



CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

# MANAGEMENT & ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

JUNE 2016

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*The following individuals are recognized for their contributions*

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All the employees of the Planning and Development Department for their time and perspective

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

The Planning and Development Department plays a critical role in the City of Newton as it is this department that is charged with taking the policy direction and vision of the executive and legislative branches of the City and turning these into executable strategies, ordinances, and plans that in turn direct implementation by other departments as well as the development community. The Department faces numerous challenges in accomplishing its role, which can be summed up in a lack of adequate systems and processes to define and support the work to be accomplished. As a result, the primary recommendations are in the form of redefining the organization of the department and its core processes, introducing greater efficiencies so that staff time is devoted to true City priorities, and creating a project management system. These recommendations together will allow the Department to shift to a proactive planning program and away from the reactive, overloaded, and staff demoralizing program as it currently exists. These elements are detailed more thoroughly in subsequent sections of the report.

Seeing and understanding the link between the City's vision and the Department's execution is critical. If the City's vision is aligned with the Department's ability to execute, the City is likely to be successful in attending to current issues and building toward the future. On the other hand, if the City's vision and the Department's execution are out of alignment or poorly demonstrated, the City's ability to achieve its planning, goals will be difficult.

By way of this initial summary, three serious roadblocks exist. These result in opportunities to strengthen the Department's strategic direction.

1. Our first observation includes a macro view of the City and the Department in terms of vision, strategies, and execution related to planning and development. We observe a sense of frustration, chaos, uncertainty, incrementalism, and absence of consistent leadership and management. Under the current circumstances, we see roadblocks in the City's ability to consistently achieve its related vision or goals. This is partly attributed to a governance approach that includes interactions with

24 Councillors, creating cumbersome processes. These observations are consistent with City leaders' assessment that the Department and the goals related to the Department have been off track.

2. The Department itself reflects a common dichotomy found in all sectors of the economy and organizational life. On one hand, the Department employs individuals we found to meet our two criteria for continued employment: values and skills. While we were not tasked with looking at individuals and their employment skills, we became quite familiar with many members of the team. Without exception, based on our interactions, we found these employees to reflect values such as teamwork, honesty, commitment, and hard work. On the skill side, we found the employees to be knowledgeable and experts in their core field of study, e.g., planning. What is lacking is specific job knowledge due to the relatively short tenure of several employees who were recently hired.

On the other hand, and in addressing the dichotomy, the employees (and thus what the City is trying to achieve) are baked into an organization that is anything but organized. For the Department, the key areas of leadership, management, goal setting, issue management, core processes, training, institutional knowledge, use of technology, and communications are all suboptimal. While work gets done, the culture is strained, efficiency is lacking, and the related vision of the City is difficult to achieve.

Stated differently, as will be detailed in the next section, the overall functioning and operation of the Department is incremental and confusing. There are few, if any, core processes and systems to guide employees, residents, petitioners and elected officials. The overall need is to become far more prescriptive and accountable at all levels.

3. While this report focuses on the Department, we would be remiss if we didn't clearly state that the Department exists within the context of an overall City system. While improving the Department is critical, the ultimate success of the City's related vision and strategies is tied to the overall system the Department exists within.



The overall development review and planning processes in Newton reach beyond the Department of Planning and Development to include residents, petitioners, legal representatives, elected officials, and other City departments. To achieve its vision, Newton must address the overall system within which all stakeholders and regulatory needs exist. For Newton and the Department, many of the intra and inter organizational issues are inextricably linked. Addressing and solving some issues means embracing a more comprehensive and system-wide point of view.

Naturally, we believe the City will be able to overcome these obstacles and transform the Department. However, the timing and level of success will depend on the City acting consistently with many of the ideas and recommendations in this report. The City's best road map must recognize the need for:

- Strong leadership
- Manageable and high functioning governance process
- Ethics in dealings between people
- A long term plan for creating a systems and process based operating department



## OVERALL PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Planning and Development Department fits within a complex municipal organization. The Department is thwarted in accomplishing its purpose and mission on two fronts. First, because of 1) a lack of stable leadership 2) a lack of managerial systems and 3) inadequate processes; the Department is best described as inefficient and is not a positive environment (i.e., culture) where work is accomplished at the highest level of reasonable expectations. Second, the Department's overall potential is hindered because it is part of a City-wide organizational system that is inefficient, uncoordinated, and stove-piped. This situation is further complicated by governance oversight by a very large group of Councillors.

## DETAILED PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Department is experiencing numerous problems and issues. These issues are serious and have a direct impact on the City and the Department's ability to achieve its vision and mission. These problems also interfere with the Department's ability to live its values.

Strategically and humanistically, we believe in the value of observing and describing problems as an exercise in and of itself. Once problems have been stated and acknowledged, the City and the Department will be in a better position to create a desirable vision, mission, and system. Furthermore, employees will have the ability to spend additional time in value added activities.

We believe in the power of first seeing where the organization is, followed by creating a plan for how the organization wants to be. When everyone is clear and honest about the problems, the opportunity to create what the City deeply wants is far easier.

In building the following detailed problem statements, we immersed ourselves into the Department through meetings, interviews, observations, and document reviews. While the following may seem like a lengthy list, our desire has been to focus on what matters most – what provides the City with the clearest diagnosis.

This list represents our analysis of the key issues and problems faced by the Planning and Development Department:

1. We agree and confirm the primary observations made by the city. This includes areas of needed improvements in staffing and structure, major processes, the large number of commissions and committees, and methods to develop a model department.
2. System/Core Processes: While the focus is on the Department, the mission and vision of this Department will be forever hampered and controlled by the roles and responsibilities of others. For example:
  - The plan and permit review process necessitates the handing off of petitions and permits to other departments. Each department has its own processes and requirements that are largely uncoordinated and undocumented.
  - At an operating level, there is no responsibility

- or accountability for the whole system.
  - Core processes are not documented.
  - Cycle times (i.e., how long and where is the petition) are not tracked.
  - Because of the inefficiencies, the Planning Department is not able to spend enough time doing actual planning work.
3. The lack of documented core processes, the multiple handoffs between departments, and the uncertainty regarding the requirements at each step has resulted in a system where there is an exaggerated need, indeed a perceived necessity, for petitioners to hire outside attorneys to oversee process, documents, changes, and city requirements. Outside attorneys, not the City, are the de-facto process and regulatory experts in place of the City and City employees.
  4. This same problem (Number 3) is also true in regards to knowing and deciding the correct staffing levels. The current lack of processes, timelines, checklists, and standard operating procedures makes it more like guess work when assessing workload against staffing resources. While perceptions of the Department being understaffed exist, the greater problem is the significant amount of organizational waste that exists as a result of inefficient processes.
  5. While a lack of documented processes exist throughout the Department and contributes to workload issues, there is also a significant problem with the overall volume of work. As an example, Housing and Urban Development staff, who must adhere to Federal guidelines, cannot get core work completed as a result of all of their reporting requirements.
  6. We observe that the process of plan review and approval in the city of Newton is cumbersome and at times arbitrary. We attribute this to many factors including the system whereby petitions are brought before the city and approval bodies to be "hashed out." By hashed out, we mean that petitions are subject to arbitrary discussions and not specific planning standards or processes. The process causes delay, creates uncertainty, and opens the City to questions of inconsistency.

Let us be clear. The consulting team has worked with complex local governments across the country. We plainly acknowledge and embrace the role and responsibilities of

elected officials and the discretion they are often granted in planning reviews and final decision making. However, to move forward and embrace a higher level of consistency and success, Newton will have to address issues such as development by right, broader staff responsibility, and strongly stated administrative procedures.

7. On one hand, the Planning and Development Department is performing excellent work, creating important outcomes and helping the City meet its overall vision. We also observed a significant level of skill, comradery, and evidence based decision making at the staff level. We see a Department that genuinely wishes to accomplish its mission. We observed employees who are responsive, thoughtful, and value-centered.

At the same time, we observed a team that feels stressed, their opinions dismissed by decision makers, employees pulled in multiple directions, contradicted, the perception of a heavy workload, unorganized, mixed messages, uncertain about their future, no reasons to be loyal, and unappreciated with regard to their expertise. This is to say that the culture of the Department is, at best, dispirited. Overall, the practices of positive leadership and management are an illusory notion. While we sensed dedication to one's career, we seldom detected an environment that drew employees into the values and vision of the City. Indeed, there were many occasions when employees (of several departments), citizens, and petitioner representatives scoffed at the vision and values of the City.

In making these observations, we do not, in any manner, place blame on anyone - past or present. Indeed, we have heard serious intentions from all corners of the City regarding the need to improve the Department. To achieve this goal, the City must first see the expansive nature of the problem tied to antiquated processes and a series of incoherent methods. The overall functions of the development and planning processes in the City, including everyone and every department that touches a permit or petition, is part of the problem. To have the greatest impact, the entire system, not just the Department, must improve.

8. The Department has no method for organizing its work or workload. We observed various incomplete lists of projects, processes, and petitions. There are no (or limited) processes for project triage, accountability, or assignments. The consequence is not knowing current project priorities or what projects cannot be completed.

9. The Department has over a dozen key projects (in addition to petitions) sitting in limbo. The Department has no method (e.g., formal project management) for managing projects that have been assigned for completion in the current period; say three months. Furthermore, staff are constantly pulled in different directions, responding to external requests.
10. There is no form of project management. Consequently, assignments, timelines, tracking, resources, project objectives, and accountability standards are unknown. This problem results in the inability to communicate project status, workload, expectations or problems, and concerns.
11. The Department lacks performance measures. There are few examples of data being used to improve performance. For example, as noted, the cycle time for a basic permit or plan review is unknown. Consequently, performance improvement against an objective standard is not possible.
12. There are no documented core processes. There are some useful and related public information brochures.
13. While there is some structure to the Department, we did not observe a structure that resulted in the presence of the critical skills of leading, managing, and accountability (LMA). Leading includes skills such as establishment of vision and strategy, guiding and coaching staff, building a team, and communication. Managing involves organizing and coordinating work. Accountability includes managing and improving processes, measuring results, and providing feedback to staff.
14. The Department interacts with an extensive number of committees and commissions which requires a great deal of staff time. As a result, staff members perform many administrative duties that are not necessarily value added.
15. The Special Permit process requires an extensive amount of staff time as a result of the Councillors approving all permits. Streamlining the process and allowing staff to directly approve permits for projects that meet certain conditions, clearly specified in advance.
16. The application process for petitions is unclear and lacks the kind of specificity and process/submittal information that would make the process more efficient.





## RECOMMENDATIONS

The body of the report, following all of the analysis, includes a complete list of recommendations. Twenty-four recommendations are included, to be completed between 2015 and 2020. For the purposes of the Executive Summary, the following list outlines selected key recommendations.

- Create an ongoing strategic planning process, using this analysis as a starting point for establishing direction. Include the recommendations on a spreadsheet, identify who is responsible for completing the recommendation, and create an ongoing reporting process on a quarterly basis.
- Restructure the Department, as outlined in the Report. Begin by hiring a permanent director. Create job descriptions for the two Deputy positions and hire these positions. This becomes the Department's Executive Team.
- Streamline the Special Permit Process by developing criteria for permits that should be handled solely by staff. This recommendation is only the first step in what should be a larger conversation about increasing the availability of by-right development guided by clear standards and creating less subjective standards for the review of those projects that still require a special permit. The City should strongly consider removing the special permit granting authority from the City Council and placing it with an independent, less political body comprised of knowledgeable professionals, citizens, and business owners.
- Develop better consistency in the Development Review process. Rather than building on previous decisions, City goals are debated and determined without context to previous decisions. The development of a standard template for decision making may improve the process.
- Work with other department heads in improving communication with those departments to minimize silos and improve processes across Departments. Some departments have done this, including the Purchasing Department.
- Document key processes that have been identified and flow chart or list key process steps. Identify important customer requirements for each process. Monitor key process performance measures and identify how processes can be improved. These should be routinely reviewed and improved as needed. Process documentation should be part of the new employee orientation process.
- Reduce the significant number of committees and commissions. The City Council may consider realigning some of them, including the following:
  - ◊ Consider combining the Land Use Committee and the Zoning and Planning Committee as the tasks for each of these bodies are closely related, knowledge and experience derived from one benefits the other and combining them would allow for greater staffing efficiency and project management capability. This also includes increasing the number of Special Permits handled by staff.
  - ◊ Consider eliminating staff support to the Farm Commission
  - ◊ Give consideration to combining the four Local Historic Districts into one. At some point in the future, further consideration should be given to having the unidied local Historic District combine with the Historic Preservation Committee.
- Hire a community engagement staff person.



# INTRODUCTION

The City of Newton engaged Sasaki Associates and Peter Burchard, LLC to complete a Management and Organizational Analysis of the Planning and Development Department. The project included a review and assessment of the structure and functioning of the Planning Department. From the project's initiation, City leaders clearly expressed the perceived problems, issues, and opportunities the City and the Department currently face. It is within this context that the analysis was performed. The approach includes objective analysis, clear identification of barriers and problems, and a detailed set of recommendations. This analysis creates the framework for planning efforts, going forward.

The complexities of Planning and Development's delivery of services are significant, given the reach of the planning function in the City. Significant demand exists for new residential and business development, with a correlating need for development review, housing, transportation, historical, and economic development planning efforts. These elements are all part of the planning system.

Additional complexities for the Department exist as a result of the extensive amount of staff time dedicated toward working with a significant number of committees and commissions. Staff members also interact with 24 Councillors, which is a much larger governance body than typically found in Massachusetts cities.

As a result of changing demographics and growth in Newton, planning and development services must be aligned with community needs and adopt agile processes to meet those needs. Furthermore, the Department aspires to develop best practice approaches. As part of the analysis, other planning departments noted for contemporary practices were contacted to provide information about their planning and development approaches.

The project included several areas of analysis:

- Methods to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department
- Review of staffing levels and organizational structure
- Identification of best practices of planning departments
- Assessment of the use of technology and analysis of data

- Strengthen the capacity of the Department
- Process review of boards and commissions and community stakeholders
- Knowledge management and staff professional development

This report is organized into five sections:

1. Executive Summary
  - ◊ Detailed Problem Statements
  - ◊ Summary of Recommendations
2. Staff and Stakeholder Input Summary
3. Current Conditions of the Department/Analysis
4. Planning and Development Departments Comparative Analysis
5. Alternatives, Recommendations, and Implementation Guidelines

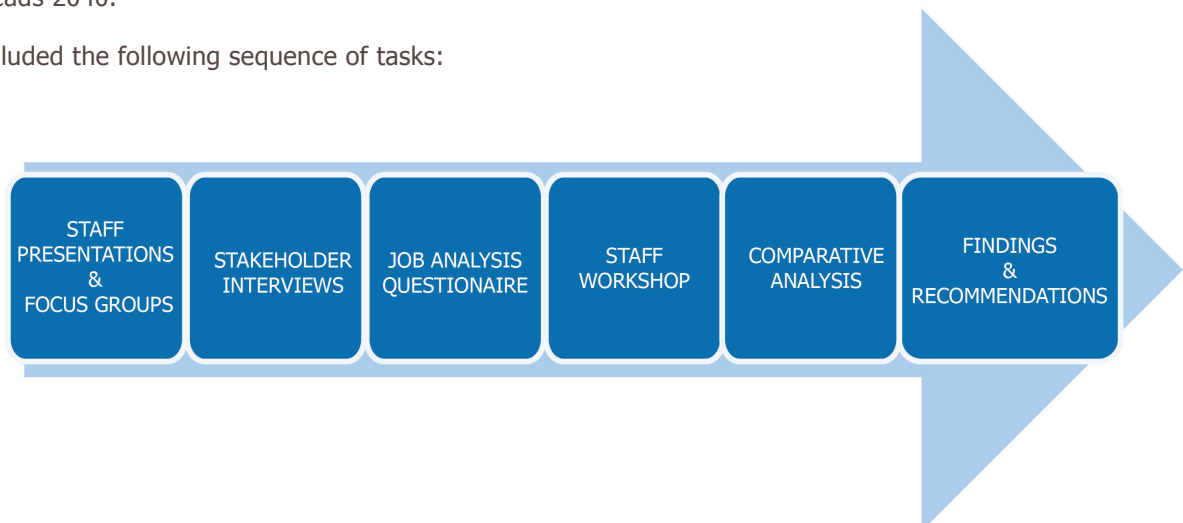
## PROCESS

The process included a series of iterative tasks designed to provide the Consulting Team with detailed information about planning and development approaches. Elements of the analysis were completed collaboratively with Department staff. The analysis included a thorough review of data including a review of the organization chart, job descriptions, information about boards and commissions, 2007 Comprehensive Plan, land use related ordinances, 2016 Planning and Development Budget presentation, Zoning Ordinances, commissions and committees meeting agendas, minutes, and processes, Community Preservation Plan information, 2016 budget information, and City website.

This process is being completed in concert with other strategic initiatives and plans for the City. This includes Newton Leads 2040, which is a call to action for all in the community to continue making the education system, public safety, infrastructure, environment, and city services to be the best. It also promotes partnership and engagement of residents and civic leaders to ensure the City has affordable and diverse housing, which relates to Planning and Development Department initiatives.

Concurrently to the Management and Organizational Analysis, other City of Newton studies include transportation and housing studies. Housing study information was also reviewed as part of this process. Recommendations from this analysis will assist with the Department's ability to effectively implement other City studies and strategic efforts such as Newton Leads 2040.

The steps included the following sequence of tasks:



## BACKGROUND

The Department includes 27 staff positions, three of which are part-time. These include the following areas of responsibility:

- Administrative Support (Executive Assistant, Development Services and Customer Service)
- Economic Development
- Planning (Development Review, Long Range Planning, Conservation, Historic Preservation and Urban Design)
- Housing and Community Development (Community Development Block Grant and other federally funded programs, Community Preservation Program)

These four areas involve an extensive array of programs and community processes, detailed below.

Administrative Support oversees office support functions and customer service. This includes responding to customer inquiries, and providing support to Planners and Inspectional Services.

Economic Development promotes and develops business and industry for the purpose of strengthening the local economy, providing jobs, and expanding the City's tax base.

Planning activities are extensive, from development review, to long range planning, urban design, historic preservation and conservation. Development review

includes areas such as administrative site plan review, comprehensive permits, real property reuse, and special permits. Conservation includes the protection of watershed resources of Newton and administration of the State Wetlands Act. Historic preservation includes four local historic districts and identifies, evaluates, and protects historic resources. Staff responsibilities include reviewing proposed projects, providing preservation recommendations, surveying historic properties, and writing nominations for properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Housing and Community Development runs all federally funded programs such as the Community Development Block Grant Program overseeing the allocation of funds, provides staffing to regional entities supporting housing development, works on City housing policy, and broadly supports affordable housing development. The Community Preservation program includes overseeing The Massachusetts Community Preservation Act (CPA), which provides local and state funds for affordable housing, historic resources, open space, and recreation land. The Community Preservation Program manager supports and advises the City bodies that set funding policies and award funds under the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act for affordable housing, historic resources, open space and recreation land; monitors, advises and evaluates the management of funded projects; and evaluates project results. The position requires working with a wide range of City departments and nonprofit organizations.

## BACKGROUND, CONTINUED

The Department assists and manages 26 committees and commissions. These include:

1. Land Use Committee\*
2. Real Property Reuse Committee\*
3. Zoning and Planning Committee\*
4. Auburndale Historic District Commission
5. Brookline, Newton, Waltham, Watertown Continuum of Care
6. Chestnut Hill Historic District Commission
7. Commission on Disability
8. Community Preservation Committee
9. Conservation Commission
10. Economic Development Commission
11. Economic Development Advisory Committee
12. Fair Housing Committee
13. Farm Commission (Angino)
14. Human Services Advisory Committee
15. Newton Corner Advisory Committee
16. Newton Historical Commission
17. Newton Housing Partnership
18. Newton Upper Falls Historic District Commission
19. Newtonville Advisory Committee
20. Newtonville Historic District Commission
21. Nonantum Advisory Committee
22. Planning and Development Board
23. Transportation Advisory Group (TAG)
24. West Newton Advisory Committee
25. Urban Design Commission
26. Zoning Board of Appeals

In addition to the above list, the Department also supports project related committees such as the Austin Street Liaison Committee. Asterisks indicate City Council Committees

## MISSION STATEMENT





As part of this process, the Department updated its mission statement as follows:

Newton's Department of Planning and Development is committed to community-based planning that guides the future of the City while promoting equity, healthful lifestyles, diverse housing options, a resilient economy, varied transportation options, and preservation of the built and natural environment.

## VALUES

Additionally, the leadership participants identified values that represent the way the Department works. The values include:

- Integrity
- Expertise
- Leadership
- Listening
- Collaboration

The successful implementation of operations and management recommendations requires alignment with an effective organizational culture, one that embraces change and innovation. This results in the Department's ability to adopt best practice approaches related to the development of a leadership system, strategic direction, robust community engagement, excellence in service delivery, leveraging technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness, staffing and structure, and measuring Departmental performance through key performance indicators (KPIs).

## OBJECTIVES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

To implement this mission, the Department of Planning and Development will:

- Engage the community to create innovative strategies that respond to the needs and values of the public, and evolving market trends;
- Research and develop interdisciplinary, creative, and practical solutions;
- Administer regulations and policies objectively; and
- Approach customer service in an educational, responsive, and transparent manner.



# STAFF & STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Approximately nine staff meetings were held with Planning and Development employees and Executive Office to gain insight into the operations of the Department. In addition, focus groups were held with a variety of stakeholders including petitioner attorneys, other City Department Heads, Councillors, and chairs of the various boards, committees, and commissions. The questions related to areas of strength, areas for improvement, processes working with various committees, staffing, structure, and communication with stakeholders.

## STAFF

Key areas of discussion from staff included:

### STRENGTHS:

- Employees generally enjoy the nature of their work
- Positive feelings toward the current leadership of the Department
- Interest in continuous improvement
- Collegial relationships of the work group
- Dedicated and knowledgeable staff
- Improved internal communication

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- Responsiveness to Councillors causes staff inefficiency. This includes receiving conflicting directions, interruptions, priority conflicts, and having Councillors review details that staff members feel they should handle
- Having staff on multiple floors creates difficulties with internal communication
- The advisory nature of committees and commissions is evolving to more of a decision making role
- Excessive workloads
- Significant turnover
- Inability to be pro-active; the Department is reactive in nature because of constant demands
- Lack of institutional knowledge as a result of turnover
- There is a lack of strategic vision and goals and objectives
- Planning staff are "stuck" as they are uncertain about roles and their future

## STAKEHOLDERS

Key areas of discussion from stakeholders included (City departments, Councillors, attorneys, City attorneys, committee chairs):

### STRENGTHS:

- High regard for staff
- Positive view about current Department leadership
- Relationships with staff are positive
- Timely response from staff
- Even though there is significant turnover, there are existing staff with incredible knowledge
- Other City departments have high levels of satisfaction toward working with Planning

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- Turnover is a significant problem; Department needs stability
- Department is stretched thin; workload is intense
- Staff morale is an issue due to all of the work interference
- Significant level of staff time toward requests by Councillors
- Need to complete zoning reform
- Lack of institutional knowledge causes difficulties
- The Department has experienced a lack of leadership
- Technology is lacking in its ability to research past problems
- Special permit process can be done at the staff level
- Staff's professional skills and judgment should be relied on more
- Does the Planning staff work for the City Council or for the mayor?

# CURRENT CONDITIONS

The following section of the Report lists current conditions and recommendations in five significant attribute areas, as listed below:

1. Department Leadership
  - Mission
  - Vision
  - Values
  - Culture
2. Department Structure
3. Staffing Levels and Skills
4. Department Processes
5. Performance Management
  - Project and issue management
  - Measuring results

Each section includes a definition of the attribute, an assessment of current conditions, and recommendations for opportunities for improvement.

## LEADERSHIP SYSTEM

### DEFINITION

*The leadership system describes the approaches to retaining a workforce that is competent, motivated, adaptive, and values people. It includes the establishment of a participatory, collaborative organization dedicated to continual learning and improvement. This includes successful deployment of mission, vision and values, and promoting ethical and legal behavior. The system also ensures institutional knowledge that is improved upon over time. The Department provides a focus and emphasis on opportunities for professional and leadership development and strives to create an integrated, well-coordinated team. Leadership also involves ensuring laws, regulations, ordinances, and procedures are known and impartially enforced by staff.*

### CURRENT CONDITIONS

According to staff working in the Department, staff members are generally satisfied with the quality of leadership in the Department. This includes an increased level of communication within the Department, as a result of Monday morning meetings and other forms of ongoing communication. The current leadership system

demonstrates a commitment to collaboration and teamwork. Leadership communicates well, has extensive contact with stakeholders and the public, and has effective relationships with other City departments and stakeholders.

While leadership has improved, the Department has a need for even stronger leadership skills to manage complex priorities, set priorities, and act assertively when needed. This requires great communication skills and understanding the elements of leadership such as the establishment of strategic direction, exerting accountability, and development of staff.

Based on meetings with Department staff, there is some level of frustration in dealing with other City departments. Some are responsive, and other departments are not. This causes inefficiency and impacts service to residents. This problem arises as a result of operating within silos.

Workload issues have caused stress and excessive turnover. Furthermore, turnover results in challenges with job knowledge. While new employees hired have the skills necessary to do the work, there is a learning curve associated with this. The newness of employees, compounded with a lack of documentation of work processes results in inefficiency. The cost of turnover of one planning position amounts to approximately \$279,591, which is calculated by an average annual salary of \$66,569, and with benefits, \$93,197. The Department estimates approximately three months of time for employees to get up to speed, which then amounts to \$279,591 as the cost of turnover for each employee that replaces someone.

The Department is so caught up in the day to day, that a tactical, rather than a strategic focus, rules the Department. There is an absence of vision and future direction as leaders and employees are involved in “whack a mole” in which current demand greatly overpowers the Department’s ability to establish a purposeful sense of direction.

Good leadership systems include the development of mission, vision, and values. As a part of this process, the Department revised its existing mission statement. Mission statements describe the overall purpose of an organization: what we do, who we do it for, and how and why we do it. It also answers the question: what is our business? A mission statement sets the boundaries of the organization’s current activities and is a starting point in developing a shared vision.



A vision statement, which describes the future aspiration of an organization, was not developed as part of the process, but will be developed at a future time after the Department has an opportunity to create future direction and goals, objectives, and work plans.

Values represent the way the organization works. It describes how employees work with one another as well as those outside the Department. As mentioned previously, the values are:

- **Integrity:** Doing the right thing and exhibiting consistency between what we say and what we do.
- **Expertise:** Continuously mastering the technical elements of our work.
- **Leadership:** Inspiring people to want to do their best. Recognizing potential and skills in building a dynamic team, while achieving high performance from staff.
- **Listening:** Heeding thoughts and opinions of others and actively listening; including inquiring about the intended meaning of words from others.
- **Collaboration:** Working together with others to accomplish work.

Each value is defined to ensure common understanding of the intent of the value. Values create the foundation for organizational culture. The key to operationalizing values includes continuous visual management techniques, or how to keep the values “top of mind.” Values should guide the hiring process. This includes creating interview questions that probe into a candidate’s ability to demonstrate the five values. Additionally, the values should be posted throughout individual staff offices.

A description of Departmental culture from staff includes: collegial, professional, affinity for planning and development work, work well together, possess requisite expertise, and hard-working. Internal communication continues to improve. The culture also includes vestiges of staff members desire to maintain the status quo. In order to affect Departmental change, individual employees need to align themselves with the desire and ability to change work processes and procedures.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Operationalize the Department’s mission and values.
2. Develop a vision statement.
3. Work with other department heads in improving communication with those departments.
4. Create an ongoing strategic planning process, using

this analysis as a starting point for establishing direction.

5. Create a Departmental orientation process, including review of mission and values.
6. Require senior leaders of the Department to participate in leadership development opportunities such as executive coaching, ongoing performance feedback, 360 degree performance reviews (peers, subordinate, supervisor, and individual participate in the review), and leadership training. Core competencies of leadership should be developed and training opportunities provided to staff. Competencies can include areas such as strategic thinking, change management, innovation, leveraging technology, financial management, and communication and feedback.

## STRUCTURE

### DEFINITION

*his attribute includes a review of the organization structure of the Department, including identification of a senior leadership team and appropriate span of control, hierarchy, alignment of work functions to structure, and work organization that leads to Departmental efficiency and effectiveness.*

When reviewing organizational structures, the following organizing principles guide the Consulting Team’s decision making:

**Span of control:** In most organizations, supervisory staff can effectively supervise five to seven direct reports, unless there is great disparity in job roles. If so, a narrower span of control is warranted. This also varies according to tenure of employees. Five new employees need more supervision than seven long tenured employees.

**Supervision level:** For every year the span of control remains the same and employees in those positions remain the same, the amount of supervision can include 10% fewer labor resources allocated toward management functions. This assumes managers should work on improving value through system and process improvements and not through inspection.

**Vertical integration:** For major functions, those functions should be clustered within the same division of the Department.

**Hierarchy:** There should be as few levels as possible of hierarchy in order for services to be closer to the external customer as well as minimizing the amount of management inspection and bureaucracy.

**Internal support processes:** Areas such as finance, purchasing, and human resources should seamlessly provide support to internal customers, their fellow employees. Their support should lead to better external customer service.

**Functional organizational structures:** Most government agencies have a functional approach to organizational structure and find this the most successful organizing approach. It is not entirely clear how the current structure works.

**Management return on investment:** Management staff should supervise positions that warrant a sufficient return on investment of their time. In addition, managers should minimize the number of hours spent on tasks that a department “overspends” for a manager doing low level clerical tasks.

**Clarity of roles and responsibility:** Employees should have a clear understanding of their individual roles, roles of their supervisors, and roles of any staff above their direct supervisor. There should be clear direction from supervisor to individual employees.

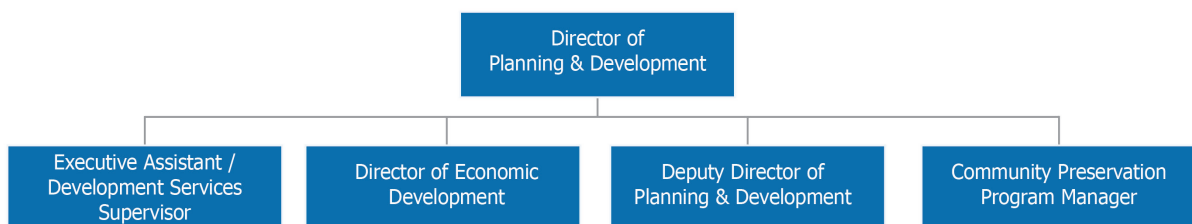
**Management Team:** Direct reports to the Director position become part of a management team that is involved in the overall leadership of the Department. This approach assists with developing leadership skills of senior leaders, incorporating multiple viewpoints of departmental direction, and development of succession.

The existing structure consists of major operating areas of administrative support, economic development, planning and development, and housing/community development. The organization structure currently is as follows: The Deputy Director position is currently serving as the interim Director.

Observations and assessment of the existing structure include the following:

### KEY OBSERVATIONS

- The current Deputy Director position is not defined, and a job description does not exist
- The Director position requires an extensive amount of interaction with the Executive Office and Councillors, which reduces the amount of time to manage and lead the Department
- The structure has been built incrementally rather than strategically
- It is not possible to assess and follow the linkage between structure of the Department and core processes of the Department (While core processes are generally known, they are not documented)
- There is a mixture of position titles and functions; elements of zoning appear to be in three areas
- There are two customer service positions, though the majority of their time is spent supporting the Inspectional Services Department
- There is a lack of clerical support throughout the Department
- Many professional staff members spend time completing clerical types of work
- The Conservation Planner has no additional support
- The Community Preservation Program Manager has no direct reports
- There is no obvious/apparent leadership team
- There is a lack of clarity over integrators and doers. To varying degrees, the director, assistant director, division heads and project managers are all integrators. Each has to have the essential skills needed to direct work, coordinate work and keep the flow going. They are also experts at managing healthy tension - the type of tension that bubbles up in any high energy/ high activity workplace. These employees have to show strong communication and leadership skills. The



higher the rank/position, the better the integration skills must be. Integrators must be system thinkers. They must master daily progress, be champions of core processes and manage consistent application of rules, procedures and laws.

- The closer a position is to the customer/client, the more the position becomes (partly or entirely) the doer. Doers follow the lead of the integrator. Because of workload, some integrators are also doers. Doers literally do the work of the organization - the produce/perform the duties or the mission. They are the plan examiners, customer service, inspectors, memo writers, etc.
- There are no apparent transportation related positions within the Department, although the planning function requires transportation planning.

#### ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

- The Chief Planner for Current Planning has a much wider span of control than other supervisory positions in the Department
- There are no examples of span of control being too large
- The urban designer position is a part of long range planning/zoning, is there a better fit?
- There is a desire by the Department to have a community engagement position

As part of the organization structure review, the Consulting Team facilitated a workshop with staff to review the major functions of the Department. The functions include the positions within the Department as well as the Executive and Legislative functions. These are outlined as follows:

#### LISTING OF LEADERSHIP POSITIONS AND THEIR FUNCTIONS

##### Executive

- Creates vision
- Appoints directors, boards and commissions

##### Directs projects/activities

- Communicates with City Councillors, public, staff
- Proposes and approves department and federal program budgets

##### Legislative/Quasi-Judicial/Regulatory

- Conducts public hearings
- Creates/adopts policies, rules, regulations
- Approves special permits
- Engages staff 24/7

- Approves budget

##### Director

- Leadership, management, accountability (LMA)
- Hires staff
- Develops strategy
- Communicates with Executive Office, Mayor, City Councillors, staff, other departments, public
- Develops departmental budget

##### Functions Reporting to the Director

Currently, Planning, Housing, Grants/Regulatory Accountability, Community Development, Economic Development, and Executive Assistant/Development Services report to the Director

##### Planning

- LMA
- Serves as Development Review Leader (DRT)
- Staffs the Re-Use Commission
- Staffs ZBA Comprehensive Permits (40B)
- Supports long range projects like Housing/Zoning Reform

##### Housing

- LMA
- Plans
- Oversees Home Consortium
- Develops Housing Policies, supports Housing Strategy work
- Get it Built

##### Grants/Regulatory Accountability

- Manages CDBG/ESG/Home
- Performs financial accounting of programs

##### Community Development

- LMA
- Develops RFPs, Human Services grants and ESG
- Child care
- Participates in Continuum of Care (CoC), manages the CoC, which is multi-jurisdictional and focused on Homelessness
- Collaborates with other communities
- Develops strategy

##### Economic Development

- Staffs Economic Development Commission
- Staffs Women's Enterprise



- Participates in regional initiatives
- Develops new community development
- Conducts business outreach
- Data
- Interacts with City/Business

### Long Range Planning

- Leads Planning and Policy Development
- Drafts Ordinances
- Provides Interdepartmental implementation support

### Community Engagement

- Develops engagement strategy for projects
- Manages online engagement and social media, web

### Urban Design

- Staffs UDC and Design of large projects
- Brings design perspective to plans and regulations, supports zoning reform
- Develops streetscape designs

### Reporting to the Planning Function

- Environmental
  - ◇ Staffs Conservation Commission
  - ◇ Manages conservation areas
  - ◇ Education
- Historical
  - ◇ Staffs the Historical Commission
  - ◇ Staff for Four Local Historic District Boards
  - ◇ Educates the public
  - ◇ Writes grants
  - ◇ Develops policy
- Current Planning
  - ◇ Provides support for Special Permits process
    - 85% of staff time spent on Special Permits
  - ◇ Provides Administrative Site Plan Review
  - ◇ Provides customer service
- Zoning Interpretation
  - ◇ Provides opinions for ZBA and Special Permits
  - ◇ Informal to Inspection Services

### Reporting to the Housing Function

- Manages Rehab Program
- Manages HomeBuyer program
- Manages Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program
- Oversees construction management

- ◇ Oversee contractors hired for rehab program
- ◇ Verifies construction work estimates and that work paid for is done correctly
- Oversees Housing Development
  - ◇ Provides Customer Service
  - ◇ Gets it Built

In a review of functions, it is worth noting the Director position spends a significant portion of time interacting with the legislative and regulatory functions as well as with the Executive Office. As a result, there is a need for deputy director level of support to assist with overall departmental leadership and dealing with day to day issues. Also, as a result of an extraordinary amount of time the Director must spend with the Executive Office and Councillors, the recommendation is to have two deputy positions. This will provide staff with additional management support. The deputies can monitor project progress and develop systems to continuously improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Within the Planning area, 85% of the two Current Land Use Planners time goes toward Special Permits, many of which are perfunctory in nature and go to the Councillor's Land Use Committee for approval.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Suggestions for changing the organizational structure include developing two deputy director positions, one responsible for planning and the other responsible for housing and community development.

This structure is recommended as a result of the significant amount of time the Director must spend with the Executive Office and Councillors. This provides the rest of the Department with an increased level of leadership with two senior leaders responsible for the daily management of the Department. This group of three becomes the executive team and has responsibility for strategic direction of the Department.

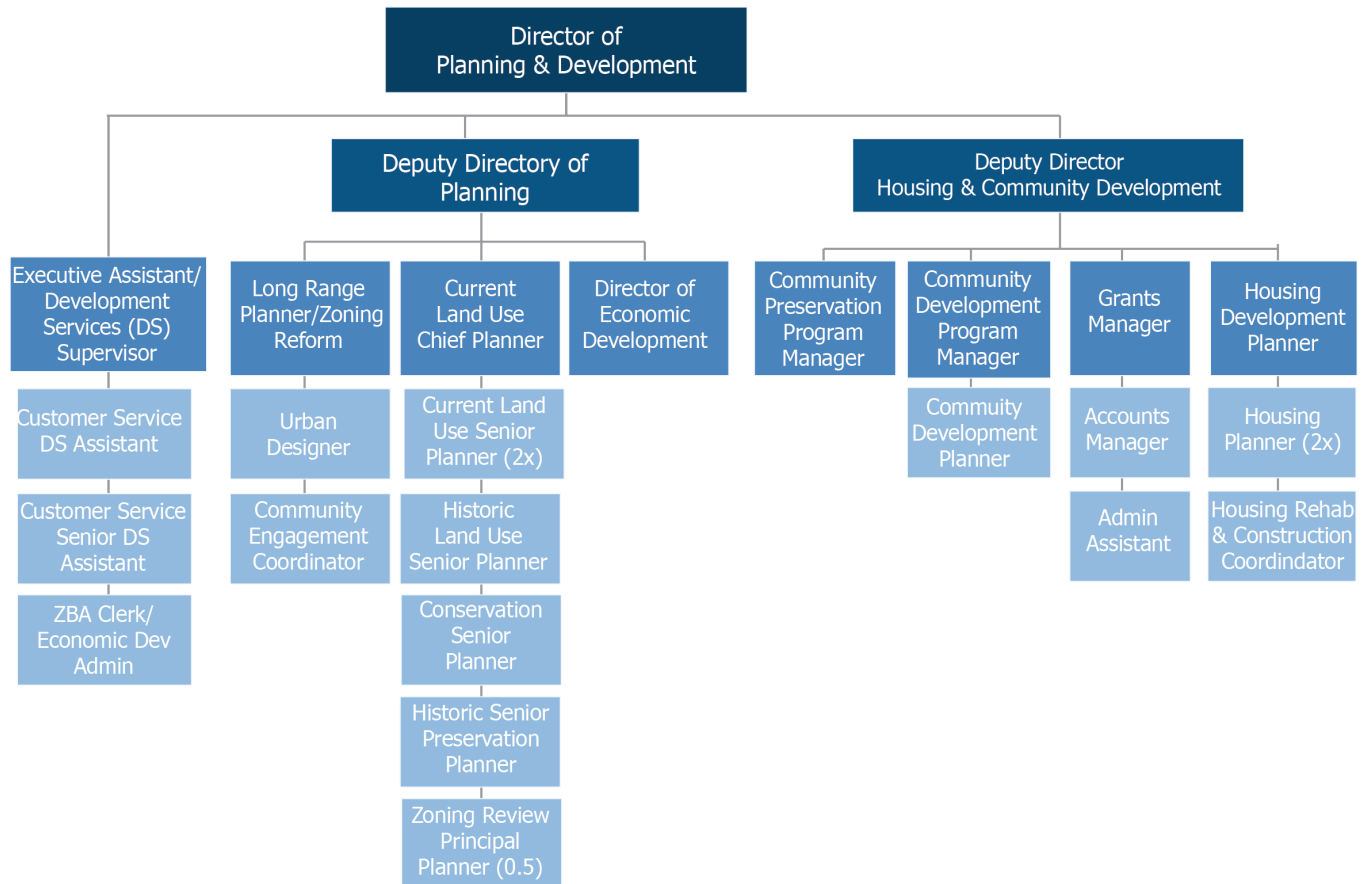
The direct reports for the Deputy Director of Planning include the Long Range Planner, Urban Designer, Community Engagement Coordinator and Director of Economic Development positions.

The direct reports for the Deputy Director of Housing and Community Development include the Community Preservation Program Manager, Housing Programs Manager, Community Development Program Manager, and the Grants Manager.

2. As an alternative, the Director of Economic

Development can report to the Director instead of the Deputy Director of Planning.

- Another alternative is to create an administrative director position, reporting to the Department Director. This position would oversee the customer service function, finance, project management, technology, committee oversight, etc.



- The majority of time spent by the two customer service staff relates to Inspectional Services tasks, rather than Planning and Development. It is not unusual to have inspections included within planning and development. The same is true for transportation and sustainability.

Providing recommendations relating to other departments is beyond the scope of work for this project, but it is worth noting that many planning departments have these functions included. Somerville, MA, Portland, ME, Oak Park, IL, Charlottesville VA, and Naperville, IL are some examples. Portland, OR is has sustainability efforts included within their planning department.

As part of reviewing the customer service function within two departments, in observation of the overall City system, there are a larger set of organizational and cultural issues that are part of the root cause of inefficiencies

and ineffectiveness. There are multiple undocumented processes and multiple departmental handoffs that create a lack of coordination and slower customer service. The organization is set up as departmental silos without sufficient focus on the external customer.

- Rather than adding additional professional staff, consideration should be given to adding another administrative assistant to provide support to current land use, historic preservation, community preservation, housing, conservation, and community development. This position could also maintain the filing system.

## STAFFING

### DEFINITION

*This is an important attribute for the City of Newton Planning and Development Department as a result of the significant workload issues. Staffing involves identifying appropriate levels of staff, assessing staff knowledge, identifying important functions of planning and development, and alignment of staffing needs with organizational structure.*

### CURRENT CONDITIONS

In a workshop with staff, the top 10 work functions were identified:

#### Planning Department Functions

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Current Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plan review</li> <li>• develop applications</li> <li>• zoning interpretations</li> </ul> | 6. Community Engagement   |
| 2. Customer Service   | 7. Economic Development   |
| 3. Housing/Human Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• grants management</li> </ul>   | 8. Community/Urban Design   |
| 4. Long Range Planning  | 9. Historic Preservation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adopted codes</li> <li>• boards, commissions</li> </ul> |
| 5. Environmental <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• related to wetlands and controlled open space</li> </ul>                                    | 10. Budget/Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• purchasing</li> <li>• contracts</li> </ul>             |

As a result of position vacancies, it is somewhat difficult to quantify changes needed in staffing levels. Currently, the long range planning function is not filled, and the urban design position is newly created and was only recently filled. The Department is led by an interim Director. During the staff interview process, employees from all areas of the Department commented that the Department is understaffed. As a result of vacant positions and the need to react quickly to the many demands of the Department, the staff members work reactively and have difficulty getting out of a cycle of putting out fires instead of moving the Department forward in a strategic direction.

According to information provided by staff, staff members work approximately 1,506 hours annually, taking into account vacations, sick/personal leave, holidays, training and breaks. In terms of work volume, a significant task area for the Department relates to the application intake process. The approximate number of applications submitted last year was 801. This includes applications such as Special Permits, Comprehensive Permits, Zoning Reviews, Historic District Applications, etc.

Of the total 801 applications, 166 were Local Historic

District Applications and 280 were Historic Demo Applications, or 56% of all applications. Special Permits numbered 67, or 8%. Yet, when this is translated into required hours managing the intake process, Special Permits require 4,650 hours of a total 9,718 hours, which is 48% of the time. The refore, whereas Special Permits represent only about 8% of the total applications, they require almost half of the time of all applications to process. According to staffing hours, 6.4 planners are needed to fulfill the requirements of all the application processes, including Special Permits. Rather than adding more staff, an alternative is to substantially reduce the number of hours required to process special permits.

An additional area of concern relates to Housing and Community Development functions. The staff members are required to complete ongoing reporting to Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The staff members experience frustration with the time needed to write reports that are mandated by HUD. As soon as a report is completed, the next one is due. This results in the staff working reactively and not having the ability to work on more strategic planning initiatives as well as more tactical duties such as managing the loan management database.

Community Development also manages the Continuum of Care program that involves three other communities. Newton manages the program as the other smaller communities have much smaller departments. This additional work also contributes to workload issues. While a temporary part-time position assists with the program, this is insufficient for the time of work required.

The Department should also develop a longer range human resources plan that outlines positions for the future. For examples, the Department has a need to facilitate many public meetings; therefore, there is a need for the creation of a position responsible for all of the engagement efforts, both public meetings and online engagement. Rather than add this position immediately, it is recommended to wait until such time that a new structure is given time to work. The position may also be shared with other departments that have a need for public engagement.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Implement process improvements before adding more staff positions, aside from an additional deputy director position.
2. Restructure the Department as outlined.
3. Develop a long range human resource plan.

## PROCESS MANAGEMENT

### DEFINITION

*Continuously improving efficiency and effectiveness of work systems. Designs and innovates work systems to maximize return on investment of resources, minimize redundancy, and work standardization, where appropriate. Controls overall costs of work systems and prevents defects, service errors and rework. Identifies key customer requirements and evaluates performance of processes according to those requirements.*

### CURRENT CONDITIONS

Observations of process management include the following:

- Little process documentation and monitoring.
- Many key processes require hand-offs between departments. These processes are not documented.
- Processes do not have a “champion” or project manager responsible for the whole.
- Files are not organized well.
- The lack of process documentation makes it difficult to identify where the petition is in the process and its status.
- There is no standard way to train new employees, other department staff, petitioners, City officials, or petition attorneys.
- There is no method for identifying how much time is spent actually working on a petition versus the time the petition is in a stack, waiting to be touched/ worked on. Typically, in an inefficient process, stack/ wait time can consume over 90% of a petition’s cycle time.
- Project and process cycle-times are not tracked. In addition, there are no timeline goals.
- Outside attorneys know and work the process best, suggesting that the outside attorney is the project manager.
- There is no formal process for quality control and no way to monitor process compliance.
- How well are all core processes known and precisely followed?
- Process with commissions and committees is administrative in nature; staff member’s professional expertise is not getting full weight and authority.
- Role of staff in the process is seen as simply administrative and information gathering.
- There are opportunities for work standardization.
- There is a level of frustration with turnaround time of hiring.

As part of the Job Analysis Questionnaire, the Department’s key processes were identified by staff. Key

processes include:

- Special Permits
- Development Review
- Management of the Community Preservation Act
- Management and improvement of zoning ordinance, zoning ordinance amendments
- Property rezonings
- Commissions and committee meeting processes
- Administering State Wetlands Protection Regulations
- Facilitation of public meetings
- Record income of federal grant programs
- Relationships with business community
- Ordinance updates
- Management of Comprehensive Plan
- Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report
- Project management
- Filing system management

Process management is an area of the Department that must greatly improve. The lack of written process documentation throughout the Department leads to inconsistencies and inefficiencies. Additionally, there is a lack of institutional knowledge as a result of staff turnover in key positions. New employees do not have an advantage of learning processes quickly because of the lack of written documentation. The same is true for residents, petitioners, etc.

The staff members were given an exercise to complete related to lean practices. Simply stated, lean is defined as creating more value for customers with fewer resources. A lean organization understands customer value and focuses its key processes to continuously improve them. The ultimate goal is to provide perfect value to the customer through a perfect value creation process that has zero waste. Waste includes the following forms:

- Over-production
- Motion
- Inventory
- Transportation
- Waiting
- Underutilized employees
- Defects
- Over processing

Evidence of waste exists within the Department. This statement is made not to suggest that staff members



intentionally cause inefficiencies and ineffectiveness. It relates to the environment in which the employees work. It may seem incongruous that while staff members have heavy workloads that the results would include underutilized staff, yet there is an underutilization of skills, as a result of the excessive amount of routine work that is created by clerical duties such as managing committee and commission meetings and undocumented core processes. During the staff workshop, leadership team members were asked to rate the following practices/attributes:

- Firefighting is a common phenomenon in the organization
- Management inspection
- Standard processes do not exist in the organization
- Performance of processes is not measured or monitored
- Processes require multiple signatures or approvals
- There is ongoing rework
- Excessive e-mail and other "e" wastes
- Information needed to do work takes excessive time to receive
- Workspace is cluttered and disorganized
- Number of full-time staff increases, without increasing business volume

Areas of most significant concern for staff include firefighting, management inspection, processes do not get improved, process performance is not measured or monitored, and processes require multiple signatures or approvals. In a brainstorming process with staff, the processes in the greatest need of improvement include:

- Hiring process
- Long range planning, as a result of a position vacancy
- Development Review Process, including the Special Permit process
- Drafting ordinances for Councillors
- Management of committees and commissions
- File management

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following information outlines recommendations to improve the management of processes, including specific processes to improve.

1. The hiring process requires support from the

Human Resources Department. As a result, this is beyond the scope of the report and requires Planning and Development staff to meet with Human Resources. However, within the Department, the recommendation is to develop an HR tracking system that tracks turnover, training requirements, employee paperwork, etc.

2. There is a lack of institutional knowledge as a result of turnover of staff and lack of documentation of processes. Key processes that have been identified should be documented. Important customer requirements should also be identified.
3. Special permit process should be streamlined. The Special Permit process includes the following steps:
  - Initial Development review meeting with petitioner and City staff
  - Intake of the special permit application
  - Review of the special permit application and plans
  - Writing of public hearing memorandum which is sent to the Land Use Committee and the petitioner and is available to the public
  - Assisting the Land Use Committee during the working session for the special permit project, including preparing a PowerPoint and answering questions
  - Many projects require multiple meetings of the Land Use Committee, and therefore multiple staff memos and presentations.
  - Drafting and editing of the board order which is the legal document associated with the special permit
  - Organizing paper and electronic files in community plus
  - Reviewing building permit plans for consistency with the special permit
  - Reviewing the final as-built plans for the certificate of occupancy

There are multiple staff members involved in the process, including Current Land Use Planners, Current Land Use Senior Planner, Chief Zoning Code Official, and Department Director. In addition, staff from a number of other Departments are involved. Therefore, there are many hands involved in the process. One process improvement includes reducing the number of staff involved.

Special Permits are approved by the Alderman and are primarily a perfunctory process. Rather than having the Councillors involved in approving all special permits, a recommendation includes creating criteria that outline an approval process for the more complex special permits. More routine permits should be processed entirely by staff. This will increase the value of work by employees by reducing staff time dedicated toward the permit process. The Department has prepared a Special Permits brochure that outlines the approach, which is helpful.

4. Develop a standardized template for the Development Review process. To supplement this, another recommendation includes flow charting the Development Review process and include that on the website. An example is Portland, OR website: [www.portlandoregon.gov](http://www.portlandoregon.gov) that has the development review process flow charted with user friendly features that allows viewers to click on each major step of the process. The website also has a list of frequently asked questions and most recently asked questions.
5. Develop a standardized memo format for each type of project review, as appropriate. As part of reviewing and documenting the associated processes, ensure that these memos, which form the basis for staff's interaction with the respective boards or committees, appropriately represents staff's role in the process, elevating it beyond being simply administrative and information gathering.
6. Planning and Development staff members work with 26 boards and commissions. Considering each committee requires an average of 120 hours per year, there is a significant percentage of time spent working with the commissions, boards, and committees. This amounts to at least 3,120 hours per year, or the equivalent of two full-time positions. The process could be improved by having an administrative person responsible for coordinating all activities of the groups. In addition, some of the groups should be eliminated, such as combining the four Historic District Commissions, Auburndale, Chestnut Hill, Newtonville, and Upper Falls into the Historic District Commission. All agendas and meeting minutes should be delivered electronically.
7. Create an orientation process and written manuals for committee and commission members in order to create improved effectiveness. Preparation of this material should include a review of staff versus

committee member roles. As time has evolved, many of the committees have taken on more of a policy orientation and exert too much control over staff.

8. Develop a satisfaction measurement system to continuously gauge committee members' satisfaction with the meetings and serving on the committee. This will serve as an evaluation process and should address areas such as process efficiencies, meeting frequency, and meeting effectiveness.
9. Develop mechanisms to reduce the amount of service counter transactions and move more transactions online. Brochures for Historic Preservation, Housing Rehabilitation, Living with Wetlands, and Special Permits exist to help residents and serve to reduce questions for staff – these should be expanded to include online versions. Move transactions from paper to online. Develop instructional videos.
10. The Department should document how the organization designs, manages, and improves key processes to deliver customer value and achieve organizational success and sustainability. The management of process includes two areas of performance: work process design and work process management.

Design concepts include how processes are developed and improved to meet customer requirements. The first step is to identify key work processes, which has been done. Secondly, key customer requirements for the processes need to be identified. Processes should incorporate cycle time, productivity, cost control, and other efficiency and effectiveness metrics.

The management of work processes includes ensuring how they meet key customer requirements and the identification of key performance indicators for the control and improvement of processes.

There are opportunities to develop standard work techniques in order to strengthen quality of services, as well as improving staff efficiency. The concept of "standard work" comes from a body of knowledge, from Office Kaizen, or a system of reducing waste such as inefficiencies that exist in office environments. Standard work is defined as the best way to do the job that is currently known. The "best way" can be defined in many ways. A useful description is that

standard work is the safest way to complete the task with outstanding quality that meets the output needs of the organization and provides superior customer satisfaction.

There are examples of staff that do a great job, but the way they do it evolved by itself and, even if it is superior, is not an established standard for everyone. The lack of standard work contributes to errors and variability in process outcomes. If three employees each do a task in a slightly different manner, it is often difficult to determine the cause of the mistakes.

Additionally, when three employees, for example, train the next three employees, the differences between them usually become greater as the new workers add their own well-intentioned embellishments. For these reasons, standard work is a bedrock principle of world-class work environments. It is usually developed by a team involving the workers, their supervisor, and the process customers. The team analyzes the performance requirements of the task. They review how everyone does the task and then decide the single best way to do it. This is often accomplished by the group constructing a flowchart of the process and discovering the different decisions, job aids, and judgments that the various workers employ. The final determination of the best way might require some experimentation and testing.

Once the best way to do the task is determined, it is documented and perhaps accompanied by a flowchart or task list. The standard work techniques are then documented in procedural manuals to guide employees in how to best accomplish work. It is very important. The development of check lists or how-to-guides are effective tools to use for standard work. This information is particularly helpful for new staff, both full-time and part-time.

There is an extensive body of knowledge for learning process management and continuous improvement techniques. One of the requirements is the development of a process improvement approach that includes a 10 step framework for change.

## 10 STEP PROCESS IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

1. What do we want to accomplish?
  - ◇ Create a charter to define team direction, mission statement, membership and roles, guidelines, objectives, and goals
2. Identify customers and their requirements
3. What are we doing now and how well are we doing it?
  - ◇ Define the process
  - ◇ Collecting and analyzing data such as output measures, process cycle times, project completion percentages, customer satisfaction, etc.
4. What can we do better?
  - ◇ Define the preferred state
  - ◇ Determining gaps and improvement opportunities
5. What prevents us from doing better?
  - ◇ Possible causes
  - ◇ Focusing on the root cause
6. What changes could we make to do better?
  - ◇ Generating potential solutions
  - ◇ Choosing the best solution
7. Implement the solution
8. Monitor results
9. If it worked, how can we do it every time?
  - ◇ Standardize
10. What did we learn?
  - ◇ Celebrate

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

### DEFINITION

*Performance management is defined as an ongoing, systematic approach to improving results through evidence-based decision making, continuous organizational learning, and a focus on accountability for performance.*

*Performance management is integrated into all aspects of an organization's management and policy-making processes, transforming an organization's practices so it is focused on achieving improved results for the public. Performance management comprises the concerted actions an organization takes to apply objective information to improve results. \**

Performance Management includes seven principles, as follows:

- A. A results focus permeates strategies, processes, the organizational culture, and decisions.
- B. Information, measures, goals, priorities, and activities are relevant to the priorities and well-being of the government and the community.
- C. Information related to performance, decisions, regulations, and processes is transparent —easy to access, use, and understand.
- D. Goals, programs, activities, and resources are aligned with priorities and desired results.
- E. Decisions and processes are driven by timely, accurate, and meaningful data.
- F. Practices are sustainable over time and across organizational changes.
- G. Performance management transforms the organization, its management, and the policy-making process.

\* David N. Ammons, ed., *Leading Performance Management in Local Government* (Washington, DC: ICMA Press, 2008), v, ix.

### CURRENT CONDITIONS

Well-defined performance management systems include a connection between goals and objectives and work tasks, which are developed within a framework for strategic direction. As a result of the Department's need to be reactive to work system demands, staff members in the Department have little available time to work on strategic efforts. The Department has initiated a workload distribution process that analyzes workloads, tasks, and hours required.

Within the budget process, the Department lists its current year accomplishments and future year desired outcomes. There are almost 30 strategies listed by functional area: long range planning, land use and transportation, economic development, conservation, historic preservation, and community development and housing. The number of strategies is overwhelming for an organization that has significant daily demands being responsive to multiple partners and stakeholders. The annual work plan should be doable within the available staff hours.

Furthermore, the strategies do not address the department as a whole; they are compartmentalized into separate and distinct functions. Strategies should serve as the over-arching framework that pulls all of the functions in a unified vision. The functional areas should then have more individual strategies aligned with the vision of the Department.

Currently, the Department does not have Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that identify organizational performance. There is a desire to identify KPIs that reflect the strategic direction for the Department. The City of Newton uses DataStat Newton as part of the City's performance management system. Eight desired outcomes were identified, many of which include efforts by Planning and Development. This includes:

- ◇ Vibrant, diverse community life
- ◇ Environmental sustainability
- ◇ Robust economic development
- ◇ Long term financial sustainability
- ◇ Community engagement

Performance management also relates to employee feedback and growth and development opportunities. Currently, employees desire more opportunities for training to further develop their skill sets.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. On an annual basis, list the top three to five needed process improvements and go through the 10 step improvement process to streamline the process. During the first year, processes for study should include the Special Permit Process, committee and commission process review, and organization structure changes.
2. The Goal of the Management and Organizational Analysis Report is to develop a framework for ongoing establishment of a strategic planning process. Strategy is an ongoing process that



requires continuous review of goals, objectives, and strategy. Strategic direction should include an approximately three year future listing of strategies, goals, and objectives in a formal strategic plan document. The Management and Organizational Analysis Report will serve as a starting point to this process. Other ongoing planning initiatives such as the Housing Needs Analysis should be combined with the recommendations included within this report into one overall strategic plan.

The following information includes a listing of all the elements included in a best practices approach to strategy development, which includes both strategy development and strategy deployment. This is based on the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Criteria for Performance Excellence, a highly regarded approach for organizational excellence. This formalizes a strategy development approach for the Department. This serves as a checklist to ensure the Department follows all of the following items in operationalizing strategic direction.

#### A. Strategy Development

- **Strategic Planning Process** How is strategic planning conducted? What are the key process steps? Who are the key participants? What are short- and longer-term planning horizons? How does the strategic planning process address these planning horizons? How does the strategic planning process address the need for organizational agility and operational flexibility?
- **Innovation** How is an environment created that supports innovation? How are strategic opportunities identified? Which strategic opportunities are intelligent risks for pursuing?
- **Work Systems and Core Competencies** What are the key work systems? How are work system decisions made?
- **Strategy Considerations** How is relevant data collected and analyzed and include this information on these key elements as part of the strategic planning process?
  - ◇ Strategic challenges and strategic advantages
  - ◇ Risks to organizational sustainability
  - ◇ Potential blind spots in the strategic planning process and information
  - ◇ Ability to execute the strategic plan

#### B. Strategic Objectives

- **Key Strategic Objectives** What are the key strategic objectives and the timetable for achieving them?
- **Strategic Objective Considerations** How do your strategic objectives:
  - ◇ Address your strategic challenges and leverage your core competencies, strategic advantages, and strategic opportunities;
  - ◇ Balance the short- and longer-term time horizons; and
  - ◇ Consider and balance the needs of all key stakeholders?

#### C. Strategy Implementation

#### D. Action Plan Development and Deployment

- **Action Plan Development** How do you develop action plans? What are key short- and longer-term action plans, and what is their relationship to strategic objectives?
- **Action Plan Implementation** How do you deploy action plans throughout the organization to the workforce and to key partners, as appropriate, to ensure that you achieve your key strategic objectives?
- **Resource Allocation** How do you ensure that financial and other resources are available to support the achievement of your action plans while you meet current obligations? How do you allocate these resources to support the plans?
- **Workforce Plans** What are the key workforce plans to support short- and longer-term strategic objectives and action plans? How do the plans address potential impacts on your workforce members and any potential changes in workforce capability and capacity needs?
- **Performance Measures** What key performance measures or indicators do you use to track the achievement and effectiveness of your action plans? How do you ensure that your overall action plan measurement system reinforces organizational alignment?
- **Action Plan Modification** How do you establish and implement modified action plans if circumstances require a shift in plans and rapid execution of new plans?

The Department should have a strategic plan document that outlines an approximate three year horizon into the future, with short and longer term goals and objectives. This is a subsequent task upon the completion of the analysis. The final Recommendation section will outline the strategies needed by the Department, which will also include priorities. The strategic plan should also cascade to divisions within the Department, such as housing, community preservation, and planning. Currently, there is a community-wide Housing Strategy that should be aligned with the Department's overall strategy.

3. The Department should identify approximately twelve to fifteen KPIs to monitor performance. Staff members currently are making efforts to create performance metrics. The comparative agencies included in the analysis did not offer much information about Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). In reviewing other planning agencies not included in the comparative analysis, some measures typically include:
  - CDBG value
  - CDBG programs
  - New housing program income
  - New affordable housing units underway
  - Zoning caseload
  - Retail vacancy rates
  - Historic District Cases
  - Amount of economic value added
  - Cycle time for permits
  - Output measures such as number of permit applications
  - Number of recipients helped by Housing Division
  - Customer satisfaction
4. In order to strengthen employee skill sets and professional development, individual career development plans should be created that align Departmental competencies with employee development. Competencies include the areas listed within the major functions of the Department: planning, customer service, housing/human services, long range planning, environmental/conservation, economic development, community design, historic preservation, and budget/administration. This will also assist succession planning efforts.



# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The Comparative Analysis was conducted during September and October 2015. Six departments were contacted. Five departments responded. The survey was not intended to be a random sample; cities were evaluated for relevance based on size (population) and relative reputations as successful planning departments with attributes from which Newton can learn.

Planning Departments Surveyed:

- Schaumburg, Illinois
- Oak Park, Illinois
- Naperville, Illinois
- Hampton, Virginia
- Brookline, Massachusetts

In order to get more robust information to include in the analysis, information from three additional cities was included. These cities are members of the Alliance for Innovation, which is a non-profit organization committed to improving innovation in local government. These cities include:

- Fairfax, VA
- Charlottesville, VA
- Providence, RI

The following chart lists each of the departments and their major functions. The areas of responsibility vary greatly among the agencies, which makes comparisons difficult. Nonetheless, the comparisons are helpful in creating context and analysis for Newton operations.



*Brookline, Massachusetts*

## A. FUNCTIONAL AREAS OF DEPARTMENTS

**Newton, MA Planning and Development:** includes Planning, Economic Development, Housing, and Community Development.

**Schaumburg, IL Community Development:** Planning and Permits, Community Development, Economic Development, Community Development Engineering, and Code Enforcement.

**Oak Park, IL Development Customer Service:** Permit Processing, Business Services, Neighborhood Services, and Planning.

**Naperville, IL Transportation, Engineering, and Development (TED):** includes Transportation and Traffic, Engineering, Development and Planning Services. In 2001 when the City realigned resources so that all civil and traffic engineering functions and planning, building, and development functions would be coordinated into a single work group.

**Hampton, VA Community Development:** includes Property Maintenance and Zoning, Planning and Zoning Administration, Housing and Neighborhood Services, Development Services Center (permits), Construction Inspection, Permits and Inspections, and Support Services.

**Fairfax, VA Community Development and Planning:** includes Planning, Community Development, and Zoning Administration Division.

**Charlottesville, VA Neighborhood Development Services:** includes Housing, Inspections, Historic Preservation, Transportation, Engineering, and Zoning.

**Providence, RI Planning and Development:** includes Housing, Community Development, and Planning.

**Brookline, MA Planning and Community Development:** includes Regulatory Planning, Economic Development, and Community Planning.



## B. DEPARTMENT SIZE AND BUDGET

The following information lists population, total area, planning and development staffing, and budget information, as follows:

	Newton, MA	Schaumburg, IL	Oak Park, IL	Naperville, IL	Hampton, VA	Brookline, MA	Fairfax, VA	Charlottesville, VA	Providence, RI	Comp Avg
Population	86,241	74,227	52,000	144,000	137,436	58,732	24,483	45,000	177,994	89,234
Total Area (Square Miles)	18.2	19	4	36	135	7	6.3	10.3	20.6	30
Planning & Development (FTE)	27	18	29	24	54	14.8	16.5	37	40	28
Population per Planning Staff	3,194	4,124	1,793	6,000	3,124	3,960	1,484	1,216	4,450	3,269
Total Annual Budget	\$1.46M	\$700k	\$400k	\$500k	\$3.1M	\$390k	\$2.2M	\$2.97M	\$5.2M	\$1.6M

The City of Newton has 27 Full Time Equivalent staff in their Department of Planning and Development for a population of 86,241, which calculates to 3,194 city population per planning staff member. This ratio falls in line with the average of 3,269 populations per planning staff of the eight cities as detailed in the table. However, it is important to note that the agencies included all have varying amounts of responsibilities. Some of the departments include code enforcement, engineering, and transportation responsibilities. Other planning departments focus exclusively on planning, economic development, and economic development. Population per planning and development staff person ranged from a low of Charlottesville 1,216 population per staff person to a high of 6,000 population per staff person in Naperville, IL.

According to 2015 budgeted expenses for planning and development, the average department budget is \$1.6 million. Newton's was slightly below the average at \$1.46 million. Comparing budgets is difficult to assess as each department has varying functions. Specifically, some departments include transportation, inspectional services, and engineering as part of their department.

## C. PLANNING PROCESSES

The following information outlines planning approaches used by other departments.

### 1. ELECTED OFFICIAL INVOLVEMENT

- It is worth noting that Massachusetts communities have far fewer elected officials than Newton. As an example, here is a listing of a few selected nearby cities:

- ◇ Newton 24
- ◇ Waltham 15
- ◇ Cambridge 9

◇ Somerville 11

◇ Watertown 9

◇ Medford 7

- For Schaumburg, when a planner is contacted or meets with a potential applicant for a development review project, a "developer contact" email is sent out to all elected officials summarizing the discussion of the project. Elected officials may respond to the email individually (in favor or against the project, have a question about the project, etc.) and it allows planners to provide informal feedback to the applicant. Likewise, all development review projects going through a review process (starting with staff review, and followed by review by our Zoning Board of Appeals, Plan Commission, or directly to the Village Board) and are ultimately approved (or denied) by the Village Board.
- Oak Park has contracted with the Oak Park Economic Development Corporation (OPEDC) to review development proposals for Village Owned land. The Village President, a trustee and the Village Manager sit on their Executive Committee. The Executive Committee makes a recommendation to the Village Board and if approved, Village Staff is directed to negotiate written agreements.
- For Hampton, prior to City Council review, elected officials have limited involvement in the development review process. Leading up to City Council review, plans are reviewed by internal departments for technical compliance with the Municipal Code. A case is not scheduled for review by the Planning Board and City Council until such time that the plans have met code requirements or the petitioner decides to move forward without staff support. When a case is scheduled for City Council review, staff receives questions in advance of the meeting from elected officials through written Q & A or internal meetings.



At the City Council meeting, public testimony is taken on the case, additional questions are asked of staff and the petitioner, and City Council renders a decision (which may include additional conditions of approval).

- Naperville City Council makes the final legislative decisions concerning development in the City. This includes adoption of ordinances, action on rezonings and use permits and adoption of the comprehensive plan and other development policies. Projects involved in a by-right development review may be the source of complaints to elected officials. These complaints are passed on to the City Manager who handles them with the appropriate city administrative department.

## 2. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN DEVELOPERS AND DEVELOPMENT DECISION MAKERS.

- In Schaumburg, a developer may request to meet with the Mayor and Village Manager regarding their project; however, most communication is handled internally between planning staff/planning director and the elected officials and developer.
- In Oak Park, the OPEDC handles pre-approval communication. Post-approval communication is primarily handled by Village Staff.
- Developers in Naperville communicate either directly with the elected officials or through the Assistant to the City Council (who then directs this communication to the elected officials).
- The P & ZA division in Hampton handles development projects that require legislative action by the City Council, Board of Zoning Appeals, or the Wetlands Board. Staff communicates with developers throughout the inquiry, pre-application, and application review process. Ex parte communications about proposed projects between applicants and elected or appointed members of decision making bodies are discouraged by staff which allows for greater objectivity.

## 3. MANAGEMENT OF PROJECTS

- Schaumburg's development review applications are reviewed through a Project Review Group meeting two weeks after a formal submittal has been completed.
- Currently, the Oak Park Director of Development Customer serves as the Project manager and is

responsible for moving projects through the process. They are in the process of implementing a new software solution called CityView which will allow projects to be managed over time.

- Naperville's development projects are managed as they are submitted. The City commits to standard review times (i.e., 21 days for first submittals; 14 days for subsequent submittals) that are adhered to throughout the development process. As the City is committed to the review schedule, the developer largely drives the development timeline based on their timelines in addressing comments and preparing resubmittals. For Planning Team special projects, staff does issue a work program to the City Council annually.

## D. TECHNOLOGY

Technology arose as a key theme across departments in several ways. First of all, departments emphasized that good technology was important for organization of information, efficiency of accessing that information as the development processes progress, and community engagement. Oak Park is the only city with a technology plan, although Hampton is in the process of developing one. Examples of technology use include:

- Schaumburg, IL sends out a "developer contacts" email after meeting with a developer on a project, and all contacts and feedback from elected officials are stored in a database that the IT Department developed. Schaumburg also has all project documents (plans, applications, staff reports) stored in an enterprise-wide database for quick access for all members of the Project Review Group and Village Manager's Office.
- All cities use geographical information systems (GIS).
- The City of Providence GIS Portal provides users with online mapping capability and access to published municipal data sets (including, but not limited to, zoning, parcels and building footprints). They also have permit applications, plans, payment, and printing permit cards online.
- Cities are using dashboards that show real time information for Key Performance Indicators. The information is shown in easy to read graphics, usually with year to year trend data.
- The City of Oak Park is currently in the process of implementing CityView, a software solution

that contains programs to manage Property Information, Permits and Inspections, Planning, Code Enforcement, Licensing, Animal Licensing, Service Requests, Rental Housing, Cemetery Management, Parking Management, and Cashiering. It also includes self-service techniques to reduce transactions at City Hall.

- Oak Park completed beta testing of performing electronic plan reviews as a prelude to transforming the plan review process into an electronic document handling system with a new permitting software system, Tidemark.
- Oak Park also has budgeted for an imaging program. A vendor was hired to scan documents in order to not tie up Oak Park staff time scanning documents.

A couple of other examples beyond the comparative analysis agencies:

- OpenGov is a cloud based technology that provides data analytics and reports. It is delivered as a software-as-a-service (SaaS), so it does not require having to rely on IT to set up servers or manage a lengthy implementation. Middletown, RI is a user of the system.
- The City of Riverside, CA uses ePlan Review, which is a web based electronic plan and document workflow solution that allows for online submission, review, and approval processes for permits. They also offer Design Professional Training for individuals and companies wanting to streamline and expedite building projects. In addition, all of their committee meeting agendas and minutes are online from 2002 to current. They have five committees/commissions.

## E. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The Planning and Development Department has significant interactions with Newton residents. There is no formal process guiding the staff in utilizing various forms of engagement. The City of Raleigh has a documented approach to engagement that outlines what type of engagement to use for different scenarios. Newton's Planning and Development staff are listed on the website, which is most helpful to residents. Many city websites do not include easy access to staff contact information. In addition, Newton posts weekly report

updates on the City's website, which is a good example of government transparency. The Department has prepared a Special Permits brochure that outlines the approach, which is helpful. The following lists other technology observations from the comparative information:

- Technology is important as a tool for public engagement. Advertising public meetings online and making project materials available online lead to better engagement. Tools like Survey Monkey and MindMixer (now mySidewalk) help engage the public in new ways and reach a younger generation of engaged citizen who expects their civic interaction to be available via the internet. Rock Hill, South Carolina utilizes a program called Open City Hall, an online tool for public engagement.
- Many city websites have Frequently Asked Questions on their sites in order to reduce the number of transactions departments need to handle in person or on the phone.
- Naperville has an online customer satisfaction survey.
- Another opportunity for engagement may be the development of short "how to" videos that outline steps involved in various applications and permit processes.



## F. COMMUNICATION WITH COMMITTEES, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Planning department management of various committees and commissions is a challenge for departments across the country. They must balance between getting full input from various committees and management of staff time and efficiency in working with the groups. Newton has, by far, the greatest number of committees and commissions to manage with staff time. Numbers of committees/commissions for each of the cities includes (list excludes city councils):

- Newton 28
- Schaumburg 3
- Oak Park 11
- Naperville 4
- Hampton 3
- Fairfax 4
- Charlottesville 5
- Providence 8
- Brookline 6

This is an area that warrants change. The amount of staff time managing the 28 committees and commissions is substantial. Newton currently has a Land Use Committee and Zoning and Planning Committee, both comprised of Councillors. Both of these meet every two weeks at a minimum, sometimes much more frequently depending on the volume of special permit applications. Typically, cities operate with just a Planning Board. These two committees could be combined. In addition, Newton has four historic preservation districts: Upper Falls; Chestnut Hill; Newtonville; and Auburndale. The districts could be merged into one and included as part of the Newton Historical Commission, which would oversee City-wide historic preservation efforts. These changes would result in reducing work activity, re-work, and additional management inspection, which results in increased staff efficiency.



## G. STAFF TRAINING

Departments had various levels of sophistication in their existing training, but those with outdated or disorganized materials discussed updating them as a key priority for onboarding. Hampton, VA has a very robust staff onboarding process that prepares staff to join the planning department and sets expectations for their role and day to day tasks. Hampton conducts internal training programs and connects staff with external training programs in interest areas where applicable. These programs help keep the entire department staff current with best practices in the field. Professional development support is another key component to staff retention, including providing support for planners pursuing licensure. Orientation to Newton's Planning and Development Department was expressed as a weakness.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop an IT plan for the Department.
2. Develop individual career development plans.
3. Provide online application option for residents.
4. Develop additional methods on the website to answer resident questions



## THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT OF THE FUTURE

The following section details four major theme areas for future planning departments, according to the American Planning Association.

### EMPHASIS ON COMMUNITY FOCUSED DESIGN

Planning as a field of study and practice must evolve alongside the cities for which it is planning, including consideration of the triple bottom line (environment, equity, and economy). The traditional role of planners as reactive regulators must be broadened to include active planning for capital improvement, programming, sustainable development, climate change resilience, etc.

Community focused design is a process by which the community planners are designing for, and its unique combination of culture, geography, and socioeconomics, becomes the center of the design process. Design tactics and combination of landscape, public space, amenities, and other solutions are informed directly by the needs, desires, and habits of that community. This process requires designers to be nimble and flexible enough to adapt and edit their solutions based on community feedback—integrating and engaging the community into every step of the process from pre-design research and dialogue, to getting feedback on design concepts and prototypes, to noticing how the community uses the final product and making changes accordingly.

### TECHNOLOGY FOR BETTER OPERATIONS AND PLANNING

Technology is ever more engrained in personal and professional life. It is natural to consider its expanded role in the planning department of the future. Some of this shift is generational; a younger generation of employees expect to have the technological resources to do their jobs at maximum efficiency. In the face of shrinking budgets, improvements in operational efficiency achieved through technology are vital for the success of departments. The reach of technology extends far beyond just enabling internal efficiency, however, it has the power to fundamentally change the planning process and the plan outcomes. The planning office of the future will have access to tools and data to enable the department to make ever better informed, empirically based policy recommendations.

### CITIZEN ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY AND THE PLANNING PROCESS

Technology also facilitates the ability to engage, educate, and serve the public. Equitable, easy access to digital information should be promoted by treating internet access as public infrastructure. The planning office of the future will have increased transparency and accountability through provision of digital information regarding city projects, progress, and initiatives.

### ADAPTING TO CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

A more diverse public needs to be engaged in different ways. Planning departments must also acknowledge that community values, needs, and aspirations will vary across generations, race, and cultures. Outreach efforts must be broad and accessible, with allowances for access to the planning process across various outreach methods and languages. Cities must monitor demographic changes and projections and plan accordingly.

Demographic shifts also change how cities need to consider their human resources policies. Where possible, reflecting the diversity of the city in the city staff is desirable. Attracting young, talented workers (the future leaders of the department) requires adapting hiring processes and workplace culture and environment to remain competitive with private and non profit sectors. While a goal of salaries that are competitive with the private sector is unrealistic, genuine investment needs to be made in promoting the benefits of working in a mission based public serving organization.

### ECONOMIC AWARENESS

To earn credibility and marshal scarce fiscal resources, the planning office of the future must be able to make a compelling economic case for why the planning function is critically important to the community. Common outcomes of effective planning include increased property values, job retention and attraction, increased revenues from property and sales taxes, reductions in vehicle-miles of travel and related congestion and air pollution, and many others. To the extent feasible, the planning office of the future must be able to draw direct connections between planning activities and such outcomes.

\*Adapted from *Planning Office of the Future Task Force Report*, American Planning Association, April 2015



# RECOMMENDATIONS

The following information includes the recommendations outlined in each section of the Report. The recommendations are listed as either short term, mid-term, or long term. Many include tactical approaches to completion where multiple steps are involved.

## SHORT TERM 2016

### 1. Operationalize the Department's Mission and Values

Approach: Provide all employees with a copy of the mission and values, include the mission on Departmental literature, and provide an overview of these during a new employee orientation process. Performance feedback should include a review of the employee's contribution to Departmental values.

### 2. Restructure the Department

Approach: Begin by hiring a permanent director. Create job descriptions for the two Deputy positions and hire these positions. This becomes the Department's Executive Team.

### 3. Create an Ongoing Strategic Planning Process

Approach: Start by including the short term recommendations on a spreadsheet, identify who is responsible for completing the recommendation, start and projected end date, and create an ongoing reporting process on a quarterly basis.

### 4. Create a Departmental Orientation Process

Approach: create a departmental checklist and include a review of mission, vision, and values. Review the results of this study.

### 5. Streamline the Special Permit Process

Approach: develop criteria for permits that should be handled solely by staff.

### 6. Initiate methods to improve the consistency of the Development Review Process.

### 7. Develop a List of Key Performance Indicators.

## MID TERM 2017-2018

### 1. Develop a Vision Statement, aligned with the mission.

### 2. Create Leadership Competencies

Approach: Identify leadership development opportunities aligned with the competencies. Examples of competencies can include areas such as innovation, change management, coaching and feedback, communication skills, strategic thinking, use of technology, etc.

### 3. Document Key Processes

Approach: Flow chart or list key process steps. Identify customer requirements for each process. Monitor key process performance and identify how processes are improved. These should be routinely reviewed and improved as needed. Process documentation should be part of the new employee orientation process.

### 4. Improve Interdepartmental Communication

Approach: Work with other department heads in improving communication among other departments to minimize silos, and improve processes across departments. To improve processes, identify the most critical ones that reach across departments. Assign a process manager to implement the 10 Step Improvement Process, as outlined earlier in the report.

### 5. Create an orientation process and written manual for committee and commission members

## MID TERM 2017-2018 (CONT.)

### 6. Reduce The Number Of Committees And Commissions

Approach: This includes combining the Zoning and Planning Committee with the Land Use Committee. The recommendation also includes reducing staffing for the the Farm Commission.

The final recommendation includes folding the four Local Historic Districts into one citywide district. This is recommended to reduce staff time dedicated to managing the four Local Historic Districts. Subsequently, determine the feasibility of integrating the one combined Historic District with the Historic Preservation Committee.

### 7. Reduce Service Counter Transactions

Approach: Move more transactions online. Have the process steps flow charted or steps listed on the website.

### 8. Hire A Community Engagement Staff Person

### 9. Develop Individual Career Development Plans

### 10. Provide Online Application Options for Residents

### 11. Increase the use of mapping tools for data analysis such as performance management and public engagement

### 12. Assign responsibility for the management of files, organize files, and centralize information as needed.

## LONG TERM 2018-2020

### 13. Develop a Long Range Human Resources Plan

Approach: Plan will identify new and evolving positions in a five year time frame.

### 14. Work with HR to improve the hiring process

Approach: The recommendation is to develop an HR tracking software system that tracks turnover, training requirements, employee paperwork, etc.

### 15. Develop a Commission/Committee Member Satisfaction Measurement System

Approach: A satisfaction measurement system would continuously gauge committee members' satisfaction with the meetings and committee service.

### 16. Develop an IT Plan

### 17. Develop Public Engagement Guidelines

Approach: Outline various community input options and identify the extent to which engagement will be used for each project/process.



# IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

The following section provides guidance for the implementation of the recommendations. In order to successfully implement elements of this Analysis, the Department needs to develop competency related to change management. The deployment of the recommendations listed above requires the Department's ability to embrace change.

- This includes creating a framework for change, such as a detailed change management process chart and an evaluation process for change initiatives.
- Include the recommendations of the analysis as part of the new employee orientation program and review with existing employees.
- Post a summary or shortened version of the Plan on the Website and track results on the site as well. It may also be helpful to print a short summary of the Plan's progress to distribute to interested partners and community members.
- A staff person or team should have responsibility of being the project manager or "champion" of the Plan's implementation to ensure successful implementation.
- Regular reporting of the Plan's progress should occur. Break the Plan into separate fiscal years and report one year at a time, as an ongoing annual work plan. Each recommendation for the year should include a list of tactics that support the goal's completion. It is the project leader's responsibility to report on his/her goal, included in a monthly or quarterly report. A suggestion is to input each year's data on a spreadsheet that lists the strategic recommendations, start and completion date, and which staff person is responsible for the Initiative's completion.
- At the end of the year, perform an annual review and documentation of the recommendations.
- Update major stakeholders on the Plan's results on an annual basis.
- Conduct staff meetings on a quarterly or semi-annual basis to review the Plan's progress and results and report the Plan's progress to the Executive Office.
- The performance feedback process should reflect the completion of the recommendations as an evaluation criterion. Also, performance criteria should be aligned with values of the District such as innovation, teamwork, and accountability.
- Track the measurement system on a quarterly basis. Some of the measures will be calculated annually. Provide an annual narrative about the results. Review the inventory of measures on an annual basis and make adjustments as necessary to ensure the measures continuously add value to decision making. Include a combination of lagging and leading indicators. (Lagging indicators or outcomes measure past performance; leading indicators or performance drivers assist in establishing future performance.)
- After completion of the first year of the Plan and when baseline results are quantified, targets should be initiated for the measurement system.
- There should be an annual just-in-time review of the next year's Initiatives to determine if priorities have changed. This can be included at an annual retreat in which successive years' initiatives are discussed as part of the annual budget process. Initiatives should tie into the budget process.
- Post a chart of each year's recommendations on office walls in administrative areas with a check-off column designating completion as part of a visual management program. Staff meetings should regularly include discussion of strategy. This is a part of the visualization process to emphasize the Plan's importance and the Department's commitment to execution.
- After each year of the Plan, the staff should review the Plan's process and re-tool any parts of the process that need improvement.
- If there are ideas for new strategies that arise throughout the year, include them on a written "parking lot" and review them as part of the annual just-in-time review to determine if they supplant any existing initiatives.