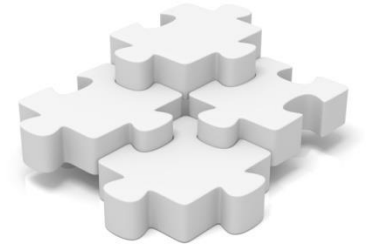
Departmental Issue Identification - Conclusions

Opportunities for Improvement

In addition, StrategyCorp identified the following issues for further investigation:

1. Roads department long-term and operational planning. The department also had issues with communications and human resource matters.
2. Some concerns were raised regarding the Operations department's role clarity and operating procedures, particularly Parks & Recreation.
3. Across the organization, staff expressed that they did not understand the roles of staff in other departments. This is likely resulting from the great deal of organizational change in recent years.
4. Staff recognition across the organization, beyond recognizing years of service.*
5. Communications and interdepartmental collaboration between the main municipal office and the non-office departments.
6. Communications from department heads down to the front-line staff and supervisors.
7. More regular and meaningful staff performance reviews.
8. Health and Safety adherence in some departments - legislative requirements may not be being met in some cases.
9. The CAO is fulfilling multiple job requirements, including acting as the municipal Clerk, Human Resources, and Economic Development officer. These additional responsibilities limit the CAO's ability to manage the organization. In addition, some roles are not being fully addressed due to the CAO's limited time capacity (i.e., economic development).

**SCI noted that the Municipality was in the process of completing an updated staff recognition policy while this review was underway.*



Appendix D:

SWOT Analysis

Purpose of this Document

- This section provides a summary Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis based on StrategyCorp's findings from its interviews with the Municipality of Brockton's Council, management and staff, as well as a selection of community stakeholders.
- In total, StrategyCorp conducted 30 interviews and two focus groups, engaging a total of 7 Councillors, 30 managers and staff, and 5 stakeholders.

Strengths



Strengths

Community engagement and volunteers

- Brockton has a strong volunteer base and active community engagement. The surrounding community has taken up opportunities to participate in municipal programs through Brockton's many committees. In addition, resident participation in volunteer initiatives and fundraising for various causes is high in Brockton.

Roads operators' skills and experience

- Roads operators are seen in the community as helpful. Most believed the roads in Brockton are well maintained year-round, especially when compared to neighboring municipalities.

Front-desk staff

- The staff at the front desk were considered to be friendly and helpful by many interviewees. They were also considered to be skilled at handling customer complaints and concerns.

Winter control

- The promptness and quality of winter maintenance was considered a strength by many interviewees, with some commending the roads operators' flexibility in providing winter maintenance services for residents.

Positive CAO influence

- The CAO is considered strong by many, and appears to have made a significant difference in the municipality. This includes implementation of initiatives to improve communications between staff and management, improve processes, and enhance the Municipality's focus on employee growth and engagement.

Office technology

- Enhanced office technologies, such as electronic filing, have improved workflow within the municipal office.

Good staff culture and morale in the administration office

- Brockton's main administrative office has fostered a supportive and positive culture for staff. Within the municipal office, staff had few complaints regarding the corporate culture, and many saw the collaborative environment as a source of organizational strength.

Weaknesses

Clarity in customer service processes and responsibilities
Council focus on operational detail
Lack of role clarity in roads and parks & recreation departments
Communications/collaboration between the main Municipal office and “non-office” departments
Staff training tracking and processes
Lack of standard operating guidelines
Communications from managers to staff in roads and parks & recreation
Capital planning
Poor Customer Relationship Management system
Perceived inconsistencies in enforcement of property standards
Perception that rural population does not get fair share of municipal service value
Employee retention / lack of recognition
Lack of space in admin office Too much debt spending
Costs of daycare services Lack of recreation storage space
Soccer complex troubles Weak industrial and commercial growth
BIA visitor center value? Lack of recreation center space
Taxes are perceived to be too high Resource purchasing policies
Lack of long-term plan
Inefficient reporting relationships
Need for more meaningful performance measurement
CAO capacity due to multiple responsibilities
High cost of police services Business retention
Inadequate deployment of technology
Lack of day-to-day operational supervisory role in Parks and
Gap in human resources service
To some residents garbage pickup is confusing
Too many committees
Municipal marketing coordination (website, social media)

Weaknesses

Communications & collaboration between the Municipal office & “non-office” departments

- There is limited communications and collaboration between the main municipal office staff and the “non-office” departments operating outside the main municipal office. This is most acute in the parks and recreation and the roads departments. It appears that geographical separation plays a role in reducing the amount of interdepartmental collaboration and communications, but there may be opportunities to better integrate the Municipality’s main office with its “non-office” departments.

Communications from managers to staff in roads and parks & recreation

- Communications between management and staff in the roads and the parks and recreation departments was considered a weakness by interviewees. Staff believe they have been unable to effectively communicate with management, or receive clear instructions, and have experienced a lack of role clarity and engagement as a result.

Council focus on operational detail

- Some managerial staff expressed concern related to Council’s involvement in more specific day-to-day operational issues.
- Some of council expressed concern related to reporting and follow-up on operational issues.
- It was also revealed during interviews that the Municipality’s Sustainable Strategic Plan may no longer accurately reflect the medium-term priorities of Council, and that Council could benefit from development of a new Strategic Plan or Strategic Plan update.

Clarity in customer service processes and responsibilities

- Some staff are unsure of how to deal with customer inquiries and complaints. There is some lack of clarity among staff as to what staff are able to say or do when responding to customer concerns. The Municipality does not have a codified customer service policy or operating procedures.

Weaknesses

Lack of comprehensive staff training tracking and processes

- Some expressed the view that staff do not always receive sufficient training at the Municipality, and that compliance with safety training requirements is not implemented by all managers in a uniform manner. This was specifically apparent in the roads department.
- Outside of the fire department, there is no standard protocol for staff who receive training to share their knowledge with colleagues. There was some difference in opinion as to whether staff should share their training learnings with colleagues.

Capital planning

- There limited codified strategic capital planning for Brockton's infrastructure at present. In addition, annual operating plans do not seem to flow from codified capital plans in a systematic manner. There may be opportunity to further clarify the Municipality's Long-Term capital plan.

Day-to-day operational leadership in parks and recreation

- There was some confusion regarding role clarity among staff in the Parks & Recreation department.
- Staff also pointed out that there are limited standard operating procedures to guide their work, and that the majority of tasks were "grandfathered in" through more senior staff (e.g., the foreman).
- The Director of Operations provides strategic oversight of the parks and recreation unit, but also has responsibility for the Municipality's water contract. As such, there appears to be a gap in day-to-day operational management of the parks and recreation unit. The unit is currently led by a foreman, who could retire at any moment. It was suggested that there may be a case for more direct management of the parks and recreation unit beyond the Director's oversight. This would likely be in the form of a "manager" position in parks and recreation, which would be responsible for day-to-day operational leadership, as well as operational planning for the unit.

Opportunities

Develop a new strategic plan
Updating recreation facilities
Innovation / job sharing
Agricultural growth
Recreation partnership with agriculture society for storage
Sharpen committee objectives and accountability via mandate letters
Co-location of all departments in a new municipal facility
Creating a comprehensive economic development strategy
Partnerships with the County
Developing a customer service protocol
Tourism growth
Additional leveraging of technology (eg. payments processing for recreation programs)
Improve staff recognition
Internal communications
Water sector improvement
Succession planning
More collaboration between staff
Daycare partnership with school
Enhanced performance tracking

Opportunities

Partner with the County

- There were numerous opportunities to collaborate with the County that were suggested in the interview process. Partnership opportunities include, a County-wide emergency management function, economic development strategy, and by-law enforcement.

Economic development strategy

- Economic development was considered a gap by the majority of stakeholders interviewed. While Brockton's Economic Development Committee has done quality work in seeking to attract businesses to the community, a significant gap was identified in the Municipality's business retention and expansion activities. The Municipality's recent RED application to help fund an economic development position will hopefully help alleviate this concern.

Customer service protocol

- The development of a standardized customer service protocol for all staff could help improve staff clarity regarding customer service responsibilities and expectations, and would help improve the Municipality's customer service overall.

Co-location of all departments in a new municipal facility

- The co-location of all Municipal departments in a new municipal facility was referred to by some as an opportunity to unite Brockton's currently separated departments. Some concern was raised, however, regarding the lack of resident support for a past soccer field proposal. It was noted that there is currently limited support for such an expenditure.

Additional leveraging of technology (e.g., payments processing for recreation programs)

- There may be opportunity to increase staff capacity through improved use of technology. Digital registration and payments processing for recreation programs was one such example.

Sharpen committee objectives and accountability via mandate letters

- Currently, Brockton has many committees which span across numerous topics. While committees are an important avenue of community engagement, they also require significant staff support time. To enhance the positive impact of committees, Council could implement specific mandate letters for each Committee, with specific and measurable targets and objectives to work towards.

Threats

Staff burnout (excessive time taken off further stresses human capital)

Pre-amalgamation ties

Infrastructural degradation

Lack of employment opportunities for younger residents

Lack of fiber optics/high-speed internet across the Municipality

Balancing need for service quality with desire for lower taxes

Provincial funding restrictions

Conservation authority slowing building development process

Too Walkerton centered

Volunteers leaving

Economic development

Aging population

Disruptive Bruce wage scale

Regulatory environment preventing economic development

Cuts to recreation funding sources

Retirements of key staff

Threats

Provincial funding restrictions

- Provincial funding reductions have placed increased pressure on the Municipality to raise revenues through property taxation, or to reduce service levels.

Pre-amalgamation ties

- It was noted that some discontinuities in service and staff cohesion still exist arising from the amalgamation from 1999.

Retirements of key staff

- While previous staffing transitions have addressed the need for succession planning in some areas within the Municipality, there remain some key positions that are due for retirement in the coming years. This will need to be appropriately planned for to ensure the transition is smooth.

Infrastructural degradation

- Infrastructure degradation poses a significant risk to all municipalities in Ontario. Proper asset maintenance and replacement require proactive planning and management. Brockton may need to improve upon its current long-term capital asset planning practices to appropriately prepare for future infrastructural challenges.

Economic development

- The Municipality of Brockton is facing challenging economic conditions at present. The Municipality is therefore obligated in some respects to help improve Brockton's economic conditions to ensure the community's long-term viability.

Employment opportunities for younger residents

- Many interviewees mentioned that younger residents are leaving Brockton in search of employment opportunities. The Municipality's ability to retain local talent is limited at present, and represents a threat to its future prosperity.



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