



Operational Audit of Manchester by the Sea

Town Hall Offices

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Introduction



Manchester City Hall and First Parish Church

Overview of Manchester by the Sea

The Town of Manchester by the Sea (MBTS) is a coastal community in Essex County located on Cape Ann in Northeast Massachusetts. It has a population of just under 5500 residents and is known for its scenic vistas and beautiful beaches. One of the most famous beaches is known as "Singing Beach" whose name was derived by the noise that is made when traversing the sand. Fishing was the first industry in the community followed by furniture making. By the early 1900's the town transitioned to more of a seaside resort community. Today the town is primarily a small bedroom community with a vibrant harbor for recreational boaters. The Town became more notable in 2016 when the film "Manchester by the Sea" debuted and gained some critical acclaim at the box office.

Manchester-by-the-Sea is bordered by Beverly and Wenham to the west, Hamilton to the northwest, Essex to the north, and Gloucester to the east. The Town is located 9 miles (14 km) northeast of Salem and 24 miles (39 km) northeast of Boston. *

Originally known as simply *Manchester, Massachusetts*, residents voted to change their name to *Manchester by the Sea* so that there would be no confusion between Manchester, MA versus the nearby City of Manchester, New Hampshire, which is located less than thirty-minutes north of the Town. The vote to change the name from Manchester to Manchester by the Sea was close and prevailed by a margin of just two votes. The Town's action was then submitted to the State legislature in the Summer of 1989 and on September 25, 1989, the State officially adopted the community's new name.

Purpose of the Operational Audit

In November of 2024, Capital Strategic Solutions was retained by the Town to conduct an operational audit of the Town Government. The purpose of this audit was to address multiple needs. The first was to determine if the organization was functioning at an optimal level and if not, what recommendations could be made to help address any shortcomings. The second was to



determine if the current staffing level is sufficient to maintain long-term stability in the organization. An outgrowth of that review is to determine what level of Succession Planning had been achieved in the organization. Depending upon what has been observed, CSS will make recommendations on how to properly address any changes that are needed. We were also tasked to evaluate the existing technology use and see if the Town is making the best use of technology applications throughout its daily operations.

If CSS determines that there are better applications of technology for use in the organization, those uses would be evaluated for integration into the Town's systems and, if appropriate, those changes would become a recommendation in our report findings.

Scope and Methodology

A more significant review was suggested due to the impending departure of the current Town Administrator, Greg Federspiel. Mr. Federspiel will be retiring as the Town's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) in June of 2025 and the Town determined that this would be a suitable time to look at the existing structure of Town Government and offer a new "road map" of governance for the next leader of the organization.

Based on our findings, CSS will recommend an action plan that will include several short and long-term recommendations. It has been our firm's experience that some organizational changes can often be made without significant disruption to operations while others can be addressed as the situation becomes more conducive.

We have also taken the time to consider the many challenges that typically impact local government such as limited revenue growth and ever evolving capital needs. MBTS has many significant infrastructure and facility needs that are being further impacted by growing environmental changes.

MBTS is a seaside community that has begun to experience the effects of global warming with rising tides and increased coastal flooding. While CSS was not retained to address the specific impacts associated with these effects, we will provide some guidance on how these factors will affect some of the important strategic planning efforts that may now need to occur more urgently as climate changes continue to evolve.

The results achieved by this report were derived from the interviews of several key stakeholders in the community and through a review of existing documents and studies that were completed prior to the start of this engagement. As was noted earlier in this Section, it is our hope that this document can serve as a guide for the next administration of the Town. It is also our desire that the chief policymakers of the Town embrace the value of these recommendations to strengthen the foundation of this community for generations to come.

Capital Strategic Solutions would like to thank the Town of Manchester by the Sea for engaging our firm to develop and present these findings. We hope that you find our results informative and our recommendations instructive. We appreciate the opportunity to provide several new guiding principles for future strategic actions in the community.

"Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, Wikimedia Foundation, 29 Jan. 2025, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manchester-by-the-Sea,_Massachusetts.



Existing Conditions

Department Interviews

Police Department

The Manchester by the Sea Police Department is comprised of seventeen sworn officers and includes a Chief, Lieutenant/Executive Officer, (3) Sergeants and (12) Patrol Officers. The Department complement of officers was increased by three Patrol Officers in 2023 when the case was made that the Department could no longer safely function under a two-person patrol system. The Town supported this change, and the Department is now structured to function in a three-shift format that includes a Sergeant and three Patrol Officers (except when there are any absences). The addition of three new Police Officers was able to occur when the Town converted to Regional Dispatch. The savings achieved by this operational change yielded enough funds to support the addition of the new Officers.

The Chief of the Department, Todd Fitzgerald and Lieutenant Mark McCoy were interviewed as part of this assignment. What we learned is that the challenges facing the MBTS Police Department are not significantly different than many police agencies when it comes to personnel. Many departments find it hard to recruit new officers in today's environment where law enforcement does not garner the same level of attraction that it once did as a profession. There are many factors that contribute to this change but some of the biggest occurred following the unfortunate George Floyd incident in Minnesota. At that time, many great police departments were painted in an uncomplimentary manner and the profession had to take multiple steps to regain their previous notoriety. Despite this challenge as a profession, the MBTS Police Department takes immense pride in the work that they do and places a high emphasis on professionalism.

The Chief and his Lieutenant had many good things to say about their department. They also expressed gratitude to the community for supporting their efforts and for recently increasing their staffing level to help keep the community safe.

With the most recent change to the staffing complement, the Department is structured and staffed appropriately, given the size of this community. They have a designed transition and leadership ladder built into their department that provides a succession plan and a layer of protection if the Chief's position becomes vacant. While the order of progression is not always guaranteed, there is at least an organizational order that follows with Patrol, Sergeant, Lieutenant, and Chief.

Some of the key issues that face the department, beyond the challenges of recruitment, have been brought on primarily by outside influences such as the Police Officer Standards & Training Commission or often referred to as POST. These new standards tightened the training requirements for all sworn personnel but also for reserve officers and so-called "Special Officers." The new requirements have made it difficult to retain a sizable number of Reserve Officers since they are held to the same training standards as full-time Police Officers. Most Reserve Officers hold other full-time employment and have used this role as a part-time or supplemental employment



opportunity. Given the new level of training required by POST, it has become impossible for many of the Reserve Officers to retain their status.

This is a particularly important concern for MBTS due to the annual influx of seasonal residents and tourists who frequent the community in the summer months. Calls for service increase and police officers are stretched thin during this time. Reserve Officers play a key role in filling this intermittent need. The Chief has been able to do some work to help bridge some of this impact on his Reserve Officers, but the POST standards come into full effect in 2027 and that is when the staffing of the Department may have to be reevaluated.

Another prominent issue facing the Department is the need for an upgraded Police facility. The current facility is inadequate to meet today's policing needs. Moreover, the physical location of the existing building is exposed to the Harbor and is subjected to rising tides and flood impacts. In recent years, the parking lot to the Town Hall/Police Department has been flooded during major storm events. More critically, the Police Department is on the first floor of the building, and storm surges could cause significant impairment of its use if not addressed in the next 5-10 years.

We have learned that this concern has already been identified in the Town's Capital Planning efforts. Since public safety is a critical mission of local government, providing a flood-hardened operational asset for Police Headquarters is an important operational consideration that should be prioritized in those planning efforts.

One final consideration raised during the Police Department interview was the need for a full-time Human Resources (HR) representative for the Town. Currently the Town provides for a shared solution with two other communities. The observation was made by the Department that HR has become such a vital, albeit complicated function of running an organization that this need has become a full-time need for not only the Police Department but the Town as a whole.

Fire Department

The MBTS Fire Department is operated by Chief Jake McNeilly, appointed to this role in July 2023. The Department has had a history of turnover at the Chief level for several positions prior to Chief McNeilly. The current Chief appears skilled and has a good understanding of his operation and he provides good stability for his department.

The Chief is responsible for operating one Fire Station less than one mile from the Harbor. The Department has a leadership structure of a Chief, Captain, and three (3) Lieutenants. The Department has an Administrative Assistant in the Office who handles many of the administrative responsibilities including payroll, accounts payable and assistance with the public on permit inquiries. The position is also shared with the Police Department and performs the same functions for both departments.

The Chief has indicated he thinks his current staffing complement is sufficient though he did indicate that he would like to have an Assistant Chief position who would provide additional executive leadership for the Department and coverage for the Chief during any planned or unplanned absence. The Deputy Fire Chief could also serve as the Fire Safety Officer and the Inspector for the Department.

The Station was built in 1975. The Station recently needed upgrades to the boiler system that were improved by the Town. The Station experiences some flooding due to its proximity to the coast. Discussions have been held, and plans have been included in the Town's Capital Improvement Plan to build a new public safety building in a location that would be less impacted by any coastal storm event.

Communications for Public Safety have recently been moved to the new Essex County Regional Dispatch Center. The Chief is a big supporter of regional dispatch, and the new Center has been providing excellent service for the community.

In talking with leaders in the community, we were informed that the Chief does an excellent job of managing his services with a limited number of resources. He is one of the few departments in Town who uses performance metrics to measure his department's effectiveness. The Fire Department provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance services with paramedic response on medical calls. The Department typically runs with four personnel on each shift with three firefighter/paramedics and a Lieutenant as a shift commander. They can run with three personnel on a shift but if there is a working fire, that can limit the operational response without the fourth individual being able to work the apparatus by themselves.

Harbormaster

Bion Pike has been the MBTS Harbormaster for the past thirteen (13) years. He is nearing retirement and will be eligible to depart in June of 2026. It was gratifying for him that during the 2024 Annual Town Meeting the community supported the funding of a new Deputy Harbormaster position. The new Deputy was hired and began his new duties in July of 2024.

While the Deputy is still in the training academy, he will be available on a full-time basis in February of 2025. The next 18 months will provide a good opportunity for the Harbor Master to mentor the new Deputy and help provide for a smooth transition for the next leader of this Department.

The current structure of the Department is that the Harbor Master reports directly to the Town Administrator. He now has a full-time Deputy but also has 3 seasonal assistants who help maintain the moorings in the Harbor and who provide valuable assistance in managing most Harbor activities including maintenance requirements during the peak tourism season.

At one point, this Department was under the supervision of the Police Department, but that approach was abandoned over a dozen years ago. The Department currently operates under the direct supervision of the Town Administrator. The Department continues to work closely with the Town's public safety officials and has recently partnered with the Fire Department on a grant to provide a new rescue boat for the Harbor.

The Harbormaster works closely with all main line departments including Police, Fire, Public Works, and many of the financial offices in Town Hall. Financially, the Department operates with a budget appropriation, even though it generates revenues by way of mooring rentals and seasonal docking activities that occur during the summer months. It is Mr. Pike's perspective that the Harbormaster Department could operate under the financial structure of an Enterprise Fund which would require little to no taxpayer funding. It is common to see an Enterprise Fund approach being used in communities that provide a high-volume of seasonal services, particularly in seaside or resort communities. However, that type of evaluation is outside the scope of this Study. That said, it may be something to look at in the future, particularly if the popularity of the Harbor continues to grow. That growth is a distinct possibility given the number of recent investments that have been made to improve the mooring and docking capability in the Harbor.

Recently, a substantial portion of the Harbormaster's role has been dedicated to grant writing and project management. Mr. Pike has played a significant role in securing over \$4 Million dollars in grant funds in the past few years. These funds have come from various funding sources but have included grants from the *United States Department of Fish and Wildlife*, the *Massachusetts Seaport Economic Council* as well as a *Mass Works Grant*.

Some of the projects have included dredging of the Harbor, development of a new docking facility at Tuck's Point, a new Fisherman's Facility in the Harbor and a new Transient Docking Facility.

Not only does Mr. Pike assist in the effort to secure the funding for Harbor projects but he also helps manage the construction of the new facilities. His work has positively impacted the harbor activities in the Town.

The Harbor is a significant asset of the community that serves as an economic catalyst for waterfront development. We were pleased to learn that there is a Harbor Management Plan which is a valuable component of the Town's Master Plan. Providing this level of foresight is critical for the safe and environmentally responsible development of waterfront activities.

Of significant note is that rising tides in the Harbor have unintentionally become a major environmental threat to the community. As sea levels continue to rise, all ocean front communities will have to closely monitor and commit more resources to the threat of sea water infiltration. This threat begins in the Harbor but extends into existing Town assets such as the Sewer Treatment Facility, the Town Hall and both Public Safety facilities. The threat also extends to the MBTA rail system as nearby rail lines have been flooded by storms in the past two years.

We discussed this concern with the Harbormaster, and he agrees that more needs to be done to fortify adjacent property to the Harbor. This will require a collaborative effort between local, state, and federal agencies to identify viable solutions. Most importantly, it will require cooperation between all three arms of the government to not just fund this effort but a commitment to getting the work done.

Finally, we discussed the current organizational structure of the Town and the need, from the perspective of CSS, to reduce the number of direct reports to the Town Administrator. Mr. Pike understood the logic of doing that.

We talked about some natural working scenarios where the Harbormaster would not have to continue to report directly to the Town Administrator. We were unable to settle on a final possibility during the initial interview, but he did ask for more time to consider options.



Assessors, Building Inspection and GIS

Michelle Branciforte serves as the Assessor for the Town but also coordinates the Building Department and GIS functions.

Michelle was appointed approximately three years ago and was hired from the outside but had some previous experience working in Manchester by the Sea as a clerk in the Assessing Department. She left in 2012 to work in Middleton as the Administrative Assessor, then moved to Newbury as the Principal Assessor. She then moved to Saugus as the Deputy Assessor, coming back to Manchester as the Principal Assessor in 2021.

CSS does not ordinarily see this combination of services in one department. When asked why the Department was structured this way, she indicated that the previous Assessor did a lot of coordination of these functions and the structure has remained the same for many years. Just prior to the retirement of the previous Principal Assessor the full-time Assessing Administrative Assistant took on the duties of a part-time Building Department clerk position. The plan has been to shift the Building Department duties to the Land Use Clerk but the implementation of this has yet to occur.

We inquired if she found it difficult to manage all three functions at the same time and she quickly responded- yes. Assessing property is an important financial function that should be associated with the finance family of services. Building Inspection is a land use and inspectional service function. GIS is normally associated with Engineering or Planning.

Michelle is highly organized and has a great handle on the assessing needs of the Community, but she is distracted by the other functions in her Office, and she is understaffed.

CSS took note that this is one of those departments where there is no back-up person to perform all the functions assigned to this individual. We immediately identified this as an area of significant operational concern that could potentially result in a critical failure if something were to happen to Michelle and she was unable to perform her duties for any significant length of time.

The only other support staff member in the Department is an Administrative Clerk who spends some of her time supporting Building Inspection demands. This support limitation further hampers the ability of the Assessor to complete critical field work.

Ideally, the Town should reconsider restructuring this Department. Currently, the Town is contracting with Patriot Properties, who assists the Department with field inspections. However, if the Assessor were placed under the umbrella of Finance, the Administrative Assistant could, with proper training which has begun and no longer having Building Department duties, support the Assessor in her role full-time and reduce reliance on the outside contractor. In short, this could be a cost neutral solution that could provide greater value to the community.

Most of the property in Manchester by the Sea is residential but there is a new biotechnology park that has been planned and recently approved for construction. CSS notes that this will require specialized assessing valuation skill to determine what the appropriate tax value could be. This is a priority for the Town to consider. The Town needs to prepare for the time when construction begins. At that point, the Assessing Department can properly book any assessed value as it is being constructed.

Michelle also has a good handle on the GIS capabilities of the Town, and she seems to enjoy doing this work. However, this further adds to the distraction of her performing the Assessing tasks.

The primary reason GIS is even in Michelle's Department is that the previous Assessor brought GIS to the Town to assist with her assessing functions. The system has grown to include data layers helpful to other departments but has remained in the Assessor's Office. However, when the Assessor retired, the responsibilities were never reassigned to a more appropriate department such as Public Works, Engineering or Land Use.

The Town's part-time Building Inspector reports to Michelle. He is employed on a full-time basis by the Town of Rockport but provides part-time support to Manchester by the Sea. The Building Inspector and his assistant inspectors who perform the Plumbing and Electrical inspections collectively issue about 450 permits per year. Most of these permits are for MassSave energy improvement projects, renovations and for some new construction. Michelle noted that new construction in the Town is starting to trend up. OpenGov, the Building Department permitting software, which is integrated with Patriot Properties CAMA, does not always integrate properly requiring the time of the Principal Assessor to handle.

The biggest near-term challenge facing Building Inspection will be the construction of the new biotechnology park. It seems that, given this Department's limited staffing, it will be difficult to manage the construction of this project daily. The Town is considering placing some of the cost of this inspectional responsibility on the contractor to keep this construction moving forward. Note that if inspections are not performed in a timely manner, this will not only delay the project, but it will mean less taxable New Growth for the Town. In short, time is money and a proactive approach to monitoring this project will need to be a priority for the Town.

The Assessing Department requires restructuring on several levels. CSS believes the current functions grouped in this department are not compatible with each other. This is not a criticism of the work product from those who fill the department's responsibilities. CSS believes that departments should always be structured where work assignments complement each other. We believe a new organizational structure would be more productive for the staff and residents.



Town Accountant and Treasurer/Collector

While CSS would normally interview Departments separately, Andrea Manville, the Town Accountant and Jennifer Yaskell, the Town's Treasurer/Collector, were interviewed together. Since they currently work very closely together, we thought this meeting would be very productive.

It was good to hear that these two individuals work so well together because both departments are critical financial functions of the Town. Their cooperative working relationship is a benefit for the Town. Both Andrea and Jennifer have over ten years of service in the Town with Jennifer having the longest tenure of just over thirteen (13) years. This is a stable team.

CSS was impressed by their level of collective knowledge and understanding of municipal finance. It does not hurt that Andrea's background included almost ten years of experience with the public accounting firm of Powers and Sullivan. That level of understanding of municipal accounting is also a clear advantage for the Town.

Jennifer is equally knowledgeable on the Treasurer/Collector side. She has an excellent understanding of the payroll and human resources (HR) benefit functions that operate out of her department.

The Town has a limited human resource management function which means that many of the transactional HR functions end up defaulting to the payroll side of the organization. Jennifer handles this well, but organizationally, it is not a recommended best practice.

It seems obvious to CSS that there is a genuine need for more HR support in the Town. Personnel management is so complex in today's workplace that it must be monitored daily by a trained professional. This topic will be discussed in greater detail during the HR Department's interview.

It was also noted earlier in this report by the Police Chief that more HR support was needed in the organization to support the daily personnel needs of each Town department. After meeting with the Town Accountant and the Treasurer/Collector, CSS agrees with that observation.

Of significant note is that the Town Accountant has managed to put together an award-winning Comprehensive Financial Report (CAFR) for eight (8) consecutive years. This is even more impressive given the limited level of administrative and technical support that is available to the department for consistently producing this level of detailed information.

This is another area where we note that not having enough backup in this department could lead to a "single point of failure." These are critical functions for the Town and there are simply not enough bodies to support this effort. In the unfortunate instance where one of these individuals became unavailable for any significant period, the financial structure of the Town could be adversely impacted.

This existing staff structure also begs the question of who the best person would be to serve in either of these roles in the event of either future retirement or unexpected displacement. Succession Planning needs to begin as soon as possible in these offices to help mitigate this concern.

With this limited support level available in each of the individual finance functions, we see this as

a natural opportunity to formally create a Finance Department. This new department with a single Director would oversee the Town Accountant, Treasurer/Collector, Assessing, and Information Technology (IT) under one roof. By merging all these functions into one congealed "finance family of operations," the Town will be better served by establishing an increased level of inter disciplinary communication. This connection leads to a more holistic understanding of the Town's financial conditions. It would also provide a significantly improved communication point for the Town Administrator who could speak the single voice of a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) instead of five (5) finance individuals.

Another area of concern that was flagged during this meeting was the limited level of support for IT that currently exists throughout the organization. Given the level of technology that now exists in municipal government in general, it makes good sense to have a person who is strictly dedicated to IT support in the Community. We think having a staff member who can support the system and provide valuable training for the staff would be an excellent value add to the organization. It is like buying a car and not having the ability to get service for the car when something goes wrong.

Currently the Town is supported by a consortium of IT help based out of the Town of Danvers. While this is a good model for major network and system support, this model fails to provide enough day-to-day support to address everyday technological needs of the organization. Moreover, having a dedicated individual who focuses on all aspects of technology takes one more thing off the Town Administrator and Town Accountants' plates.

One suggestion that was offered, and we think it has merit, is to find a way to fund a dedicated staff person through the Danvers Consortium. This person would report to Danvers on a supervisory level but would be functionally based here in Manchester by the Sea. We think that this is a "best of both worlds" scenario where the Town could maintain a strong connection to the main IT hub but also provide daily support for the needs of each department.



Parks and Recreation

Cheryl Marshall serves as the town's Director of Parks and Recreation. She is one of the more senior staff members and has served in her role for over eleven (11) years. She previously worked for the Town of Danvers as the Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation. Her role is to run year-round recreation programs, manage the Town's beaches, oversee recreational facilities, organize the Town's annual Fourth of July Celebration, and run an after-school program for 50 to 80 kids.

Cheryl interacts often with the Public Works staff for the maintenance and repair of the Town's fields and recreational facilities.

Parks and Recreation is responsible for operating an active summer program where they hire over fifty summer staff members. Some of these staff members are perennial, seasonal employees but many of them are not. Conducting an annual recruitment process, along with performing training and orientation for the summer staff, is a significant responsibility each year. It becomes even more challenging when the permanent staff of the department is limited to just one other full-time member.

Cheryl is trying to hire another part-time staff person who will run the After-School Program. She notes that finding qualified candidates, who possess all the credentials to run such a program is a big challenge in the existing labor market.

Like other Town Departments, Cheryl also has a limited number of staff. These limited resources restrict the department's offerings and create voids in service whenever anyone is suddenly absent from performing their role.

Ideally, Cheryl would prefer to have one employee dedicated to after-school programs. Another person would serve as a Recreation Program Coordinator and Cheryl as the Department Director. This staffing level provides for an increased level of back-up for running programs while also providing an internal staff ladder for promotional opportunities when a vacancy occurs. More importantly, it provides for Succession Planning.

We discussed the existing structure of the Town as it relates to human service offerings from other Town Departments, but it was her experience that these services tend to operate separately making it more difficult to partner or coordinate Town program offerings.

To resolve this concern, an innovative approach that is now being deployed in many communities is the new structure of the Health and Human Services Department. CSS believes that this could be a useful design for Manchester by the Sea. This new department design would require inter agency cooperation to help assure residents that they are getting the most out of Town program offerings. It is noted that this approach would require a change in organizational culture. Making this change work may not be right for the community today but could be more easily accomplished if one of the existing department heads were to leave.

In a Health and Human Service Department structure, all the Town's community service functions, including Parks and Recreation, Council on Aging, Health and Veteran Services would be housed in one department with one Director. By using this model, opportunities would occur with intergenerational programs that could happen more naturally, and health issues could be

monitored more effectively. By consolidating all staff members, a greater level of support could be given to each individual program. Each department would continue to use their facilities, but opportunities would arise to schedule off-hour use of the facilities. A likely scenario could occur between Recreation Programs and Council on Aging Programs where instructors can easily be shared.

CSS values all the programs offered by the Parks and Recreation Department but believes that these offerings could be expanded through an improved Department structure. With limited staff and resources, combining services of this type will not only be more efficient but more effective for the residents.



Public Works

Chuck Dam is the Public Works Director for the Town of Manchester by the Sea. He has held this role for six and a half (6.5) years. Previously, he was the City Engineer for Salem, Massachusetts, and a consultant with the engineering firm of Camp, Dresser, and McKee (CDM).

Chuck runs a full-service public works department that includes facility maintenance as well as operation and maintenance (O&M) for much of the town's infrastructure. His department is actively involved in the town's capital planning process for infrastructure and facility repair/replacement.

The Public Works Department interacts with most of the Town's operating departments, and the Director reports directly to the Town Administrator. Chuck is knowledgeable, thoughtful, and strategic in his approach to his work. His department handles many significant responsibilities with a total staff complement of twenty (20) employees, including himself.

He notes that his department currently uses technology for many aspects of their work but would like to do more with the ability to track O&M for facilities and fleet maintenance. More details will be shared on this topic within the Chapter on Technology.

Staffing for the department seems adequate but if they begin to manage any significant capital facility projects in the future, they may need to retain some specialized help. This would come as a contracted service for this need as opposed to hiring any permanent staff members.

DPW's significant accomplishments have been focused on improving the Town's water, sewer, and road infrastructure. In this regard the Town has supported DPW's efforts with millions of dollars of investment in water and sewer improvements in the past several years, along with a commitment to a comprehensive pavement management program.

The Department is now turning its attention to facility repair and replacement. The need for attention in this area seems significant based on what CSS has seen. The Town has not built any new facilities for public works, public safety, or any other town government agency in multiple decades. The need for major planning and investment is significant. CSS was pleased to see that attention is now being given to planning and preparing for these improvements.

As was noted in a previous section, the need for this type of investment is being driven by two major considerations, the age of the existing facilities and the need to harden those facilities to protect against the growing threat of coastal flooding from the Harbor.

A Facilities Master Plan was prepared by the firm Tetra Tech in November of 2023. That report clearly identified the challenges the community faces as it relates to the replacement of their capital facilities. The study's findings indicated that "Approximately seventy-five (75%) of the Town of Manchester by the Sea's (Town's) critical facilities are located within a flood zone." * With the impact of coastal flooding, this means that those public facilities could be subject to saltwater infiltration which could significantly impair the Town's ability to provide critical public services to the community.

The structure of the Department of Public Works is properly defined with a director who manages all the department's operations. There is a Town Engineer who effectively serves as an Assistant Director of Public Works but is focused on design, inspection, and project management/details.

There is a management plan for natural progression in the organization which also provides some level of assurance that the department will be managed on a stable and continuous basis. Succession Planning is clear in the case of this department.

Regarding internal partnerships, the Department often works with Parks and Recreation, Police, Fire and Town Hall staff to achieve their operational objectives. They have a solid record of accomplishment in getting projects completed. They are strategic in their thinking.

Communication from this department to the public seems reasonable but now that the Town has a Communications Director, the Department is making full use of this resource. Communications in public works projects and in storm related events are critical to the successful completion of the public works mission. We have found that the public can be much more receptive to some level of inconvenience if they understand why the work is being done, there is a clear timeline, and thoughtful detour plans have been designed to limit inconvenience to traffic flow. The Public Works Department in Manchester by the Sea understands what it takes to get the job done. They set a good example for everyone to follow.

The Director shared that while his organization seems to communicate well, he would also like to see a greater level of collegial and strategic discussions with his fellow Department Heads. Given the current organizational structure of the Town, CSS appreciated this comment and observation from the Director.



Communication

Tiffany Marletta is the Town's Communications Director, a role that began in 2019 as a part-time Communications Coordinator and was then promoted in July of 2024 to the role of full-time Director.

Tiffany works closely with every Town department, board, and committee to provide a valuable information link for the public. She is responsible for creating content for the Town's social media channels, websites and written media resources and manages the information published in those outlets.

CSS was pleased to see that Manchester by the Sea was committed to a position of this nature so that the Town's residents can remain fully informed on key issues facing the community. Many cities and towns have struggled with providing a steady stream of accurate information to their residents because they have not recognized the need for this investment.

With the growth of social media, many local news media outlets and print media firms have witnessed their slow demise. This is primarily due to the loss of advertising revenue.

As a result, this has created an information void in communities. Unfortunately, much of the information generated by social media is not always accurate which often leads to a chilling effect of public opinion.

The best way to combat against this impact is to become more proactive in publishing information that helps to inform the community of intended public actions. A high dissemination of accurate information builds confidence in the public's opinion of civic actions. This approach is highly encouraged whenever possible.

Tiffany communicates at least quarterly with the public through a newsletter that she prepares by working with each of the Town's operating departments. This newsletter is distributed with each of the quarterly tax bills. She also prepares a weekly e-newsletter called "The Tide" which covers the Town's top stories of the week.

Communication regarding the recent MBTA 3A rezoning issue was important in leading to this important compliance effort. This topic has seen some very volatile debate around the State in recent months. Those communities who did not keep their residents informed on the community's policy intentions resulted in unfavorable actions at their Town Meetings.

The communication strategy on this topic proved highly effective for the Town and everyone associated with this approach should be complimented for their consistent messaging.

The structure of this Department is simple, this is a one-person operation. CSS recognizes that this is a specialty function that will not garner a lot of additional assistance, but CSS does recommend that the Town build support within the organization for this role and this will be described in greater detail later in this Report.

Formally, from an organizational structure perspective, CSS believes that the Communication Director should continue as a direct arm of the Town Administrator/Board of Selectmen's Office. This will help to support the work of the Chief Administrative Officer and the Chief Policy Making

Board of the Town by helping to prioritize and distribute information that needs to be shared with the Community.

While it may be a challenge to physically locate Tiffany's function in the Town Administrator's Office, contact between her and the Town Administrator's Office should be regular and consistent to achieve maximum results for her responsibilities.

It has been noted throughout this report that internal communication is an area for improvement, and we believe that Tiffany could become part of that solution.

While the Town has taken a very proactive posture as it relates to communications, CSS thinks that communication in the community could be taken to a higher level by engaging with the public on certain policy topics. Having an individual with Tiffany's skills could help lead those discussions and provide feedback to the Town's Administration and Select Board. This is best achieved online or in public forums where open conversations can solicit reactions from the public on diverse topics. These types of discussions often lead to "healthy debate" and provide important feedback for the Select Board and the Town Administrator.



Human Resources

Michelle Maloney is the Town's part-time Human Resources Director (HR). Michelle is a regional HR Director for the three communities of Manchester by the Sea, Hamilton, and Rockport. Previously to this arrangement, the Town had contracted for HR services with Insight HR Consulting. Under the current contract with Michelle, the Town receives ten (10) hours per week of her services.

In talking with Michelle, she notes that the Town is only providing reactionary HR services and responding to issues when they occur and that any strategic HR practices are unable to be performed.

Michelle thinks that ideally, the Town should move away from the three-town split and look towards a more workable two-town split. The additional hours gained by this change would provide the opportunity to spend more time on workforce retention and organizational development. CSS also noted that Michelle does not currently support the collective bargaining efforts of the Town and only provides some limited labor contract interpretation to support Town Departments.

Michelle recently assisted with the reorganization of the Land Use Department which now includes Planning and Conservation. This was a good step in the right direction, but CSS believes that more can be done in the Land Use Department to further improve its effectiveness.

Michelle did make some organizational observations which seemed consistent with our findings. Many departments in the Town take on too many roles and the missions become blurred at times. *Internal communication is ineffective as too many people are looking for access to the Town Administrator.*

It was the observation of CSS that the HR function, as it is currently structured, is ineffective and places too much stress on the remaining parts of the organization to resolve complicated HR issues. It is our opinion that if the proper level of HR support is provided, most issues can be resolved easily. However, if the issues are not addressed early and consistently, they become more complicated and become a drain on the morale of the organization.

We do think that the current HR Director is competent and knowledgeable in her field. She recognizes that her limited availability is only impacting the organization in a small way. More time is needed for topics such as organizational development and Succession Planning for the Town.

CSS also thinks that being more proactive in labor relations would positively impact the community and feels this effort should be supported by the HR Director. Strategic HR Planning is non-existent as it relates to compensation modeling, updates to job descriptions and proactive HR policy development. CSS feels that these are critical considerations that must be proactively addressed in today's workforce culture.

Town Clerk

The newest member of the administration is the Town Clerk. Christine Dixon was hired in September of 2024. Christine was hired from the City of Beverly where she served as the Assistant City Clerk. Prior to her service in Beverly, she was the Town Clerk in Amesbury for about three years. She currently resides in Beverly, which makes this position easily reachable from a commuting perspective.

Christine provides a full-service Town Clerk operation, and she is front facing to the public. When she started her position, the part-time clerk in the Office was also vacant, and the Town was forced to hire a retired Town Clerk to fulfil the Department's needs until Christine arrived.

From the day she started, there has been no shortage of challenges. The Town was facing a national election for President for which the Town Clerk's Office has a significant role in the voting process. In addition, the Town was also facing a Special Town Meeting which included a very controversial zoning Article and anticipated a large crowd at the Meeting.

The Town Clerk has a significant role in coordinating and preparing the space for a Town Meeting. In Manchester by the Sea, the Town Meeting members vote electronically, and the Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring that the voting system is functioning properly.

This was truly a baptism by fire for Christine, but she performed exceptionally well. National elections are always trying for Town Clerks because they usually draw the largest number of voters. In addition, there are always a considerable number of absentee ballots that must be accurately counted so the process is challenging for even the most seasoned Town Clerks.

The Special Town Meeting drew one of the largest crowds for a Town Meeting in recent years, but the votes were processed correctly and the Town Meeting proceeded normally with only a few minor glitches.

Since Christine is so new, it is difficult to get a good indication from her as to what works well and what does not. However, her early indication is that the current staff structure appears challenging.

The Office has one part-time clerk who does not serve as an Assistant Town Clerk. This is significant because this effectively limits the number of transactions that can occur in the Town Clerk's Office if she is absent for any length of time.

The Town Clerk is the official keeper of the record for Cities and Towns in Massachusetts. This person is responsible for certifying the authenticity of documents presented as official records.

Town Clerks accept official documents and applications from the public for Zoning Board of Appeals and they are responsible for assuring that they are compliant with all statutory requirements. As such, having no "back-up" plan could create an unintended exposure for the Town.

At one point, the Town employed a second full-time person in the Office, but the decision was made to limit that second position to part-time. CSS believes it would be difficult to consistently maintain a part-time person in this Office to support all the responsibilities incumbent of a Town Clerk. This situation would be particularly challenging in an election year or if the Town Clerk were absent for any length of time.



Council On Aging

Nancy Hammond is the Council on Aging Director for Manchester by the Sea. Nancy has held this position for the past twenty-four years and was hired internally by the Town at the time.

Nancy has a staff of one full-time employee who serves as a Program Director. She also has three part-time Van Drivers who rotate their schedules and provide transportation services for the elderly throughout the community. The transportation is provided by three (3) handicapped accessible vehicles. One is a twelve (12) seat van and the other two are eight (8) seat vans. One of the eight seat vans is all electric. Two of the vans were purchased through the Eighty/Twenty Program sponsored by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) in 2024. Nancy believes that the department operates sufficiently with the existing staff but when the new Senior Center opens, she may need additional staff to operate it.

The Town does not have a Senior Center, so all programs run by the Department operate at separate locations throughout the Town.

During the past year, the Town Town approved the purchase of a portion of the Masonic property to develop Senior Center space. The Masonic property is next to the parking lot at Town Hall. If all goes as planned, the Town will own a portion of the Masonic property by the end of January of 2025. However, the property cannot be used until a \$2-\$3-million-dollar renovation project is completed. This is further complicated by the Town Meeting not providing funding for this renovation. Nancy informed me that the Friends of the Seniors will be tasked to raise the necessary funds for renovations through a substantial fund-raising effort. When asked if that effort had begun, Nancy replied, "No not at this time." This is concerning because this will only delay the use of the new building if it takes a substantial amount of time to raise the funds. However, CSS has since learned that a consulting team has been hired to assist with the fund-raising effort and an architectural firm has been retained to provide a cost estimate for constructing the building's improvements.

Nancy's goal is to start a daily meal program for Seniors, increase programming for wellness, crafts, and writing. She envisions space for a technology lab for Seniors to learn how to use computers, iPads, and the use of features on their smartphones once the new Senior Center becomes operational.

When asked if she currently partnered with any other Town agencies, she cited her department works with the Police Department, the Fire Department, DPW, the Board of Health and with Town Hall staff on various occasions.

Nancy was asked if she had partnered with the Parks and Recreation Department on any programs. She explained that more communities are starting to combine services for elderly and youth under one organization called Human Services Departments. She indicated that she was not a fan of combining services in this manner because she was under the impression that the Executive Office of Elder Affairs did not support this type of merger. CSS does not share this opinion. The more recent perspective from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs is that they do support a combination of Human Services Programs since it provides a more cost-effective and higher level of services to Seniors in a community.

It was further explained that funding for Senior Programs would remain dedicated to the Senior

residents of the Town and that those funds could not be spent on Youth Programs. A typical outcome is that the two programs could share facilities and instructors. Moreover, this type of organizational structure encourages intergenerational engagement and leads to further communication between both age groups.

Nancy said that if her department merged with anyone, it should be with a neighboring community like Essex. She noted that there are already regional departments with Essex, and this regional approach would maintain the elder services of MBTS with the elder services of another Town.

She did note that the Council on Aging currently has several intergenerational programs with the Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. They also have gardening and knitting programs between the Seniors and students.

A few key accomplishments from the Council on Aging during the past year included acquiring the new buses from the EOEA 80/20 Program. They have also had some success with a Lobster Roll Lunch Program. The luncheon occurs every three to four months and each time the number of participants has increased. The biggest crowd they have drawn so far was approximately 65 participants.

Finally, when asked what process would be used to replace her if she retires? Her response was that the Town should look for outside candidates, preferably with a background in Gerontology. CSS could not identify any effort made by the current Director to do any Succession Planning for her position.



Library

Cynthia Gemmel is the Manchester by the Sea Library Director, appointed in November 2023. Cynthia was formerly employed by the City of Worcester's library system and moved to Manchester by the Sea out of a desire to run a small community library system.

The MBTS library consists of three (3) full-time staff members and the Director. They also have substitute and part-time employees who can fill in when the full-time staff is absent. They try to always maintain a minimum staffing level of two people in the library but when it drops below that level they close the building. That happens on occasion but not very often.

The library had a material circulation of 79,000 in Fiscal Year 2024 (July 1, 2023- June 30, 2024). 43,655 patrons (about twice the seating capacity of Madison Square Garden) visited the library during that same period. The library produced 480 programs in that time span, including children's story time, concerts, guest speakers and outside performances. CSS was impressed by the number of programs and the level of patronage the library has for a small community.

The library, from a staff perspective, appears to have an adequate level of staff for the size of the library that they have. It is noted that the library is open seven days a week but supported by part-time and substitute librarians. The full-time staff, except for the Director, are all part of the Town Hall Union. Part-time staff members are not members of the Union.

The biggest challenge facing the library is the size and age of the building. The structure is old and has historic value but needs some significant repairs. Cynthia has applied to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) for grant assistance. However, a determination on this grant application was pending until the Town came into compliance with the Affordable Housing Zoning Regulations that were promulgated by the State under Chapter 40 A, Section 3A. That action was taken and approved by the Town Meeting in November of 2024, so the grant application was submitted to the MBLC. Unfortunately, CSS was informed recently that the grant was not awarded to the community.

Maintenance of the Library remains an on-going challenge and many of the repairs are more than what the Town could easily afford. The competing concern is that there are many capital facility needs in the community and the question will be how this project will rank over other projects.

Cynthia notes that one of the biggest needs that she has for her department, beyond facility improvements, is the need for support in Information Technology (IT). Here, the department has become highly reliant on technology services over the years, and the public has become more reliant on this type and level of service.

The Town has a good relationship with the Danvers IT Support team, but she mirrors the concern that was highlighted by other departments in that day-to-day services now require more reliable, daily IT support.

CSS is inclined to agree with the Director's observations and thinks that an increased presence of IT support could be beneficial for all Town Departments.

The structure of this department is consistent with most communities throughout Massachusetts

where the Library Director receives her policy direction from the Board of Library Trustees, who is a separately elected body in the Town. Administratively, the Library Director reports to the Town Administrator who provides administrative direction involving payroll, personnel matters, budget, and repairs to her facility. CSS does not think changing this structure is critical to the delivery of Town services, but we encourage the Director to continue to work closely and cooperatively with the Town Administration.



Board of Health

Wendy Hansbury is the Town's Public Health Director, a position she has held since November 2022. Wendy reports to the appointed, five-member Board of Health for policy but to the Town Administrator for operations and administrative purposes. Wendy advised us that there is an administrative agreement in place between the Board of Health and the Board of Selectmen regarding the administrative responsibilities of this Department with the Town.

Boards of Health in Massachusetts have specific statutory authorities that allow them to enforce health codes relating to food born illnesses, sanitation systems, public lodging locations and other more general issues such as smoking, the use of pesticides, and even the regulation of funeral directors.

Wendy is the first full-time director that the department has had in over twenty (20) years. She has a limited staff of one part-time administrative assistant for twenty-six (26) hours and a Public Health Nurse who works twelve (12) hours per week. Before Wendy's arrival in Town, much of the health inspection work was performed by contractors. With that in mind trying to establish the role of Health Director has been challenging at times. She is committed to the work and wants to produce a good result for the Town. The current structure is challenging in that there is no succession plan in place. The existing staff level is not sustainable to perform all the duties of public health; and to perform them well.

On the technological side, her department uses software for inspections, but she is working to improve its applicability to the work that they perform. CSS has seen this challenge in other communities where the public health software does not always reflect the work that is being performed in the department, and it must be altered to become more applicable. Wendy has put more permits online for ease of use by the public and contractors. She is making beneficial use of the GIS mapping capability of the Town, particularly as it relates to the location of septic systems and wells throughout the community.

Public Health interacts with Water, Sewer, Building Inspections, and the Assessor's Offices regularly to conduct inspections and enforce public health codes. While she works with these specific departments, she also believes that a solid working relationship with all Town departments is the key to successful public service.

Some of the big challenges her department faces are a general distrust of science and the enforcement responsibilities of public health actions. When this occurs, it is usually born out of a lack of education on public health topics. As such, Wendy and her department staff are taking steps to help explain and educate the public on the value of the work that they do.

Wendy's observations of the Town's organization are that it lacks a fully functioning personnel or HR function. She noted that when she first arrived there was no on-boarding process in place. Staff development is lacking, and she believes that building such a capacity for staff retention is critical for building organizational strength.

She also noted that the current structure of the organization is that it seems "siloeed," which is consistent with the findings that CSS has witnessed throughout this engagement.

Improved communications across departments are important from her perspective and it should not just start and end with department heads. She thinks it should extend to Boards and Committees too.

This observation is consistent with our belief that establishing a more holistic organization will automatically result in the sharing of more information with departments. That outcome is difficult to achieve with the current structure of the Town.

Wendy is a big supporter of providing public information sessions. This idea coincides well with the work that the Communications Director is now embarked on. CSS agrees that information sessions are important for engaging with the public and for teaching them about the value of public health responsibilities and initiatives.



Land Use

Marc Resnick is the Director of Land Management, a position he has held since the Fall of 2023. Before MBTS, Mark was the Town Planner in Lakeville, MA. His family owned a house in nearby Gloucester, MA for years and he spent many summers in this area. He now lives in Gloucester, and by signing on with MBTS, it provides him with a good opportunity to continue working in an area that he loves.

One of his big accomplishments in the past year was the passage of the new 3A legislation at the Town Meeting in November. The Town Meeting passed the legislation by a 75% approval margin. This now means that the Town is following the new mandate that communities with public transportation must pass. This zoning will provide high density housing near a train or multi-modal stations in the community. By passing the new zoning, the Town remains eligible for many of the State's discretionary grant funded programs.

Marc notes that the Town has many environmental challenges that it must begin to address. Early in this report, CSS noted that many of the Town's public facilities are in the flood plain area of the community. This includes the Police Department, Town Hall, the Sewer Treatment Plant, the soon to be acquired Senior Center, the Library, and the Fire Department. It is also noted that the MBTA Commuter line is in an environmentally vulnerable area.

Marc also points out that while the current Public Works facility is not in a vulnerable area, it is significantly outdated and needs to be replaced since the department provides many critical services for the community. He is working on the planning for all these facilities now and is following the guidance presented by the Tetra Tech Report that was published in November of 2023.

One of the biggest projects facing the Town is the newly planned Bio Tech Park on a parcel of land located adjacent to Route 128. The project was approved in late November of 2024 and will be built in two separate phases. The project's owners are MBTS residents who want to build it to better the overall community. As mentioned earlier, this project will add some significant new tax growth for MBTS which could help offset some of the tax burden needed to fund the backlog of capital projects for the Town.

The Land Use Department was recently restructured to include the following departments and offices: Planning, Conservation, Downtown Improvement Committee, the Housing Trust, the Zoning Board, Historic District Commission, and the Open Space Committee.

There was previously some internal discussion that the Building Department should be relocated to Land Use. CSS agrees with that assessment as we think the responsibilities of this operation are more aligned with this department's work.

This is another Department with limited full-time and part-time staff. The Department includes the Director, a full-time Land Use Clerk, and a part-time Conservation Agent. The current Conservation Agent is newly appointed and serves as a part-time Agent for the Town of Hamilton.

CSS believes that a greater use of technology could assist this department in managing its

workload. Planning Board and Conservation submissions can often be burdensome with heavy paper-based applications and plans. By moving to a fully on-line approach, this could provide easier storage of information, and the plans could be more easily referenced.

Marc Resnick is a very capable Planner with a long and successful career in the profession. CSS believes expanding the Director's supervisory role to include Building Inspection will only help coordinate and enhance all land use services for the Town.



Town Administrator and Staff

CSS took the time to meet with the entire staff in the Town Administrator's Office to understand responsibilities and to determine if there were areas where work assignments could be enhanced or improved.

We initially met with Debbie Powers, who serves as the Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator and the Select Board, and we later met with Susan Croft, Grants and Special Projects Coordinator.

Debbie Powers has almost nineteen (19) years of public sector experience and is highly skilled in managing the Town Administrator/Select Board's Office. When she arrived in Manchester by the Sea, after having spent several years working for the Town of Rockport, MA in a similar capacity, she immediately reorganized the Office and reorganized various areas of the Town Hall to make it more functional. She is a graduate of the Mass. Municipal Association's Suffolk University's Certificate for Local Government Leadership and Management Program and has a good grasp of local government operations. She enjoys working in finance matters and has an associate's degree in business. She does the minutes for several Town Boards and uses Artificial Intelligence technology in preparing those documents. This is clearly a new and innovative approach for getting this work accomplished. Anyone who has had to do minutes for meetings will know that this can be very tedious work. Using this modern technology will certainly help to make the work more manageable.

Debbie has a good handle on all licensing requirements the Select Board approves each year. The Town has nine (9) diverse types of license offerings. She is efficient and organized in her approach to this work and a good representative of the Town in these transactions.

Over the past year, she has helped the Town Administrator address many transactional inquiries that have come to the Office. She has also become a great liaison between the Town Administrator and Department Heads and helps to manage his calendar on items that require his attention.

CSS believes this may be a position whose role could be expanded in the Town Administrator's Office given the skill level this person possesses.

Sue Croft is the Grants/Special Projects Coordinator in the Town Administrator's Office. Sue was hired a little over three (3) years ago and works 24 hours per week. Her work background is in the private sector, but she has done a highly commendable job in securing many grants for the Town. During the past year alone, Sue worked with various Town Departments to receive eighteen (18) different grant awards. In addition, the Town has been an applicant on fifty-two (52) separate occasions for grants in the past five years. Most of these applications were funded during Sue's tenure.

One of the largest grants awarded to the Town was in 2022 through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) under the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRICs) program. The amount awarded to the Town was **\$4,484,673**. That amount combined with some additional matching funds brought the total amount awarded to the Town to approximately **\$6.5 Million dollars**. This funding is being used to replace the bridge/culvert on Central Street, restore Central Pond and install new revetments along the eastern side of the Pond.

Another significant grant award was achieved in the Fall of 2023 under the Mass Works Program for a water/sewer main installation of \$3.5 Million.



Sue has done a masterful job of seeking out grants and submitting quality applications that have often been successful for the Town. Grant applications and management requires incredibly detailed work, and Sue has done an excellent job of performing this function for MBTS.

Like Debbie's position, CSS believes Sue's role could also be expanded in the Town Administrator's Office.

Sue and Debbie work well together, and the combination provides a supportive platform for this Office. These two individuals do a commendable job of backing up each other's work so that coverage is always available if one of them is out of the office at any time.

After meeting with Debbie and Sue, CSS was compelled to note that the Office area for the Town Administrator and his staff is not conducive to a professional work environment. The office area has limited privacy and a small work and reception area.

We recommend that an evaluation of other space in the Town Hall be considered for executive office use. The Town Administrator/Select Board's Office serves as the Chief Administrative and Executive Office of the Town and this level of responsibility should be reflected in the office spacing and décor of the office that it represents.

Gregory (Greg) Federspiel is the Town Administrator for the Town. In 2024 Greg asked the Board of Selectmen to commission this study because he is planning to retire in June of 2025 and wants the new Town Administrator to have a road map for how the organization should function in the future. He appreciates the support that the Town has given him to perform his duties, but he also recognizes that there will be many priorities and challenges for the new Chief Administrative Officer to address when that individual takes over the reins. Having this organizational plan in place should provide a path forward regarding how the Town should be staffed and what the priority projects should be when that person arrives.

In talking with many of the Select Board Members, they are deeply grateful for Greg's contributions to this community. They view him as a "calm steady hand" who has provided solid guidance and leadership for the Town.

CSS's observations of Greg's management style are that he is very approachable and has low key mannerisms. He is a hands-on manager but does not have many team meetings, and we think that reflects how the organization is structured. We noted earlier in this report that linear organizations tend to be very reactive, rather than proactive. Greg tries to be proactive but constant interruptions and dealing with "the issues of the moment" have a distractive effect on his strategic intentions. Greg readily admits that he spends way too much time in the "weeds."

In talking to Greg, he has some clear perspectives and was very forthcoming about what the Town's priorities and the short-and-long term needs of the community should be. He derived this perspective having worked closely with the Select Board and the Town's leaders over the last decade.

In the short term, he feels that the Town needs to work with the developer of the new Biotechnology Park to make sure that the development stays on track for construction. He recognizes that this development's timely construction will help provide an important new tax revenue stream for the community that will help finance some of the capital spending projects that have been identified for the Town.



The revenue from this new development, coupled with the prospect that the Town's long-term Pension and OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits) obligations are projected to be met in 2032 will help serve as funding mechanisms for the debt service for projects such as:

- PFAS Removal from the Town's Water Supply
- A New Public Works Facility
- A New Public Safety Facility
- Renovations and flood hardening of Town Hall
- Environmental Resilience Measures that were identified in the June 2023 Fuss and O'Neil Coastal Vulnerability Action Plan
- Library Improvements

Clearly this is an ominous list of projects that will be challenging under any conditions, but these are needs that have been properly studied, evaluated, and scrutinized. The only things that remain are defining financing and action plans that are acceptable to the community. This will require the investigation of applicable grants, debt exclusions and borrowing actions that will be paid for over a long time. One thing that seems certain is that the longer the waiting period is, the more costly the projects will become based on borrowing and material costs.

The next step was to examine the organization and develop a staffing plan that is sustainable over the short and long term. Greg asked CSS to evaluate the existing conditions in departments to determine what adjustments were needed to make the Town more efficient and effective in its service delivery.

In addition, Greg asked us to look at succession planning in each department to see if any plans were in place for the inevitable "changing of the guard." This is important to help reduce the chances for any significant drop in a department's performance due to a change in leadership.

As part of the organizational audit, he wanted to have CSS provide some guidance on how the Town could improve its use of technology. It should not come as a surprise to anyone that the government tends to be late to the technology party. However, a review of technology is particularly important now because we are embarking on a new era of technology with the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Greg acknowledged that there are some weaknesses in the organization that need to be addressed such as the limited presence of HR support in the Town. As the HR world continues to evolve, every organization needs an increased presence of HR oversight. Presently in Manchester by the Sea, that presence is simply not enough.

Finally, Greg wanted to make sure that whatever staffing structure is recommended it must include some level of cross training for departments so that the work continues to be done in all departments whenever short-term absences occur.

Select Board

CSS spent time with each of the Town's Select Board Members. The members offered their own perspectives of how the Town currently functions and provided us with some important insight into the significant issues facing the Town. We were also able to garner a sense of how the Board interacts with staff and with other Boards and Commissions in the community.

The members that were interviewed included:

Chair of the Board-	Ann Harrison
Vice-Chair-	John Round
Member-	Catherine Bilotta
Member-	Brian Sollosy
Member-	Jeffrey Delaney

We learned a lot about their observations and goals for the Town and have summarized their interviews to provide perspectives. Below is a sampling of those comments:

- *"Board members get along well with each other, and they respect each other's opinions."*
- *"I think that the Town functions well, but we are facing some noticeably big challenges with capital needs that have been put off for way too long. That, coupled with the concern of coastal storm impacts and rising tides, is only expediting the need to act."*
- *"The prospect of a new Town Administrator adds to a certain level of uncertainty and uneasiness, particularly with the number and scale of major projects that need to be addressed."*
- *"The Regional 911 Center has been a success for the community, and we are glad that we participated."*
- *"The concept of shared services needs more attention and should be expanded if possible."*
- *"There needs to be more operational follow-up so that items that get prioritized with the Board and things do not get forgotten."*
- *"Succession planning is being practiced in some departments but not in others. More needs to be done so that operational gaps do not occur."*
- *"There is a greater need for HR Support."*
- *"There needs to be more automation of systems and a greater use of technology. However, there is not enough IT support in the organization which limits this effort."*
- *"There are too many separate websites in departments. This must be centralized for the benefit"*



of the person visiting the Town."

- "The 3A Task Force was a tremendous success and all who worked on this should be proud of their effort."*
- "Use of community forums helped keep residents informed of the issues before the Town Meeting. This is a model we should continue to use to inform residents of challenging issues before Town Meetings."*
- "The Town Administrator's Weekly News column provides useful information to the community, and it should be continued with the next Administrator."*
- "The compatibility of the Board members adds to the transparency of Town Government."*
- "The number of Town Departments should be consolidated and reduced. This does not mean reducing individuals, but we should be consolidating roles to reduce the number of people reporting to the Town Administrator."*
- "The Regional School Budget is going to be a big challenge in the next year."*
- "Some of the biggest challenges facing the Town include managing the Regional School Budget, flooding along the coastline, construction of the new Public Works and Public Safety Facilities and finding a way to produce Affordable Housing."*
- "The next Town Administrator should be a good manager of people."*
- "The number of students in MBTS has gone down while the number for Essex remains flat and that has contributed to the School Budget dilemma."*
- "Partnering with Essex on Public Safety needs seems like a possible solution. We should look at that more closely."*
- "People who work here like it here, and they usually stay for a long time."*
- "For a while, the connection between the people and the government was not working but that has improved."*
- "The question we must contend with regarding capital needs is what are the "nice to have" items vs what we absolutely "need to have"?"*
- "We need to look at opportunities to build 40 B Friendly projects, if possible. That will help the Town get beyond the mandate while addressing a real need in the Town."*

After meeting with all the Department Heads and with the Select Board Members there was a significant amount of consistency regarding the key issues in the Town.

Those issues include, in no specific order:

- Contending with the Regional School Budget
- Organizational Structural Improvements (fewer Departments)
- Improved Communication Internally and Externally
- Succession Planning
- Addressing Staffing Gaps
- Improved Use of Technology
- More Technology support Within the Organization
- Continued Use of Community Forums for Educating Voters on Issues
- Finding a Solid Replacement for the Town Administrator
- Capital Spending for New Capital Facilities and Infrastructure
- Hardening of Public Facilities and Protecting the Community against the Impact of Coastal Flooding
- More Partnerships with Neighboring Communities (Regional Approaches)
- Building Affordable Housing
- A More Coordinated Use of Websites and Social Media



Organizational Observations

Existing Organizational Structure

MTBS has a linear organizational structure with most Department Heads reporting directly to the Town Administrator. Presently there are eighteen (18) direct reports to this individual. This is a “flat organization.”

Ideally, organizations who perform well are structured by job families. Examples include Public Works, Public Safety, Finance, Human Services and Land Use. Within those departments there are several divisional functions who all report to the Department Head. This results in a lower number of direct reports to the Town Administrator, making it easier to manage the organization while maximizing internal communications. Most importantly, it allows the organization's leader the opportunity to direct the operation through fewer individuals while achieving quality improvements in their performance. Smaller organizations communicate more and have a much greater connection to key issues facing a community.

Having fewer departments should not be confused with having fewer people. It is our view that the organization is already lean in many positions, which often proves to be a detriment to the consistency of service delivery. We have seen in several cases that there are no backup staff, for instance(s) when a person is sick or wants to take any meaningful time off from work. Meaning that when a person is absent, that function must close, or the service becomes limited to the public.

We are pleased to see that some consolidation of functions has occurred over time. While we may not agree with how some of these consolidations have occurred, we do appreciate the approach.

As mentioned earlier, the Assessors' Office has taken over responsibility for the oversight of the Building Department and for the GIS functions of the Town.

Another more recent consolidation occurred in the Planning Department with the Planning Director taking on an expanded role of supervising the Conservation Agent and assisting with the administration of the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Department was renamed Land Use.

CSS thinks that some of these consolidations are headed in the right direction while other functions are not particularly well matched. For example, the combination of the Assessors Officer with the Building Department and GIS responsibilities do not provide the best organizational value. We would prefer to see that the functions of GIS and Building Inspection be matched with Land Use. These two functions are naturally defined as land use functions. We believe that the reassignment of these functions will provide greater internal support for the existing Land Use operations. When functions such as planning, conservation, inspection, zoning, and GIS are all working together, a more collegial and supportive work environment occurs due to the internal exchange of ideas and information.

On the other hand, the Assessor's functions are more closely aligned with a full-service Finance Department. Evaluating property, assisting with Motor Vehicle Excise tax issues, and tax bill preparation are all best suited for a Finance Department. We will provide a more detailed description of the proposed Finance Department later in this Report.

The Police Department, while currently located within the Town Hall, should be more closely aligned with the Fire Department as one Public Safety function. The current Town organizational Chart describes these Departments as one Public Safety Function but structurally and operationally they are disconnected. Much of this concern is an outgrowth of the physical separation of these two departments. We believe that enhancing the communication strategy and operationally establishing a true Public Safety team will yield better results for the community.

The Harbormaster currently reports directly to the Town Administrator. While this position performs several important roles for this seaside community, he clearly plays an important public safety role in the Harbor. However, this Department functions more as a support service for public safety. The current organizational chart describes this Department as a member of the Public Safety operation. This is reflected in the structure, but the reporting relationship is not currently consistent with the intended role as a division of Public Safety. CSS believes that this position should be restructured to provide a more beneficial chain of command for the Department.

Another organizational observation made regarding Public Safety is that the Parking Clerk function was assigned to the Human Resources Director. From our experience this seems like an unusual assignment for this role. For MBTS this action was taken as a temporary measure when the former Town Clerk left her role. The Parking Clerk is associated with the Police Department and is usually assigned to a Lieutenant or Sergeant. Since tickets are issued by the Police Department, this Department should be the single most knowledgeable agency regarding a ticket concern. While this would not be a momentous change for this department, CSS thinks that this will be operationally more practical and more responsive to the public's needs.

CSS observed that the following departments or functions report directly or indirectly to the Town Administrator. In no order, the current list includes:

- **Library**
- **Health Department**
- **Council on Aging**
- **Parks and Recreation**
- **Veteran's Services**
- **Police Department**
- **Fire/Rescue Department**
- **Harbormaster**
- **Town Accountant**
- **Treasurer/Collector**
- **Assessor/Building Inspection/Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**
- **Information Technology (IT)**
- **Land Use**
- **Human Resources**
- **Town Clerk**



- **Public Works**
- **Communications**
- **Grants/Special Projects**

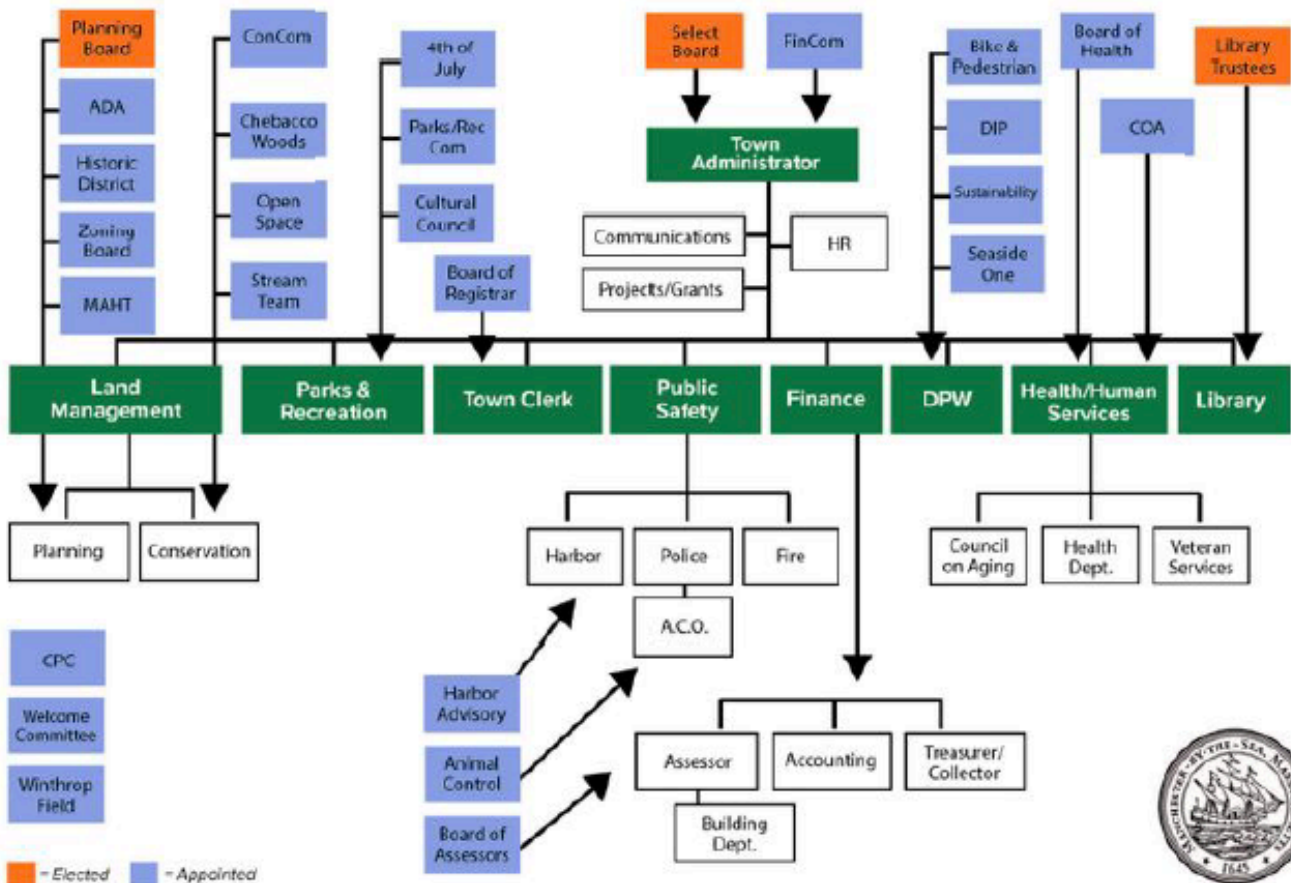
Further details on the existing or contemplated expanded role of some of these departments will be provided in greater detail in the next section of this Report

Improved Structure

CSS believes that the current organizational structure as described on page 15 of the "Town of Manchester by the Sea Fiscal Year 2025 Proposed Budget" – dated April 24, 2024, provides a reasonable design for a structurally sound organization. However, in practice, the eight (8) operating departments as described on the chart (see below) do not actually function as departments in the way they are described. In practice, the departments and the several corresponding "divisions" do not all report to a single Department Head as shown, rather they report directly or indirectly to the Town Administrator.

CURRENT Organization Chart

TOWN OF MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



By having the organization function with these many direct reports, the job of the Town Administrator becomes exponentially more difficult to manage. Ideally, fewer direct reports provide for a more strategic functioning organization based on an elevated level of internal communication and increased collaboration.

CSS practically recognizes that a Town the size of Manchester by the Sea will not be able to structure all its departments with an ideal department design. For example, the *Public Safety Department* would not function with one Public Safety Director to oversee the Fire and Police Department. That type of structure is usually reserved for larger, urban communities with organizations that have several layers of public safety functions. In this instance we believe that a hybrid organizational structure will work just as effectively, and most certainly better than the current operational practices.

Based on what we have identified through our interviews, we have determined several opportunities where consolidation of the organization would effectively reduce the number of direct reports to the Town Administrator by almost half.

These suggestions include:

1. We recommend assigning the **Harbormaster** to work under the supervision of the **Police Department**. The two departments currently work well together and the added level of support for both the Fire Department and the Harbormaster should improve the overall delivery of service for both operations. By design, the Harbormaster would effectively become a Division of the Fire/Rescue Department.
2. The **Parking Clerk** should be reassigned from **Town Clerk** to the **Fire Department**. This means that the Police Department would now oversee **Parking** and **Animal Control**. Both functions serve as an arm of Public Safety, and they operationally belong to this Department. As noted earlier, the functions of a Parking Clerk can be assigned to a Lieutenant or a Sergeant. CSS would not recommend assigning this function to a Patrolmen as the Officers are the ones who issue tickets. By having a ranking officer look at the citation, they can often determine if there is a justifiable basis for upholding an appeal or to fully enforce the action.
3. The Town should create a new **Department of Finance**. This Department would be responsible for the functions of **Accounting, Treasury, Collection, IT, Assessing, Accounts Payable** and **Purchasing**. While it is not within the purview of CSS to determine who should function as the Director of Finance, it has been our experience that this role does lean in the direction of the Town Accountant. Despite this observation, if the Town chooses to go in a different direction, that would be entirely your prerogative. By combining these financial functions under one roof, cross collaboration, and communication of finance strategies for the Town, Finance will become more connected. This approach serves to strengthen the concept of a Finance Team, and it provides some needed operational back up to all these individual functions.

Note that this function lacks appropriate support to consistently address the responsibilities of the Offices. One area that was consistently addressed as a concern with Departments was the lack of daily IT support that exists in the organization. While the Town is supported from a backup computing perspective by the Town of Danvers, the daily needs of IT are not being addressed in a timely or consistent manner. This concern is highlighted more clearly in the section of this report that addresses IT uses.

In short, if the organization wants to be more creative in the use of IT, it needs to provide the supportive infrastructure to successfully execute that goal. We recommend that the Town reexamine the use of existing funding sources and find a way to prioritize additional funding for this goal if it wants to successfully advance the use of technology in the organization.

CSS also recommends that oversight and responsibility for **GIS** and **Building Inspection** should be reassigned from the Assessor's Office and placed in **Land Use**. These are more appropriate support services for full-service planning, development, and open space department.

CSS is not averse to the concept of moving the GIS function to **DPW** and **Engineering** as there are also supportive arguments for aligning this function with the mapping of streets, the location of hydrants, and other underground utilities. That is an operational decision that the Town can make based on what works best for your organization.

4. We recommend that the Town establish a new **Health and Human Services Department**. This would include the operations of **Health, Parks and Recreation, the Council on Aging** and **Veteran's Services** who would all report to one Director of Health and Human Services. Establishing this new Department may mean that the Town would have to hire a new Director for this role to oversee all three functions. Presently, the three functions operate independent of each other, but this approach is not beneficial for providing the most optimal service for the community. Conversely, there may be internal candidates who could fulfill this role. One additional option would be to delay the implementation of this new department until a vacancy occurs at the department head level of any one of the three existing departments. Establishing a Health and Human Services Department makes operational sense from the perspective that recreation, health, and elder services should all be coordinated so that residents of the community will have a lifetime of services provided to them from this one department.
5. The **Department of Public Works** should continue to function as it is currently designed. We believe the structure is correct and these functions provide optimal coordination of this service. However, if the Department continues to lead the effort in capital facility improvement, planning, and construction, it may need additional technical support in managing these projects. The current staff would be stretched too thin to potentially manage several multi-million-dollar construction projects simultaneously.
6. The **Library** organization should not be altered, and the Department should continue to report to the Town Administrator for operational and administrative purposes. Operationally the Library is organizationally limited by the size and capacity of its facility. CSS does recognize that their existing facility requires significant improvements and expansion. However, given the number of high priority public safety needs, construction improvements for the library could be several years away unless an unexpected source of funding suddenly becomes available to the Community.
7. The **Town Clerk** should continue to report to the Town Administrator. Communication between these two offices is vital as it relates to the Town Census, Records Management, Town Meeting Coordination, and the proper execution of Elections.

CSS does note that the staffing level of this Office is overly concerning in that the level of backup support for the Town Clerk must be addressed. Having a capable Town Clerk and a full-time Assistant Town Clerk to support the Office is essential for maintaining reliable service



for the Community.

8. The **Department of Land Management** is already well designed, but CSS suggests **Building Inspection** and **GIS** should be added as functions to this Department. It was noted earlier that by adding these functions, the Department will become a full-service land management department with planning, conservation, open space, economic development, housing, and inspection functioning under one roof. CSS recognizes that conflicts between land use priorities can develop when all these functions are under one roof but the value of having these disciplines all coordinated far outweighs the concerns.
9. CSS has observed that the role of **Human/Resources** should be expanded in the organization. The current HR presence in the Town is entirely too limited in today's complex personnel world. The current arrangement of sharing an HR Director may appear good in theory but the demands for HR services that are not being met due to the limited availability of the individual do not properly support the organization. We want it to be clear that we think the individual who performs this work is highly competent, but the Town does not provide enough of her time to address all the personnel needs of the organization. The lack of HR support places further pressure on the Town Administrator's Office and all the Department Heads to solve personnel matters that are complex and often beyond their skill sets to resolve. We recommend a commitment to funding a full-time HR staff member or at the very least increasing the hours of the existing individual to 25-30 hours per week.

Operationally, the HR Director should continue to report to the Town Administrator, and we do not think this individual needs to work out of the Town Administrator's Office. Our experience at CSS has shown that having an HR professional work directly in the Chief Administrative Officer's office can sometimes discourage employees from consulting on sensitive matters. We feel strongly that the Town Administrator should always remain fully aware of issues that will impact personnel within his/her organization, but employees should not be unwilling to come forward to discuss a sensitive topic if they are dissuaded by the proximity of the HR office to the Town Administrator's Office. As such we recommend that this individual continue to work at the Seaside #1 office space or until another office space is identified in Town Hall, that would be more appropriate.

10. Finally, we think the current staff of the **Town Administrator's Office** can provide increased value to the organization by increasing their ability to provide more supervisory and oversight capabilities from this Office. The Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator's role should be increased to the level of **Assistant to the Town Administrator for Operations**, in which she could provide some valuable assistance to the **Communications** Director and the **HR Director**.

The **Communications Director** should have a direct connection to the Town Administrator and should assist him with developing weekly communications to the organization, the Select Board, and the community at large. We note that the Town Administrator is a skilled writer, but we think that the time it takes for him to prepare this information would be better spent **leading** the organization. Having the Communications Director work directly with the Assistant to the Town Administrator for Operations and the Town Administrator on a weekly basis to prepare communication updates for the community should provide a more effective communication strategy.

In addition, we think it also makes sense for the HR Director to report through the Assistant

Director of Operations. Given the existing structure of the HR Director's role with the Town, it would be more operationally prudent for this person to be reporting through the Town Administrator's Office but not directly to the CAO.

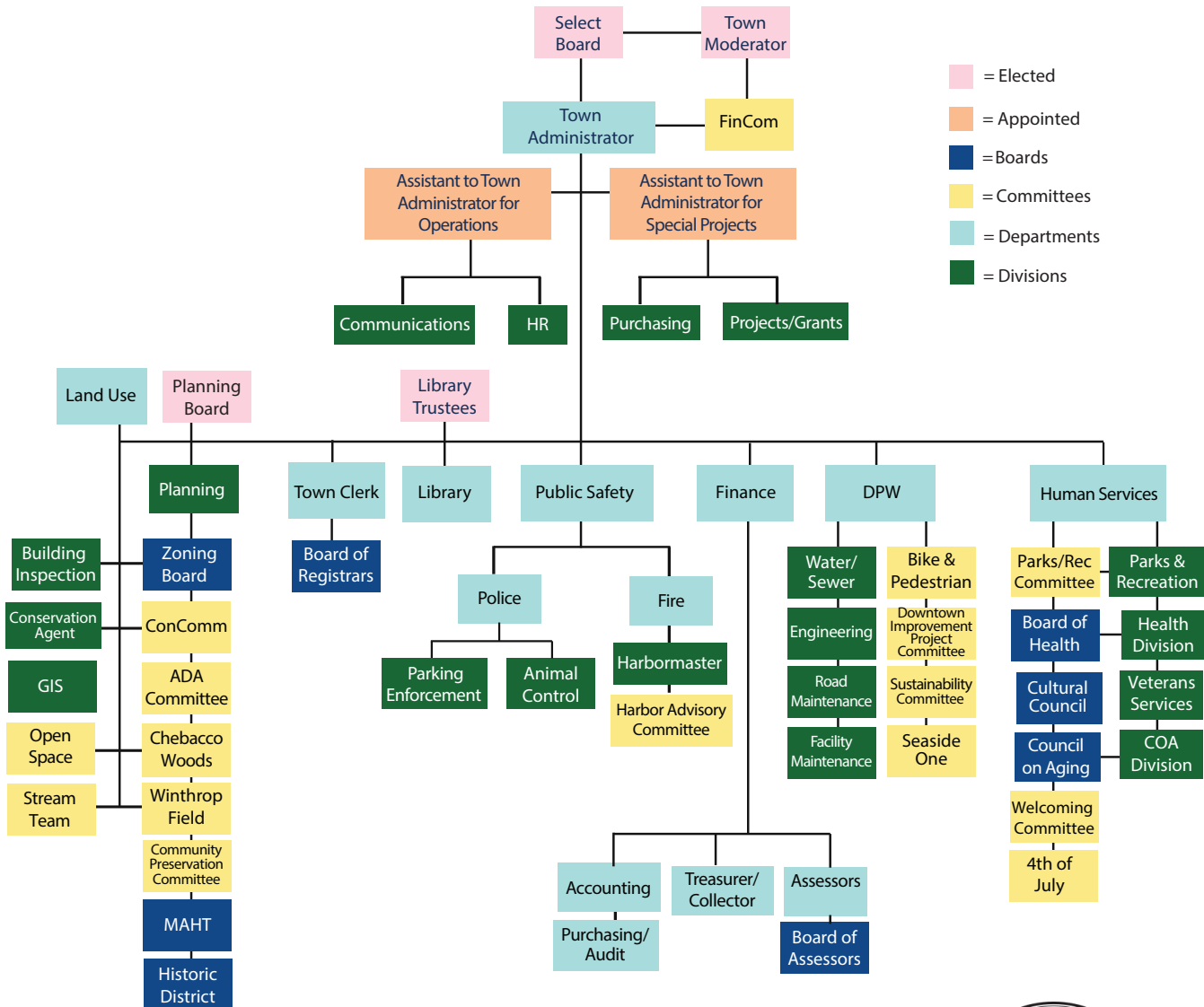
The **Grants and Special Projects Coordinator** should also be elevated to the level of an **Assistant to the Town Administrator for Special Projects**. This role will continue to be involved in grants administration, but it should be expanded to provide oversight and provide regular updates on projects that are going on throughout the organization. Several significant construction projects are planned in Public Works that may occur in the near future. Having this individual serve as a direct link for the Town Administrator will help keep the CAO fully informed of the progress being made to complete this work. Finally, an opportunity exists for this individual to assist with contract management and purchasing. These are areas where the Town currently has extremely limited resources. Adding this responsibility to this role could provide added value to the organization.

The summation of these changes will create a new Organizational Chart that would look something like the following (p. 45):



Proposed Organization Chart

Town of Manchester-By-The-Sea Organizational Chart



- = Elected
- = Appointed
- = Boards
- = Committees
- = Departments
- = Divisions



Internal Communications

Throughout the interview process, there were two consistent comments made by Department Heads. One was the need for *improved internal communications* and the other is the need for more IT support.

CSS observed department head meetings were occurring only once a month. It is our belief that effective internal communications are related to organizational design and a consistent communications strategy.

With fewer direct reports, the Town Administrator will be able to focus more on strategic initiatives and fewer "issues of the moment." This will also enable the CAO to have a more meaningful department "**Operations Meetings**" on a regular basis.

CSS recommends that the Town Administrator meet weekly with the new Department Head structure and that each week this meeting will either be held in person or remote. The meetings should be limited to no more than **60 minutes**, and each Department Head will be given an opportunity to update the Town Administrator on the issues facing their department and how they impact on the Town. The structure of these meetings is that the Town Administrator (or one of the Assistant to the TAs in his absence) starts the meeting by providing the "Team" with all items that he/she is working on along with updates of any upcoming deadlines facing the organization (Town Meeting issues, Budgets, Select Board issues, etc.). He/she then goes around the room and gets a "briefing" of what that Department is working on and if there is a need for any assistance from other departments to perform their work. If a department project has a deadline, this is a perfect opportunity to provide everyone with a status update.

Any Department that is not able to provide an update at this meeting is often viewed as being a performance flag and should be followed up to determine if there are any impediments to the Department's operational progress.

The Communications Director will attend this meeting so that notes can be taken of information that can be shared with the Board or the Town as part of the weekly communications update.

The value of having weekly "**Operations Meetings**" cannot be understated. These meetings achieve multiple goals. They improve *organizational communication*. They help to forge *organizational relationships* that lead to greater internal cooperation. They provide the Town Administrator with weekly updates about what is going on in the organization. This effectively leads to fewer "surprises."

If there is an issue that requires further follow-up, the item gets flagged for further discussion and information sharing. These meetings *keep all the Department Heads informed* of critical issues and allow them to understand how the Town is addressing them. That action alone cuts down on rumors and inuendo throughout an organization.

Finally, it helps build morale. If the leaders of the departments are working like a team, the stress of daily challenges often gets reduced when they know they are all "rowing in the same direction."

After the weekly Operations Meetings, the Town Administrator, the Assistant to the TA for

Operations and the Communications Director should review the notes of the meeting and determine what information should be shared in the weekly update. This meeting should take no longer than **30 minutes**.

In short, the Town Administrator should strive, as part of his/her weekly operational routine, to spend **90 minutes** each week to practice this approach for staying fully informed of the organization's work progress.

Following these meetings, Department Heads also have a chance to do their own team building. They can do this by keeping their staff informed of topics that are operationally significant. Department Heads should set aside some time to share information with their internal teams at least once a week with the goal of building the same collegial atmosphere in their own departments.

Conversely, Departments who do not share information will stand out if the remaining parts of the organization echo key operational messages that have been filtered down through Town operations.

External Communications

The Town has taken some important positive steps towards enhancing its external communications capabilities. We feel that the Town can advance those steps even further.

CSS believes that good external communications is the direct result of good internal communications. If internal communications are disjointed and inconsistent, it becomes much more difficult to reflect a good external image. As was noted earlier, building a consistent model for developing internal information makes the sharing of external information much more effective.

The Town already has the advantage of a person whose focus is entirely on messaging information to the public. This position is Communications Director. We believe it would be prudent for the Town to develop a comprehensive external communications strategy around using this individual's capabilities.

The Town has already taken important steps in developing this strategy by providing articles for the local newspaper and various social media outlets. It is important to remember that with the reduction in the amount of newsprint media, a gap in sharing of local government information has been occurring in communities all over the country. Local governments have struggled to deal with external communications by becoming more *reactive* to questions and concerns being generated by residents who use and often misuse social media outlets.

Some organizations have splintered their communications strategy by using a more siloed approach by some departments having their own web sites and social media links. We suggest that a cohesive communications approach led by the Communications Director will provide more consistency with respect to the Town's communication approach with its residents.

Communities who have become more proactive by creating informational links to their residents have seen some positive results. The actions and the approach taken by the Town in the most

recent approval of the 3A Zoning matter at the Town Meeting is an excellent example of consistent messaging and being proactive in sharing information. This clearly led to positive results. We encourage the Town to take this course with this messaging approach for supporting the major capital projects that the Town will face soon.

Strategic Planning

After considering all the capital facility needs of Manchester by the Sea, it seems clear that planning for many of these long-term expenses has not been effective, or the message has gotten lost in many of the short-term needs of the community. CSS believes that this could also have been a direct result of the existing organizational structure of the local government. With so many issues being fielded by the Town Administration trying to address everyone's priorities, the time needed to focus on the big-ticket items became displaced. The proposed organizational structure should help with refocusing priorities.

Strategic Planning is a critical part of building stability in local government but because the needs are often so significant, many communities defer on these needs or "kick the can down the road." In many cases, deferring on these items happens so often that some of the issues do not get addressed until they reach a crisis level. Manchester by the Sea is reaching that level with many of its public facilities. Moreover, the impact of emerging environmental impacts will increase the need to act more swiftly.

That said, the Town has taken some especially important steps in developing key information that is needed to move the Town's Strategic Plan to an "Action Plan" level.

CSS has reviewed the **Town's Facility Master Plan** that was completed in 2023 by *Tetra Tech*, along with the **Coastal Vulnerability Action Plan** that was also completed in 2023 by the engineering firm of *Fuss and O'Neill*. The pertinent data provided in these two studies offers the Town the information it needs to develop a **List of Priority Projects** that the Town will need to present to the community. That **List of Priority Projects** would then be coupled with a reliable *Financing Plan* which will explain the cost impact to the taxpayers. Once that information has been agreed to by community leaders including the *Select Board* and the *Finance Committee*, the only things that remain is to develop an **Action Plan** that includes a Town wide strategy for communicating the information of the Plan to the residents.

Based on the studies that were completed in 2023, the needs of the "Town" were identified. However, it also seems that the Regional School District was pursuing its own Capital Plans, and they now anticipate building a new Regional Elementary School. The timing of this plan may complicate any plans to move **Town's Facility Master Plan** forward.

The inclusion of any contemplated school project is a critical component of a comprehensive facility improvement strategy. If the community is presented with all the facilities' needs at once, the residents will at least be fully informed of all the Town's needs at once. By providing this information, it will then be up to voters to decide what projects they would like to prioritize.

One thing seems clear, the time to act is now to address the multiple capital needs of the Town. Having a clear and comprehensive list of projects is critical.

Strategic Focus Areas

Succession Planning

Building long-term, stable organizations requires that every department build a support system that provides a plan for succession. Each Town department should ideally have a succession plan to train someone who can take over when the current department head leaves the organization.

Developing succession plans for local government has been particularly challenging in general but it has been especially challenging for small Towns.

The need for this planning was significantly highlighted during the COVID 19 Pandemic. Several communities lost employees who decided to leave their government role either by retirement or by career change. The result was that several communities suddenly found themselves without individuals to fill critical staff roles.

It is also important to note that since the Pandemic and, based on the controversial use of social media, the number of candidates willing to come forward and fill many local government roles has gone down at an alarming rate. This has placed an even greater emphasis on building succession plans in local government.

In Manchester by the Sea, some Town departments have built succession into their department staffing plans, but many have not.

The departments/offices who have contemplated succession plans includes:

- Police Department
- Fire/Rescue Department
- Harbormaster
- Public Works

The departments/offices who have not contemplated succession plans include:

- Town Administrator
- Assessor
- Building Inspector
- Town Accountant
- Treasurer/Collector
- Parks and Recreation
- Communications Director
- Town Clerk
- Library Director
- Health Director
- Council on Aging Director

In evaluating the departments who have not contemplated succession plans, some of this lack of planning is beyond their control. In many instances, there is no second person in command of that department who would be a candidate to succeed in the Department Head's role.

For example, in the case of the Town Administrator, there is no Assistant Town Administrator who would train and become a serious contender for that position. In the case of the Town Clerk, there is no Assistant Town Clerk who could fill that vacancy if the existing Town Clerk were to leave.

CSS recommends that this situation be given thoughtful consideration as part of the Town's staff planning. There are many instances in the organization where the Town could encounter a *critical point of failure* if a department head were to suddenly become absent due to illness or injury or decide to suddenly leave the organization.

Succession planning is not only important for consistency in service quality, but it is also important for addressing service gaps. In the case of Manchester by the Sea, the staffing complement in many departments is extremely lean. We will discuss this situation in greater detail in the section of this Report dedicated to "Staffing."

CSS would like the Town to also consider that in today's municipal employment market, it is now taking a considerable amount of time to fill many high-level positions that provide critical services to the community. Positions in fields such as Information Technology, any position in Finance, Building Inspection, and several positions in DPW have all become exceedingly difficult to fill with outside candidates. With that consideration in mind, we encourage the community to develop a succession plan element to its staff planning. This will help to address any unforeseen change that could occur in the organization.



Technology Use

The Town's IT infrastructure and software are typical of what is utilized in many municipalities in the Commonwealth. The Town has servers and desktops attached to a fiberoptic network connecting multiple buildings within the Town. Software from multiple vendors is used for business purposes such as accounting, payroll, budget development and online permitting. Most of the software is cloud based, which is becoming the norm for business use and is encouraged for effective and efficient service delivery.

The Town is part of a collaborative of eight communities that comprise the North Shore IT Collaborative (Collaborative) spearheaded by the Town of Danvers and its IT Director, Colby Cousens. The Town, as a member of the collaborative, operates through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Danvers.

The Collaborative has secured multiple [Community Compact Grants](#) to build out a secure and reliable IT infrastructure across the region to enhance service delivery to the member communities which can be referenced in the 2024 Annual report.*

Police and Fire have recently joined the Essex County Regional Dispatch Center and will benefit from enhancements to the Towns' infrastructure as the network evolves and connectivity to the Internet is enhanced.

The Library uses software and services provided by the Merrimack Valley Library Network for most of its needs.

Network

The Town operates on its own fiberoptic network that connects all the Town offices. In addition, the Town's fiber network connects to the Collaborative's fiber network, which will eventually evolve into a dual redundant ring to avoid single points of failure in the fiber architecture. Once the ring is completed the Collaborative will look to upgrade internet connectivity for its members by installing multiple, larger connections providing the bandwidth needed by the member communities and eliminating single points of failure.

The first project was to enhance IT system and network security by standardizing network security and providing multi-factor authentication and endpoint detection and response. The Town of Danvers is responsible for collecting data from the various endpoint firewalls and passing the information through its security systems. This project is complete, and the network security consisting of multi-factor authentication (MFA) and endpoint detection and response (EDR) required by the Town's insurer is in place.

The Town's continued membership of the Collaborative is strongly encouraged both for cost effectiveness and efficiency of operation.

* Town of Danvers. (n.d.). North Shore IT Collaborative. Danvers, MA. Retrieved January 31, 2025, from <https://www.danversma.gov/617/North-Shore-IT-Collaborative>

Servers

The Town uses Dell PowerEdge for its servers, which are used primarily for Active Directory and as a fileserver using Microsoft SharePoint to house documents and other important files. The original thought was to relocate the servers to the Danvers datacenter; however, that may not be the best approach. Once the network topology is in place a better approach would be to utilize the cloud for file storage and user authentication. Colby Cousens will lead this initiative as the project unfolds.

Software

The Town currently uses software as a service or hosted options for its various business processes such as accounting, payroll, online permitting, assessing, budget development and desktop tools.

The Towns Accounting system is Softright that was purchased by Springbrook, which offers its own cloud-based financial management solutions that are modular and available individually or as a package. In speaking with the account representative for the Town she indicated there is no plan to retire the Softright product; however, there is also no plan to enhance the product. Any updates to Softright will focus on bug fixes only. That being the case, the Town should begin the process of looking for alternatives to using the Softright product as a project to replace this core operational tool is significant and will take a great deal of time and effort.

The Springbrook cloud solution is clearly an option but will cost the Town ~50% increase in its operating costs. Considering the significant impact on the operation of the Town and subsequently the taxpayer, should there be issues within the finance function, this cost could be minimal. There is also the current nontangible impact on the operation of the Town caused by the lack of updates and enhancements to the existing accounting and finance systems.

Payroll services are provided by Harpers using the vendor's cloud based solution. Harpers is one of the preferred providers of payroll services to multiple communities in the state. Harpers provides one stop shopping for this vital function and the Town is encouraged to continue that relationship unless there is a better option provided by a new accounting system. In any event there should be a means and method of sharing data between the accounting system and the payroll system.

Microsoft 365 is used for all desktop software needs and is the preferred method for providing these services to the employees. The Town should continue to utilize this product suite.

OpenGov is an industry standard software as a service product that is currently used by the Town for its online permitting process. OpenGov is used by multiple communities throughout the Commonwealth, and it is recommended the Town continue to utilize this tool to streamline and enhance the permitting process.

The Town currently utilizes ClearGov for its budgeting process; however, the product is not being used to its full capacity. One of the benefits of utilizing ClearGov is the ability to develop the Town's budget online for the community to follow. Additionally, the product can be used to show the taxpayers how the Town stacks up against like communities in its revenue and expenses. The product utilizes a proprietary algorithm and data collected by the state to compare revenue and expenses down to departmental detail to show the taxpayers where their money is being spent. It is recommended the Town look to utilize this product to provide more transparency to enhance understanding of the operations of the Town for the taxpayer.



Zoom is the preferred product for online meetings. This is an acceptable means to provide this service; however, it may be of interest to the Town to investigate using Microsoft Teams since the Town currently utilizes SharePoint which is used as a document repository for Teams. Documents can be more easily shared and even edited in real time if necessary.

Desktop

The Town utilizes Dell for its desktops and monitors. It also uses HP and Lenovo for its laptops and printers. These are industry standard products, and the Town should continue to use these vendors for its desktop architecture.

Website

The Town's web site is provided by CivicPlus, which is an accepted industry standard used by multiple communities across the country. The Town's web site is the latest version and provides links to services and information relevant to the taxpayers. As noted previously the Town would benefit from providing a link to ClearGov on its main page to enhance transparency in the budget process.

Services

As stated above, the Town is a member of the Northshore It Collaborative, which has provided significant value to the community. It is recommended that the Town continue to participate in the Collaborative and look to leverage that relationship to its fullest.

The Town outsources IT support through a managed IT services contract with New Era Technology, which in turn subcontracts to Cascade for help desk support. Cascade provides 30-minute response as part of its service level agreement (SLA) for network and server issues 24x7 and desktop support during normal business hours. Cascade is also used by Danvers through a similar contract for its support.

While this is not ideal from a user perspective it is cost effective to outsource this service. In speaking with Colby Cousens, he feels that bringing support in house may not be as efficient as outsourcing; however, he is currently piloting a project with Middleton to determine the feasibility of providing inhouse services. In the interim, it is recommended the Town continue to outsource this service with the caveat the Town periodically bid the service out or request quotes from multiple OSD vendors to ensure it is receiving the best services and pricing.

The Town's IT is up to par with most communities in its size and is ahead of the pack as a member of the Collaborative. The Town should continue to move in the current direction, with an eye to having enhanced onsite support for the users, including consistent and regular training of staff to take full advantage of the numerous software programs the Town has.

The Town's IT infrastructure uses industry-standard software for key functions like accounting, payroll, and online permitting. While the current tools are effective, greater value can be gained by maximizing their use, particularly with underutilized features in ClearGov. Improved training and staff development will help the Town fully leverage existing systems, enhancing efficiency and community communication without the need for new investments.

Key Challenges for the Organization

After evaluating the organization from several different perspectives, CSS has identified several key challenges for the Town.

Staffing Needs

As was mentioned in the last chapter of this report, CSS observed that the staffing of the Town is very lean in many departments. This low staffing situation places greater emphasis on the proposed reorganization of the Town. Over the years many of the Town's operations have become "siloes" which has led to a reduced level of communication and in some instances cooperation for functions that will only provide better service for the Town's residents. By creating fewer departments and a reduced number of direct reports to the Town Administrator, CSS believes that the organization will become more collegial and team oriented. More importantly, we think communication will noticeably improve, particularly with weekly Operations Team Meetings.

However, the Town is limited in its ability to properly engage in Succession Planning because the staffing level is so limited in several instances.

Some of our specific observations and recommendations include:

Assessors- The Town Assessor provides an overly critical role for the Town in identifying value for new tax growth in the community each year. She performs this task mostly on her own. CSS believes that this is a very vulnerable position for the Town. Finding Tax Assessors is an exceedingly challenging task in the current marketplace. We suggest that that Town consider providing some field inspection help for the Assessor and preferably this could be an individual who could learn the role of the Assessor and help to address the Town's Succession Planning effort for this Department/Division.

Building Inspection- The Town is about to embark on the significant development of a new Bio-Technology Park. Inspection for a project of this size and complexity will require a continual inspection commitment from the Town. Finding one person who possesses all the credentials to perform this work will be difficult to acquire. As such the Town may need to work with several communities located along the 128 Corridor and in the Worcester Region to determine how some of the biotech facilities were inspected in those communities. CSS may be able to assist in this process, as part of separate engagement, to identify the right resources for MBTS.

Finance Director- We suggest that the Town Accountant role be transformed into Finance Director and this position would effectively become the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for the Town. This individual will be involved in all aspects of the Town's finances and will continue to play a key role in developing the Annual Operating Budget and the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). With these added roles, the supervision of the Department will increase and the ability to do accounting work may diminish. As such the Town should consider boosting the Assistant to the Accountant to Assistant Accountant and hiring an Accounting Clerk. The Accounting Clerk would handle much of the data entry needs of the Accounting Department while also providing back-up support to the Treasurer/Collector Office.



Fire Department- The Fire Chief identified the need for a Deputy Chief. CSS believes it is challenging to manage the Department alone as the only employee who is not a member of the Union. The Fire Chief needs a member of management who can operate the Department in the Chief's absence. Therefore, we do recommend that the Town consider the Fire Chief's request.

Health and Human Services- Presently there is one Health Director for the Town who manages many responsibilities for this Department. Having no back up for this role is concerning from many perspectives. This need was particularly highlighted during the Pandemic. Health issues are becoming more prominent in every aspect of life. The role of a Health Director is multi-faceted that includes reviewing septic system plans, inspecting new restaurants, housing inspections, managing vaccines, and providing health clinics for residents. This is part of the reason we believe consolidation of Health, Council on Aging, Veterans Services and Parks and Recreation makes sense. The consolidation of all these functions will provide some back-up support for some aspects of all these functions combined. With the development of a new Senior Center, these four functions may require additional staff support. However, because this department will require the appointment of a new Director, this is a significant expense that cannot be incurred until an existing Department Head position becomes vacant. Until that happens, the specific timing of this change cannot be specified.

HR Director- The hours of this position should be expanded to at least 25-30 hours or preferably to full-time. The personnel needs of the organization are only being met at a minimal level and that is placing greater stress on the role of the Town Administrator's Office and the Treasurer/Collector. Each office is asked to intervene regarding matters related to benefits, training, labor relations, compensation, and paid leave programs. In addition, recruitment and retention are being addressed only as needed and in today's labor market, these are critical considerations.

Parks and Recreation- The Parks and Recreation Director runs many popular programs for residents of the community. She has an extremely limited staff to accomplish this objective. It is reasonable to consider some additional support in the role of an Assistant Director to help run this Program.

Town Clerk- The existing staff level cannot even assist the Town Clerk if she were to leave on vacation or be sick for an extended period (more than a week). This means the Office will not be adequately staffed if that happens. CSS also thinks that a full-time Assistant Town Clerk should be hired and trained to inevitably become a replacement for the Town Clerk if this position were to become vacant. This would result in a Succession Plan for this Office.

Town Administrator's Office- As indicated previously, CSS recommends that the roles of the two support staff members of the Town Administrator's Office be increased to provide more operational support for the Town Administrator. The recommendation is that the Executive Assistant to the Town Administrator be changed to the title of Assistant to the Town Administrator for Operations and the Grants/Special Projects Coordinator be changed to Assistant to the Town Administrator for Special Projects.

Treasurer/Collector- This Office has a staff position that can perform some of the support functions for the Office but cannot perform most statutory roles of the Treasurer/Collector. CSS recommends that with the formation of a new Finance Department that the Town should also consider creating an Assistant Treasurer/Collector. By doing so, this role is redundant to the head of this department or division and would also address the Succession Planning needs in this function.

Short and Long-Term Capital Needs

The Town has identified many Long-Term Capital Needs, and it continues to manage many of its Short-term Capital needs such as road paving, sidewalk improvements and vehicle replacements. The Town has done a decent job of addressing many of these needs through an aggressive effort and by leveraging value from some of their utility replacement work as it pertains to road improvements. The Town should continue to address short-term capital needs by using Free Cash, water and sewer revenue and available Grant funds to address the cost of those needs.

The Town is faced with a daunting list of capital facility needs that was identified in the Tetra Tech Report. However, the scope of that Report did not consider any new School building needs as part of its analysis. This consideration must be included in the capital needs assessment. If a new Elementary School Project is advanced before any of the Town's Projects, that could significantly alter the timing of the Town Projects due to the cost impacts to residents.

The Town should act now by developing a complete list of capital projects (including schools), prioritize the projects, prepare a financing plan, and begin the process of educating the public on the needs for these improvements. Costs continue to rise with each year that goes by, so it is critically important to be able to move efficiently and address these needs. The cost of these projects will have to be parsed over time so that taxpayers are not overburdened.

While borrowing costs for capital projects are not the most favorable for projects now, the cost of bonds can always be refinanced when the rates eventually go down. The Town's Triple A Bond Rating will help to keep borrowing costs more favorable than many communities.

Reducing the costs for long-term liabilities such as OPEB and employee pensions by the early 2030's does provide some opportunity to fund these projects with existing revenues without making all the funding entirely debt exclusion dependent.

It seems building a new DPW facility is one of the key projects the Town needs to be addressed first. If that project goes forward, moving DPW to their new location will open the possibility of building a new Public Safety Building on the former DPW site. Another option would be to build a Public Safety Building next to the new DPW facility.

Another idea that has been suggested is the possibility of doing some additional partnerships with the Town of Essex to address Public Safety facility needs. The Town of Essex recently built a new combined Police and Fire facility. This suggestion has only been advanced at the concept level for now, but CSS feels that the idea may have some merit. We think the idea should be explored further to understand the positive and negative implications of this approach.

Environmental Impacts

From the very first day that CSS came to the MBTS, the impact on the environment was clear. The water level of the Harbor was even with the Parking Lot of Town Hall, and there were no storms affecting the coast at that time.

The findings of both the 2023 Fuss and O'Neill Report and the Tetra Tech Reports indicate that the Town is vulnerable to rising sea levels. This impact is growing over time as Climate Change is

beginning to escalate on a global scale.

Based on the tide measurements identified in the Fuss and O'Neill Report, MBTS has twenty-five years (2050) to address many of its Town Building, Sewer Treatment and Public Safety needs before those facilities will experience regular flooding.

If the impacts of Climate Change escalate this timetable by any significant margin, the timetable for building new Town facilities may have to be advanced to avoid any major loss of Town Services. The Town will have to monitor this situation closely and update their planned construction schedule accordingly.

Key Recommendations

Short-term Recommendations

- CSS recommends that the Town take the steps necessary to restructure the Town organization based on the recommendations contained in this Report. This will help to significantly reduce the number of direct reports to the Town Administrator. Most of the organizational changes identified could be achieved by the start of the next Fiscal Year. The most challenging of these changes is the establishment of the new Department of Health and Human Services. This change should wait until staff rotation occurs for one of the affected Department Head level positions.
- We also recommend that weekly Operations Meetings be implemented as soon as possible. These Meetings will have a positive impact on the organization's communications, both internally and externally.
- The Town should take steps in the next Fiscal Year to extend the hours of the HR Director. An opportunity exists now to address this change as the current Director is reducing her time in one of her current commitments. The timing of this change is favorable, and the need within the Town is great. If it is feasible to fund in the next fiscal year, this would be a worthwhile investment in the FY 2026 Budget Plan.
- If any of the new Departments are recommended for implementation under the newly proposed reorganization, changes will have to be made to job descriptions and wages. We recommend that this work be performed over the next year to help support a smooth transition.
- The Town should evaluate all additional positions identified and determine how they can be implemented as part of a strategic staffing exercise. CSS recognizes and appreciates that implementing all the changes is not fiscally achievable, but a strategy should be prepared to help address these needs over several budget cycles.
- Now that the Town has identified all the capital facility needs that should be addressed, we recommend that the chief policy makers of the Town convene a process to prioritize the list and then establish a financing strategy to pay for the improvements. Once this is complete, we recommend that a communication strategy be established that includes a proposed timeline of actions that will be taken to get this endeavor started.



Long-term Recommendations

- The Town has a large list of capital facility projects that need to be addressed over time. While the time is now to get started, these plans will take many years before they are fully addressed. The long-term recommendation is to make sure the project priorities are constantly reviewed until the process is complete.
- Restructuring the Town will also take some time to complete, however fully achieving this change is not a short-term goal but more of a medium-term objective. During this process, some of the changes will be altered to fit the Town's needs. The long-term goal should be to periodically review the organization to see if it continues to meet the needs of the Town. A reasonable review period should occur every three years.
- The Town should plan and seek a funding source for expanding IT support in the Town. The Town contracts this service now and this is the most efficient use of these dollars at this time. However, as the use of technology continues to expand in local government, having an in-house coordinator of these services may be a more stable, and operationally beneficial solution for the community.
- The Town should consider changing the legislation that established the Town Administrator Form of Government to a Town Manager Form of Government. Of specific note, the Town should provide greater details about the amount of authority this position will have. The current form of government has been in practice for several years now and it is time to reevaluate the authority and role of this position.



Winter aerial view of Manchester-by-the-Sea, Massachusetts, showcasing the historic town center, harbor, First Congregational Church, and Town Hall on Cape Ann.

Executive Summary

Summary of Findings

Capital Strategic Solutions (CSS) was engaged by the Town of Manchester by the Sea (MBTS) for a comprehensive review and audit of the Town's organizational structure to determine if efficiencies could be achieved in how the Town currently operates and how it is presently structured.

The current Town Administrator, Greg Federspiel, has served the Town well but is going to be retiring in June of 2025. It was the Town's desire as part of this engagement to create some new management objectives for the next Town Administration.

We performed many interviews conducted over a three-day time span. Some interviews were conducted remotely due to schedule conflicts. Meetings were conducted with Department Heads, some staff members and with members of the Select Board.

CSS learned a lot about how MBTS operates through those meetings. We think that we have developed several helpful recommendations that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Town government. We also feel these recommendations will also improve the level of communication in the organization both internally and externally and will help to create a more collegial work environment.

We made some interesting discoveries regarding staffing levels. Our findings did not result in the reduction of staff members. We concluded the Town should increase staffing in some instances. We tried to make this recommendation in a conservative but operationally effective manner because we understand the many challenges facing this community, particularly as it relates to Capital Facility needs. We also think that some of these staffing changes can be phased in over time.

MBTS is a very lean organization and in several cases, and as previously noted, the organization could become operationally vulnerable if some of the staffing needs are not proactively addressed.

We assessed the ability of the organization to conduct Succession Planning, and we could only find four instances where that could be performed. That is an exceptionally low factor for local government, particularly in a world where finding talented replacements for department leaders has become exceedingly difficult. CSS thinks the community should reassess its approach to staff planning and evaluate primary and secondary leadership in each operating department. We believe that this approach will provide a more stable operation for the Town.

Speaking of departments, CSS evaluated the current operations of the Town and determined that the present reporting structure is not sustainable. The Town's organizational structure is flat with about 18 distinct functions, all reporting directly or indirectly to the Town Administrator. CSS does not feel that this is an efficient organizational design.

After meeting with all the Department Heads, however, we were able to redesign the structure and reduce the number of operating Departments down to eight (8) with a couple of individual functions



continuing to indirectly report to the Town Administrator.

CSS believes many of these changes can be implemented within the current organization, but some may have to wait for certain department head positions turnover to achieve the full restructuring effect. In any event, we feel that this plan will provide a good organizational road map for the Town's next Administration.

Inevitably this new structure will be able to communicate more efficiently through the initiation of weekly "Operations Meetings." These meetings help transform the flow of information internally and externally.

CSS also concluded that it is a suitable time to reevaluate the position of Town Administrator and consider changing the position to Town Manager. We observed that the responsibilities of the current position are not clearly outlined; and this should be clarified to avoid any potential confusion over the authority of this position. This is particularly important as the position transitions later this year.

CSS conducted an evaluation of the IT needs of the organization and our recommendations include, but were not limited to, an expansion of support services for IT. Currently, the organization is contracted with the Town of Danvers for several cloud-based services of the Town, but the organization is significantly lacking in daily IT support. We think this support should be expanded.

Our evaluation also concluded that more support is needed in Human Resources (HR). Currently the Town contracts for a regional HR Director for approximately ten (10) hours per week. We suggest that the service level should be tripled to thirty (30) hours per week or to a full-time level position to address the personnel needs of the Town. Personnel management has become an overly complex factor in organizations in recent years, and the Town should proactively address this need for the long-term benefit of the organization.

Finally, CSS looked at some of the major challenges facing the Town. Those challenges are driven primarily by capital needs and environmental challenges.

Over the years, the Town has not proactively addressed its capital facility needs, particularly on the Town side of government. This approach has now led to an incredibly challenging scenario as most of the Town facilities are not operating efficiently and are well past their useful life span. This situation becomes even more challenging when you factor in that many of these facilities are presently located in areas that are vulnerable to rising tides and flooding. As the tidal flow into the Harbor continues to rise the need to fortify or relocate several Town facilities becomes more time sensitive.

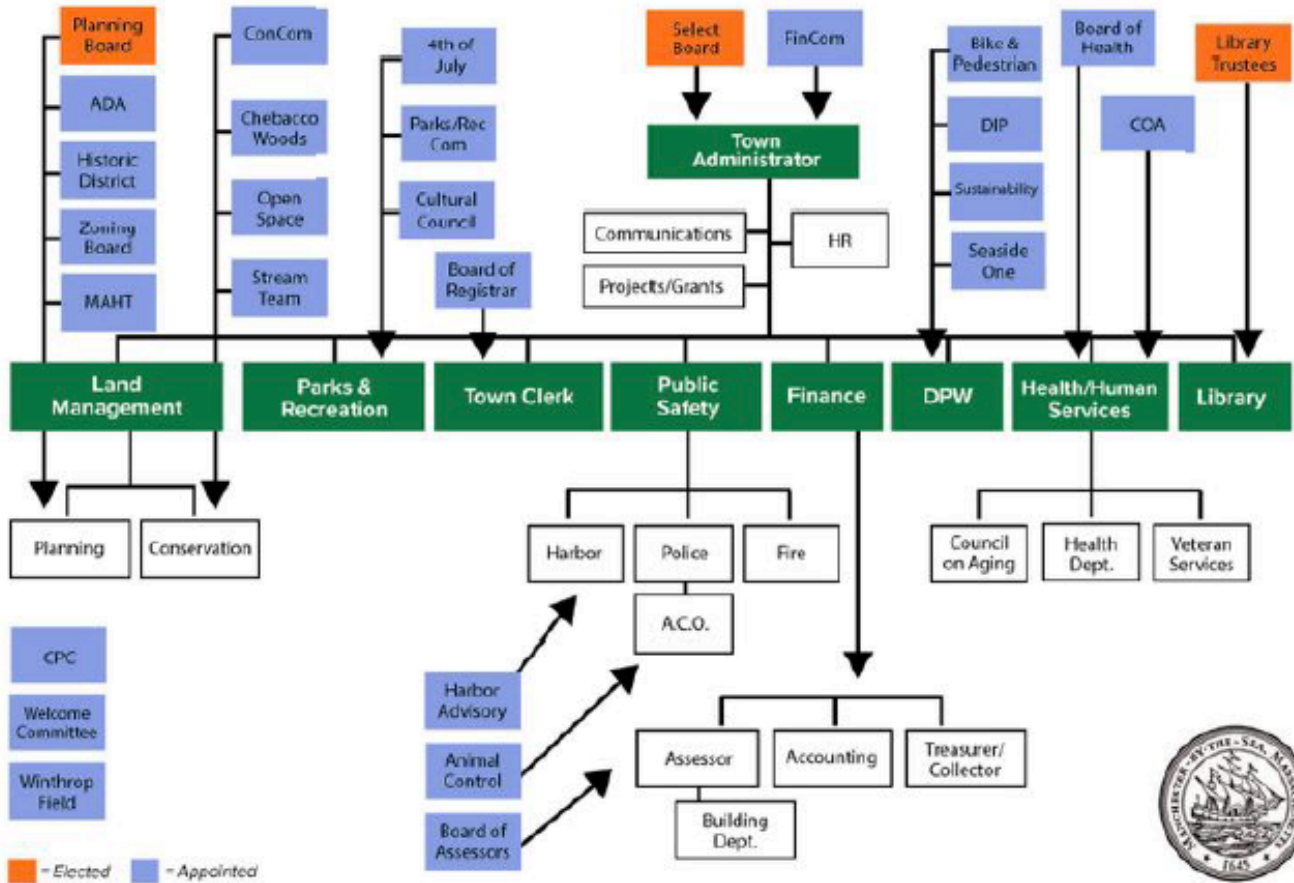
The Town has been proactive in studying its needs and has actively studied the coastal impacts of rising tides. The Town has also properly identified their list of capital needs, but they need to prioritize those needs and create a viable financing plan that moves the Plan forward. CSS has offered its insight on how that process should proceed.

It has been our pleasure to serve the Town of Manchester by the Sea. We hope that you find our recommendations helpful and useful. We are happy to review each of these findings as needed.



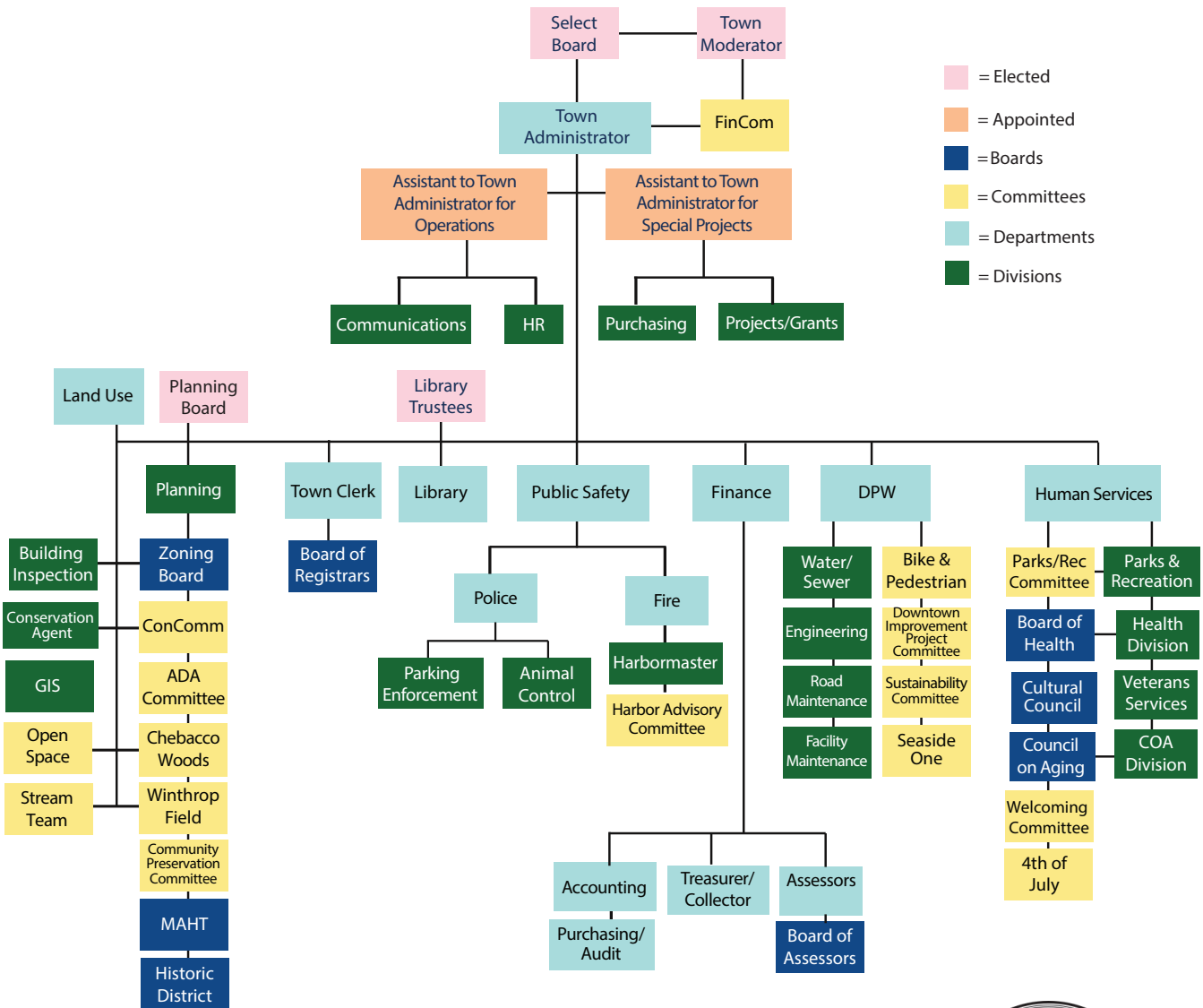
CURRENT Organization Chart

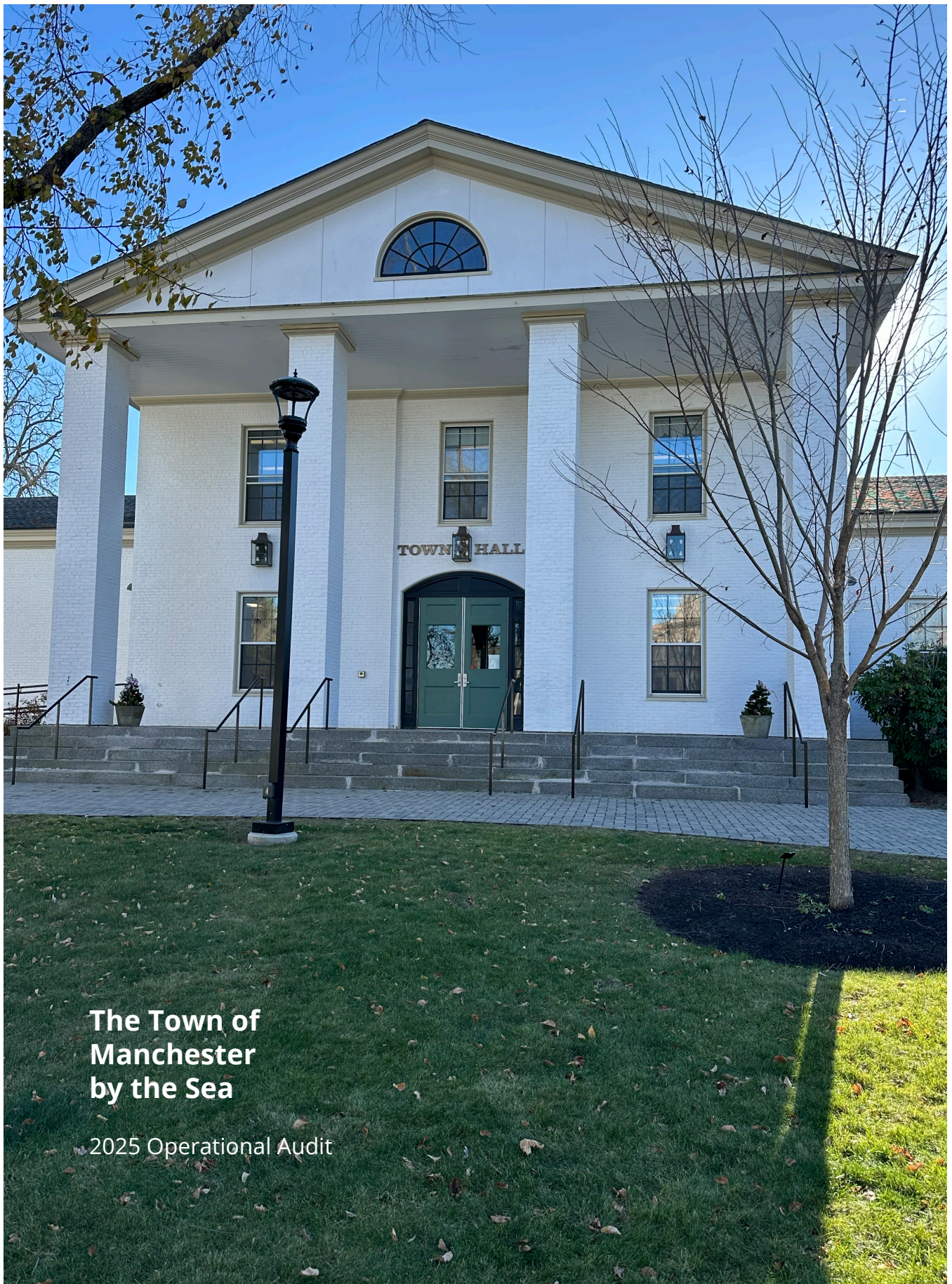
TOWN OF MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Proposed Organization Chart

Town of Manchester-By-The-Sea Organizational Chart





**The Town of
Manchester
by the Sea**

2025 Operational Audit