



Final Report

Villages of Ossining and Briarcliff Manor and Town of Ossining, New York

Public Works Analysis

June, 4 2010

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

June 4, 2010

Mr. Richard Leins, Interim Village Manager
Village of Ossining
16 Croton Avenue
Ossining, New York 10562

Re: FINAL REPORT OF THE PUBLIC WORKS ANALYSIS

Dear Mr. Leins:

Springsted Incorporated is pleased to transmit the final draft report of the Public Works Analysis, commissioned by the Village of Ossining, Town of Ossining and the Village of Briarcliff Manor as part of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) study conducted to examine how best to provide police services and public works operations within the boundaries of these municipalities.

The following analysis is based on data provided by each municipality. Because the municipalities operate as three separate organizations, each with its own approach to budgeting and cost allocation, we performed the analysis taking into account variations in how each municipality tracked costs to the extent possible. Estimated time spent profiles were developed by each municipality at our request since actual employee time spent data to track the distribution of staff among various public works functions was not readily available.

Notwithstanding the limitations inherent in the analysis, this study can draw some conclusions regarding the feasibility of increased sharing and consolidation of public works services among the municipalities. These conclusions reflect an already existing trend of sharing services among the departments and rely on best public works practices, which integrate day to day public works operations with the long range planning and financing associated with effective management of public infrastructure.

In conducting this study, we wish to acknowledge the assistance of the municipalities' public works directors, Paul Fraioli, P.E., Village Engineer for the Village of Ossining; Edward Torhan, Superintendent of Public Works for the Village of Briarcliff Manor and Michael G. O'Connor, Superintendent of Highways for the Town of Ossining. Their assistance to the consultant team included on-site meetings, telephone conversations, responding to requests for information, estimating time spent profiles, verifying data, and providing comments and feedback on the analysis.

We also wish to acknowledge Thomas Warren, the Village Treasurer/Town Comptroller for the Village and Town of Ossining and Robin Rizzo, Village Treasurer for the Village of Briarcliff Manor, for providing additional financial information used in this final report.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with the Village of Ossining, the Town of Ossining and the Village of Briarcliff Manor to examine how public works operations within the boundaries of these municipalities could be best provided. It is our hope that the findings and conclusions provided in this final report encourage continued discussion focused on opportunities to support increased efficiency and effectiveness in delivering public works services among the municipalities.

Respectfully submitted,

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1. Introduction and Study Methodology

The Village of Ossining, Town of Ossining and the Village of Briarcliff Manor retained the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and its subcontractor, Springsted Incorporated, to conduct a study to examine how best to provide police services and public works operations within their boundaries. In commissioning this study, policy makers hope to identify opportunities to share services and reduce staff and equipment that would create efficiencies and the ability to reduce the property tax burden. This initiative recognizes that several intergovernmental municipal agreements (IMAs) already exist among the municipalities, providing some momentum for identifying further opportunities to expand this approach to the delivery of public works services.

The results of this analysis have been submitted to the municipalities in two parts; the first examining a consolidation of police services and the following report, presenting the results of Springsted's review and analysis of public works operations. The public works analysis is presented in four sections: Introduction and Study Methodology, Department Overviews and Organizational Structures, Functional Reviews, and Findings and Conclusions.

The study methodology included a consultant site visit to meet with the individuals responsible for directing each public works department and develop a first-hand understanding of public works activities, equipment, facilities and infrastructure. The consultant also met with members of the municipalities' study committee.

Background information provided by each department was reviewed by the consultant team including but not limited to:

- FY 2009 adopted department budgets
- Job descriptions
- Pay schedules
- Collective bargaining agreements
- Service characteristics and metrics
- Estimated time spent profiles created by each department
- Other documents provided by each entity

After reviewing this documentation, telephone conferences were held with each department head to clarify information and request additional information as needed, specifically an estimated time spent profile that provided each department head's assessment of staff time allocations to the various public works functions. In addition, we shared our analyses with the department heads several times throughout the project to ensure our understanding of each department's operations and to verify the data we used.

In our analysis of the municipality's public works operations, we sought to understand the similarities and differences in the services provided and to identify critical issues related to the feasibility of consolidated services. We examined service metrics, operating expenses, and staffing estimates, noting variations that limited our ability to compare and analyze operations. The results of our analysis have been shared with the heads of each public works department and their comments have been incorporated as appropriate.

There were considerable inconsistencies in the data we were provided. The municipalities do not have the same fiscal year, which could account for some variations in the analysis. Also, each municipality tends to account differently for public works operations; where one municipality had a separate account to track public works expenses, another combined multiple activities. Based on the information provided, the analysis could not account for these differences.

As with most public works services, personnel expenses account for 70 percent or more of operating costs making the allocation of staff time among the various public works functions critical to our analysis. Like many local governments, each municipality assigns personnel costs among its various public works functions by estimating the number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) required to provide services rather than according to actual time spent performing the function. Moreover, two of the municipalities, the Village of Briarcliff Manor and the Town of Ossining, charge regular employee time against the home department budgets to which employees are assigned (e.g. highways) and charge only overtime on the basis of the function performed (e.g. snow plowing). The absence of actual time spent data by function and the different approaches used to assign budget costs make it difficult to interpret the results of the analysis.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the analysis provides observations and identifies questions that the municipalities can address to determine opportunities to increase efficiency, including sharing or consolidating services.

Assessing the feasibility of sharing or consolidating services goes beyond a comparison of activities, staffing and operating expenses. It also involves governance issues and community perceptions about the fairness of the consolidation, e.g. tax payers must understand that they are receiving the same level of service and paying a proportionate cost of service. For the purposes of this study, we are assuming that the type and level of services remain constant.

Finally, it is important to recognize that cost-savings from sharing or consolidating services may not be immediate. Consolidations often occur in phases over time, providing entities with the opportunity to address logistical concerns and integrate operational planning.

2. Department Overviews and Organizational Structures

Combined, the public works departments provide services to a population of 37,224 residing in an area of 12.2 square miles. The characteristics of the municipalities vary in some important ways. The Village of Ossining has the highest density of the three municipalities with 7,503 persons living per square mile; indicative of a mix of single- and multiple- dwelling units. The Village of Briarcliff Manor and the Town of Ossining are comprised largely of single-family homes, having much lower densities at 1,283 and 1,838 persons per square mile, respectively.

Figure 1 offers a demographic and service metric profile for the municipalities, individually and collectively. It should be noted that the number of annual gallons of water pumped and miles of water mains for the Town of Ossining are included in the totals provided for the Village of Ossining, as the Village of Ossining provides these services to the Town under IMAs. Similarly, for the Village of Briarcliff Manor and the Village of Ossining, highway miles plowed are higher than highway miles maintained as a result of IMAs with other units of government.

Figure 1. Demographics and Service Metrics				
Area Profile				
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)	Combined
Population Served	7,696	24,010	5,514	37,224
Households	2,496	8,515	1,945	12,956
Area (square miles)	6	3	3	12
Population per square mile	1,283	7,503	1,838	3,051
Households per square mile	416	2,661	648	1,062
Highway miles maintained (center miles)	40	53	21	114
Highway miles plowed	43	55	21	119
Number of street lights	600	950	200	1,750
Miles of storm sewer mains	28	27	6	61
Annual gallons of water pumped (in millions)	440	1,120		1,560
Miles of water mains	65	74		139
Miles of sanitary sewer	30	39	10	79
No. of vehicles maintained	75	150	70	295

Figure 2 shows a matrix of 16 public works functions and indicates how each municipality delivers these services to its residents. In the Village of Briarcliff Manor and the Village of Ossining, most services are provided in-house. Both villages contract for engineering services that cannot be provided by in-house engineering staff. The Town of Ossining contracts for all engineering services as it does not have any in-house engineering capabilities. The Town of Ossining also contracts for sanitation and recycling services.

The Village of Ossining and the Town of Ossining provide in-house sanitary sewer services and maintain reciprocal IMAs to account for shared use of sanitary sewer mains. Approximately 80 percent of the Town's wastewater passes through the Village of Ossining's system, while a much smaller amount of the Village of Ossining's wastewater passes through the Town's system. Similarly, the Town of Ossining has an IMA to bring its leaves to a temporary transfer site provided by the Village of Ossining and an agreement with the Village of Ossining to provide street lighting maintenance. Additionally, Town residents receive water from the Village of Ossining, except for a few who may have private wells.

The Town of Ossining also maintains an IMA with Briarcliff Manor covering the purchase of fuel.

Briarcliff Manor is the only municipality to provide park maintenance services under the auspices of its public works staff. The Village of Ossining and the Town of Ossining have assigned park maintenance services to another operating department.

Figure 2. Public Works Services Matrix			
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)
Road/street maintenance	X	X	X
Storm water maintenance	X	X	X
Snow removal	X	X	X
Traffic control	X	X	X
Street lighting	X	X	IMA
Recycling	X	X	C
Organic waste	X	X	X/IMA
Special pick ups	X	X	X
Sanitation	X	X	C
Water	X	X	IMA
Sanitary Sewer	X	X/IMA	X/IMA
Fleet management (incl. fuel)	X	X	X/IMA
Building maintenance	X	X	X
Park Maintenance	X	NA	NA
Engineering/Constr. Mgt.	X/C	X/C	C
Public works administration	X	X	X

Performed in-house	X
Services provided under an IMA	IMA
Services contracted privately	C
Not applicable	NA

To further understand each public works department, it is helpful to review the organizational structure for each department.

Figure 3 shows the organizational chart for the Village of Ossining Department of Public Works. The department is directed by the Village Engineer, who reports to the Village Manager. The department has 59 employees; foremen and assistant foremen positions function as working supervisors who work side by side those in their assigned work groups.

Figure 3.

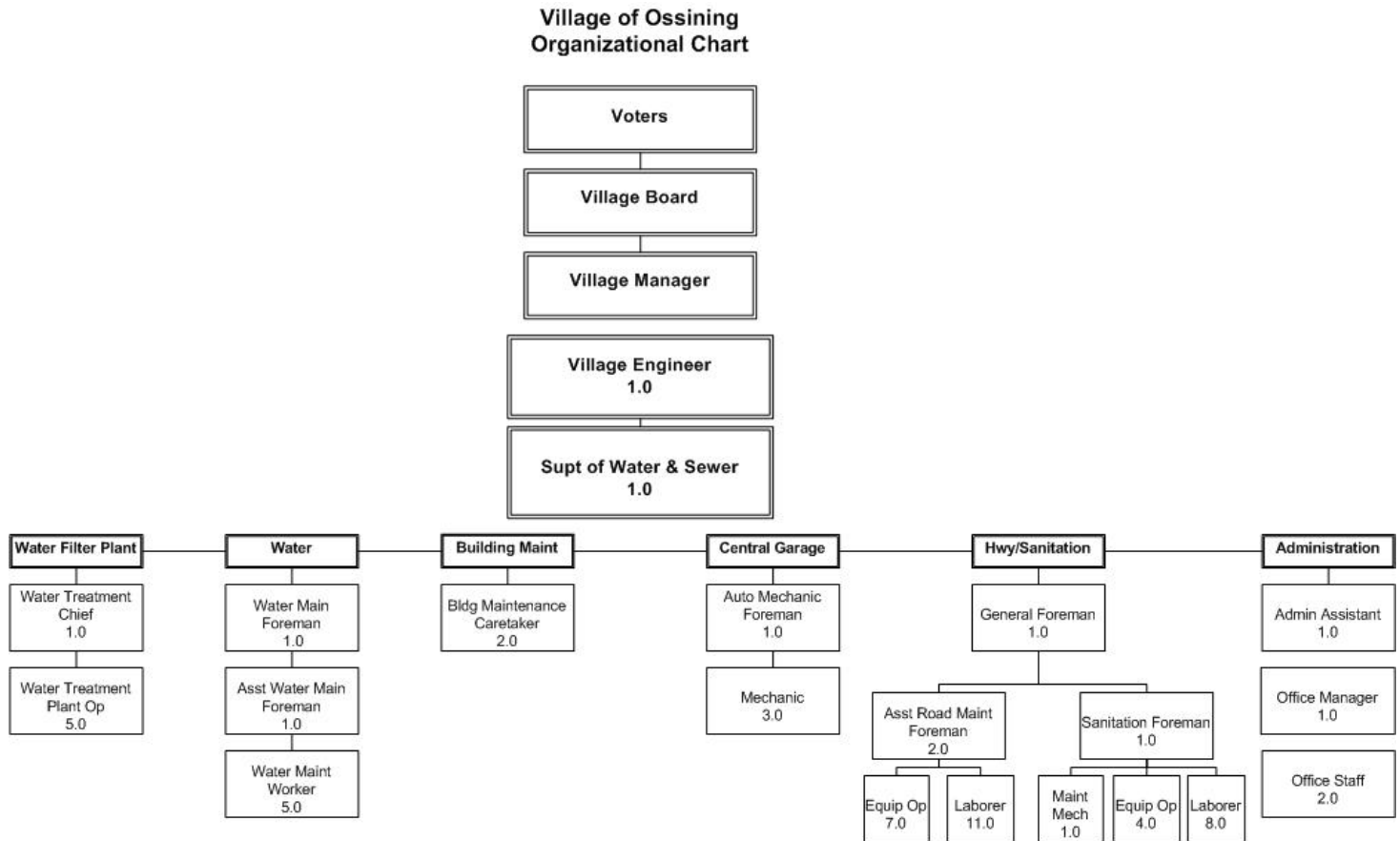


Figure 4 shows the organizational chart for the Town of Ossining Highway Department. The department is headed by an elected Superintendent of Highways. The department has a total of 11 employees. The general foreman functions as a working supervisor and works in the field with the highway employees.

Figure 4.

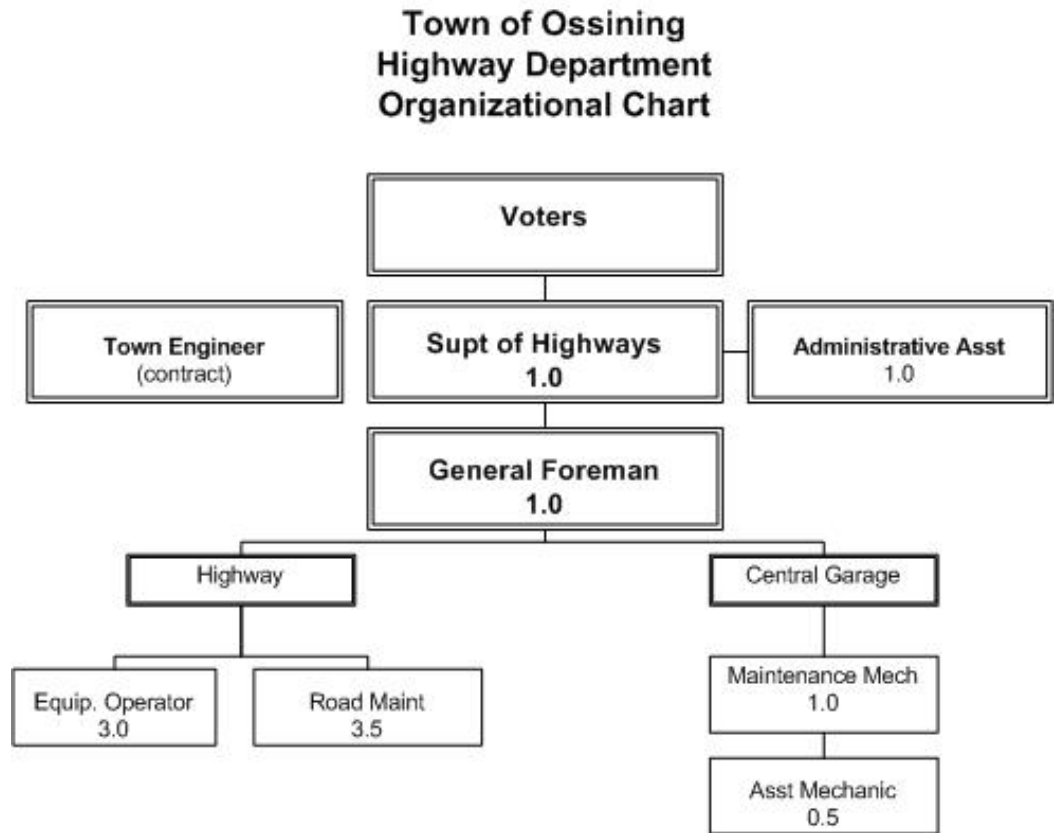
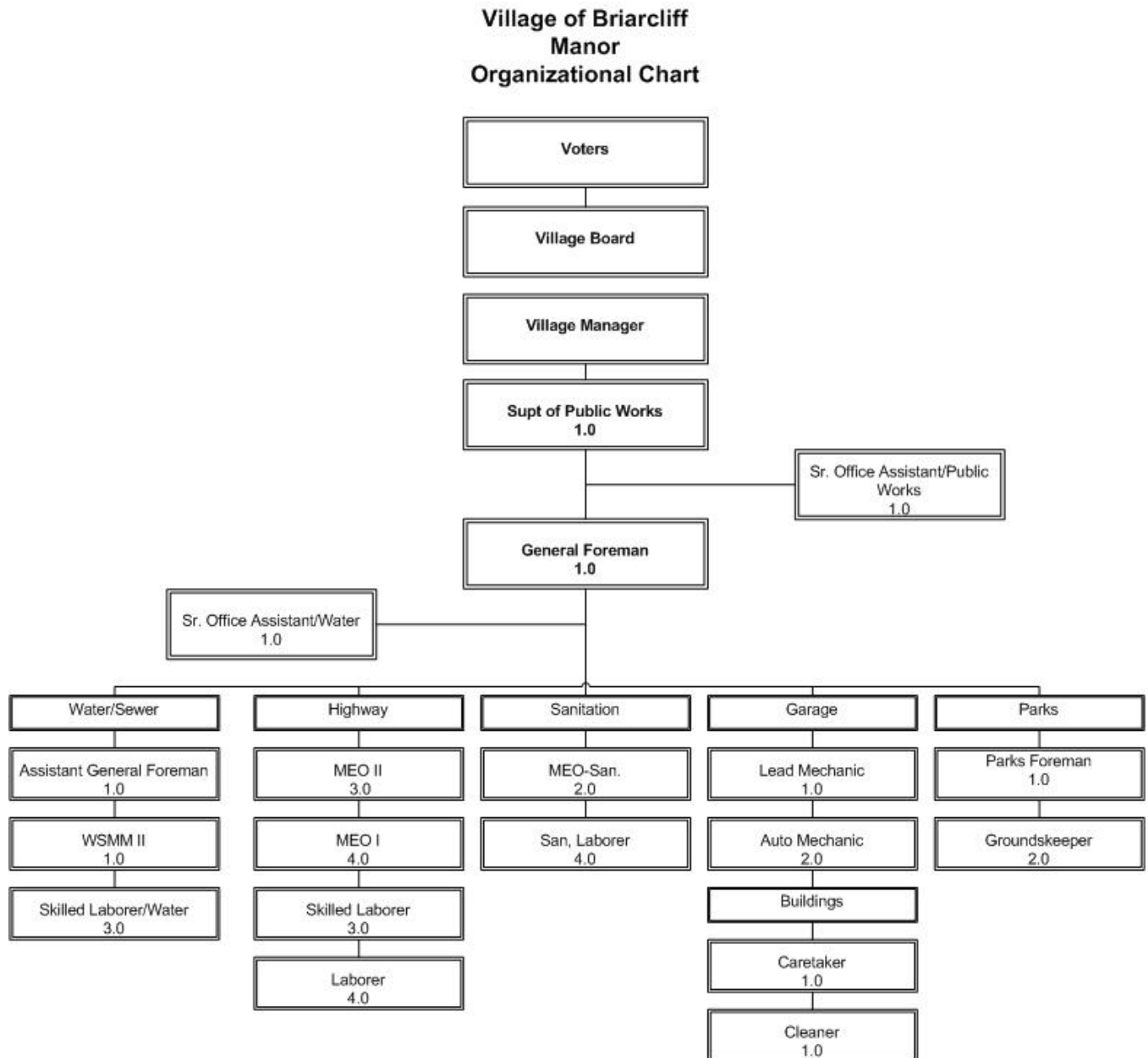


Figure 5 on the following page shows the organizational chart for the Village of Briarcliff Manor Department of Public Works. The department is led by a Superintendent of Public Works with previous experience in pavement and construction management. The department has a total of 37 employees, including three working supervisors. Briarcliff Manor recently completed a reorganization assigning its three park maintenance employees to the Department of Public Works to increase cross-training and provide increased flexibility in staffing.

Figure 5.



While an organizational chart shows how personnel are assigned to a department's work units, it does not reflect how the employees in any given job class actually spend their time. The seasonal nature of public works functions such as street maintenance, snow removal and leaf pick up means that public works employees will be assigned to various functions as needed instead of dedicated to a single program. For example, water and sewer employees may assist with snow removal.

To understand department staffing, it is important to look beyond budgeted staff allocations to examine how employee time is actually spent among the various public works functions. Allocating regular personnel costs in accordance with an employee's home department is a prevailing budget practice in New York State that reflects state law allowing only local governing bodies to authorize budget modifications. Typically, power to modify or amend a local government budget resides with the governing body. However, it does not follow that payroll expenses must be charged where budgeted. If payroll expenses are not charged according to the function performed, the local government limits its ability to track costs by program function.

The Village of Ossining provided us with information demonstrating that regular and overtime personnel expenses are allocated and charged by function. The Village of Briarcliff Manor and the Town of Ossining allocate regular salary costs to an employee's home department(s) irrespective of the functions performed. Only overtime expenses are allocated by function and assigned to a program budget.

To create a consistent approach for reviewing public works staffing allocations, we asked each department head to estimate how employee time was distributed among the municipality's various public works functions, with the recognition that these estimates could change rather dramatically due to seasonal fluctuations and department work goals. Not surprisingly, these allocations also reflect variations in the mix and level of services provided and differences in how each department operates.

Figure 6 on the following page provides an estimated time spent profile for the municipalities, individually and combined. The data provide an approximation of how staff time is allocated between functions; these estimated FTE allocations are used throughout the analysis to indicate how staff time spent differs among the municipalities. In reviewing the estimated time spent profiles, several observations must be made. First, Briarcliff Manor includes park maintenance as part of its public works operations. We have added the number of park maintenance FTEs for the Village of Ossining and the Town of Ossining for comparison purposes, even though those FTEs are generally outside of the public works operations. Second, the municipalities use different methods to allocate administrative staffing. Briarcliff Manor and the Village of Ossining assigned most administrative time across multiple functions; the Town of Ossining assigned administrative time as a separate function.

Figure 6. Full-time Equivalents (FTEs) by Function				
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)	Combined
Highway/street maintenance	4.58	12.28	3.56	20.42
Parking	.1	.08	-	0.18
Snow Plowing	1.34	1.05	.66	3.05
Traffic Control	.5	.85	.13	1.48
Street Cleaning	.1-	.98	.1	1.18
Street Lighting	0.26	1.30	-	1.56
Storm Water	1.68	2.95	1.01	5.64
Sanitation (res.)	5.64	3.97	-	9.61
Sanitation (com)	.31	2.84	-	3.15
Recycling	2.54	4.04	-	6.58
Leaf Pick Up	3.27	.64	1.13	5.04
Bulk Pick Up	.57	2.85	.11	3.53
Vehicle Maintenance	3.16	3.02	1.73	7.91
Building Maintenance	1.35	2.94	0.01	4.30
Water	5.35	15.01	-	20.36
Sanitary Sewer	1.52	3.06	0.4	4.99
Administration	.36	.72	2.16	3.24
Parks	4.35	*6.97	*3.0	14.30
Engineering	.02	0.15	-	0.17
Other (capital projects)	-	.25	-	0.27
TOTAL	37.00	65.95	14.00	116.95

**Includes non-DPW staff*

In order to compare staffing and costs among the three municipalities, this study will focus on those public works operations the municipalities have in common. Figure 7 on the following page shows the 2009 budgeted public works expenditures for the municipalities, individually and collectively, excluding the amount budgeted for water in the Village of Ossining and Briarcliff Manor and for parks maintenance in Briarcliff Manor. Public works staffing is also included in Figure 7. The number of FTEs for each municipality has been adjusted, excluding park maintenance and water personnel based on information contained in the estimated time spent profiles.

The Village of Ossining has the lowest cost per capita and cost per household for public works services; reflecting to some extent its higher density. The cost per capita and cost per household for the Village of Briarcliff Manor and the Town of Ossining are comparable, attributable to similar development patterns. The Village of Briarcliff Manor has the highest per capita and per household FTE ratios, reflecting the higher level of service it provides including such things as back door refuse pick-up and personal notification of public works activities affecting residents. The per capita and per household FTE ratios for the Village of Ossining and the Town of Ossining are comparable.

On the basis of density, measured as the population per square mile, the cost of providing public works services is highest in the Town of Ossining where it costs \$6,812 to provide services to 1,838 people per square mile. The

corresponding cost to provide public works services in the Village of Briarcliff Manor is \$3,200 based on 1,283 people per square mile and \$730 based on 7,503 people per square mile in the Village of Ossining. FTEs based on density are highest in the Village of Briarcliff Manor where staffing is at 0.021 FTEs compared to 0.006 FTEs for both the Town of Ossining and the Village of Ossining.

Figure 7. Public Works Comparison				
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)	Combined
Public Works--2009 Adopted Budget	\$3,912,522	\$4,110,771	\$2,595,934	\$10,619,227
Sanitary Sewer--2009 Adopted Budget	\$193,664	\$1,366,311	\$306,320	\$1,866,295
Total Public Works--2009 Adopted Budget	\$4,106,186	\$5,477,082	\$2,902,254	\$12,485,522
FTEs	27.30	43.97	11	82.27
Cost per household	\$1,645	\$646	\$1,492	\$965.79
Cost per capita	\$534	\$229	\$526	\$336
Cost for population per sq. mile	\$3,200	\$730	\$6,812	\$4,092
FTEs per 1,000 households	10.94	5.16	5.66	6.35
FTEs per 1,000 pop	3.55	1.83	1.99	2.21
FTEs by population per sq. mile	0.021	0.006	0.006	0.027

Figure 8 on the following page shows the staffing patterns in each public works department and lists the number of management, administrative, working supervisor, and operations positions.

The percent of public works staff devoted to management and administration is lowest in Briarcliff Manor (7.5 percent); the Village of Ossining and the Town of Ossining have respectively 9.4 percent and 18.2 percent of their staff devoted to management and administration. This variation reflects differences in the services provided by each municipal department. Although we did not account for management and administrative positions involved in water or park maintenance, the partial FTE amounts listed in Figure 8 for Briarcliff Manor and the Village of Ossining indicate that these positions are performing some management and administrative work for the functions that were excluded in this analysis. All things considered, the Village of Ossining would be expected to have a higher percentage of management and administrative positions because the department head serves the dual roles of Village Engineer and Director of Public Works.

The Town of Ossining has the highest percentage of management and administrative positions; although its administrative demands may be less than those of the other departments because it outsources sanitation and recycling and provides other services through IMAs. Despite these differences, it would be unreasonable to expect the Town to employ a part-time Superintendent of Highways and a part-time administrative assistant based on the current department configuration. However, if the departments were consolidated, the

overall number of management and administrative positions could be reduced by combining some of the management and administrative work that each department must now handle separately.

The ratio of working supervisors to operations staff is highest in Briarcliff Manor where there are 10.9 operational FTEs to every working supervisor. The ratios are 7.0 and 8.0 FTEs per working supervisor in the Village of Ossining and the Town of Ossining, respectively, indicating a consistent staffing pattern.

Figure 8. Staffing by Type Comparison				
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)	Combined
Management Positions	0.68	1.08	1.00	2.76
Administrative Positions	1.36	3.04	1.00	5.40
Working Supervisor Positions	2.13	5.0	1.00	7.26
Operations Positions	23.13	34.85	8.00	66.35
Total Positions	27.30	43.97	11.00	82.27

Base wages rates were also reviewed for comparable positions using the January 1, 2009 salary schedules provided by the Town of Ossining and the Village of Ossining and the June 1, 2008 schedule for the Village of Briarcliff Manor which would have been in effect during its 2009 fiscal year. This comparison, using maximum base wage rates, appears in Table 9. It is important to note that actual pay received, which would include overtime, is not reflected in this table.

In general, the Briarcliff Manor maximum rates are higher than those of the other two municipalities. The Village of Ossining reports the lowest base wage rates. It should be noted that Village wages rates were last adjusted in 2008; and a new labor agreement is not yet in place. From a staffing perspective, it is interesting to note that the Village of Ossining rates for the Heavy Motor Equipment Operator and the Motor Equipment Operator are the same. Often there is minimal difference in the work performed by these two job titles such that the positions could be regarded as a single job class making it easier to assign work without the limitations and costs sometimes imposed by collective bargaining agreements.

Figure 9. Base Wage Rate Comparisons				
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)	Average Maximum Rate
Working Foreman	\$82,475	\$68,955	\$73,082	\$74,837
Mechanic	\$72,932	\$63,143	\$70,474	\$68,850
HMEO/MEO II	\$73,754	\$63,143	\$68,271	\$68,389
MEO	\$69,377	\$63,143	\$67,534	\$66,685
Laborer	\$67,675	\$55,893	**\$49,808	\$57,792

** The Town does not currently have any employees assigned to the laborer job class.

3. Functional Reviews

Highway Maintenance

Highway maintenance is the backbone of each public works department. This work unit provides basic maintenance services ranging from road maintenance, pot hole repair, street sweeping, street sign installation, painting road lines to cleaning, repairing and installing catch basins and maintaining storm water collection mains. Administrative requirements include filing reports on each municipality's street system and storm water management activities.

The activities performed by and accounted for within each municipality's highway program differ significantly, resulting in the variation of cost per center mile maintained in Figure 10. In addition to maintaining streets, the Village of Ossining maintains municipal parking lots. In the Village of Ossining and the Town of Ossining highway employees perform leaf pick-up and the cost of this program is included in the highway maintenance budget. Although highway employees in Briarcliff Manor provide leaf pick-up, the cost for this program is reported as part of the recycling budget even though highway employees perform this service.

Similarly, storm water activities are performed by highway employees but the cost of these activities is sometimes accounted for separately, as in the Village of Ossining which has a separate budget for storm sewers. In addition to maintaining catch basins and storm water mains, public works departments may undertake some storm water repair or construction projects in-house without contracting.

Apart from these differences, other factors can have a significant impact on the department's efficiency and therefore its cost to provide services. Operational efficiency is affected by such things as the design and condition of the infrastructure, the condition of equipment and customer requirements. Typically municipalities have a five-year capital improvement plan that outlines the funding and timing of major highway projects that will maximize the public's investment in the life of the infrastructure. Some of these projects, particularly those involving paving, may be done in-house as part of the highway function; other projects may be handled under contract. Briarcliff Manor and the Village of Ossining have multi-year capital improvement plans; the Town of Ossining budgets highway projects on an annual basis and does not have a five-year capital improvement plan.

Figure 10. Highway Maintenance Metrics				
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)	Combined
Center Miles Maintained	39.66	53.00	21.00	113.66
Highway/St. Mntnce FTEs	4.58	12.28	3.56	20.42
Service Ratio (miles/FTE)	8.66	4.32	5.90	5.57
2009 Budget St Mntce	\$975,740	\$947,362	\$763,680	\$2,686,782
Estimated Cost per Center Mile Maintained	\$24,603	\$17,875	\$36,366	\$23,639

Street Lighting

Each municipality owns and operates a street lighting system; the Town of Ossining has an IMA with the Village of Ossining in the amount of \$9,000 to provide maintenance to its street lighting system. Note that the number of street lights maintained per FTE for the Village of Ossining is based on the number of street lights maintained in the Village as well as those maintained in the Town. Figure 11 shows metrics associated with street lighting operations.

Figure 11 Street Lighting Metrics				
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)	Combined
No. of street lights	600	950	200	1,550
2009 Street Lighting Budget	\$221,441	\$260,050	\$74,000	\$625,094
FTEs	0.26	1.3		1.56
Cost per street light	\$369	\$274	\$370	\$311
Street lights maintained per FTE	2,308	885		994

Snow Removal

All of the municipalities provide snow removal. The costs and staff time allocated to this function will vary each year depending on the frequency and volume of snow received. Budget estimates also vary because of differences in reporting labor costs. It should be noted that the Village of Ossining includes estimated regular and overtime employee costs for snow removal while the budgeted amount for the Village of Briarcliff Manor and the Town of Ossining reflects only estimated overtime labor expenses.

The efficiency of snow removal operations is also affected by on-street parking; snow can be removed more efficiently when plows can clear snow from curb to curb without maneuvering around parked cars. The Village of Ossining is the only one of the three municipalities that does not restrict on-street parking.

Figure 12 compares snow removal metrics among the municipalities. First, it should be noted that center miles plowed in Briarcliff Manor and the Village of Ossining exceed the number of center miles maintained under the highway function due to IMAs to plow state highways. Briarcliff Manor has the lowest cost per mile at \$4,115; the Village of Ossining is higher at \$7,339 which reflects both regular and overtime labor costs to plow snow. At \$8,440, the Town of Ossining has the highest snow removal cost per mile, over double that reported by Briarcliff Manor. Terrain and cul-de-sacs may account for some of the increased plowing costs to the extent that it differs from the topography and

street design of Briarcliff Manor and the Village of Ossining. Or the higher estimated cost per mile may reflect a history of incurring overtime costs in snow removal.

Figure 12. Snow Removal Metrics				
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)	Combined
Center Miles Plowed	43.46	55.00	21.00	119.46
Snow Plowing FTEs	1.34	1.05	0.66	3.05
Service Ratio (miles/FTE)	32.43	52.38	31.82	39.17
2009 Snow Plowing Budget	\$178,839	\$403,653	\$177,250	\$759,742
Estimated cost per mile	\$4,115	\$7,339	\$8,440	\$6,360

Sanitation and Recycling

While all of the municipalities provide sanitation, recycling and organic waste collection, there are significant differences in how each provides these services and assigns costs. Across all of the municipalities, refuse is collected twice weekly and recycling is collected once a week.

The Town of Ossining is the only municipality to outsource sanitation and recycling services to a private hauler. Annual cost of the service was budgeted for \$448,813 in 2009. The Superintendent of Highways estimates that he spends 2-3 percent of his time monitoring the contract and tending to administrative matters. The Town's highway staff is responsible for collecting leaves and brush and picking up bulk items. The Town has an IMA with the Village of Ossining to bring leaves to its temporary transfer site and an IMA with Briarcliff Manor to bring brush to its transfer site.

Briarcliff Manor has two sanitation crews handling large routes and a satellite crew that serves several commercial users and schools. Of the municipalities, Briarcliff Manor is the only one to provide back door pick-up of garbage. Curbside recycling is handled by village highway personnel; water employees may be called upon to pick up recycling if highway personnel have to plow snow. Newspapers and bulk metal items are picked up on Wednesdays by sanitation employees. Briarcliff Manor maintains and manages a two-acre compost site located at its public works facility.

The Village of Ossining runs three residential routes twice a week. Recyclables, bulk metals and organic waste are picked up once a week. The Village provides a commercial dumpster program for 150 commercial customers and also operates a transfer station, which is used by the Town of Ossining under an annual IMA, to collect organic leaf waste. Village employees load organic waste into container vehicles provided by the County and the County hauls the material to a composter.

Figure 13 compares sanitation and recycling metrics among the municipalities. The per household cost for Briarcliff Manor is higher due to the level of service provided and because it also includes the cost of leaf pick up. The Village of Ossining and the Town of Ossining assign recycling and leaf pick up costs to their respective highway functions. The Village of Ossining reports the lowest per household cost. The Town of Ossining's 2009 budgeted cost for sanitation and recycling includes its contract for service, which accounts for 77 percent of the budget, and various expenses for payments to the County and other miscellaneous costs.

Figure 13. Sanitation and Recycling Metrics			
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)
Households	2,496	8,515	1,945
FTEs (residential service)	5.64	3.97	
FTEs (commercial)	.31	2.84	
FTEs (recycling)	2.54	4.04	
FTEs (bulk pick up)	.57	2.85	.11
FTEs per 1,000 households (sanitation)	2.26	.47	NA
FTEs per 1,000 households (recycling)	2.26	.47	
2009 Sanitation and Recycling Budgets	\$1,066,656	\$1,068,671	\$578,313
2009 Commercial Dumpsters		\$331,556	
Sanitation and Recycling Cost per Household (excl commercial dumpsters)	\$427	\$126	\$297

Water

The Villages of Briarcliff Manor and Ossining provide water services; residents in the Town of Ossining purchase water directly from the Village of Ossining. Figure 14 compares water service metrics for the two villages based on operating costs; costs associated with debt have been excluded from this analysis. Fiscal year 2009 costs for the Village of Briarcliff Manor do not include a transfer to debt service for the water bond principal and interest as that transfer first occurred in fiscal year 2010. For the Village of Ossining, the BAN debt of \$83,312 and an interfund transfer of \$1,743,380 have been deducted.

The two water systems are, for the most part, separate having only two one-way interconnections that allow Briarcliff Manor to draw water from the Ossining system for emergency purposes. A \$20 million water source supply project that will serve Briarcliff Manor is under way; the project will allow the village to draw drinking water from an intake located below a New York City water treatment plant eliminating the need for Briarcliff Manor to operate a water treatment plant and reducing some administrative reporting which is handled by New York City. The village provides only chemical treatment at its pumping stations to limit corrosion and balance pH levels; it pumps 440 million gallons annually. It should be noted that Briarcliff Manor is entering into an IMA with Tarrytown to explore the feasibility of a consolidated water system.

The Village of Ossining operates a water treatment plant. It also handles various regulatory and compliance work to assure water quality and provide information to residents. The Ossining system pumps 1,120 million gallons of water annually.

Water utility funds are operated as an enterprise operation; they usually include a transfer to the general fund to pay for indirect costs associated with various administrative services. The amount of a transfer, which can vary according to a municipality's financial policies and practices, can affect a comparison of operating expenses. It should also be noted that the Village of Ossining Water Fund includes a chargeback of \$805,670 for a Department of Public Works and a non-Department of Public Works administrative allocation. The Village of Briarcliff Manor has not reported similar allocations as part of its water utility fund. Briarcliff Manor has a higher cost per capita, which may reflect its lower rate of density compared to the Ossining system. However, we note that the gallons of water (in millions) pumped per FTE are comparable with less than a 10 percent variation.

Figure 14. Water Service Metrics

	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Combined
2009 Water Budget (excl. debt)	\$2,445,855	\$6,129,661	\$8,575,516
Annual gallons of water pumped (in millions)	440	1,120	1,560
Connections	2,799	5,998	8,797
Households	2,496	10,460	12,956
Population served	7,696	29,524	37,220
FTEs	5.35	15	20.35
Cost per million gallons	\$5,559	\$5,473	\$5,497
Cost per connection	\$874	\$1,022	\$662
Cost per household	\$980	\$586	\$662
Cost per capita	\$318	\$208	\$230
Gallons of water pumped (in millions) per FTE	82	75	77

Sanitary Sewer

Each municipality operates a sanitary sewer collection system; Westchester County provides wastewater treatment. The municipal systems differ in the number of lift stations required to raise wastewater to a level that will allow it to feed by gravity into a sewer line. The Town of Ossining operates 14 lift stations and is exploring ways to eliminate three lift stations, according to the Superintendent of Highways. Briarcliff Manor has eight lift stations while the Village of Ossining has only one. The Town of Ossining and the Village of Ossining have IMAs in place allowing wastewater to pass through the other's sewer lines. The Town pays the Village of Ossining \$120,000 annually with 80 percent of its wastewater passing through Village lines. The Village pays the Town \$17,000 for wastewater that passes through the Town's lines.

Briarcliff Manor accounts for sanitary sewer operations as part of its general fund. The Village of Ossining maintains a sanitary sewer utility fund; and the Town of Ossining levies property taxes for twelve lift station service areas.

The metrics shown in Figure 15 for costs per mile and miles maintained per FTE raise questions that we are unable to answer. Miles of sanitary sewer maintained per FTE are lowest in the Village of Ossining and highest in the Town of Ossining. This could point to an incorrect estimate in the time spent profiles; or it could indicate higher maintenance demands based on such things as the number of lift stations in the system. Costs per mile vary substantially suggesting that there may be some costs assigned to sanitary sewer budgets in one municipality and not in others or that some costs attributable to sewer operations are included in other program budgets. We note that the Village of Ossining Sewer Fund includes a chargeback of \$454,522 for a Department of Public Works and a non-Department of Public Works administrative allocation. This variation could also reflect differences in how the municipalities account for labor costs. The Village of Ossining reports all regular and overtime labor costs in its budget, which may not be the case with the other municipalities.

Figure 15 provides comparative information on sanitary sewer operations.

Figure 15. Sanitary Sewer Metrics				
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)	Combined
Miles of Sanitary Sewer	30.00	38.85	10.00	78.85
No. of Lift Stations	8	1	14	23
FTEs	1.52	3.06	0.40	4.98
2009 Sanitary Sewer Budget (excl. debt)	\$193,664	\$1,366,311	\$306,320	\$1,893,583
Cost per mile	\$6,455	\$35,169	\$30,632	\$24,015
Miles per FTE	19.74	12.70	25	15.83

Central Garage

Each municipality operates a central garage. Figure 16 indicates the number of vehicles maintained by each municipality. The condition of the central garage facility appears to be a significant difference among the municipalities. The Town's garage facility does not have equipment bays or garage doors large enough to accommodate some of its larger pieces of equipment. It has two lifts, one that can support 9,000 pounds and a portable lift that can support 65,000 pounds. All transmission work is contracted out. The Town of Ossining has an IMA with the Village of Briarcliff Manor for fuel.

Briarcliff Manor and the Village of Ossining perform all repairs on municipal equipment, with the exception of major overhauls on large pieces of equipment such as fire engines.

Figure 16 shows the metrics for the central garage operations. The table shows variances in expenditures per vehicle that we are not able to explain, other than to suggest that there may be variations in how the municipalities report expenses.

Figure 16. Central Garage Metrics				
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)	Combined
No. of vehicles	75	150	70	295
2009 Central Garage budget	\$596,917	\$293,107	\$264,603	\$1,154,627
Expenditures per vehicle	\$7,959	\$1,954	\$3,780	\$3,914
FTEs	3.16	3.02	1.73	7.91
Vehicles maintained per FTE	23.73	49.67	40.58	37.32

Building Maintenance

Limited building maintenance information was available for the municipalities. Briarcliff Manor and the Village of Ossining did provide budget information and an FTE allocation. Other data needed to compare operations include the area of buildings that are maintained and the level or frequency of providing building maintenance services.

It should be noted that the Town of Ossining occupies offices in the Ossining Village Hall and the Village Operations Center; these facilities are maintained by the Village's building maintenance staff.

A summary of building maintenance information appears in Figure 17.

Figure 17. Building Maintenance Metrics			
	Briarcliff Manor	Ossining (Village)	Ossining (Town)
2009 Building Maintenance Allocation	\$193,949	\$215,706	NA
FTEs	1.35	2.94	0.01

Asset Management

The American Public Works Association (APWA) defines asset management as “the principle that public works facilities...should be managed to provide the highest possible return on the public's investment (retrieved from apwa.net on February 19, 2010).” The APWA goes on to state that:

“Infrastructure asset management involves day-to-day operations and maintenance as well as strategic planning and budgeting. What distinguishes asset management practices is an explicit recognition that benefits and services as well as costs are being managed. This recognition is reflected in the fundamental operational objective of infrastructure asset management, to provide defined services efficiently. The members of the community served must define the services they want, now and in the future; understanding that the diverse costs of these services will be incurred now and in the future as

well. They must recognize that when resources are constrained, services may be reduced.”

An established process for capital improvement planning and financing is essential to address the long term aspects of managing a community’s infrastructure and providing information that will guide policy makers and administrators in making decisions about the need, timing and cost of public improvement projects. Capital improvement planning provides a proactive approach to maintaining and replacing public infrastructure.

Briarcliff Manor and the Village of Ossining have adopted five-year capital improvement plans. These plans include items such as the planned replacement of vehicles and equipment; annual street paving and sidewalk programs; sewer relining and replacement; water tank painting, and major building maintenance projects. Briarcliff Manor reports that it paves two to three miles annually while the Village of Ossining paves approximately one mile each year.

The Town of Ossining does not have a five-year capital improvement plan or replacement schedule for equipment and vehicles. Without such a plan, the Town is more likely to find itself reacting to infrastructure problems than planning for improvements that will maximize its investment in highways, sewers, and other public facilities.

In addition to reviewing each municipality’s approach to capital improvement planning, we also requested information explaining its use of staff and consulting engineering services. Both the Village of Briarcliff Manor and the Village of Ossining have in-house staff resources which they draw upon as much as possible to hold down project design costs. Similarly, both villages utilize in-house staff to manage construction projects. Typically, contract engineering assistance is used when specialized design services are needed or in-house staff capacity is not available.

The Village of Ossining provided detailed information on its use of engineering resources. Because the Village has a Village Engineer on staff, many engineering services are provided in-house including regulatory filings, site plan and building permit reviews, contract and construction management services, general engineering and field oversight for the sanitation, highway, water, storm water, and sanitary sewer functions and general advice and consultation to the Village Manager and other department heads.

The Village typically uses outside engineering firms when necessary to obtain specialized knowledge, skills or services. In 2009, general fund operating expenses for consulting engineering services included \$9,573 to provide a ,storm water training workshop, to study flooding at the train station, and to provide engineering design services related to a retaining wall. The Village also contracted with professional engineers for hazardous materials assessment resulting in a \$5,850 charge to the water budget and a sanitary sewer inspection

and siphon study resulting in a charge of \$40,140 to the sanitary sewer budget, half of which was reimbursed by the County.

The Village also utilizes outside engineering firms and other consultants for major projects that appear before the Planning Board. These expenditures are 100 percent reimbursed from moneys deposited in escrow accounts established by Planning Board applicants; these expenses do not impact the Village's general, water or sewer funds.

Each year, the Village undertakes a number of capital projects to improve or acquire new infrastructure (such as sidewalks and streets, sewer lines, water filtration, water distribution system), buildings, or vehicles and equipment. For the past five years, capital project expenditures were \$7,046,114 (2005), \$5,597,309 (2006), \$5,442,423 (2007), \$3,590,555 (2008), and \$1,601,204 (2009). The Village scaled back and postponed certain capital improvements in 2008 and 2009 due to the economy.

In order to accomplish many of these capital improvements, the Village contracts with outside engineering projects for design services and construction oversight and administration. In 2009, the Village of Ossining spent \$121,858 on outside engineering firms associated with projects such as the State Street Streetscape project, Snowden Park Improvements, sewer inflow and infiltration, and the design and construction of filters for the water treatment plant. It should be noted that many of these engineering expenses are paid from issued debt and/or state and federal grants.

Unlike the villages, the Town does not have an engineer on staff. General engineering services are provided under a part-time retainer agreement with an outside engineer. In 2009 engineering expenses of \$74,165 were allocated among the Town general fund, the Town Outside (unincorporated area) general fund, the Planning Board, and Dale Cemetery for services such as planning drainage and maintenance projects, preparing equipment specifications, and reviewing and commenting on reports going to the Town Board. These costs reflect the type of work that could be performed by staff engineer.

The 2009 preliminary Town budget presentation dated November 25, 2008 reports a capital projects budget of \$259,500 including such things as the purchase of equipment, replacing garage doors at the public works facility and repairing a retaining wall. Neither the 2009 adopted budget nor the budget presentation identifies capital infrastructure projects involving road or sanitary sewer improvements.

The Town also retains a consulting engineer to provide design and construction management services for capital infrastructure projects. The cost of these engineering services are typically capitalized as a project cost. For example, in 2009 engineering services charged against capital projects totaled \$149,211 on two anticipated capital projects related to Town lift stations.

It should also be noted that the Town also retains firms to provide engineering services related to specific projects under consideration by the Planning Board; the costs of these services are reimbursed 100 percent by project applicants.

4. Findings and Conclusions

In undertaking this study, the municipalities wanted to identify opportunities to share services and create efficiencies enabling them to reduce the property tax burden. As this analysis demonstrates, public works operations vary in the level and mix of services they provide and more importantly, in the way they assign personnel and track costs. There is no single prescribed way for setting up public works program budgets and assigning costs. Nor is there a uniform approach to staffing a public works department. The lack of consistent data precludes an analysis of detailed cost savings, but our understanding of the municipalities and their operations is sufficient to identify factors that support an increased sharing or consolidation of services as well as findings and conclusions for the municipalities' consideration.

There are many factors that support an increased sharing or consolidation of services. First, the municipalities encompass a combined area of 12.2 square miles. From a public works perspective, this is a relatively compact geographic area that could be serviced by a single public works department.

Second, the municipalities are all located in Westchester County and therefore subject to the same environmental regulations affecting sanitation, recycling, and organic waste programs. The County also receives and treats wastewater collected from each municipality's sanitary sewer system. Opportunities to eliminate duplicative administrative reporting are likely to exist.

Third, the municipalities have an established history of working together. Most notably, the Village and Town of Ossining have a long history of working together, reflected in the IMAs that authorize the Village to provide public works services to the Town including street lighting maintenance, water, and use of a temporary transfer site for leaf disposal. The Town also has an IMA with the Village that allows 80 percent of its wastewater to pass through the Village's system, and the Village has an IMA with the Town allowing a portion of the Village's wastewater to pass through the Town's sewer lines. Two IMAs between the Town and Briarcliff Manor are in effect. Briarcliff Manor purchases fuel for the Town and receives its organic waste collection, excluding leaves, at its transfer site. In addition to these IMAs, each municipality noted the informal cooperation that exists among front-line employees, such as sharing equipment.

If the municipalities determine that it is in their best interest to consolidate public works services, there are several obstacles they will have to address. First, the municipalities must consider the facility needs of a consolidated department. Currently, each municipality has a public works facility although none of the facilities has adequate space to accommodate the equipment and personnel of a consolidated department. Maintaining separate facilities would require each municipality to continue providing supervision at each site.

Second, the municipalities would need to address differences in the level of services provided. These differences are most pronounced in Briarcliff Manor where residents value and expect a more personalized level of service exemplified by such things as back door refuse pick up and personal notification of public works activities in their neighborhoods. Real or perceived differences in the level of services received can pose an obstacle in determining how the costs of providing services should be apportioned. In addition, it may be necessary to address differences in local regulations affecting service delivery, such as parking and refuse pickup.

Third, the pay rates among the municipalities differ. In a consolidation, differences in compensation and benefits would need to be addressed.

Fourth, the municipalities' different approaches to asset management and infrastructure maintenance could present an obstacle to consolidation, particularly if these approaches result in varying infrastructure conditions and deferred maintenance.

Fifth, each municipal department exhibits a different management philosophy. While the presence of different department management philosophies should not deter policy makers from moving ahead with a consolidation that they consider to be in the best interests of the municipalities, it is a factor that must be addressed by establishing clear expectations for the level and costs of services residents receive.

Taking into account the analysis of the three departments and the factors that support and inhibit consolidation, a merger of all three departments is not recommended. In our opinion, the level and mix of services provided by Briarcliff Village are sufficiently different when compared to the Village and Town of Ossining, making consolidation difficult to achieve. The Briarcliff Village Department of Public Works is distinguished by a higher level of refuse services, personal notification to residents of neighborhood public works activities and park maintenance. Including Briarcliff Manor in a consolidated department would go against one of the assumptions identified earlier in this study, i.e. that the level and mix of services would remain the same after, as they were before, a merger. Briarcliff Manor has undertaken a major water source supply project and is participating in an IMA with Tarrytown to explore a consolidated water system. These developments also suggest that including Briarcliff Manor in a merger of the three public works departments does not make sense.

On the other hand, consolidating the public works departments of the Village and Town of Ossining is a logical option that warrants further consideration. A number of IMAs already exist between the Village and the Town. The Village provides street lighting maintenance and water service to Town residents. Approximately 80 percent of the Town's wastewater passes through the Village's sanitary sewer lines, and the Town hauls its leaves to the Village's

temporary transfer site. This level of shared services often precedes a decision to consolidate departments as such consolidations frequently occur over time as one service and then another are integrated.

Staffing levels among the two municipalities are compatible. The number of FTEs based per thousand population and on density, i.e. population per square mile is the same, an indication that staffing levels are similar. Pay rates tend to be higher in the Town of Ossining. A comprehensive salary and benefits study should accompany any further examination of department consolidation.

Lack of an adequate facility to house a consolidated department is a significant obstacle. There is sufficient land adjacent to the Village public works facility that would accommodate an expanded facility, provided the Village and Town are willing to make such an investment. From the Town's perspective, consolidating the two departments into an expanded Village facility would provide a more state-of-the-art public works center to house and maintain vehicles and equipment. An expanded facility would also allow the departments to increase their efficiency by centralizing supervision of staff and providing opportunities to streamline administrative services that both departments now perform separately.

The municipalities are interested in identifying potential cost savings that could be realized through reduced personnel and equipment. From a personnel perspective, our analysis was structured to determine areas where excess personnel capacity exists. The analysis does not immediately indicate that public works operations are overstaffed. Staffing of the Village and the Town highway and central garage functions are comparable. Positions have been eliminated in both departments in recent years indicating that each has achieved a higher level of productivity. Nevertheless, we do believe that the Village and Town could realize more efficiency in their public works operations through consolidation. To some extent, the wider variety of services performed by the Village allows a broader deployment of staff among various public works activities, including activities provided to the Town under IMAs, which could lead to a more optimal use of employees and equipment.

Creating a consolidated department provides an opportunity for the Village and the Town to define department values and priorities and determine the management and professional competencies needed to ensure an efficient public works operation and effective management of infrastructure assets. Important among these competencies is the ability to provide for a high level of integration between the engineering and public works disciplines. As previously noted in the APWA's statement on asset management, effective stewardship of public works facilities "involves day-to-day operations and maintenance as well as strategic planning and budgeting." In the short term, public works management is focused on maintaining infrastructure, ensuring the safety of those facilities and providing public works services; its long-term focus emphasizes

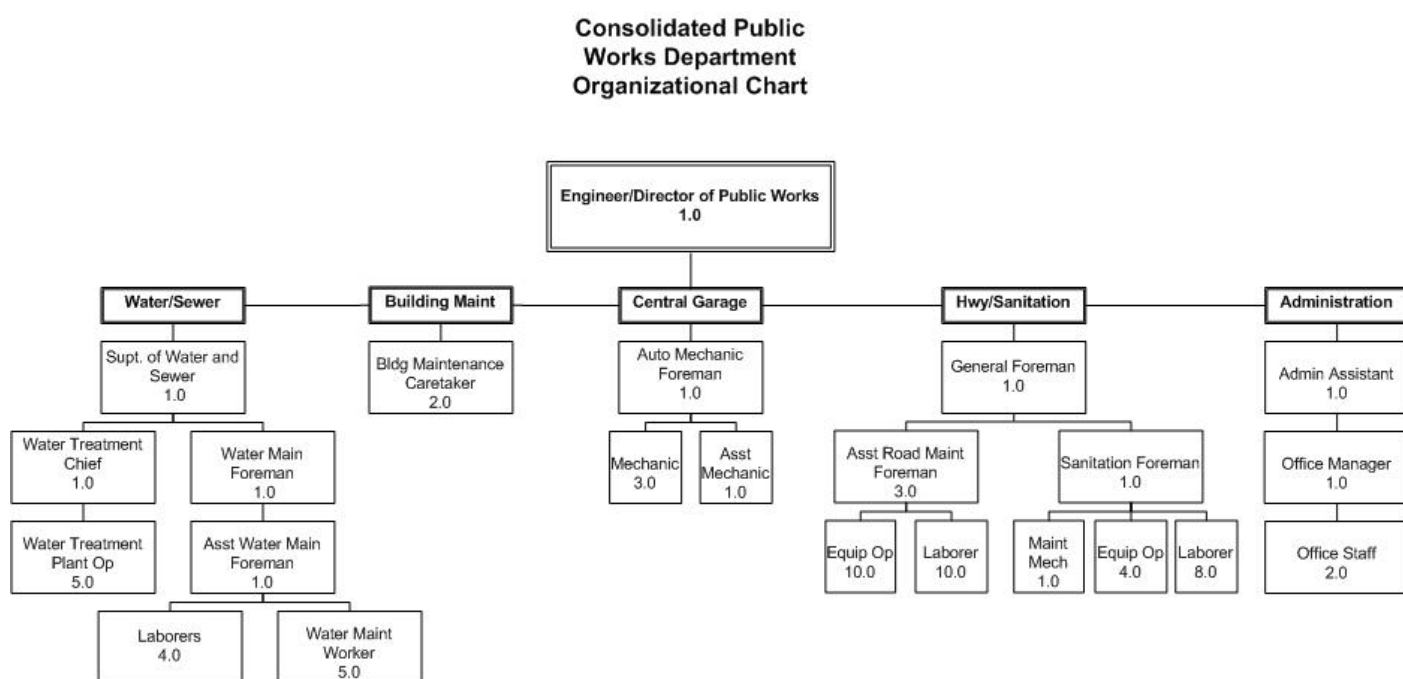
maximizing the public's investment through planned improvement projects linking public works operations and engineering.

As this study reveals, public works departments operate under different organizational models. The Briarcliff Manor Department of Public Works is headed by a Public Works Superintendent with significant experience in public works planning and construction management. He has ready access to the Village Engineer who heads the Village's Building/Engineering Department. In the Village of Ossining, the Department of Public Works is headed by the Village Engineer who has extensive experience in engineering design and construction management. The Town of Ossining's Highway Department is headed by an elected Superintendent of Highways; engineering services are provided by a consulting engineer.

Organizational models that provide for a public works director who is trained as a professional engineer or an in-house engineer in another municipal department generally achieve a better integration of public works operations and engineering than an organizational model that relies on a consulting engineer. The benefits of a combined village engineer/public works department include increased coordination of public works operations, better project planning and management, long-term cost-effectiveness in maintaining the public infrastructure and improved management and oversight of consulting engineers.

A proposed organizational structure for a consolidated department is shown in Figure 18.

Figure 18.



The proposed organization is headed by an engineer/director of public works to enhance the coordination of public works operations and engineering. Administrative and management staffing assumes one department head for the consolidated department and four administrative staff. Operational staffing reflects a blending of the two departments. Five functions report to the director: water and sewer, building maintenance, central garage, highway/sanitation, and department administration.

Department staffing totals 68 FTEs, representing a net savings of 2 FTEs from the existing staff complement of both departments. Personnel savings are roughly estimated to range from \$125,000 to \$150,000.

In addition to these savings, up to an additional \$60,000 to \$70,000 could be saved through the elimination of consulting engineer fees paid by the Town. Such things as developing plans for drainage projects and preparing equipment specifications could be done with in-house staff, under the direction of a professional engineer as appropriate. Additional savings could be realized to the extent that other consulting engineering costs are being capitalized as part of improvement projects. It is unlikely that the Town would eliminate all consulting engineering costs, particularly should the need exist for specialized engineering services in conjunction with a planned improvement.

Additional operating costs savings would probably be realized, particularly insofar as the Town is concerned but data are not sufficient to quantify these savings. Improved coordination between engineering and public works operations are likely to produce more efficient planning and scheduling of maintenance activities. In addition, some reduction in the combined fleet could be expected as the condition and need of each unit are assessed over time.

In many respects, the feasibility of a consolidated department needs to be evaluated based on long-term economic benefits and not on short-term operational savings alone. A consolidated department would require a significant investment in the form of an expanded public works facility. The economics of this investment are not known, although there is speculation that the sale of the land on which the Town's public works facility is situated could offset some of the costs of an expanded facility. However, given the condition of the Town's facility, it is unlikely that the current facility can provide a suitable basis of operation into the foreseeable future. Whether or not a consolidation occurs, the Town can expect to incur costs associated with a public works facility.

There is also the question of future operating and capital costs associated with public works. For the Town, it will be important to develop a five-year capital improvement plan that considers projects needed to address or prevent deficiencies in its infrastructure. For the Village, continuation of its capital improvement process is critical to evaluate the level of project funding required to extend the life of its infrastructure.

In the final analysis, the question of consolidating public works is a governance issue. The mix and level of public works services provided are ultimately policy decisions that balance the public's desire for service and its willingness to pay for those services. To the extent that services can be provided with increasing efficiency, the public's resources can be maximized. Integrating engineering and public works operations and ensuring that the public's investment in infrastructure have a similar impact. To be sure, there would be many details to work out if the governing bodies decide that it is in the best interests of their communities to consolidate. An expanded facility, funding, and staffing would be among the details to be addressed. From a technical standpoint, public works standards, service regulations, and work processes would need to be examined and possibly altered. These are details that can be addressed once the governing bodies determine if consolidating these operations are in the best interests of their residents.