Step 4 - Department Operations Review

General Government
Financial Management
Police Department
Fire Department
Street and Solid Waste Department
Code Enforcement
Technology

2024

Strategic Management Plan





Prepared by:
Grass Root Solutions
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ELECTED OFFICIALS

Eric Bartels	Mayor
Ralph Jenko	Deputy Mayor
Ann Amatucci	Council Member
Dawn Vavick	Council Member
Bridget DiVittis	Council Member
James Kelley	Council Member
William Yuhaniak	Council Member

STAFF

Terry Carcella	City Manager
Karen Meholic	Finance Director
Richard Bosco	Chief of Police
Dan Weimer	Code Enforcement Officer
Scott Wajdic	Public Works Supervisor

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Strategic Management
Planning Program – Step 4

STEP 4: MANAGEMENT REVIEW OF OPERATIONS

As part of the Strategic Management Planning Program (STMP), and with assistance from GRS, Latrobe is performing an operational review of all departments and service delivery methods. The review includes narrative summaries for each department with budgets, staffing information, activity, and supporting data. This information is collected through interviews with the City Manager, department supervisors, and key staff to complete a comprehensive review of the City's operation.

INTRODUCTION

Latrobe was incorporated as a borough in 1854 and adopted a home rule charter in 1995, officially becoming the "City of Latrobe" (City). According to census data, the population is estimated to be 8,060 and the land area is 2.3 square miles. The City is located 40 miles east of the City of Pittsburgh sharing borders with the townships of Derry and Unity.

Latrobe is the home of the Latrobe Brewery, founded in 1939 and the original brewer of Rolling Rock beer. The plant is currently actively brewing Iron City Beer under contract. Latrobe was the birthplace and childhood home of children's television personality Fred Rogers and former professional golfer Arnold Palmer. The banana split was invented there by David Strickler in 1904. Latrobe is also home to the training camp of the Pittsburgh Steelers.

The City's population reached an all-time high in 1970 at 11,750. It has declined every decade since that time. At 8,060, the population is now about 70% of the population that it was in 1970.

Latrobe's home rule charter provides for a governing body that includes the mayor and six council members (Council), elected at large for four (4) year terms. The deputy mayor is designated by a majority vote of Council at the organization meeting and exercises all the powers of the mayor in the mayor's absence.

The city manager is appointed by the Council and serves as the City's chief executive officer authorized to carry out all routine administrative functions of the City government and oversee all departments.

The tax collector is appointed by the Council and is responsible for the receipt, collection and accounting of all revenue received by the City.

Department directors are appointed by the city manager subject to the approval of the Council. All other employees are appointed by the city manager in consultation with the department directors and subject to the City's personnel system.


General Government
"Welcome to the neighborhood"
LATROBE
PENNSYLVANIA

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

The review of the City's general government operation was conducted by Deborah Grass, project manager and owner of GRS. Deborah has extensive experience in local government operations. She spent over 17 years as a municipal manager, 3 years at the PA DCED Governors Center for Local Government Services, and 15 years as a municipal consultant. She has conducted training for local government officials through the PA-DCED, PA-GFOA, PA State Association of City Supervisors (PSATS), APMM, and the Local Government Academy (LGA). She has completed 25 previous STMP projects for Pennsylvania communities.

> "Without quality leadership, the organization and the broader community will suffer."

The basis for authority and action in any local government resides with the leadership and management of its operation. To this end, the structure, culture, and resources for basic management activities are critical to the success of the organization and, by extension, to the health and welfare of the community and its residents. Without quality leadership, the organization and the broader community will suffer.

The review and recommendations of this Plan rely heavily on the ICMA *Standards for Effective Local Government* and is the basis for much of the evaluation of the departments and programs. The ICMA standards assert that "if a local government is to function effectively "the leaders must possess three critical characteristics:

- The will to act,
- The necessary human and monetary resources, and
- The administrative machinery to bring the first two assets to bear upon its problems."

Leadership and management excellence must exist for the community to thrive. A well-led and well-managed local government sets the tone and conditions that instill public trust and confidence.

This evaluation of the general government operation will focus on professional expertise, human and financial resources, and the organizational structure that allows the employees in the organization to perform to their highest capacity.

OBSERVATIONS

To complete this evaluation, the consultant conducted fieldwork and site investigations, analyzed data, gathered information from comparable local government operations, and performed research. Interviews were conducted with the city manager and other key staff members. The Consultant also observed the City's routine general government and financial management operation. The recommendations contained in this report are based on recognized standards, accepted practices, and government mandates.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Latrobe adopted a Home Rule Charter in 1995 (effective January 5, 1998) that provides for the council-manager form of government. Under this form, the Council acts as the legislative body establishing laws, regulations, and policy and the city manager is charged with carrying out Council decisions and the oversight of the day-to-day operation of the City.

Operating under the Home Rule Charter, the Latrobe ***City Council*** acts as the governing body and is comprised of six council members and a mayor elected at large for four-year terms. To ensure continuity of governing, a maximum of three council members are up for election in any given election year. The council approves the ordinances, resolutions, annual budget, capital program, and policies for the City.

The ***Mayor*** is elected at large, serves a four (4) year term, and acts as the presiding officer of Council but has no special voting authority. In Latrobe, the mayor is involved in many community activities and community events.

The ***Deputy Mayor*** is appointed by a majority vote of council at the organization meeting and exercises the powers and duties of the mayor during the mayor's absence for any reason.

The ***Council Secretary*** is a staff position assigned to the council in the Charter. The secretary is charged with maintenance of the records of the municipality including minutes, ordinances, and resolutions. The secretary also attests and signs all legal documents for the City.

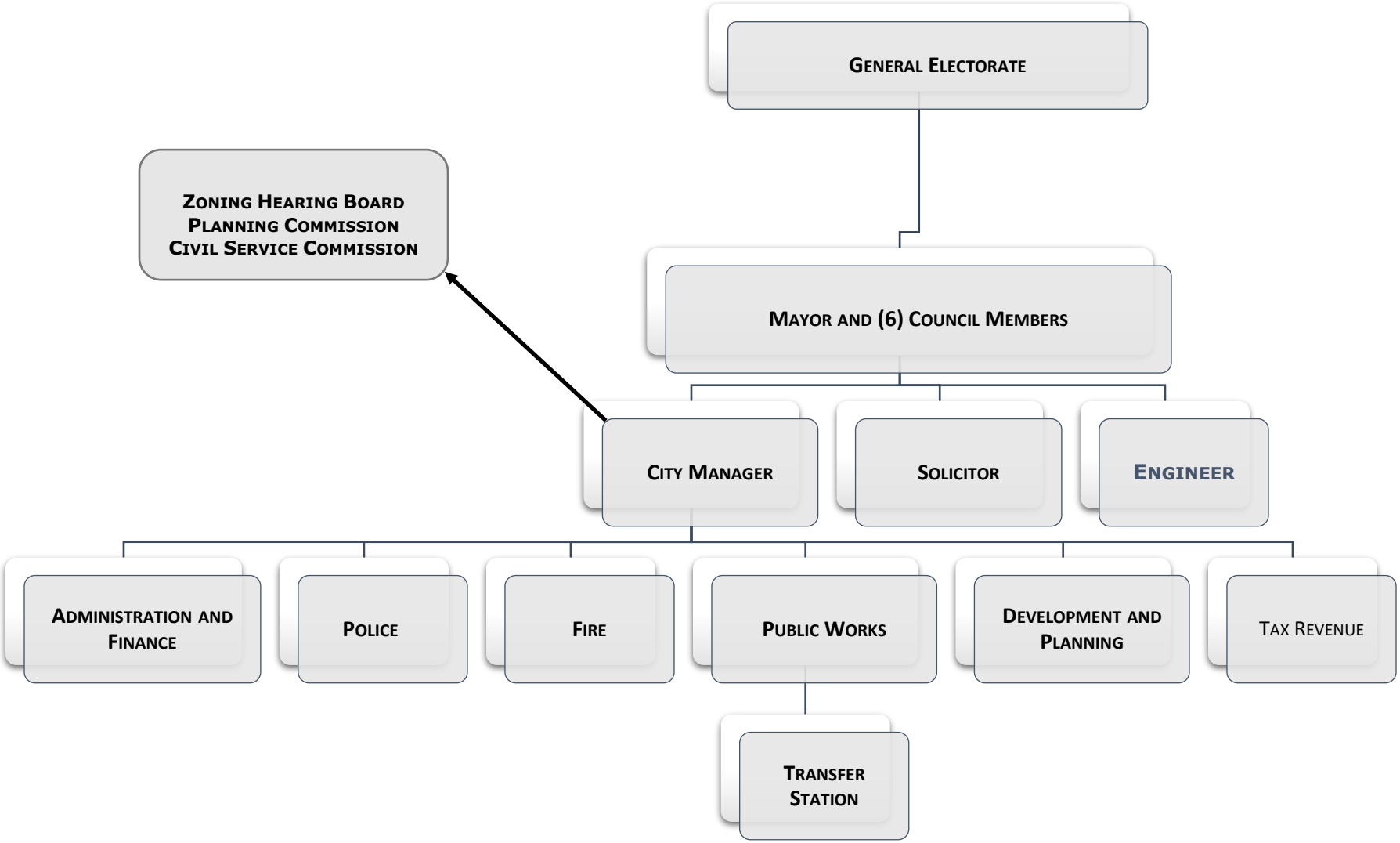
The office of ***City Manager*** is a required position under the Home Rule Charter and the appointment must be made "on the basis of managerial and administrative qualifications and experience." According to the Administrative Code, the city manager is designated as the chief executive and oversees all departments. The city manager is charged with carrying out the actions taken by the Council and overseeing the day-to-day operation of the City organization. The powers and duties of the manager are set out in detail in the Administrative Code. The city manager is an "at will" employee who can be removed with or without cause. The current city manager is an experienced professional manager who was appointed to the position in May of 2022.

The ***Tax Collector*** is appointed by City Council and is charged with ensuring that funds are deposited into City accounts. The manager has been appointed as the Tax Collector and oversees the Department of Tax Revenue. A deputy tax collector has also been appointed to assist with the oversight of the department.

Figure 1 is a representation of the current City organization.

> "Latrobe adopted a Home Rule Charter in 1995 which provides for the Council-Manager form of government. Under this form, the City Council acts as the legislative body and the City Manager is charged with carrying out the decisions of Council and the oversight of the day-to-day operation of the City."

FIGURE 1 – CITY OF LATROBE CURRENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE UNDER THE CHARTER



THE POLICY PROCESS

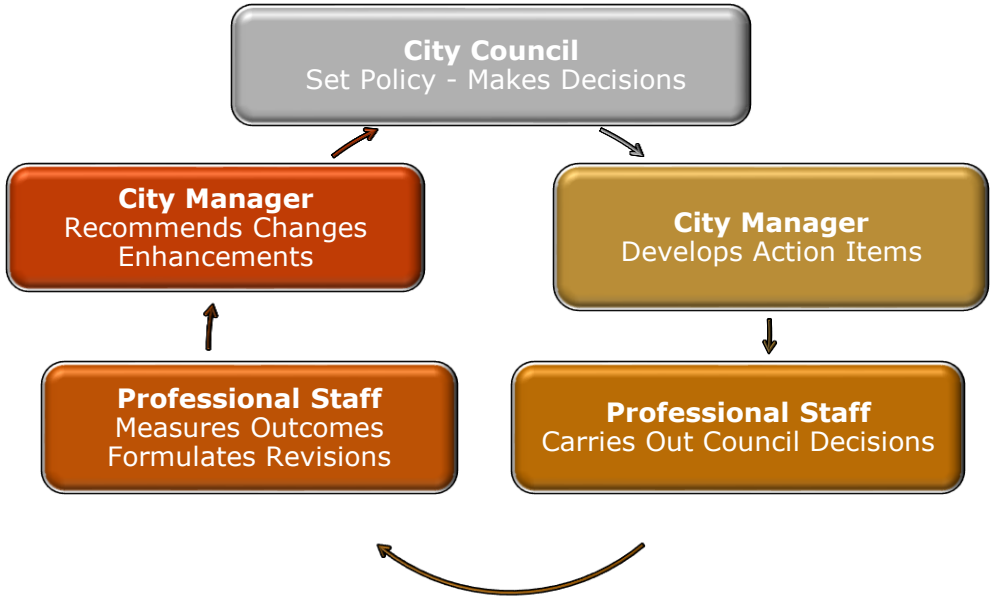
One of the important ICMA standards states that the governing body *"helps people to see the community as a total enterprise, not as a series of separate factions to be separately accommodated."* The interaction of the Council members, manager, and staff should be respectful and productive.

Local government works best when the elected officials, as a governing body, establish thoughtful, well-designed, and carefully examined policy directives based on a clear vision of the organization's mission and goals. Responsible actions derived from the decisions of the Council are carried out by a professional Manager and dedicated staff who are fully aware of policy decisions and act under the direction of trained supervisors. Proper training of the staff to constantly adhere to and advance the goals of the organization should be a top priority.

Local government works best when the elected officials, as a governing body, establish thoughtful, well-designed, and carefully examined policy directives based on a clear vision of the organization's mission and goals.

The Manager is responsible for the completion of action items to carry out Council decisions. The manager also develops information necessary for the Council to make informed decisions. **Figure 2** is a graphic representation of this process in a healthy policy-making environment.

FIGURE 2 - POLICY-MAKING PROCESS FOR AN EFFECTIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT



In Latrobe, the city manager presents information and establishes agendas based on directives from the Council members. The manager provides Council with comprehensive information on a regular basis for decision making purposes.

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

The Council and manager have established lines of communication for sharing information. Under the City's Charter, Council members must work through the manager regarding concerns, complaints, and requests for service. The Charter provides that no individual Council member has any authority whatsoever unless authority is specifically delegated by the Charter or by the Council. The manager facilitates concerns, complaints, and requests from Council members to the proper department for action.

OPEN RECORDS – OPEN MEETINGS

RECORDS

The "Open Records Act" requires that public documents and information must be made available to members of the public on a timely basis with reasonable costs. The City of Latrobe is committed to the concept of transparency and accountability in its operation. The City is responsive to its residents in requests for public information and has set up a record request policy pursuant to the Open Records Act. The manager acts as the "Right to Know" officer and is charged with ensuring that citizens have access to public records and public meetings where decision-making takes place. This provides a foundation for establishing trust in local government. The City operates on a primarily paper record retention system and could benefit from a conversion to a digitized system. This would simplify the search process for retrieval of records and right to know requests. The City has developed an on-line codification of its Charter, administrative code, and legislative ordinances through *eCode 360*.

MEETINGS

Pennsylvania's "Sunshine Law," also called the "Open Meetings Law," requires that all public meetings, special meetings, committee meetings, and work sessions be open to the public. The law provides that some discussions may be held in private, such as those related to real estate transactions, legal matters, and personnel. Council meetings are held on the second Monday of the month. Council workshops are held on the 4th Monday but no action is taken at the workshop meetings. Meetings are advertised by the City at the beginning of the calendar year and the Manager ensures that special meetings and committee meetings are advertised as necessary. The Open Meetings Law defines "local agency" as the governing body or any committee of the governing body authorized to act or to provide advice to the governing body. An established formal agenda for the regular Council meeting is prepared by the City Manager with input from the Mayor. Council members also have an opportunity to provide input. The agenda is published on-line and is available to elected officials in advance of the public meeting along with materials, documents, or commentary essential to understanding the business items that will come before the Council. Agendas for the public are made available at the Council meeting so that residents can comment on agenda items before a vote is taken.



SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS – OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS



Every local government requires the use of outside consultants who are appointed by the governing body for specific areas of expertise or special services. Under the City's Charter, competitive bidding is not required for:

- Labor or services rendered by any officer or employee of the City
- Labor, material, supplies, or services furnished by one department to another department
- Contracts for labor, material, supplies, or services available from only one vendor.
- Contracts relating to the acquisition of real estate or use of real property
- Contracts for professional or unique services
- Contracts for insurance and surety bonds
- Contracts for emergency repair of public works in the City
- Contracts with other governmental entities, authorities, agencies or political sub-divisions

When the City requires the services of special consultants such as attorneys, accountants, engineers, planners, financial advisers, or bond counsel the governing body follows an established formal contracting procedure:

1. The development of a scope of services for the work to be performed.
2. The use of a formal request for proposal (RFP) or request for qualifications (RFQ).
3. Public advertisement that proposals are being accepted.
4. Review and evaluation of proposals in accordance with the pre-established criteria contained in the scope of services; and
5. Award of a contract to the individual or firm with the best professional qualifications that can do the work for the most reasonable cost. This is best achieved through an open, competitive process as described above.

Likewise, from time-to-time, the City Council must fill vacancies on its boards, commissions and committees such as recreation, zoning board, planning commission, other authorities, and ad hoc committees. It is important to inform the public when there are vacancies to be filled and to encourage interested and qualified citizens to apply. The process should attempt to balance broad-based community representation with specific qualifications needed to ensure effective performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1 – UPDATE THE HOME RULE CHARTER.

The City's Home Rule Charter was adopted in 1995 and should be scheduled for a review and update at least every ten (10) years. There are certain outdated provisions in the Charter that cause the City unnecessary time, money, and resources that should be revisited including:

- Section 302 – requires the Council to organize at 7pm on the first Monday of January following the election. This should be more flexible.
- Section 313 – refers to a "Council Secretary."
- Section 402 – refers to a "Council Secretary" who is responsible for minutes and records.
- Section 408 – refers to the "Citizens Right to be Heard." This should reference the Sunshine Act" since the City is required to follow this law.
- Section 501 – requires the adoption of an Ordinance for the establishment of wages, hours and fringe benefits for employees and rate charges for services. This can be done by resolution or motion.
- Section 503 – also refers to "Council Secretary."
- Section 505 – provides for the publication in a newspaper of general circulation for ordinances after adoption. This does not give the public notice prior to the adoption of ordinances. Only zoning, land development, and new tax ordinances require publication 10 days prior to adoption.
- Section 506 – requires public hearings for the new taxes or increases to taxes or any service charge.
- Section 507 – requires recording ordinances in record books. This should be changed to codification on-line.
- Section 903 – the Council should have authority to appoint special counsel when necessary.
- Section 1006 – requires the adoption of the budget by ordinance. This can be done by resolution or motion.
- Section 1202 – requires the adoption of a personnel system that includes: job classification, a compensation plan, merit-based recruitment, testing and appointment, grievance procedures and a benefit plan.

The update to the Home Rule Charter can be achieved through a City Council appointment of an ad hoc Committee that would review and recommend changes to the Charter. The proposed changes would be adopted by City Council by ordinance and provided to the Westmoreland County election bureau so that the referendum questions can be placed on the ballot of either a primary or general election for voter approval. If the referendums are approved, the Charter would be adjusted accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – UPDATE THE ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

Once the Charter is updated, it will be necessary to update the City's administrative code to be consistent with the changes to the Charter. Furthermore, the administrative code should be reviewed and updated regularly to keep it consistent with changing local practices and state law. For example, the City's administrative code sets a bid limit of $18,500 for competitive bidding while the PA threshold set by the Department of Labor and Industry is $23,200 and is adjusted every year based on the CPI.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – CONSIDER REDUCING THE NUMBER OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

A recent study identified dozens of vacant Council seats across the Commonwealth because residents are too busy or too disinterested to serve on governing bodies. The study also found that smaller governing bodies are more efficient and effective in promoting cohesion, flexibility, and effective participation by members to achieve governance objectives.

Having 7 Council members made sense when the population was over 11,000 people but with a population of 8,000, the Council could be reduced to a five (5) member Council that includes a mayor and four (4) council members. This could be achieved by placing a question on the ballot (either at the general or primary election) to amend the Charter. Sitting council members would serve their full terms, and the new structure would not take effect until a date certain in the future.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – CONSIDER CREATING AN ASSISTANT MANAGER POSITION

The City is a complex organization that provides a wide variety of services through the management of an $8 million budget. The addition of an assistant manager's position would provide another layer of professional expertise for the City that an executive secretary position cannot provide. By adding a second professional management level position, the City could achieve better oversight of finance, planning and development, public works, sanitation, and personnel management. An assistant manager ensures legacy planning because he/she can be prepared for a future transition to the City Manager position.

RECOMMENDATION 5 - PROVIDE PERSONNEL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF

The City employees are the most valuable assets in the City organization. Like most communities, the largest expenditure in the City's budget is personnel and related items. The personnel environment is complex and rapidly changing especially with the internet and social media. Handling these issues requires a high degree of training and experience so that matters can be addressed effectively and in accordance with public-sector employment law. Situations such as workers' compensation claims, disabilities, and long-term absences can be expensive if they are not addressed in an effective and expedient manner. In fact, the City's Charter requires a comprehensive personnel system based on merit and pre-established rules.

The city manager, department directors, and staff who handle human resource management should have access and attend personnel management training. One such opportunity is the annual public employee training sponsored by the Public Employee Labor Relations Advisory Service (PELRAS) and supported by the PA Municipal League (PML) and the Association for PA Municipal Managers (APMM), held in State College in March of each year. This training focuses on personnel related and collective bargaining matters. There are also other opportunities for training each year through the Local Government Academy (LGA), the Association of PA Municipal Managers (APMM), and the PA-Government Finance Officers Association (PA-GFOA).

RECOMMENDATION 6 – DEVELOP AND ADOPT AN EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

All local governments need an employee handbook to protect against a variety of risks and liabilities. A handbook will significantly reduce disputes with employees by ensuring that everyone knows and follows the established rules. The handbook should include among other things:

- General employment statutes and legally mandated regulations
- Compensation and benefit policies including payroll, sick leave, paid time off, overtime, benefits, breaks, and jury duty.
- Harassment and discrimination policies.
- Work rules, workplace conditions, and policies
- Standards of conduct
- Computer use and social media policies.
- Disciplinary process

RECOMMENDATION 7 – DIGITIZE RECORDS

The City's codification through *eCode 360* is an excellent tool for the officials, departments, and public but it is only updated through September of 2022.

But other record management challenges continue to rise for municipalities. The City could be more efficient in the storage of both electronic and paper files and the integration of each with regulatory standards consistent with the PA record retention schedule. Records must also be available for retrieval for "right to know" requests. The move to a paperless environment should be a priority for the City.




Financial Management

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT



The review of the City's financial management operation was conducted by Deborah Grass, owner and project manager of GRS, as part of the review for Step IV of the STMP project. Deborah has extensive experience in preparing and reviewing financial information for municipalities. She spent over 17 years as a municipal manager, 3 years at the PA DCED Governors Center for Local Government Services, and 15 years as a local government consultant. She provides training for local government officials through the PA-DCED, PA-GFOA, PA State Association of City Supervisors (PSATS), APMM, and the Local Government Academy (LGA).

To complete this evaluation, the consultant conducted fieldwork and site investigations, analyzed data, gathered information from comparable local government operations, and performed extensive research. Personal interviews were held with the Manager, the Accountant, the City Clerk, and the Councilman who is the Supervisor of Accounts and Finance. In addition, interviews were conducted with employees who are part of the financial management operation as part of the finance and technology review. The ICMA publication *Standards for Effective Local Government,* the best practices developed by GFOA, and the DCED publication *Fiscal Management Handbook* were used as part of the review of the City's financial management. The recommendations contained in this plan are based on recognized standards, accepted practices, and government mandates. According to the *ICMA Standards,* municipal financial management includes five areas of activity. They are:

Accounting – the process of creating and maintaining a consistent and readily accessible records system that represents all of the local government's financial transactions

Budgeting – the plan annually adopted by the legislative body that allocates revenues to support the local government's spending priorities for services, programs, and capital improvements

Cash management and Investments – the actions taken to accelerate the collection of revenues, meet expenditure obligations in a timely manner, and generate investment earnings on available cash until it is used to meet expenditure obligations

Debt management – the use of long-term borrowing by the municipality to finance capital improvements

Auditing – The annual review of the accounting records using generally accepted accounting practices to determine whether the municipality's financial transactions conform to those permitted by municipal codes and charters and authorized in the annual budget.

OBSERVATIONS



The management of the City's finances is distributed among several staff members including the deputy tax collector, the finance director, accounting clerk, sanitation clerk, and the manager. There is also an outside accountant who has been working with the City to set up the new software system which is *Accufund.* The Tax Revenue Office receives payments for real estate taxes and other receivables. The manager oversees the budget, pension administration, and investments. As a result, there is no cohesive and coordinated financial management system.

FINANCIAL OFFICERS

The **Director of Finance** in Latrobe is appointed by the Manager and heads the Finance and Administration Department. The Finance Director is also the Director of Administration, the City Secretary, and the records clerk and, in addition to overseeing the financial management operation, is charged with attending Council meetings, taking minutes, keeping all official records, signing checks, and attesting all legal documents. This position is also responsible for part of the payroll preparation process.

The Manager has been appointed the **Tax Collector** and has appointed a deputy tax collector to oversee the Tax Revenue Department. This department is charged with keeping an account of all receipts including real estate taxes, permits, inspections and other fees. The department regularly prepares and submits reports for the City Council for all revenue sources.

Beginning in 2012, Earned Income Tax (EIT) has been collected through a countywide Tax Collection Committee (TCC) that selected Berkheimer Tax Services as its collector. The City has also assigned the collection of Local Services Tax (LST) to Berkheimer.

The **Accounting Clerk** is responsible for invoices and accounts payable and the preparation of the payroll processing.

The **Sanitation Clerk** oversees the billing and collection of garbage fees and stormwater fees.

Table 1 provides the history for the expenses associated with the administration and finance operation since 2019.

TABLE 1 – ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE EXPENSES 2019-2023

CATEGORY	2019 AUDITED	2020 AUDITED	2021 AUDITED	2022 AUDITED	2023 PROJECTED
400 Executive					
400 120 000 Salary of City Manager	71,608	57,446	59,908	87,773	64,166
400 121 000 Salary of Dir of Admin & Finance	52,744	71,106	25,405	41,755	64,463
400 140 000 Salaries of Clerical Staff	90,859	99,573	148,611	129,465	144,977
Total 400 Executive	**215,211**	**228,126**	**233,923**	**258,993**	**273,606**
403 Tax Collection					
403 120 000 Salary of Director	10,869	5,746	14,977	16,154	15,142
403 140 000 Salary of Clerical Staff	45,079	20,304	66,353	77,197	47,500
403 210 000 Office Supplies	847	1,178	1,155	1,407	309
403 300 000 Administrative Operating Expense	0	0	1,143	1,407	0
403 301 000 Miscellaneous Expense	341	174	2,369	1,732	5,948
403 321 000 IT / Communications	2,207	3,063	1,904	3,262	2,675
403 325 000 Postage Expense	4,550	4,803	5,003	5,994	1,995
403 353 000 Surety and Fidelity Bonding	0	785	0	0	0
403 460 000 Travel, School & Conference	0	0	0	0	0
403 530 000 Land Bank RE Reimbursement	1,340	311	0	381	0
Total 403 Tax Collection	**65,234**	**36,364**	**92,905**	**107,535**	**73,569**

SOURCE: CITY OF LATROBE FINANCIAL RECORDS AND GRS ANALYSIS

FINANCIAL PRACTICES

Based on discussions and interviews with the manager and staff and from the observations of the STMP team, the following conditions are reported:

REVENUE COLLECTION

- The Tax Revenue Office collects all current year real estate tax through January of the subsequent year.
- The real estate current year collection rate is about 95% which is excellent.
- Prior-year real estate taxes are turned over to the Westmoreland County Tax Claim Bureau.
- The EIT and LST are collected by Berkheimer Tax Services as part of the countywide collection.
- The Tax Revenue Office collects all other fees.



- The City's funds are placed with Commercial Bank & Trust which is a reliable and FDIC-insured entity. Management would like to transition to a different depository but the transition is difficult.
- Garbage fees and stormwater fees are collected in-house.

FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

- The City is struggling with the transition to the *AccuFund* financial management software due to training and support issues. As a result, the City financial reports are not timely or reliable.
- *AccuFund* is a fund accounting software and is a suitable product for the City's accounting system once the installation, training, and support are addressed.
- The manager is responsible for the City's overall financial management operation. However, many of the tasks are distributed to the finance director, deputy tax collector, accounting clerk, and sanitation clerk.
- Council does not receive monthly budget comparison reports, reconciled balance sheets, or cash flow analysis.
- The Tax Revenue Office is responsible for recording receipts and entering accounting transactions related to payments but there has been some concern about the accuracy of the data entry because the ledger remains unbalanced.
- There is an outside accounting service that provides support to the City staff for financial management.
- There is no formal purchasing process and therefore no system for encumbering funds when orders are placed.
- The staff have received no formal training in governmental fund accounting and are not members of the (GFOA).
- The City uses independent auditor Opst and Associates to prepare the City's annual audited financial statements for submission to DCED. These reports are due no later than April 1 but are not completed and submitted on time.
- There are no written standard operating procedures for financial functions: cash management, accounts payable, purchasing, invoice processing, reconciliation of accounts, and regular reporting. This is a significant concern given the limited staff and potential for turnover and transition in the City operation.

BUDGET PROCESS

- The manager and finance director are responsible for preparing and submitting the budget to Council.
- The City does not have a written process for preparing and approving the annual budget.
- The City does not publish a formal budget calendar.
- The manager and staff meet with the department directors during budget preparation.
- There are formal budget workshops scheduled for public participation.
- The budget does not include a budget message.
- Budgets are prepared and adopted for all City funds: the general fund, liquid fuels fund, stormwater fund, and capital fund.
- Although Council members are involved in budget development, they are not able to monitor budget progress because they don't receive regular budget reports or balance sheets.

- The City does not currently prepare a five (5) year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).
- The City has not prepared and adopted a comprehensive fee resolution outlining fees for services as part of the budget process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 8 – REMOVE TASKS FROM THE FINANCE DIRECTOR THAT ARE NOT RELATED TO THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

The City needs a finance director that is completely focused on the financial management of the City to ensure timely and accurate reporting. It is impossible to make informed decisions without comprehensive financial reporting. Duties related to records management, Council support, and other administrative items should be reassigned to other staff members.

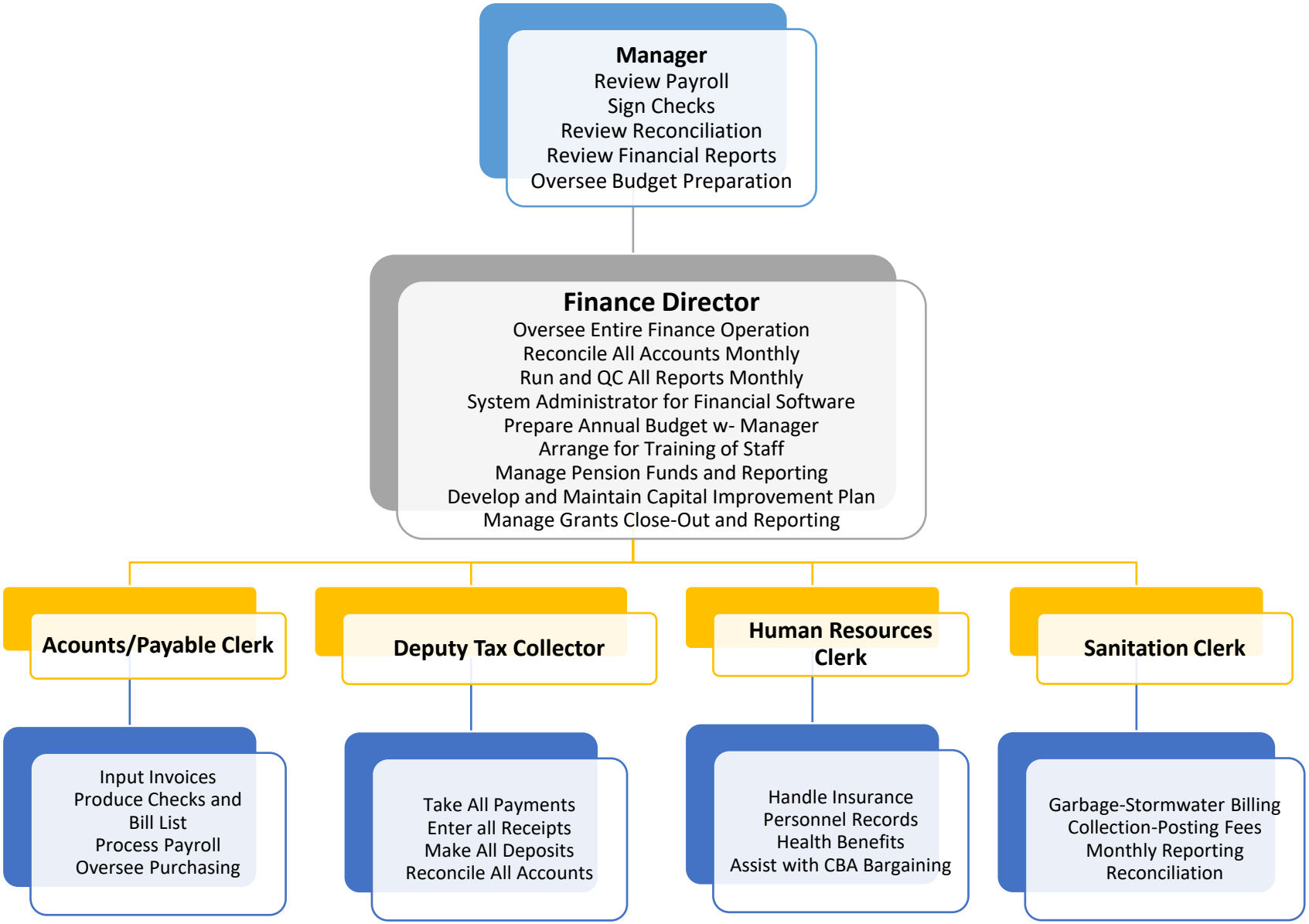
The finance director should have a strong governmental accounting background and should be knowledgeable and a member of GFOA. The director should be responsible for the oversight of all City funds, capital planning, and administration of the pension system. With a dedicated finance director, the City could begin to address financial management internal controls that are not currently in place. Expansions and enhancements to the financial management system should be added such as:

- Fiscal Procedures Policy
- Fixed Assets Inventory
- Purchase Order System
- Permits and Licenses Tracking System
- Equipment and Vehicle Replacement Schedules
- Infrastructure Planning
- Capital Improvement Planning

Figure 3 is the recommended structure for the City's financial management operation:



FIGURE 3 - RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR FINANCE DEPARTMENT



RECOMMENDATION 9 - PROVIDE FUNDING FOR TRAINING

The City operation is currently supported by an $8 million annual operating budget. In order to protect the assets and resources of the City (both human and capital), it is important that the City have a financial management system that meets *Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)* and that management of the financial system is vested with employees who have the authority and training to act accordingly. In order to further enhance and protect the City assets, the City should sponsor membership in GFOA and provide training allocations for the finance director to attend the annual conference and to participate in training opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION 10 – INSIST ON ADDITIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT FROM ACCUFUND

Fund accounting is an accounting system for recording assets, liabilities, revenue and expenditures in separate funds as required by governmental standards. It emphasizes accountability rather than profitability and is used by governmental agencies of all sizes. In this method, a fund consists of a self-balancing set of accounts, and each is reported as either unrestricted, temporarily restricted, or permanently restricted for specific purposes based on legally imposed restrictions. *AccuFund* has been used successfully by dozens of municipalities across the state, as a fund accounting system for municipal financial management systems. But it has been a struggle for the City staff due to lack of training and support. The City staff should dedicate the time and resources to ensuring that the software is working for all users and produces the monthly reports for decision-making purposes.

RECOMMENDATION 11 – PRODUCE COMPREHENSIVE MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Monthly financial reporting should be a routine and required function of the finance operation as soon as bank reconciliation is completed but no later than the 10th of each month. Currently, the City staff are not providing timely reports for review by the manager and the Council inclusive of all funds and all accounting transactions. Monthly reports should include but not be limited to the following information:

- ***BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISON REPORT*** – Report that compares budgeted revenues and expenditures to actual revenues and expenditures for each and every category and line item for each of the funds.
- ***SUMMARY BALANCE SHEET REPORT*** – Report that shows the assets, liabilities, and fund balance for each and every municipal fund reconciled to the bank statements.
- ***CASH FLOW ANALYSIS*** – Report that compares cash flow in the current fiscal year to previous year(s) and identifies what the actual availability of cash is estimated to be by month and at year-end.

RECOMMENDATION 12 – DEVELOP A FISCAL PROCEDURES POLICY

There is no *Fiscal Procedure Policy* for the City's financial management system. Because of the limited staff and potential transition in key positions, the lack of written procedures could cause confusion and errors. The written policies and procedures should cover the following:

- Accounting for revenues, expenditures, assets, and liabilities
- Financial procedures for:

  - Accounts payable
  - Payroll preparation
  - Purchasing and inventory management
  - Accounts receivable
  - Grant management,
  - Tax collection
  - Fees, fines, departmental charges, and intergovernmental revenues
  - Monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting for all funds
  - Handling cash and parking meter revenues
  - Use of credit cards
- Administrative procedures, including recordkeeping, filing, and forms
  - Internal controls
  - Cash management
  - Separation of duties
  - Risk management
  - Investing
  - Auditing
  - Pension Administration



RECOMMENDATION 13 – MAKE ENHANCEMENTS TO THE BUDGETING PROCESS

The development of the annual budget sets the tone for the entire organization for the fiscal year. It is a policy statement about what programs and services will be provided as well as a decision about how resources will be allocated. The Council and manager should consider the following enhancements to the budget development process:

- Distribute **BUDGET WORKSHEETS** to department directors that include at least three years of prior financial data. A historical analysis of revenues and expenditures will improve the ability for making accurate budget projections.

- Use a **BUDGET CALENDAR** that is published and distributed within and outside of the City organization and placed on the City's website. The calendar enables people who are involved in the budget process (the Council, the department directors, and the agencies) to plan accordingly for workshops, public presentations, and adoption of the final budget. It also provides the public with the ability to participate in the process and to provide public comments in a timely manner. Finally, it keeps the process focused and on target to meet the legal requirements of advertisement, publication, public inspection, and adoption.

- Schedule several public **BUDGET WORKSHOPS** so that the budget can be explained in plain language, and the Council can receive comments from the citizens.

- Include a complete **ANALYSIS OF COST** prior to any new planned hire in any department. The City's personnel costs make up about 80% of the overall budget. For this reason, it is critical to evaluate every position prior to Council approval of a new hire. The analysis should include not only starting costs but projected benefit and pension costs over the entire employment period, with adjustments for estimated inflation rates.

- Prepare and include a **BUDGET MESSAGE** in plain language that accompanies the initial presentation of the budget to the Council and the public for preliminary review. The budget message should include areas of financial concern such as a reduction in revenues, the need for a tax rate increase, or changes to staffing or service levels. The budget document itself should be presented in a format that is clearly understandable to officials, the public, and the media.

Once the budget has been adopted, it should be used to control spending. The manager and finance director should monitor, measure, and evaluate the following:

- **PROGRAM PERFORMANCE** – How well is the City doing in reaching its program goals and objectives?

- **BUDGETARY PERFORMANCE** – How well are actual revenues, expenditures, cash flows, and fund balances staying within budget?

- **FINANCIAL CONDITION** – What is the long-term health of the City, including the community's general social, demographic, and economic conditions?

- **EXTERNAL FACTORS** – What changes have occurred that can have an impact on performance?

RECOMMENDATION 14 – INVOLVE DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS IN THE BUDGET PROCESS

The finance director, police chief, fire chief, code enforcement officer, and public works director should be involved in the development of the budget, and they should be held responsible for working within the confines of the budget limits. The departments should be held accountable for budget overruns and should be required to justify expenditures that are not routine or ordinary. Any items requested for the new budget year should have a complete analysis of cost (initial and maintenance), a statement of need, supporting data, the volume and nature of the work performed, benefits to be achieved, and justification for the purchase. Any proposed new revenue items or revenue enhancements should be encouraged and fully explored by the department directors and relevant staff.

RECOMMENDATION 15 – PREPARE A FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP).

The five-year CIP should be undertaken separately from the annual budget process and should include all projects with descriptions, estimated costs, estimated schedules, and identified revenue sources to support the projects and equipment. The CIP should be developed in conjunction with department directors, the City engineer, and key staff. The CIP should also identify the impact that

each capital project will have on the operating budget for specific fiscal years. The annual capital budget should be based on the multiyear CIP.

RECOMMENDATION 16 – BUILD-IN ADDITIONAL OVERSIGHT OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES.

With limited staff, it is very difficult to have segregation of duties in the financial operation creating the perception that there could be mismanagement or fraud. But it is possible to have some limited oversight of the daily financial transactions by adding some reviews and signoffs for financial transactions. The following procedures are recommended:

- The manager should review the payroll register and sign it before checks are issued.
- The manager should review the quarterly payroll withholding tax payments to ensure that they are being made by the City appropriately.
- The Council should review the bill list and sign it after the Council approves it each month.
- Receipts should be pre-numbered and not be taken by the same person who records the information into the accounting system.
- Deposits should not be made by the same person who writes and records receipts.
- Checks should be prepared by the accounts payable clerk for approved invoices and signed (live signatures) by the manager, mayor or their designees as provided in the Charter.
- The real estate tax account fund should be examined and audited regularly. As the largest revenue source, this fund provides the highest potential for theft or mismanagement.
- The independent auditor should file the DCED annual financial report by April 1 as required by law.

RECOMMENDATION 17 – IMPLEMENT A FORMAL PURCHASE ORDER PROCEDURE.

A purchase order system should be designed and implemented requiring the finance director to approve purchases up to a certain threshold limit and to require other purchases to be approved by the manager in advance of the purchase. This policy should ensure the cost, quality, and delivery of products and services used by the City. A sample policy has been included in **Appendix A.**


POLICE
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POLICE DEPARTMENT

The review of the City of Latrobe police department was conducted by Robert F. Johnson, police consultant for GRS, as part of Step 4 of the STMP project for the City of Latrobe. Johnson has over 29 years of experience in law enforcement, first serving as a Pennsylvania state trooper where he retired as a lieutenant, commander of the Criminal Investigation Section, Troop A, Greensburg. Johnson then went on to serve as the Chief of Police for the City of Johnstown for three years prior to his retirement from Law Enforcement. He is a graduate of the Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command.

To complete this evaluation, the consultant conducted fieldwork and site investigations, analyzed data, gathered information from comparable local government operations, and conducted extensive research. Personal interviews were held with the chief of police. The ICMA publication *Standards for Effective Local Government* and publications from the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) were used as part of the review of the department. The recommendations contained in this report are based on recognized standards, accepted practices, and government mandates.

It is the intent of the STMP team to provide the City's public officials with a complete, comprehensive, and professional evaluation of the provision of police services in their community. This report is developed and submitted with the sole purpose of improving existing conditions through a comprehensive evaluation of the police operation.

OBSERVATIONS

The Latrobe police department is under the supervision of the appointed police chief who reports directly to the city manager. According to the City's website the Latrobe police department is "devoted to ensuring the safety of our community by employing professional, highly trained officers who are committed to community policing and proactive law enforcement". The police department is dispatched to all emergency and non-emergency calls through the Westmoreland County Department of Public Safety 911 Center.

ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

At the time of evaluation, the police department consisted of 14 full-time positions.

LEADERSHIP

The Latrobe police department is led by a police chief who has 30 years of experience. He was previously employed by the Latrobe police department prior to leaving for a successful career with the PA State Attorney General's Office, and subsequently, as chief of police in Lincoln Borough before returning to Latrobe.

ANNUAL EXPENDITURES

The police department is the second largest expenditure in the City's 2023 overall budget, making up 26% of the entire budget.[1] Roughly 81% of the police budget is allocated for wages. Police department expenditures have remained consistent at roughly 26% over the previous five (5) year period. The 17% increase in the police department budget over the period of 2019-2023 is a result of annual salary increases of 2.5% under the collective bargaining agreement. The actual overtime expenditures show a 53% increase for patrol officers from 2020 to 2023. A detailed line-item history is provided in **Table 2**.

TABLE 2 - POLICE DEPARTMENT EXPENDITURES 2019 - 2023

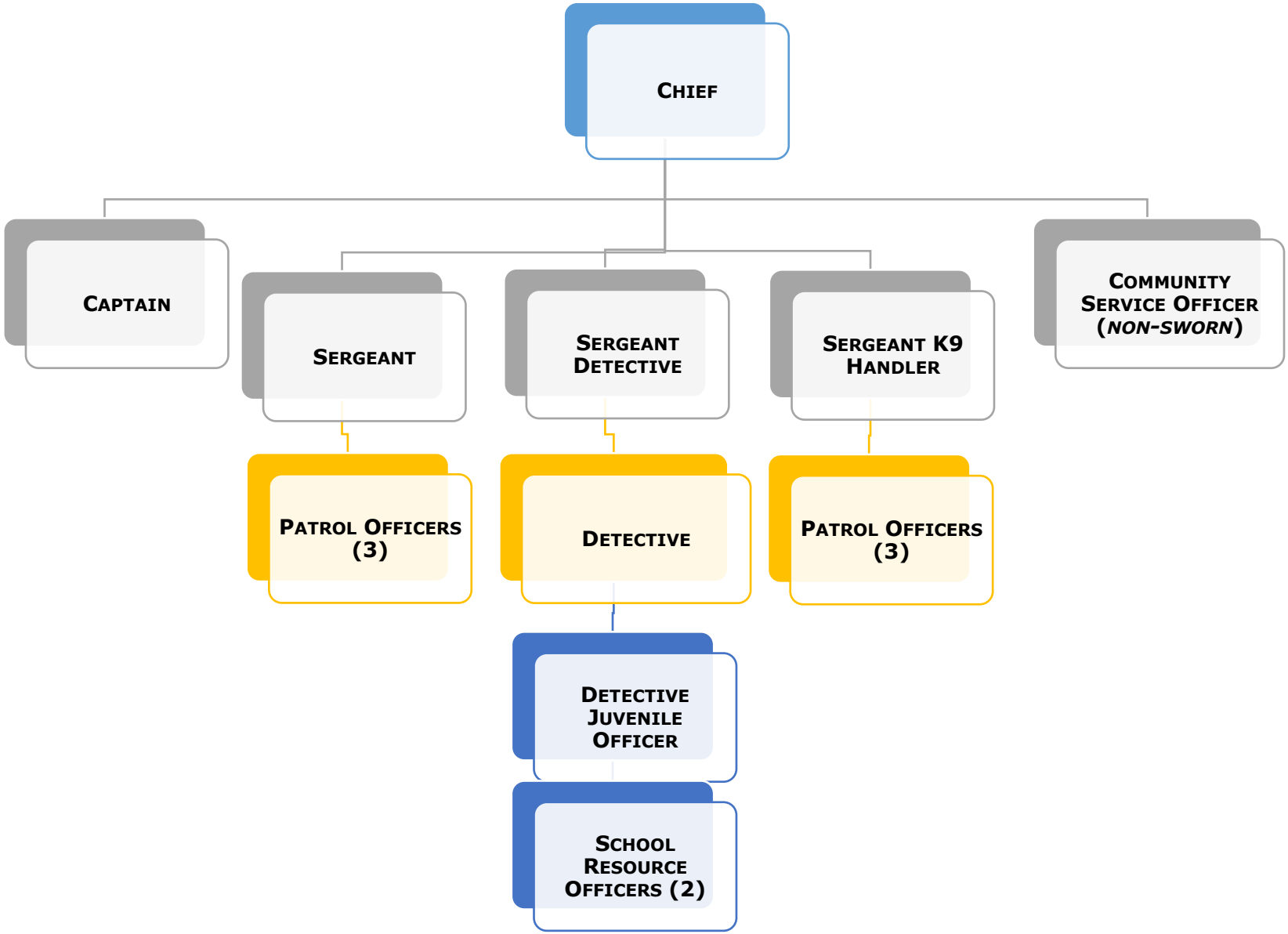
410 POLICE DEPARTMENT	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
410 121 000 Police Chief's Salary	105,284	94,310	104,476	94,429	102,778
410 122 000 Police Chief's Vacation Buyback	10,910	3,442	0	0	0
410 130 000 Patrolmen Salaries	892,170	983,640	1,012,859	988,380	995,647
410 132 000 Meter Attendant's Salary	35,399	49,092	48,837	53,656	24,217
410 132 100 Community Service Officer	42,222	39,743	43,171	42,671	49,220
410 133 000 Police - Traffic Control Aux.	8,231	(3,524)	7,014	5,821	4,116
410 183 000 Overtime Pay - Patrolmen	117,020	78,194	85,502	103,453	119,486
410 183 100 Overtime - Drug Task Force	41,287	21,088	13,969	12,958	4,395
410 183 200 Overtime - DUI Force	11,954	9,888	15,001	6,579	8,617
410 185 000 Holiday Pay - Patrolmen	47,992	55,976	49,162	45,782	53,456
410 192 000 Uniforms	7,730	7,441	5,403	5,637	6,077
410 210 000 Office Supplies	1,122	1,522	1,256	2,986	3,873
410 211 000 Violation Ticket	0	1,445	0	0	600
410 212 000 Community Relations - Supplies	0	80	500	571	0
410 214 000 New Personnel Costs	911	376	5,928	0	5,211
410 220 000 Operating Supplies & Expense	145	801	1,057	662	1,995
410 242 000 Guns and Ammunition	1,996	2,240	6,043	2,146	4,681

[1] The City budget does not allocate health benefits or pension costs to the respective departments otherwise the costs would be 30% higher than shown.

410 POLICE DEPARTMENT	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
410 250 000 Traffic Signal - Maint & Repairs	8,690	3,396	56	0	0
410 251 000 Traffic Signal - Electricity	9,249	6,229	1,541	2,741	3,101
410 252 000 Equipment	0	0	0	4,621	1,380
410 260 000 Minor Equipment - Headquarters	0	1,346	156	666	1,160
410 300 000 Administrative Operating Expense	1,623	598	421	531	771
410 301 000 Miscellaneous Expense	6,644	4,992	5,192	3,449	3,829
410 303 000 LIVESCAN / CPIN Expense	4,129	11,600	11,600	1,650	14,266
410 310 000 Professional Services	0	207	231	23,850	346
410 316 000 Dog Law Enforcement	3,445	3,480	3,190	3,330	3,480
410 321 000 IT / Communications	10,551	11,109	16,511	10,041	128,904
410 325 000 Postage	460	356	455	365	0
410 326 000 Radio Equip - Maintenance/Repairs	7,848	6,144	3,469	4,740	286
410 330 000 Vehicle Impounding	0	0	0	310	250
410 331 000 Mechanics Salary - Vehicles	18,426	19,125	32,180	25,893	15,431
410 332 000 Misc. Vehicle Expense	1,531	370	477	2,139	59,137
410 333 000 Gasoline	14,931	12,526	15,599	21,483	17,132
410 334 000 Oil & Grease	277	609	1,168	691	474
410 335 000 Tires	2,397	1,435	5,848	2,445	4,300
410 336 000 Repair Parts	2,310	1,713	576	1,534	2,479
410 337 000 Contracted Vehicle Maintenance	233	606	3,730	210	2,366
410 338 000 Minor Equipment - Vehicles	145	420	244	57	0
410 341 000 Advertising & Printing	1,211	76	187	1,715	1,274
410 342 000 Lab Fees	7,349	7,794	18,699	14,201	19,220
410 370 000 Service Agreements	6,096	5,913	8,188	7,802	3,541
410 420 000 Dues, Subscripts, Memberships	799	1,019	1,198	3,605	5,166
410 440 000 Travel & Business Expense	4,585	1,145	4,057	2,653	9,458
410 460 000 School / Training Expense	4,868	2,855	7,166	3,750	3,608
Total 410 Police Department	**1,442,172**	**1,450,818**	**1,542,316**	**1,510,203**	**1,685,728**

SOURCE: CITY OF LATROBE FINANCIAL RECORDS AND GRS ANALYSIS

FIGURE 4 – POLICE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



STAFFING FOR COMPARABLE CITIES

Table 3 provides information about police expenditures for ten (10) comparable municipalities in Pennsylvania. The comparable municipalities are staffed with full-time officers. [*NOTE: Latrobe does not include benefits in the department calculation.]*

TABLE 3 - POLICE EXPENDITURES AND STAFFING IN COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES

MUNICIPALITY	TYPE	COUNTY NAME	POPULATION	SQUARE MILES	POLICE EXPENDITURES	STAFFING
MURRYSVILLE	BORO	WESTMORELAND	21,006	36.8	3,643,813	21
GREENSBURG CITY	CITY	WESTMORELAND	14,976	4.1	3,341,769	25
NEW KENSINGTON	CITY	WESTMORELAND	12,170	4.0	2,552,565	23
LOWER BURRELL	CITY	WESTMORELAND	11,758	11.3	2,206,671	17
CASTLE SHANNON	BORO	ALLEGHENY	8,249	1.6	2,681,225	14
DORMONT BORO	BORO	ALLEGHENY	8,244	.8	2,286,035	13
CARNEGIE BORO	BORO	ALLEGHENY	8,134	1.6	1,490,981	13
LATROBE CITY	CITY	WESTMORELAND	8,060	2.3	1,590,150	14
GROVE CITY	BORO	MERCER	7,871	2.7	1,120,410	11
BRADFORD CITY	CITY	MCKEAN	7,849	3.4	1,626,576	20

SOURCE: COMMONWEALTH OF PA, DCED MUNICIPAL STATISTICS, 2023.

HTTPS://DCED.PA.GOV/LOCAL-GOVERNMENT/MUNICIPAL-STATISTICS/

CRIME DATA

The Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program serves as the state repository for the collection of crime statistics. Its primary objective is to generate reliable information for use in law enforcement administration, operation, and management. The UCR program receives data from more than 1,000 local agencies. The accuracy of the statistics depends on the adherence of each local law enforcement agency to standards of reporting information. Participation in the program is voluntary.

Based on the latest Pennsylvania UCR crime data reports, the number of Part 1 offenses[2] reported within the City of Latrobe are lower than municipalities of similar size and demographics. Despite having a lower number of reported Part 1 Offenses, the City has a lower-than-average clearance rate. The clearance rate is calculated by dividing the number of crimes that are "cleared" by the total number of crimes recorded. It is a measure of crimes solved by the law enforcement agency. Low clearance rates are indicative of insufficient investigations, insufficient training, or a lack of supervision. A detailed comparison of clearance rates for comparable police departments is provided in **Table 4**.

TABLE 4 - UCR CRIME DATA FOR COMPARABLE CITIES 2022-2021

			2022	2022	2021	2021
MUNICIPALITY	COUNTY	POPULATION	PART 1 OFFENSES	CLEARANCE RATE %	PART 1 OFFENSES	CLEARANCE RATE %
MURRYSVILLE	WESTMORELAND	21,006	83	55.42	112	43.75
GREENSBURG CITY	WESTMORELAND	14,976	304	45.39	291	45.02
NEW KENSINGTON	WESTMORELAND	12,170	360	35.56	386	40.93
LOWER BURRELL	WESTMORELAND	11,758	143	45.45	97	56.70
CASTLE SHANNON	ALLEGHENY	8,249	70	54.29	52	65.38
DORMONT BORO	ALLEGHENY	8,244	72	25.00	50	40.00
CARNEGIE BORO	ALLEGHENY	8,134	126	23.02	123	30.08
LATROBE BORO	WESTMORELAND	8,060	119	36.13	110	31.82
GROVE CITY	MERCER	7,871	68	75.00	46	80.43
BRADFORD CITY	MCKEAN	7,849	385	27.01	270	31.48

SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, UNIFORM CRIME DATA, WWW.UCR.PA.GOV/PAUCRSPUBLIC/HOME/INDEX

DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY

The Latrobe police department utilizes the CODY records management system (RMS). When an officer responds to a call for service and subsequently completes a report, the system categorizes and tracks department activity at a very high level. CODY, like other RMS platforms, is dependent upon officers completing and entering the report into the software. Activity entered in CODY is an aid to determine staffing levels - each police agency must determine an acceptable variance between the number of calls for service and the number of reports completed. The STMP team obtained the full year report, generated by CODY, for November 2022

[2] Part 1 offenses are crimes against a person such as: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

through October 2023. Based on the information provided, the annual number of reports taken for the period in question was 4,366. This is an average of 335 reports per responding officer per year based on thirteen (13) officers – or roughly 1 report per officer per day. The most common calls for service were for traffic enforcement, suspicious persons, alarms, and medical calls. **Table 5** details the number and type of calls.

TABLE 5 - NUMBER AND TYPES OF MAJOR INCIDENTS NOV 22 THROUGH OCT 23

NUMBER OF CALLS	TYPE OF CALLS
1,038	Traffic Incidents (Enforcement)
458	Suspicious Persons
404	Alarms
209	Ambulance or Medical Call
193	Assist Other Agencies
172	Disturbances – Fights, Disputes, etc.
156	Miscellaneous Police Requests
126	Motor Vehicle Accidents (All classifications)
103	Lost, Found, Recovered Property
98	Disturbances – Domestic
74	Assaults – All
66	Thefts
58	Drug Offenses
40	DUI Offenses – All
19	Deaths

SOURCE: CITY OF LATROBE PD, UCR OCCURRENCES BY MONTH NOV 22-OCT 23

In addition to the CODY report, the STMP team obtained a full year report generated by the county 911 Center that detailed the total number of calls for police services for the period of Jan 2022 through Dec 2022. This report showed a total of 7,615 calls for police services received by the call center. A second report was generated for Jan 23 through Nov 23. This report revealed a total of 6,298 calls for police services received by the call center. What is noticeable is the difference between the number of calls received and the number of reports completed. Based on the above referenced data the number of completed reports in CODY is 30% to 45% lower than the number of calls for service received by the 911 Center.

WORK SCHEDULE

The chief of police staffs the department in platoons. The shifts provide 24-hour coverage by scheduling personnel one of three contractually available shifts, 7am to 3pm, 3pm to 11pm, 11pm to 7am. Split shifts of 11am to 7pm and 11pm to 7am are also options. Scheduling is optimized by utilizing *eSchedule* software. The current schedule maximizes the use of personnel and is appropriate and fair given the obligation to provide 24/7 police coverage for residents. The scheduling speaks to the prudent management style of the chief and the commitment of personnel to show up for work. When the department is appropriately staffed, the department performs well using this schedule. The current staffing level provides little to no flexibility in scheduling for planned leave, call-offs, or work-related injury. Therefore, the department operates at minimum staffing levels which predictably results in significant overtime equal to or greater than having additional officers.

PATROL FUNCTION

A key factor in providing superior public safety is visibility and enforcement. The patrol function is the backbone of every local police department, and its importance is best depicted by the following statement from the IACP:

> *Patrol is the primary and most important activity of the police organization. The patrol force is the largest unit of the police organization, is distributed throughout the community, and operates on a 24-hour basis; its members are in constant contact with the public. The patrol function is so basic to meeting the police responsibility that its objectives are synonymous with the total police responsibility. These objectives include the prevention and suppression of crime, the safeguarding of lives and property, the apprehension of criminals, the control of traffic and non-criminal conduct and the provision of public service.*

Currently, the Latrobe Police Department has fourteen (14) budgeted positions that do not include the position of chief of police. They include one (1) captain position and thirteen (13) sworn full-time positions. Eleven (11) of the thirteen (13) provide 24-hour coverage for the City across three 8-hour shifts. One (1) full-time community service officer (CSO) is a non-sworn position that provides a substantial amount of administrative support, scheduling, community outreach, and basic call taking. This position does not and cannot respond to or handle any incident that may result in prosecution or appropriate police action, nor is it included in the collective bargaining agreement. The sworn positions include sergeants, a detective sergeant, patrol officers, and school resource officers. To provide continuous shift coverage in the City, all personnel, regardless of assignment and including the chief, must work patrol. Low staffing levels result in low morale, poor quality investigations, low clearance rates, and officer safety issues.

In the case of the Latrobe police department, the detective sergeant and detectives routinely work in patrol to provide shift coverage. A key component in conducting a thorough investigation is being able to commit enough time and appropriate attention to the matter before the investigator. The way detectives are currently being utilized by the police department prevents the investigators from conducting proper investigations. This is clearly evidenced by the low clearance rate for the department.

A unique circumstance for the detectives in the City is the presence of Adelphoi Village and its associated group homes. According to the chief, Adelphoi is partially responsible for the unusually high number of assaults and phone related crimes associated with juveniles in the jurisdiction. Mandated state reporting also impacts the efforts of the detectives.

The City does not contract with nearby municipalities nor have the surrounding communities sought their services. Adjacent communities Derry Township and Unity Township rely on state police services at no cost. Furthermore, current staffing would prevent the department from offering services outside the City.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS (SRO)

The City employs two (2) full-time SROs. According to the current collective bargaining agreement (CBA) the SRO is scheduled Monday through Friday during the school year, unless circumstances outlined in the CBA occur. In those cases, it is possible the SRO may be assigned to work a daylight shift in patrol in the City. During summer months when school is not in session, the SRO is placed in the patrol rotation and is available to work weekends. As reported by the Chief, two-thirds of the wages for the SRO's are paid by the Latrobe School District and Adelphoi Village. The remaining third of the wages are paid by the city. Due to their assignments in the schools, the SROs take vacation during the summer months because they cannot take it during the school year.

K9 UNIT

The department has a dedicated K9 team certified annually by the North American Police Work Dog Association (NAPWDA) in the areas of narcotic detection (April 2023) and patrol (November 2023). The K9 team trains one (1) day a week except for holidays, vacation, or sick leave. Training occurs at various locations across Westmoreland and Allegheny counties.

It was reported that the team has been deployed approximately 486 times since inception. These deployments include narcotic searches, tracking of suspects, lost people, article and area searches, K9 demonstrations, and non-use of force and use of force apprehensions. The team was unable to obtain the department K9 policy.

According to UCR Occurrence Data provided during this review there were three (3) K9 deployments from November of 2022 through November of 2023 and nine (9) K9 training records submitted for the same period. There were no training records or deployment records submitted in 2018 through 2020. **Table 6** details the number of K9 training records and K9 deployments.

TABLE 6 - NUMBER OF DEPLOYMENTS AND TRAINING RECORDS BY YEAR

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
K9 TRAINING RECORDs	0	0	0	1	1	9
K9 DEPLOYMENTS	0	0	0	14	13	3

SOURCE: CITY OF LATROBE POLICE DEPARTMENT RECORDS SYSTEM

In fact, there is a substantial discrepancy between what is reported in the department's record-keeping system compared to what is reported by the K9 handler. According to the reporting system the K9 has been deployed thirty (30) times in a four-year period and has been trained a total of eleven (11) times. Documentation is an important part of protecting the City from potential litigation - the records indicate a lack of frequency of deployment and training. K9 teams have proven to be a valuable addition to policing but they are also an unnecessary expense if not used. K9 teams can incur significant liability for the City without proper policies and training.

COMPENSATION

According to the CBA between the City police bargaining unit, dated January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2024, the basic salaries for members of the police department are shown in **Table 7**:

TABLE 7 - POLICE OFFICER RATES 2020-2024

POSITION	YEARS OF SERVICE	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Patrolman	0-1	51,156	52,307	53,483	54,687	55,197
	2-Jan	54,566	55,794	57,049	58,333	59,646
	3-Feb	57,977	59,282	60,616	61,979	63,374
	4-Mar	61,387	62,678	64,180	65,624	67,101
	5-Apr	64,798	66,256	67,746	69,271	70,829
	Over 5	68,209	69,744	71,312	72,917	74,558
Sergeant		72,301	73,928	75,591	77,292	79,031

SOURCE: CITY OF LATROBE PD COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

OVERTIME

Overtime is primarily generated by police officers' use of vacation, sick days, workers compensation, and court time. The overtime premiums are paid at time and one half to all employees for hours worked more than their scheduled shift. This does not include non-mandatory training, task force, special duty pays, or any other pay excluded in the CBA. Although overtime decreased by 33% in 2020 from the previous year, overtime increased by 53% over the next four-year period from 2020 to 2023. This substantial increase in overtime wages is problematic – a review of the overtime revealed:

- Three (3) senior officers receive five (5) weeks of vacation annually (75 days).
- Three (3) other officers receive four (4) weeks of vacation annually (60 days).
- The remaining officers receive between two (2) and three (3) weeks of vacation annually (100 days).
- The K9 handler receives one compensatory day a month (12 days)
- The K9 handler is also obligated to train one day per week (40 days less leave and unexpected incidents)

- School resource officers (SRO) must take their vacation during the summer months during prime vacation time.
- Officers take vacation and then sign up for overtime associated with the vacated shifts to pad their wages.

These circumstances result in approximately 287 shifts that must be filled with overtime. Keeping in mind that a single employee works 240 days a year, the result is approximately 9.5 months of open shifts. **Table 7** details the increase in overtime during the past four (4) years.

TABLE 8: POLICE OVERTIME TO COVER SHIFTS 2020-2023

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
OVERTIME EXPENSE	117,020	78,194	85,502	103,453	119,486
PERCENTAGE CHANGE		-33.2%	9.3%	21.0%	15.5%

SOURCE: CITY OF LATROBE FINANCIAL RECORDS AND GRS ANALYSIS

The budgeted expenditure for overtime in 2024 is 20% less than for 2023. This budget allocation is flawed because there have been steady increases and, without staffing changes, the overtime is expected to continue to increase. A vacancy due to resignation, injury, or any other unforeseen circumstance could impact this expenditure significantly. Compensatory time is currently utilized within the department on a case-by-case basis and, if not sufficiently controlled, can also drive overtime costs.

INVESTIGATIVE ASSISTANCE

The department has two (2) detectives and a juvenile resource officer. The detectives' workload is determined by the complexity of the investigation as well as the amount of follow-up necessary to effectively investigate the crime. Investigative assistance is provided by the Westmoreland County District Attorney's Office and the Pennsylvania State Police. Examples of investigative assistance would include but are not limited to crime scene processing and polygraph examinations.

SUPPORT STAFF

The department has employed a Community Service Officer (CSO) as part of the department support staff. The CSO handles the administrative and clerical duties of the department. The CSO is a full-time non-sworn employee that does not count against the compliment of sworn personnel for budgeting purposes. This position is not part of the police CBA but is part of the AFSCME bargaining unit. This position is what would typically be considered a police clerk position in other police departments.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The police department currently uses *CODY* as its records management program. This is a common and efficient method for tracking police activity and evidence management. *CODY* is a license-based RMS system which will no longer be supported in the coming months. It is set to be replaced in 2024 with *Pathfinder* which is a cloud based RMS platform.

TRAINING

Training should be an ongoing process for every police department. It is important that the officers remain proficient in performing their duties. The only way a police department can ensure that they have competent and capable officers on the street is by making sure they are properly trained.

Training should include a wide range of topics. The City's police officers attend training for CPR/First Aid, Narcan, AED, and use of firearms. Currently the officers attend required update training online. The Pennsylvania Municipal Police Officers Training and Education Commission (MPOETC) offers grants to law enforcement agencies throughout the Commonwealth for classes that the officers may need. These grants are easy to apply for and are almost always approved for funding.

The chief of police is a commissioner on the MPOETC Board which is responsible for the implementation and development of annual training for municipal police officers across the Commonwealth. He also is the chairperson of the MPOETC budget and certification committees.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT (CBA)

A review of the CBA between the City and the police bargaining unit revealed a reasonable document. None of the benefits or stipulations appear excessive or unreasonable.

FACILITIES

The police department is in the City building along with the administrative offices. Public access to the building is gained through a street side door located along Jefferson Street. Access to the department is gained through a common vestibule that services other administrative offices for the City. The police department includes the Chief's office, patrol room, CSO office, detectives' office, interview room, processing room, evidence storage, holding cells, sally port, and training room. The City currently uses holding cells only for temporary detention. Individuals are held as charges are being prepared prior to arraignment and an individual may be released to the custody of a responsible party for certain offenses. The holding cells are not utilized as a "drunk tank."

The police department has video surveillance in certain areas outside and inside the administrative building. A surveillance camera system in specific parts of the city is also monitored in the patrol room. Access control systems that control movement throughout the police department are also in place.

EVIDENCE STORAGE

One of the sergeants is designated as "evidence custodian" for the department and is responsible for managing the evidence room which is locked within the department. Two (2) patrol officers serve as the receiving officers. The sergeant and the identified officers are the only two officers permitted access. The inventory is managed through the *CODY* records management program. Renovations of the evidence room are currently being undertaken. The existing evidence room has outlived its usefulness and is being expanded to store evidence more effectively and efficiently. Periodic unannounced inspections are conducted by the chief for all evidence.

INTERVIEW ROOM

The police department has an interview room that is also undergoing renovations due to the relocation of the detectives' office. When completed the interview room will be re-fitted with a camera system capable of producing video and audio recordings critical to the effective prosecution of offenders. During the renovation process, officers are using their bodycam systems to capture video and audio recordings during interviews.

EQUIPMENT

The police department is well equipped with modern serviceable equipment. Recent purchases include firearms, Tasers, body cameras, and bullet proof vests. Several officers will be receiving new vests in 2024.



POLICY AND PROCEDURES

A policy manual is in place and is subject to periodic revisions - the last full revision occurred in 2015. Revisions occur as the officers' encounter outdated or missing policies. Personnel are trained annually on use of force, pursuit policy, body cameras, Taser, and the code of conduct. There is no policy or procedure in place that mandates random drug testing. The chief and one of the sergeants are responsible for policy and procedure maintenance, development, updates, and implementation. Policies and procedures are currently available in print format for each officer but not on-line.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 18 – REVIEW ALL EXPENDITURES REGULARLY WITH MANAGEMENT.

The chief of police and the city manager should closely review the department's budget and determine what if any adjustments can be made. The areas that require the most scrutiny are the line items for: overtime wages, the K9 team, and LIVESCAN/CPIN expense. As discussed overtime has increased by nearly 53% from 2020 to 2023. Also, the reported activity for the K-9 team doesn't support the expense and liability that are incurred for the City. (See Recommendation 23) It should also be determined if LIVESCAN/CPIN is operationally necessary given its expense. This can be determined by requesting the total number of prints submitted for the terminal annually through PSP CLEAN. Many local agencies have eliminated this expense following the implementation of central booking centers or in the case of Westmoreland County the park police offer this service free of charge.

RECOMMENDATION 19 – ADJUST STAFFING TO INCREASE PATROLS AND CLEARANCE RATES.

There are currently fourteen (14) budgeted full-time positions within the department, not including the chief's position.

Typically, eleven (11) personnel and on occasion, the chief, are responsible for providing police coverage 24/7 nine (9) months out of the year as the SRO's are dedicated to their assigned districts during the school year. *[NOTE: The CSO position is non-sworn and is not included in the budgeted police positions.]*

The current CBA requires a minimum of two officers on each shift which is a reasonable shift requirement in a small police department. Often, the chief or one of the detectives serves as the second officer on the shift to provide the mandated coverage.

The use of the detective sergeant and detectives in this manner directly impacts the ability of this unit to conduct proper investigations that result in arrests (clearances). This is clearly evidenced by the lower-than-average clearance rate for the department. The low clearance rate is not an indictment of the detectives but is caused by the staffing level that consistently requires the unit to respond to basic patrol-related calls.

It is recommended that the scheduling practice of utilizing the detective sergeant and detective to fulfill the staffing obligations of the CBA be ended as soon as practicable by adding additional personnel to the overall complement. Additional staffing would address but not eliminate the detective sergeant or detective from contributing during periods of minimal staffing.

The proposed budget for 2024 has a separate line item for a captain with a salary of $99,000. The chief created this position to place a layer of supervision between himself and the sergeants. This position is expected to assume more of the administrative duties currently being undertaken by the sergeants.

But - the biggest issue facing the police department is the number of budgeted patrol positions, not the number of supervisory positions. The recommended supervisory span is from three (3) to seven (7) personnel per supervisor with five (5) being optimal. In Latrobe, each sergeant, except for the detective sergeant, is responsible for three (3) patrol officers. The detective

sergeant supervises four (4) total. The current staffing structure (without the captain) represents sufficient and appropriate supervisory positions. But it is recommended that the budgeted number of officers be increased to sixteen (16) sworn officers without the addition of the captain position to allow for more patrolling and investigations. [3]

[NOTE: Assuming the budgeted expenditure for overtime in 2024 of $95,000 is combined with the $99,000 budgeted salary for the captain position a total of $194,000 would be available for wages. Two entry level positions for patrol officers would cost $110,394 plus benefits and would leave $83,605 available for overtime wages.]

RECOMMENDATION 20 – IMPROVE CLEARANCE RATES.

Low clearance rates are indicative of insufficient investigations, insufficient training, or a lack of supervision. The clearance rate for the department was the lowest of the comparable cities captured in **Table 4**. During a follow-up interview with the chief, he reported that clearance rates for the past three (3) months were between 80 -95%. The increase was attributed to greater supervisory oversight and setting clear expectations for personnel. It is recommended that continual oversight is necessary to maintain a higher clearance rate.

RECOMMENDATION 21 – DEVELOP AND ENFORCE A POLICY REGARDING REPORT SUBMISSION.

A disparity of about 30% to 45% existed between the number of calls for service received by the 911 Center and the number of reports entered into the RMS platform in 2022 and 2023. A new policy that dictates which calls for service require report submission has been enacted by the Chief. It is recommended that the chief periodically review the number of calls for service at the 911 center against the number of reports completed in the RMS system.

RECOMMENDATION 22 – LIMIT THE USE OF DETECTIVES FOR PATROL.

The detective sergeant is routinely assigned to the patrol function due to existing staffing levels and mandates in the CBA that require a minimum of two (2) officers on a shift. Consideration should be given to not assigning this position to the patrol function unless necessary. This practice would result in better investigations that ultimately lead to higher clearance rates. Redefined use of this position in this manner may also eliminate the need for a juvenile officer.

[3] During the period of this review, the captain position was added to the department.

RECOMMENDATION 23 –DETERMINE IF THE K9 UNIT IS NECESSARY. [IN JUNE OF 2024, THE K-9 UNIT WAS ELIMINATED AFTER CAREFUL REVIEW AND DISCUSSIONS WITH MANAGEMENT.]

The Chief should review the K9 program and policy in its entirety and determine if it is needed. According to the CBA, the City may at any time discontinue the K9 unit, without prior notice or approval of the bargaining unit. Discontinuance of the unit by the City is not a subject of grievance arbitration or an unfair labor practice but considered to be a management decision.

According to the K9 handler, the team trains one day a week except holidays, vacation, or sick leave. Based on this information, the team is taken off the schedule a minimum of forty (40) days a year just for training. This is a considerable burden on the schedule given existing staffing levels. This does not account for the compensatory day off the handler receives every month as governed by the CBA. One K-9 handler position accounts for fifty-two (52) empty shifts annually that require overtime.

As shown in **Table 6** the number of training record reports entered is eleven (11) for the review period. Based on the information from the K9 handler, there should be 160 training records. Any training that occurs with the team should be mandated to be documented in the RMS system in addition to any records that are created during training. This lack of documentation is problematic because the single biggest defense in civil litigation involving police K9 units is training that is properly and appropriately documented. Certifications are of little consequence without proper training documentation.

K9 deployment records are also lacking. Based on the information provided by the K-9 handler, there should be approximately 486 records for deployments during the review period, but the RMS system details only thirty (30). Any time the K9 is deployed, it should be mandated that a report is generated on the RMS platform with a separate K9 report.

Given the enormous impact of the K-9 team to the schedule, budget, and liability to the City; significant review of this program is recommended to determine the need for this specialized asset.

RECOMMENDATION 24 – EVALUATE THE ESCALATING OVERTIME INCREASES

There are several factors affecting the escalating overtime expense. First and most importantly, there are 287 unscheduled shifts annually due to contractually obligated leave under the CBA. There is also overtime associated with specialized positions such as the K-9 team, detectives, and school resource officers. Finally, there seems to be "pyramiding" by officers where overtime is being paid twice for the same overtime event.

The only way to control these practices is for more oversight and control by the chief and by the city manager. It is strongly recommended that management conduct a comprehensive review of leave usage and associated overtime during those leave periods. If "pyramiding" is occurring it is a clear violation of the CBA, Article VI – Overtime Pay, Section 4

"There shall be no pyramiding of overtime pay. Officers shall not be paid more than once, or for more than one (1) reason, or under more than one (1) provision of the Article for the same hours worked." This practice is a significant disruption and may have been occurring for an extensive period in the past.

Management should also examine the specialized services to determine if they are necessary and attempt to reduce the amount of paid leave in the CBA during the next round of contract negotiations.

RECOMMENDATION 25 –ENFORCE THE POLICY ON REPORT WRITING

The department is transitioning to the RMS platform *Pathfinder*, a cloud-based system, in 2024. The Chief implemented procedures governing what calls for service must be entered into the RMS system. This is a key factor in determining appropriate staffing levels. Prior leadership failed to hold membership accountable about report submission resulting in inconsistent reporting practices. The policy change should result in greater accountability across the board and will provide the chief with the data necessary to make sound decisions for staffing and scheduling.

RECOMMENDATION 26 –DISCONTINUE THE USE OF COMPENSATORY TIME.

Compensatory time in a police department causes excessive overtime and disruption in scheduling. The use of "comp" time should be halted immediately. Typically, the accumulation and subsequent use of "comp" time in policing is problematic because record keeping is often left to the employee. Often disputes arise over available time, when it can be used, and the ultimate payout at separation of employment. Instead of "comp" time personnel should be paid for hours worked at the time they work.

RECOMMENDATION 27 –CONTINUE TO RENOVATE THE FACILITY.

Overall, the department is utilizing its existing office space to capacity. But the City should continue to renovate the office area. During the preliminary site visit, crews were installing an access control system. This is an important first step in providing improved site security. As part of the renovation of the facility, the City should consider the installation of shatter resistant window film to entry doors and within the main lobby in the police department. Shatter resistant window film is a cost-effective means of fortification that is a fraction of the cost of conventional ballistic glass. Renovations to the interview room should be completed as soon as possible to allow full use of the installed recording systems utilized during interviews.



RECOMMENDATION 28 – IMPROVE EVIDENCE STORAGE AND PROCEDURES.

The evidence room is also being renovated. An adjoining office is being converted to afford the department additional evidence storage space. As part of the renovations, the interior walls of this room that "share" a wall with adjoining offices should be covered

with ¾ inch plywood. This prevents inappropriate access to the room. Additional reinforcement should be added to the ceiling in those areas that utilize drop ceiling systems. *[NOTE: The chief was provided a customizable evidence policy, and additional examples can be obtained through the IACP.]*

RECOMMENDATION 29 – UPDATE THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL.

The department should engage a company such as Lexipol to assist them in updating the policies and procedures. Utilization of a service will reduce liabilities that are often the result of policies and procedures developed internally without professional review. Similar services are offered by the PA Chiefs of Police Association as well as the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP).

As part of the updated manual, the department management should engage in discussions with the Union for the development and implementation of a random drug testing policy. *[NOTE: The chief was provided with a customizable random drug testing policy.]*

The department continues to rely on policy and procedures distributed through paper copy. The chief should explore the use of Power DMS, a web-based management system, to track the agency's compliance with internal policy and procedures. This software platform tracks an officer's receipt and review of any policy or procedure that is enacted, revised, or updated. Furthermore, the platform allows the Chief to develop officer testing associated with the policy or procedure all of which is tracked electronically and can be invaluable during civil litigation.

CONCLUSION

The City of Latrobe police department is heading in the right direction following a period of turnover in executive leadership. Following the appointment of the new chief, the department has seen significant growth across the board to include facility improvements, technology improvements, and ultimately an improved professional stance.

Given the current staffing levels and structure of the department, it is remarkable that department leadership has been able to regularly put officers on the street. But clearance rates and the ability to thoroughly investigate reported crimes has suffered.

As the department evolves and improvements are implemented, this department will be well-managed, well-equipped, and prepared to provide professional police services to the citizens of Latrobe.


Fire Department
CITY OF LATROBE
ENG 113-3

FIRE DEPARTMENT



The review of the fire department was conducted as part of the STMP for the City of Latrobe. To complete this evaluation, the GRS team conducted field work and site investigations, analyzed data, gathered information from comparable local government operations, and conducted extensive research. A comprehensive review of the fire department was conducted in 2013 – this report is an update to the report completed at that time. This report also includes a brief overview of regional approaches to consider.

OBSERVATIONS

STRUCTURE

The Latrobe Volunteer Fire Department (LVFD) is responsible for all calls within the 2.3-mile limits of the City. There are five stations, each with their own company that dispatches from their respective stations. These companies are:

GOODWILL HOSE COMPANY #1
Oak & Alexandria

HOOK & LADDER COMPANY #2
901 Jefferson Street

FREEWILL HOSE COMPANY #3
Lehmer & Ridge

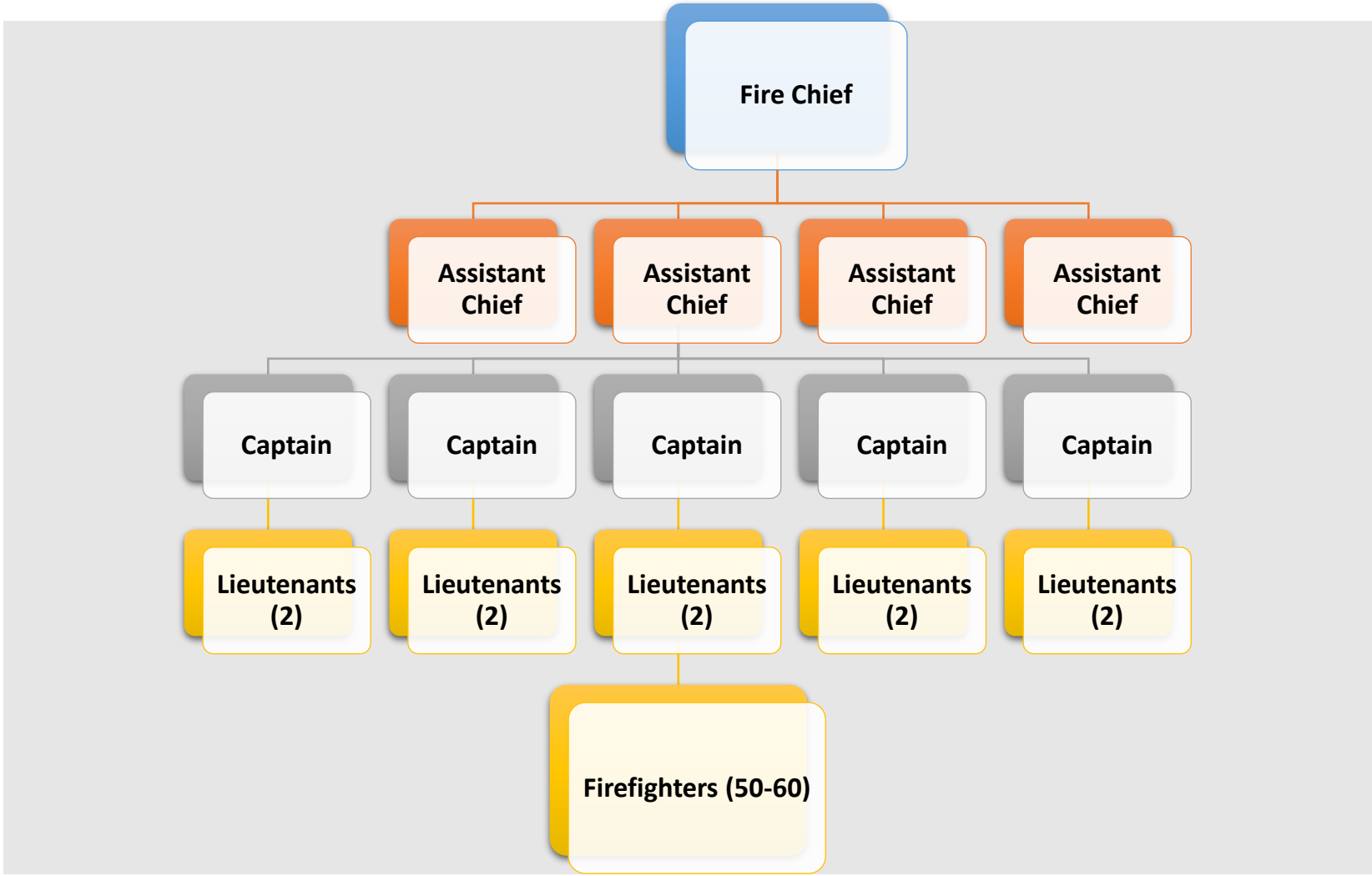
GOOD FRIENDS HOSE COMPANY #5
Avenue A

FREE SERVICE UNIT #6
Lloyd Avenue

All five (5) stations operate somewhat independently, maintaining their own finances, including fundraising and budgeting. The City provides support to each company in the form of financial assistance as well as oversight of the foreign fire funds that are distributed to the companies annually. The LVFD is led by a long-tenured fire chief who oversees duty drivers and dozens of volunteer firefighters. Currently, there are two full-time and six part-time apparatus drivers employed by the City, one on duty per shift to provide 24/7 coverage. The duty driver has several other responsibilities. The fire chief is a part-time employee of the City.

Each fire station has one engine apparatus (water, pump, hose, and general firefighting equipment), and each station has one or more specialty apparatus. An aerial apparatus (water, pump, hose, aerial and ground ladders) is staffed from Station #2. A rescue engine (water, pump, hose, vehicle, and specialty rescue equipment) is staffed from Station #5. The department averages 800 to 900 emergency responses annually.

FIGURE 5 – LATROBE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION



The on-duty apparatus operators in this department have been given regular assignments, in addition to their responsibilities for fire suppression and dispatching. These include apparatus and equipment maintenance and repair, administrative responsibilities (record keeping, dispatch logs), information technology, and other operational functions.

FACILITIES

The department maintains five (5) fire stations in the City. All are combination stations, providing standard fire department quarters for apparatus, equipment, personnel, and offices. In addition, several provide social hall space for rental and other fund-raising activities. Each station houses multiple fire department apparatus.

Currently, there are five stations in a 2.3-square-mile municipality, serving a population of 8,060 (ACS 2022 Estimate). The City of Pittsburgh, the City of Aliquippa, and the City of Bradford all provide fire protection with fewer stations and larger area/population coverage.

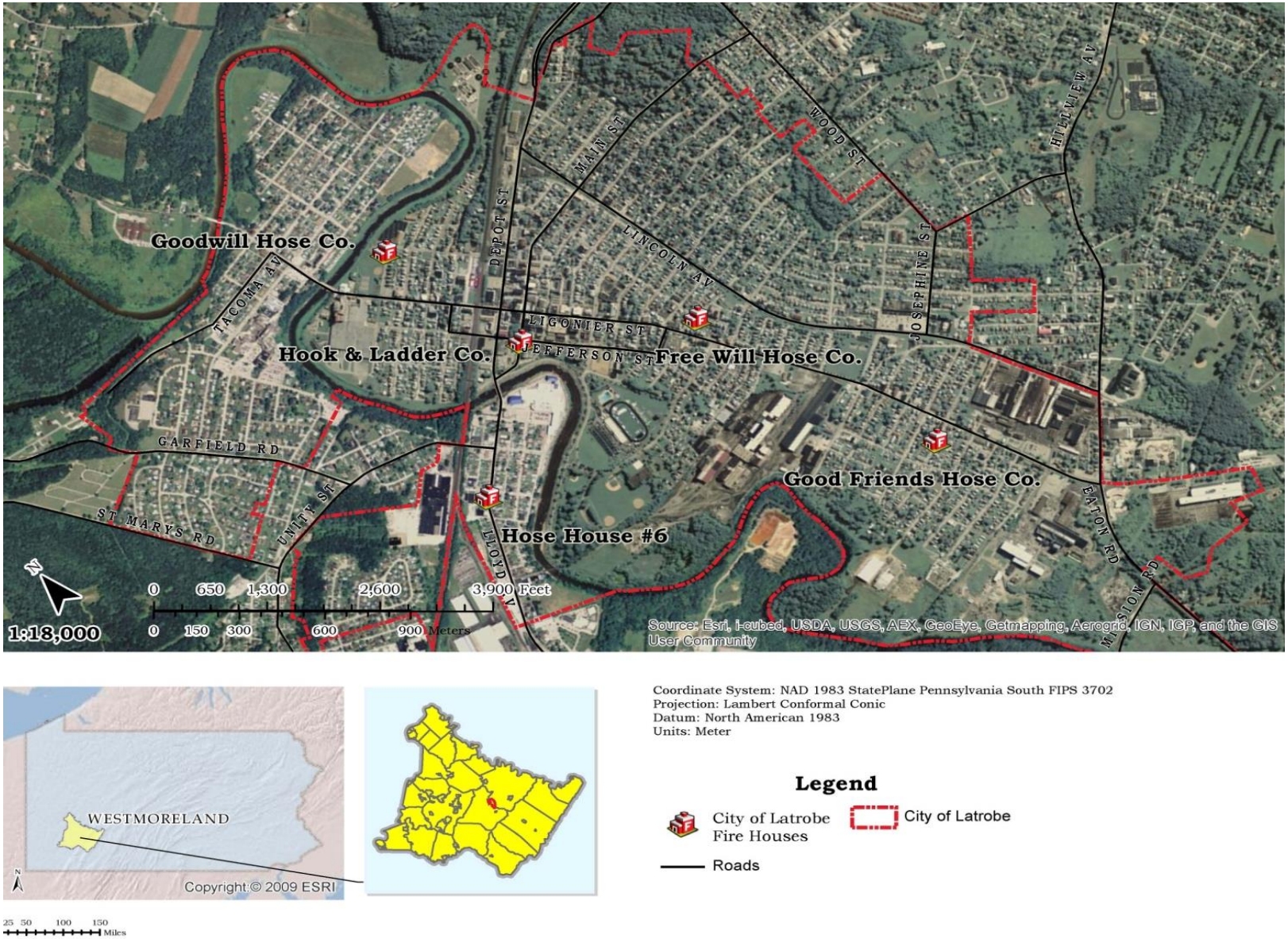


TABLE 9 – FIRE STATION POPULATION AND AREA COVERAGE

	CITY OF PITTSBURGH	CITY OF BRADFORD	CITY OF ALIQUIPPA	CITY OF LATROBE
Population	302,971	7,847	9,148	8,060
Square Miles	58	3.5	4.2	2.3
Number of Fire Stations	29	2	1	5
Population per Fire Station	10,542	4,588	9,148	1,690
Square Miles per Fire Station	2.0	1.8	4.2	0.5

SOURCE: 2022 ACS – US CENSUS

FIGURE 5– CITY OF LATROBE FIRE HOUSES



SOURCE: CITY OF LATROBE FIRE DEPARTMENT

STAFFING

The two full-time and six part-time apparatus operators have costs in line with other municipalities. Given the response statistics, with an average of six (6) to eight (8) firefighters per emergency response the need for an on-duty firefighter/operator remains important. All the duty drivers' duties are related to the fire department operations. These employees should probably be classified as firefighters based on the description of their duties.

DISPATCH

Westmoreland 9-1-1 provides direct fire dispatch for all municipalities within the county borders except for the City of Monessen and the City of Latrobe. While this can normally be performed by the on-duty firefighter, there is additional time, cost, and risk involved in the transfer of 9-1-1 calls from the County to the fire station. The firefighter on duty is responsible for taking the information, dispatching the appropriate station, apparatus, and firefighters, and then responding to the emergency. Even when done efficiently, this is an additional handoff and touch point for emergency dispatching, and when that firefighter responds, additional emergency calls must be transferred by radio via 9-1-1 operators. This is an additional step that may cause delay, and results in additional communication equipment needed for dispatching which duplicates spending for Latrobe residents who must pay a 9-1-1 cost through the Pennsylvania Public Safety Emergency Telephone Act (1992).

Also, most agencies are now using the 800Mhz ICORRS (Inter County Regional Radio System) digital trunk system. Latrobe and Greensburg are the only municipalities in Westmoreland County that are not using the new digital radio system.

INSPECTION AND CODE ENFORCEMENT

Several western Pennsylvania fire departments of similar size, including the City of Bradford, City of Sharon, and the Borough of Swissvale, use on-duty firefighters to perform municipal code fire safety inspections, often for commercial and multiple occupancy dwellings (apartments) when there is a change of residency. These inspections and related fees present an opportunity to provide a new revenue stream without costs to the residents and businesses. The on-duty staff could perform these inspections on a scheduled basis using fire apparatus. By transferring dispatch to the 9-1-1 Center, the duty firefighter would have more time to conduct property maintenance inspections. Also, it provides the fire department access to buildings that are potential fire hazards.

FINANCIAL

The LVFD makes up 5% of the total City budget. Most of the costs are related to personnel, vehicle maintenance, and building repair and upkeep. It should be noted that the operating budget does not include equipment purchases. New engines cost over $750,00,000, new aerials over $1.5 million, and the cost to equip one firefighter to enter a burning building is over $20,000. The biggest benefit to municipalities from volunteer fire departments is their manpower.

TABLE 10 – LVFD FIRE EXPENDITURES 2019-2023

411 FIRE DEPARTMENT	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
411 121 000 Fire Chief Salary	5,809	6,151	5,842	5,748	6,459
411 122 000 Salaried Drivers	100,619	105,530	104,205	105,933	112,292
411 123 000 Relief Drivers Salaries	28,233	37,495	38,695	35,836	43,252
411 192 000 Uniforms	1,810	1,162	0	0	972
411 220 000 General Supplies & Expense	425	1,908	415	1,705	2,212
411 260 000 Minor Equipment	299	765	0	1,215	770
411 301 000 Miscellaneous Expense	1,382	3,609	492	366	300
411 321 000 IT / Communications	7,971	8,391	9,041	6,535	1,794
411 322 000 Alarm Monitoring Service	1,990	2,022	2,661	2,208	2,119
411 326 000 Radio Equipment – Maint/Repairs	2,815	125	38	0	0
411 331 000 Mechanics Salaries -Truck Expense	18,423	19,114	32,180	25,893	15,431
411 333 000 Gasoline	11,733	5,662	7,232	17,013	11,447
411 334 000 Oil & Grease	637	275	1,032	447	217
411 335 000 Tires	1,389	711	0	1,748	813
411 336 000 Repair Parts	2,544	6,635	1,668	5,868	3,804
411 337 000 Contracted Vehicle Maintenance	7,449	5,318	8,314	16,366	5,069
411 338 000 Minor Equipment - Trucks	1,028	49	142	2,295	2,584
411 361 000 Electricity	16,686	22,644	13,399	21,132	21,651
411 362 000 Gas	12,645	10,703	11,527	13,165	13,340
411 364 000 Water & Sewage	1,783	1,677	1,868	1,195	1,671
411 370 000 Building & Property Maintenance	9,874	10,316	4,345	10,998	12,473
411 420 000 Dues, Subscriptions, Membership	1,346	0	1,521	0	2,073
411 540 000 Foreign Fire Relief	38,470	39,113	34,958	41,760	41,760
Total 411 Fire Department	**275,360**	**289,376**	**279,573**	**317,427**	**302,504**

SOURCE: CITY OF LATROBE FINANCIALS AND GRS ANALYSIS

Latrobe is fortunate to have funds raised by the five fire companies as well as the foreign fire insurance state funding to support fire protection for the City. For Latrobe to provide adequate manpower with a fully paid career fire department would increase the costs from $300,000 to well over $1 million annually. **Table 11** provides a comparison of seven city fire departments and the expenditures for each in 2022. Combination departments that include volunteer support are much less expensive than fully paid career firefighter services. The City should continue to be supportive of the volunteer services.

TABLE 11: COMPARISON OF THE COSTS FOR PAID AND COMBINATION FIRE DEPARTMENTS (2022)

CITY	POPULATION	SQUARE MILES	EXPENDITURES	$ PER CAPITA	NO. FIRE COMPANIES	TYPE FIRE SERVICE
City of Latrobe	8060	2.3	302,504	37.53	5	combination
City of Aliquippa	9198	4.2	1,131,972	123.07	1	paid
City of Bradford	7847	3.3	2,020,153	257.44	1	paid
City of Jeannette	8790	2.4	873,260	99.35	1	combination
City of Meadville	12929	4.4	1,427,534	110.41	1	paid
City of Sharon	13143	3.8	2,020,153	153.71	1	paid
City of Titusville	5262	2.9	919,954	174.83	1	paid
City of Uniontown	9913	2.1	1,880,860	189.74	4	combination

SOURCE: PA DCED MUNICIPAL STATISTICS, FIRE SERVICE 2022; US CENSUS REPORTER 2022

AUDITOR GENERAL COMPLIANCE AUDIT

Every three (3) years, the Office of the PA Auditor General conducts a compliance audit for the foreign fire relief public funds that are received by volunteer fire companies. The most recent audit, for the period of January 1, 2019, through December 31, 2021, reported that, "in all significant respects, the relief association complied with applicable state laws, contracts, bylaws, and administrative procedures as they relate to the receipt of state aid and the expenditure of relief association funds." The report shows that the fire companies received $38,470 in 2019, $39,113 in 2020, and $34,958 in 2021. As of December 31, 2021, the relief association records showed:

Cash	$ 120,103
Fair Value of Investments	$1,148,331
Total Cash and Investments	**$1,268,434**

The relief association records also showed the following expenditures:

Benefit Services: Insurance Premiums	$232,039
Fire Services: Equipment purchased and Maintenance	$38,619
Administrative Services: Officer Compensation:	$ 3,000
TOTAL Expenditures	**$364,658**

Based on the AG report, the relief association is very well funded and carries a very healthy balance in the relief account. Other funds are not audited by the auditor general but must be reported as part of the annual IRS filing by the respective companies.


AIR CO.

Fire departments receiving financial support from their municipality are required by statute to submit budgets to their municipality. With five (5) percent of the City's annual budget being spent on fire protection, the fire department should provide both a summary of total costs and transparency regarding what is being spent. There is a perception among many municipalities and fire departments in Pennsylvania that monies raised through various fundraising activities by the fire departments (fund drives, bingos, raffles, carnivals, etc.) are not public, and the income, expense, and management of these funds need not be made public. All these funds are public because the fund-raising activities are expected to be used to provide fire protection and emergency responses. As volunteer fire departments require more support, both financial and non-financial, from their municipalities it is incumbent on them to provide open and transparent views of their financial operations.

OPERATIONS

The Latrobe Fire Department responds to between 800 and 900 emergencies on an annual basis, or about 2.5 calls per day. About one-third of the calls are false alarms caused by problems with automatic detection systems, smoke detectors, or suppression systems. About 12 percent are medical-related responses to assist or respond prior to ambulance arrival. An additional 19 percent are motor vehicle accidents (MVAs) with or without injuries or entrapment. These, along with several other categories, show that most responses are not directly the result of fire. This is typical for fire departments in Pennsylvania - automatic alarm systems and medical-related responses constitute most of the annual call workload.

False alarms due to system/detection malfunctions are a growing national issue for the fire service. Each alarm requires a fire response, moving multiple apparatus from multiple stations or municipalities, until the cause of the alarm is determined. Many of the false alarms result from the reluctance of owners or occupants to have their alarm systems properly maintained or serviced.

APPARATUS

The department operates and maintains sufficient fire apparatus for nature and number of emergency responses. The department currently has five fire engines, one aerial tower (ladder) truck, two rescue vehicles, one squad, one air/light unit, one vent/hazmat unit, one special services vehicle, one canteen, and one salvage truck. All are staffed with on-duty and responding firefighters, depending on the nature and location of the dispatched alarm. As noted in the financial section, one of the highest fire costs are for maintenance and repair of vehicles.

MERGING/CONSOLIDATING FIRE SERVICES

The primary reason to embark on any consolidation or merger of fire services should focus on improved fire service response and operations, with a secondary consideration of economics and management.

Volunteer fire departments in Pennsylvania have seen dramatic changes in the last 20 years, including declining firefighter enrollment, a broader range of emergencies to respond to (hazardous materials, EMS/QRS, technical rescue), and additional qualifications required to meet training, grant eligibility or insurance requirements. While the number of serious fires and fire

fatalities has decreased nationwide, the overall number of emergencies (CO alarms, good intent alarms) continues to grow. Also affecting Pennsylvania departments is the aging of its volunteer firefighter force.

While it is recognized that consolidation of fire departments and services can be a difficult and at times emotional issue, the partnership between municipalities and fire departments needs to develop a cooperative agreement on how to efficiently and economically deliver and manage fire protection and emergency services while not placing either it's residents or firefighters at risk. Regrettably, many fire departments and municipalities struggle to fund fire apparatus, stations and equipment that are duplicated or underutilized.

Consolidations and mergers can take many forms, however there are five models that have been implemented throughout the state that have provided improvements at multiple levels. See **Appendix E** to review these models.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 30 – ENTER ALL FIRE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY IN THE FIREHOUSE REPORTING SOFTWARE

Fire companies battle with inconsistent record keeping and report completion. The challenge with incomplete and insufficient reporting is that this data ends up not supporting the operational needs of the Department. Incomplete data makes grant applications that require state and federal reporting numbers to be included difficult to access.

All information such as response times, training and certifications, and firefighter demographics should be maintained consistently and correctly in *Firehouse*. The chief should mandate that all firefighters be trained and use the software to record information.

RECOMMENDATION 31 – REQUIRE LEVEL 1 CERTIFICATION FOR ALL NEW RECRUITS

The department has a goal for all new firefighters to reach *Firefighter Level I* within three years. This goal is important for the safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of the department. This nationally recognized certification sets a standard for NFPA. As demonstrated in the financial section of this report, there are relief funds available for training and it is an allowable use of the funds. This also will improve eligibility for federal FIRE Act and SAFER grants. Firefighters should have their training and certifications recorded in the department's *Firehouse* reporting software with regularity.

RECOMMENDATION 32 – REQUIRE ALL ACTIVE FIREFIGHTERS TO PASS AN ANNUAL PHYSICAL

Firefighting is a physically demanding and difficult activity. Whether career or volunteer, the risks and physical performance requirements are the same. Year after year, about half of all firefighter fatalities are cardiovascular related, and firefighter fitness for duty is one of the biggest issues in the fire service today. This is another program that can be funded by relief funds. The City provides workers' compensation insurance for all firefighters and, therefore, has an interest in the health and welfare of all employees and volunteer firefighters.

RECOMMENDATION 33 – REVIEW THE USE OF FIVE (5) FIRE STATIONS – REDUCE TO THREE (3)

The City should engage with the LVFD officers to discuss the use and benefit of closing at least two (3) of the fire stations. Even with three stations, the ratio of both residents and area covered will remain greater than most other communities with paid and combination departments. The review should take into consideration manpower, responses, and run times. ISO requires one engine apparatus/company for each 1.5 square miles, and one aerial/apparatus company for each 2.5 square miles, based on population density. Reducing to three stations would remain above those levels.

There is an operational cost component to maintaining five fire stations in a 2.3-square-mile first response district. While it is recognized that there are concerns with the location of fire stations and the traditions of the five fire stations and companies, the opportunity for immediate cost reduction, medium-term cost avoidance, and long-term capital requirements for maintaining five stations will reduce the overall cost of providing adequate fire protection to the City.

PA DCED provides a free service to municipalities to assist with the merger discussions of fire companies. By submitting a Letter of Intent to DCED, the City can request professional technical assistance for facilitating these discussions.

RECOMMENDATION 34 – CONTINUE THE USE OF DUTY DRIVERS AS PART OF THE FIRE SERVICE

With the difficulty of recruiting volunteer firefighters and the lack of availability of people during daylight hours, it is necessary to continue to employ duty drivers who can respond quickly and move fire apparatus to the fire scene. The City should research whether the duty drivers should be classified as firefighters based on the Fair Labor Standards Act and ensure that both full-time and part-time employees are paid for hours worked. The continued use of paid drivers and volunteer firefighters is the most efficient and financially beneficial method for providing fire protection.

RECOMMENDATION 35 – DEVELOP JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR PAID PERSONNEL.

This should include a description of the position, qualifications, certifications required, description of the tasks and responsibilities, and a process for measuring performance and accountability. This should be completed for the duty drivers and the fire chief.

RECOMMENDATION 36 –DEVELOP A TRANSITION PLAN TO MOVE TO THE COUNTY 911 CENTER

This should include a summary of all current and projected costs for providing the current ring-down service, as this will be a savings in providing fire service to the City. It will also allow the full-time employees to engage in code enforcement activities that will improve fire safety and generate revenue to support the fire services.

RECOMMENDATION 37 – REQUIRE DETAILED ANNUAL BUDGETS FROM THE LVFD

Fire departments receiving financial support from their municipality are required by state statute to submit budgets to their municipality. As volunteer fire departments require more support, both financial and non-financial, from their municipalities it is

incumbent on them to provide open and transparent views of their financial operations. The AG relief association audit for the period ending December 31, 2021, showed a balance in the Latrobe Firemen's Relief Association of $1,148,331 in investments and $120,103 in cash. This balance is far greater than the City and fire department combined spend in any given year.

The report also showed an average spending of about $132,000 per year mostly on insurance premiums for firefighters. No funds were expended on training and only $38,619 was spent on equipment during this period. The City should discuss the distribution of expenditures with the LVFD officers to determine whether other expenditures (such as SCBA breathing apparatus and other protective gear) can be supported by the relief funds. **Appendix D** provides the eligible uses for fire relief funds.

RECOMMENDATION 38 –ADOPT A FALSE ALARM ORDINANCE

Many communities use a false alarm ordinance to enforce alarm system maintenance that reduces the workload on fire department resources and create an additional revenue stream for the municipality. In any given year, about 50% of calls are related to false alarms – many of which are not even in the City but are in Derry and Unity townships.

RECOMMENDATION 39 –REVIEW MUTUAL AID RESPONSES

While sufficient resources need to be dispatched to provide adequate apparatus and manpower to meet the requirements of NFPA 1720 and 1500, the number of mutual aid responses should be analyzed to understand what aid is being provided and received. Furthermore, formal mutual aid agreements that are in place should be reviewed, updated, and amended to be more favorable for the City's fire department.

RECOMMENDATION 40 – REDUCE FIVE ENGINES TO FOUR

Along with the review of the fire stations and given the statistics for emergency responses, the average number of firefighters responding, and the number of apparatuses owned by the department, it is recommended that the five engines be evaluated based on performance, pump tests, age, and capabilities. A reduction of five(5) engines to four (4) (three primary and one reserve engine) would reduce the costs of purchase and the costs of vehicle maintenance over time.


Public Works
ONE WAY
PARKING

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT



The review of the City of Latrobe's public works department was conducted by Jason A. Dailey, as part of the STMP for the City of Latrobe. Jason served as a municipal manager and was more recently the Public Works and Utilities Director for Cranberry Township, Butler County for over 14 years. He has experience working with local governments assisting them with improving the efficiency and effectiveness of their municipal operations.

To complete this evaluation, Jason conducted field work and site investigations, analyzed data, gathered information from comparable local government operations, and conducted extensive research. Personal interviews were held with the city manager, public works director, laborers, and various agencies and organizations working with the City. The recommendations contained in this report are based on recognized standards, accepted practices, and government mandates.

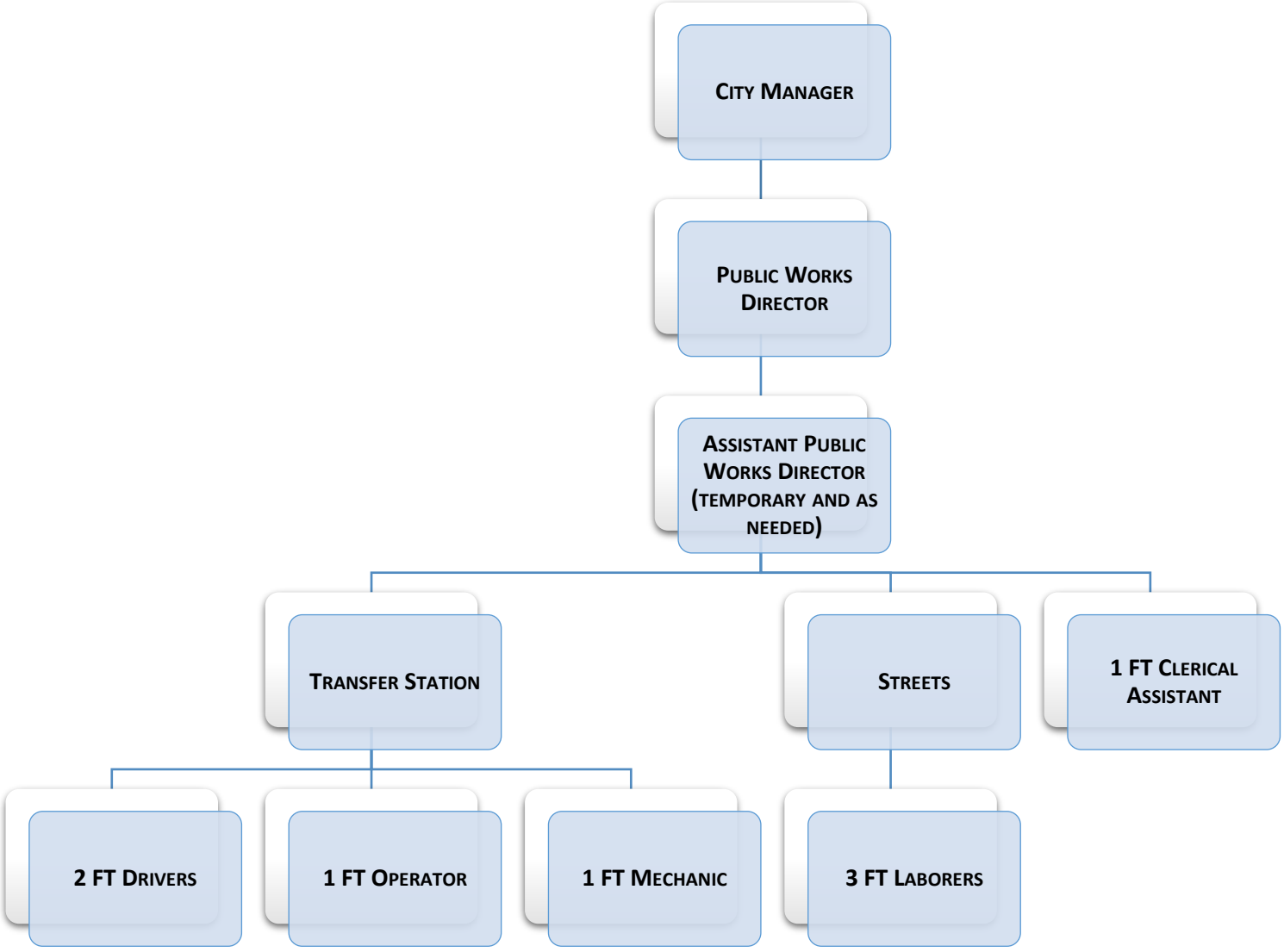
OBSERVATIONS

The public works department is responsible for the maintenance of streets, traffic signals, stormwater maintenance, winter maintenance, fleet and equipment maintenance, light facilities work, and the solid waste transfer station. The director manages the operation of both typical public works activities as well as that of the transfer station for the day-to-day oversight and assignments of the crew.

The department is divided into two (2) primary operations: the transfer station and the streets operation. The department includes eight full-time employees, the director, and one clerical person. All street department employees are members of a collective bargaining unit under the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 629.

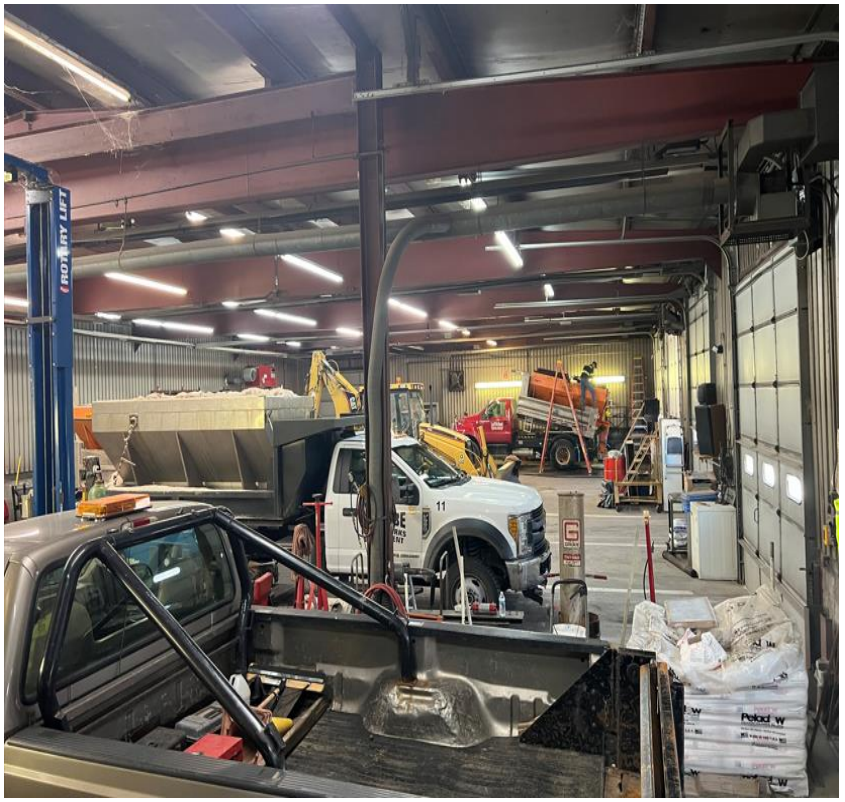
Figure 6 shows the organizational structure of the public works operation.

FIGURE 6 -LATROBE PUBLIC WORKS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



LEADERSHIP

The public works director has been with the City since 2018 in the director role, and is experienced in the City operations. The director's position is not part of the collective bargaining unit. The public works department is small but consists of a highly skilled and dedicated workforce. The workload is especially heavy because of the transfer station and the demands on the director because of this operation. The director is the only management level person at the transfer station's remote facility. As a short-term solution, the code enforcement officer serves as the assistant public works director in the director's absence but does not routinely participate in the management of the department.



STREET MAINTENANCE FACILITY

The Public Works facility is located at 696 Mission Road. This property also serves as the location for the transfer station and main public works garage and workspace.

- The facilities are located behind a gated entrance that is clearly marked upon entry. The gate was functional, and the fencing was in good condition upon inspection.
- Trucks and equipment are stored inside the heated facility.
- The main facility is also the administrative office for the director who has a laptop, desktop computer, fax machine, phone and filing cabinets with records and maps.
- There is a lack of adequate fire protection throughout the facility for the type of stored equipment, supplies, and materials.
- The lighting throughout the main public works garage space is high bay, high-efficient lighting. The lighting is adequate for most of the garage space. Low-level lighting may be needed in the area where mechanics work on the vehicles
- Garage doors are not numbered, however each vehicle appeared to have its own assigned stall
- Security cameras are located around the building.

The building capacity is at its limit for the space needed to store equipment and work on vehicles. In the winter months with plows and spreaders attached, the space is even tighter.

The upper storage areas are utilized for various holiday event items, parking meter and repair areas, and additional supplies for vehicle fleet repairs. There is concern with the storage of flammable materials and liquids as there is no fire protection throughout the building.



STREET MAINTENANCE

According to the PENNDOT Liquid Fuels map, the City owns and maintains approximately 41.2 miles of streets. There are also approximately 1.87 miles of state roads located within the City. The director estimated that there are 6.5 miles of alleys and dirt/ gravel roads that the City also maintains.

- Pavement patching is primarily handled by the streets labor crew at residents' complaints or worker observation.
- There is no long-term significant pavement maintenance or resurfacing plan except for those projects funded through the Liquid Fuels state aid allocation.
- The roads selected for repaving are based on work being done by the utility companies (gas, water, or sewer line work) who must contribute to the repair and replacement.

- Road costs have also been supported by the ARPA funds and stormwater fund where applicable.
- When there is a paving program for a given year, the director is responsible for developing and recommending the paving list, and then working with the PennDOT municipal services representative to develop the paving bid documents.
- Structures and facilities located within the rights of way of the City are not mapped or controlled by the City.
- The department has a newer *Crafco* crack sealing machine. It is estimated that there were at least 12 miles of roadway in need of crack sealing. There were four pallets of material stored on-site at the time of this report.
- The 2024 Liquid Fuels allocation was $273,060. These funds are used for eligible costs associated with maintenance and repair of roads throughout the City.

TABLE 12: LIQUID FUELS STATE AID ALLOCATIONS 2020- 2024

LIQUID FUELS	AUDIT 2020	AUDIT 2021	AUDIT 2022	ACTUAL 2023	ACTUAL 2024
355.020 State Liquid Fuels	298,123	277,041	281,573	274,917	273,060
355.000 Liquid Fuels	**298,123**	**277,041**	**281,573**	**274,917**	**273,060**

SOURCE: PENNDOT LIQUOD FUELS ALLOCATIONS 2024 MLF ALLOCATION.PDF (PA.GOV)

STREET NAME SIGNAGE

- All streets are clearly marked with signs using an adopted sign standard.
- A black "U Channel" post and common hardware are used for installation with a breakaway post that was observed to be properly installed throughout the sign network.
- There is no mapped inventory of street name signs detailing location, type of sign, post, and condition.
- There have been a lot of regulatory and directional signs placed throughout the City over the years resulting in some sign pollution.
- The department does an excellent job of maintaining an inventory of high usage signs and has a good, fast turnaround for signs that need to be ordered.
- A new sign topper with a trolley was adopted but the City is not rolling them out proactively. Individuals must request and pay for the sign upgrade which is around $800 per sign.
- It was estimated that one-third of the City's signs have the new topper design.
- The City uses *US Municipal* for sign ordering under the Blairsville COG contract.



PARKING GARAGE, LOTS AND METERS



- The parking operation is under the city manager, with the maintenance and operations of the lots, garage, and meters being assigned to public works.
- There are nine separate lots, one three level garage, and 900 parking meters installed that are a mix of battery (POM) and mechanical (Duncan Eagle) style.
- Meters are calibrated annually.
- Two full-time parking employees report to the chief of police. One reads the meters, the other performs clerical work, assists with work at the weigh station, and also cleans the garages and lots.
- Parking rates and violations vary and were available online https://www.cityoflatrobe.com/services/administration/parking.php
- A recent study was completed by the City engineer, *Gibson Thomas,* on the parking operation, one-way roads, and traffic signals.

STREET LIGHTING

- The streetlights are maintained by City personnel, with only a few by Penn Power.
- There are some new decorative lighting standards that were utilized in the business district that have been updated. These lights were upgraded over the last few years to LED.



TRAFFIC SIGNALS

- The City owns eleven (11) signalized intersections as part of the traffic signal system. Low level items such as bulb changes, head changeouts, timers, and flashers are performed in-house with the assistance of contractor *Wyoming Electric. Traffic Systems Services* from Carnegie, PA perform complex work
- The department designated two employees who have electrical and communications background to work on traffic signals.
- The City maintains an excellent inventory of spare parts and components. There are enough parts for several cabinets to be rebuilt if necessary.
- According to the director, six intersections were updated within the last three years. The newer intersections have emergency pre-emption, generator hookups, and radar detection that replaces older loop technology.
- The director is in the process of developing a five-year plan for replacing older LED bulbs.
- The City's comprehensive signal inventory was completed by PennDOT and is found at https://www.tsamssyst.penndot.gov/tsams/help.do This site not only has the hardware for each intersection with pictures but also has each intersection signal permit. Communities are responsible to keep the data updated when changes are made to components, intersection markings, or inspections are performed.

- During the last signal upgrade, both intersection cabinets were outfitted with batteries that provide short duration backup. There are also emergency generator plugs available for longer term outages. All but Avenue D and the Rt 982 intersections have generator hookups.
- There are cameras at various intersections that are available for public safety only. These cameras are for observation and enforcement, not for signal operations. Public works does not currently have access to these cameras.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT



- The City collects an annual stormwater fee that is billed once annually at a rate of $90 per household and business. This fee typically generates approximately $410,000 annually.
- The entire City is under the DEP permitted Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program.
- The Latrobe Municipal Authority has begun to map about 50% of the storm system in their GIS system using the same municipal engineer as the City.
- There is an active five-year capital plan for stormwater projects that includes:
    - Underground retention and property acquisition at Jefferson Street
    - New stormwater retention, rain garden, conveyance pipes and drains, on JoAnn Drive.
    - Stream work on Mary Street
    - Underdrain installation ahead of a paving project on Fairmount Street.

REFUSE COLLECTION

- Refuse billing and collection makes up the largest single revenue source for the City. From 2018 to 2022 there was on average a 33% increase in fees received from residential collection.
- The City requires all residential and commercial properties to participate in the City's contracted service for collection. The hauler included a 2% increase for the 2024 contract.
- The collection includes 2,683 residential bag accounts, 846 residential toter accounts, 68 commercial bag accounts and 135 commercial toter accounts.
- The current contract is with Republic and expires at the end of 2025; however, the City is seeking to bid the contract early in various forms to increase the number of interested bidders. The bid is being proposed in four parts including residential bag, residential toter service, recycling, and commercial.
- Recycling can be collected at curbside or residents can drop off material at the recycling center.
- Costs for residential service are $85/quarter for toter collection, and $68/quarter for bag service (plus the costs of stickers)

- There is an initiative in 2024 to convert all residential bag customers to toter collection service. Most of the customers in 2024 were bag service.
- The City offers transfer station rates for various items such as tires, freon removal, and general tonnage. There are also rates for roll-off and driveway dumpsters.

VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

- Preventative maintenance on all vehicles and equipment is done in-house. Personnel routinely perform more complex mechanical work as well. Maintenance is done for police, fire, refuse, public works and administration. There are approximately 50 vehicles included in the maintenance fleet.
- Each vehicle has an EXCEL file maintained by the mechanic at the public works building with history of maintenance.
- The director has a five-year vehicle and equipment replacement plan for the public works fleet.

LEAF COLLECTION

- The department provides leaf collection services during October and November for 4-6 weeks.
- Leaves are collected curbside with a vacuum machine utilizing a driver and laborer walking along-side with the vacuum.
- The collected leaves are composted by the department and made available to the public for free of charge to City residents.

PA "ONE CALL" MARKING AND RESPONDING

- The department is responsible for accurately marking and always responding to PA One Calls submitted by utility companies and contractors for work within the City. The sanitary and storm sewer lines, electric and communication lines, and privately owned utilities located within the park are the City's responsibility.
- Tickets for excavation are received during daylight hours via fax to the public works office.
- Tickets are closed by one of the two clerical employees who use a shared username and password to close out the tickets online.
- Utilities are located either with paper maps or through an online mapping "app" provided by the municipal engineer.



WINTER MAINTENANCE

- There is currently no formal snow and ice control plan, but the director and employees have a good working understanding of snow plowing and specific areas that need special attention.
- Calls for service are initiated with a call by the police department to the 911 Center. The Center contacts the director who then initiates calls which is done by seniority and overtime equalization.

- Public works operators are responsible for snow removal for 41.2 miles of City streets in addition to the garage, parking lots, and facilities. There is a contractor who assists with significant snow events and sidewalks owned by the City.
- Staff estimate that snow removal takes 3.5-4 hours when salting and plowing and 2.5-3 hours when just salting is needed. Operators receive a four-hour minimum callout when called after regular workday hours.
- There are three F550 trucks and one F650 truck set up for winter operations that are outfitted with Vbox spreaders along with 11.5-12' size plows. There are two F550's set up for backup trucks during the winter months.
- The trucks, plows, and spreaders were well maintained and in good working order.
- The City uses 600 tons of rock salt and pretreats its salt with calcium chloride using an overhead boom sprayer system.
- The City stores its winter maintenance material under a tarp shed which is adequately sized for the amount of material that is annually ordered and stored. The tarp needed repairs to keep the material dry but has recently been replaced.

Table 13 below provides the current inventory of vehicles located at the Public Works facility.

TABLE 13 - VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

VEHICLE/ EQUIPMENT	PLOW / SIZE
FORD F-150	
Ford F-250	
Ford F-550	Vbox / 11.5
Ford F-550	Vbox / 11.5
Ford F-650	Vbox / 11.5
Ford F-550	
Ford F-550	
Mack rolloff	
Takeuchi mini excavator	
CAT 426C backhoe	
Case 589 Backhoe	
CAT 242D Mini Skid Steer	
Tymco 600 Sweeper	

SOURCE: CITY RECORDS AND SITE VISITS



CITY BUILDING AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE



The City Building houses the council chambers, administration, police department, codes and the main fire station. It also serves as rental space for the shared parks and recreation commission. City staff provide routine upkeep, but public works personnel are responsible for maintenance items such as heavy cleaning, lighting, HVAC, and electrical. The interior of the City Building, while older, is well maintained – portions of the building are under renovation. The lighting is sufficient, the carpet in decent shape, and the overall appearance of the building was clean and organized. Nine (9) HVAC handling unites are being installed in Fall of 2024. The outside of the building was well maintained. The parking lot for the building provides adequate spaces for City staff and visitors. There are no known recent or pending claims against the City related to the operation or care of the buildings or grounds.

PUBLIC WORKS – OPERATING BUDGET

The operating budget for the public works operation supports routine activities including road maintenance, vehicle and equipment repairs, snow removal, tools, and equipment. **Table 14** provides a detailed review of department expenditures.

TABLE 14: PUBLIC WORKS EXPENDITURES 2019 – 2023

430 PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
430 122 000 Salary of Director	17,315	8,615	0	18,386	22,978
430 130 000 Salaries - General Labor	190,860	165,295	66,453	155,815	249,148
430 183 000 Overtime Pay - General Labor	10,262	8,022	819	9,432	8,810
430 192 000 Uniforms	16,852	12,418	12,786	18,881	7,705
430 200 000 CDL Testing	195	146	0	147	137
430 220 000 Operating Supplies & Expense	2,650	4,723	2,931	7,809	2,647
430 245 000 Signs	6,829	317	5,663	3,010	8,113
430 246 000 Street Marking Expense	6,116	51	129	460	10,297

430 PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
430 250 000 Deicing Material	46,450	17,209	133	825	0
430 252 000 Stone	1,417	668	712	180	0
430 253 000 ID -2	12,525	0	0	0	2,886
430 254 000 Pipe	669	0	1,404	0	0
430 256 000 Masonry Supplies	680	0	317	5,928	0
430 257 000 Highway Sealant	246	0	0	0	2,976
430 260 000 Minor Equipment	1,321	181	1,128	1,048	1,408
430 301 000 Miscellaneous Expense	10,930	1,414	29,082	2,667	5,146
430 331 000 Mechanics Salary	52,946	57,539	19,367	8,941	15,489
430 333 000 Fuel	12,230	5,191	6,043	16,074	13,208
430 334 000 Oil & Grease and Fluids	785	687	1,909	1,080	1,563
430 335 000 Tires, Tubes & Repairs	4,259	354	468	3,906	4,549
430 336 000 Repair Parts	8,535	3,909	3,855	5,822	14,685
430 337 000 Parking Meter Repairs	1,025	17	1,229	2,249	74
430 338 000 Parking Garage & Lot Repairs	131	3,238	10,698	264	453
430 339 000 Street Sweeper - Repair Parts	2,076	0	0	31	34
430 361 000 Street Lighting	121,670	30,336	12,323	8,429	5,283
430 362 000 Street Lighting - Liquid Fuels	7,388	2,399	0	0	0
430 364 000 Water-Sewage -Parking Garage	168	62	0	0	156
430 384 000 Rental of Equipment	386	386	0	0	418
430 385 000 Right of Way Maintenance	3,861	1,765	3,480	1,230	936
430 450 000 Contracted Svcs/Highway	608	2,447	2,446	75	902
430 451 000 Snow & Ice Removal	7,349	8,188	9,579	16,209	9,871
430 452 000 General Operating Parking Exp	0	0	34,961	47,600	15,710
430 453 000 Parking Garage Expenses	0	0	752	3,233	3,951
430 454 000 Misc. Parking Expense	0	0	37	61	77
Total 430 Public Works Department	**548,735**	**335,577**	**267,253**	**339,789**	**409,633**

SOURCE: CITY OF LATROBE FINANCIALS AND GRS ANALYSIS

SOLID WASTE OPERATING BUDGET

The operating budget for the solid waste operation includes not only the costs for the Republic contract for the solid waste program for the residential and commercial collection, but also for the operation of the transfer station which includes the wages, benefits, utilities and vehicle and equipment costs. Because the costs related to the transfer station are not separated in the accounting

system, it's difficult to determine the exact costs associated with the transfer station operation. **Table 15** provides a detailed review of the solid waste -transfer station expenditures.

TABLE 15: SOLID WASTE EXPENDITURES 2019-2023

426 SOLID WASTE - REFUSE	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
426 122 000 Salary of Director	19,815	65,911	66,703	49,904	45,956
426 130 000 Salaries - General Labor	104,365	103,076	95,745	92,926	104,280
426 131 000 Salary - Public Works Dispatch	69,274	76,193	24,868	34,873	65,316
426 183 000 Overtime - General Labor	14,601	8,434	1,188	8,123	39,811
426 200 000 CDL Testing	75	221	270	75	359
426 210 000 Office Supplies	4,833	3,669	5,030	4,395	4,919
426 215 000 Office Equipment Rental	3,614	2,693	2,881	2,616	1,913
426 220 000 Operating Supplies & Expense	2,224	3,210	3,478	3,740	4,728
426 230 000 Refuse Service Liens	0	8,968	0	0	0
426 244 000 Refuse Collection Stickers	3,947	4,061	0	5,011	0
426 301 000 Miscellaneous Expense	2,326	2,425	3,508	3,658	5,844
426 325 000 Postage	8,448	8,983	6,447	8,467	7,460
426 326 000 Radio - Maintenance & Repairs	0	307	38	177	0
426 331 000 Mechanics Salary - Vehicle Exp	21,282	25,968	17,588	882	58
426 332 000 Misc. Repairs - Hoppers, Boxes	20	1,764	3,612	6,354	5,387
426 333 000 Fuel	26,430	25,165	36,071	48,328	56,072
426 334 000 Oil, Grease & Fluids	981	2,271	1,948	2,583	3,206
426 335 000 Tires, Tubes & Repairs	7,000	7,199	4,572	3,130	16,256
426 336 000 Repair Parts - Vehicles	10,632	18,363	11,061	34,563	23,637
426 338 000 Minor Equipment - Vehicles	0	377	1,181	1,744	1,321
426 341 000 Advertising Transfer Station	3,198	2,548	2,514	2,018	4,684
426 440 000 Collection / Transportation	965,707	947,669	892,001	854,839	1,003,012
426 441 000 Landfill Expense	260,329	261,836	266,326	248,832	326,888
426 442 000 Recycling Costs - Misc.	4,316	3,395	0	0	2,312
426 452 000 Transfer Station / Maint & Repairs	2,984	2,315	3,349	3,593	25,301
426 453 000 Transfer Station - Electricity	1,043	1,102	1,152	1,667	1,642
Total 426 Solid Waste - Refuse	**1,537,445**	**1,588,121**	**1,451,529**	**1,422,494**	**1,750,362**

SOURCE: CITY OF LATROBE FINANCIALS AND GRS ANALYSIS

CAPITAL PLANNING

The public works director developed a long-range Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for department facilities, infrastructure and vehicles. The plan is updated regularly based on funding availability.

TABLE 16: PUBLIC WORKS CIP 5-YEAR PLAN

Capital Projects 5-Year Plan								Revised 2/26/24
Project or Vehicle	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Dept	Status
Scale Extension		56,000					Sanitation	
Water Line		18,000					Sanitation	
Sprinkler system			35,000				Sanitation	
Garage Door Compactor							Sanitation	
Open Boxes		15,000	12,000				Sanitation	
Compactors		11,000	12,000				Sanitation	
Excavator Tracks			2,500			3,200	Sanitation	
Roll off Truck 24		order		185,000			Sanitation	
Roll off Truck 26						order	Sanitation	
F-550 # 29 2014				order	100,000		Sanitation	
10 Yard Boxes			10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	Sanitation	
Truck #4 Pickup 012 4X4		order	85,000				All	Foreman Truck/Plow
Truck #1 Highway Plow		order	60,000				Mechanical	Used Plow #1
Truck # 8 8 Ton Dump Plow		order	150,000				Highway	
Truck # 5 Pickup w/Lift Gate 4x4	order	62,876					Highway	Paid
Truck # 9 Highway Plow			order		150,000		Highway	
Cat Excavator			order	150,000			Highway / SW	Shared Equipment
Roller 2005			45,000				Stormwater	
Lawn Mower			4,500				Bldg & Grounds	
Craft Crafco Sealer Unit		order		20,000			Highway	
Seal Pavement at TS			2,500				Bldg & Grounds	
Unit #3 Air Handler		48,000						
Electric Box Replacements (4)		23,100						Funded
Keystone Blight Grant Program		67,500						Denied
Admin. Floor Replacements		25,000						
Police Vehicle Replacement				56,000		60,000		
Police Drone Program / Weapons		30,000						
SW Utility Truck / Mix Ap		85,000					Stormwater / P.C	On Hold

COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES BENCHMARKING

A review of local communities in the southwestern PA region with similar population and demographics was conducted for public works expenditures for fiscal year 2022 using data reported to DCED**.** Of the comparable communities around the region, Latrobe had the lowest reported public works expenditures by far. When comparing communities solid waste-refuse expenditures, Latrobe was listed as the highest in that category. *[NOTE: None of the other communities own and operate a transfer station.]*

TABLE 17: PUBLIC WORKS EXPENDITURES FOR COMPARABLE CITIES

MUNICIPALITY NAME	COUNTY NAME	POPULATION	PUBLIC WORKS-HIGHWAYS	SEWER	WATER	SOLID WASTE	ELECTRICAL SYSTEM	OTHER PUBLIC WORKS
MURRYSVILLE	WESTMORELAND	21,006	4,197,902	-	-	-	-	34,543
GREENSBURG	WESTMORELAND	14,976	2,218,572	-	-	44,814	73,537	410,075
GROVE CITY	MERCER	7,871	691,798	2,099,481	1,312,426	467,965	5,793,142	269,162
BRADFORD	MCKEAN	7,849	1,193,877	-	-	793,167	177,488	131,474
CARNEGIE	ALLEGHENY	8,134	1,334,968	2,736,777	-	-	-	109,112
LATROBE	WESTMORELAND	8,060	570,270	-	-	1,459,372	-	391,485
DORMONT	ALLEGHENY	8,244	1,437,991	2,292,288	-	732,494	-	78,832
LOWER BURRELL	WESTMORELAND	11,758	1,532,212	2,641,495	-	186,926	-	2,105
NEW KENSINGTON	WESTMORELAND	12,170	1,518,483	-	-	974,045	-	50,834
CASTLE SHANNON	ALLEGHENY	8,249	1,290,007	2,383,876	-	569,763	-	-

SOURCE: DCED MUNICIPAL STATISTICS, NEW.PA.COM WEBSITE, 2022

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 41 - EVALUATE THE OPERATIONS STRUCTURE - CONSIDER ANOTHER LEVEL OF MANAGEMENT

The public works department is divided into two distinct and separate operations. The director is charged with supervising both operations. Each operation requires a high degree of focus and attention to detail and the physical presence of the director to work through issues and resolve problems. There is also a significant amount of planning and management level work that the director needs to accomplish that cannot be done because of the lack of management level staff to oversee the very important activities of the public works operation while managing the transfer station. Although the code enforcement officer fills in as an assistant public works director, this is not an ideal practice since it limits the hours available for proactive code enforcement.

One approach considered would be to create two new positions in the CBA that would be "crew leader" positions. These positions would be paid slightly more (perhaps $1.00 more per hour) to perform some of the routine management level work like ordering, planning projects, and providing field oversight of projects and personnel. The two "crew leaders" could be cross-trained so that the oversight of the routine public works activities and the transfer station operation would always have supervisory coverage.

Another approach would be to hire a director to oversee the transfer station and staff only. The transfer station is a business operation that requires a lot of attention. It is confined to one location and has its own equipment and functions that are relatively routine. A focused management level director would provide the necessary oversight for this important operation of public works that generates significant revenue for the City. A director that is focused on the transfer station could implement improvements to maximize the operation and plan for long-term upgrades and new technology.

RECOMMENDATION 42 – REPLACE THE TARP STORAGE SHED WITH A PERMANENT ROOF STRUCTURE THAT ALLOWS FOR THE INTEGRATION OF THE LIQUID STORAGE

The City utilizes 100% rock salt and calcium chloride as part of its winter maintenance snow removal. The City should invest in a permanent structure with upgraded lighting to protect its rock salt investment at the facility. The current tarp construction is prone to wind damage and tearing that will constantly need repaired and replaced. The calcium chloride liquid storage and overhead boom system could be integrated into the construction of an upgraded structure.

RECOMMENDATION 43 – PERFORM A BUILDING SPACE ANALYSIS

The main public works garage space is at maximum capacity and needs to be thoroughly evaluated. The City has a large investment in vehicles and equipment that are located within a garage that requires complicated maneuvers to angle equipment. This is both unsafe and will eventually result in damaged equipment. There is additional yard space that provides the potential for adding equipment and office space - this would require planned renovation and additions. A space utilization analysis by an architect to determine the structural integrity of the building and provide options for renovations would assist the City with decisions about future upgrades to the building.

RECOMMENDATION 44 – REPLACE THE EXISTING SCALE AT THE TRANSFER STATION

The current scale used at the transfer station requires a lot of manual actions and communication from the weighmaster inside the facility. Newer, modern scales have digital outdoor displays that can provide remote access that reduces staff hours. The current scale has reached its useful life and needs significant repairs and parts. The current scale is limited to 40' and should be upgraded to accept 80.' The tonnage is also limited – a new scale would increase tonnage limits. Fees can be adjusted to cover costs.

RECOMMENDATION 45 – CONSIDER MODERN PAYMENT OPTIONS AT THE TRANSFER STATION

The ability to scan checks, use Venmo or PayPal, use QR codes, and take credit card payments on-site would modernize the operation and make it more profitable. The City's bank does not currently have the capability for any of these options.

RECOMMENDATION 46 – DEVELOP A DETAILED TRAINING PROGRAM FOR EMPLOYEES

The City is supportive of training when it is cost effective and able to be attended locally. Training provided to employees can affect their productivity and efficiency. Benefits of training include improvements in morale, motivation, productivity, and quality of services.

Training and Professional Development for the Public Works Foreman

The Director's role as not only a supervisor, but also worker in the department, requires both supervisory and technical training. The LTAP Roads Scholar Program is an excellent resource for the City to consider. The PA State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS) and the PA State Association of Boroughs (PSAB) both offer excellent training annually around the Pittsburgh region.

- Pennsylvania LTAP Roads Scholar Program I & II
  https://gis.penndot.gov/ltap/
- Routinely evaluate courses offered by Pennsylvania State Assoc of Twp Supervisors (PSATS) and Pennsylvania State Boroughs Association (PSAB)
  http://www.psats.org
  http://www.psab.org

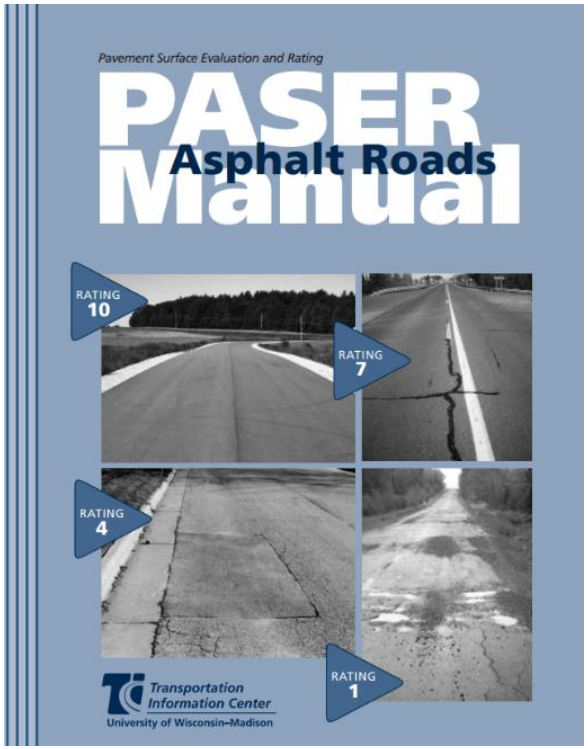
Training Program for the Department

- Basic electrical course
- Attend Annual PA One Call Event (September) and consider hosting a training on site just for City personnel (offered for free)
  https://www.pa1call.org/pocs/117b8650-3f40-4caf-bc82-fa4b4067e976/Events

RECOMMENDATION 47 - DEVELOP ANNUAL SAFETY TRAINING PROGRAM

The workers' compensation insurance carrier should be able to provide a resource for toolbox talks or follow up at no expense. Examples of topics include:

- Compressed air
- Bench and hand grinder safety
- Hand tool safety
- Slips, trips, and falls
- Lock-out, Tag-out
- Chainsaw safety
- Pre-job safety



RECOMMENDATION 48 – DEVELOP A LONG-RANGE PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The City should develop a long-range plan for paving and reconstruction of its 41.20 miles of paved roads and alleys. A pavement management plan will ensure that community goals and needs are met, inform the public of the prioritization of upcoming projects, encourage efficient administration, and allow the City to be proactive and coordinate utilities work with road repair. Cities use pavement management software to record conditions, estimate costs, and schedule routine maintenance.

There are innovative, inexpensive services that have been developed recently to assist municipalities in their evaluation of their road infrastructure. One service is called *StreetScan.* This company uses a vehicle outfitted with high resolution imaging and gyroscopes that analyze road surfaces every 10' and provide the image with a 1-10 rating based on the PASER rating system developed at the University of Wisconsin. The final report is an excellent overall snapshot of the road system of the municipality. The cost is $100-$120 per mile. More information can be found at https://streetscan.com/

RECOMMENDATION 49 – CONTINUE USING SHARED FUNDING FOR STREET MAINTENANCE

The City does not have a dedicated funding source for its street resurfacing needs. The City could consider dedicated millage for street improvement purposes in addition to revenue from other sources that can be directed for street maintenance like those of the stormwater fund. A community with 41.20 miles should be addressing 4.5 miles of roadway per year on a 10-12 year paving program.

RECOMMENDATION 50 - CONSIDER SEALCOATING STREETS

Unprotected asphalt surfaces are sufficiently porous to allow water to seep into the base courses. The water softens the aggregate and reduces the overall load carrying capacity of the pavement. More severe damage is caused by the expansion of the trapped water in the pavement during winter months. The freeze-thaw cycles create large cracks and the problem is steadily worsened.

The City should consider sealcoating streets that have been constructed in the last 5 to 10 years if the roads are in fairly good condition. The sealcoat will create an impervious barrier that will prevent water from seeping into the pavement. The sealcoat will also protect the roadway from ultraviolet rays and deicing materials. There are a variety of sealcoats in the industry that are conducive to urban settings such as slurry seals and microsurfaces.

RECOMMENDATION 51 – CONTINUE THE DETAILED EVALUATION OF SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING

The City is ahead of an expiring contract with its current hauler. Regional refuse rates have skyrocketed, and larger contracts have begun to limit the pool of interested bidders to only those large enough to already have the vehicles and manpower to take on larger or less geographically desirable contracts. The City should continue its comprehensive evaluation of its contract costs and performance including a market analysis. This study will result in a refined bid document that will be structured to bring more bidders to the table while aiming to keep rates reasonable for users.

RECOMMENDATION 52 – DEVELOP AN OPTIONAL PLAN FOR IN-HOUSE SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING COLLECTION

The City was proactive in evaluating the market with a pre-bid of the solid waste and recycling contract. It revealed that the market is getting tighter and more costly. The City has an advantage over most communities in that it maintains its own transfer station that provides short-term drop off solution for haulers who can then transport to the landfill. Manpower and refuse vehicles would be the primary concern for an in-house program because refuse vehicles have a long lead time of nearly 24 months and solid waste workers are in short supply and high demand. If the City is going to consider moving this collection in-house, a more formal business plan should be developed as soon as possible to determine if this option is economically and practically feasible.

RECOMMENDATION 53 – CONSIDER SEASONAL AND PART TIME EMPLOYEES

Most municipalities utilize seasonal labor for lower-level maintenance activities. During the peak construction season, there is an abundance of landscaping and street maintenance activities (like crack sealing, right of way clearing, grass cutting, and line painting) that could be accomplished with seasonal labor. Vacations, personal, and sick time impact the productivity of the City's small crew during the summer months. The department should maximize the use of summer employees and assist the department for labor intensive storm drainage projects and routine pavement maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION 54 – CONSIDER INCREASING THE PARKING RATES AND ENFORCEMENT

Parking meters are installed to manage valuable parking spaces in commercial districts during peak parking hours. The enforcement of parking meters encourages compliance and reduces commercial complaints that parking is not available. The current rates of the parking meters encourage illegal parking because enforcement is not uniform and consistent. Prime parking hours may not follow the typical daylight shift hours and should be reviewed and adjusted to when parking restrictions are necessary. This may be during evening dinner rush hours or weekend evenings. Increasing rates and adjusting enforcement will increase parking revenues for this program.

RECOMMENDATION 55 – EVALUATE PRIVATIZING PARKING OPERATIONS

The City has valuable parking assets in its garage and lots as well as over 900 metered spaces. Those assets are underutilized and the enforcement underperforming. The parking assets would be attractive to a private parking management company to manage

and enforce parking regulations. Privatization of parking assets is becoming more popular as collection and enforcement has become easier with newer technology. The City should consider putting together an RFP for a private service to manage its parking assets.

RECOMMENDATION 56 – ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT FOR TRAFFIC SIGNAL UPDATES AND MAINTENANCE

The City uses two (2) different vendors for traffic signal support in an "on-call" fashion. It is difficult for issues to be identified with the signal system network if the vendor is not brought on-site at least annually to perform preventative maintenance inspections and upgrade components. It would be advisable for the City to have a multiyear maintenance agreement with *Traffic Systems Services* that includes a regular inspection and upgrade plan.

RECOMMENDATION 57 – FINALIZE THE LED BULB REPLACEMENT PLAN AND FUND IT ANNUALLY

The director was in the process of developing an LED bulb replacement plan that will require a five (5) year phased budget allocation. This is an excellent initiative that should be implemented within the timeframe being proposed. This project can be completed in-house, which will keep the costs low. The benefit and return on this investment will be in the reduced electrical costs and improved lighting at the signalized intersections.

RECOMMENDATION 58 – UPGRADE REMAINING TRAFFIC INTERSECTIONS WITH RADAR DETECTION, BATTERY BACKUPS, AND GENERATOR CONNECTIONS

There were six intersections upgraded recently within the last three (3) years. The remaining five (5) intersections should have the same upgrades with radar detection, battery backups, and generator connections that will be able to operate the intersections during periods of power interruption.

RECOMMENDATION 59 – INSTALL ADDITIONAL OBSERVATION CAMERAS

There are several intersections in the business district that have observation cameras – additional cameras should be installed as funds become available. Currently the public works director does not have access to the cameras. Operations management requires the ability to utilize all tools available to make the best decisions and assist with the deployment of employees and vehicles. The director and his operations management staff should be provided with their own username and password to regularly access the cameras.

RECOMMENDATION 60 – IMPROVE THE PA "ONE CALL" TICKET MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The oversight of the PA "One Call" ticket system is now under the PA Public Utility Commission. Ticket violations by municipalities are more closely scrutinized and there is a need for public works management and staff to take the ticket management process more seriously. Increased training in-house for staff that are excavating and for those locating lines is extremely important to maintain compliance. Individuals that are closing tickets should have their own usernames and passwords for trackability of the ticket process.


Parks and Recreation
Latrobe Park
1529 E Fort Ave
Open Sunrise to Sunset
Program Open Space, Department of Natural Resources

PARKS AND RECREATION

The review of the City of Latrobe's parks and recreation was conducted by Jason A. Dailey, as part of the STMP for the City of Latrobe. Jason served as a municipal manager and was more recently the Public Works and Utilities Director for Cranberry Township, Butler County for over 14 years. He has experience working with local governments and assisting them with improving the efficiency and effectiveness of their municipal operations. To complete this evaluation, Jason conducted field work and site investigations, analyzed data, gathered information from comparable local government operations, and conducted extensive research. Personal interviews were held with the City Manager, Public Works Director, laborers, and various agencies and organizations working with the City. The recommendations contained in this report are based on recognized standards, accepted practices, and government mandates.

OBSERVATIONS

The City of Latrobe, Latrobe School District, and Unity Township have formed the Greater Latrobe Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission). This Commission owns, maintains, and operates recreation facilities and develops and oversees recreational programming for the communities. The Commission is made up of 9 members appointed by the respective governments with equal representation for each. Meetings are open to the public and held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month rotating from the Latrobe Municipal Building to the Unity Township Building for alternate months. A seasonal newsletter is developed by the Commission that allows for printed and *eNews* communication to the communities including information such as updates by the Latrobe Community Revitalization Program (LCRP).

The City of Latrobe contributes approximately $60,000 to the Commission. The amount in the 2024 budget was shown as decreasing to $42,000 but also included a gasoline line item. The Commission receives office space at the Latrobe City Building that includes three offices and use of the building for meetings and programming. It is expected to return to the previous $60,000 level in 2025. The library receives a $20,000 contribution from Latrobe annually supported by dedicated real estate tax millage.

TABLE 18: RECREATION AND PARKS EXPENSES 2018-2022

452 PARKS AND RECREATION	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**
452 500 000 Contribution to Rec Commission	62,136	60,505	62,610	18,441	67,804
454.000 Parks	0	961	9,500	524	3,613
Total 452 Recreation	**62,136**	**61,466**	**72,110**	**18,965**	**71,417**
456 LIBRARY	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**
456 100 000 Contribution to Library	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Total 456 Library	**20,000**	**20,000**	**20,000**	**20,000**	**20,000**

SOURCE: LATROBE FINANCIAL RECORDS

PARKS BUDGET COMPARISON

While Latrobe does not own or maintain parks facilities or provide programming, **Table 19** below provides a comparison between what Latrobe spends for these services and what other communities spend. Despite what appears to be a low investment for culture and recreation, the appointment of a joint Commission has proven to be a strong asset for the Latrobe community that would otherwise require each of the individual entities to provide a much greater financial investment.

Latrobe's expenses remain relatively low for recreation and about average for funds spent for the Library.

TABLE 19: PARK AND RECREATION BUDGETS FOR COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES

MUNICIPALITY NAME	COUNTY NAME	POPULATION	CULTURE AND RECREATION	LIBRARIES
MURRYSVILLE BORO	WESTMORELAND	21,006	634,363	315,983
GREENSBURG CITY	WESTMORELAND	14,976	1,295,906	124,564
GROVE CITY BORO	MERCER	7,871	238,856	32,341
BRADFORD CITY	MCKEAN	7,849	550,302	25,000
CARNEGIE BORO	ALLEGHENY	8,134	118,851	94,000
LATROBE BORO	WESTMORELAND	8,060	72,110	33,107
DORMONT BORO	ALLEGHENY	8,244	727,017	88,818
LOWER BURRELL CITY	WESTMORELAND	11,758	49,145	32,000
NEW KENSINGTON CITY	WESTMORELAND	12,170	558,145	82,173
CASTLE SHANNON BORO	ALLEGHENY	8,249	150,415	230,671

SOURCE: PA DCED MUNICIPAL STATISTICS, 2022, WWW.PA.GOV/MUNICIPALSTATISTICS

RECREATION AS A COMMUNITY ASSET

Latrobe has clearly found a model of cooperation with the Township and School District that is working for the Latrobe residents and for the region. Parks, recreation, and cultural activities provide a community with necessary outlets for social and physical interactions. Communities that recognize their role as the provider of recreational assets attract residents and businesses while creating healthy, livable environments.

RECOMMENDATION 61 – CONTINUE TO EVALUATE THE COMMISSION WITH STRATEGIC PLANNING EFFORTS

Latrobe has a great model that is providing the necessary recreational programs and maintenance components for its residents' recreational needs. The Commission is functioning well and should continue to be used as the vehicle for the City's parks and recreation needs. The participating communities and school district should regularly engage in a strategic management process to determine long-term costs, performance, and future investments.

RECOMMENDATION 62 - THE CITY AND COMMISSION SHOULD CONSIDER SHARED SERVICES.

The City and Commission are currently not working together to share labor creatively. There are a lot of opportunities for both entities to share equipment and personnel resources due to the type of work performed that would reduce the operating expenses and capital expenses by both entities. Those areas that could be explored more thoroughly are:

- Joint road repair contracts (parking lot and trail work could be included)
- Shared equipment used for trucks and equipment.
- Joint winter maintenance planning / sharing both personnel and equipment.
- Shared utility management of electric and gas bills




Code Enforcment

CODE ENFORCEMENT, UCC, AND ZONING



The review of the City of Latrobe's code enforcement, UCC, and zoning operation was conducted by Jason A. Dailey, as part of the STMP for the City of Latrobe. Jason served as a municipal manager and was more recently the Public Works and Utilities Director for Cranberry Township, Butler County for over 14 years. He has experience working with local governments and assisting them with improving the efficiency and effectiveness of their municipal operations. To complete this evaluation, Jason conducted field work and site investigations, analyzed data, gathered information from comparable local government operations, and conducted extensive research. Personal interviews were held with the City Manager, Public Works Director, laborers, and various agencies and organizations working with the City. The recommendations contained in this report are based on recognized standards, accepted practices, and government mandates.

OBSERVATIONS

The City adopted the 2012 International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) for existing structures and makes it available online through the E360 "app" at the City website (https://ecode360.com/LA1211/home) The City has also opted into the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code (UCC) for new building construction both residential and commercial.

The code enforcement officer is also named as the zoning officer. In 2023, there were 61 zoning certificates issued and 100 UCC permits issued. The staff uses *SmartGov* software to manage the permits issued through the office.

Code enforcement activity in Latrobe has been largely reactive based on complaints that are received through the City office. There is also an active *Quality of Life* ticketing system that is used for first notice to property owners. At the time of this report there was a significant backlog of these tickets that needed follow-up. Most of the complaints received are related to trash, high weeds, and alley debris.

ZONING CERTIFICATES AND INSPECTIONS

Most zoning permits issued are for auxiliary structures such as fences, sheds, roof repairs, gutters, siding, doors, windows, painting, masonry, garages that are under 1,000 square feet, and decks less than 30 inches in height. The zoning officer also issues fire pit permits, sidewalk/street/driveway permits, sign permits, and demolition permits. Permits that require plan review and/or UCC inspections are handled through a 3rd party inspection agency, TKL Code Inspection Services. The actual application and issuance process for UCC permits is handled by the zoning officer.

OPERATING BUDGET

The City 's code enforcement activity is performed by one (1) full time and one (1) part-time code enforcement officer. Most of the budget consists of wages and benefits, UCC inspections, and software maintenance.

TABLE 20: CODE ENFORCEMENT EXPENDITURES 2019-2023

414 PLANNING AND ZONING	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
414 122 000 Code / Zoning Officer	47,718	49,996	46,710	61,947	78,613
414 122 100 Code Officer / Part-Time	0	0	0	0	0
414 220 000 General Supplies	516	534	782	678	1,277
414 301 000 Miscellaneous Expense	1,339	812	766	421	(694)
414 314 000 Zoning Hearing Board Legal Exp	2,250	2,400	750	4,150	210
414 321 000 IT / Communication Geo Plan	0	0	0	326	0
414 337 000 Car Expense	0	0	45	125	0
414 341 000 Advertising	1,094	839	758	455	0
414 450 000 Code Inspections	4,196	5,645	4,823	3,993	47,434
414 460 000 Vector Control	1,500	1,750	1,930	2,000	3,180
414 461 000 Rat Control	165	165	0	203	0
Total 414 Planning and Zoning	**58,777**	**62,141**	**56,565**	**74,298**	**130,019**

SOURCE: CITY OF LATROBE FINANCIAL RECORDS AND GRS ANALYSIS

CODE ENFORCEMENT BUDGET COMPARISON

The total budget for code enforcement activities was compared to similar communities in southwestern PA with similar population, demographics, and operations. The Latrobe expenditures for UCC and code enforcement were $74,298 which is lower than many of the comparable communities. It should be noted that many of these communities outsource code and property maintenance enforcement and some share services with neighboring communities. In many cases the fees are paid directly to the third-party inspection agencies and are not recorded as a general fund expenditure. As a result, these expenditures are not captured in the reported data for DCED. Likewise, the City's community development is provided primarily by the LCRP and expenditures are, therefore, not recorded in the City's accounting records.

TABLE 21: CODE ENFORCEMENT EXPENDITURES – COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES

MUNICIPALITY NAME	COUNTY NAME	POPULATION	UCC AND CODE ENFORCEMENT	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
MURRYSVILLE BORO	WESTMORELAND	21,006	-	-
GREENSBURG CITY	WESTMORELAND	14,976	253,788	193,954
GROVE CITY BORO	MERCER	7,871	19,800	15,000
BRADFORD CITY	MCKEAN	7,849	120,657	1,423,608
CARNEGIE BORO	ALLEGHENY	8,134	84,715	34,777
LATROBE BORO	WESTMORELAND	8,060	74,298	-
DORMONT BORO	ALLEGHENY	8,244	108,721	3,330
LOWER BURRELL CITY	WESTMORELAND	11,758	22,005	-
NEW KENSINGTON CITY	WESTMORELAND	12,170	88,981	12,757
CASTLE SHANNON BORO	ALLEGHENY	8,249	144,785	-

SOURCE: PA DCED MUNICIPAL STATISTICS, 2022, WWW.PA.GOV/MUNICIPALSTATISTICS

ZONING HEARING BOARD

The City currently has a completely populated Zoning Hearing Board of five members. Members are appointed to 5-year staggered terms with no alternates. The City should continue its efforts to recruit interested and qualified candidates for the Board to ensure it will have ample talent when vacancies occur. The Board has its own Solicitor and uses a stenographer for hearings. There is a fee schedule for hearings that covers costs. Recent activities of the Board included conditional use hearings and setback variances. Members should be provided with outside training opportunities through the DCED-PATH, PML, or LGA training on the role and responsibilities of Zoning Hearing Board members.

PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission has a completely populated five-member Board with 4-year staggered terms. There are no alternates currently. Plans are typically submitted as hard copy paper plans. The municipal engineer is engaged for land development applications that are submitted to the City. The City should consider sending members of the Planning Commission for regular training and engaging members for strategic planning meetings. Communication and common goals should be consistently shared between the elected and appointed officials of the City.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (SALDO)

The City's SALDO is currently being revised.

ZONING ORDINANCE

There is currently a review of the zoning ordinance being undertaken by the zoning officer and planning commission.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City's Comprehensive Plan is currently in the process of being updated.

RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL BUILDING AND ELECTRICAL INSPECTIONS / FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT

The City opted into the PA UCC in 2004 and contracts all commercial, residential, and electrical inspections and plan review services to TKL. from Indiana, PA. TKL has a simple and informative website that included a link to Latrobe's application http://www.tklinspection.com/LatrobeBuildApp.pdf The application was not fillable and there was no fee schedule included. The application must be returned to the City who then submits it to TKL. The fees include a 20% mark-up for administrative fees which the City collects and retains.

UCC APPEALS BOARD

Because the City has opted into the UCC, a UCC appeals board must be established and maintained. Although, the City may have initially set this up at the time of the opt-in, there is no longer an active Board and there is not an on-line application to request an appeal. Efforts are currently underway for the re-establishment of a UCC appeals board potentially with a regional approach through a Council of Governments (COG).

CODIFICATION

The City uses General Code Publishers and Ecode360 for codification of the City ordinances. The latest update was done through September 19, 2022. The code is available online at https://ecode360.com/LA1211 This link is provided to the public through the City's website.

RENTAL REGISTRATION AND INSPECTION PROGRAM

Residential rental registrations are currently managed through the code enforcement office. Registrations are only required at the time of occupancy change. There is currently no fee to register and there is no inspection program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 63 – ADD AN ADDITIONAL CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

Code enforcement work needs to be focused, planned, data-driven and proactive. The current structure provides only reactive enforcement because of the office workload. There should be at least one additional code officer working full time to proactively canvas neighborhoods and the commercial districts for property maintenance violations.

RECOMMENDATION 64 – IMPROVE THE QUALITY-OF-LIFE TICKETING PROGRAM

The City's *SmartGov* software has the capability of logging violations and issuing tickets from the field. The current practice of documenting and then issuing the tickets back in the office is a duplication of labor. Using remote software and a portable printer in the vehicles will reduce time and increase productivity. *[NOTE: The Smartgov software is expected to go live in October of 2024. The City is currently in the testing phase of the implementation.]*

RECOMMENDATION 65 – ASSIGN A MARKED VEHICLE FOR CODE ENFORCEMENT

The role of code enforcement requires the officer to spend time in the field which requires a reliable vehicle. It is not uncommon for retired police vehicles or a pickup truck to be used for code enforcement activities. A designated vehicle that is outfitted with the code enforcement laptop, gear, tablets, and printers should be assigned for productive enforcement activity. Currently the code office shares a City vehicle with administrative and other departments. This is inadequate since the vehicle should be clearly marked for code enforcement so that the public is assured of the legitimacy of the contact with officers.

RECOMMENDATION 66 - UPDATE THE CODIFICATION OF ORDINANCES

The City has already taken the labor intensive step of digitally codifying its ordinances through General Code Publishers and made the investment in Ecode360 so that there is public access through the website link. Ordinances have been updated through September 2022 but should be kept current to ensure accuracy.

RECOMMENDATION 67 – IMPROVE THE PERMITTING PROCESS WITH ONLINE FILLABLE FORMS

The City has application forms available online that could very easily be converted to fillable forms and submitted to the City or contracted services online. For example, the building permit process has a link to TKL, who then provides a link to a PDF that needs to be printed, filled out, and returned to the City for processing and payment. Consider making all permit applications available online as fillable forms that can be submitted and paid for online, making the applicant experience much more pleasant and "user friendly." This process limits the staff time needed to walk applicants through the application process. The *Smartgov* software should make a fully automated process possible.

RECOMMENDATION 68 – ESTABLISH A UCC APPEALS BOARD OR PARTICIPATE IN A JOINT BOARD

The City opted into the PA UCC and is required by law to have a UCC appeals board in place. Many communities find these Boards difficult to maintain as they meet so infrequently and require specific accreditations and certifications for Board members. For this reason, COGs have formed joint UCC appeals boards to handle appeals from multiple jurisdictions. The City should either re-establish the local appeals board or consider participating in a joint board. Without an appeals board in place, any appeal may be "deemed approved" by the courts for lack of due process for the applicant. Efforts are currently underway for the formation of a regional UCC appeals board through a COG.

RECOMMENDATION 69 – IMPROVE THE RENTAL REGISTRATION PROGRAM

The City only requires landlords to register their properties or tenants at change of occupancy. The "best practice" for rental management is to adopt an annual rental registration process. An annual registration of tenants provides information for tax collection, public safety, and code enforcement purposes. There should be a per unit fee to cover the administrative costs to mail applications, and to enter and maintain the tenant information in the *Smartgov* software.

RECOMMENDATION 70 – CONSIDER ADOPTING A RENTAL INSPECTION PROGRAM

The City does not currently have a regular rental inspection program. Rental inspection programs improve the rental housing stock in the neighborhoods by requiring that the rental units meet basic standards for quality living and home safety. Inspections provide the City with updated information on living conditions and utility services. Inspection programs are typically performed once every two or three years, or at the time of tenant change if sooner. An inspection fee usually averages $85-$100 per inspection, with additional fees for re-inspections and no-show inspections. Because of the large number of rentals located within the City (about 1,260), a rigorous and regular inspection program should be adopted.

RECOMMENDATION 71 – UPDATE THE FIRE LOSS ESCROW ORDINANCE

When a fire occurs in a municipality and the property is a total loss, demolition and structural removal can be required through a fire escrow ordinance. It is not uncommon for property owners to walk away from a total loss with the insurance funds and build elsewhere leaving the burned-out structure to become an eyesore and safety concern for the host municipality. Latrobe has adopted an ordinance requiring insurance companies to provide a check to the municipality to escrow funds to cover the cost of demolition or rehabilitation. The City should update its contact information with DCED, making it easier for insurance companies to contact the City in the event of a loss https://Citys.org/ordfiles/Fire%20Losses.pdf

RECOMMENDATION 72 – ADOPT THE 2023 INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE (IPMC)

The City adopted the 2012 IPMC but has not updated the newest 2023 version. The updated versions are deployed so that municipalities can keep up with the latest trends in materials, processes, and enforcement tools. The City should adopt the most recent version of the IPMC to ensure that the codes are current.


Community
Development
The Way
MINISTRIES
Colonial
Cleaners
DRY CLEANERS

Community Development

The review of the City of Latrobe's community development program was conducted by the GRS team, as part of the STMP for the City of Latrobe. To complete this evaluation, the team conducted field work and site investigations, analyzed data, gathered information from comparable local government operations, and conducted extensive research. Personal interviews were held with the city manager, the executive director for the LCRP, and organizations working with the City. The recommendations contained in this report are based on recognized standards, accepted practices, and government mandates.

OBSERVATIONS

STRUCTURE

Community development, economic development, historical preservation, and sustainability are the core mission of the Latrobe Community Revitalization Program. The LCRP is a 501(c)(3) organization that has proven to be an economic engine for the City and the region with numerous successful redevelopment initiatives have been undertaken and completed. The LCRP is managed by an executive director who has been in this position for the past ten (10) years, formerly serving as the City's assistant city manager. The City and the LCRP have an excellent relationship working closely to identify, secure, and maximize opportunities for funding and resources.



PROGRAMS

Several programs are managed by the LCRP including but not limited to:

- **Business Incubator** – This self-sustaining program houses architects, *Headspace* media and a doctor's office currently.

- **Façade Program** – this grant program provides an architect and design team to help businesses improve their street façade. The program has provided over 30 businesses with grant funds to make improvements. The LCRP has been able to leverage CDBG funds for this program.

- **Downtown Infrastructure, Streetscape and Placemaking Projects** – The LCRP has partnered with foundations and leveraged federal funds for various major downtown intersection and infrastructure projects. Once the projects are completed, they are turned over to the City for long-term maintenance.



- **Residential Blight** – Partnering with Westmoreland County and using the conditions map produced in the blight study, the LCRP has worked to offer a tax credit program that helps to rehabilitate blighted properties through leveraging private investment.

- **810 Ligonier Street Building Rehabilitation** – This building was recently purchased and there are planned renovation phases to bring this very historic building back to life.

One of the major functions of the LCRP is to focus on the implementation of the strategic plan that was completed two years ago. This study focused on underutilized buildings as well as the main anchor buildings and their tenants. Revitalization of historic buildings rather than demolition has become a successful strategy for the LCRP.

PARTNERSHIPS AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS

In 2018, the City and the LCRP received the Governor's Award for Excellence for working cooperatively with the Greater Latrobe School District, LCRP, the Latrobe Community Revitalization Program, the local Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, organizations and foundations to "make significant improvements in our downtown."

Among the projects cited in the application were:

• Completion of 23 facade improvements for downtown buildings, representing an investment of $840,000 with support from a state-funded program

• Development of annual festivals that relate to icons associated with the community — Steelers Fest, the Great American Banana Split Festival, and Mister Rogers Family Day

• Ongoing construction of the Latrobe Elementary School on a former athletic field the school district acquired from the City

• Creation of a popular walking trail on an abandoned rail line parallel to Lincoln Avenue, and plans for a trail connection from Saint Vincent College to downtown Latrobe

• Replacement of 17 deteriorated homes along Route 981 with new, affordable housing through a partnership with the organization Homes Build Hope.

FUTURE INITIATIVES

The LCRP has completed several master plans. These plans help to provide direction and focus for program funding goals. For example, a parking evaluation study was completed that includes an evaluation of one-way streets. Another master plan included an evaluation and feasibility study for the Latrobe Train Station and improvements that could be made at that station to not only promote multimodal transportation, but also economic development around the station.



RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 73 – CONSIDER THE USE OF THE DCED NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (NPP) AND NEIGHBORHOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (NAP) TAX CREDITS.

This is a valuable funding program for CDCs and non-profit organizations that work in neighborhood revitalization. DCED just doubled the money available for this program to $72 million and opened a new round of funding. CDCs may apply for either a six-year program (NPP) or a one-year program (NAP) that awards tax credits to corporate sponsors who are willing to invest in the business district and neighborhoods. Eligible activities include affordable housing, blight elimination, community economic development, integrated housing and health initiatives, weatherization and housing rehabilitation, mortgage foreclosure prevention, workforce development, and job training

RECOMMENDATION 74 – CONSIDER A PUBLIC ART OVERLAY DISTRICT AND REVIEW BOARD

The City should consider adding a Public Art Overlay to its Zoning Ordinance to encourage and regulate public art. The benefit of incorporating public art into the reuse of blighted properties is that the art fosters a sense of belonging to place. Public art can also create a sense of place that helps people make meaning from their surroundings, and the act of generating artwork can build relationships in a community. Integrating public art into Latrobe's redevelopment projects generates community engagement and enhances the results of blight remediation.

When people think of public art, they often think of large, permanent sculptures, such as the stone and bronze statues that are often found in city and town centers and parks, or perhaps a modernist sculpture in an office building plaza. But public art is extremely diverse. Public art can be temporary or permanent and can include installations, performances, festivals, music, dance, theatre, paintings, text, chalk, graffiti, yarn bombs, functional art (like street furniture or signage) found materials in the natural environment, digitally mediated experiences, and dazzling displays of technology, color, and light.

RECOMMENDATION 75 –ELIMINATE ONEROUS PARKING MINIMUMS

According to *Strong Towns*, a national planning organization, "local laws requiring private property owners to provide and maintain a certain number of off-street parking spaces do not belong in a strong city or town. Parking minimums take large chunks of land out of productive use. Developers who are required to build parking stalls pass the cost on to the tenant. Parking minimums are especially onerous for subsidized affordable housing, where part of the goal is to keep costs, and therefore rents, as low as possible. These projects invariably have very slim margins between viability and non-viability, and a parking minimum can easily make the project non-viable.

Parking lots can dramatically impede the walkability of an area. The "spreading out" effect of devoting much of our land to parking lots means that walking, bicycling, and even public transit become less viable modes of transportation. Parking, especially mandated free parking, is a powerful inducer of more automobile use and less healthy lifestyles.

Parking is also costly for small businesses because a chunk of the overhead goes to building and maintaining the required parking spaces. Parking minimums often make the traditional development pattern impossible**.** Even where the zoning code allows a mix of uses (like an apartment above a store), allows buildings to come right up to the sidewalk, and allows a fine-grained mix of smaller structures, parking minimums make an old-fashioned Main Street all but impossible.[4]

RECOMMENDATION 76 – ENGAGE IN ALTERNATIVE ENERGY STRATEGIC PLANNING

Developing alternative energy strategies can increase a community's resilience and reduce the costs of operation long-term. The City should consider developing a Community Energy Strategic Plan (CESP).

The steps to complete this plan are:

Step 1:	Establish and Charge a Leadership Team
Step 2:	Identify and Engage Stakeholders
Step 3:	Develop an Energy Vision
Step 4:	Assess the Current Energy Profile
Step 5:	Develop Energy Goals and Strategies
Step 6:	Identify and Prioritize Actions
Step 7:	Put Together a Financing Strategy
Step 8:	Develop a Blueprint for Implementation
Step 9:	Plan to Regularly Evaluate
Step 10:	Develop, Adopt, and Publicize the CESP

In 2018, the Borough of Forest Hills used sustainability planning and design to construct their municipal building using net zero energy concepts and serving as a model for its residents saving thousands of dollars of operational funds.

RECOMMENDATION 77 – CONTINUE TO WORK WITH THE WESTMORELAND COUNTY LAND BANK

The Westmoreland County Land Bank works closely with the Westmoreland County Redevelopment Authority to address and eliminate blight in the member communities. The work is carried out through blight demolition, residential and commercial rehabilitation, acquisition, and repurposing of vacant and tax-delinquent properties, accessible and affordable housing, training and education partnerships, historic preservation, and brownfield redevelopment. Latrobe has been a member of the land bank since 2014, and the land bank has demolished and sold 10 residential properties in Latrobe during the past decade. Two (2) properties are available for sale at this time.

[4] Strong Towns, The Many Costs of Too Much Parking (strongtowns.org), 2018



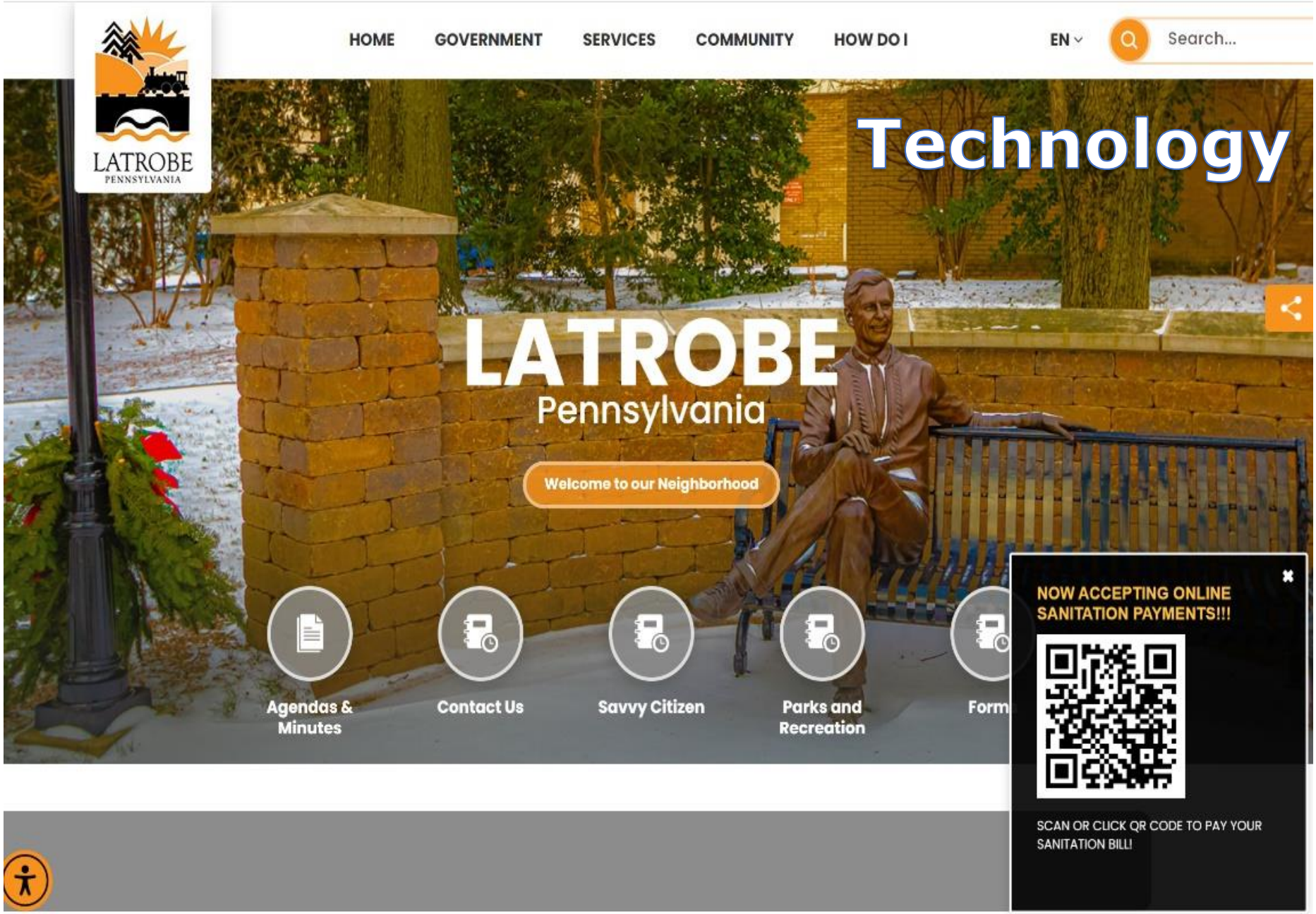
RECOMMENDATION 78 – USE CONSERVATORSHIP TO OBTAIN SITE CONTROL OF BLIGHTED PROPERTIES

The Abandoned and Blighted Property Conservatorship Act, also known as Act 135, was put in place to ensure that residents and property owners in a community can report substandard or abandoned buildings to prevent potential risks or hazards. Through Act 135, a party in interest can petition the Court to appoint a conservator to take control of a blighted, substandard, or abandoned property, and carry out necessary repairs. The conservator ensures that the property returns to a relatively safe and functional state and that it is put to productive use. The appointed conservator will then become the property's virtual owner and will have the power and responsibility to renovate and sell the property. Once the property is sold, the cost of conservatorship and the property renovation can be deducted.

RECOMMENDATION 79 – APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDS THROUGH THE "MAIN STREET MATTERS" PROGRAM

The Main Street Matters (MSM) program is designed to support Pennsylvania downtown cores and surrounding neighborhoods with tools to create healthy, vibrant, and welcoming communities. DCED announced a new round of funding in the amount of $20 million to support revitalization efforts in planning, business support, aesthetic improvements, and the increase of safety and security.

Because Latrobe has been designated as an official "Main Street" community, the City should receive priority funding. Designation is an opportunity for targeted investment and development including the identification of specific needs for investment and/or development and the design and implementation of a strategy to address those needs.


LATROBE
PENNSYLVANIA
HOME
GOVERNMENT
SERVICES
COMMUNITY
HOW DO I
EN
Search...
Technology
LATROBE
Pennsylvania
Welcome to our Neighborhood
Agendas & Minutes
Contact Us
Savvy Citizen
Parks and Recreation
NOW ACCEPTING ONLINE SANITATION PAYMENTS!!!
SCAN OR CLICK QR CODE TO PAY YOUR SANITATION BILL!

TECHNOLOGY EVALUATION

OBSERVATIONS

The review of the City 's administration, public works, and police information technology (IT) infrastructure was conducted by Jason Dailey. To complete this evaluation, the consultant conducted field inspections of equipment, analyzed data, and interviewed users. The recommendations contained in this report are based upon recognized standards, accepted practices, and government mandates. **Table 20** provides an inventory of the various departments' hardware. The recommended replacement parameters were based on the actual profile and use of each machine that was evaluated. Those highlighted in light red should be prioritized based on their Windows 10 operating system that will no longer be supported in 2025. Those highlighted in yellow would be next to be prioritized for replacement based on their warranty expiration.

TABLE 22: TECHNOLOGY INVENTORY AND REPLACEMENT SCHEDULE

DEVICE CLASS	DEVICE NAME	MAKE / MODEL	CPU DESCRIPTION	RAM (MB)	OS AND SERVICE PACK	OS INSTALLATION	WARRANTY EXPIRY
Windows Laptop	COL-SURFACE-KAREN	Microsoft Corporation / Surface Pro 7	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-1035G4 @ 1.10GHz	8192	10 Pro	Nov 25, 2022	
Windows Laptop	CONF-LAP	LENOVO / 20VE	11th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-1165G7 @ 2.80GHz	16384	10 Pro	Aug 08, 2022	Feb 05, 2023
Windows Laptop	KAREN-LAP	Dell Inc. / Latitude 5530	12th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-1245U	16384	10 Pro	Dec 09, 2022	Dec 09, 2025
Windows Laptop	PD-LUKON-LAP	Dell Inc. / Latitude 5430 Rugged	11th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-1145G7 @ 2.60GHz	8192	11 Pro	Oct 18, 2023	Aug 28, 2026
Windows Laptop	PD-Wig-Lap	Dell Inc. / Latitude 3540	13th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-1335U	8192	11 Pro	Jan 25, 2024	Jun 01, 2026
Windows Laptop	SRO-Surface	Microsoft Corporation / Surface Pro 8	11th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-1135G7 @ 2.40GHz	8192	11 Home	Aug 30, 2023	
Windows Laptop	SURFACE-CHIEF		Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-1035G4 @ 1.10GHz		11 Home	Feb 13, 2024	

DEVICE CLASS	DEVICE NAME	MAKE / MODEL	CPU DESCRIPTION	RAM (MB)	OS AND SERVICE PACK	OS INSTALLATION	WARRANTY EXPIRY
Windows Laptop	SURFACE-DAWN	Microsoft Corporation / Surface Pro 7	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-1035G4 @ 1.10GHz	8192	10 Home	Feb 01, 2024	
Windows Laptop	SURFACE-RALPH	Microsoft Corporation / Surface Pro 7	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-1035G4 @ 1.10GHz	8192	11 Home	Jan 31, 2024	
Windows Laptop	Surface-Robert	Microsoft Corporation / Surface Pro 7	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-1035G4 @ 1.10GHz	8192	10 Home	Apr 08, 2021	
Windows Laptop	Terry-Surface	Microsoft Corporation / Surface Pro 7+	11th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-1135G7 @ 2.40GHz	8192	11 Home	Feb 13, 2024	
Windows Laptop	TRACY-W11	Dell Inc. / G5 5590	Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-9750H @ 2.60GHz	16384	11 Pro	Feb 19, 2024	Feb 04, 2021
Windows Server	Admin-HV-01	Dell Inc. / PowerEdge R750	2x Intel(R) Xeon(R) Silver 4310 @ 2.10GHz	131072	Server 2022 Standard	Aug 21, 2023	Jun 10, 2028
Windows Server	CODYFILES	Microsoft Corporation / Virtual Machine	Intel(R) Xeon(R) Gold 6330 @ 2.00GHz	8192	Server 2019 Standard	Nov 02, 2023	
Windows Server	COL-DC1	Microsoft Corporation / Virtual Machine	Intel(R) Xeon(R) Gold 6330 @ 2.00GHz	32768	Server 2012 R2 Standard	Feb 11, 2016	
Windows Server	COL-DC2	Microsoft Corporation / Virtual Machine	Intel(R) Xeon(R) Gold 6330 @ 2.00GHz	16384	Server 2012 R2 Standard	Apr 27, 2016	
Windows Server	COL-PD	Microsoft Corporation / Virtual Machine	Intel(R) Xeon(R) Gold 6330 @ 2.00GHz	24576	Server 2012 R2 Standard	Apr 28, 2016	
Windows Server	COL-TS	Microsoft Corporation / Virtual Machine	Intel(R) Xeon(R) Silver 4310 @ 2.10GHz	32768	Server 2012 R2 Standard	Apr 28, 2016	

DEVICE CLASS	DEVICE NAME	MAKE / MODEL	CPU DESCRIPTION	RAM (MB)	OS AND SERVICE PACK	OS INSTALLATION	WARRANTY EXPIRY
Windows Server	Data-01	Microsoft Corporation / Virtual Machine	Intel(R) Xeon(R) Silver 4310 @ 2.10GHz	8192	Server 2022 Standard	Dec 14, 2023	
Windows Server	Data-01	Microsoft Corporation / Virtual Machine	Intel(R) Xeon(R) Gold 6330 @ 2.00GHz	8192	Server 2022 Standard	Sep 06, 2023	
Windows Server	DC-01	Microsoft Corporation / Virtual Machine	Intel(R) Xeon(R) Silver 4310 @ 2.10GHz	8192	Server 2022 Standard	Sep 06, 2023	
Windows Server	DC-01	Microsoft Corporation / Virtual Machine	Intel(R) Xeon(R) Gold 6330 @ 2.00GHz	8192	Server 2022 Standard	Sep 06, 2023	
Windows Server	DC-02	Microsoft Corporation / Virtual Machine	Intel(R) Xeon(R) Silver 4310 @ 2.10GHz	8192	Server 2022 Standard	Dec 14, 2023	
Windows Server	dc-02	Microsoft Corporation / Virtual Machine	Intel(R) Xeon(R) Gold 6330 @ 2.00GHz	8192	Server 2022 Standard	Oct 19, 2023	
Windows Server	PD-HV-01	Dell Inc. / PowerEdge R750	2x Intel(R) Xeon(R) Gold 6330 @ 2.00GHz	131072	Server 2022 Standard	Aug 22, 2023	Jun 10, 2028
Windows Server	PD-HV-02	Dell Inc. / PowerEdge R750	2x Intel(R) Xeon(R) Gold 6330 @ 2.00GHz	131072	Server 2022 Standard	Aug 22, 2023	Jun 10, 2028
Windows Workstation	ANN-WIN10	System manufacturer / System Product Name	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-8400 @ 2.80GHz	32768	10 Pro	Nov 01, 2022	
Windows Workstation	Chief-Richard	Dell Inc. / OptiPlex SFF Plus 7010	13th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-13700	16384	11 Pro	Feb 19, 2024	May 16, 2026
Windows Workstation	COL-BETH-NEW	Dell Inc. / OptiPlex SFF Plus 7010	13th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-13700	16384	11 Pro	Feb 13, 2024	May 16, 2026

DEVICE CLASS	DEVICE NAME	MAKE / MODEL	CPU DESCRIPTION	RAM (MB)	OS AND SERVICE PACK	OS INSTALLATION	WARRANTY EXPIRY
Windows Workstation	COL-DUMP-FRONT	System manufacturer / System Product Name	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-9400F @ 2.90GHz	16384	10 Pro	Oct 31, 2022	
Windows Workstation	COL-DUMP-SCOTT	System manufacturer / System Product Name	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-7500 @ 3.40GHz	16384	10 Pro	Nov 01, 2022	
Windows Workstation	DERK-W10	LENOVO / 30CF003MUS	Intel(R) Core(TM) i9-9900T @ 2.10GHz	16384	11 Pro	Jan 25, 2024	Apr 26, 2023
Windows Workstation	DESKTOP-NMTPU62 (CAMERA SERVER NEW)	ASUS / System Product Name	11th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-11700K @ 3.60GHz	65536	11 Pro	Feb 12, 2024	
Windows Workstation	Evidence-Rm	Dell Inc. / OptiPlex SFF Plus 7010	13th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-13700	16384	11 Pro	May 26, 2023	May 16, 2026
Windows Workstation	FREIDA-W11	Dell Inc. / OptiPlex 7000	12th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-12700	16384	11 Pro	Feb 09, 2024	Sep 12, 2025
Windows Workstation	JANINA--W10	System manufacturer / System Product Name	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-9400 @ 2.90GHz	16384	10 Pro	Nov 03, 2022	
Windows Workstation	JIM-W10	ASUS / System Product Name	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-10400 @ 2.90GHz	65536	10 Pro	Oct 31, 2022	
Windows Workstation	KAREN-W10	System manufacturer / System Product Name	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-6400 @ 2.70GHz	16384	10 Pro	Oct 31, 2022	
Windows Workstation	MANAGER-W10	ASUS / All Series	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-4690 @ 3.50GHz	16384	10 Pro	Oct 31, 2022	
Windows Workstation	MARSHA-W10	System manufacturer / System Product Name	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-9400 @ 2.90GHz	16384	10 Pro	Nov 03, 2022	
Windows Workstation	PD-Det-02	Dell Inc. / OptiPlex SFF Plus 7010	13th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-13700	16384	11 Pro	Jan 25, 2024	May 16, 2026

DEVICE CLASS	DEVICE NAME	MAKE / MODEL	CPU DESCRIPTION	RAM (MB)	OS AND SERVICE PACK	OS INSTALLATION	WARRANTY EXPIRY
Windows Workstation	PD-Det-Preston	Dell Inc. / OptiPlex SFF Plus 7010	13th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-13700	16384	11 Pro	Feb 12, 2024	Aug 28, 2026
Windows Workstation	PD-Det-Wig	Dell Inc. / OptiPlex SFF Plus 7010	13th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-13700	16384	11 Pro	Feb 19, 2024	May 16, 2026
Windows Workstation	PD-OFFICE-SPR		Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-2500 @ 3.30GHz	8192	10 Pro	Dec 05, 2023	
Windows Workstation	PD-Squad-01	Dell Inc. / OptiPlex SFF Plus 7010	13th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-13700	16384	11 Pro	Feb 19, 2024	Aug 28, 2026
Windows Workstation	PD-Squad-02	Dell Inc. / OptiPlex SFF Plus 7010	13th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-13700	16384	11 Pro	Feb 19, 2024	Aug 28, 2026
Windows Workstation	PD-Squad-03		Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-4670 @ 3.40GHz	16384	10 Pro	Oct 31, 2022	
Windows Workstation	PD-Squad-04	Dell Inc. / OptiPlex SFF Plus 7010	13th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-13700	16384	11 Pro	Feb 19, 2024	May 16, 2026
Windows Workstation	PD-Squad-05	Dell Inc. / OptiPlex SFF Plus 7010	13th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-13700	16384	11 Pro	Feb 19, 2024	May 16, 2026
Windows Workstation	Sanitation	System manufacturer / System Product Name	Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-6400 @ 2.70GHz	16384	10 Pro	Oct 31, 2022	
Windows Workstation	TS-TCLK	ASUS / System Product Name	11th Gen Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-11400 @ 2.60GHz	32768	10 Pro	Nov 14, 2023	

ADMINISTRATION OBSERVATIONS

The City contracts with LV Technology for its hardware and technical support needs for the entire City operations. LV is a well-respected IT service provider and has many municipal clients making it a good choice for the City. The City employees are technically proficient in operating their primary software which is the *Accufund* financial software. In addition, employees are using typical office applications that include Word, EXCEL, and Outlook. The PCs for most of the administration, including the manager, are older and in need of replacement, which are prioritized in the schedule above. The primary programs and network configurations are currently backed up daily to the server which is in the manager's office. The server is not currently being used for anything other than the program backups. All office users across the organization are using *Office 365* which unifies file management in the cloud and keeps Microsoft programs updated to the latest versions.

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The City's website domain www.cityoflatrobe.com is registered through *GoDaddy.* The domain registration **expires on March 21, 2029.** City staff internally maintain the site which recently underwent a facelift and is very easy to navigate. The site's recent update has several dead or misdirected links that will need to be completed. The site is designed to be ADA compliant, mobile friendly, and was efficient with fillable forms that can be completed and submitted directly to City departments. Some forms in the code enforcement office are linked to PDF documents that must be downloaded and manually completed and returned to the City.

The City uses *Savvy Citizen* as its primary method of outreach that requires those interested in receiving alerts to sign up and subscribe to the various alerts. The police department and volunteer fire department have social media accounts that are maintained by their respective departments - the police department is very active with updates and communication.

EMAIL AND OFFICE FILE MANAGEMENT

The City 's domain "cityoflatrobe.com" is used for the City staff emails. All staff across the organization use file sharing or server storage for document management on the Office 365 platform. This is a best management practice and should continue to be enforced.

PHONE SYSTEM

The City's phone system and handsets have been updated within the last year and are on a Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) system. The handsets are new and the system is feature rich and robust for a small office setup with multiple remote locations such as the remote public works garage and transfer station. Voicemails integrate with email making remote attention to the office efficient. Feature rich VOIP systems that work over the internet provide cost savings and user features that make office phone systems far more beneficial for office staff. The Recreation Commission office space and the Fire Company section of the complex are not currently on the system due to extensive network wiring that would be needed.

BUILDING ACCESS CONTROL

The City complex is not currently secured with electronic access control, but is hard-keyed. The police and administrative offices at 901 Jefferson are beginning to have keyless entry installed. This will also be done for public works, police, fire and all gated locations.

COUNCIL CHAMBERS AUDIO - VISUAL

Council Chambers is a large gathering space where Council meets to conduct City business and invites the public to attend and participate. Presentations by staff and the public are a routine occurrence. The public room has small monitors with small space audio capabilities when presentations are made. There is an opportunity to enhance the technology to make this space more useful for Council meetings and accessible to the public.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The fire department is located adjacent to the City Building complex. Like the administration and police, the department is operating under its own modem for WIFI access. The fire department just recently had wiring issues resolved that allowed it to be joined with the existing phone system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 80 – EVALUATE ACCUFUND AND CONSIDER ENTERPRISE SOFTWARE

The City is currently using Accufund for its general ledger and accounting system. While Accufund is suitable software for supporting the City's financial management system, it is limited to ONLY the finance operation. The City would be better served to evaluate a government enterprise software package that would address the needs of all City departments and would integrate the financial management system with public works service requests, land use and asset management, permits, and utility billing for the transfer station and stormwater.

RECOMMENDATION 81 – EVALUATE A MORE ROBUST INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER

The City is currently using Comcast business service which is not able to provide the necessary speed and bandwidth the City offices require. There is another local provider that could provide fiber optic with much higher speeds for City business.

RECOMMENDATION 82– ADD THE POLICE MOBILE DATA TERMINALS AND LAPTOPS TO THE NETWORK

The police department's MDTs in the vehicles are not connected to the network so they are not managed the same way that the other devices are managed. The MDTs should be added to the maintenance schedule and managed in the same manner, which may increase the number of devices that need updated and replaced on the inventory and schedule provided in **Table 22.**

RECOMMENDATION 83 – ASSIGN MAINTENANCE OVERSIGHT OF THE WEBSITE

The City's website has undergone a recent update and provides valuable information to the public. The website is ADA compliant and has a user-friendly and attractive appearance. The site, however, needs regular content updates and active page links. Assigning department directors to manage and oversee their own pages is a common practice that requires accountability from the departments for information that is current and pages that remain active. Departments should be charged with this responsibility.

RECOMMENDATION 84- INSTALL CAMERAS AT THE CITY BUILDING, PUBLIC WORKS, AND FOR ALL INTERSECTIONS

Internet or closed circuit camera systems provide an added layer of security for public places. Cameras installed inside facilities provide for another added level of security in the event of a perimeter or building breach. The City should have cameras installed at all of its buidlings including the City Buildling, public works garage, park facilities and grounds, and at all intersections. There are systems that will operate on the same platform for viewing and that can store video on a schedule and override the data after a prescribed interval to limit the storage needs. Cameras at intersections that would be accessible to management staff would allow for remote monitoring of road conditions during inclement weather as well as provide observation of the status of the signal operation.

RECOMMENDATION 85 – REPLACE HARDWARE THAT IS OUT OF WARRANTY - PLAN FOR WINDOWS 11 UPGRADES

The City has been updating IT hardware that supports necessary applications for each user and department. Most of the desktop PCs have been upgraded to professional office accounts, however, the administration offices will need their hardware replaced as these machines are slowing down and out of warranty. It is recommended that machines be put on a replacement schedule and new PCs that are purchased have no less than i5 processors with 8GB RAM and 500GB SSD hardware. Hardware upgrades on a regular basis will ensure reliability and functionality for users. Machines that are running Windows 10 will no longer be supported after October 2025 and they will be vulnerable to system attacks and poor performance.

RECOMMENDATION 86 – INSTALL VOIP PHONES FOR PARKS AND FIRE DEPARTMENT

The City's current phone system needs to be updated across all City operations within the complex. The newest protocol for VOIP voice and data makes voicemails accessible via email and functionality of the handsets interface with cell phones. The area of the building that houses the Parks Commission offices as well as the Fire Department currently requires actual phone numbers to be dialed to reach those locations making it inconvenient, inefficient, and more costly to operate. These areas of the building do not follow the same protocols for voicemail or message forwarding. The City's VOIP system should be extended to those locations.

RECOMMENDATION 87 – INSTALL BATTERY BACKUP DEVICES FOR ALL OFFICES

Battery backup devices help to maintain business activity when the power is interrupted or goes out completely. Desktop PCs and laptops that are not protected with battery backups will have a shorter life cycle and may experience data loss and complete failure prematurely because of a power surge. The City should consider battery backup devices for each office workstation.

RECOMMENDATION 88 –UPDATE THE AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ROOM

The City would benefit from having a Council meeting room with updated audio and visual technology for presentations. Additionally, all departments benefit from having a training room where employees can train on-site and not have to travel. This room should be upgraded, and its use expanded so that all departments can use it as a City-wide training facility. A training room with adequate audio and visual components allows the City departments to host trainers and save money by being able to use their own equipment. It also allows for more intergovernmental hosting opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION 89 – UPGRADE BUILDING ACCESS CONTROLS

The City facilities are not currently secured using electronic access. Managing facilities with electronic access control will ensure that facilities are able to be audited for access and secured from public interference. Remote access can be managed electronically and with schedules from a PC rather than hard-key locked.

RECOMMENDATION – REDUCE THE NUMBER OF MODEMS IN CITY HALL

There are currently multiple modems within City Hall. There are separate modems for police and administration, for the Parks Commission, and for Fire. These three (3) modems could be eliminated, and a single modem used that would improve connectivity and speed while still maintaining separate secure connections for each operation. This should be explored with LV Technology to reduce the redundancy that is causing unnecessary cost and complexity.

APPENDIX A –SAMPLE PURCHASE ORDER PROCEDURE POLICY

PURCHASE ORDER PROCEDURE POLICY

The purpose of a purchasing procedure policy is to clearly define the process by which services and commodities are procured, contracted for, received, audited during invoice processing and, ultimately, approved for payment. It also ensures proper record keeping. The policy implements budgetary controls, controls on aggregate spending and safeguards against special interests. The procedures outlined in this policy will apply to negotiated contracts and competitive bidding, as well as routine purchases.

The goal of the purchasing function is to procure the highest quality in commodities and services, meeting the specifications, at the least expense to the City. It encourages open, competitive pricing and savings or cost avoidance through bulk or quantity purchases. The vendor list will ensure that all vendor and contractors comply with the procedures outlined in this policy, as well as any additional contractual obligations. Aggregate spending will limit unnecessary stocking of supplies by departments for daily use.

All purchases will be made in accordance with the current City ordinance, with respect to competitive bidding policy and procedures.

The procedures outlined in this document will serve to strengthen internal controls by segregating the various tasks, while virtually eliminating the duplication of tasks and paper handling. The procedures make the departments responsible for the respective budgets and ensure timely payment of invoices through a streamlined electronic procedure. Proper data input results in financial information that can be sorted by vendor or types of purchases, giving more accurate data for compiling the annual budget.

I. BIDDING PROCEDURES:

1. The City Council shall appoint a Purchasing Agent for the City which may be the City Manager.
2. Except as otherwise authorized by the City Code, all materials, equipment, supplies and contractual services, when the estimated cost thereof exceeds _____, shall be purchased by formal written contract from the lowest responsible bidder. All sales of personal property which have become obsolete and unserviceable, when the estimated value shall exceed $_____, shall be sold by formal written contract to the highest responsible bidder. Sales of real estate valued at $_____ or more shall be sold by formal written contract to the highest responsible bidder. All awards shall be made by the City Council.
3. When the award is not given to the lowest responsible bidder, a full and complete statement of the reasons for placing the contract elsewhere shall be placed in the minutes of the Council meeting following the award. In interpreting this action, the burden of proof rests with the City, if other than the lowest responsible bidder is awarded the contract.
4. If all bids received are for the same total amount or unit price, quality being equal, the contract shall be awarded to a local bidder. When the decision can be made in no other way, the contract shall be awarded to one of the tie bidders by drawing lots in public.
5. Notices inviting bids shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the City, in accordance with legal requirements. The newspaper notice shall include general descriptions of the articles to be purchased or sold, shall state where bid forms and specifications may be secured and the time and place for opening bids. In all cases, a notice inviting

bids will be posted in an appropriate place in the City Building at least ten days preceding the last day for the receipt of proposals.

6. The Purchasing Agent also shall solicit bids from all prospective vendors and contractors by mailing them copies of bids with the necessary specifications, and any other information which will acquaint them with the proposed purchases.
7. Bids exceeding the statutorily established threshold for Citys shall be sealed, shall be identified on the envelope, shall be submitted no later than the time stated in the public notice inviting bids, and shall be opened at a public meeting at the time and place stated in the public notice. A tabulation of all bids received shall be made available for public inspection.
8. When deemed necessary by the City Council, bid deposits shall be returned to unsuccessful bidders within five days after the awarding of the contract(s). The successful bidder shall forfeit any deposits required upon failure on the part of the bidder to enter into a contract within fifteen days after the award.
9. A performance bond in the amount of _____% of the proposed contract shall be required form the successful bidder before entering into the contract. If such bond is not provided within fifteen days of the award of such bid, the award shall be void. The contractor shall furnish such other bonds and insurance coverage as may be required by law and/or bid specifications.
10. No contract or purchase shall be subdivided to avoid requirements of these rules.

II. PURCHASE ORDER PROCEDURE:

1. On each and every _____, all requisitions that have received final approval are converted to purchase orders by the Purchasing Agent. The system will automatically assign purchase order numbers in numeric sequence by year.
2. Requisitions from various departments may be combined into a single purchase order when using the same vendor. The Purchasing Agent may change the vendor on a requisition as discussed in #5 in the Requisition Procedure.
3. The conversion process will confirm purchase order approval. The budget allocation is not encumbered in the system until the requisition is converted to a purchase order.
4. The Secretary will process the purchase orders and print a Purchase Order Report that will be retained in a three ring binder and clearly marked "Purchase Order Reports."
5. Once the department supervisor has received the white and pink copy of the purchase orders, he/she may place the order accordingly since this assures that all required approvals are in order. Placing an order without having the purchase order in hand is prohibited by this written purchase order procedure policy except in the cases of emergencies as defined under the City ordinance.
6. Section _____ of the Latrobe City Code states that "in case of actual emergencies, _____ _____. The department supervisor must submit a confirming purchase order as soon as possible after the emergency that provides a record of the emergency, together with a report of the circumstances of the emergency.
7. Outstanding purchase orders will be reviewed monthly and reported to the department supervisors by the Purchasing Agent requesting explanations and updates.

8. Purchase orders outstanding at year end will be liquidated and re-issued against the new budget year, unless it is fulfilled within the sixty-day window for accruals.

IV. RECEIVING PROCEDURE:

1. Products are shipped to the respective departments from where the purchase order was issued for receipt verification against the purchase order.
2. Bulk items purchased for use by all departments will be kept in the Manager's Office and individual departments will sign for supplies as needed by their respective departments.
3. The Manager's Office will keep an inventory of all items on hand and make a physical count of the inventory every calendar quarter.
4. Inventoried supplies will be recorded as an asset when ordered and charged to the appropriate department when requisitioned from inventory (which will have the effect of reducing the asset).
5. All bills of lading, shipping lists and packing lists shall be attached to the pink copy of the purchase order by the department supervisor. The department supervisor must sign the pink copy of the purchase order and submit it, with all other documents, to the Secretary.
6. The Secretary will match the pink receiving copy (and support documents) to the yellow copy and retain both in a file awaiting receipt of an invoice.
7. The Secretary will indicate items received in the system and match up the pink receiving slip, the yellow copy of the purchase order and the invoice prior to issuing payment for any service or item.

APPENDIX B – PCCD GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

FUNDING AND GRANTS PROCESS



HOW TO GET AND MANAGE FUNDS

PCCD announces all funding opportunities on this webpage and you can subscribe to receive email notifications when these opportunities are available. Unsolicited applications are not accepted. Most funding opportunities are competitive, with agencies selected based on the merits of their submission. Both you and your agency must be registered with the PCCD s system to apply for and manage grants. Click here to register for funding announcement notifications.

REGISTERING

Applying for PCCD funding through Egrants is not difficult, but does require registering and establishing security roles. Allow enough lead time before applying for funds to process the necessary forms. More ...

COMPETITIVE GRANT PROCESS

For a general overview of the standardized process PCCD follows when issuing, reviewing and awarding competitive grants to applicants…click here.

FEDERAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

All potential agency applicants and sub-recipients for federal funding must have a DUNS number (a unique, nine-digit identification number for each physical location of your business) and be registered with the System for Award Management (SAM, formerly CCR). Here's how to do that: More ...

http://www.pcced.state.pa.us/portal/server/pa/community/funding

APPENDIX C – ON-LINE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

1. Online Training from the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association
2. Free online training for you and your police department.
3. PAVTN is the only place that has the MPOETC Mandatory In-Service Training Courses ONLINE
4. The PAVTN provides the following benefits:

- Training that is free
- Training that requires no travel or schedule changes
- Training that is based on the latest instructional design
- Training that delivers clear and consistent content

There is no more challenging profession than police work. Protecting citizens, preserving the peace and putting their lives on the line are all in a day's work. Police officers deserve our full support. Integral to that support is training that is relevant, streamlined, and cost-effective. Online training gives officers more advanced skills, time, and resources to fight crime. That is what PAVTN.net provides.

In this era, resources are severely limited at every level of government. By bringing law enforcement training online, multiple agencies can share curricula, develop classes that address critical needs, and update training quickly. Through the use of audio narration, video, and interactive scenarios, officers gain the critical knowledge to improve their skills, serve the public, and advance their careers. This vision is taking shape today.

The evidence is clear. Online training is the way.

A December 2009 survey found that 94 percent of Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association respondents support Internet-based training to save time, money and improve mandatory law enforcement training.

- Safer public • Cost effectiveness • Less time training
- More engaged officers • Up-to-the-minute information • Expanded curricula
- Better training • Administrative efficiency • 24/7 online access

Our organization is a collaborative effort between law enforcement professionals, government agencies, and interested private concerns in the chain of law enforcement. We welcome your suggestions on all aspects of our operations. We are actively seeking partners in providing courses that address the needs of society, officers and law enforcement agencies throughout Pennsylvania. We are learning, too.

Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association 3905 North Front Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110 Tel: (717) 236-1059

APPENDIX D – ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES FOR FIRE RELIEF

SECTION 1: EXPENDITURES

GENERAL EXPENDITURES ALLOWED BY LAW

The statutory authority over Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Associations (VFRAs) is contained in the VFRA Act (35 Pa.C.S. §§7411 et. seq.) which permits the use of state aid funds for the following general purposes:

• To pay for such normal and reasonable running expenses as may be appropriate to the businesslike conduct of the affairs of the association, including legal fees, rental or purchase of offices, payment of reasonable compensation of employees and purchase of office equipment and supplies.

• To purchase contracts of insurance for active VFRA members against losses due to injury suffered in the fire service, for example, payments to the surviving spouse or other dependents in the event of a member's death, replacement of prosthetic devices such as visual, hearing aids, dentures, braces, crutches and the like, where those devices have been lost or damaged while the owner was engaged in the fire service or when the need for those devices arose because of functional impairment attributable to participation in fire service.

• To maintain a beneficiary or death benefit fund.

• To pay for costs of procuring and forwarding tokens of sympathy and goodwill to a firefighter who is ill or hospitalized.

• To make cash payments to families in distressed circumstances by reason of age, infirmity or other disability suffered by one of the family members in the course of participation in fire service.

• To acquire and maintain membership in any Statewide association or corporation which extends assistance to firefighters.

• To contribute or purchase contracts of insurance for rehabilitating and retraining a volunteer firefighter who suffered a major impairment due to participation in fire service.

• To pay for medical and surgical bills arising from injuries sustained by volunteer firefighters while engaged in activities of the fire company to the extent that the bills are not covered by insurance provided by the relief association.

• To pay reasonable expenses for attending bona fide firefighter training.

• To purchase safeguards for preserving life, health, and safety of volunteer firefighters to ensure their ability to participate in fire service, including necessary training.

• To secure insurance against liability for loss and expense from claims arising out of official performance of official and authorized duties while going to, returning from, or attending fires as special fire police.

• To maintain comprehensive health, physical fitness and physical monitoring programs that provide for physical fitness activities, nutrition education and supplies and instruction and health and fitness evaluation and monitoring, provided that the programs have been approved by the nearest State-licensed health care facility which is authorized to provide that service.

• To purchase exercise and fitness equipment for the use by volunteer firefighters. • To purchase fire hoses and nozzles.

• To purchase fire prevention materials for public distribution. • To pay reasonable expenses actually and necessarily incurred for attending bona fide emergency medical technician or paramedic training schools.

• To purchase investments to earn additional income (Section 7416 (c) of the VFRA Act).

• To pay for expenses for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting of equipment and property, or other expenses incurred to prevent the spread of communicable illnesses.

• To provide financial assistance for activities and materials needed to aid in the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters.

• To establish and pay for length of service award programs.

• To pay for facilities for storage of emergency vehicles and equipment, training, and meetings.

• To pay for vehicles used for emergency response.

• To purchase equipment used for emergency response.

• To defray the cost of obtaining or renewing a commercial driver's license under 75 Pa.C.S. Ch. 16 (relating to commercial drivers) for volunteer firefighters who are residents of this Commonwealth to operate fire or emergency vehicles registered to fire companies or municipalities.

• To pay for stipends to volunteer firefighters, not to exceed $1,500 per yea

APPENDIX E - MERGING/CONSOLIDATING FIRE SERVICES

The primary reason to embark on any consolidation or merger of fire services should focus on improved fire service response and operations, with a secondary consideration of economics and management.

Volunteer fire departments in Pennsylvania have seen dramatic changes in the last 20 years, including declining firefighter enrollment, a broader range of emergencies to respond to (hazardous materials, EMS/QRS, technical rescue), and additional qualifications required to meet training, grant eligibility or insurance requirements. While the number of serious fires and fire fatalities has decreased nationwide, the overall number of emergencies (CO alarms, good intent alarms) continues to grow. Also affecting Pennsylvania departments is the aging of its volunteer firefighter force.

Each community and its emergency services are being tasked to provide greater levels of service with shrinking resources and decreasing funding. The need exists to evaluate and change the current model to provide the requisite emergency response organizations and funding to meet community requirements, where appropriate.

Each community must determine what is needed to protect their community, how much it will cost, how it will be funded and how the services will be delivered.

The combining of multiple fire companies is a means by which an increasing number of municipalities and fire departments are responding to the issues noted above. This combination of services can range from simple agreements for mutual aid and shared standards and purchasing to a complete merger. While it can be completed in many forms, there are 5 categories which cover most opportunities:

- **Administrative**: 2 or more fire departments maintain separate operations but share some administrative functions. An example would be common purchasing and standardization of equipment and procedures to control costs.

- **Partial**: Departments maintain legal separation, but work as a group for defined service areas, such as rescue response and other mutual aid. This may include joint purchase of shared equipment and apparatus.

- **Functional:** Departments maintain legal separation, but perform certain functions as one department, such as training and maintenance.

- **Operational:** Departments maintain legal separation, but join together for all administrative and operational functions, delivering services as one department.

- **Full:** 2 or more departments merge completely into a single legal entity. All service demands across multiple municipalities are met by one organization.

Service level issues to be considered during consolidation include:

- The amount of time it takes fire units and firefighters to respond to emergencies.
- Number of firefighters who respond to a call
- How costs will be shared
- Equipment and apparatus placement at fire stations
- Minimum training levels

Consolidation or merger of 2 or more fire departments results in the following:

- One fire department
- One set of rules, regulations and operating guidelines
- One personnel management system
- One chain of command
- One budget

National experiences tracked by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) show major improvements in service and efficiency following consolidations, including:

- Improved fireground communications
- Improved standard fireground operations
- Reduced response times
- Improved firefighter safety
- Cost transparency to the municipalities

Reduction in administrative efforts for volunteer firefight

APPENDIX F – STORMWATER FEES – A CASE STUDY



ON APRIL 27, 2016,
the Borough of Dormont Stormwater Authority passed a resolution authorizing the collection of a stormwater fee. It was a big step toward the municipality's goal of managing its stormwater more effectively and complying with Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) regulations - but it didn't happen overnight.

Authority Background

From 2012 to 2016, Dormont Borough researched and developed a plan for funding stormwater in the municipality through public meetings, outreach mailings to residents and a Stormwater Committee charged with identifying stormwater issues in the borough and developing recommendations for funding stormwater management. In 2014, the Stormwater Committee created educational materials for stormwater authorities and determined the methodology for a stormwater fee. In 2015 the Committee shared their research and recommendations with Dormont Borough Council and held public workshops in conjunction with the Saw Mill Run Watershed Association.

On August 3, 2015, the Borough of Dormont Stormwater Authority was formed through Ordinance No. 1609. The Authority submitted its Articles of Incorporation to the Pennsylvania Secretary of State in October 2015, but due to delays at the state level, the Authority was unable to receive official approval until February 4, 2016. On March 23, 2016, the Authority held its first public meeting and organized its Board of Directors.

Authority Structure

The Borough of Dormont Stormwater Authority is a separate entity from the Borough of Dormont, which was incorporated in 1909 and is situated on .9 square miles in the South Hills of Pittsburgh. The Borough has a population of nearly 8,258 residents according to the most recent census data. The Authority, with its five-member Board of Directors, meets monthly and oversees funding for operation and maintenance (O&M) of the borough's stormwater system; administers the mandated MS4 permit requirements, and designs, funds and constructs capital improvements in the stormwater system. The Authority also carries out an extensive public outreach program that includes newsletters, workshops, training, and participation at community events. Since 2020, the Authority has included a focus on the installation of green infrastructure solutions.

Stormwater Fee

Prior to the creation of the Stormwater Authority, funds for repairing and maintaining the stormwater system came from the General Fund of the Dormont Borough operating budget. This funding structure became unfeasible due to:

- the severity of Dormont's stormwater problems;
- state and federal mandates to reduce sediment and phosphorus runoff into waterways;
- the need to meet requirements of the PA DEP MS4 program; and
- an aging, deteriorating and undersized storm sewer system in need of repair.

The Stormwater Authority structure allows for the borough to charge a fee to homeowners, commercial property owners and non-profit entities specifically to be used for stormwater management in the community. Fees are even paid by tax-exempt properties, such as municipal buildings, the post office, churches, and schools.

To originally calculate the fee, Dormont hired an independent engineering consultant who used aerial photographs and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) computer software to measure impervious areas, hard surfaces that do not allow rain or snowmelt to infiltrate at the same rate as natural surfaces such as grass or dirt.

The amount of stormwater runoff flowing from a property into the borough's stormwater system (and on to Saw Mill Run and ultimately the Ohio River) is directly related to the impervious surface of each property - so Dormont decided to base its fee calculation on impervious surface area.

Fee Structure

Owners of single-family homes **pay a flat fee of $8.00/month** based on one Equivalent Stormwater Unit or ESU. An ESU is the median amount of impervious surface found on a single family residence (SFR) property in Dormont. Multi-family units are charged using a multiple of the ESU:

- 2 Family- 1.25/ESU ($10.00/month)
- 3 Family- 1.50/ESU ($12.00/month)
- 4 Family- 1.75/ESU ($14.00/month)
- Rowhouse- .50/ESU ($4.00/month)



Larger properties (apartment buildings, commercial, institutional, nonprofit) are charged fees based on the actual amount of impervious surface. Ratepayers are billed on an annual basis but may alternately choose to make quarterly payments for an extra fee.

Ratepayer Fee Credits

The Borough of Dormont Stormwater Authority offers ratepayers an opportunity to reduce their stormwater fee by implementing any of the following benchmark practices:

- **Rain Barrels** – Residents may earn a one-time, $40 rain barrel credit
- **Rain Garden** – Residents earn a 25% discount on their stormwater bill annually with proof of a functioning rain garden.
- **Peak Flow Attenuation** – commercial property owners may reduce a development's peak runoff rates to pre-development levels to earn credits. This can be done by the installation of a retention tank or facility to contain stormwater on-site.

For more information:

Visit the Borough of Dormont Stormwater Authority website http://dormontstormwater.org/

See Following Pages

APPENDIX G - SAMPLE INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

CITY OF LATROBE GENERAL INTERNET AND COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT USE POLICY
ISSUE DATE: EFFECTIVE DATE:

1.0 Policy

1.1 Employee use of the City's computer systems and technology is a privilege and not a right. All data and messages on these systems are the property of the City. System users should have no expectation of privacy in the contents of their electronic communications, files or any other use of technology. The City management may monitor, review, log or otherwise utilize any activity or information on its system. Inappropriate, unauthorized and illegal use may result in cancellation of usage privileges and appropriate disciplinary action.

1.2 Employees are expected to obey all laws, to respect the rights of others, and to refrain from behavior that may damage the City's reputation within the community. The requirements set forth in this Policy cover the use of City computer systems, technology and computers of any type, including but not limited to workstations, microcomputers, cell phones, iPads, electronic notebooks and tablets, networks and network resources.

1.3 Sending, receiving, downloading, printing, copying or otherwise disseminating confidential information, is a violation of this policy. Upon termination of employment, employees must return all City-owned equipment, electronic files, and data (including any and all copies of files and/or data) to the City Manager.

1.4 The City purchases and licenses the use of various computer software for business purposes and does not own the copyright to this software or its related documentation. Unless authorized by the software developer, the City does not have the right to reproduce such software for use on more than one computer. Employees may only use software on local area networks or on multiple machines in accordance with the applicable software license agreement. The City prohibits the illegal duplication of software and its related documentation.

1.5 In order to ensure the integrity of the City's operations and the avoidance of inappropriate use of the City's property, this policy is intended to confirm the authorized uses of the Internet and communications equipment which are provided by the City to its employees for the purpose of performing job functions, including communication, information exchange and research.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 "Communications Equipment" is defined as any and all computer equipment, telephone equipment of any kind, cellular telephones, personal digital assistants, pagers, iPads, electronic tablets and notebooks, and radio equipment.

3.0 Use of Internet

3.1 Internet access is provided by the City for work related purposes. The following guidelines have been established to help ensure responsible and productive Internet usage. While Internet usage is intended for job related activities, incidental and occasional brief personal use that complies with the City's policies is permitted within reasonable limits or may be used while an employee is off-duty. Employees may not use the Internet for personal purposes at times when they are supposed to be performing work duties.

3.2 All Internet data that is composed, transmitted or received via City computer communications systems is considered to be part of the official records of the City and as such is subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties. Consequently, employees should always ensure that the business information contained in Internet email messages and other transmissions are accurate, appropriate, ethical and lawful.

3.3 Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed or received via the Internet must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating or disruptive to any employee or other person. Examples of unacceptable content may include but are not limited to, sexual comments or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments or any other comments or images that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by law.

3.4 Internet users should take the necessary anti-virus precautions before downloading or copying any file from the Internet. All downloaded files are to be checked for viruses; all compressed files are to be checked before and after decompression.

3.5 Abuse of the Internet access provided by the City in violation of law or the City's policies is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

3.6 Unauthorized use of the Internet is strictly prohibited. Unauthorized use includes, but is not limited to: connecting to the Internet without an authorized account; illegally accessing, using, reproducing, downloading or disseminating copyrighted files including but not limited to software, text, music, audio or video files; accessing, posting, viewing, sending or downloading sexually explicit or pornographic material; non-job-related solicitations; accessing or viewing sexually explicit websites; accessing dating websites; accessing social media sites; accessing fantasy sports sites; sending communications that are offensive, threatening, defamatory, demeaning, sexually explicit, pornographic or disruptive; gambling; engaging in fraud, plagiarism, copyright infringement or any activity in violation of federal, state or local laws; computer "hacking," intentionally spreading computer viruses or engaging in similar activities; or attempting to disable or compromise the security of information contained on the City's computers.

3.7 Users may not establish Internet or other external network connections that could allow unauthorized individuals to gain access to the City's systems, networks or information.

4.0 E-Mail

4.1 All email correspondence sent, received, composed, accessed or stored on City systems is the property of the City of Latrobe. Email is a tool to be used for job-related purposes. Personal use of email should be limited.

4.2 Employee email communications should not be considered private, notwithstanding any such designation by the sender or the recipient. Email is not the place for discussing sensitive issues, such as suspicions, employee performance, discipline, hiring or firing.

4.3 The City has the right to monitor employee email accounts at its discretion. In certain situations (e.g. legal action involving the City), the City may also be compelled to preserve, access, review and/or produce messages sent over its email system.

4.4 Email may not be used to solicit others for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations or other non-business matters.

4.5 Disruptive non-work related email communications (e.g., mass emails, spam, chain letters, non-job-related solicitations or personal business ventures) are prohibited. Employees shall not subscribe to news groups, mailing lists or other services unless the subscription is for a work-related purpose. All non-work related subscriptions are prohibited.

4.6 Employees shall not transmit trade secrets, copyrighted material or other confidential information.

4.7 Email messages that are offensive, threatening, defamatory, demeaning, sexually explicit or pornographic, disruptive or unlawful are prohibited. Employees shall not use email to transmit messages that are in violation of any City policies, including those that prohibit inappropriate conduct, discrimination and harassment.

4.8 Employees should regularly delete accumulated email and empty email "trash" in order to keep the City's computer system free of unnecessary clutter. However, there may be some instances where the City instructs employees to preserve email correspondence, including those that have been deleted to the "trash" folder. In these instances, all employees are required to comply with the City's instructions. Any employee who deletes email or items in a trash folder after such a directive will be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

4.9 The existence of "delete" functions do not restrict or eliminate the City's ability or right to access electronic information. Employees should be aware that despite the availability of a "delete" option, even deleted messages may be electronically retrievable. Email should be considered a formal and permanent form of communication.

5.0 Use of Communication Equipment

5.1 Personal use of Communications Equipment should be kept to a minimum.

5.2 The preceding sections 3.0 and 4.0 apply to the use of all Communications Equipment.

5.3 Misuse of Communication Equipment is a violation of this policy and may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.

6.0 Passwords

6.1 Password use must have the City's approval. Employees will notify the City of the need to use passwords. Passwords may be used only for the purpose of securing information when the information relates to City business and a password is necessary to protect the information or keep it confidential.

6.2 Employees must provide passwords to the _____or _____ upon request.

6.3 Employees shall not disclose their passwords other than to the _____ or _____. Employees may not share email passwords, provide email access to any unauthorized users, or access the email account of another without authorization. Employees shall not post, display or make available any information related to accessing City systems and networks, including, but not limited to, passwords.

6.4 The existence of passwords does not restrict or eliminate the City's ability or right to access electronic information.

Sign Off

I have read and understand the implications of the City's Technology, Email, and Communication Policy. I understand that a violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment with the City of City.

_____ _____

Employee Manager Date_____