



GOVERNMENT
STRATEGY
GROUP

**MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW
FOR THE CITY OF PERTH AMBOY, NJ
August 28, 2021**

“Innovating the Business of Government”

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Table of Contents

[Click headings to go to there.]

Table of Contents	1
INTRODUCTION	2
MAJOR ISSUES	3
GENERAL GOVERNMENT & ADMINISTRATION	6
Human Resources Review	8
Redevelopment	11
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	13
IT Summary	13
IT Security	14
Applications & Media	23
DEPARTMENTS, OFFICES, & OPERATIONS	24
Office of the City Clerk	24
Police Department	29
Office of Emergency Management	37
Water/Wastewater Utility	38
Municipal Court	50
Fire Department	56
Public Works	61
Parks, Buildings & Grounds	65
Office of Economic and Community Development	67
Engineering	68
Code Enforcement	70
Department of Human Services	77
Harborside Marina Utility	83
Parking Utility	85
FINANCIAL REVIEW	97
COMPARABLES	112
APPENDIX	121
Exhibit 1 – Roster of Interviews and Meetings	121
Exhibit 2 – Project Team	123
Exhibit 3 – Key Performance Indicators	127
Exhibit 4 – Professional Services Schedule of Fees	130

INTRODUCTION

Background

The City of Perth Amboy is one of New Jersey's oldest and most historic communities. Originally settled in colonial times in 1683, Perth Amboy is home to seven national historic sites and forty-six local historic sites.

In 2020, Helmin J. Caba was elected Mayor of Perth Amboy, together with two of his runningmates being elected to City Council – Rose B. Morales and BJ Torres – to join Joel Pabon, William Petrick, and Milady Tejada on that body. With a new Mayor and newly constituted City Council taking office in January 2021, a foundation was laid to bring transformative change and stability to Perth Amboy. Almost immediately, Mayor Caba reached out to established professionals in New Jersey government at all levels to bring into the community expertise and experience to help advise him and the City Council on how to advance their goals and objectives for a bright future for their community. As a result, Government Strategy Group was commissioned to review City departments and operations and make recommendations to enhance the functioning of City government and the services it provides to and for the community.

As with all municipalities, the recent COVID-19 pandemic has served to complicate managing the City and to adversely effect its residents and businesses, leaving many, if not most, struggling to get by. This, in turn, and quite understandably, has created an environment where elected officials have great sympathy for their community and are reluctant to take any actions that would make life even harder for their residents and businesses.

Hopefully, this report and its 150+ recommendations can serve as a roadmap to assist City officials and the community in turning the corner to a more vibrant, livable, and economically stronger community.

Methodology

In preparing this report, detailed interviews were conducted with numerous individuals, including department and division managers and staff, elected officials and other City officials, in order to ascertain facts, evaluate same, and draw conclusions. Attached in the Appendix is a listing of the interviews conducted, with many individuals interviewed multiple times. All available relevant reports and documentation – such as budgets, working forms and reports, current financial and procedural records, backup paperwork and data, third-party studies and reports – were obtained, inspected, and analyzed. At

times, conflicting information was obtained in interviews or otherwise uncovered and extra time devoted to resolving such instances.

A team of ten experienced experts in the management of municipal government plus subject experts were employed in this effort to assist Perth Amboy. A listing of the team members is attached in the Appendix.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this report. Where appropriate, sources have been noted: information for comparables with other municipalities has come from the towns themselves. The cooperation and input of sources are gratefully acknowledged. This report also utilizes respected information sources from the public domain, such as from Rutgers University New Jersey Data Book, the City-Data.com website, the State of New Jersey, the Census of the United States, and the FBI, especially for general information. Additionally, this report uses information, statistics, and data as self-reported by departments, divisions, offices, and agencies of the City. While no one can completely guarantee the type of information in reports of this nature, Government Strategy Group believes all the information presented to be accurate and reliable.

As a disclaimer, nothing contained in this report should be construed as having legal expertise or as legal advice. Such expertise or advice should only be obtained from a licensed attorney with the appropriate knowledge and background.

MAJOR ISSUES

During the course of performing this study, Government Strategy Group detected many issues that merit the attention of the City. Without diminishing the importance of all recommendations, three in particular stand out as being in need of immediate attention.

Quality of Life

Of all the issues of concern in Perth Amboy, “quality of life” concerns dominated Government Strategy Group’s findings, with nearly every City official expressing their concern. Speeding, noise/loud music, overcrowding, illegal housing, unruly public behavior – were all cited as issues effecting the quality of life in Perth Amboy, with the situation having deteriorated over the years and continuing to do so. This is not only a safety concern (for example, vehicle speeding leads to more accidents, injuries, and deaths; overcrowding and illegal housing can lead to tragedies like fires and resulting injuries and loss of life), but it threatens the future livability of the community, which in turn would adversely affect the economy of the City.

Throughout this report, GSG presents a number of findings and recommendations related to this issue and related to the review of a particular department or office. In addition to those recommendations, here we present an overarching recommendation for the City to implement.

Recommendation:

- GSG recommends that the City establish a formal Quality of Life Task Force to monitor the implementation of the quality of life-related recommendations contained in this report, to recommend any additional ones it feels would be helpful based on local knowledge and any changing circumstances, and to oversee progress, or lack of progress, being made. Such a task force should meet monthly and include influential community leaders and representatives of elected officials and City management staff dealing with quality of life issues.

Water Utility

Over the years, Perth Amboy has pursued a policy of keeping residential water rates artificially low while implementing meter charges to business/industrial customers that are substantially higher (in some cases double or more) than what private water companies charge. In effect, City policy has attempted to get the money it needs from 11% of users (i.e., larger meter sizes) rather than from 89% of the users (i.e., residential meter sizes). This is a policy that is not sustainable and has helped to put the water utility in crisis mode, with its future viability in jeopardy. In addition to the threat to the viability of the operation itself, it was reported to GSG that several industrial customers have cited high water rates for businesses in Perth Amboy as an incentive to relocate out of the City, which if it happened would only compound the crisis. By way of example on charges, the following table shows what Middlesex Water charges its own customers based on meter sizes versus what Perth Amboy charges, noting that Middlesex Water also operates the Perth Amboy water system (through a contract held by its subsidiary Utility Service Affiliates).

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW			
Current Water Meter Rates			
METER SIZE	Middlesex Water Co.	Perth Amboy	% PA Higher
1"	\$ 118.14	\$ 145.04	22.8%
1.5"	\$ 236.25	\$ 334.62	41.6%
2"	\$ 378.00	\$ 630.07	66.7%
3"	\$ 708.75	\$ 1,400.77	97.6%
4"	\$ 1,181.25	\$ 2,450.90	107.5%
6"	\$ 2,362.50	\$ 4,237.91	79.4%

Recommendation:

- GSG recommends that the City have a formal rate study prepared regarding charges for water supply by area utilities.
- GSG recommends that the City prepare a detailed five-year plan to strengthen and improve the Water Utility. Such a plan should include a rate study providing information that will assist in decision-making going forward.

The Water Utility merits a deep operational study. Details of the Water Utility situation and additional recommendations regarding the Utility can be found by following this report's Index or by clicking [this link](#) to get there.

Use of Technology

While conducting this review, GSG found three general concerns related to the use of technology: 1, applications in use that are outdated and are no longer supported or are on extended support; 2, excellent software that has been obtained by the City but is not being sufficiently implemented, in particular Spatial Data Logic; and 3, a lack of online service offerings to the community, in particular online payments systems for fees and for program registrations. Individual recommendations regarding these concerns can be found throughout this report, to which we add the recommendations that follow. We have identified this issue – use of technology – as a major issue because it impacts so many areas of City operations.

Recommendations:

- While the City has an IT staff that deals with its IT systems, it does not have staff dedicated solely to software and applications in use for operations and training in the use of same. A City the size of Perth Amboy can not only justify same but benefit greatly from it. GSG recommends that Perth Amboy consider adding a staff person or dedicated solely to software and applications in use for operations and training in the use of same, or retaining an IT consulting firm to perform these functions.
- GSG recommends that the City establish formal training programs for maximizing the use of technology already in place – in particular Spatial Data Logic – and also consider establishing an IT equipped training room where regular training sessions can be conducted without interruption.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT & ADMINISTRATION

The City of Perth Amboy is governed under New Jersey's Faulkner Act, Mayor/Council form of government for municipalities. This form of government is also known as the "strong Mayor/weak Council" form of government, meaning that the Mayor is the Chief Executive Officer with control of the municipal administration, unlike in other forms of government (for example, "Borough" or "Committee") where the Council has the administrative authority or can delegate it in whole or in part to a Business Administrator. While having no administrative authority under the Mayor/Council form of government, the Council does have a very significant role to play in the governance of the City, most notably in the final approval of a City budget and in adopting legislation for the community.

Prior to the new administration of Mayor Helmin Caba taking office in January of this year, the most significant factor affecting the administration of local government of Perth Amboy was the remarkable number of Business Administrators who were appointed in the past – in the past twelve years, ten appointments were made. This obviously speaks to disarray and instability in municipal government in Perth Amboy over that period of time at least. The City's current elected officials have expressed a commitment to work hard to provide for stability in local government going forward, a commendable goal.

An important factor in the City's ability to achieve its goals going forward will be for all elected officials to understand their appropriate roles. Government Strategy Group noticed during its review of the municipal code that it provides in Section 4-13 for "mandatory training" of Council Members from recognized institutions that provide said training (e.g., the New Jersey State League of Municipalities and Rutgers University) and this can be helpful to the effective functioning of the City government. Of course, nothing is a substitute for trust and good communications so always working on that is an important goal.

It was reported to GSG during this review that approximately 25% of Perth Amboy's staff has 20-plus years of service, with many also being 55+ years of age. This underscores the need for succession planning in City government. The City should also be mindful – as all good organizations are – to bring on new staff with capacity to grow and to fill roles of increasing responsibility. Also, to have strong training and professional development programs.

With the history of instability in Perth Amboy's government in recent decades, the importance of working on continuity and stability is emphasized. One of the

components of this is succession planning for the replacement of retiring and departing staff, especially in management and supervisory positions.

There are over 150 recommendations throughout this report dealing with specific issues and concerns. As additional general recommendations pertaining to governance and administration, Government Strategy Group offers the following.

Recommendations:

- The City should begin to implement formal succession plans for all departments, offices, and agencies. Each of them should be responsible for drafting recommended plans of succession for key positions. GSG recommends that this endeavor should be under the jurisdiction of the Business Administrator and each plan should be approved by the Administrator prior to being submitted to the Mayor for final approval.
- The City should consider holding a retreat for the elected officials as soon as possible to promote full understanding of roles, consensus on working together, and agreement on process and communications. A number of outside organizations specialize in conducting such retreats. Such retreats are typically scheduled for a full day without other distractions.
- The City should consider developing a formal, written five-year strategic plan, setting forth future goals, objectives, and priorities. This would come from a formal process of meetings with, and soliciting input from, elected officials, key staff, and community leaders and stakeholders. Again, there are consultants and firms who can guide the City through this process. Once adopted, such a plan can serve as a roadmap for the future and a gauge or “report card” for how the City is doing in accomplishing the steps necessary to achieve goals.
- The City should redouble its efforts to push redevelopment and economic development. To aid with this, and considering the many challenges Perth Amboy faces in upgrading its infrastructure (and with other issues), the City should consider retaining the services of a grantswriting consulting firm. Such firms typically bring in substantially more in grants than the fees that they charge.
- With all the major initiatives to be undertaken by the City’s new administration, consideration should be given to ramping up the City’s public education efforts and campaigns. A regular newsletter to the community in English and Spanish, and the possibility of retaining a professional public relations/communications firm, should be considered.

- Council Members should take advantage of training opportunities as depicted in Perth Amboy's Code, and the Mayor and key staff should also take advantage whenever possible of training and seminars offered by the League of Municipalities and the Rutgers School of Public Affairs and Administration. Keeping up-to-date and well-informed on issues affecting local government can only help Perth Amboy officials in working through complex issues the City faces.

Human Resources Review

As part of its review of General Government & Administration matters, Government Strategy Group reviewed Perth Amboy's Human Resources/Personnel manual/policies and its collective bargaining agreements, and prepared salary comparables with the selected overall comparable communities – New Brunswick and North Bergen.

GSG's human resources experts found the Perth Amboy human resources manual to be a definitive example of what a personnel manual should be. The policies set forth are comprehensive and qualify the manual as an example of best practices in the field of human resources. The only addition it will need – and GSG recommends – is a policy update related to marijuana once State regulations pertaining to its usage and employer/employee rights have been clarified and finalized.

With respect to the City's collective bargaining agreements, GSG found nothing unusual or out-of-line with similar contracts in the area of municipal labor relations in New Jersey. Information developed regarding comparable salaries follows.



PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW								
Administrative Salary Comparisons								
PERTH AMBOY			NEW BRUNSWICK			NORTH BERGEN		
TITLE	CURRENT SALARY	SALARY RANGE	TITLE	CURRENT SALARY	SALARY RANGE	TITLE	CURRENT SALARY	SALARY RANGE
Business Administrator	\$ 114,000	\$134,672 - \$175,073	City Administrator	\$ 162,000		City Administrator	\$ 224,783	\$50,000-\$117,000
OEM Coord/Dep Chief (2)	\$ 153,512	\$119,857 - \$155,815	Deputy Police Dir	\$ 162,278		Municipal Dept Head	\$ 130,687	\$60,000-\$125,000
Fire Chief	\$ 140,931	\$113,072 - \$146,995	Dir of Fire	\$ 203,417		Deputy Police Dir	\$ 218,578	\$180,191-\$227,509
Police Chief	\$ 161,112	\$127,049 - \$165,165	Dir of Police	\$ 138,542		Police Chief	\$ 276,373	\$214,161-\$272,150
IT/Network Admin	\$ 78,533	\$75,200 - \$97,761	Data Proc Coord		\$56,000-\$120,000	Deputy Police Chief	\$ 227,322	\$180,191-\$227,509
Sprv Bldgs& Grnds	\$ 77,929		Sprv Bldgs& Grnds	\$ 44,716		Deputy Police Chief	\$ 218,578	\$180,191-\$227,509
Business Mgr (Parking)	\$ 80,988	\$55,618 - \$82,203	N/A					
CFO/Comptroller	\$ 136,625	\$100,634 - \$138,625	CFO	\$ 127,000		CFO	\$ 180,525	\$50,000-\$110,000
Personnel Officer	\$ 85,720	\$66,928 - \$87,006	Asst Personnel Tech	\$ 65,000				
Purch Agent (3)	\$ 77,000	\$75,200 - \$98,185	Purch Agent	\$ 56,739	\$40,000-\$84,000	Purch Agent	\$ 135,181	\$85,000-\$135,000
Dir Code Enforc.	\$ 96,900	\$50,750 - \$99,337	Chf Code Enf Off	\$ 75,000				
Supt. of Recreation (4)	\$ 105,338	\$94,938 - \$123,419				Parks Dir	\$ 130,687	None-Reported
Recyc. Coord	\$ 58,686	\$59,566 - \$77,435	Recyc. Coord		\$38,000-\$78,000			
Library Dir.	\$ -	\$79,712 - \$91,350	Library Dir.	\$ 112,283				
City Ck	\$ 115,096	\$106,672 - \$138,674	Municipal Clerk	\$ 75,000		Municipal Clerk	\$ 105,822	None-Reported
Tax Assessor	\$ 97,965	\$79,712 - \$104,881	Tax Assessor	\$ 102,625		Tax Assessor	\$ 111,569	\$25,000-\$117,000
Tax Collector	\$ 106,672	\$106,672 - \$138,674	Tax Collector	\$ 102,969		Tax Collector	\$ 125,189	\$20,000-\$131,000
Const. Official	\$ 98,634	\$89,565 - \$116,434	Const. Official	\$ 90,000		Const. Official	\$ 100,664	None-Reported
Zoning Officer	\$ 80,869	\$63,140 - \$82,082						
Dir of Law	Outsourced		Dir of Law	\$ 160,776				
Court Admin	\$ 63,140	\$63,140 - \$82,082	Court Admin	\$ 82,809				
Registrar	\$ 77,435		Registrar	\$ 62,344				
City Engineer	Outsourced		Municipal Engin	\$ 145,000				
Exec Asst	\$ 74,718	\$63,140 - \$82,082	Secy to Dept Head	\$ 59,512				
Asst. Municipal Clerk	\$ 64,151	\$64,151 - \$85,534	Deputy Clerk	\$ 44,890				
Accountant	(Vacant)	\$50,012 - \$65,461						
Bldg Inspector	\$ 51,000	\$41,992 - \$54,589						
Dep Court Admin	(Vacant)	\$47,181 - \$61,336	Dep Court Admin	\$ 51,000				
DPW Director	\$ 118,189	\$94,938 - \$123,419	Dir DPW/Engin	\$ 127,500		DPW Super	\$ 161,419	None-Reported
(1) Base Salary Only			OTHERS TO CONSIDER			OTHERS TO CONSIDER		
Does not include 1.5% 1-1-21			Dir Human Serv	\$ 90,000		Dir Comm Improve	\$ 141,678	\$90,000-\$150,000
(2) OEM Stip \$12,000			Supt Rec	\$ 79,820		Dir Hlth Welfare1	\$ 236,501	\$75,000-\$250,000
(3) P.A.C.O. \$2,000			Supt PW	\$ 94,300		Dir Hlth Welfare2	\$ 110,000	
			Public Info Officer	\$ 68,000		MunicipalProsecutor	\$ 90,000	
						Public Info Officer	\$ 59,625	
						Public Defender	\$ 100,000	

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW						
Police Salary Comparisons						
	PERTH AMBOY (1)		NEW BRUNSWICK (2)		NORTH BERGEN (3)	
TITLE	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM
Captain		\$ 135,027	n/a	\$ 162,748	\$ 135,495	\$ 151,108
Lieutenant		\$ 122,196	n/a	\$ 144,205	\$ 116,843	\$ 130,292
Sergeant	\$ 106,581	\$ 110,585	n/a	\$ 127,773	\$ 110,770	\$ 112,358
Police Officer	\$ 40,000	\$ 95,548	\$49,818	\$ 111,300	\$ 29,768	\$ 96,907
Sr Officer w 16 yrs		\$ 100,325				
Sr Officer w 16 yrs (after 8-25-14)		\$ 98,048				
<i>(1): Perth Amboy Superior Officer salaries are as projected for 2021.</i>						
<i>(2): Includes 16 holidays in base pay.</i>						
<i>(3): Includes \$3,500 Holiday Pay in base pay.</i>						

Fire Departments: It is common in New Jersey that Fire Departments/Fire Services are not readily comparable between and among municipalities because of the many different structures and systems used, including fully paid, fully volunteer, hybrid, regionalized, different rank structures, etc. Such is the case with comparing Perth Amboy, New Brunswick, and North Bergen, the overall selected comparables for this report. Perth Amboy and New Brunswick have different rank structures, while North Bergen is a member of a large regional fire and rescue organization – the North Hudson Regional Fire & Rescue service.

The Perth Amboy Fire Department does not include a Deputy Chief position, while New Brunswick does not include a Battalion Chief position, which Perth Amboy does. Perth Amboy has a Fire Chief, while New Brunswick has a Director of Fire but no Chief. New Brunswick also has the position of Lieutenant, which Perth Amboy does not. Keeping in mind the structural differences, the following chart shows the salaries for Perth Amboy and New Brunswick.

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW					
Fire Salary Comparisons					
PERTH AMBOY			NEW BRUNSWICK		
TITLE	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	TITLE	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM
Chief		\$ 140,931	Director	n/a	\$ 203,417
Battalion Chief*	\$ 109,140	\$ 114,123	Deputy Chief	n/a	\$ 153,854
Captain*	\$ 101,526	\$ 106,161	Captain	n/a	\$ 136,291
Trainer		\$ 100,295	Lieutenant	n/a	\$ 120,007
Fire Fighter	\$ 42,536	\$ 97,938	Fire Fighter	\$ 57,311	\$ 104,965

** = The minimums are as established in 2018, the maximums as projected for 2021.*

As can be seen from the foregoing information, many if not most of the salaries paid in Perth Amboy tend to be lower than the comparable communities, indicating that a more in-depth study should be considered.

Recommendations:

- The City’s personnel manual and policies should be updated to address marijuana-related issues once the State has clarified and finalized regulations regarding usage and employer/employee rights.
- The City should consider performing a comprehensive study of salaries for all municipalities in New Jersey that share many or most of the same or similar demographics and characteristics and develop, as necessary, a long-term plan to

make and keep its salaries competitive in the marketplace in order to attract and keep capable staff.

- The City's collective bargaining agreements should be updated as applicable to reflect the June 27, 2018, "Janus decision" of the United States Supreme Court.

Redevelopment

In March 1997, the City created the Perth Amboy Redevelopment Agency (PARA) and adopted an aggressive redevelopment plan, FOCUS 2000, to revitalize almost 1,500 acres within the city. PARA was charged with developing and implementing the redevelopment within the City in conjunction with the City's Special Improvement District and Urban Enterprise Zone. Through over \$1 Billion of public/private partnership initiatives, PARA's efforts to date have generated millions in revenue to the City, created over a thousand jobs, and remediated over 100 acres of brownfield properties. Its ongoing efforts include additional residential, retail, and commercial/industrial projects throughout the City with a focus on job creation and more sustainable growth geared to transit riders.

Over the past 20 years, the City's FOCUS 2000 redevelopment plan progressed from a general citywide planning tool to a design and implementation phase initiative. Since 2016, the entire FOCUS 2000 plan has been updated (now FOCUS 2020) to reflect current market conditions, a new vision for the City, and compliance with today's standards for planning and development. Illustrated below are recent and current redevelopment projects:

NCP Perth Amboy Holdings, LLC – This 100-acre site along the Raritan River was purchased by a developer in 2016 who worked with the City to redevelop the property for an additional million square feet of light manufacturing and distribution. The project, completed in 2020, entailed \$100 million in private investment and created two new waterfront parks, a mile-long green way, and a new public amphitheater to host large events. It reconnected the surrounding neighborhood to the waterfront under the existing train trestle. It was estimated that the project would provide between 300 and 500 jobs.

Phase I of Bridgeport Logistics Center – Bridge Development Partners delivered almost 1.3 million square feet of Class A distribution space across three buildings that stand on what was previously contaminated sites. The project was estimated to create between 1,000 and 1,500 jobs, and to bring \$180 million worth of investment to the City along with additional tax revenue.

Phase II of Bridgeport Logistics Center – Located at the former ASARCO site, Bridge Development Partners and Commercial Development Co. is planned to deliver more than 1 million square feet of additional industrial space. When fully completed, the Bridgeport Logistics Center will have redeveloped over 190 acres of previously blighted land. This second phase could bring over 300 additional jobs to Perth Amboy.

500 High Street – A \$4 million rehab project creating luxury units on the City's waterfront along the northern section of High Street. The final project will include three floors of residences over a flagship commercial site and include two rooftop terraces. This project will remediate contaminated land and rehab a historic structure on one of the city's main arterials.

144 Grant Street – Construction was completed in 2019 for headquarters and a central manufacturing facility for Gourmet Nut, a Brooklyn-born upscale trail-mix producer. The project was expected to bring 90 jobs as well as making use of a formerly vacant industrial building.

Smith Street Realty – This project will result in a new and improved gateway to the City from the busy Route 35 corridor. It will feature a new Wawa and make improvement to the site's familiar car wash and oil change facility. Such improvements will create 15 to 30 new jobs and greatly enhance the City's appearance through new streetscaping and accessibility improvements.

Riverwalk Crossing – Riverwalk Crossing will result in the remediation of 6 acres of highly contaminated property between Patterson Street and Riverview Drive that for over a decade has disconnected several areas of the City from the waterfront. The removal of such blight will allow for the extension of the City's waterfront walkway, and reconnections of the street grid with improvement to streets and sidewalks thereby connecting one of the largest residential neighborhoods of the City to the amenities located there. The project provides for a new public park and ratables from new market rate housing units.

Perth Amboy Self Storage – Completed earlier this year, this project transformed 1.8 acres of contaminated land into an attractive and accessible gateway to the City with a historically referential design and improvements to the area's transportation infrastructure.

Sayre Avenue – Requests for proposals were issued for this project resulting in two strong proposals for mixed-use projects in the area. Vetting and developer designation was completed in the Spring of 2019 and necessary approvals for construction are in progress.

Recommendations:

- The Administration is encouraged to continue a close working relationship with PARA to ensure goals and objectives are aligned – not only economically but most importantly as they impact quality of life in the City.
- Engage the community, through visioning sessions, to provide input on their ideas, thoughts and suggestions for how to improve and redevelop the City. Citizen engagement and input can be very supportive for transformational change.
- Fully exploit waterfront improvement opportunities to include development of parks, recreational activities and other public spaces.
- Continue to study and monitor traffic impacts resulting from redevelopment – not only in the immediate vicinity of redevelopment projects but also as they may impact other areas of the community.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Government Strategy Group (GSG) conducted a review of the technology landscape at the City of Perth Amboy. Our priority was an IT assessment with a focus on security. We conducted non-intrusive software scans that pulled configuration data from each of the domains and interviewed the IT Staff as well as a few other employees on key questions pertaining to technology and security.

IT Summary

Overall, Government Strategy Group finds the City has a responsible and committed IT staff, willing to consider new technology recommendations. The current IT environment consists of two IT staff who managed day to day operations and have started to develop a plan to improve the infrastructure and security. Our recommendations will provide a list of common processes and controls that can be reviewed, prioritized, and budgeted as a roadmap.

There are several deficiencies throughout; quite a few can be mitigated with a little planning and no cost to implement – items such as patching and verifying that all endpoints have anti-virus protection installed and updated. Others would take some investment to move forward, such as upgrading email services. The biggest infrastructure issue noted is the multitude of domains in the City. For this size operation we would expect two domains, one for the City and other for Police. Perth Amboy has a total of six domains which can make administration more of a challenge.

We found several other areas where improvements could be made, including:

- Creation and review of yearly technology priorities and initiatives.
- Utilizing third party vendors to provide specialized services that can supplement current staff and add broader skillsets and expertise.
- Improving policies and procedures, especially incident and disaster recovery.
- Establishing a security management program utilizing our recommendations, CIS Suite (Core Infrastructure Suite) and regular review and planning meetings.

The infrastructure is made up of mostly virtualized machines, the network and firewall are comprised of Cisco devices and Barracuda appliances for backup. The network cabling is up to standards with CAT 5e and 6. There is failover internet (backup internet connection). Though there is only a single firewall at some city facilities, the Police and Fire have redundancy. A plan to upgrade to more enterprise systems is in the works. There is Wi-Fi for guest and community use provided by a cable modem and Cisco wireless access points that are not connected to the main city network. In addition, there is city Wi-Fi for the specific purpose of using an iPad. The City's website is designed, managed, and hosted by Intrado, a digital media & communication company specializing in municipalities and emergency services. The city upgraded its old 3com phone systems two years ago to Avaya and while it is VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol), the system does have copper lines for emergency calling. The end user computing does need some attention with many Windows 7 machines that are end of life and need to be replaced, along with the email system running Exchange 2013. There are several policies used by the City such as Acceptable Use, Social Media use and others. But there are several more policies that should be considered as a separate policy or included in a handbook – such as staff on/off boarding, change management, incident management, and vendor management.

While there are constant improvements occurring and this assessment provides a critical list of gaps to review and prioritize, the one area that concerns the IT operation for cost and planning is the need to start planning for a migration to the Microsoft 365 platform.

[IT Security](#)

At present, there is no organized or documented cybersecurity or threat prevention program in place. There is no formalized training for IT users who handle sensitive data, and other staff. We found no documented process for addressing a ransomware or other malicious attack. GSG believes that consistent, documented security training is important in any organization in today's world. Making users aware of the current threat landscape in a formal way benefits everyone – management and staff alike.

While the list of recommendations can seem overwhelming, many can be done by using tools already in place today and either implementing the recommended solution or creating some reoccurring tasks to check in on each system daily or weekly; for example, Active Directory, End Point Protection, WSUS (Windows Server Update Services) patching, and USB lockdown.

Physical security is managed by two different systems. The City's IT rooms and closets are controlled by physical keys. The IT staff and one other person have access. There is no log but with only three authorized personnel, the City feels this is sufficient. The Police and Fire rooms are controlled by an access control lock requiring card swipe.

The current security controls are made up of Cisco firewalls with Intrusion Detection, WSUS Windows Patching Server for patching Windows systems, and Sophos antivirus and Active Directory for account management. Our recommendations are based on Center for Internet Security (CIS) Controls and NIST (National Institute for Standards and Technology). By prioritizing and implementing these recommendations Perth Amboy will create a security posture having multiple layers of defense to protect a computer, user account, physical access, etc.

Issue – Multiple Domains: A domain is meant to provide a structured, secure framework to manage computers and users from multiple departments and regions consisting of thousands of accounts in one domain. Having multiple domains adds more strain to the IT staff to manage and many software packages are based on particular domain(s), causing additional cost to support.

Recommendation:

- GSG highly recommends consolidating domains to two, if possible, (Police and Emergency Services sometimes have compliance issues requiring a separate domain) which is fine.

Issue – Unsupported Operating Systems in the Environment: Computers were found using operating systems that are no longer supported. Unsupported operating systems no longer receive vital security patches and present an inherent risk.

Recommendation:

- Upgrade or replace computers with operating systems that are no longer supported.

Issue – Password Policy Issues: User accounts with passwords set to never expire present a risk of use by unauthorized users. They are more easily compromised than

passwords that are routinely changed. Enforcing password complexity limits the ability of an attacker to acquire a password through a brute force attack. (A brute force attack is the cyberattack equivalent of trying every key on your key ring, and eventually finding the right one.) Passwords that are not changed regularly are more vulnerable to attack and unauthorized use. Minimizing the allowed password age greatly reduces the window of time that a lost or stolen password poses a threat. Passwords are not required to be 8 or more characters, allowing users to pick extremely short passwords which are vulnerable to brute force attacks. Short password histories allow users to rotate through a known set of passwords, thus reducing the effectiveness of a good password management policy.

Recommendation:

- Investigate all accounts with passwords set to never expire and configure them to expire regularly. Also configure Active Directory password settings to address the below items –
 - Some set to not expire.
 - Maximum age over 90 days allowed.
 - Password complexity not enabled.
 - Password history not remembered; set to 6.
 - Passwords less than 8 characters allowed.

Issue – Account Lockout Disabled: Account lockout (disabling an account after several failed attempts) significantly reduces the risk of an attacker acquiring a password through an attack.

Recommendation:

- Enable account lockout for all users.

Issue – User Account Permissions: Users have not logged on to a domain in 30 days. A user that has not logged in for an extended period could be a former employee or vendor. Due to high work from home, we have seen where Active Directory does not update this based on remote logins.

Recommendation:

- Verify that unused accounts should not be active, then disable for 30 days until ready to delete the account altogether.

Issue – Lack of Redundant Domain Controllers: Some domains had only one domain controller on the network. This creates a heightened risk of business downtime, loss of data, or service outage due to a lack of redundancy.

Recommendation:

- Evaluate the risk, cost, and benefits of implementing a redundant Domain Controller or consolidate to the domain that is already redundant.

Issue – Operating Systems in Extended Support: Computers are using an operating system that is in Extended Support. Extended Support is a warning period before an operating system is no longer supported by the manufacturer and will no longer receive support or patches.

Recommendation:

- Upgrade computers that have operating systems in Extended Support before end of life.

Issue – Automatic Screen Lock: Automatic screen lock prevents unauthorized access when users leave their computers. Having no screen lock enabled allows unauthorized access to network resources.

Recommendation:

- Enable automatic screen lock on computers presently without it.

Issue – Domain Controllers are Virtualized: If an issue arises with the virtual infrastructure's ability to run multiple separate operating systems on one piece of hardware, the domain controllers could be down as well causing network issues for all domain clients.

Recommendation:

- Have one domain controller that is a physical server and not virtualized.

Issue – Offsite Backup not Synchronized: Ransomware can traverse a network and target backup system vulnerabilities allowing it to spread to the backups and possibly encrypting the data.

Recommendation:

- Have backups copied to a cloud storage provider; by syncing data to the cloud the City would help provide additional protection to critical backup files.

Issue – No Disaster Recovery Testing: While there have been some small file restorations, a full disaster recovery test has not been conducted to verify process and capabilities to recover from an outage or down service.

Recommendation:

- Map out a disaster recovery plan based on common risks that everyone has – such as a failed server, failed critical service and complete site outage from fire, flood etc. For each scenario, write a high-level process on how the City would recover from each and continue to fine tune and practice dry walkthroughs to verify. The more planning now will help greatly when an incident occurs, and the City is prepared.

Issue – Employee Computers: Windows7 operating systems throughout the network are over 13 years old and pose risk to the organization

Recommendation:

- The current plan is to replace employee computer systems on a 5-year lifecycle with 20% refresh each year. However, this establishes a wait of 2-3 yrs. to get most of the Win7 system out, which can be a long time with the risks it poses. Where hardware is good, consider buying a new operating system (OS) and doing an in-place upgrade.

Issue – Environmental Monitoring: There is no device in place to monitor the server room's temperature, humidity, and other controls.

Recommendation:

- GSG recommends implementing an environmental monitor for each server room or closet. Such devices will monitor server rooms for temperature, humidity, and other controls. This can be done at minimal cost.

Issue – Email Services: Email is handled with an on-premise Exchange 2013 server and entered into extended support in 2018. It is no longer receiving proper security updates.

Recommendation:

- There are multiple options for updating email, all of which revolve around an upgrade to the existing Exchange server. The City should consider possible alternatives such as building and migrating to a new Exchange server, moving to the cloud, or build a hybrid solution on premise and using Office365 cloud.

Issue – Spare Hardware: There is no spare hardware on site for urgent needs or emergencies.

Recommendation:

- If a system is not configured for high availability, then it is recommended that some spare systems should be kept onsite – desktops, laptops, network switches, etc.

Issue – Administrator Accounts: All user accounts should typically have least privileged access and be a part of the users group and not administrators. Administrator accounts should be used only for performing administrative functions.

Recommendation:

- When an admin account is needed, create a separate admin account to be used only by each user who actually needs privileged access.

Issue – Network Intrusion Detection System: Threats can come from the internet and from devices internally. Firewall protection that uses intrusion detection protects traffic coming into the network from the internet. While system owners rely on endpoint security to protect a system, threats can at times traverse the network from host to host.

Recommendation:

- We do recommend using the Center for Internet Security’s “Albert” system, which is a low-cost network security monitoring system specifically for government agencies and municipalities. Note that we do consider it a higher maturity model and not a priority compared to other controls that need to be mitigated.

Issue – Web Content Filter: Web filtering and content control is not now implemented. It was reported that there was a system on premise that included proxy services. However, with remote work from home, this system reportedly caused issues and was shut down.

Recommendation:

- To protect from known bad sites and categories, and protect from potential lawsuits, Perth Amboy should reimplement a system of web filtering as soon as feasible. There are several options that are cloud based now that are easy and low cost.

Issue – EDR Endpoint Security (Enhanced Detection and Response): In today’s world, basic antivirus does not provide enough protection from advanced threats and ransomware. EDR provides AI (Artificial Intelligence) protection based on the MITRE Corporation attack playbooks that cover every possible threat vector. These systems do not require daily updates and can detect and respond to advanced threats by locking down endpoints when an incident occurs.

Recommendation:

- Use endpoint protection (aka antivirus/anti-malware) that follows the MITRE attack playbook and uses AI/machine learning.

Issue – Penetration Testing & Vulnerability Scans: Both of these tests provide a valuable service. Vulnerability scanning will constantly scan for internal and external threats to hardware and software protecting the City’s system. Penetration testing will test your security the same way a hacker will, so there is no better test than a Pen test.

Recommendation:

- GSG recommends both vulnerability scanning and Pen testing, which will show if the Perth Amboy network can be broken into with current vulnerabilities.

Issue – Security Awareness Training: Training is key to enhancing cybersecurity posture. Empowering employees to understand the basic threats and what they can do to assist in the protection of your network and data is a high value objective. A good system will deliver training over the web, quarterly, and provide scenarios for handling threats & fraud.

Recommendation:

- Implement a mandatory security awareness training program for all employees. There are many in the marketplace today to choose from. Consider including “phishing” email simulations for testing.

Issue – SIEM Event Logging: Devices, firewalls, network hardware, etc. all create logs. Log monitoring provides a central repository for all logging of events. SIEM (Security Information Event Management Software) brings Artificial Intelligence and machine learning to detect active threats in a network.

Recommendation:

- GSG recommends Security Information Event Management Software (SIEM) as a standard security service. We do understand that organizations are strained to

catch up on all the new options and services available today. Therefore, we recommend SIEM not as a high priority item at this time, but to be considered more of a higher maturity model once the City completes the other items which provide active protection vs reactive alerting.

Issue – USB Port Management: Besides email, USB devices are still a common way to introduce a threat into the IT environment.

Recommendation:

- Use endpoint security or Active Directory group policy/registry keys to deny read and write to USB drives.

Issue – Antivirus and AntiSpyWare Not Installed 100%: Anti-virus software was not detected on some computers. Without adequate anti-virus and anti-spyware protection on all workstations and servers, the risk of acquiring malicious software is significant. Some anti-virus definitions were found to not be up to date. Up to date anti-virus definitions are required to properly prevent the spread of malicious software.

Recommendation: Ensure anti-virus protections and definitions are up to date on all system computers.

Issue – Missing Security Patches: Security patches are missing on some computers.

Recommendation:

- Maintaining proper security patch levels helps prevent unauthorized access and the spread of malicious software. Address patching on computers missing security patches.

Issue – Unsecure Protocols: Computers are using potentially unsecure protocols.

Recommendation:

- While there may be legitimate business need for certain protocols, these risks should be assessed individually. Certain protocols are inherently unsecure since they often lack encryption. Inside the network, their use should be minimized as much as possible to prevent the spread of malicious software. There can be reasons these services are needed and other means to protect systems which listen on those ports. We recommend reviewing the programs listening on the network to ensure their necessity and security. Enable Windows or antivirus firewall on each endpoint and use hardened operating system images from CIS Controls.

Issue – Compromised Domain Passwords: A scan of the Dark Web revealed that one or more compromised passwords from Perth Amboy’s domain were listed in known hacker sites where stolen information is bought and sold. The most recent compromise for the City’s domain occurred in 2021.

Recommendation:

- Ensure enforcing the changing of users’ passwords quarterly. We recommend having all users reset their password as the extent of the compromise is difficult to assess. Best practice is to use two factor authentication everywhere possible to reduce the risk of a compromised password by having second level of identification similar to logging into a personal online bank account and receiving a text message code or application code to prove proper identity.

Issue – Security Auditing & Tracking: No process was detected for identifying, tracking, and mitigating security issues or the baseline system to gauge progress.

Recommendation:

- Having real time access to a system that will actively scan domains and list all gaps, along with a road map to best practices, is a must these days. GSG recommends that Perth Amboy contact CIS Controls and obtain the Security Suite. This is a free service for government agencies.

Issue – Improve Employee Onboarding/Offboarding Process: There needs to be a clear process for the hiring/terminating of employees as it relates to IT process. No account should be created/deactivated until IT receives authorization from the hiring manager.

Recommendation:

- Create a policy that captures key information – role, applications, hardware, etc. When staff leave the organization, the account should have passwords changed immediately and external or cloud access revoked. Offboarding should specify if there is a replacement and what to do with documents and email.

Issue – Improve Hardware Onboarding: No clear process was detected for bringing new systems onto the network securely.

Recommendation:

- Create a policy and process specifying the baseline configuration for any new desktop, server, laptop, etc. Include patching, end point security, application

firewalls and updates from the manufacturer. Also consider Center for Internet Security hardened images for servers.

Issue – Incident Management: No clear process was detected for covering disaster recovery, cyber and other risks, dealing with incidents, etc.

Recommendation:

- Create a policy that covers management responsibilities and procedures to ensure a quick, effective, and orderly response to security incidents. Include proper reporting of incidents and encourage staff, contractors, and vendors to speak up if they see something.

Issue – Change Management: No clear approval process was detected for changes to critical infrastructure.

Recommendation:

- Create a policy and process specifying the critical systems for the organization. From firewalls to the phone systems, list them out and decide as a team who has approval rights to authorize changes. This does not need to be complicated but more importantly it should be documented.

Applications & Media

The following list of applications are in use by the various departments and offices in Perth Amboy.

- Mix of Office 2010 & 2013 with Exchange 2013 email server (all departments).
- Edmunds ver. 2020.3(all departments).
- Q.E.D. ver. 8 (Police CAD system).
- Firehouse ver. 7 (Fire Department records management).
- QuickBooks 2013, 2011 (BID, Tax Collector & Marina Utility).
- Spatial Data Logic.
- Fuel Force (DPW fuel pump management).
- Metric (Parking Utility Meter lookup & reporting).
- iTron Field Collection ver. 4.2.0 (Water Dept. Meter software).
- Sensus AutoRead ver. 8.16 (Water Dept. Meter software).
- Munidex (Vital Statistics Software).
- Microsystems ModIV (Tax Assessor).
- Axis Communication Camera station client / server (Security Camera systems).
- Motorola Callworks (Police 911 phone software).

- Motorola Elite (Police / Fire radio system software for dispatch consoles).

Recommendations:

- The Office and Exchange applications in use are outdated, with no support since 2018. Consider upgrading to Microsoft 365 Office and Exchange cloud services for workplace applications and email services.
- The Firehouse application has numerous minor releases. With version 7 we identified thirty past minor releases. It is important to make sure to keep the system as up to date as possible, such as quarterly or yearly.
- The QuickBooks versions in use are outdated. Support ended in 2016. Consider upgrading to a newer version or another system, such as Sage ERP.

While the IT Department has little to do with social media campaigns, the City is highly involved. We detected the following departments that have social media platforms in use: the Mayor's Office, Recreation, Police and Fire. Platforms in use include Facebook, Instagram, Constant Contact, and Nixle. The Police mainly use Nixle to get out emergency alerts while everyone else utilizes Facebook/Instagram for general communication. No deficiencies were detected from an IT standpoint.

The City has an effective, professional website by a digital media and communications company that specializes in designing, managing, and hosting websites for municipalities and emergency services.

DEPARTMENTS, OFFICES, & OPERATIONS

Office of the City Clerk

The incumbent is a 37-year employee with the City of Perth Amboy who has served in her current role for the past three years. Prior to her appointment as Clerk, she served as Assistant Clerk.

The office staff consists of the City Clerk, an Assistant City Clerk and an account clerk. The Clerk and the Assistant Clerk handle the typical duties of a Clerk's office, while the account clerk provides support and handles purchasing for the department. The Clerk reports that due to staff absences associated with the pandemic, the office is behind with many of its responsibilities.

In Perth Amboy, the Clerk's office handles the following responsibilities:

- Agendas for council meetings
- OPRA – Open Public Records Act requests

- Elections
- Dog/Cat Licenses
- Rabies Clinics – twice per year
- Taxi/Owners & Drivers
- 38 Liquor Licenses
- Bingo and raffles
- Tow Trucks
- Social Permits
- Financial Disclosure Forms

The City Clerk’s office is located on the first floor of City Hall and, under normal circumstances, is easily accessible via a main entrance to City Hall. Currently, however, City Hall has restricted access due to the COVID pandemic. As a result, the office is accessed via the adjacent Water Department corridor or via a rear hallway entrance.

The office space is relatively small with much of the floor area taken up by filing and storage cabinets. There is a rear storage room that has records and files arranged in a haphazard fashion. It was reported that the office and storage areas are scheduled to be renovated. Part of any renovation project should include updated records storage with modern filing systems to provide better organization and retrieval of documents.

Recommendation:

- Include in any office renovation project updated records storage with modern filing systems to provide better organization and retrieval of documents.

Perth Amboy subscribes to a comprehensive software package designed for local government, Spatial Data Logic (SDL). The City Clerk reports that she does not yet have access to SDL. Providing access to this software for the Clerk should be a priority.

Among the efficiencies that can be gained from this software package include:

- Management of OPRA requests
- Licensing
- Pet Licensing
- Collaboration among all departments
- Online access by citizens reducing phone calls and site visits.

Recommendation:

- Provide appropriate training and access to the City Clerk’s office staff in the use of Spatial Data Logic software.

The Clerk reports that she receives a list of agenda items from the Law Department for each council meeting and that list is then placed into the agenda format. The Law Department prepares some of the resolutions and ordinances while bond attorneys are responsible for bond ordinances and form of sale resolutions. Administration and the CFO handle salary ordinances. Budgets, temporary budgets and transfers are handled by the CFO or Auditor. Tax overpayment resolutions are by the Tax Collector. The City Clerk's office is responsible for matters related to Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) and handicap parking & certain license refunds.

An agenda preparation meeting is held on Thursday in anticipation of the caucus meeting the following Wednesday. Currently a hybrid solution including a paper agenda as well as a digital agenda loaded to Council Member iPads are available to Members of Council.

The agenda is posted to the Perth Amboy website by the Information Technology (IT) office. Council members utilize their iPad's for reviewing the agenda and for use during the meeting. The .pdf document that is created has the agenda first, with all supporting documents following. This creates an extraordinarily long document, where finding information associated with the individual agenda item is challenging.

Recommendations:

- An agenda with hyper-links to the individual documents would allow the immediate retrieval of the specific documents, rather than requiring scrolling through the entire .pdf document to find the information associated with the item. *The following example is accomplished using the E-Gov program –* (<https://www.newprov.org/download/Agendas%20and%20Minutes/Agendas/2020/01-27-2020-Agenda.pdf>)
- Consider agenda flow software for the overall management of the agenda process. This would streamline the process and enhance efficiency.

A time-consuming function in all municipalities, the City of Perth Amboy wisely separated the Police Department and Code Enforcement to serve as their own custodians of their own records. This helps to share the burden across three departments, as consolidation of this function would easily overwhelm the Clerk's office.

Currently, all OPRA requests are logged onto an Excel Spreadsheet for tracking purposes. The request for information is forwarded via email to the department head who returns the requested information via email. It is reported that there are often delays in getting information back from the various departments, which can jeopardize the timely return of the information – potentially subjecting Perth Amboy to penalties

under the Open Public Records Act. Complicated requests or matters that require review due to redaction of certain information are sent to the Law Department for review.

Recommendations:

- Provide training to all department heads concerning the requirements and time-constraints of the Open Public Records Act. This will help to facilitate a timely response to the Clerk’s office when records are requested.
- Use a software program specifically designed for OPRA management, such as Spatial Data Logic (SDL).

One of the primary functions of the City Clerk is the responsibility to serve as the custodian of records for the city. Records associated with the Clerk’s office are essential for documenting the actions of the governing body as well as the licensing outlined above. This critical role assures that all permanent records of the City of Perth Amboy are maintained, managed, and coordinated. Efficient retrieval of these records is important and enhances productivity.

Unfortunately, no record management system is in place. Records are described as being “all over the place”, with some records located in the office and others stored at an off-site, privately managed facility, Crown Records. It appears that the management of records has been neglected for some time, likely due to staff time constraints and prioritizing other work of the office. Cataloging records, with the various destruction dates in consultation with the NJ Division of Records Management (DARM) for authorization to purge records is a monumental and time-consuming task. However, reducing the volume of records stored off-site will result in savings related to storage fees currently paid.

Recommendations:

- For short-term needs, consider additional staffing, perhaps on a temporary and/or part-time basis, to be dedicated to records management. Destruction of outdated records will free up space for required records.
- Longer term, invest in high-speed scanners and digital records storage services to substantially reduce paper records storage. This would also vastly improve records searches – e.g., researching an old ordinance or minutes can take seconds instead of hours. Many of the costs involved in this investment can be substantially managed via financing and improved efficiency.

Assuring that all pets are licensed is an important public health policy because proof of rabies vaccination is a licensing requirement. In addition to managing the licensing of

dogs and cats, the city Clerk also coordinates a rabies vaccination clinic twice each year. It is likely that the current number of licensed pets – reportedly 204 dogs and 24 cats – is extremely low, costing the City in lost revenues for what should be an entirely justified revenue source in the best interests of public health, safety, and welfare.

The last pet census was conducted more than ten years ago. At the time of the last census, the Police Department included a letter with the annual tax bill reminding residents that licenses were required for dogs and cats. The Clerk reported a significant increase in pet licensing that year due to the letter.

Currently, the pet licensing fees in Perth Amboy are set at \$10 for dogs or cats that are not neutered and \$7 if the pet is neutered. By comparison, the Township of Woodbridge fees are \$18 for dogs and \$23 for cats that are not altered and \$15 for dogs and \$13 for cats that are altered. Creating a financial incentive through license fees to encourage that cats are neutered – as in the case of Woodbridge – helps to reduce the likelihood of feral cat colonies.

According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, about 38% of households own a dog and 25% are cat owners. Applying those same percentages to Perth Amboy suggests that there could be nearly 6,072 dogs and 3,995 cats within the community. Even if there were just one-half of that number, it represents a loss in revenue – estimated as much as \$35,000 – and importantly, a potential public health issue if rabies vaccinations are not maintained.

Recommendations:

- Consider revising the pet licensing fees to assure that costs of operating the licensing and vaccination programs are covered and that appropriate health and safety goals are met.
- A comprehensive pet canvassing campaign should be developed focusing on ensuring that all pets are licensed and vaccinated. At a minimum, include a letter from the Police Department with the tax bill each year reminding residents to license (and thereby vaccinate) their pets. There is an opportunity to improve public health, safety, and welfare and also justifiably increase revenues to the City in the public interest by \$35,000+ per year.

With the Clerk's Office administering liquor licenses, a program worth noting is an annual "Quality of Life" meeting with liquor license holders, presented by members of the Police Department, Code Enforcement, and the NJ State ABC. The purpose of the meeting is to remind liquor license holders of the regulations associated with their licenses, such as code enforcement, noise ordinances, overserving patrons, and ABC

regulations. Information is shared by personnel of the ABC and Police about identification of fictitious ID's and dealing with unruly customers.

Police Department

The Perth Amboy Police Department is currently led by a Chief and Deputy Chief. The Chief is a 33-year veteran of the Police Department, serving for the last five years as Chief of Police. He is scheduled to retire effective 7/1/2021. The Deputy Chief, a 31-year veteran, has served the last seven years as Deputy Chief.

The authorized staffing for the Perth Amboy Police Department is 135 officers. Current staffing is 120, with 13 recently hired officers. However, due to police academy training requirements, these new officers will not be available until 2022. The Chief indicates that the city is supportive of department staffing requirements and authorizes recruitment of officers to meet the designated staffing levels. The Chief indicated that Civil Service rules along with residence requirements make hiring qualified candidates challenging.

The department operates out of a modern, 160,000 square foot state of the art shared facility, with department operations occupying approximately 35,000 square feet. The building adequately houses the department's various divisions and bureaus. A three-person staff, who have undergone background checks, are responsible for cleaning the building. The city's parks, buildings and grounds division is responsible for maintaining the facility. An innovative and notable design feature is that the building is physically joined by the local YMCA.

Perth Amboy is a 4.5 square mile community with a reported population of 53,955 believed to be closer to 70,000. The city demographics are 78% Latino and 3.6% African American and the diversity of the department reflects those demographics. There are 12 female officers, including one holding the rank of captain. The Chief reports that about 25 officers live within the community while many officers have family members residing in Perth Amboy.

Two unions represent the police officers, the PBA (Patrolman's Benevolent Association) for the patrolmen and FOP (Fraternal Order of Police) for the superior officers. The Chief reports a good relationship with the leaders of both unions, indicating that he has an open-door policy and usually can work-out any issue or concern. He reports there are no grievances pending, other than a procedural grievance dealing with a recent Secaucus ruling about health insurance contributions. Additionally, the Chief reports that very few misconduct complaints are received about his officers.

The organization for the police department is divided into four divisions: Operations, Support, Professional Standards and Investigations. Each division in turn is broken down into several bureaus and units. A listing of each division and respective sub-category is shown below:

Operations	Support	Professional Standards	Investigation
Patrol	Homeland Security	Internal Affairs	Detective Bureau
Communications	Main Services Unit	Training Bureau	Domestic Violence
Special Services	Liaison OEM	Accreditation	Response Team
Traffic & Motor Unit	LESO Program		Juvenile Aid Bureau
Accident Investigation	Records Bureau		Special Investigations
Community Policing	Police Garage		Identification Bureau
L.E.A.D. / Great	Building Maintenance		Intelligence Unit
Special Officers I & II	Animal Control		Cyber Unit
Report Takers	Traffic Maintenance		Evidence

Note: LESO = Law Enforcement Support Office of the U.S. Department of Defense

The divisions are commanded by a police captain except professional standards which is led by a police sergeant.

Recommendation:

- The Police Department should consider “civilianizing” positions wherever possible, which can result in considerable cost savings from the differences between salaries and compensation for uniformed personnel and civilian personnel. The City should request through the Mayor or Business Administrator that a report be prepared indicating which positions in the department are not candidates for civilianization and which are.

- Consideration should be given to elevating the command of the Professional Standards Division to that of a police captain – equal to the other divisions of the department. In a para-military organization, chain of command and rank structure is critical to the efficient operations of the department. The responsibilities of the Professional Standards Division include the essential components of training and internal affairs. A captain commanding this division demonstrates to the officers in the department and the community at large that these responsibilities are equal to the other divisions of the department. This could be tied to the City’s committing to re-establish its accreditation from the NJ State Association of Chiefs of Police.

The patrol division of the department – the most visible – works a rotating schedule consisting of four, 10-hour shifts. The officers are deployed in five sectors for citywide coverage which is a model that has not changed for many years. The department recently deployed a fully equipped, rapid response vehicle that can accommodate five officers. A rapid response vehicle provides ballistic protection and is equipped to address more challenging law enforcement operations, such as SWAT scenarios. Typically, it will carry specialized equipment such as ballistic shields, riot helmets and high-power weaponry.

The scheduling and management of extra duty jobs (outside work) are handled through a contract service provider – Jobs in Blue. This management service handles all aspects of the extra duty posts, including coordinating the sign-up and documentation for the posts, collecting all fees as well as posting the jobs for the officers. The software used integrates with the department’s police scheduling system (POSS (Police Officer Scheduling System) to avoid any scheduling conflicts. The system tracks a hierarchy for eligibility for posts, based on fees the officers have received from extra duty assignments to date. The lower amount already received, the greater their eligibility for the assignments.

Recommendation:

- The current deployment model of five sector cars for patrol of the city has been in place for many years. An analysis of calls for service based on type of incident, day of week and time of day should be performed to determine whether a different deployment model should be used.

The 9-1-1 dispatch function is managed by the police department and typically consists of four, bi-lingual dispatchers per shift during peak hours and two during off-hours. The dispatchers are responsible for police, fire and EMS communications through a trunked radio system. These highly sophisticated radio systems are costly to purchase and

maintain. Perth Amboy has controlled costs by entering into a shared services agreement with the Township of Woodbridge for their radio system. The city maintains a backup radio system in the event of a failure of the trunked system. The department also has access to use of a Geographic Information System (GIS); however, it is currently not used for crime mapping.

Recommendation:

- The Geographic Information System (GIS) in use by the department should be used to its fullest extent. For example, GIS should be employed for crime mapping and for use in intelligent policing for predictive modeling.

Perth Amboy has an active auxiliary (volunteer) police program with 21 members who provide support to the patrol division of the department. This is recognized as an especially cost-effective way to increase police presence and enhance public safety in communities throughout New Jersey.

The police department has created valuable incentives for auxiliary police members. First, auxiliary officers in good standing and who are successful in the civil service selection process, are considered for appointment to full-time positions when vacancies occur. This is a productive practice that allows the candidate to gain valuable experience and exposure to the community and police work as an auxiliary member. Likewise, the management of the police department is also able to identify those auxiliary members with the level of dedication and work ethic that would suggest future success as full-time officers.

After three years of service, auxiliary officers are eligible for appointment as a special police officer, which is a paid position in Perth Amboy. Special officers are used to provide security for the municipal court and for City Hall. This is an example of good use of limited resources, both financially and in terms of personnel. Special officers are compensated more modestly than regular officers and by relieving regular officers from performing security details, those officers can be deployed to higher level law enforcement activities.

Currently, the parking enforcement officers employed through the parking utility are part-time employees. The Chief recommended that special police officers perform parking enforcement officer duties, a recommendation that should be explored. Having additional uniformed police presence in the downtown by using special officers to address parking issues would enhance overall public safety. In addition, the special officers could be deployed to address alternate side parking complaints, a source of frequent responses by the police department.

Recommendations:

- Consider increasing the number of special officers to allow full time officers to concentrate their efforts on higher level activities. Parking complaints, for example could be handled by a Special 1 officer.
- Evaluate the benefit of using special officers for parking enforcement duties.

The Chief reports significant outreach to the community as part the community policing philosophy of the department. In 2016, Perth Amboy was one of six departments receiving an award from the State of New Jersey for community relations.

The department has created a noteworthy chaplaincy program, with 24 active members from every denomination in the community. The chaplains maintain an office in the police department and are on call at all times to assist the police. Their activities include: death notifications, employee counseling, presence at serious accidents or other events, and hospital visits to those sick or injured. As a testament to the positive relationship the chaplains have with the department, each Thanksgiving the chaplains provide meals for the on-duty officers.

The Perth Amboy Police Department conducts a Civilian Police Academy and Youth Police Academy for residents of the community. Both programs are reportedly well-received by the community, with some junior police academy graduates joining the auxiliary police. While the department did not run the civilian police academy last year due to COVID, it does plan to offer the program this year. The junior academy is structured similar to the regular police academy, including physical training giving the “recruits” an authentic experience.

In the past, the Perth Amboy Police Department has been an accredited agency as designated by the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police (NJSACOP). Accreditation demonstrates that the department complies with over 120 standards of NJ law enforcement best practices. Achieving accreditation demonstrates to the community that their police department is serious about providing law enforcement services in a professional manner. Unfortunately, the accreditation status for the department has lapsed. The Deputy Chief advised that there is a commitment to assuring the department will become reaccredited.

Recommendations:

- Commit to the NJSACOP re-accreditation process. While the process to achieve accreditation is a time-consuming process it demonstrates a commitment to professional law enforcement standards.

- In the more distant future and after NJSAOCP accreditation is fully secured, consider applying for and achieving CALEA (The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies) accreditation, considered by many to be the gold standard for Police Departments.

Managing training for a department of this size is a complex task of critical importance. Too often, inadequate, improper, or untimely training is the basis for litigation. The earlier recommendation to elevate the command of the division responsible for training is intended to acknowledge the complexity and importance of the training function within the department.

A recently approved PBA contract calls for the PBA members to participate in 44 hours of required in-service training annually during their off-duty time. This is a good feature of the renewed collective bargaining agreement, resulting in an increase from 24 hours in the past contract and will prove to be a cost saving benefit for the community.

Required member training is reported to be up to date – this study did not include validation of any training records. Training is managed by using Power DMS, a comprehensive document management system. The department maintains a local firing range for regular and convenient firearms training and certification. It was reported that members recently completed training in de-escalation techniques.

Recommendation:

- The department should prepare an annual report on the training accomplished each year for submittal to the Mayor and Council.

The school system in Perth Amboy has some 14,000 students with 19 public schools, 3 charter schools and 2 Catholic schools. A new high school for 3500 students is currently being constructed with completion expected in 2025. The school system has its own security force, with a former Perth Amboy Police Department Captain serving as Chief of school security. The school security officers have the ability to patch-in radio communications with the police department and the board of education creating an efficient communication system.

The Chief reported that the relationship between the police department and the superintendent of schools “could be better.” Maintaining an excellent working relationship between the schools and police department is in everyone’s best interests and should be considered a priority.

There are 50 school crossing guards managed by an officer in the department. The Deputy Chief has received a proposal for a private vendor to provide crossing guard services. Although the proposed cost is higher than current employee costs, there are still considerable savings associated with the service. Of primary importance is that no officers will be required to fill-in crossing posts due to employee absences. In addition, no management oversight will be required by the department, freeing up a police officer to provide other services. Finally, related payroll costs will be eliminated as well as any associated liability or workers compensation issues.

Recommendations:

- Take affirmative steps to assure that the relationship at the highest levels of the school system and police department is one that embodies professionalism, high trust and open communication.
- Perform a thorough cost/benefit analysis of the private vendor proposal for school crossing guard services, including analysis of indirect cost savings and efficiencies. Police officers standing on vacant school crossing posts is a waste of valuable (and limited) resources.

The police department has a more than 160 vehicles, including a police department tow truck as well as other miscellaneous equipment. To service vehicles and equipment, the department has three dedicated mechanics who work in a four-bay repair shop. Police department mechanics have a working relationship with DPW mechanics whereby PD mechanics maintain light-duty vehicles for other departments, allowing DPW mechanics to concentrate the City's fleet of trucks and heavy equipment.

Recommendation:

- The police department has a significant number of vehicles, possibly more than may be required. An assessment of the full inventory of vehicles should be made to assure that any considered surplus are disposed of.

The Perth Amboy Animal Shelter – The Perth Amboy Animal Shelter is currently under the jurisdiction of the police department with one full-time and two part time civilian employees. Only a few New Jersey municipalities operate their own animal shelters and even fewer – two or three – are managed by the local police department. Animal shelters and the animal control function are demanding operations that present many challenges for municipalities to operate on their own. In Perth Amboy, the Chief reports that managing the shelter is a significant issue with many complaints. The police department's main areas of focus should be on law enforcement, community relations, and quality of life issues. Two of the other municipally operated shelters in NJ are

nearby – Woodbridge and Edison –which presents an opportunity to explore a shared services arrangement for the Perth Amboy animal shelter.

Recommendations:

- Perth Amboy should explore a shared services arrangement with Woodbridge or Edison or both for animal control and shelter services. This can be considered in conjunction with other Board of Health services required by the city noted elsewhere in this report. Since many of the residents of the City do not have cars, it is advisable that any shared services arrangement involve keeping the animal shelter within Perth Amboy open for the convenience of residents.
- In the alternative, Perth Amboy should explore outsourcing the operation of the animal shelter to one of a number of private organizations that are highly regarded for their successful and humane operation of animal shelters, or a public-private partnership.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are provided to the city through an agreement with Hackensack Meridian Health and dispatched through the local 9-1-1 system. This no-fee to the city service actually provides a \$25,000 revenue for the city based on office rental by the EMS unit for space in fire headquarters. The agreement provides that one EMS unit be staged within the city limits and a second unit be available within a 12-minute response time. This agreement provides rapid and dependable service and is a positive value to the city.

Department management recognizes the value of coordinating the intelligence gathering capability of the department. Specific circumstances have occurred where the sharing of information through the New Jersey State Police (NJSP) twice weekly briefings, or contacts in the NYPD or Port Authority Police has provided information that helped solve or prevent crimes in Perth Amboy. The Deputy Chief proposes creation of an “Office of Innovation, Technology and Investigation,” with the office staffed with retired police officer(s) and perhaps IT savvy college students who could perform predictive analysis of data to prevent and solve crimes. This team would also be responsible for increasing the social media presence of the department as a component of an improved community outreach effort.

Recommendation:

- A proposal to create an “Office of Innovation, Technology and Investigation” should be fully developed and presented for consideration.

It should be noted in conclusion that the Perth Amboy Police Department has received \$7,500,000 worth of equipment from the LESO (Law Enforcement Support Office) of the U.S. Department of Defense, where excess equipment and supplies are provided to local law enforcement. The equipment has included boats, computers, Hummer vehicles, furniture, and more. The savings to the city through this program has been noteworthy.

Recommendation:

- The department and City should work on developing the resources of time, talent, and funding to produce a comprehensive annual report in English and Spanish that can be shared with the community, giving details of the department's achievements across all divisions, as well as reporting on basic law enforcement statistics. See the following link – http://www.southbrunswicknj.gov/images/departments/police/2020_Annual_Report.pdf – for an example of “best practices” with such reports.

Office of Emergency Management

The Perth Amboy Deputy Police Chief serves as the Emergency Management Coordinator for the City. The role of deputy OEM coordinator is filled by a police department sergeant.

The Emergency Operating Center, located in the lower level of the Police Department is an impressive, well equipped facility furnished with 15 workstations and capabilities for presentations. During exercises or actual events, staff from the various departments gather in the center to manage the emergency. The Deputy Chief reports that there is a high level of cooperation among all departments in the city and that working through the COVID 19 pandemic has enhanced the working relationship of all departments.

Perth Amboy is one of just four Emergency Management Assistance (EMA) funded agencies in Middlesex County. Through the competitive EMA program, FEMA provides \$10,000 in annual funding to Perth Amboy.

Quarterly exercises are required for the Office of Emergency Management. Many communities rely on table-top exercises to fulfill this requirement. In Perth Amboy, according to the director, the frequency of major incidents fulfills the obligations.

Critical infrastructure in the city includes the water supply and sewer collection systems, which are owned by the City and operated by Middlesex Water Company. There are two rail lines in Perth Amboy; one a NJ Transit passenger line and one a Conrail freight

line that includes transport of hazardous materials. There are also three major petroleum terminals located within the City.

Each municipality is required to maintain an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that describes the various risks as well as steps designed to mitigate, prepare and respond to incidents that may occur. The local EOP is currently undergoing a planned update.

Overall, the Perth Amboy Office of Emergency Management appears to be operating at a high level.

Recommendation:

- Succession planning for the critical role of Emergency Management Coordinator is important. Assuring a high level of leadership competence in OEM into the future should be a priority. This key position requires considerable training, experience and commitment. Events can and do occur at any time of the day or night and the level of planning and administrative tasks are considerable. When disasters occur and reimbursements are made available, complex applications, including precise documentation of expenses must be completed and submitted. State statute requires that the position of OEM coordinator be a resident of the community, a requirement that can be a limiting factor for potential candidates. Perth Amboy would benefit by retaining the current, proven OEM coordinator into the future; however, a formal process should be undertaken to assure that candidates are identified and mentored as potential future OEM coordinators. Recruiting the right person, with experience and intimate familiarity with Perth Amboy, along with the leadership capacity and ability to encourage various departments and agencies to work collaboratively will be essential for the continued success of emergency management in Perth Amboy.

[Water/Wastewater Utility](#)

The Perth Amboy Water/Wastewater Utility (aka "Water/Sewer Utility") operates with two divisions – the Water Division and the Sewer Division. The Water Division is a PWID NJ1216001 (Public Water System Identification Number) W-4, T-4 system. W-4 designates a water *distribution* system's necessary license to operate based on population; 4 is the highest license. T-4 designates the water *treatment* license necessary to operate the system by treatment processes; 4 is the highest license.

Recent NJDEP reports state that there are 11,579 service connections. The system has a Total Water Supply firm capacity of 7.963MGD (million gallons per day) including .497MGD committed peak with firm available capacity of 1.16MGD (uncommitted). The system has approximately 95 miles of lines and 746 fire hydrants. The license operator

mentioned an unaccounted-for water of 15.25%. In the 2020 CCR (consumer confidence report), which gives 2019 results, an exceedance of TTHM (total trihalomethanes) LRAA (locational running annual average) was reported at 3 sites. According to the NJDEP water watch site, in 2020 no TTHM violations occurred.

The sanitary sewer is a C-4 system as classified by the NJDEP (the highest classification) and is combined with storm water in multiple connections. This combined system is in the beginning stages of being separated. Improvements have been made and are ahead in the initial schedule with the federal Environmental Protection Agency (as per the CCR 2019, but not independently verified). In reviewing the necessary construction to separate the systems, estimated costs of \$376.7 million dollars would be necessary to separate the system in its entirety. Reviewing and updating the separation plan as progress occurs could possibly allow for less expensive options going forward as initial stages get completed.

The Perth Amboy Water/Sewer utility is subcontracted to Utility Service Affiliates a subsidiary of Middlesex Water for an operations cost of \$6.7 million dollars per year. The contract provides for day-to-day operations of the City's Runyon Watershed and its combined sanitary/storm sewers. This is a 10-year contract, becoming effective January 2019 and ending 2029. The contract includes sampling and compliance for the city's water/sewer systems. Some of the main items include the following:

1. Supply licensed operators for the Water and Sanitary Sewer systems.
2. Operations of the Runyon Watershed which has municipal wells (source water) and treatment facilities.
3. Sampling and laboratory services for NJDEP compliance for water quality (treatment) and the water distribution system.
4. Sampling for EPA UCMR (unregulated contaminant monitoring rule).
5. WQAA (Water Quality Accountability Act) compliance which includes valve turning, capital improvements, GIS mapping for both hydrants and valves, capital projects including water main installation, etc., with the City being responsible for capital investments.
6. Hydrant flushing once per year.
7. Water meter reading and related issues (not including billing).
8. Assistance with rate structures.
9. Assistance with the city selling its firm capacity water surplus for potential additional income. ("Firm capacity" is that amount of water production capacity the State considers minimal to maintain the system.) It should be noted that Middlesex Water itself has 16 MGD surplus, leaving it with little incentive to earn income for Perth Amboy by selling City surplus.
10. Responding to utility mark outs.

11. Responding to water system failures, including water main breaks, service leaks, and additional calls for service, including sanitary sewer backups.
12. Capital planning and assistance with NJEIT (New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust) financing for capital expenditures.
13. Capital project management including engineering, if feasible.
14. Flushing the sanitary sewer system every 3 years including video inspection.
15. Safety and security of the facilities.

GSG visited the Runyon Water Shed and toured the facilities, including the treatment plant and wells. The facilities are well kept, painted, and operational. Upgrades can be seen while touring the plant. The watershed has a main electrical substation that powers the facility at 4160vac (volts alternating current), 3-phase. There is an internal electrical distribution system distributing 4160 to all the individual wells and the treatment plant. It also keeps the internal system with smaller wire when traveling long distance via telephone pole arial cable. This type of system is more cost effective as the electrical utility charges less per KWH at 4160 than if 480vac was initially purchased (due to the electrical utility having transformers and the losses associated with them). Each individual building then transforms the medium voltage to 480vac 3 phase for usage on the electric motors which power the pumps, clarifiers, etc. Each individual building has a 4160 to 480 transformer. Some of the transformers were of the older oil filled type. GSG was advised that the oils for each transformer were tested for PCB's and were now good. Switchgear throughout the system was of different vintages, some most likely entering the end of their useful life. The oil filled transformers while working, will be soon, if not already, entering the end of their useful life.





OLDER OIL FILLED TRANSFORMER (see plug on bottom for oil)

The internal watershed electrical system is maintained by outside contractors and sometimes the City helps with issues. Tree trimming and inspection is critical when having an electrical distribution system like this. cursory views showed tree trimming was being kept up. Not knowing the history of splices and wire/cable age, keeping the system together and updated is an important maintenance issue.

The SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition) system at this time had little to no control. The only control reported is an interconnection valve with Middlesex Water. This valve would add water during an emergency involving water production. Controllers were used for treatment process but everything appears to be local control. The wells also had only local control with no alarms to the main plant. Scada was used for monitoring mostly for the plant with an available auto dialer for system alarms.

The treatment plant was well kept, well painted, and recent results show water quality in compliance, as shown in the following photos.



Treatment plant pumps, newest on the left.

The equipment was well kept, with some new pump motors being installed that were high efficiency inverter duty. Inverter duty has better wire insulation (class F or H wire insulation) in the windings to protect operation from voltage spikes and heat).



New motor at Ranney well being installed (middle pump). Pump capacities of the above pumps are Left to Right 2MGD, 4MGD, 4MGD.

Other recent upgrades include new valves at the Ranney Well site, as shown in the following photo:





Two upper valves are new at the Ranney Well site.

Some well pumps were fenced only with no protection from the elements. While this works, a building would be significantly preferable. See following photos:

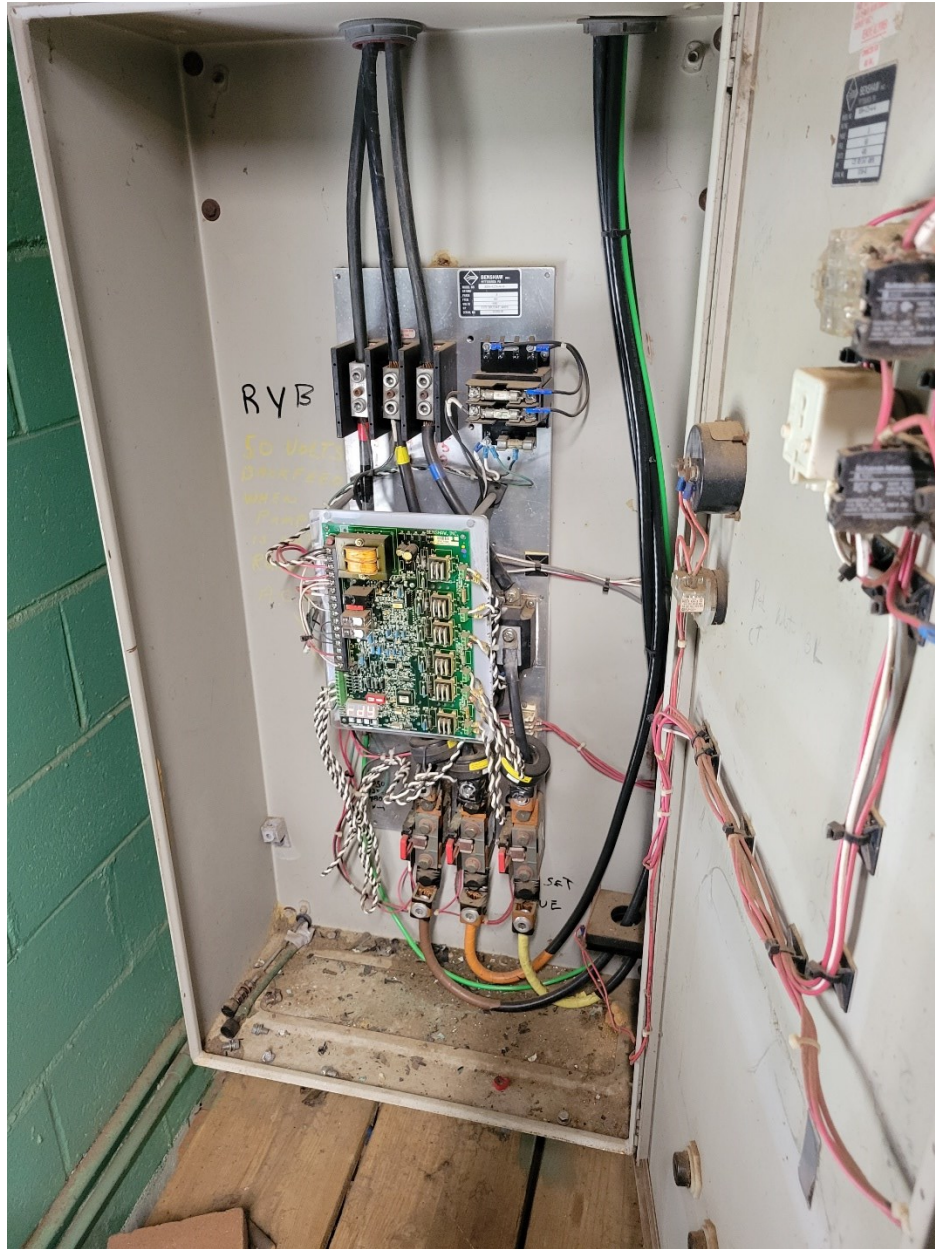


An example of equipment being generally kept in good condition is evidenced in the following photo:



In some instances, the Water Utility is relying on “soft start” motor control devices on motors, as pictured below. These devices help moderate mechanical shock and electrical surges by controlling the acceleration and deceleration of a motor, while VFDs (variable frequency drives) can also control the speed of a motor.





Example of an older soft-start on motor starter at the Water Utility.

Sanitary Sewers – The sanitary sewer system is a combined system with upgrades occurring yearly. Lining projects to reduce I&I (inflow and infiltration) were included on the 6-year capital program. So long as the lines are properly sized, lining refurbishes the structural integrity of the line and increases the “C factor” (a factor or value used to indicate the smoothness of the interior of a pipe) The higher the C factor, the smoother the pipe, the greater the carrying capacity, and the smaller the friction or energy losses from water flowing in the pipe. Generally, after lining, the carrying capacity (gpm) actually increases due to the monolithic tube the lining uses. This trenchless technology is a great

alternative to digging and changing the pipe in place. In 2020 there were 10 mainline backups (according to personnel) in the sanitary sewer lines. The contract includes cleaning the whole system every 3 yrs. and includes video inspection. The status of the combined system is an engineering report within itself and such a deep evaluation is not within the scope of this review.

The Second Street main sewer pump station with a stand-by generator was installed so as to keep damages to a minimum from flooding during extreme weather and keep storm water moving during large events.

Recommendations:

- Water rates need to be increased and new infrastructure charges established. Recent adjustments do not go far enough. The current rate for a 5/8 x 3/4 meter from Perth Amboy Water is \$24.85 quarterly which includes 500 cubic feet of water or 5 units of 100 cuft. Comparing to local private companies, that same volume of water and meter size would be \$70.20 to \$81.25 per quarter. Due to unfunded mandates, capital expenditures for the foreseeable future will be consistent and potentially higher. Many systems are behind on their equipment and large cost items. Generally, utilities cannot borrow their way through this over many years. Most water utilities charge either a service charge, facilities charge, or infrastructure charge as an investment into the utility's system maintenance and planned obsolescence. This is considered an imperative and should be implemented in Perth Amboy. Policy makers need to realize that if reasonable rates are not charged, then when the utility is either sold (or given away depending on debt) the next owner is likely to be a utility regulated by the NJ Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU or BPU) that will move forward with higher rates than if the City's policy makers made the decision in the near future to act on rates and new infrastructure charges. Unfortunately, city utilities usually compare rates with other cities in a race to the bottom, while comparing to BPU regulated utilities would reveal that their rates are far too low. The BPU regulated utilities have had decades of higher rates to complete capital work so many cities are even further behind than them in improvements and upgrades. While charging what BPU regulated utilities may be considered high, charging closer to those rates, for example, would be better for residents than a future of 100% of what BPU regulated utilities charge.
- Consider installing mixers in all water storage tanks. Tanks with little to no turnover require mixers for better water quality. In particular, an oversized tank exists within the Perth Amboy system that staff has indicated is being evaluated

for installation of a mixer. Mixers can help reduce disinfection by-products and produce better chlorine residuals.

- Consider installing backup generators in the future (capital) for the larger wells so water supply continues during outages. At a minimum during electric upgrades, install transfer switches so that when needed either a trailer or pad mounted generator could quickly be installed at the facilities during emergencies.
- Consider enclosures for the wells that are now only fenced in. A prefab structure or stick-built enclosure would keep equipment out of the elements.
- Evaluate possibly more efficient ways of meeting the community's needs for fluoridation by comparing how much water is consumed by people versus how much total water is pumped by the system. Currently all pumped water is fluoridated, while we estimate 55,000-60,000 is consumed per day. (Fluoride doesn't put fires out better, make grass greener, make showers better, or flush toilets better, not to mention environmental factors.)
- Review the SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition) system to ensure it provides for better control of the water system with system alarms, including the well houses, and allows for operational improvements, less potential damage to equipment, better pumping schedules, and even better electrical usage. Since electric utilities charge less at night per KWH, an upgraded SCADA system can also save money. Generally, electric power charges M-F between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. (peak) are higher than 10:01 p.m. to 7:59 a.m. (off-peak). Saturdays 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. is "intermediate" and after 10 p.m. Saturday until Monday 8 a.m. is off-peak. Upgraded SCADA systems go into fill mode during off-peak. During the day (peak) the water system can use storage with minimal pumping. With this capability, SCADA can potentially save money utilizing pumping schedules and VFD (variable frequency drives). SCADA also can detect and give personal text messages of parameters, alarms, issues, etc. in advance of violation or major problems.
- Consider in future contracts a clause providing for the City to receive a share of savings achieved when upgrades are made at the facilities.
- Review the materials (hydrants, valves, pipe, etc.) purchasing practices for the Water/Sewer Utility. Some operations contractors get direct manufacturer's pricing which can be substantially less than bid prices, otherwise bidding should be utilized to compare prices.
- Consider issuing an RFP for engineering services for review of capital projects, inspections, and other issues to protect the City's best interests. Most or all of

these costs can become part of the capital projects/capital budget. Third party yearly review of facilities and projects could also be useful.

- The City should consider installing VFDs (variable frequency drives) on motors currently using soft-start devices.
- City officials should also consider making more visits and inspections to the City's water/sewer facilities. The City's investment alone warrants walk-throughs and trust that its investment is being cared for properly.
- The City should consider commissioning an independent rates study for water and wastewater in order to develop a reasonable and defensible rate structure.
- At the time of this report, the City was planning an auction for the purchase of electricity. It should ensure that the Water/Wastewater Utility is included in this, as well as the other City Utilities.

Finally, it should be noted that improvements to the City's water supply infrastructure and system can improve the community's fire rating and save local property owners money on their fire insurance.

Municipal Court

The Municipal Court of Perth Amboy is located at 361 New Brunswick Avenue, in the same building as the Perth Amboy Police Department.

Government Strategy Group found that the Court facility was neat, clean and efficiently configured. All of the important security concerns are in place but only used when there is a court session. GSG was advised by the Court Administrator that the building, as shared with the Police, was dedicated in 2008 and is quite adequate for the Court operation. GSG did observe that the "file room" area appeared to be lacking an adequate number of file cabinets.

The Municipal Court of Perth Amboy operates from 8:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Monday through Friday. Court sessions are held three days a week, two sessions each day: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00AM and 10:45AM; Wednesdays 1:30pm and 2:15PM. Special sessions are scheduled as needed. During the pandemic and currently, the Municipal Court conducts all Court sessions via video conference.

The Court Administrator reported an objective of maintaining the present staff and replacing the one Deputy that was not replaced when she took over as Court Administrator more than two years ago. There are presently eight (8) total staff and a full complement of staff would be nine (9). The Court Administrator also advised that in

addition to her duties as the Administrator, she has had to absorb other duties that the missing Deputy Court Administrator would have been responsible for.

The Court presented as being aware of goals of the new City administration, such as updating the entire City government with the technology necessary to make it more modern and efficient. One area in the Municipal Court that could use upgrading would be the second courtroom that does not have internet capabilities or the equipment necessary to conduct hearings.

There are issues with the telephone system in the Municipal Court. Incoming calls ring on various phones within the complex and are difficult to pick up from one's desk. There is also an issue with the number of calls that the system can accommodate. The maximum number of calls to be received is only three and when the maximum is reached, no more calls are allowed into the Court. There is also an issue with transferred and dropped calls.

Most of the Perth Amboy Court employees have taken Level I and Level II "Principles of Municipal Court Management" classes. These classes are conducted by the Administrative Office of the Courts and are provided online. (Level I is a required class to be a court employee.) To become a Certified Municipal Court Administrator, one would have to take all four levels of the "Principles" classes, which can take up to two years. Court Administrators also must pass a state written and oral exam and then present a court improvement project, similar to a thesis. The Perth Amboy Court Administrator is currently pursuing her Certification and has completed all of the requirements except the court improvement project.

Many training opportunities are available and offered to the employees of the Perth Amboy Municipal Court. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) directly provides significant training for Court employees. AOC administers the Certified Municipal Court Administrator courses previously mentioned, as well as training courses online for various subjects such as yearly certificate programs involving diversity and handling difficult people. Most all of these classes are available online and can be viewed in the present courtroom with the video equipment the Perth Amboy Court has.

The Municipal Division of the Superior Court system also offers training for employees of the Court on an average of twice a week through a program called "Teams." These training programs are also viewed onsite in Perth Amboy in the present Courtroom.

The Perth Amboy Court reports a good working relationship with other City departments. The primary department that the Court is involved with is the Police Department and the Court Administrator reports an excellent relationship with the Police Department. A periodic issue with ticket control was reported with the Court

having to track down some officers to get them to comply with Ticket Control regulations.

The Municipal Court receives an inordinate amount of truancy complaints from the school system. Many times the court has to schedule special sessions due to the sensitive nature of the complaints and the restricted period of time for the truancy officers to appear. There does not seem to be extensive investigation before a complaint is issued as when the parents appear in court, they often report a change of address or illness that could have been resolved without the issuance of a complaint.

The Municipal Court is community minded and strives to assist citizens and the business community. The primary business in the City that utilized the court is Shop Rite. The Security Officers there are familiar with the procedures for shoplifting complaints and work well together with Court staff in processing their complaints.

The Court does not report any issues with the operational workflow within the City. Purchase Orders are processed in a timely manner and are automated in the Edmunds software system. The Court reports that other departments within the City are cooperative and provide assistance when needed.

All employees of the Municipal Court with the exception of the Court Administrator are part of the Union in the City. The City is also part of the Civil Service System. There do not seem to be any noteworthy employee issues currently. It should be noted that the current president of the Union is a municipal court employee.

Professional services enjoyed by the Municipal Court include "Language Line", which is a telephonic interpretation service for court clients who cannot speak English or Spanish. There is a Spanish Interpreter present in all virtual court sessions. Interpreters are always on call for other interpretation services such as sign language. The sound recording system within the Courtroom has a maintenance contract with the Gramco Communications company in the event of a breakdown.

The Administrative Office of the Courts oversees all Municipal Courts in the State of New Jersey and collects various statistical data, which is available to the public. Most of the data involves the issuance of traffic and criminal complaints. Revenue statistics for each Municipal Court are not readily available and although they were not established to be a revenue-producing agency, they usually account for the second largest revenue production for municipalities. Best Practices for the Municipal Court operation are generally provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts. This is to ensure equal justice throughout the State of New Jersey and the same applications and procedures in all Municipal Courts.

During the recent pandemic conditions, the staff of the Perth Amboy Municipal Court has maintained contact with the public and members have reported to their jobs onsite throughout. The public has always been able to contact the court and video conferencing was immediately available to try and move cases. The Administrative Office of the Courts has provided all the tools for the Municipal Courts to continue to serve the public during these difficult times. The Middlesex County Municipal Division, which is an arm of the Administrative Office of the Courts, has maintained communications with all the Municipal Courts within its Vicinage. They continued to provide support, guidance, and remote training for all staff.

The Municipal Courts that share similar statistics with the City of Perth Amboy include the Township of Old Bridge, Piscataway and New Brunswick. Although the demographics of the Municipalities differ in size, ethnic makeup and industry, there are some similarities that one can compare with similar caseloads and personnel. The comparison chart which follows provides a “snapshot” of data for these three municipalities and Perth Amboy.

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW								
Municipal Court Comparisons								
	2018	Admin	# of	Criminal	Traffic	Criminal	Traffic	Pending
	Populat.	Salary	Emp	Issued	Issued	Disposed	Disposed	Cases
Perth Amboy	51,678	\$63,139	8	2,851	11,541	1,378	7,610	10,707
New Brunswick	55,960	\$82,808	16	4,937	38,667	3,574	25,042	37,753
Old Bridge	65,898	\$96,397	5	2,084	5,275	526	4,222	4,190
Piscataway	56,923	\$87,515	6	1,206	4,511	709	2,952	3,795
*Issued and disposed cases include cases from July 2020 to January 2021								

It should be noted that all municipalities have suffered a loss of revenue from the courts due to the pandemic. The issuance of complaints is down an average of 35% and the disposition of cases is down an average of 69% throughout Middlesex County. Statewide the issuance is down by 32% and dispositions are down by 54%. There are many factors that contribute to the decline. Some of the issues involve avoiding contact with the public to reduce the possible spread of the virus; closed businesses due to emergency orders by the Governor; emergency directives by the Administrative Office of the Courts to close Courts to the public; ceased collection activities; recalling

warrants and other procedures that would normally generate more revenue.

Although the revenue is down and there was a reduction of cases filed, the backlog in the Municipal Court continues to grow. The Administrative Office of the Courts ordered closure of the Municipal Courts on March 23, 2020, through an abundance of caution with the Covid19 virus; however, the staff of the Municipal Court reported to work every day. All in-person court sessions were cancelled at that time, creating a backlog of cases throughout the State. The last in-person court session was March 12, 2020.

Backlog is the number of cases that remain open and not adjudicated in the Municipal Court. It includes both traffic and criminal cases that require a court hearing and a lot more intensive work by the employees of the Municipal Court through more coordination, correspondence and notifications to State Agencies. The statewide percentage of backlog as of January 2021 is 75%. The Perth Amboy percentage of backlog as of January 2021 is 76%. This relates to over 10,000 cases that need to be resolved and does not include new cases filed each day thereafter. The current reduction of one staff member and the increase in Virtual Court hearings creates a new burden for the Municipal Court and will contribute to the backlog. This emphasizes the importance of a full staff.

Virtual Court hearings recently initiated, created a new responsibility for the Municipal Courts and involve more Court staff to handle. Not only does the scheduling of cases and correspondence change but the new procedures and handling of video equipment require at least three staff members at each session instead of the two staff members required before – one staff member to operate the Video Conferencing Equipment, one staff member to operate the Sound Recording Equipment and one staff member to enter dispositions into the AOC Computer. Presently, the Court has two sessions per day, three days a week or six sessions per week.

GSG's general overview of the Perth Amboy Municipal Court is that is a well-run Municipal Court with dedicated staff and a modern secure facility. The City of Perth Amboy has provided for a safe and comfortable working environment.

Recommendations:

- A Police Liaison to the Court should be appointed to assist with the ticket control issues and any other issues that may arise. The appointment of a Police Liaison to a Municipal Court is not a new idea. Many municipal courts enjoy this type of cooperative tool that enhances the cooperation between the two agencies. The Police and the Court must always maintain the substance and appearance of propriety to the public; however they must work together at times to resolve issues like ticket control. It is recommended that a ranking officer be appointed

who has the authority to resolve any issues that may arise between the Court and the Police Department.

- As soon as fiscally feasible, the City should provide more IT equipment to the Court that is capable of enhancing the Court's ability to scan documents. Although the Administrative Office of the Courts provides computer equipment to the Municipal Court it does not allow for scanning.
- The appointment of a Deputy Court Administrator should be given strong consideration by the City. This is not only an issue with the added responsibility to the Court Administrator but begs the question of who is in charge during the Court Administrator's absence. In these economic times, it may not be feasible to hire an additional staff person to fill this position. However, a current staff member could be promoted to the Deputy Court Administrator position, which will save the City of Perth Amboy an additional full salary and provide a measure of relief for the Court Administrator workload.
- Consideration should also be given to adding a part-time position to augment the Court staff and help deal with the backlog.
- A quick review of marketplace salaries tends to indicate that Perth Amboy Court salaries are not competitive. This may explain the volume of staff turnover, including with several Court Administrators in recent years. The City should study this issue further and the salary structure of its own Court.
- In line with the City's goal of updating technology organization-wide, consideration should be given to having its second courtroom fully equipped with sound equipment, internet connectivity, and video conferencing equipment to provide for additional hearings to efficiently dispose of more cases, reducing the backlog.
- The City should improve the capability of the Court's phone system or install a new system. This will result in better customer service to the public and to anyone doing business with the Court, as well as improved staff efficiency. A review of the features and modification costs of the call system is necessary to determine the adequacy of this vital communication tool and whether it needs to be replaced or can be upgraded.
- Discussions should be initiated with appropriate school officials regarding the Court-identified issue of improving pre-complaint investigations in student truancy matters.

Fire Department

The current Fire Chief was appointed to the department in 2012 and promoted to his current position in 2017. The present compliment of members is 71, including three vacancies in firefighter positions. Organizationally, the department is divided into four units: Operations (Fire Suppression); Administration and Investigations; Training, Safety and Certification; and Fire Prevention. Battalion Chiefs head up each of the four platoons in Operations and also the Administration and Investigations division and the Training, Safety and Certification division, while Fire Prevention is headed by the acting fire official who currently holds the rank of firefighter.

The department operates out of one station, a spacious, state of the art facility constructed in 2006. Office space within the building is shared with the Code Enforcement Department. Pairing these two departments in one facility encourages a close working relationship among the construction, code enforcement and fire officials. Having those same officials accessible in one location also adds convenience to those doing business with the city in matters relating to property and land use.

Monthly activity reports are prepared by the fire chief and a comprehensive annual report is published each year.

Staffing

Fire suppression services are delivered by four platoons of firefighters and officers that work a rotating schedule to assure coverage at all times. Each platoon is headed by a battalion chief, assisted by three captains and 13 firefighters for a total staff of 17 on-duty although two platoons each have a vacancy of one firefighter position. During major incidents, off-duty firefighters are recalled to duty to staff reserve apparatus or to provide additional manpower at the incident scene. In addition, the department is supported by six active and certified volunteer firefighters along with five members of designated fire police.

The fire department follows the National Fire Protection Association Standard (NFPA) 1710 which provides staffing guidance for the "Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations." Although the standard does not constitute a regulatory requirement, it is widely considered a best practice and provides an excellent framework for fire suppression staffing.

Apparatus

The current fleet of fire apparatus includes four engines, two ladder trucks, one heavy rescue unity, one four-thousand-gallon foam tender and a 36-foot fire boat. There are

also several support vehicles and specialized trailers. Purchase and maintenance of fire apparatus is costly and the department has been creative in acquiring used apparatus as a way to quickly, if temporarily, update otherwise obsolete units.

The foam tender, delivered in 2020 and funded through a grant, is a specialized unit that is particularly valuable for responses to any of the three major petroleum terminals located within the city.

The marine unit, a 36-foot fire boat purchased in 2005, is scheduled for replacement and will be funded entirely through a combination of a federal grant and developer's fees.

Statistics

The fire department is active, responding to 2,004 incidents during 2020, including 44 structural fires among the 182 fires overall. For the first three-months of 2021, the number and type of incidents are shown in the table that follows:

Perth Amboy Fire Department Responses January 1, 2021 – March 31, 2021	
Fires	33
Rescues	179
Hazardous Conditions	107
Service Calls	38
Good Intent Calls	5
False Alarms	35
Total Responses	502

Strategic Plan

The department also follows a six-year strategic plan that was developed in 2020 and updated in 2021. The plan lists goals related to facilities, delivery of fire prevention services, fire suppression and response as well as a schedule for apparatus replacement. Strategic planning is considered a best practice and appears to be serving the department well.

The strategic planning effort is made even more effective when it is developed using a community-based approach and fully considers the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and trends (S.W.O.T.T.). Using that model encourages input and participation from a broad representation of community stakeholders that help the fire department better understand the needs of the

community and, at the same time, the community better understand the capabilities and any limitations of the fire department.

Recommendation:

- Consideration should be given to using the community-based approach to strategic planning for future updates to the department’s strategic plan.

New Fire Station

Plans have been prepared and property acquired for the construction of a new, three apparatus bay, second fire station to be located in the northeast section of the city. The addition of the second station will improve overall response times and increase on-duty staffing to 21 personnel. Overall, 16 new firefighters are proposed, adding four each year beginning in 2022. Partial funding is anticipated through federal grants for the new hires.

Special Operations

The department is characterized as an “all hazards” organization, responding to a wide range of fire and emergency incidents. An active dive team and a fire investigation team are jointly operated with the Perth Amboy Police Department. Leveraging the expertise from both agencies serves the community particularly well and demonstrates a close working relationship and mutual respect that more communities should follow.

Insurance Service Office

The Insurance Service Office (ISO) performs periodic and comprehensive evaluations of a community’s structural fire suppression capabilities. The ISO fire suppression rating schedule is used to determine the public protection classification (PPC) grade for the community. The PPC grades are broken down into ten separate classifications. A classification of 1 denotes superior fire protection, a designation of 10 indicates that fire protection does not meet minimum ISO criteria. Many insurers use the PPC grade as a component to determine insurance premium charges.

Part of this study involved a review of the most recent (2018) evaluation by ISO. Perth Amboy maintains a PPC classification of 3, which overall should be considered is a very good rating. However, because the local water supply system contributes 40% of the rating, it is highly likely that improvements to the city’s water supply system would result in an improved ISO classification.

Beyond the benefits of potentially lower insurance premiums for property owners, the fire chief has identified the water supply distribution system as a significant issue in need of improvement.

Recommendation:

- A long-term improvement plan should be established to upgrade the city’s water supply infrastructure and distribution system.

Training

An essential part of operating a high-functioning fire department involves the delivery of effective training. For Perth Amboy, that training includes specialized evolutions for marine, high-angle, bulk storage and rail transport of flammable liquids. The fire chief reports that most training is conducted “in-house” using members that are certified as instructors. This is a cost-effective way to deliver training in a timely fashion.

Fire Prevention

The fire prevention bureau is headed by a seven-year veteran of the department who is serving as the acting fire official. In 2019, the fire department assumed responsibility for administration and enforcement of the uniform fire code following a 2018 audit by the NJ Division of Fire Safety that raised several operational concerns.

Among the issues revealed by the audit was the absence of enforcement by the previous inspector relating to fire protection requirements in certain commercial occupancies with windowless basements. The fire official reports that there has been considerable push-back from some property owners due to the expense of compliance with this code requirement.

The fire official advised that the members of the bureau are working with property owners to establish reasonable timeframes to accomplish the required property improvements. In addition, federal community development block grant funding has been identified to use for financial assistance for property owners to complete the work.

During 2020, the fire prevention bureau completed inspections and activities as illustrated in the following chart:

Perth Amboy Fire Prevention Bureau Activity 2020	
Life Hazard Use Occupancy	348
Non-Life Hazard Use Occupancy	540
Uniform Fire Code Compliance	331
Fire Safety Permits Issued	100

As the fire prevention bureau continues to address the backlog of inspections, the goal is to complete 4,000 initial inspections annually as required by the NJ Division of Fire Safety and local ordinance.

The fire department has taken a novel and cost-effective approach to staffing by using off-duty firefighters who are certified as fire inspectors to perform fire inspections. These part-time inspectors are compensated at a negotiated rate of \$40 per hour. While the off-duty members are serving as fire inspectors, they are radio equipped and carry their turnout gear in their inspector’s vehicle. In that way, the inspectors are available for response in the event of a significant emergency at which time they will be paid at the negotiated firefighter overtime rate.

Currently, there are eight firefighters serving as part-time inspectors with an additional seven members in training. This is a noteworthy program that provides experienced fire fighters as inspectors on a part-time and cost-effective basis while increasing the potential fire suppression response capacity of the department. In addition, the increased participation of rank and file firefighters serving as fire inspectors will increase their overall knowledge and awareness of local fire hazards.

Operations of fire code enforcement bureaus are intended to be self-supporting from a revenue standpoint. The fire chief reports that actual revenue for 2020 exceeded the projected \$101,000 with a total of \$214,000 received. Revenue projected for 2022 is \$500,000.

The fire chief has recommended that the firefighter assigned as the acting fire official be promoted to the rank of captain. The rationale for the promotion is the acknowledgement that the role is supervisory in nature and reflective of the responsibilities associated with the position. Government Strategy Group agrees with that rationale.

Recommendations:

- Fees and expenses related to the operation of the fire prevention bureau should continue to be monitored to assure that the operation is self-supporting financially.
- Consideration should be given to elevating the position of fire official (as head of the fire prevention bureau) to captain.

Issues for Consideration

The fire department should consider expanding the role of the fire prevention bureau to include the concept of Community Risk Reduction (CRR). The concept of CRR is to view the risks posed to the community broadly and encourage working with the various stakeholders to mitigate risks. Proactively addressing the issue of overcrowding within Perth Amboy may be an example of CRR. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1300, *Standard on Community Risk Assessment and Community Reduction Plan Development* should serve as a framework for a CRR initiative.

The NFPA recently published a new standard; NFPA 1730 *Standard on Organization and Deployment of Fire Inspectors and Code Enforcement, Plan Review, Investigation and Public Education Operations*. Among other important areas, this standard outlines the process for a Community Risk Assessment to “Identify the needs and the circumstances of the community and to establish the level of fire prevention activities.” The Perth Amboy Fire Prevention Bureau should consider this standard as a framework for continuing organizational improvement.

Recommendations:

- NFPA 1300 *Standard on Community Risk Assessment and Community Reduction Plan Development* should serve as a framework for a CRR initiative.
- NFPA Standard 1730 should be used as a framework for continuing organizational improvement.

Public Works

The director of public works at the time of this study had served as a Perth Amboy employee for 37 years, and in his current role since 2015. The department is made up of the following divisions: sanitation, parks, mechanics, buildings & grounds, and roads. The table of organization includes 76 listed positions of which four are currently vacant, two are seasonal positions, two have been detailed to other departments and one is on

disability leave. The director recommends hiring seasonal employees to address a number of current vacancies.

The director expresses values of excellent customer service and value for the community, perhaps best illustrated by the following inscription on the entrance door to DPW offices: *"Delivering the Best Service for the Best Value to the People of Perth Amboy."* That is a meaningful example of reminding both employees and visitors about the department's stated commitment to excellence.

Government Strategy Group noted an active safety training program. The director participates as a member of the city's safety committee. The frequency of safety committee meetings was described as inconsistent.

Recommendations:

- Use of seasonal staff represents a cost-effective way to temporarily fill vacancies. Consideration should be given to filling vacancies using seasonal staff.
- By reviewing and learning from accidents and recommending improved procedures and practices, the work of employee safety committees is an important initiative for any community and can result in worthwhile savings in insurance premiums and legal costs. Steps should be taken to assure that the safety committees meet on a regular basis and have the full support of the administration to conduct this important work.

Public Works Facility

The public works facility occupies 13 acres of which eight are in use. The remaining five acres are slated for possible use as a recycling facility pending approval of a site remediation plan by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection.

A fuel depot for use by the various city departments and agencies is located on the DPW property. A 5,000-gallon diesel fuel supply and 5,000-gasoline supply are stored at the depot as well as back up supply of 1,000 gallons of diesel and gasoline. Users are required to use a key fob and unique PIN. Video surveillance of the fuel depot is provided. The board of education and water department are back charged for fuel use.

An emergency stand-by generator provides partial coverage of the facility. There is no monitored security or fire detection or suppression systems protecting the DPW facility and equipment.

Recommendation:

- A public works facility represents a critical infrastructure site of a community. The continuity of operation of facilities, vehicles and equipment is essential for the city. Consideration should be given to installation of monitored security, fire detection and fire suppression systems at the public works facility.

Sanitation

For the efficient collection of solid waste, Perth Amboy is divided into six collection routes and one route exclusively for parks. In total, there are approximately 12,000 stops for sanitation pick up in the city. Collection is provided twice per week for each property. Four single-operator automated collection trucks and two rear loading conventional packer trucks operated by a driver and two helpers cover the assigned routes. The director intends to add an additional automated vehicle and maintain one rear loader for use in congested areas.

While the automated packer trucks are highly efficient, they are also mechanically complex and have a service life of just 6 – 8 years. An informal agreement exists with the Township of Woodbridge for sharing automated packer trucks in cases where a unit may be out of service for repair.

The city maintains a transfer station on the grounds of the DPW where solid waste is compacted for transfer to a landfill in East Brunswick.

Collection of bulk waste is scheduled for a fee of just \$30. There is no limit on the volume to be collected.

Recommendations:

- Currently, there is no long-range vehicle and equipment replacement schedule. Instead, replacement is dependent on the six-year capital plan. A longer-range replacement schedule, forecasting replacements over a 20-year period, will help to better schedule and pace the replacement of costly vehicles and equipment operated by the department. This should apply to all DPW divisions.
- The current practice of collecting bulk waste should be reviewed and revised. In a city with a reported dwelling turnover rate of 20% annually, along with no real controls on the origin of the bulk waste, this service constitutes a significant cost to Perth Amboy in terms of tipping fees, equipment and labor. Contractors should not be allowed to use the city services for removal of their business generated waste. Additionally, a process should be in place to assure the waste

was in fact, generated from the property owner, not another location. Finally, there should be a reasonable limitation placed on both frequency of bulk waste collections and amount of waste removed. The taxpayers of Perth Amboy should not be paying for waste generated from out-of-town.

Recycling

The sanitation unit also collects recycling once each week from each property. There is a dumpster on the grounds of the DPW for resident use for drop-off of recyclable materials.

Recommendation:

- Municipal collection of recyclables is a time consuming and expensive program. Although commodity prices can sometimes be high enough to cover collection expenses, often they are not. The city should explore whether outsourcing recycling to a private vendor would result in savings.

Technology

Dashcams were recently installed into the sanitation vehicles and GPS is used to track routes. The use of dashcams is a valuable practice for accountability and safety.

Spatial Data Logic and Fleet Mate are software programs in use. Excel is used to maintain a list of vehicles in the DPW fleet.

Recommendation:

- To better understand the full extent of the work performed by the department, each of the software systems currently in use should be fully leveraged to generate regular activity reports – something not currently done.

Succession Planning

Currently, there is no second in command to the department director. The role of general supervisor, a de facto deputy director position, is vacant. The current director is an experienced department head with among the longest tenures of city employees. The director indicated that he is mentoring a number of subordinates that are candidates for advancement. This effort is especially important to assure that the department is well prepared to fill vacancies – in particular that of director – at the time of the retirement of the incumbent.

The supervisor noted that the former Public Safety Building, located at Rector and Fayette Streets is in disrepair and should be considered for demolition and the land used for a use more beneficial to the city.

Parks, Buildings & Grounds

The incumbent Supervisor of the Parks, Buildings and Grounds division is a 32-year employee of Perth Amboy who has served in his current role since 1998.

The parks, buildings & grounds unit of 11 personnel including the supervisor, includes the following titles:

- Senior Maintenance Repair
- Senior Carpenter
- Senior Electrician
- Senior Plumber
- Building Service Worker.

The division is responsible for maintaining all of the municipal buildings (12), park facilities (12) and traffic signals (24). While the electrician and plumber are not licensed, they are able to perform most work on city owned facilities. For projects requiring a licensed electrician or plumber, contracts are maintained for provision of those services. Facility cleaning is performed by staff provided by ACCSES NJ, a not-for-profit organization that provides employment for persons with disabilities.

Several maintenance agreements – HVAC, window washing, preventative maintenance and the like – are drafted and overseen by the parks, buildings and grounds supervisor. He indicated that he strives to assure that a high standard of work is delivered along with an excellent value for Perth Amboy taxpayers.

The division also provides various services to both the parking utility and the marina utility. Work performed is not back charged to the utilities.

The iconic Perth Amboy Town Clock first installed in 1869 and located in the Methodist Church is maintained by the division's supervisor – in effect, the city's modern day clock keeper. Recently, the clock tower underwent an historical restoration that was overseen by the division.

The supervisor appears to be a hands-on supervisor who will often investigate issues and determine the best course of action to pursue. He indicates a commitment to save taxpayer funds, citing an example where all of the municipal traffic signal heads were converted to LED lighting, saving in energy costs and future operating expense. As an

example of the on-going training employees pursue, the supervisor, along with three other employees, completed certification from the International Municipal Signal Association in traffic signal repair.

The most important issue facing the division was characterized by the supervisor as: "personnel – hiring the right people for the right work." He indicated that a current lack of sufficient staffing in the sanitation unit of DPW creates a demand on the overall labor pool which in turn has impacted parks, buildings and grounds staffing.

While the division is clearly active, there are currently no reporting requirements that would confirm the volume, frequency and cost of the essential services provided. Although much of the work is self-initiated and routine in nature, there are no work orders submitted for the various tasks performed. Instead, requests are received by email, phone and in-person and then handwritten onto a calendar. Consequently, planning the important work of the Parks, Buildings and Grounds Division is to some degree, left to chance. Management reports being "re-directed every day."

Perth Amboy subscribes to a comprehensive software package designed for local governments, Spatial Data Logic (SDL), which could be very effectively utilized in this division.

Recommendations:

- There is no designated second in command for the Parks, Buildings and Grounds Division. Consideration should be given to appointing an assistant supervisor to handle day-to-day management in the supervisor's absence. Additionally, given the long tenure the incumbent supervisor has with the city, it is important to begin succession planning efforts now so that at the time of his retirement the transition will be seamless.
- Access to and appropriate training in the use of Spatial Data Logic should be provided to the Parks, Buildings and Grounds Division members for use in creating work orders, scheduling and reporting.
- Work performed by the Parks, Buildings and Grounds division for the Parking Utility and Marina Utility should be charged to the respective utility. This will better reflect the cost of services the City provides to each of these enterprises.
- The former Public Safety Building, located at Rector and Fayette Streets, is in serious disrepair and should be considered for demolition with the land put to a use more beneficial to the City.

Office of Economic and Community Development

This Office is currently managed by the Assistant Director of Community Development. The Director position is currently vacant.

The incumbent Assistant Director has been serving in this role for the past 18 months with total employment of four years with Perth Amboy. In a community where approximately 70% of residents rent with half of those individuals at or below the poverty level, there is a need for a highly functioning Office of Economic and Community Development. Fortunately, Perth Amboy has such a department, led by an enthusiastic individual with competent staff helping to tackle the issues that arise from this circumstance.

The Assistant Director currently supervises two other staff members, writing grants, overseeing funding and managing projects related to Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), CARES ("Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security") Act and HOME programs. Additionally, they oversee small business grants and special projects. Collectively they manage nearly \$5,000,000. The Assistant Director indicated that much of the focus of the office has been on providing COVID relief in the form of grants to local businesses.

The primary work of the office is the assistance provided through funding received from the HUD (Housing and Urban Development) HOME program. Participating jurisdictions may use HOME funds for a variety of housing activities, according to local housing needs. Eligible uses of funds include tenant-based rental assistance; housing rehabilitation; assistance to homebuyers; and new construction of housing. The primary focus of the HOME program is the creation of affordable housing.

The Community Development staff has dedicated considerable time and resources to addressing issues associated with the COVID 19 pandemic. They have secured grants for local businesses and received HUD grants to assist residents. The Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) are leveraged to provide additional Business Improvement District (BID) grants, while providing special funding from the Neighborhood Preservation Program (NPP) received through the N.J. Department of Community Affairs (DCA). An example of a current project underway is the installation of Wi-Fi in public parks throughout the City.

The BID (Business Improvement District) Executive Director maintains an office in City Hall and shares space with the staff of community development. It was reported that there is an excellent working relationship between and among the BID and City Hall staff members.

There is an Urban Enterprise Zone (UEZ) that is administered by the City's Business Improvement District. It was reported that fees associated with the UEZ are no longer collected. While an assessment of the BID and UEZ were not a part of this study, the relationship and operation of the UEZ and BID should be reviewed to assure that both entities are operating effectively and efficiently.

The Assistant Director advised that there currently is no city planner within this operation; however, the consulting City Engineer is also a professional planner and apparently also serves in the role.

Recommendations:

- The offices of Planning, Economic and Community Development play an important role in the future vitality of the city. Selection of a new Director should include consideration for a candidate that is a professional planner.
- The role of the UEZ should be examined to assure that Perth Amboy receives the full value of the enterprise.
- The City should consider retaining the services of a grantswriting consultant. These firms typically bring in more funds to a community like Perth Amboy than they cost and could bring added knowledge and value to this operation.

Note: For the past 24 years, the City's economic interests have also been served by a statutorily created Redevelopment Agency which operates with its own budget, its own Board of Commissioners, and various retained professionals. Over the years the Agency has brought over \$1 billion in development to the City, remediated 500+ acres of contaminated properties, and added 20+ acres of open space to the City.

Engineering

Through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process at the start of each year, the city invites engineering firms to present proposals for general engineering and tax map update services. The incumbent vendor, Center State Engineering of Monroe Township has served in this role for the past 12 years. Approximately 95% of Center State's engineering work is dedicated to government entities. The city has no municipal staff assigned for engineering purposes. Residents requesting engineering services, are directed to contact the firm. A separate consulting engineer is contracted to represent the city's land use boards.

The owner/CEO of Center Street Engineering is designated as the "City Engineer." The owner is a Perth Amboy resident with a long history of local involvement with the community. A second engineer at the firm works closely with each city department and agency on day-to-day engineering matters. Each indicated that the firm prides itself in

being highly responsive to calls received from local residents. A flat fee of \$3,000 per month (as dictated in the RFP) is paid to the firm to address general engineering concerns as well as updating the City's tax maps. Most capital improvement projects including Department of Transportation (DOT) paving programs as well as project inspections are managed by the same consulting engineering firm for an additional fee.

While the engineers reported an excellent working relationship with all department directors, they identified a need for improved communication with the Perth Amboy Redevelopment Agency (PARA). Improving communications by and between the City's Redevelopment Agency and its engineers will help to address engineering related issues prior to formal action by the local land use boards.

Recommendations:

- The use of a consulting city engineer appears to be working well in Perth Amboy. The engineers have an extensive knowledge of the city's infrastructure and operational requirements, and the annual fee also appears to be reasonable. The city should, however, continue to carefully monitor the engineering fees associated with the various capital improvement projects to assure that those fees are both reasonable and appropriate and properly charged to the projects.
- The city's website should be updated to include information about the engineering services available to Perth Amboy residents as well as contact information for the incumbent firm.
- Formalize the process for review and comment by the city engineer for all PARA development applications submitted to the local land use boards.

Like other communities with very early storm and waste water collection systems, those systems in Perth Amboy are combined. This design feature is no longer considered in compliance with environmental regulations and the City is under a long-term "system separation project" as required by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection. This costly project is important for at least two reasons. First, environmentally it is critical to assure that untreated waste does not enter waterways. Second, because wastewater treatment is calculated by actual flow, it is also important to assure that only wastewater is directed to the treatment facility and that the City is not paying to have stormwater such as rainwater and runoff treated (as opposed to sanitary sewerage flow).

Recommendation:

- While unseen, updating the city's sanitary and storm sewer infrastructure is a critical, long-term and costly project. Modern, high functioning infrastructure is crucial for the health, safety and success of every community. The city should

continue to prioritize the system separation program and seek grant funding for this project.

The consulting engineers assist the Department of Public Works in the development of the annual road paving schedule and submit on behalf of Perth Amboy an application for NJ Department of Transportation (DOT) road improvement funding. The annual grant funding for road improvements is reported as approximately \$500,000., with an additional \$800,000 generally available through the capital budget for road resurfacing.

Although not specifically designed as the city planner, the consulting city engineer, who is also licensed as a professional planner, serves in this role when necessary. A master plan reexamination was last completed in 2016 and Rutgers University has conducted several planning reports pro-bono for the city. Various elements of the master plan have been updated, most recently, the recreation element. The housing element represents an important component of the master plan. The city engineer has recommended that the housing element should be updated and a local ordinance adopted to enact a commercial development fee for creation and rehabilitation of affordable housing.

Recommendations:

- Update the city's master plan to include the housing element and incorporate the several recent updates into one document.
- The housing element of the master plan should be updated and a local ordinance adopted to enact a commercial development fee for creation and rehabilitation of affordable housing.

Code Enforcement

The department is headed by a seven-year Perth Amboy employee who has served as the department director since 2018. The department includes the offices related to planning, zoning, construction, and housing. The director indicates a "team oriented" philosophy, encouraging a culture of professionalism and an emphasis on customer service.

Housing

There are four housing inspectors responsible for properties within five separate zones in the city. The inspectors are accountable for assuring compliance with respect to abandoned and vacant properties, illegal housing, code compliance certificates, responding to complaints, as well as performing self-initiated, spot inspections.

An illustration of their work is shown in the following table and it should be noted that due to the Covid pandemic, inspection work was necessarily limited in 2020:

2020 Housing Inspections	
Abandoned or Vacant Properties	12
Certificate of Code Compliance	116
Complaints	312
Spot Inspections	1,415
Overgrowth	678
Fire Department	8
Police Department	28
Illegal Housing	96

The inspectors make use of available technology. Each inspector is equipped with an iPhone and download property images and information into the city’s software platform, Spatial Data Logic (SDL). The images are also included in any violation notice served on the property owner. As a result, a clear and unambiguous record is shared regarding identified violations to be addressed.

The director recommends that an additional inspector be employed to provide full coverage of the five inspection zones.

Recommendation:

- Based on the existing workload and importance of property maintenance, particularly with regard to illegal housing (as noted elsewhere in this report), consideration should be given to adding a housing inspector.

Zoning

This office is led by the city’s zoning officer who also acts as the administrative officer for both the planning board and zoning board. An assistant zoning officer, who also serves as the housing inspection supervisor, is shared half time with this office.

The zoning officer plays a critical role within the construction and land use approval process. Most, though not all, construction projects require a zoning review for “prior approval” before an application for construction or development can proceed.

An illustration of the various reviews and permit approvals is shown in the table below for 2019, 2020 and year to date that was provided by the zoning officer:

Zoning Plan & Permit Reviews	Year to Date	2020	2019
Building Permit Reviews	78	357	342
Zoning Permit Reviews	100	266	321
Zoning Information Requests	11	40	70
Dumpster Permits	21	32	17
Sidewalk & Curb Permits	15	65	48
Sidewalk Café Permits	3	15	2
Road Opening Permits	5	19	7
Land Use Board Applications	5	13	20
Code Compliance Certificate of Use	98	292	485

During 2020, the reduction in the number of zoning permit reviews and information requests is likely a reflection of the impact of the pandemic. However, the data provided by the zoning officer does not align with the data provided in the most recent annual report submitted by the department. Consequently, the accuracy of the information cannot be confirmed.

This discrepancy appears to result from data not being accurately recorded for all zoning activity, a deficiency that must be corrected. SDL offers specific modules for construction; land use and code enforcement and the city should assure that each of those modules are activated and properly used by staff in order to fully leverage the benefits of this software and track the activities of the zoning, code enforcement and construction offices.

The zoning officer reported that zoning violations are typically addressed first by issuing a verbal warning and if not resolved a written notice of violation will be submitted. As a terminal step, a summons will be issued for non-compliance. According to the zoning officer, fewer than 10 cases are brought to court annually. Information on the number of zoning inspections, written notices and summons issued was not made available for this report.

For reasons that were not explained, the zoning officer advised that not all complaints are recorded in the city's tracking system, SDL. This is a deficiency that must be corrected.

Illegal Housing

Overcrowding, illegal dwelling units, illegal kitchens, and sleeping quarters in basements and attics were identified as the most dangerous issues the zoning office deals with. As

noted elsewhere in this report, other departments have identified this as a significant safety matter facing Perth Amboy.

The zoning officer advised that a local ordinance prohibits residential use of attic or basement space as sleeping areas. He explained that enforcement is complaint based, there are no pro-active inspections currently taking place. The zoning office works jointly with the housing office to address illegal housing.

Currently, the zoning office conducts an inspection and issues a “certificate of code compliance” based on transfer of a property deed. Such an inspection assures that the property is in compliance with the applicable maintenance codes when ownership of a property is transferred. A similar inspection should be required for transfer of occupancy, sometimes referred to as a “continuing certificate of occupancy” to assure the property is in compliance for the new occupants.

Rental Properties

The city should consider a rental property registration program to further assure that rental properties are in code compliance. An example of successful rental registration program, currently in use in Toms River Township, has been shared with the department director for consideration.

Vacant Properties

Vacant properties are a frequent source of property maintenance issues. A vacant property registration program is a method to assure the municipality has the appropriate tools to effectively enforce property maintenance requirements for vacant properties. An example of a successful vacant property registration program, also currently in use in Toms River Township, has been shared with the department director and should be considered for adoption by the city.

Recommendations:

- All zoning complaints and actions taken to resolve complaints should be required to be logged in the SDL (Spatial Data Logic) system.
- Better overall tracking of activities using SDL is needed by the zoning officer to eliminate any conflict in data collection and reporting. This is also critical to evaluate the effectiveness of the operations of the zoning office.
- Government Strategy Group recommends that a single lead agency be designated with the responsibility to address the City’s illegal housing problem. Without leadership to address what has been identified as the single most

serious safety threat facing the city, there is the risk that a coordinated and thorough approach to enforcement will not occur.

- Consideration should be given to implementing a continuing certificate of occupancy inspection program to assure property code compliance during change in occupancy.
- Consideration should be given to adopting a rental registration program to assure compliance with property maintenance codes and requirements for rental properties.
- Consideration should be given to adopting a vacant property registration program to assure compliance with property maintenance codes and requirements for vacant properties.
- Illegal occupancy and overcrowding of dwelling units is a significant safety issue for residents. Inadequate exits, lack of proper heating units and non-code compliant electrical service contribute to increased risk for occupants. The city should increase its efforts to address overcrowding by assembling a task force representing the various agencies that may be aware of illegal housing conditions. The task force should include at minimum, representation from: health & human services, zoning, construction & code enforcement, police, fire and DPW. The efforts of the group should include educating municipal employees, landlords and tenants in the hazards of overcrowding as well as enforcing the appropriate housing and related codes. Importantly, and perhaps most difficult, is the need to identify alternative housing for those that may be displaced from overcrowded locations. A lead agency, such as zoning or housing, needs to be identified to assure accountability and responsibility for the program.
- In addition to responding to complaints of illegal housing, a process should be developed to assure that properties with suspected illegal housing may be inspected to proactively address the hazard.

Construction

The construction office headed by the Construction Official, with the incumbent holding the position for the past four years. The Construction Official also serves as the fire sub-code official for the city. There is one full-time and one part-time building inspector. Both the plumbing and electrical inspectors are part-time, serving 18-hours per week. Elevator inspections are performed by a third-party vendor on behalf of the city.

The construction official states that the office is a “well-oiled machine” and that the staff works to provide excellent customer service. As an example of a commitment to customer service, GSG was advised that resident inquiries are responded to in the same day. Work performed without the proper permits is an on-going issue for the office.

The table that follows illustrates the activity permit fees relating to Uniform Construction Code (UCC) inspections:

UCC Inspection Activity	2021 Year to Date*	2020
Number of Permits	395	1,110
Value of Construction	\$7,278,766.00	\$50,797,083.00
Permit Fees	\$109,403.00	\$575,576.00
<i>*as of May 14</i>		

Permit Fees

Building departments are intended to be self-supporting enterprises and various permitting fees are established to cover costs. It is important to periodically revise the permit fees to assure costs to provide services are covered and to address changes in permitting requirements. This is important in part because in 2015, a statewide change removed the requirement for a permit when replacing roofing, siding or decks. That change necessarily reduced construction division revenues. The last revision to the Perth Amboy permit fee schedule was made approximately 11-years ago.

Recommendation:

- The permit fee schedule should be revised and updated to assure that operating costs of the Building and Construction Division are covered.

Technical Assistant to the Construction Official

The role of technical assistant to the construction official (TACO) is a value-added position in that the individual – by receiving additional training and certification – can assist with initial plan and application review and intake to improve process efficiency. The department wisely uses a technical assistant as part of its staffing compliment and should consider expanding the number of staff that have this training to provide adequate coverage during absences.

Recommendation:

- The department should consider expanding the number of staff trained as technical assistants to assure adequate coverage during absences.

Open Permits:

The construction official estimates that there are “hundreds” of open permits -- construction code permits that were taken out by contractors and property owners but never received a final inspection. While most of the open permits are likely for minor work, it is also likely that some represent substantial projects. Aside from assuring that the projects actually were finalized in compliance with all code requirements, it is also important to assure that completed projects that should result in added assessments are in fact, added to the property tax rolls.

Currently, inspectors will pull permits for an address scheduled for certificate of occupancy or certificate of continuing occupancy inspections.

Recommendation:

- Development of a program to assertively work through the open permit backlog is recommended. This has the potential to add noteworthy revenue to the City via added assessments. Not doing it means that taxpayers who have not undertaken improvement projects are subsidizing those who have.

Technology

To improve both convenience for the applicant and efficiency for the office, the on-line portal offered by Spatial Data Logic (SDL) should be used. Applications can be submitted via a portal on the city’s website and inspections may be scheduled, reducing both foot traffic and calls to the office. The applicant may also use the portal to track progress of the permit approval process. Moreover, inspectors may use iPads for field inspection work that is then integrated with the SDL system.

Although the office does not currently accept construction plans electronically, planning for that eventuality should begin now. It is anticipated that the upgrade for electronic submissions will cost as much as \$100,000 which can potentially be a capital expenditure.

Recommendations:

- Implement the SDL on-line portal on the city’s website to improve convenience for applicants and efficiency for the offices.

- Create a funding and implementation plan in anticipation of state approval for construction plans to be submitted electronically.

Website

A municipal website, in addition to providing a virtual welcome to visitors, should also be a simple, accessible and efficient resource for those seeking information and doing business with the city. A well-designed website will decrease foot traffic and phone inquiries to city departments and agencies, increase overall efficiency and improve user satisfaction.

The current website landing page for code enforcement does not include any information regarding the construction office, a major component of the department. Applications should be designed to be fillable and have the option to be submitted electronically. Many of the documents that are on the website are out of date.

Recommendation

- Update the website to include information regarding the construction office.
- Provide applications online in a fillable format that may also be submitted electronically.
- All documents on the website should be periodically reviewed and updated to assure that only current versions are available online.
- A portal for access to the SDL (Spatial Data Logic) system should be included on the city's website for the construction office..

Department of Human Services

The Department, located in the Jankowski Community Center, has a broad portfolio of responsibilities, including: Office on Aging, Office of Housing & Social Services, Office of Recreation, and the Office of Vital Statistics. The department also manages the "City ID Card" program, Teen Center, and Perth Amboy Gallery Center for the Arts.

The current Department Director also holds the Civil Service title of Superintendent of Recreation. The incumbent has worked with the City of Perth Amboy for 23 years, serving in his current role for the past 11 years.

Within the Jankowski Community Center are offices occupied by US Congressman Frank Pallone, the Middlesex County Board of Social Services, the Middlesex County Health Department, as well as the Easter Seals organization. Each of these entities provides

various levels of support locally for the convenience of citizens of Perth Amboy. Congressman Pallone has his office staffed twice per week to provide constituent services related to immigration, while Easter Seals assists in providing jobs for seniors and those with disabilities. The office space used by Easter Seals and the congressman are provided at no fee to the city.

Space in the Community Center building is at a premium, so much so that the Director is contemplating moving the recreation offices to an alternate location.

Department management indicated that the COVID 19 pandemic significantly shifted its work and required the staff to repurpose themselves to assist city residents during this unprecedented time. A COVID hotline was created, which was linked to staff phones and computers to receive and track residents' requests. The majority of the staff worked through the pandemic and were assigned to various COVID relief measures, including the creation of a volunteer network to assist local food pantries. Through partnership with a local supermarket, a \$90,000 donation to the relief effort was received. Nearly \$800,000 was received in CARE funding to help offset the salary costs associated with this work.

During ordinary times, the Department reports significant food insecurity in the city with 75% of school students participating in "free or reduced cost" lunch programs and some 30% of households not driving. The Director advised that their staff coordinated and provided an extraordinary 200,000+ boxes of food during the pandemic, delivering 200 meals per day, using summer helpers and re-purposed senior center drivers. In addition, the Perth Amboy Senior Center provided breakfast and lunch daily to approximately 90 participants.

The City also has approximately 90 persons that are experiencing homelessness, identified by the most recent point in time count. During the last year there were some 75 nights that were designated "Code Blue" when the outdoor temperature was considered dangerously low. On such occasions, the department operates a temporary shelter to provide a safe and secure environment for those experiencing homelessness.

As part of the senior services programming, Perth Amboy provides transportation for older adults to medical appointments, food shopping and recreation. The department operates three buses using two drivers. Two of the buses accommodate 22 passengers and one has seating for 14 passengers. It is anticipated that NJ Transit will be donating a 14-passenger bus to the city.

Recommendations:

- The existing lease agreements with Easter Seals and the congressman should be reviewed to assure that they continue to provide best value for the city.
- While it may be a viable option to move Recreation offices to another location, consideration should be given to whether it continues to make sense to have the County Board of Social Services occupy second floor office space in the Community Center. Those offices have been vacant during the pandemic and the services delivered via teleconference. To the extent that that process has been successful, the city should consider that as the model going forward and repurpose the office space.

In Perth Amboy, Recreation equates to social engagement. Various programs are designed to help engage the community. Youth programs include baseball, football, T-ball, tennis, and various art programs. Programs for adults include tennis, bootcamp, Zumba and women's softball. There is an artist registry program where aspiring artists can register using an online portal for listing and showcasing visual, literary, performing, and multi-disciplinary artists from Perth Amboy and throughout the area. This portal allows artists and art organizations to expand their audience and to promote their work.

Perth Amboy offers free boating and kayaking at their marina, while hosting sailing programs from various high schools.

The *Success Bound Program Summer Leadership Academy*, operating in their sixth year is open to rising High School juniors and seniors. A partnership with Middlesex County college allows 80 participants to earn 16-20 college credits and then return to internships in City Hall, local non-profit organizations, the hospital or local law offices. The program provides a stipend to participants and, importantly, provides them with valuable work experience that prepares them for future success.

Recommendations:

- Payment for recreation programs is cumbersome as only money orders are currently accepted. Payment by credit card should be accepted as well as on-line payments for recreation programs. The nominal fee charged for the credit cards can be added to the program fee.
- Fees for recreation services should be updated to reflect the cost to provide each program.

Perth Amboy contracts with the Middlesex County Health Department to provide health related services for the City. Two inspectors are assigned to Perth Amboy who are in the office for the first and last hour of the day and otherwise in the field. There are no support staff in the office, so anyone calling during most business hours must leave a message for the inspectors. Concerns about the level of service, escalating cost and level of accountability for the work product were expressed by several representatives of various Perth Amboy departments. It was reported that neither of the health inspectors are bi-lingual which is a valuable skill set for successfully interacting with the Perth Amboy community. Some nine years ago, the health services fees assessed by the County were reported to be \$50,000 annually with five inspectors assigned to work within the city. The service now costs \$250,000 annually with just two employees assigned.

The February and March 2021 retail food inspection and complaints reports were reviewed and revealed that 36 inspections were completed in February and 50 completed in March. Of those inspections, 76% (65 inspections) were performed by one inspector and 24% (21 inspections) were performed by the other inspector. While no assessment of the quality or detail of each inspection was made, the actual number completed would appear to be low for a city the size of Perth Amboy.

It was reported that the Coronavirus infection rate in Perth Amboy was the highest in Middlesex County and as of May 4, 2021, only 16% of the residents of Perth Amboy were vaccinated. Middlesex County reported an overall vaccination rate of 48.9% Steps are being made to engage the County to provide a mobile vaccination clinic in Perth Amboy, a particularly important service since nearly one third of the households in the city do not drive.

The COVID pandemic has been especially challenging for Perth Amboy. Although municipal staff members worked tirelessly to address the challenge, the need for a coordinated local health department response is evident. Consequently, the city should fully evaluate their current contract with Middlesex County for health services to assure that local public health needs are met. Perth Amboy should also consider and compare other options, such as whether entering into a shared service agreement with the Township of Woodbridge would improve the level of public health services delivered to the city.

Recommendations:

- The existing health services contract with Middlesex County should be fully reviewed. Any agreement must detail specific tasks to be accomplished, timelines

for completion of inspections, with inspectors accountable to the local department head.

- The Township of Woodbridge maintains a local health department and may represent a shared service opportunity with a neighboring community. A shared services agreement with the Township of Woodbridge Health Department should be explored to determine whether an improved level of service to Perth Amboy may be possible.
- Another option to consider is a wholly staffed local health department, or a hybrid department partially staffed and partially outsourced.

The current Registrar has served in this role for nine years. Prior to his appointment, the incumbent worked in the police department as executive assistant and served as chief of the auxiliary police unit. He oversees a staff of three, all of whom are licensed municipal registrars, which provides seamless backup for the position of registrar and a natural plan for succession.

The Office of Vital Statistics is located on the second floor of the Jankowski Community Center. The space is largely taken up by files holding vital records dating to 1856. The Registrar reports that currently nearly all of the records have been filed in fire proof cabinets. However, the cabinets are not modern in design or well ordered. There are improved filing systems available that are fireproof and use less floor space, something important for an already crowded office where preservation of vital records is critical.

In addition to typical records maintained by the Registrar, his office also processes 565 food establishment licenses and approximately 60 beauty culture licenses. The food establishments are inspected by one of the two county health inspectors assigned to Perth Amboy. When inspections are required, the Register reported difficulty making necessary arrangements with the Middlesex County health inspectors because they are only in the office for two hours per day – the remaining time is spent in the field. He expressed frustration that he is unable to better coordinate the required property inspections by the county inspectors.

Communities that host a local hospital will typically have a very active office of vital statics; Perth Amboy is no exception. Annually, the office processes:

- 5,000 birth certificates
- 500 marriage applications
- 2,000 marriage licenses
- 2,000-2,500 death certificates
- 565 Food licenses
- 60 beauty culture

As is the case in other city departments, only money orders are accepted by the Office of Vital Statistics. This creates an overly burdensome process for those doing business with the various city departments. Both online and credit card payments should be authorized and available for all doing business with the city.

While licensing of barbers and beauticians are handled by the State of New Jersey, Perth Amboy does not have an ordinance that regulates the permitting and health inspections of beauty establishments. This Office reported frustrations with the inability to oversee these types of establishments. By way of example, each barber or beautician in an establishment must display their license. It is not uncommon to find this requirement being regularly violated without an ability to remedy. The Registrar shared a proposed amendment to the Perth Amboy code for regulating these establishments.

Recommendations:

- Consider the acquisition of improved filing systems for all vital records to assure secure storage and reducing the floor area used.
- Institute both online and credit payment options for those doing business with the city.
- The City should consider acquiring software and equipment that would enable its department to directly communicate with the County inspectors during all business hours (not just two hours per day) and put inspections to be made on the inspectors' schedules and be able to track same. A system using iPads, for example, could accomplish this. The agreement with the County should require this. The City is entitled to have accountability under its agreement with the County.
- Reconsider the enactment of the ordinance (added as an addendum to this report) regulating beauty establishments.

The Deputy Director of the Department and has served with the municipality for 21 years. She reports that Perth Amboy has some 14,000 rental units, a median income of \$40,000, average market rate rent of \$1,400 - \$1,600 for a two-bedroom unit per month, and the highest unemployment / underemployment in the county, with these facts making rent control a significant issue in the City. In response, the local Rent Control Board has recently been reactivated.

This office offers social service assistance to residents to assist them with issues from homelessness to food insecurity, as well as with accessing various benefit programs.

Perth Amboy's "City ID" program is also managed through this office. Initiated in 2016, the City will issue identification cards, valid for two years, for use in the City to residents who otherwise do not have access to an official form of identification.

Recommendation:

- The Department of Human Services is responsible for a wide-ranging portfolio of programs and activities for the city. Over time, it is likely that some number of these programs were randomly added to the Department creating a situation where the current way the city operates is not accurately reflected in the local code. A study should be undertaken to update the city code to reflect current operations of each department.

The Department Director reports that there is considerable employee turnover within the department. Ordinarily, this would be a cause of concern; however, the purpose for the turnover is more important. This department gives evidence of actively encouraging employees to grow both professionally and personally. As a result, the Director provides opportunities for department employees to experience growth opportunities within the department and when available to take positions in other departments. He takes pride that several alumni from the Department of Human Services have gone on to leadership roles in other departments. This commitment to mentorship and employee development is a good model for the entire municipal organization.

[Harborside Marina Utility](#)



Perth Amboy's Harborside Marina

The City of Perth Amboy owns and operates a successful, profitable marina, which is budgeted for as a Utility of the City. For the current boating season (April 15th to

November 15th), 126 of the Marina’s 137 boat slips are rented, a noteworthy 92% occupancy rate, with an estimated 70% being repeat business. Two small charter boats and a tugboat are commercial enterprises that operate out of the Marina. The City’s Harbormaster is a 32+ year employee, with the past ten years in his current position.

The Marina offers most amenities common to marinas except for a fuel dock. While installing a fuel dock would be desirable, doing so would involve a very extensive permitting process and expensive installation costs. Given that – 1, the Marina is financially successful at this time without a fuel dock; and 2, there are fuel docks nearby in Seawaren and at the Morgan Marina in Sayreville – this is not an immediate need for Perth Amboy but something for future consideration.

Fees at the Marina have remained unchanged for a number of years. The Marina’s successful finances are reflected by the following chart:

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW					
Marina Revenues and Expenses : 2017 - 2021 Budgets					
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Surplus Anticipated	35,267	17,613	37,831	90,282	187,683
Rents for Slips	275,000	299,400	296,519	261,501	262,335
Total Revenues*	320,267	317,013	334,350	351,783	450,018
Total Appropriations	320,267	317,013	334,350	351,783	450,018
<i>*2017 includes 10,000 in misc. revenue</i>					

It should be noted that although it appears that revenues for slip rentals are declining in the budget, cash actually realized is exceeding budgeted rental revenues by a substantial margin. In 2020, \$261,501 in slip rentals was anticipated while \$342,334 was actually realized. Payments at the Marina can be done via credit card, with the system reported as being tied in to the City’s Finance Office.

The Marina is staffed by the Harbormaster, one full-time Marina Attendant, two clerks, and one part-time/seasonal employee. The Harbormaster reports that he could use additional seasonal help.

Recommendations:

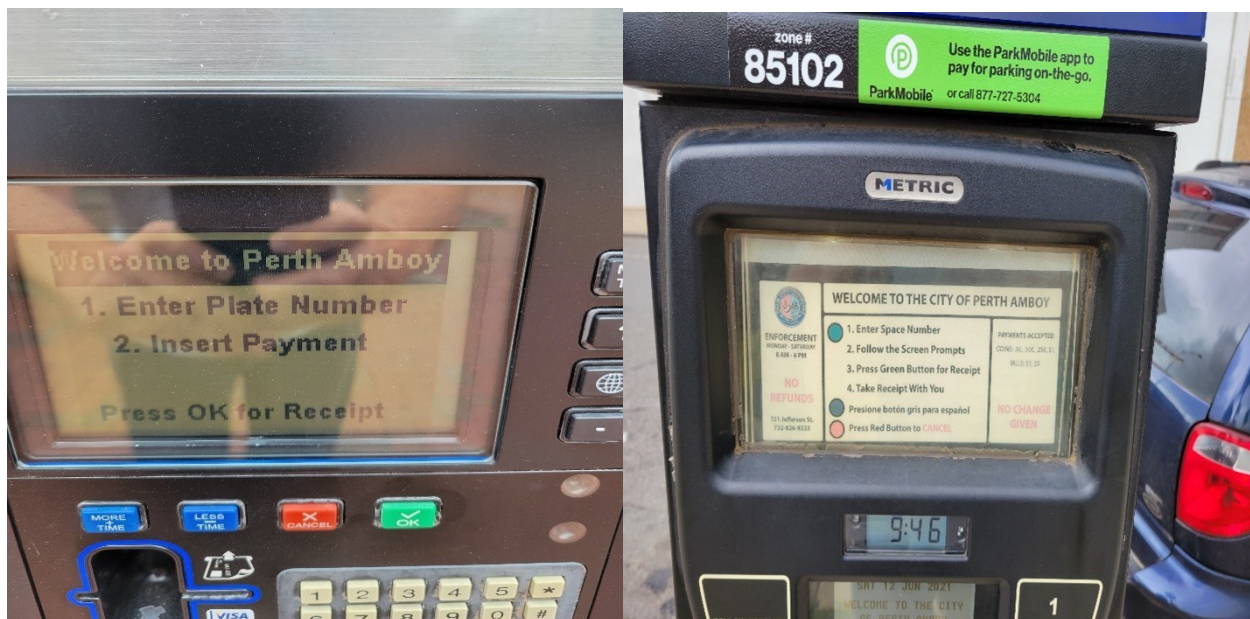
- The City should consider updating its website page for the Marina to include real-time slip availability information and direct payment ability.
- When possible, the City should refresh its website page for the Marina with dates for the boating season and newer photographs with some showing family activity

at the Marina, keeping in mind that the Perth Amboy Marina is in competition with other nearby marinas.

- A formal, written rate study of area marinas should be performed to inform rate decisions going forward, keeping in mind the need to stay competitive and to attract customers with attractive rates.
- The City should consider having a formal cost/benefit analysis performed regarding the future installation of a fuel dock at its Marina. The possibility exists that this could add to the Utility's profitability and enhance the Marina's competitive marketability.

Parking Utility

The Perth Amboy Parking Utility consists of one deck, eight municipal lots, and on-street parking. There is a combination of pay by space, pay by plate, and single parking meters. There is also the option of customers being able to use the ParkMobile software application at various locations throughout the City.





In March of 2020, the Utility commissioned a structural evaluation of the parking deck by an outside firm. On Saturday, June 12, Government Strategy Group visited the City's parking facilities. The parking deck when visited was clean. The deck has a mixture of permits and 4-hour parking. There are no waitlists at the deck for permit parking.





At the time of GSG's June 12 visit, there were customers utilizing the lower floor of the deck. The roof level was empty and the other levels were sparsely utilized. Upon closer inspection some defects were noted within the structure, as seen in the next photographs. Such defects were also noted in the deck evaluation report.





Lighting was sufficient and operational. There were no permanent garbage receptacles, only cans on wheels. There were upgraded LED lights on the roof and in the stair towers, but some of the electric conduit boxes were rusted/degraded in the stairwells. Many of the lights are still fluorescent. The March 2020 deck evaluation concluded that the deck was in "fair" condition and needed some repairs/maintenance. The total hard costs to bring it to the top of good/excellent condition were estimated at approximately \$330,000, not counting required annual maintenance. The report estimated a need for approximately \$48,000 per year for maintenance over and above current budget levels. A number of routine maintenance items needing to be addressed are depicted in the photographs that follow.



The height bar was missing on one entrance to the deck.



Fencing was damaged in one area.



Bird droppings were excessive in two areas on the bottom floor.



Parking lots were clean when visited but the asphalt needed repair. Library construction staging was taking up some of the lot.



Some of the meter spaces had no lines in the street. This could lead to issues with parking customers not parking correctly and getting tickets.



The pay by space spots had lines and numbers for parking. Signage was plentiful as were pay stations for customers.

GSG requested the collection procedure for the parking meters and was given a 2012 procedure. While we did not witness the collection occurring, if the procedure is being followed we find it to be adequate. The procedure uses key locks and sign-in sheets.

Management reported that meter batteries are replaced as needed and are replaced within 24 hours after being discovered deficient.

Parking rates are low but without a major draw to the area, it would be hard to increase rates.



Recommendations:

- The City should consider using security seals (such as shown below) on canisters and pay station cash boxes. This would add another layer of security to the operation. These low-cost seals have numbers that can be verified by personnel. The seal is put on empty canisters and boxes and the numbers given to the bank. Colors and numbers can, and should, be rotated.

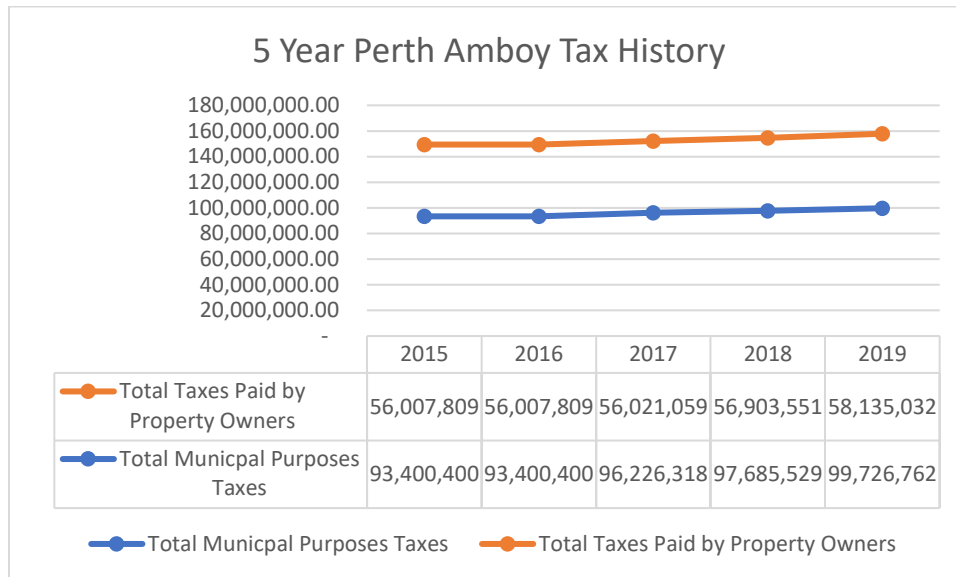


- The City should consider bringing in an independent firm that specializes in investigating collections and counting operations. These firms help insure the accuracy of these operations.
- The City should consider implementing a system of periodically sending pre-counted coinboxes to the bank. This would add confidence in the whole system when/if they match. Presently with the system in use as presented to GSG, nobody knows the original count from the Duncan meters – it's a complete unknown amount that is delivered to the bank.
- The City should consider replacing all single meter batteries at one time in order to ensure continued operations, rather than waiting to detect dead battery situations.
- Continue implementing pay-by-plate parking pay stations and consider at a later date implementing LPR (license plate recognition) software, which can be used for enforcement in the future. This would also allow for fewer PEO's (Parking Enforcement Officers) by attrition and for "virtual tire marking" for areas of 2 or 4 hour parking.
- The height measuring device on the entrance to the deck should be reinstalled. It appears that trucks are entering and they can cause damage to the deck.
- Fencing in the deck should be repaired to avoid liability exposure.
- Add bird spikes to the areas where there are large amounts of bird droppings.

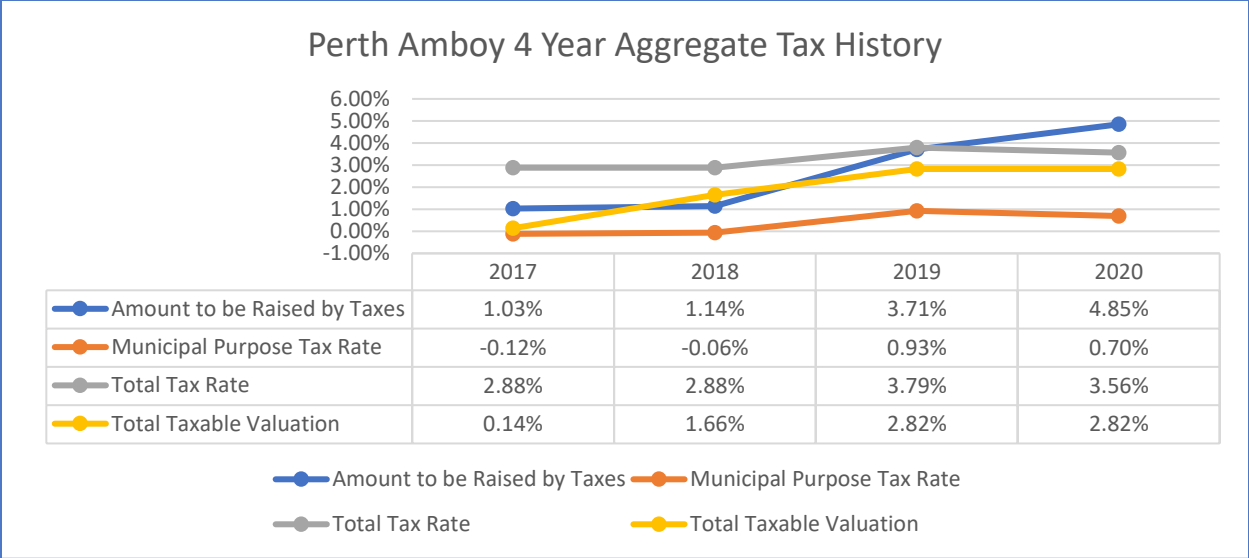
- Follow the recommendations of the structural evaluation report on the parking deck.
- When fluorescent fixtures go bad, replace with LED light fixtures.
- Consider having the PEOs submit inspection reports on their observations of conditions at the lots and the deck. Such information can allow for repairs to be accomplished before trips/falls happen, thus avoiding potential insurance claims and lawsuits.
- Proper marking of meter spaces should be addressed to avoid irregular parking by customers.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Taxes



In the state of New Jersey, there are numerous factors that impact a property owner’s tax burden. The total tax rate includes all taxing agencies, but is driven primarily by school taxes, county taxes and the local municipal purposes tax. Both municipal and all taxing entities increased from \$56.0 million and \$93.4 million to \$58.17 million and \$99.7 million respectively from 2015 to 2019. As can be seen in the chart below, the rate of increase for municipal taxes for Perth Amboy mimics the rate of increase for taxes overall.



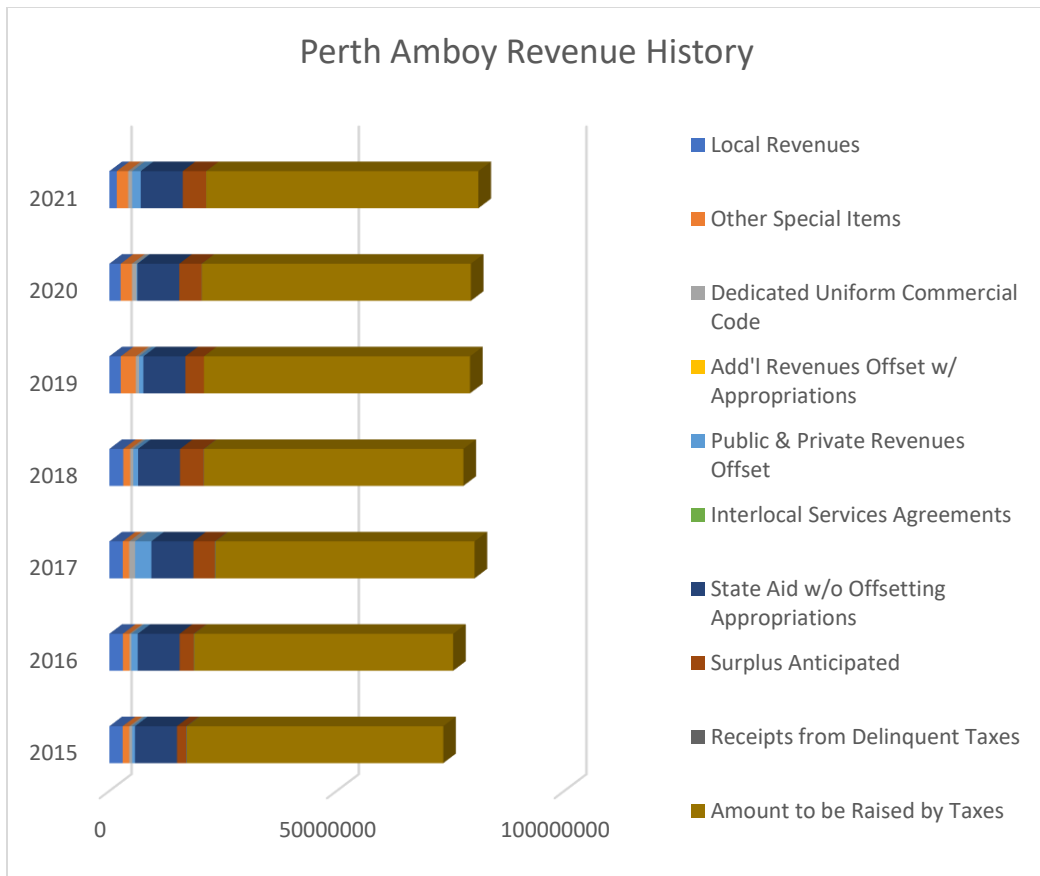
Looking deeper into the data, the aggregate Amount to be Raised by Taxes increased 4.9% over the 4-year period or an approximate average of 1.2% per year. However, the Municipal Purposes Tax Rate, (the rate that will raise the Amount to be Raised by Taxes) only increased 0.7% over that period or 0.2% annually in the aggregate.

This difference in escalation rates can be explained by the increase in the Total Taxable Valuation over the 4-year period, reducing the impact of the tax increases on the residential property owner.

At the same time, while the Municipal Purposes Tax Rate was increasing 0.2% annually, the Total Tax Rate increased at an average rate of 1% for the same 4-year period, despite the increase in ratables. This can be explained by the fact that the other taxing entities during that period increased their tax levies at a higher rate than Perth Amboy's, \$5 million higher overall.

Revenue History





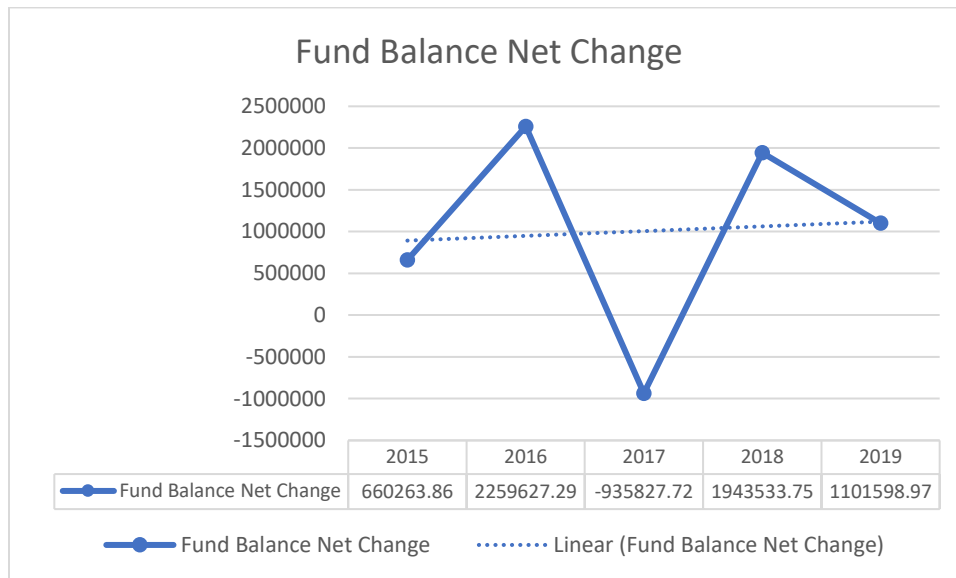
Over the last 6 years, as can be seen on the above chart, Perth Amboy’s revenues, with the exception of some fluctuations in Surplus Anticipated and Public & Private Revenues Offset, have remained stable, with taxes accounting for most increases.

Fund Balance

The fund balance in any given fund is essentially what is left over after the fund's assets have been used to meet its liabilities. In entities using General Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), such as the Board of Education in New Jersey and municipalities in most other states, it represents resources that can be used for any purpose of the fund they are reported in. However, in New Jersey, municipalities are mandated by the State to use a Modified Accrual Basis Accounting, where income can only be counted if cash is received and expenditures are accounted for on an accrual basis or when the obligation is made, not paid. Additionally, in order to spend surplus, it must be anticipated in the Budget and is not available for uses over and above the amounts authorized in the budget.

In New Jersey, Fund Balance and Surplus are often used interchangeably; that is not always the case in other accounting protocols. However, for the purposes of this report, consider them the same. Although Surplus Anticipated has not remained stable, those

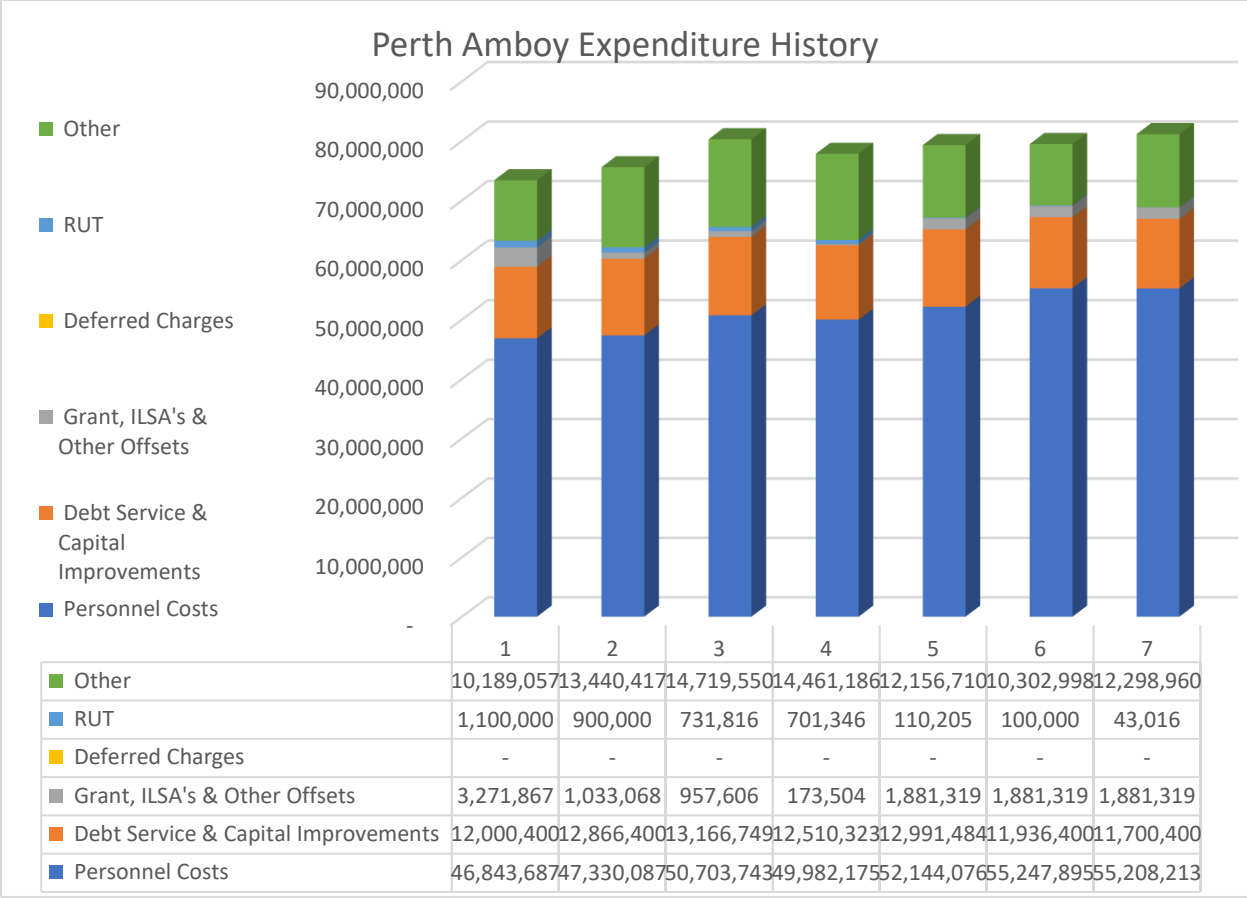
numbers are not the relevant metric for rating performance for fund balance. A healthy Fund Balance comes from consistency in operations. That consistency, or lack thereof, is found in the operational ability to replenish surplus utilized in the current year budget.



As seen above, Fund Balance has been erratic, but generally increasing over the last 5 years. When the focus is recast to look at Surplus loss against the amount used as anticipated revenue and Tax refunds, it becomes clear that the Fund Balance volatility is driven by an effort to keep tax rates stable, a reasonable practice, especially given that the net change over time has increased Fund Balance.

Expenditure History

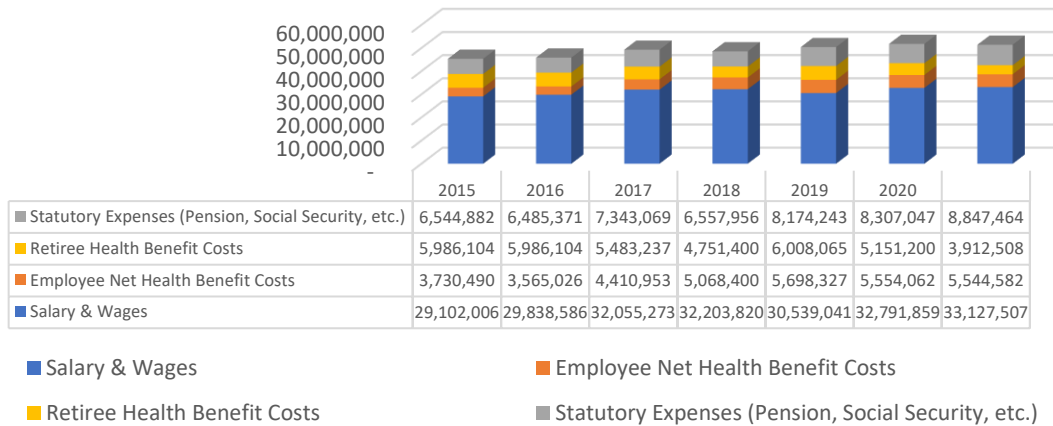
Over the last 5 years, as can be seen on the chart below, Perth Amboy’s expenditure increases have been driven by, as expected, personnel and other expenses with the remaining expenses either flat or decreasing. The overall increases in expenditures over the last 6 years have risen just 11%, from \$73.49 million to \$81.1 million. Personnel costs rose an average of 3.0% annually over the same period from \$46.8 million to \$55.2 million. Other expenses increased an average of 2% annually over the same period while Debt Service remained flat.



Personnel Costs

The chart below outlines the cost of personnel to the taxpayers of Perth Amboy. At first glance there seems nothing highly unusual here, a 3% escalation / 3.0% annually over 6 years, slightly high in a 2 % CAP environment (which will be explained later), but not alarming. Statutory expenses are, as indicated, fixed cost based on actions taken over the last 10 years. While not unimportant to future costs, it has no direct impact on 2021 evaluations of personnel costs in 2021.

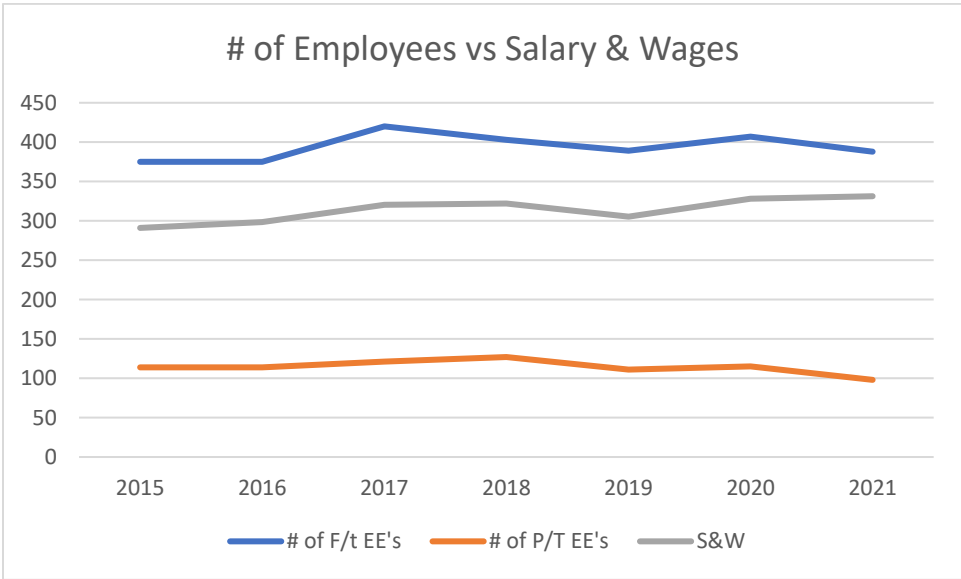
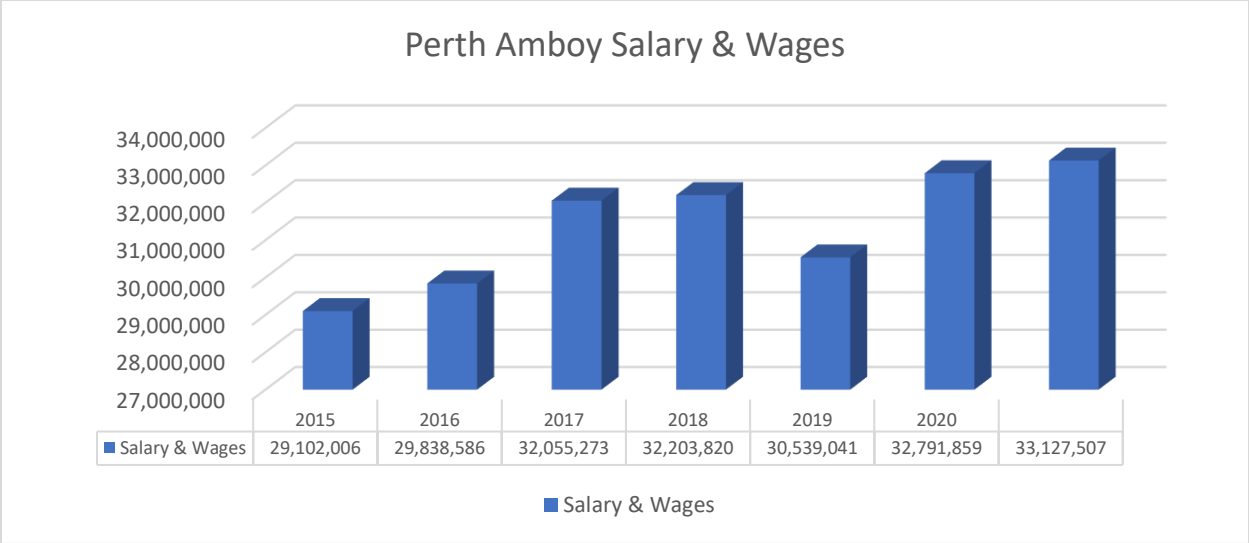
Perth Amboy Personnel Costs



Salaries and Wages have increased \$4.0 million over 6 years from \$29.1 million to \$33.1 million or an average of 2.3% annually. Statutory expenses, mostly fixed costs, have escalated from \$6.5 million to \$8.8 million in 6 years as well, or 5.9% annually. Employee Health Benefit costs have moved upwards an average of 1% from \$5.2 million to \$5.5 million. Lastly, Retiree Health Benefits have actually been reduced from \$6 million to \$3.9 million or -5.8% annually. While this reduction in Retiree Health Benefit cost is very significant, the remaining obligation still presents a challenge in managing future personnel costs.

Salary & Wages

In order for Salaries and Wages to meet the demands of the 2% Levy CAP, it is imperative to understand how a 2% increase in taxes impacts the municipal budget. Because municipal real estate taxes generally, on average, reflect about 2/3rds of a municipality's revenue, a 2% increase in taxes only covers about a 1.3% increase in expenses.



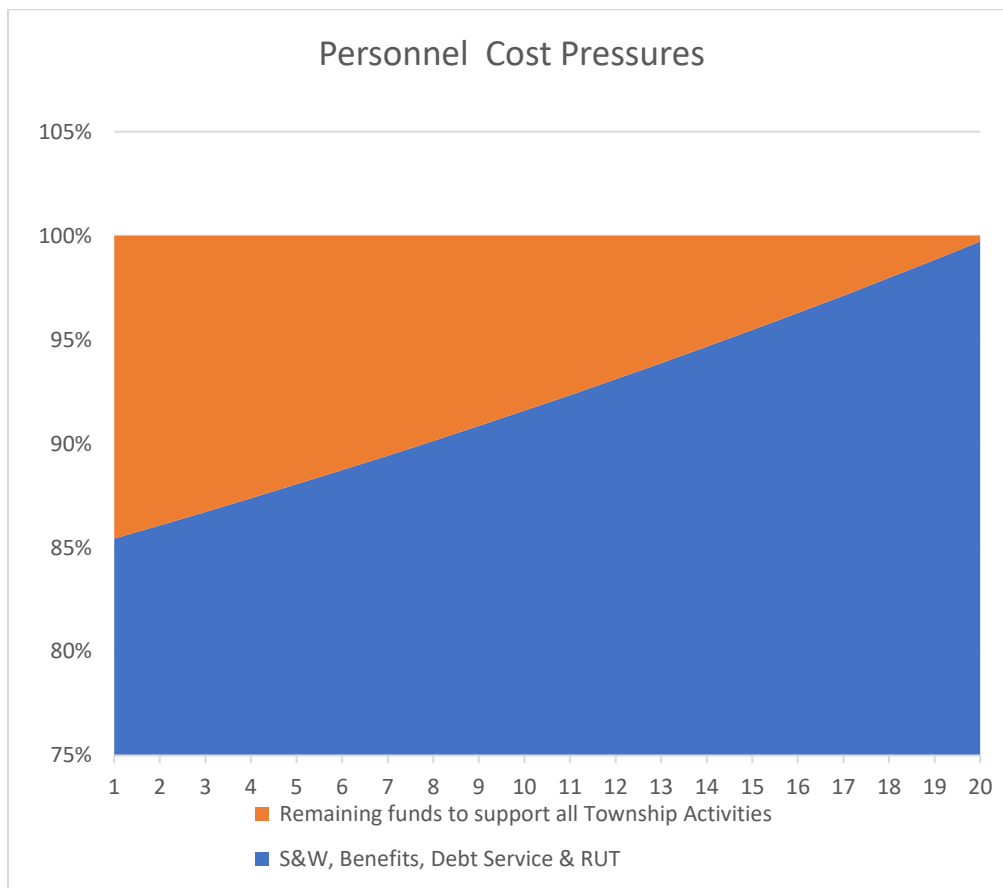
So, unless there are miscellaneous revenues that escalate every year, 2% above the previous year, like personnel costs often do, a 2% increase in taxes will never cover a 2% increase in salary & wages. Therefore, while it is widely believed that the general target for collective bargaining is 2% per year, it actually should be 1.33%. For Perth Amboy, the taxpayer’s share of budgetary revenue is higher than average at 74%, meaning that its target salary & wage increase would be 1.48% or lower .

Over the last 6 years, Perth Amboy has experienced a 2.3% annual escalation in S&W, 0.8% higher than the optimum rate. This is causing an increased structural imbalance of approximately \$265,000 annually, each and every year (that is, \$265k in 2016, \$530k in 2017, \$795k in 2018 and so on) that must be made up by other budgetary

savings/service reductions, the diversion and erosion of fund balance, or additional taxpayer funding through taxes.

Health Benefits

Health Benefits for Employees and Retirees continue to burden the municipal budget, with no end in sight. Currently, the cost of health benefits is escalating at a rate of 2.52% annually in excess of the overall increases experienced by all other Perth Amboy budget lines.

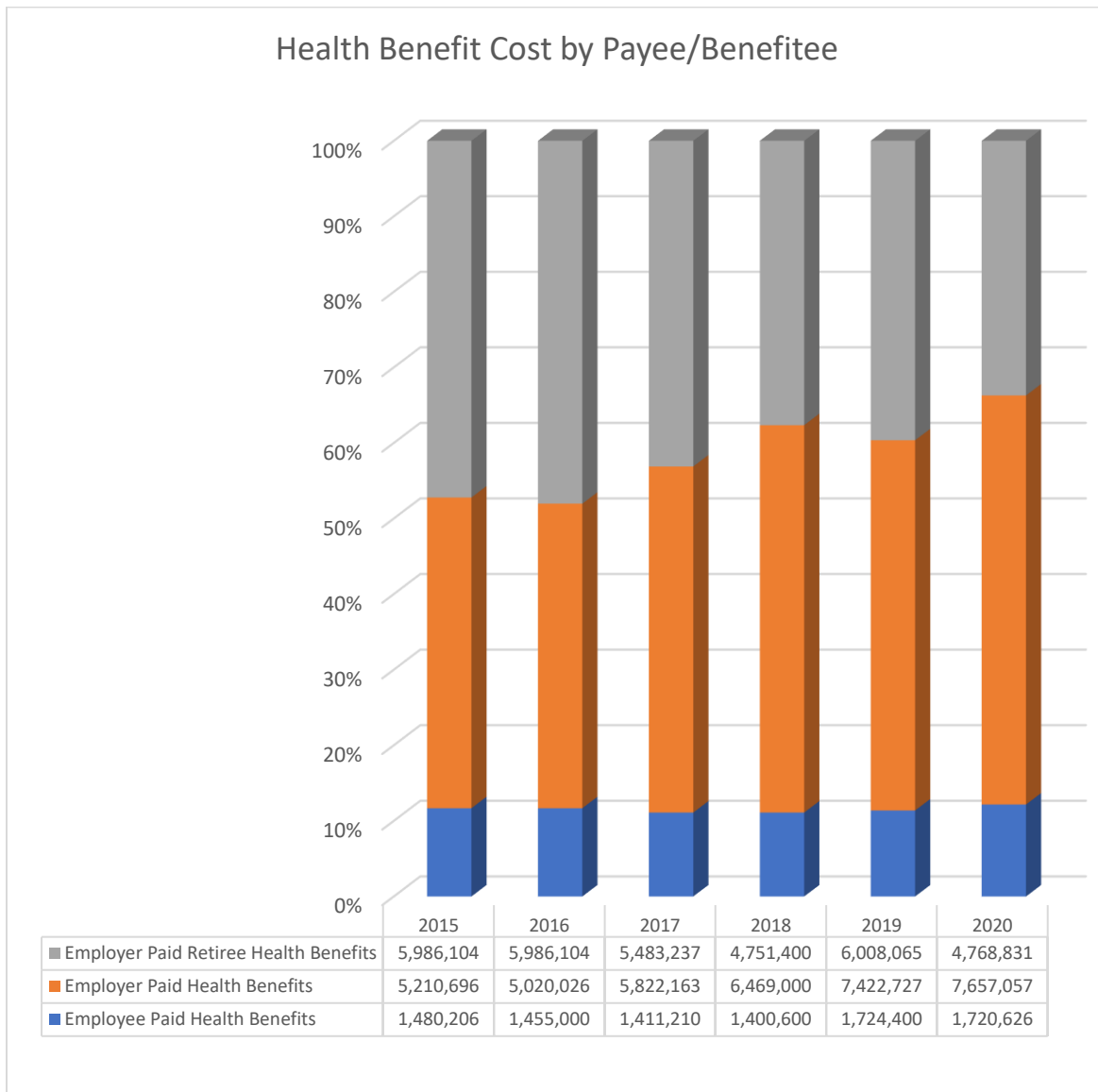


This escalated cost of health benefits, if not properly addressed, will ultimately smother the City's ability to fund all other programmatic expenses.

As can be seen from the chart above, projecting the future costs of current personnel and the unavoidable cost for debt service and the reserve for uncollected taxes (which represents a total of about 85% of the 2021 budget) will squeeze out the remaining 15% of the Perth Amboy budget in just 20 years.

This structural imbalance from health benefits represents about a \$300,000 increase in today’s dollars, each year.... forever, unless some other fundamental change occurs. In order to avoid this devastating obstacle, the City has numerous, poor options.

Finding offsetting revenues will be challenging to say the least and will not change the fundamentals.



Of the identifiable revenues available to address this challenge, the City’s Chapter 78 collections from employees seems the first logical consideration. Currently, it is a robust 18%, and will, over time escalate to 35%. It will increase about \$200,000 in 2021. Future increases will be substantial, but slow in coming as the increases tail off and do not reach the maximum for another 75-85 years.

The other revenue-based solutions are to find a currently unknown re-occurring revenue that increases annually by a factor of \$300,000 per year. Today, only property taxes can meet that requirement and only if the governing body is willing to dedicate an annual 0.5% increase in taxes, basically dedicated to health benefits, in eternity.

Expenditure-based solutions are the only way to actually change the fundamentals by eliminating the need to pay for health benefits. Historically, municipalities have been "nibbling around the edges" with providing incentives to waive coverage when duplicative coverages exist, providing reduced coverage options that reduce the employee's contribution, and saving the City's financial exposure by hiring returning retirees, essentially eliminating retiree coverage for a period of time.

Other than negotiating broad reductions in benefits, the most effective tool available to municipalities is to reduce personnel, usually negatively affecting programming. While this is effective in the short run, it can be considered a case of the "tail wagging the dog" and ultimately just "kicking the can down the road" since the structural problem with health benefits remains and will once again begin its journey to dominate the budget.

Given that health benefits are directly tied to employee compensation, any resolution other than additional revenue will have to be agreed upon in the collective bargaining process.

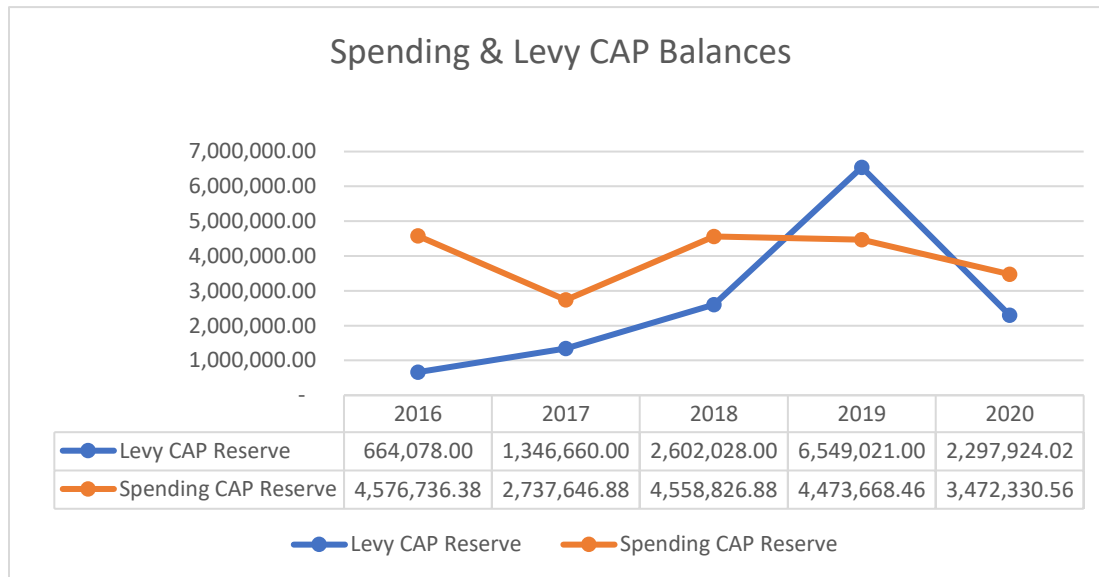
Some municipalities have been successful in negotiating the elimination of retiree health benefits for new employees in exchange for eliminating contributions from active employees when they retire. While this may seem counterintuitive in the short run, it is a long-term game changer.

Whether giving up a 20% contribution to health benefits from new retirees for 25 years in exchange for saving 100% of the cost for retiree benefits in eternity (and having NO retiree health benefit costs at some point) will be advantageous, obviously depends on what changes occur at the federal level.

Nevertheless, even with the most significant proposed changes at the federal level, such as Medicare for All, there will continue to be significant pressures on the collective bargaining process to continue to provide a wrap-around product to employees while they are working and carried on into retirement, if such coverage is not eliminated prior. This pressure further strengthens the generalized push for this strategy in municipal management.

2% Tax Levy CAP and 1973 Spending CAP

N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.3 provides for a spending CAP on New Jersey municipalities, limiting certain expenses to increase no more than 3½% annually. Additionally, the New Jersey 2% Tax CAP limits the amount to be raised by taxes to 2%, with certain exceptions allowed to exceed the limits.



Moving into the 2021 budget season, Perth Amboy enters with sufficient Spending CAP reserve and Tax CAP reserve. These healthy reserves establish one less issue to deal with while addressing the threats previously described regarding Salaries and Wages and health benefits.

Recommendations:

Best practices are a set of guidelines, ethics or ideas that represent the most efficient or prudent course of action in a given business situation. Best practices may be established by authorities, such as regulators or governing bodies, or they may be internally decreed by a company's management team.

In the State of New Jersey, the Director of the Division of Local Government Services (DLGS) of the State's Department of Community Affairs annually publishes a list of best practices that it has determined should be used to establish a municipality's eligibility for a portion of the State's financial aid to the municipality. To qualify for the aid, a municipality must self-certify that it adheres to at least 80% of the practices identified each year.

The Best Practices identified below include some, but not all, and are not limited to those identified by the DLGS. Rather they represent areas Government Strategy Group has identified where some action may be warranted.

- Alternative Fuel Vehicles

Perth Amboy has already taken the early steps in the transition to embrace alternate fuel vehicles by applying for and being awarded a grant to assist in the funding of the installation of an Electronic Vehicle Charging Station at Town Hall.

Perth Amboy is currently exploring the future fleet replacement with electric vehicles, dependent upon a cost-benefit analysis which includes the consideration of the capital and personnel training costs required to perform such repairs/maintenance.

These intentions are a positive step, but in order keep pace with an economic sector that is already on the move, it is recommended that a formal (written) plan be initiated in 2021 to recognize Perth Amboy's future needs for charging station locations, electronic vehicle (EV) acquisitions and the required logistics for EV storage, recharging, and the requisite operational adjustments needed for EV utilization. Funding for this initiative can be provided through a preliminary expense capital authorization.

- Capital, Debt Service, 5-year Budget Forecasts & Plans and Financial Management Plan

Senior management informally maintains the key elements to an annually produced written debt service management, capital needs and multiyear budget forecasts & plans, with the anticipation to formalize in writing in the near future. GSG fully supports that intention and recommend realistic deadlines be established for completion.

Producing these forecasts in writing for consumption to the governing body and the public creates a common base of understanding amongst stakeholders regarding the overall financial conditions of the community and will breed a level of acceptance of difficult decisions than would otherwise not exist.

While Perth Amboy did approve a Debt Management Plan at the end of 2014, it should be updated with a multi-year forecast and piggy-backed on a capital management forecast & plan which would include projecting future capital needs based on asset useful life or other useful criteria, such as a schedule of all equipment and vehicles, Parks and Recreation improvements, facility improvements and renovations and Infrastructure needs.

This information, dovetailed with fluctuations in debt service, will provide the economic pathway to manage the balance between debt service and capital needs.

Similarly, maintaining a written annual 4-5 year forecast of the Budget and other key performance indicators (see attached Appendix #3) will provide great insight and understanding of the many dilemmas municipal budgeters face every year.

Pulling all of these documents together will provide the details needed for a Financial Management Plan, which, in addition to providing all the benefits previously mentioned, Perth Amboy's credit ratings will benefit because major credit rating agencies have a highly favorable view of entities with Financial Management Plans.

Government Strategy Group recommends that these forecasts be annually produced in writing and distributed in the public domain.

This recommendation is revenue neutral and will likely provide some level of savings by adding accountability and maintaining efficiency.

- Cash Receipt Monitoring

Cash receipts are currently not being centrally monitored upon receipt as the existing system does not provide immediate access to that information.

Central monitoring can prevent/identify delayed or lost deposits by creating accountability for those collecting cash payments. GSG recommends acquiring simple, inexpensive point of sale cashiering software to provide the needed security for cash transactions. Initial costs can be funded from capital appropriations and a small increase in operations appropriations moving forward.

- Health Benefit Waivers

For more than 20 years, in order to reduce the costs of health benefits to municipalities, most have been issuing Health Benefit Waivers payments to provide an incentive to employees who had coverage options elsewhere to utilize those alternative options, subsequently saving the municipalities the difference between the costs of the coverages and the waiver amount paid to the employee.

Health Benefit Waivers are payments made only to employees who have the rights to obtain health benefits as part of their employment but choose to waive those benefits in order to receive a monetary payment in lieu of those benefits.

New Jersey municipalities who provided such waiver payments initiated prior to May 21, 2010 were limited to 50% of the savings. However, any waiver payments initiated on or after May 21, 2010, which is the effective date of P.L. 2010, c. 2, cannot exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the amount saved by the local unit as a result of the waiver, or \$5,000, whichever is less.

Subsequent to the regulations above, municipalities were then also legislatively required to seek contributions from employees receiving benefits. These “Chapter 78” contribution requirements specified a schedule of contributions up to 35% of the cost of the insurance premium which has provided most municipalities between 15% to 20% annual savings from these Chapter 78 contributions alone.

It has also reduced the amount of waivers by a like amount since that contribution obligation must now be deducted from the total premium cost when calculating amounts saved.

Health benefit waiver payments are statutorily excluded from collective bargaining. Therefore, municipalities have sole discretion as to whether or not to offer employees payments for waiver of health benefits and may offer waiver payments below the statutory maximum or not at all.

Given that the required employee contribution alone can be up to 35% of a premium cost of up to \$40,000 (or more) is likely a sufficient incentive to employees who have coverage options elsewhere to utilize those alternative options, the need for Health Benefit Waivers is significantly diminished if not eliminated. Serious consideration should be given to eliminating Health Benefit Waivers entirely, saving the cost of those likely irrelevant payments.

- Human Resources

Equally important to managing the municipal finances, is managing Human Capital. Human Capital is an intangible asset or quality not listed on a company's balance sheet. It can be classified as the economic value of a worker's experience and skills. This includes assets like education, training, intelligence, skills, health, and other things employers' value such as loyalty and punctuality.

In essence, Human Capital Management (HCM) says the value of an employee to the organization is equal to the employee's favorable output after ensuring the organization has properly made its investments in the employee. The theory is that an employee's production can vary widely – lower if the employer fails to properly invest its resources in the employee and higher as the employer meets its planned investments.

Municipalities have historically viewed employees as a cost center rather than a service center. Yet a municipality's risk for not properly investing in an employee's development has generated unexpected additional budget-busting costs (legal, workers compensation and other lost opportunity costs). One of the main reasons for this lapse is that the complexity and volume of details that must be monitored to properly invest in employees overwhelms administrators using traditional paper information systems.

Today, however, companies such as Ultimate Kronos and even ADP offer a single online platform, reasonably priced, to bring all of the components of one's employment life into a single place, making it much more manageable and capable for municipalities.

GSG highly recommends investigating the use of these platforms. Single platform solutions bring together secure storage and organizing employee data, personnel policies, creating workflows for time-off approvals, self-service time tracking with biometric timeclock devices, tracking employee training for development and compliance, gauging and reporting on employee satisfaction, performance management and goal tracking, benefits administration and management including paid time-off accruals, scheduling, payroll processing, health benefit management, time management, pre-boarding, onboarding, and offboarding automation, third-party application integrations, and monitoring all data changes with an audit trail.

GSG recommends pursuing a HCM solution for Perth Amboy. Much of the upfront cost can be funded as a capital improvement and annual operating costs could be funded by the redirection of current payroll costs and savings from time management efficiencies. We also recommend folding the update of the Employee Policy and Procedure Manual into this effort.

GSG also recommends that Perth Amboy explore issuing an RFP for banking services that would include the awarded bank providing payroll services or contributing to the cost of an HCM software solution. This is a possible additional method of helping with the cost of a comprehensive Human Resources Information System.

- Procurement Training

An area of concern identified during interviews was the extent of understanding throughout all departments of the varied procurement rules and regulations required to be administered by the Purchasing Department. It was suggested that in order to keep everyone on the "same page," procurement training be provided to all departments. GSG whole-heartedly supports any training that provides a uniform understanding to the approved policies and procedures.

- Risk Analysis

During our interviews, Perth Amboy Senior Management and Government Strategy Group agreed that an Internal Control Risk Assessment document be prepared to identify and record every existing internal control, its objective and its efficacy as it exists in every department, division and office. Specifically, it should address the handling of revenues, procurement of goods and services and all compensation of employees, monetary and non-monetary benefits. Known or discovered weaknesses should also be identified and recorded with suggested new/strengthened internal controls constructed to provide the desired outcomes.

As part of this process, it is key that each department, division and/or office update or create detailed reports detailing their specific procedures regarding receipt of revenues, procurement of goods and services and all compensation of employees monetary and non-monetary benefits currently in use in each environment. The report should show how all cash receipts reach the proper account, goods and services get where they belong, each vendor and each employee are paid the proper amount every time, the first time.

This type of workflow analysis will disclose to Senior Management existing strengths and weaknesses in cash handling procedures for inclusion in the Internal Control Risk Management Report. From this Risk Analysis will come new/amended internal controls, enhancing the municipality's financial strength and reducing its financial risks. Additional benefits include staff "buy in" and reduced operational ambiguity leading to improved efficiency and effectiveness.

This Risk Analysis, the new/amended internal controls and the individual Department, Division, or office reports will be the basis for amendments/creation to written Procedure Manuals discussed for each Department, Division or office to be then updated annually. Senior management should be provided the necessary management support and commitment to accomplish these critical needs beginning this year.

This recommendation is revenue neutral and will likely provide some level of savings by adding accountability and maintaining efficiency.

COMPARABLES

When performing budgetary, financial, and staffing comparisons between municipalities in New Jersey, care needs to be taken not to jump to conclusions. Municipalities do not compare exactly to one another for a variety of reasons, some clearer than others, some subtle. For example, two of the most financially significant areas where municipalities may differ is in how they budget for fire protection services and for refuse and recycling collections services.

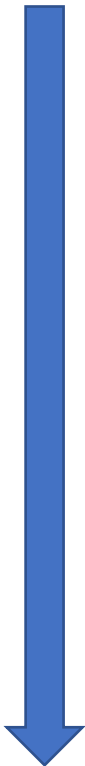
For example, most municipalities have volunteer fire departments, some have fully paid fire departments, and some have hybrid departments of paid and volunteer firefighters. Yet, all will have some level of budget appropriations and tax support for the service as provided. Similarly, regarding refuse collections and recycling, some municipalities handle the services entirely in-house, some contract for all or parts of the services, and some provide no municipal service at all or a hybrid of privately arranged collections and municipal services.

These two examples of how services are delivered and budgeted for are just two of the most cost-significant examples of differences between municipalities; there are many more examples of other differences, even if less in magnitude.

The true purpose of high-level budgetary, financial, and staffing comparisons is to raise a flag – initiate an alert – when numbers appear as out of sync between municipalities being compared, so that the causes or reasons for same can then be explored and understood to determine the significance for such discrepancies.

In choosing the municipalities for comparables with Perth Amboy for this study – i.e., North Bergen and New Brunswick – Government Strategy Group focused on several macro-level similarities – size; offering a similar array of municipal services; and facing many of the same urban issues and financial challenges, as well as demographics (especially a significant Latino population) and population density. Additionally, having waterfront geography and active commuter services, whether by train or buses or both, were considered pluses. Finally, GSG thought it of value to have at least one comparable located in Middlesex County.

Following is a series of charts detailing data regarding these three communities.



PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW
Appropriations for All Municipal Operations - 2020 User Friendly Budgets

APPROPRIATIONS*	Perth Amboy			North Bergen			New Brunswick		
	Amount	FT	PT	Amount	FT	PT	Amount	FT	PT
General Government	4,605,146	34	8	7,783,852	54	60	4,976,677		
Land-Use Administration	48,722	-	1	261,990	2	-	51,942		
Uniform Construction Code	1,113,323	15	9	881,095	15	2	782,571		
Insurance	15,172,769	-	-	18,396,500	-	-	16,571,628		
Public Safety	22,528,970	233	61	16,954,730	150	114	32,820,541		
Public Works	8,079,801	65	5	6,048,080	71	30	5,137,258		
Health and Human Services	730,369	12	-	1,022,815	10	2	1,430,627		
Parks and Recreation	1,580,876	19	15	3,772,615	30	230	1,191,114		
Education (including Library)	1,138,235	9	-	2,335,800	-	-	2,019,332		
Unclassified	885,258	10	11	-	-	-	2,383,800		
Utilities and Bulk Purchases	*28,027,855	-	-	2,248,000	-	-	1,682,950		
Landfill / Solid Waste Disposal	130,477	-	-	7,087,330	-	-	-		
Contingency	10,000	-	-	25,000	-	-	-		
Statutory Expenditures	8,306,358	-	-	6,496,934	-	-	11,309,362		
Judgements	-	-	-	45,000	-	-	-		
Shared Services	-	-	-	15,174,874	-	-	2,545,000		
Court and Public Defender	743,075	10	5	1,076,810	14	1	1,290,174		
Capital	1,060,438	-	-	304,000	-	-	189,000		
Debt	10,612,468	-	-	6,733,713	-	-	6,394,626		
Deferred Charges	-	-	-	-	-	-	353,130		
Debt - Type 1 School District	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,814,438		
Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	100,000	-	-	2,632,442	-	-	431,534		
Surplus General Budget	-	-	-	-	-	-	33,593,480		
Total	76,846,284	407	115	99,281,580	346	439	127,969,181	547	286

Info was not disclosed in the User Friendly Budget

* Perth Amboy number also includes costs for its three Municipal Utilities.

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW
Local Tax Amounts & Rates - 2020

TAX COMPARISON	Perth Amboy		North Bergen		New Brunswick	
	Budget	Tax	Budget	Tax	Budget	Tax
Municipal Purpose Tax	57,924,489	1.739	66,500,979	2.593	35,904,525	1.048
Municipal Library	1,138,235	0.034	2,212,021	0.086	1,162,070	0.033
Municipal Open Space	-	-	-	-	-	0.010
Fire Districts (total levies)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Special Districts (total levies)	248,500	-	-	-	700,000	-
Local School District	27,296,701	0.792	52,253,466	2.044	32,701,700	0.955
Regional School District	-	-	-	-	-	0.021
County Purposes	13,813,805	0.381	27,940,368	1.007	14,034,973	0.372
County Library	-	-	-	-	-	-
County Board of Health	-	-	-	-	-	-
County Open Space	1,043,891	0.032	663,742	0.002	342,688	0.031
Other County Levies (total)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	101,465,620	2.978	149,570,576	5.732	84,845,956	2.470
Avg Residential Assessment / Tax	241,265	7,184.88	140,000	8,024.80	270,900	6,691.23
2020 Total Assessed Value	3,330,452,512		2,563,885,003		3,426,880,300	
Ratio of Assessed to True Value	96.40		38.82		97.39	
Aggregate True Value Real Property	3,512,565,183		6,651,210,259		3,565,744,868	

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW
Revenues Comparisons - 2020

REVENUES	Perth Amboy	North Bergen	New Brunswick
Surplus	4,266,000	4,900,000	2,150,000
Local Revenue	26,647,332	11,264,178	30,696,120
State Aid (without offsetting appropriation)	9,237,369	7,185,597	15,607,612
Uniform Construction Code Fees	1,000,000	1,500,000	726,750
<i>Special Revenue Items w/ Prior Written Consent</i>	-	-	-
Shared Services Agreements	-	-	2,545,000
Additional Revenue Offset by Appropriations	-	-	-
Public and Private Revenue	526,984	118,579	1,065,244
Other Special Items	2,495,517	3,850,226	36,665,645
Receipts from Delinquent Taxes	100,000	1,750,000	-
Amount to be raised by taxation	-	-	-
Local Tax for Municipal Purposes	57,924,489	66,500,979	38,512,810
Minimum Library Tax	1,138,235	2,212,021	-
Open Space Levy Tax	-	-	-
Addition to Local District School Tax	-	-	-
Deficit General Budget	-	-	-
	103,335,926	99,281,580	127,969,181

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW
Debt Service - 2019

	Perth Amboy	North Bergen	New Brunswick
Debt Authorized, Not Yet Issued	-	1,838,854	5,426,000
Notes	-	25,593,000	-
Bonds	90,792,548	48,965,000	49,080,000
Loans	831,070	1,095,045	1,321,375
	91,623,618	77,491,899	55,827,375
3 Yr Average Property Valuation	3,292,161,149	6,425,660,312	3,422,603,260
Net Debt as % of Avg Property Value	2.78%	1.21%	1.63%
Population	50,814	60,773	55,181
Per Capita Gross Debt, incl schools	\$3,749.99	\$2,293.48	\$9,458.15*
Per Capita Net Debt	\$1,803.12	\$1,275.10	\$1,011.71
Ratings (Moody's/S&P)	A2/A+	Aa2	A2

**Note: also includes substantial Parking Authority debt guaranteed by City of New Brunswick.*

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW
Personnel Comparisons

Personnel	Perth Amboy			North Bergen			New Brunswick		
	Amount	FT	PT	Amount	FT	PT	Amount	FT	PT
Governing Body	\$255,299	1	5	\$354,200	0	5	\$133,014	0	6
Dept Heads & Managers	\$3,655,110	32	0	\$3,325,717	23	0	\$2,004,714	14	0
Police Officers & Superior	\$18,796,697	130	0	\$19,267,851	120	0	\$26,411,120	150	0
Fire Fighters & Superior*	\$10,210,787	69	0	\$0	0	0	\$15,805,115	99	0
All Other Union	\$12,771,373	145	0	\$5,919,550	70	0	\$14,354,856	206	65
All Other Non-Union	\$4,502,852	30	110	\$14,771,293	133	434	\$8,446,211	78	215
	\$50,192,118	407	115	\$43,638,610	346	439	\$67,155,031	547	286

**Note: North Bergen belongs to a regional Fire Dept for which it budgeted \$14,886,124 in 2020.*

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW
Personnel Component Costs

PERSONNEL COMPONENT COSTS	Perth Amboy	North Bergen	New Brunswick
<i>Pension (Estimate)</i>			
Governing Body	25,000	24,642	2,990
Dept Heads & Managers	337,049	358,317	96,269
Police Officers & Superior	3,535,115	3,743,972	4,935,215
Fire Fighters & Superior*	1,541,517	*	3,290,143
All Other Union	923,386	457,288	1,309,265
All Other Non-Union	444,291	852,451	516,865
	6,806,358	5,436,669	10,150,747
<i>Health Benefits Net of Cost Share</i>			
Governing Body	53,200	119,088	21,835
Dept Heads & Managers	400,000	261,631	272,957
Police Officers & Superior	2,840,000	2,152,150	2,993,613
Fire Fighters & Superior*	1,902,900	*	1,614,918
All Other Union	1,700,000	1,529,732	3,497,793
All Other Non-Union	700,000	2,417,211	1,519,938
	7,596,100	6,479,813	9,921,054
<i>Employment Taxes & Other</i>			
Governing Body	13,000	13,770	7,688
Dept Heads & Managers	220,000	206,501	116,224
Police Officers & Superior	210,000	182,655	264,163
Fire Fighters & Superior*	102,000	*	155,792
All Other Union	730,000	266,626	678,501
All Other Non-Union	225,000	856,157	455,476
	1,500,000	1,525,709	1,677,844

*Note: North Bergen belongs to a regional Fire Dept for which it budgeted \$14,886,124 in 2020.

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW
Personnel Component Costs

PERSONNEL COMPONENT COSTS	Perth Amboy	North Bergen	New Brunswick
<i>Base Pay</i>			
Governing Body	164,099	180,000	100,500
Dept Heads & Managers	2,598,061	2,487,861	1,519,264
Police Officers & Superior	11,911,582	12,493,664	17,250,129
Fire Fighters & Superior*	6,314,370	*	10,556,163
All Other Union	8,903,416	3,160,304	8,497,826
All Other Non-Union	3,018,560	10,404,075	5,866,524
	32,910,089	28,725,904	43,790,406
<i>Overtime and other Compensation</i>			
Governing Body		16,700	-
Dept Heads & Managers	100,000	11,400	-
Police Officers & Superior	300,000	695,410	968,000
Fire Fighters & Superior*	350,000	*	188,100
All Other Union	514,571	505,600	371,471
All Other Non-Union	115,000	241,400	87,409
	1,379,571	1,470,510	1,614,980

*Note: North Bergen belongs to a regional Fire Dept for which it budgeted \$14,886,124 in 2020.

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW
U.S. Census Data

Item:	Perth Amboy	North Bergen	New Brunswick
Population estimates, July 1, 2019	51,390	60,666	55,676
Population estimates base, April 1, 2010	50,827	60,790	54,500
Population, percent change - 2010 to 2019	1.10%	-0.20%	2.20%
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	50,814	60,773	55,181
Persons under 5 years, percent	7.60%	6.70%	6.30%
Persons under 18 years, percent	27.10%	20.70%	22.80%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	11.20%	14.50%	5.90%

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW
U.S. Census Data - Race

Race:	Perth Amboy	North Bergen	New Brunswick
White alone, percent	79.20%	67.90%	63.80%
Black or African American alone, percent	8.40%	4.20%	16.20%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone,	0.00%	0.30%	0.10%
Asian alone, percent	1.10%	7.70%	9.90%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.00%	0.10%	0.10%
Two or More Races, percent	2.50%	4.10%	2.00%
Hispanic or Latino, percent	78.00%	68.20%	46.80%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	13.90%	19.70%	26.70%
Foreign born persons, percent, 2015-2019	41.50%	49.70%	31.50%

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW
Crime Data from the FBI

Perth Amboy	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Violent Reported	243	247	231	210	171	165	147
Violent Cleared	97	74	86	102	81	113	78
Property Reported	1,041	987	842	806	843	721	697
Property Cleared	75	80	67	87	101	97	72
North Bergen	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Violent Reported	102	115	116	107	96	98	90
Violent Cleared	68	70	81	77	66	67	67
Property Reported	638	684	658	602	485	435	404
Property Cleared	122	131	144	158	130	115	156
New Brunswick	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Violent Reported	303	418	413	392	360	309	262
Violent Cleared	81	96	111	117	96	93	100
Property Reported	1,665	1,582	1,279	1,252	1,341	1,210	1,111
Property Cleared	125	137	128	112	82	105	96

PERTH AMBOY MANAGEMENT ENHANCEMENT REVIEW
Shared Services Review

Perth Amboy	North Bergen	North Bergen cont'd.	New Brunswick
<p><u>Middlesex County</u> (Rec) Health Department (Rec) Sky Watch Surveillance (Rec) <u>Perth Amboy S.D</u> / Snow Removal Support (Rec) <u>Passaic Valley Sewerage Comm</u> / Water Monitoring</p> <p>(Rec) <u>Woodbridge</u> / Digital Trunk Radio System</p>	<p><u>Hudson County School Tech</u> (Rec) Parking Spaces (Rec) Certain Salting & Road Maintenance</p> <p><u>North Hudson Regional Fire & Rescue</u> (Rec) Regional Fire Dept. Services</p> <p>(Pro) Truck maintenance and repairs</p> <p><u>North Bergen BOE</u> (Pro) Various</p> <p>(Pro) Special Police Officers (Pro) <u>North Bergen Library</u> / Purchasing Agent Services (Pro) <u>West New York</u> / Health Officer and Env. Health Specialist</p>	<p><u>Town of Guttenberg</u> (Pro) Various DPW (Pro) Maintenance of Waterfront Park</p> <p>(Pro) Health Officer and Env. Health Specialist</p> <p>(Pro) Emergency Medical Services</p> <p>(Pro) <u>North Bergen MUA</u> / Emergency Management Coordinator & Emergency Sewer Repairs (Rec) <u>Regional Communications</u></p> <p>(Pro) <u>North Bergen Parking Authority</u> / Various Services (Pro) <u>Weehawken</u> / Health Officer</p> <p>(Pro) <u>Union City</u> / Health Officer</p> <p>(Pro) <u>Harrison</u> / Health Officer</p>	<p><u>New Brunswick BOE</u> (Pro) Parks Usage (Pro) Garbage Disposal</p> <p>(Pro) After School Program</p> <p>(Pro) School Safety Program</p>

APPENDIX

Exhibit 1 – Roster of Interviews and Meetings

GSG consultants either interviewed or met with, or both, and often multiple times, the following Perth Amboy officials and staff:

- **Helmin J. Caba**, Mayor
- **William A. Petrick**, Council President
- **Joel Pabon, Sr.**, Council Member
- **Milady Tejeda**, Council Member
- **Rose B. Morales**, Council Member
- **Bienvenido BJ Torres**, Council Member
- **Kenneth Ortiz**, Director of Human Services
- **Victoria Kupsch**, City Clerk
- **Roman McKeon**, Chief of Police
- **Larry Cattano**, OEM Coordinator/Deputy Chief of Police
- **Edward Mullen**, Fire Chief
- **Frank Hoffman**, Director of Public Works
- **William Northgrave**, Director of Law
- **Jill Goldy**, CFO
- **William Fitzpatrick**, Tax Assessor
- **Irving Lozada**, Director of Code Enforcement
- **Scott Melski**, Construction Official
- **Solenny Pena**, Court Administrator
- **John Alleman**, IT/Network Administrator

- **Luis Perez-Jimenez**, Director of Operations for UJA/Water Utility
- **Daniel Cleaver**, Supervisor of Buildings & Grounds
- **Ed Troche**, Registrar
- **Maria Rivera**, Purchasing Agent
- **David Acela**, Chief Accountant
- **Tashi Vasquez**, Assistant Director - OECD
- **Diane Roman**, Supervisor – Social Services & Housing
- **Jaime Rios**, Zoning Officer
- **Kevin Metz**, Acting Fire Official
- **Jeffrey Rauch**, Consulting City Engineer
- **Ernest Feist**, Consulting City Engineer/Planner
- **John Marcinko**, Police Officer/PBA President
- **Jeanette Rios**, Business Manager, Parking Utility
- **Frank Wild**, Harbormaster

In addition to the above, numerous email communications back and forth were conducted with additional City staff members.

Exhibit 2 – Project Team

JOSEPH M. HARTNETT, Executive Managing Director, Project Lead/Project Manager – Joe Hartnett is one of New Jersey’s most respected professionals in the management of municipalities. He has been admitted as an expert on the Faulkner Act in Superior Court and as an expert on municipal personnel management before the State legislature, as well as serving as an expert for colleges and universities, Freeholder Boards, the NJ League of Municipalities, and Congressional representatives. Most recently he has served as Project Manager and report author for management studies for Red Bank, Long Branch, Matawan, and Toms River. Joe served for six years as Township Manager of Montclair (400+ FT employees) and sixteen years as Business Administrator in Rahway, as well as holding significant State and County appointments. He is also the former Vice President and CFO of Saint Peter’s University. In 2014 Joe was appointed by a former Chief Justice of the NJ Supreme Court and a former Director of Criminal Justice for NJ to manage the dissolution of a corrupt public agency in Newark, New Jersey’s largest city, where they have recovered more than eight million dollars in stolen funds for that city’s taxpayers.

KENNETH DeROBERTS, Chief Executive Officer, Chief Budget, Workflow, & Financial Strategy – Currently overseeing the financial operations of New Jersey’s fifth largest municipality, Edison Township, Ken DeRoberts is one of New Jersey’s elite budget and financial executives and analysts. Ken is a New Jersey Certified Municipal Finance Officer who has compiled an impressive record of accomplishment. While serving as City Administrator/CFO, he is renowned for leading Summit, NJ to become the first municipality in the nation to achieve AAA bond ratings from all three major Wall Street ratings agencies and for subsequently achieving the same impressive accomplishment for the Borough of New Providence.

Ken has served over twenty local and county governments and agencies as a consultant in a variety of challenging financial and management assignments. Through operational and cost-saving analyses, insightful forecasting, and a strong track record in creative shared services, he has been credited with savings millions of dollars for clients, while strengthening their financial positions. For the past eight years, Mr. DeRoberts has been engaged as a respected guest lecturer on redevelopment at New York University’s Schack Institute (Graduate School of Real Estate). Ken serves as Co-Chairman of the Economic Recovery Advisory Council for Legislative District 11 and is Chairman of SoupKitchen411.com

CHRISTOPHER COTTER, Managing Director, Departments & Operations Review Manager – Chris has over 30 years of experience in various local government roles which have included as Summit’s City Administrator. He began his career in the Fire Department where he ascended to the rank of Chief and was the Emergency Management Coordinator. He oversaw the reorganization of the police department and was the Director of the Department of Community Services, responsible for public works, engineering and code enforcement. Chris was responsible for instituting several successful shared services programs. He also served as a member of the leadership team that implemented a shared

911 communications center for fire, police and EMS in three municipalities spanning two counties.

JOSEPH SALEMME, Managing Director, Staffing and CBA Analysis SME – Mr. Salemme has over 30 years' experience as a versatile public sector executive with a record of accomplishment in a wide range of highly responsible assignments. Joe's major achievements have been in the areas of operations management, labor relations & contract negotiations, and organizational leadership. As the former longtime Director of Administrative Services for the County of Union – a \$490 million operation with 3,000 employees and twenty-two labor unions – Joe was intimately involved with all aspects of departmental personnel administration, including serving as chief labor negotiator with all unions and conducting all economic research and analysis required for the development of the County's labor policies, staffing needs, and negotiations strategy. He also collaborated with the County's health benefit providers and insurance brokers to develop cost containment options and strategies. Before being appointed to the Director's position, Joe served as a Special Assistant to the County Manager where he played a major role in the reorganization of the County that reduced the number of operational departments from eleven to six. Mr. Salemme holds a B.A. in Sociology from LaSalle University and a Master of Labor and Employment Relations from Rutgers University.

MARIO TRAFFICANTE & WILLIAM OVOIAN (via Blue Front Technology Group), Information Technology SMEs – Mario and Bill bring over eighteen years of high-level IT experience and public sector experience to reviews of IT usage in governmental units. Mario is a traditional technology professional with substantial experience across all areas of Information Technology inside municipalities, government entities, and private sector clients. Bill has 25+ years' experience in all facets of Information Technology and has held multiple IT roles from solutions engineer, to Director of IT, to Chief Security Officer. He is a Certified Information Security Manager as well as holding ITIL v3 certification for best practices in managing information technology.

ULRICH (AL) STEINBERG, Managing Director, Municipal Finances SME – Al Steinberg is a member of the GSG team who served as the Director of Local Government Services and Chair of the Local Finance Board for the State of New Jersey, as well as liaison to the Governor's Office regarding policy matters affecting local governments. He is an expert in all aspects of municipal finance who recently retired after his distinguished career in New Jersey local government. During his long municipal career, he served numerous communities and county governments in senior financial management positions, including as a full-time CFO/CMFO. Al's services include budget consulting, software design and other financial technology applications. He holds a Master's Degree in Accounting from Rutgers University as well as undergraduate degrees in Accounting, Computer Science, and Business Administration from William Paterson College.

JOHN GROSS, Managing Director, Financial Analytics and Operations SME – John is an award-winning public manager with extensive experience and skills. His expertise ranges from all aspects of municipal finance, to development and redevelopment, to insurance and benefits, and to all facets of municipal administration. He has served as a CFO and as a

Business Administrator, as well as heading up emergency management, information technology, and redevelopment efforts. He has won awards for innovations in public-private partnerships, fiscally sustainable development, and "smart growth." John also served as the first Executive Director of the South Orange Performing Arts Center, responsible for design, financing, construction, and initial operations.

MICHAEL D'ECCLESSIS, Managing Director, Municipal Court Operations SME – Mike is retired as the Municipal Court Division Manager for the NJ Superior Court, Union County Vicinage. With more than 29 years' experience in the municipal court system, D'Ecclessis served as Court Administrator for the City of Summit and Court Director for the City of Plainfield. He has been assigned by the Supreme Court of NJ to serve as a member of the Municipal Court Certification Board, the Merged Courts Study Commission and many other projects to improve the integrity of the Municipal Court system in NJ. He has also worked in Project Management overseeing the implementation of information management/processing systems for municipal courts around the country. Mike is an NJ Certified Municipal Court Administrator, as well as being certified as an NJ Paralegal.

DOUGLAS MARVIN, Managing Director, Departments & Municipal Offices Operations SME – Doug is an expert in municipal administration and law enforcement. He began his career with the New Providence Police Department where he worked his way through the ranks to become Chief of Police. After twenty-seven years with the Department, he was appointed Business Administrator, where he served for an additional fifteen years. Doug also served as a Commissioner with the NJSACOP Police Department Accreditation Commission and as Chairman of the Garden State Joint Insurance Fund. Among many achievements, Doug is highly regarded for being instrumental in numerous shared services agreements, including for municipal courts, tax assessing, sewer management, and central 911 dispatch for Police, Fire, and EMS.

GARY OBSZARNY, Managing Director, Municipal Utilities SME – Gary Obszarny's skills and hands-on experience with municipal utilities' operations are unsurpassed. Prior to becoming Director of Utilities (Water, Sewer, and Parking) for the Township of Montclair and the beginning of his career in municipal utilities work in 1995, Gary worked for Pratt & Whitney Aircraft assembling and testing military and commercial aircraft engines, as a maintenance mechanic in a chemical plant, and as a maintenance supervisor for a sewerage treatment plant. Thus, his overall background has given him a meticulous approach on best practices in running utilities operations, as well as detailed knowledge of up-to-date applicable technologies. In addition to completing basic and advanced water and wastewater courses, Gary holds the following credentials: Certified Public Works Manager; NJDEP W-4, T-3, and C-4 certificates; and FAA Airframe and Powerplant Certificates.

DOROTHY BLAKESLEE, Managing Director, Metrics and Analytics SME – Ms. Blakeslee has over 25 years of experience as a financial analyst, financial advisor and investment banker. She has a proven ability to find creative solutions to financial problems. Dotty started her career as a computer programmer. She designed and executed computer models at Merrill Lynch and Bear Stearns. Her career then moved over to municipal finance as partner in a

woman owned financial advisory company where she analyzed and modelled debt for municipalities. Currently, she works with Government Strategy Group and assists municipalities in optimizing operations. She is experienced in design and use of databases and has recently analyzed large amounts of data from the US Census in order to facilitate comparisons between municipalities. Ms. Blakeslee serves on the boards of Bergen Community College, the NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (for 23 years), and the NJ Ethnic Advisory Commission.

HITEN PATEL, Director, Metrics and Analytics SME – Hiten is an expert in data analytics, cloud computing, and project management. He has spent the majority of his career in private industry in corporations such as Lockheed Martin, Johnson and Johnson, Valeant Pharmaceutical, and Newell Brands. As a Senior Business Intelligence Analyst, Hiten implemented system improvements and led business process change efforts, replacing inefficient reporting processes by utilizing the latest software tools. He implemented KPI (key performance indicator) dashboards and used visual analytics tools including Qlik and Tableau. Mr. Patel was the project manager using Microsoft Azure suite to switch to cloud computing for data reporting and analytics. He has created and maintained SharePoint sites to house KPI dashboards and reports. During his career, Hiten earned Top Secret Clearance from the GAO/Department of Defense. In the public sector, Hiten most recently utilized his private sector experience in the analysis of the Suez Group privatization of water infrastructure for Edison Township. He has a BBA in Finance and Economics from the University of Iowa and is near completion of an MBA with a concentration in Data Analytics at Rutgers University.

TEAM MEMBERS – while the above SMEs indicate areas of concentration, GSG team members are highly collaborative and work together to enhance each other's performance, sharing their knowledge and experience. For example, Marvin, DeRoberts, and Hartnett will also be sharing input on personnel matters, and on shared services agreements and other contracts and components with financial implications for Perth Amboy.

Exhibit 3 – Key Performance Indicators

		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Average Annual Performance	
Budget	Current Fund									
Budget	SUMMARY OF REVENUES									
Budget	1. Surplus Anticipated	08-101	2,000,000	3,065,000	4,704,000	5,190,000	4,090,000	4,886,000	5,144,274	26%
Budget	2. Surplus Anticipated w/ Prior Written Consent	08-102								
Budget	3. Miscellaneous Revenues:									
Budget	Total Section A: Local Revenues	08-001	2,913,838	2,967,663	2,952,100	3,036,485	2,507,078	2,475,300	1,625,740	-7%
Budget	Total Section B: State Aid w/o Offsetting Appropriations	09-001	9,237,369	9,237,369	9,237,369	9,237,369	9,237,369	9,237,369	9,237,369	0%
Budget	Total Section C: Dedicated Uniform Commercial Code	08-002	615,400	422,400	1,300,000	700,000	700,000	1,000,000	885,000	7%
Budget	Total Section D: Interlocal Services Agreements	11-001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section E: Add'l Revenues Offset w/ Appropriations	08-003	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section F: Public & Private Revenues Offset	10-001	638,846	1,379,192	3,587,271	1,033,068	957,606	173,504	1,881,319	32%
Budget	Total Section G: Other Special Items	08-004	1,461,296	1,453,835	1,395,945	1,532,300	3,308,485	2,495,517	2,495,448	12%
Budget	Total Miscellaneous Items	13-099	14,866,748	15,460,460	18,472,685	15,539,222	16,710,538	15,381,689	16,124,876	1%
Budget	4. Receipts from Delinquent Taxes	15-499	162,141	110,250	145,000	80,000	-	50,000	30,000	-14%
Budget	5. Subtotal General Revenues (Items 1,2,3 and 4)	13-199	17,028,889	18,635,710	23,321,685	20,809,222	20,800,538	20,317,689	21,299,150	4%
Budget	6. Amount to be Raised by Taxes for support of the Budget		56,376,123	56,934,262	56,957,778	57,019,312	58,483,256	59,150,922	59,832,757	1%
Budget	7. Total General Revenues		73,405,012	75,569,972	80,279,463	77,828,533	79,283,794	79,468,612	81,131,907	2%
Budget	Summary of Appropriations									
Budget	Salary & Wages		28,474,586	29,286,613	31,504,533	31,645,817	29,970,776	32,213,143	32,538,148	2%
Budget	Net Health Benefit Costs		12,677,006	12,461,130	12,716,610	12,621,000	13,430,792	12,425,888	11,377,090	-2%
Budget	Employee contribution to Health Benefits	est.	1,480,206	1,455,000	1,411,210	1,400,600	1,724,400	1,720,626	1,920,000	5%
Budget	Health Benefit Costs		11,196,800	11,006,130	11,305,400	11,220,400	13,430,792	14,146,514	13,297,090	3%
Budget	Statutory Expenses (Pension, Social Security, Etc..)		6,544,882	6,485,371	7,343,069	6,557,956	8,174,243	8,307,047	8,847,464	6%
Budget	All Other OE		10,436,193	11,082,982	10,415,480	11,661,534	12,468,957	13,115,522	13,490,770	5%
Budget	(A) Operations: (a+b) Within "CAPS"-including Contingent									
Budget	Statutory Expenditures	34-299	58,132,667	59,316,096	61,979,693	62,486,306	64,044,768	66,061,600	66,253,472	2%
Budget	(a) Operations-Excluded from "CAPS"									
Budget	Other Operations	34-300	1,533,099	1,108,284	1,129,338	1,097,491	1,179,731	1,197,108	1,253,701	-3%
Budget	Uniform Construction Code		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Interlocal Municipal Service Agreements	42-999	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Additional Appropriations Offset by Revenues	34-303	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Public & Private Offset by Revenues	40-999	638,846	88,816	3,271,867	1,033,068	957,606	173,504	1,881,319	32%
Budget	Total Operations-Excluded from "CAPS"	34-305	2,171,945	1,197,099	4,401,205	2,130,559	2,137,337	1,370,612	3,135,020	7%
Budget	(C) Capital Improvements	44-999	300,000	150,000	515,404	454,174	178,896	1,060,438	1,538,162	69%
Budget	(D) Municipal Debt Service	45-999	11,700,400	12,716,400	12,651,345	12,056,149	12,812,588	10,875,962	10,162,238	-2%
Budget	(E) Total Deferred Charges (Sheet 18 + 28)	46-999	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	(F) Judgments	37-480	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	(G) Cash Deficit	46-885	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	(K) Local District School Purposes	29-410	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	(N) Transferred to Board of Education	29-405	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	(M) Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	50-899	1,100,000	900,000	731,816	701,346	110,205	100,000	43,016	-16%
Budget	Total General Appropriations	34-499	73,405,012	75,569,972	80,279,463	77,828,533	79,283,794	79,468,612	81,131,907	2%
Budget	Dedicated Water/Wastewater Utility									
Budget	SUMMARY OF REVENUES									
Budget	1. Surplus Anticipated	08-101	3,064,622	717,174	-	-	992,953	1,106,931	1,500,000	-9%
Budget	3. Miscellaneous Revenues:									
Budget	Total Section A: Rents	08-001	18,923,875	19,112,756	19,526,376	19,840,020	20,437,307	22,172,295	21,154,417	
Budget	Total Section B:	09-001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section C: Miscellaneous	08-002	216,432	216,432	220,000	220,000	250,000	250,000	224,000	1%
Budget	Total Section D: Cell Tower Rentals	11-001	181,000	181,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	2%
Budget	Total Section E: Reserve for Debt Service	08-003	134,088	57,805	235,201	11,760	-	1,028,846	32,929	
Budget	Total Section F:	10-001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section G:	08-004	-	-	-	-	-	-	659,164	n/a
Budget	Total Miscellaneous Items	13-099	19,455,394	19,567,993	20,181,577	20,271,780	20,887,307	23,651,141	22,270,510	2%
Budget	4. Deficit	15-499	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	7. Total General Revenues	13-199	22,520,017	20,285,166	20,181,577	20,271,780	21,880,260	24,758,072	23,770,510	1%
Budget	(a) Salary & Wages		-	-	-	49,555	249,388	252,798	185,093	91%
Budget	Other Operations	34-300	12,373,870	11,907,676	11,559,058	11,591,001	10,887,314	11,445,148	11,409,647	-1%
Budget	Payment on BAN/Bond Principal		4,014,812	2,951,056	2,913,207	2,506,223	3,659,952	4,726,076	3,488,766	-2%
Budget	Interest on BAN/Bonds	42-999	5,231,335	5,426,434	5,709,312	5,962,500	6,313,325	7,180,649	7,322,258	7%
Budget	Social Security/PERS	34-303	-	-	-	-	50,281	53,401	40,725	-10%
Budget	Capital Improvement Fund/Capital Outlay		900,000	-	-	162,500	720,000	1,100,000	1,100,000	4%
Budget	Deficit in Prior Year Operations		-	-	-	-	-	-	224,021	n/a
Budget	Total Operations-Excluded from "CAPS"	34-305	22,520,017	20,285,166	20,181,577	20,271,780	21,880,260	24,758,072	23,770,510	1%
Budget	Dedicated Parking Utility									
Budget	SUMMARY OF REVENUES									

		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Average Annual Performance	
Budget	1. Surplus Anticipated	08-101	-	85,000	105,505	100,500	143,099	269,310	421,892	79%
Budget	3. Miscellaneous Revenues:									
Budget	Total Section A: Rents	08-001	739,000	739,000	761,000	833,700	887,298	648,690	534,702	5%
Budget	Total Section B:	09-001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section C: Miscellaneous	08-002	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section D:	11-001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section E:	08-003	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section F:	10-001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section G:	08-004	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget										
Budget	Total Miscellaneous Items	13-099	739,000	739,000	761,000	833,700	887,298	648,690	534,702	5%
Budget										
Budget	4. Deficit	15-499	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget										
Budget	7. Total General Revenues	13-199	739,000	824,000	866,505	934,200	1,030,397	918,000	956,594	8%
Budget										
Budget	(a) Salary & Wages		275,688	355,627	376,139	396,294	333,947	379,132	424,489	9%
Budget	Other Operations	34-300	316,174	363,720	389,964	434,806	593,256	438,089	426,436	6%
Budget	Payment on Bond Principal		85,000	85,000	85,000	90,000	95,000	95,000	100,000	3%
Budget	Interest on Bonds	42-999	23,903	19,653	15,402	13,100	8,194	5,779	5,669	-13%
Budget	Social Security	34-303	38,235	-	-	-	-	-	-	n/a
Budget	Capital Improvement Fund		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget										
Budget	Total Operations-Excluded from "CAPS"	34-305	739,000	824,000	866,505	934,200	1,030,397	918,000	956,594	8%
Budget										
Budget	Dedicated Marina Utility		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	SUMMARY OF REVENUES									
Budget	1. Surplus Anticipated	08-101	8,600	45,800	35,267	17,613	37,831	90,282	187,683	347%
Budget	3. Miscellaneous Revenues:									
Budget	Total Section A: Rents	08-001	226,000	243,300	275,000	299,400	296,519	261,501	262,335	3%
Budget	Total Section B:	09-001	-	10,000	10,000	-	-	-	-	n/a
Budget	Total Section C: Miscellaneous	08-002	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section D:	11-001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section E: Reserve for Debt Service	08-003	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section F:	10-001	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Total Section G:	08-004	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget										
Budget	Total Miscellaneous Items	13-099	226,000	253,300	285,000	299,400	296,519	261,501	262,335	3%
Budget										
Budget	4. Deficit	15-499	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget										
Budget	7. Total General Revenues	13-199	234,600	299,100	320,267	317,013	334,350	351,783	450,018	15%
Budget										
Budget	(a) Salary & Wages		132,997	141,480	145,845	155,688	164,074	178,942	238,130	13%
Budget	Other Operations	34-300	101,603	157,620	174,422	161,325	170,276	172,841	211,888	18%
Budget	Payment on BAN/Bond Principal		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Interest on BAN/Bonds	42-999	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Social Security/PERS	34-303	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget	Capital Improvement Fund/Capital Outlay	1-000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Budget										
Budget	Total Operations-Excluded from "CAPS"	34-305	234,600	299,100	320,267	317,013	334,350	351,783	450,018	15%
Budget										
Audit	Reserve for Tax Appeal			2,512,558	2,169,280	2,131,939	1,983,366	1,818,054	1,659,203	7%
Audit	Tax Refunds			343,278	37,341	148,572	165,313	158,851	-	-13%
UFB	Total Taxable Valuation		3,243,069,449	3,243,069,449	3,247,597,639	3,296,845,414	3,335,343,212	3,379,497,964	-	1%
UFB	Total Equalized Valuation		3,021,305,617	3,212,232,022	3,126,899,325	3,413,236,788	3,459,899,598	3,624,515,191	-	3%
UFB	Average Residential Assessment		239,615	239,615	238,904	239,846	241,265	242,788	-	0%
UFB	Average Equalized Value of a Residential Property		223,230	237,336	230,025	248,313	250,275	260,391	-	2%
UFB	Municipal Purpose Tax Rate			1.727	1.725	1.726	1.743	1.739	-	0%
UFB	Total Tax Rate			2.880	2.963	2.963	2.990	2.978	-	1%
UFB	Tax Collection Rate			99.74%	99.72%	100.70%	99.99%	100.22%	-	-0.12%
UFB	Ratio		107.34%	100.90%	103.86%	96.59%	96.40%	93.24%	-	-1.91%
UFB	RUT Rate			99.05%	99.24%	99.27%	100.18%	99.45%	99.96%	0.18%
UFB	# of Parcels Residential		7,659	7,659	7,728	7,717	7,718	7,715	-	0%
UFB	Value of residential Parcels		1,835,209,100	1,835,209,100	1,846,249,100	1,850,890,800	1,862,086,300	1,873,112,900	-	1%
UFB	State Court Appeals		160	112	112	88	78	58	58	-10%
UFB	County Board Appeals		438	237	237	204	150	95	82	-13%
UFB	# of County Tax Board Decisions Appealed to the State Court		118	60	60	48	46	22	22	-13%
UFB	# of Pending Property Tax Appeals		252	90	90	93	47	59	40	-11%
UFB	Tax Appeals Awarded		1,628,595	343,278	343,278	202,616	251,678	101,372	204,398	8%
UFB	Value of Exempt Properties		598,634,200	598,634,200	598,634,200	681,063,400	689,992,800	711,122,300	796,854,900	7%
UFB	# of F/t EE's		5,986,104	375	420	403	389	407	388	1%
UFB	# of P/T EE's			114	121	127	111	115	98	3%
UFB	Retiree Health Benefit Costs			5,986,104	5,483,237	4,751,400	6,008,065	5,151,200	3,912,508	7%
UFB	Accumulated Absence Liability Days			14,882	15,270	15,081	15,081	16,313	16,726	2%
UFB	Accumulated Absence Liability Hours			111,615	114,525	113,108	113,108	122,348	125,444	2%
UFB	Accumulated Absence Liability Amount			6,338,660	6,478,954	6,482,362	6,482,362	6,915,052	7,650,626	4%
UFB	Accumulated Absence Liability Amount/Hour			57	57	57	57	61	61	1%
UFB	Population			50,814	50,814	50,814	50,814	50,814	50,814	0%
UFB	3yr avg property value			3,098,338,922	3,098,703,825	3,100,474,390	3,223,177,866	3,292,166,149	3,442,798,000	2%
UFB	Net Debt			116,073,710	105,659,896	101,210,790	96,233,906	91,623,618	101,479,965	3%
UFB	Debt Ratio			3.75%	3.41%	3.26%	2.99%	2.78%	2.95%	4%
			2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Average Annual

UFB	Bond Rating	S&P A+				Moody's A2		S&P A+	Performance
Audit	Fund Balance January 1	6,011,311	6,671,574	8,931,202	7,995,374	9,938,908	11,040,507	9,732,719	n/a
Audit	Current Fund Revenues	112,280,769	116,707,452	122,485,288	123,630,843	124,604,741			2.7%
Audit	Current Fund Expenditures	109,620,505	111,382,824	118,717,116	116,497,309	119,413,142			2.2%
Audit	Excess(Deficit) in Revenues	2,660,264	5,324,627	3,768,172	7,133,534	5,191,599	3,578,213	-	6.9%
Audit	Amount Used as Anticipated Revenue	2,000,000	3,065,000	4,704,000	5,190,000	4,090,000	4,886,000	5,144,274	26%
Audit	Fund Balance December 31	6,671,574	8,931,202	7,995,374	9,938,908	11,040,507	9,732,719	4,588,445	-5%
Audit	Fund Balance Net Change	660,264	2,259,627	(935,828)	1,943,534	1,101,599	(1,307,787)	(5,144,274)	-147%
Budget	S&W In CAP	28,474,586	29,286,613	31,504,533	31,645,817	29,970,776	32,213,143	32,538,148	2%
Budget	OE In CAP	23,113,199	23,544,112	23,917,204	23,497,420	25,899,749	25,453,341	24,867,850	1%
Budget	S&W Out of CAP	627,420	551,973	550,740	558,003	568,265	581,191	525,511	-3%
Budget	OE Out of CAP	1,544,525	645,126	3,850,465	754,569	1,103,160	789,421	2,609,508	11%
Budget	Levy CAP Limit		56,602,190	57,235,257	58,581,532	63,913,258	60,222,413	60,553,326	1%
Budget	Levy CAP Actual		55,938,112	55,888,597	55,979,504	57,364,237	57,924,489	58,642,243	1%
Budget	Levy CAP Reserve		(664,078)	(1,346,660)	(2,602,028)	(6,549,021)	(2,297,924)	(1,911,083)	38%
Budget	Spending CAP Limit		63,892,833	64,717,340	67,045,133	68,518,436	69,533,931	67,691,618	1%
Budget	Spending CAP Actual		59,316,096	61,979,693	62,486,306	64,044,768	66,061,600	66,253,472	2%
Budget	Spending CAP Reserve		(4,576,736)	(2,737,647)	(4,558,827)	(4,473,668)	(3,472,331)	(1,438,146)	-14%
Budget	Reserve for Uncollected Taxes	1,100,000	900,000	731,816	701,346	110,205	100,000	43,016	-16%

Exhibit 4 – Professional Services Schedule of Fees

Name	Service	Amount Paid		
		2020	2019	2018
Cruiser, Mitchell, Novitz, Sanchez	Legal		\$ 16,988.11	\$ 67,152.29
DeCotiis, Fitzpatrick, Cole & Giblin	Legal	\$ 112,120.79	\$ 200,976.84	\$ 387,585.64
Eric M. Bernstein & Associates, LLC	Legal	\$ 10,680.00	\$ 7,050.00	\$ 1,005.00
Connell Foley LLP	Legal			\$ 2,500.00
The Cintron Firm, LLC	Legal			\$ 1,000.00
Apruzzesse, McDermott, Mastro & Murphy	Legal	\$ 18,244.03	\$ 72,563.60	\$ 92.50
Norris, McLaughlin & Marcus	Legal	\$ 9,212.50	\$ 302,888.78	\$ 106,050.99
Peter J. King, Esq	Legal	\$ 73,896.40	\$ 200,725.45	
Lanza & Lanza, LLP	Legal	\$ 8,105.33		
King, Moench, Hirniak & Mehta LLP	Legal	\$ 37,774.90	\$ 82,401.63	
Ellen M. Fisher, Esq., LLC	Legal	\$ 350.00		
Wilentz, Goldman & Spitzer	Legal			\$ 110,445.00
Florio & Kenny, LLP	Legal		\$ 795.00	\$ 31,660.49
Wilentz Goldman & Spitzer	Legal		\$ 4,683.00	
O'Toole, Couch, Della Rovere	Legal	\$ 36,302.50	\$ 35,338.31	
Gill & Chamas	Legal	\$ 35,023.45		
Vaughn Baio & Partners	Legal	\$ 7,515.00		
Jasinski, P.C.	Legal	\$ 74,002.69	\$ 26,557.44	
James P. Nolan & Associates	Legal	\$ 116,312.08	\$ 140,417.52	\$ 144,367.69
James W. Mastriani	Legal - Arbitrator		\$ 1,840.00	\$ 1,840.00
Ira Steven Cure	Legal - Arbitrator		\$ 1,542.64	
McManimon, Scotland & Baumann, LLC	Legal - Bond Counsel	\$ 28,121.93	\$ 29,996.86	\$ 97,267.65
Gluck Walrath, LLP	Legal - PILOTS	\$ 20,157.50	\$ 8,520.00	
Friend & Wenzel, LLC	Legal - Planning & Zon	\$ 19,987.50	\$ 11,025.00	\$ 21,587.50
Maraziti Falcon, LLP	Legal - Redev.			\$ 12,985.50
Hoagland, Longo, Moran, Dunst & Dukas	Legal - Tax Appeals	\$ 88,785.00	\$ 92,378.21	\$ 115,472.50
Boggia, Boggia, Betesh & Voytus	Legal - Tax Appeals	\$ 15,243.60	\$ 7,305.00	\$ 31,147.49
Leckstein & Leckstein, LLC	Legal - Zoning	\$ 9,040.00	\$ 7,630.00	\$ 1,275.00
Matsikoudis & Fanciullo, LLC	Legal - Zoning		\$ 1,435.00	
TOTAL LEGAL		720,875.20	1,253,058.39	1,133,435.24
Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates	Engineering			\$ 3,085.00
CDM Smith, Inc.	Engineering			\$ 89,589.64
Colliers Engineering & Design	Engineering	\$ 2,272.50	\$ 36,795.00	\$ 6,975.00
Center State Engineering (incls. Escrow)	Engineering	\$ 701,975.25	\$ 387,884.26	\$ 483,241.01
Suburban Consulting	Engineering	\$ 11,513.75		\$ 9,017.10
Brinkerhoff Environmental	Engineering		\$ 4,987.50	\$ 226,571.12
SOR Consulting Engineers	Engineering		\$ 6,500.00	
CME Associates	Engineering	\$ 20,453.00		
H2M Architects & Engineers	Engineering	\$ 7,800.00		
TOTAL ENGINEERING		744,014.50	436,166.76	818,478.87
Ferrioli, Wielkotz, Cerullo & Cuva	Auditors		\$ 5,000.00	\$ 96,750.00
PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP	Auditors	\$ 89,500.00	\$ 87,000.00	
TOTAL AUDITING		\$ 89,500.00	\$ 92,000.00	\$ 96,750.00
Topology NJ LLC	Planner	\$ 363.93	\$ 13,675.00	\$ 10,886.60
Kyle + McManus Associates	Planner	\$ 1,278.00	\$ 18,908.48	
TOTAL PLANNER		\$ 1,641.93	\$ 32,583.48	\$ 10,886.60
Sonnenfeld & Trocchia	Architect	\$ 19,448.76	\$ 39,751.12	\$ 15,580.17
Michael Calafati Architect, LLC	Architect	\$ 1,788.00	\$ 14,291.78	
TOTAL ARCHITECT		\$ 21,236.76	\$ 54,042.90	\$ 15,580.17
G B Associates, LLC	Financial Advisor	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 3,500.00
Stateside Affairs, LLC	Public Relations/PIO	\$ 19,724.99	\$ 11,125.00	
TOTAL		\$ 1,626,993.38	\$ 1,886,476.53	\$ 2,078,630.88