Value for Service Delivery Review

Submitted to:
The City of Barrie

Prepared by:
TkMC

Date:
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A Commitment to Your Privacy:

Information collected for and contained in this report will not be disclosed to any other parties, unless written consent is received from the City of Barrie.

TkMC is fully compliant with Federal and Provincial privacy protection legislation. The information contained in this document is confidential and may be legally privileged.
Acknowledgements

The Value for Service Delivery Review for the City of Barrie represents an investment in starting to define service priorities and initiating an organizational transformation that results in the provision of the right services at the right level, to the citizens of Barrie. Phase One of the Review has been a high-level diagnostic of the Municipal Corporation to provide indications on how well the organization is performing.

TkMC would like to thank the City for the opportunity to work on this very important and timely project. Over the course of three months the consultants of TkMC and the City Administrator’s Office required support and quick response from all areas of the organization. At all times the support to this initiative was professional, courteous and noticed.

The expectation was that this review be an arms-length undertaking, and we have successfully done that. It is imperative that accurate and timely information be made available, however, and the Administration ensured that information, advice and support was provided without intruding into the review process. TkMC would acknowledge that overall, the City has many knowledgeable and committed staff that were generally supportive of this exercise.

We need to specifically thank Rebecca James-Reid who initially acted as the Project Manager for the Review and Craig Hebert, P.Eng. who capably stepped in to carry this review to completion.

TkMC also wishes to thank the Steering Committee and in particular the City Administrator, Peter Lee P.Eng. who provided unwavering sponsorship of the Review.
Executive Summary

To many, the operation of a municipal government is viewed through a single lens, according to the services that they use and the relative value that they see in the service they receive. Some citizens are more aware of the variety of services that are within the scope of responsibility of a municipality and recognize that they are complex businesses that fund their operations through property taxes, user fees, lot levies, grants or rebate, and the sale of assets. This review has been conducted using a number of lenses to assess the City in this value for service delivery review. This review uses a variety of mechanisms and channels to undertake the assessment including: Council, senior management, labour representatives and external stakeholder interviews, focus groups for mid-management, an employee survey, and a comparator survey of selected municipalities involving current contemporary practices and Municipal Performance Management Program information.

Municipalities for the last number of years have been actively pursuing the Provincial and Federal Governments for a “New Deal” in the form of multi-year flow through funding. In an effort to demonstrate efficient and effective management of resources, municipalities have been conducting a plethora of reviews to prioritize programs, determine core services and polling their customers. Municipalities are becoming more strategic in their approach to service delivery and are examining the extent to which services are provided and challenging the status quo. The conflicting demands of continued or increasing services, holding the line on taxes or increasing the revenue stream is forcing municipalities to systematically evaluate what they do. The ability to comprehensively review the service level base, account for the cost and offsetting revenues of services as well as examining the relative value of a service when tested against a set of defined criteria is an objective for the City of Barrie.

TkMC was engaged by the City to undertake this Value for Service Delivery Review (VSDR) which began in December 2004. The final report was delivered in May 2005. The detailed methodology of Phase 1 of the review is found in a later section of this report. In summary, the approach was as follows:

Three Stages

1. Information gathering through
   - Interviews of key stakeholders, including council members, staff and external stakeholders
   - Document review
   - Staff input focus groups
   - Internal web-based survey
   - External benchmarking exercise with two components (quantitative and qualitative).

2. Review and analysis
   - Review of information gathered
   - Analysis and theme development
   - Application of leading practices knowledge
   - Summary of findings.
3. Report Development

- Draft
- Preliminary presentation(s)
- Final Report submission.

The project specific goal was to undertake a high-level diagnostic of the organization. In so doing, as noted above, TkMC used qualitative and quantitative techniques and tools to assess, validate and identify programs and services that may be subject to further review for recommended changes. Subsequent phases of the VSDR may be undertaken.

The findings of the program relate to a set of organizational, cultural, and operational themes which came from the extensive collection of information in this first phase of the review. This phase of work also revealed a number of improvement opportunities which are related to these themes and merit further investigation.

Generally, the City of Barrie can be described as progressive by virtue of the contemporary work and activities that have taken place at the direction of its own administration. This has happened in a period where many municipalities, facing the same issues i.e. growth, fiscal constraint and downloading have become very reactive and defensive in their positions and actions of administering complex organizations. The City has been proactive in assessing its organizational structure, seeking out opportunities for upper-tier funding, assessing boundary issues, and keeping the lines of communication open with its own human resources through the employee survey.

The overall picture of the City from the Phase 1 review is a positive one. What comparative financial data exists indicates that the comprehensive range of services provided by the City is provided at a relatively low overall cost. The comparator benchmarking undertaken as part of this review showed that on eight out of eleven factors the City was at, or better than average. Exceptions were noted in the areas of road maintenance, winter control and transit. An Ontario-wide study published in 2004 demonstrated through a number of comparative elements that the City of Barrie is performing well including having relatively low taxes as demonstrated through several different measures. The net per capita contribution towards taxes in 2003, for instance was $822 in Barrie, which is approximately 14% below the study average.\(^1\) The anecdotal and qualitative information gathered through the VSDR also supported a generally positive view of the organization and its performance.

The above notwithstanding, however, there are still areas where the city may find ways to do better, and as a part of its own continuous improvement and quest for total quality excellence, we have been able to identify areas that warrant further investigation and some specific corporate initiatives that should be priority items for Council and the Administration to consider.

The conclusions of the review can be summarized as follows:

- Generally, the City of Barrie can be described as progressive by virtue of the contemporary work and activities
- The City has been proactive in assessing its organizational structure, seeking out opportunities for upper-tier funding, assessing boundary issues, and keeping the lines of communication open with its own human resources through the employee survey
- The overall picture of the City from the Phase 1 review is a positive one

\(^1\) Municipal Study – 2004, BMA Management Consulting Inc., 2004
• the comprehensive range of services provided by the City is provided at a relatively low overall cost.
• The comparator benchmarking undertaken as part of this review showed that on eight out of eleven factors the City was at, or better than average.
• The anecdotal and qualitative information gathered through the VSDR also supported a generally positive view of the organization and its performance.
• Like most organizations, it was possible to identify areas where improved performance is possible and/or areas that warrant more detailed review.

Base on the last conclusion, TkMC prepared a list of recommendations that the City should pursue in its efforts to continually improve and provide greater value in its service delivery.

The summary of high-level recommendations are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation # 1. That as part of Phase 2 of the VSDR, the City undertake a detailed review of the Community Services Division focusing on operations, structure, people, processes, technology, alternative service delivery, partnering and revenue generation strategies</td>
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<td>Recommendation #2. That the City develop a clear, long term change management strategy to incorporate the original intent of the reorganization initiative of 2001 and appropriate elements of the VSDR.</td>
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<td>Recommendation #3. That the VSDR Report and Recommendations be referred to the City Administrator to undertake a review to assess the return on investment and feasibility of the recommendations and develop a detailed implementation plan.</td>
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<td>Recommendation #4. That the City consider formalizing the development of a detailed Citizen Participation Strategy or policy built on the principles already cited by the City, its past experience with citizen participation and utilizing the IAP2 guidelines.</td>
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<td>Recommendation #5. That the City consider the development of a regular series of governance development workshops for Council and Administration.</td>
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<td>Recommendation #6. That the City consider the development of a comprehensive customer relationship management plan.</td>
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<td>Recommendation #7. The City should consider the development of a comprehensive performance measurement system for all of its services built on an activity-based costing/accounting system.</td>
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<td>Recommendation #8. That the City should consider undertaking a select program of business process improvements.</td>
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<td>Recommendation #9. That the City should consider the development of a management training program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation #10. That the City should consider the development of a Project Management Office or project management capacity as part of the City Administrator’s Office to effectively define and manage the overall change initiative arising out of the VSDR.</td>
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Introduction

Context

The City of Barrie is located at the terminus of picturesque Kempenfelt Bay on Lake Simcoe and at the gateway to Ontario’s cottage country, and it is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Canada. It is growing by approximately 5,000 people per year with continued high growth projected. The 2001 Census population was stated at 103,710 and has since pushed to approximately 125,000.

Significant representation exists in the automotive, plastics, the food and beverage and industrial automotive sectors. Future growth industries such as health and medical, communications and telecommunications, computers and semi-conductors and instrumentation sectors continue to show growth.

The Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Renewal has recently released the Draft Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe February 2005 which sets out the position of the province relative to urban development for the areas surrounding the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton. Barrie is located within the outer ring of the GGH where approximately 25% of the growth will occur in designated areas. This growth comes mainly from out-migration from the GTA and in the case of Barrie, represents a continuation of a trend that has developed over the past 15 years. The City of Barrie has been identified as a Urban Growth Centre within that outer ring. It is conceivable that this status as a designated growth centre may result in a stronger focus by the province on the needs of the outer-ring municipalities especially in the areas of hard infrastructure, public transit and the social service providers.

The City Administration has identified a need to evaluate the businesses it is in, and ensure that the services and activities which the City is engaged in are critical, essential, or strategic to the social, economic and physical well-being of the Community. The hierarchy of the strategic planning process provides the context for any new initiative being considered by the City including the Value for Service Delivery Review (VSDR). The broadest guiding tool is the Community Vision:

“The City of Barrie is an exciting, caring, and progressive community we call home. We are committed to the growth and prosperity of Central Ontario’s leading City and most dynamic Waterfront community. Our community will be built on the diversity of its Economy and vibrancy of its people.”

Stemming from the Vision are the eight key community goals:

- Community Safety and Security
- Economic Development to Ensure a Prosperous Future
- Waterfront Excellence
- A Clean and Healthy Environment
- Governance and Service Excellence
- Maintain and Enhance Barrie’s Premier Lifestyle
- Transportation
- Planning for Our Future
Within the Corporate Business Plan, Council has established a list of 10 priorities. Priority #4 is to, “develop a comprehensive long-term financial management plan/manage finances proactively.” The action statement supporting that priority says to, “conduct a Value for Service Delivery Review”.

The City of Barrie, like many Canadian municipalities, faces growing demands on the quality and scope of services provided to citizens, along with increased scrutiny on the utilization of financial resources used to provide the services. In particular, the City of Barrie is faced with very rapid growth – the City’s population is expected to grow by 25% over the next 12 years in an area of constrained growth within Ontario – placing pressure on the City’s existing resources and ability to deliver services. Both lower taxes and a high quality of life are important factors in attracting new businesses and residents.

Across the country there is a general concern expressed by the public about the taxes that they pay, whether it is in federal income tax, provincial tax on retail purchases, or the property tax that they pay to their local municipality. Inevitably, discussions about taxes at the local level are those that the average citizen is most conversant with. Research done by the Canada West Foundation and TD Economics, among others, conclude that overall municipal property taxes are not high, yet the public readily will have an opinion as to the value for money that they derive for their tax dollar. Citizens and council have a growing set of expectations which includes ensuring accountability for tax dollars, progress towards community goals and regular information and knowledge about what is working. Elected officials are unfortunately put in the position of having to support the increases in taxes to maintain current service levels, or, becoming the champions of holding the line on taxes, with the potential result of reductions in service levels.

Over the past five years there has been a strong focus on the part of Canadian municipalities to change their relationship with the upper levels of government. Cities are seeking long term financial commitments that bear a stronger relationship to the broader economy and are not simply program based. The Big City Mayors Caucus of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has developed a coordinated approach to the Federal Government and there have been significant advancements in this relationship such as the GST rebate and concessions on the sharing of the federal fuel excise tax for municipalities.

The prospect of a “new deal” for municipalities is now in play and there will likely be an emphasis placed on the way in which municipalities are administering their resources, achieving performance targets or getting value for taxes received. Through programs such as the Municipal Performance Management Program the Province may well seek ways to identify levels of efficiency and effectiveness in municipalities as conditions for achieving larger proportions of financial support.

Aside from vigilance of citizens and senior levels of government Barrie, like all other communities, recognizes that it is in fact competing with other municipalities for growth. They are in competition for attracting people for population growth, industries for economic growth, investment for cultural and asset growth, and most importantly, in competition for the attention of higher levels of government for a ‘fixed pie of dollars’. Many City Councils and their Senior Administrations have recognized that the traditional approach that has been taken to the annual budget and long term financial planning of their organization is not necessarily sustainable; nor is it as effective in attracting new investment opportunities. Both lower taxes and a high quality of life are important factors in attracting new business.

As part of the process of planning and investing in the future, Council and City Administration of the City of Barrie has committed to a review of the City’s current practices—to determine what
the City should focus on with respect to service delivery. The City is looking for ways to re-think its program and service delivery in order to improve operational efficiencies. It is critical that the City of Barrie ensure it is doing the right things, the right way, for the right reasons. Phase One of the overall Value for Service Delivery Review, will use qualitative and quantitative measurement tools, anecdotal evidence along with a benchmarking methodology that will serve to identify which areas and services may be subject to further analysis in subsequent phases of the review.

**Project Specific Goals of the Value for Service Delivery review**

The first phase of the overall Value for Service Delivery Review is an integral part of the City's management process. It uses qualitative and quantitative techniques and tools to assess, validate, and identify which areas and services should potentially be further analysed and modified through development of recommendations for improvement in Phase Two of the review. The priorities that the City is addressing as it undertakes its Value for Service Delivery Review include:

- Validating programs and deliverables;
- Validating work processes;
- Being more accountable to citizens;
- Linking to corporate strategic priorities to the extent that they are articulated;
- Benchmarking against peer organizations;
- Positioning for future innovation.

A focus on identification of which services and business process should be subject to further analysis and recommendations for improvement in Phase Two.

**Guiding Principles**

The execution of Phase One of the overall review will be guided by the following principles:

- Guiding and building management competencies.
- Forward-looking and strategic.
- Quantitative and qualitative review of the services and business practices that currently exist today, providing a report card of where the City stands with respect to service delivery and relative to peer municipalities.

These statements of principles, goals, and priorities are a critical context to the first phase of this Review. They form the intended results to be achieved through the use of the City’s finite resources (financial, human, capital, and information) and therefore they are the key reference points against which Phase One of the Review will identify, analyze and assess the current inventory of programs, activities and services undertaken by the City. The results of the initial diagnostic may point to areas that appear to present opportunities for improvement. A further detailed review in those identified areas may then be undertaken in a subsequent Phase.

The City, in conducting the review, wished to have it completed as a current and contemporary review of services delivered by the city, by an objective third party.

*Note: Detailed information about the Program may be found in the Program Charter/Terms of Reference which is available in the City Administrator’s Office.*
Project Scope

Phase One of this review includes an internally focusing qualitative and quantitative performance measurement methodology and externally focusing benchmarking process that will lead ultimately to identification of organizational improvements at corporate, division and department levels in Phase Two of the review in the following areas:

- Organizational design opportunities;
- Technology opportunities;
- Partnering / Alternative Service Delivery opportunities;
- Efficiency opportunities;
- Corporate process improvement opportunities;

The overall Value for Service Delivery Review must also recognize and address pre-existing work that will provide important contextual and environmental understanding. These will include but are not limited to:

- The proposed 2005 Capital Budget
- 2004 Operating and Capital Budget
- Long Term Residential Growth: Towards a Strategy for the Next Century
- The Corporate Business Plan 2004-2006
- Other strategic and planning documents as identified including recent budget submissions.

And to emphasize, the overall Value for Service Delivery Review process is not a budget, an audit, an organizational review, nor is it an assessment of individuals, skills or competencies.

Phase One of this review focused primarily on the development of a diagnostic or report card that identifies areas, services, and business process that might benefit from a more detailed analysis which will be accomplished in Phase Two of the review. This report identifies, qualitatively and quantitatively, how the City is performing based on observations and relative to peer benchmark municipalities.
The Approach

As with any review of this type, clear recommendations are paramount, along with a methodological approach to review and analysis coupled with rigorous project management in order to ensure project success.

Phase One of the Value for Service Delivery Review was administered in general compliance with the following Workplan:

**Value for Service Delivery Review Project High-level Workplan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Stage 2</th>
<th>Stage 3</th>
<th>Stage 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set-up</td>
<td>Information Gathering</td>
<td>Review and Analysis</td>
<td>Reporting</td>
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1. **Project Charter**
2. **Scope Interviews**
3. **Process Reviews**
4. **Issue & Risk Identification**
5. **Validation of Analysis**
6. **Draft Report**
7. **Final Report**

The specific steps of each stage are:

**Stage 1 – Set-up**

*Project Charter:* The project charter solidifies and clarifies project understanding, project activities, information requirements, time frames, review points, deliverables and resource time demands required for the project.

*Project Kick-off Meeting:* The first meeting permitted the Steering Committee to address the following:

- Confirm the reporting structure for the project;
- Establish a protocol for preliminary review of findings, project direction and problem resolution;
- Review the Draft Project Charter, deliverables, and timelines;
- Identify key contacts within the City and where critical documents and background materials may be obtained;
• Confirm Councillors, Management Team members, labour representatives and external stakeholders to be interviewed. Establish coordination personnel to arrange interview times and locations;
• Address any project sensitivities; and,
• Establish project communication plans including feedback processes.

**Review Background Materials and Data Collection:** TkMC undertook a review of current Barrie strategic and operational materials to address themes and/or impacts regarding the strategic direction. The following information was reviewed:

• Organization Charts of all City Divisions and Departments;
• Current tasks and services the City of Barrie provides;
• The City operating/capital budgets.
• Regulatory requirements and existing workplace policies; and
• Copies of all business plans;

**Stage II – Information Gathering**

**Stakeholder Interviews:** TkMC conducted 38 interviews with Councillors, Senior Management, external stakeholders and labour representatives. Our discussion focused on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization and Structure</th>
<th>Policies and Strategies</th>
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<tr>
<td>Programs and service delivery</td>
<td>Appropriateness in light of resources</td>
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<td>Authority and accountability</td>
<td>Internal consistency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarity of role</td>
<td>Appropriateness for the future</td>
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<td>Acceptance of role and responsibilities</td>
<td>Workability and past results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Span of Control</td>
<td>Management and leadership direction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adequacy of resources</td>
<td>Participation and delegation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Measurement and support analysis</td>
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<td>Effectiveness of management</td>
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<td>Satisfactory degree of risk</td>
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<td>Policy service standards</td>
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<td>Acceptance of policy</td>
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<td>Perception of serviced value</td>
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<td>Quality of decisions</td>
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<td>Understanding of secondary impacts</td>
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**Web Survey:** TkMC created an Internet based survey tool that was deployed to all City of Barrie employees. Like the stakeholder interviews described above, survey information was used to shape and focus our program analysis. To ensure consistent information is collected a draft questionnaire protocol was developed and reviewed by the City.

**Staff Input Workshops:** TkMC facilitated four workshops/focus groups with 45 management/senior administrative employees to create a structured dialog to gain field and
technical support level insight into City of Barrie services and operations. The workshop objectives explored service plan and programming methods, defined service standards, service coordination and deployment methods, service roles and responsibility parameters and opportunities, issues and challenges.

**Current State Validation:** A briefing session with the Steering Committee on the status of the review to provided a high level view of the findings of the staff workshops/focus groups, and interviews.

**Leading Practices Research:** TkMC utilized our corporate information base of management practices, work methods, organizational structures, business processes, program and work accomplishment standards of other municipalities.

**Benchmarking:** The consulting team identified existing validated benchmarks from the Municipal Performance Measurement Program, established a list of benchmark contemporary municipal practises and activities, and contrasted those with the City of Barrie. The municipal comparator municipalities included:

- City of Guelph
- City of Cambridge
- Town of Richmond Hill
- City of St. Catharines
- Town of Oakville
- City of Oshawa
- City of Burlington
- City of Vaughan
- Town of Newmarket
- Town of Whitby
- Town of Pickering

**Stage III – Review and Analysis**

**Analysis:** The analysis has been contextualized relative to the findings obtained through the workshops/focus groups, interviews, web survey, on the ground assessment, best practice and benchmarking research collected earlier in the project. The analysis focused on three broad areas:

- Benchmarking the services of the City determining the critical tasks (what has to be done);
- Assessing the design of the City’s structure by aligning the tasks and activities to be completed with the requisite human resources deployed to perform these tasks and,
- Assessing the City’s processes and systems.

**Stage IV – Reporting**

**Preparation of Draft Report:** Based on the findings of our review, we prepared a draft final report for the City of Barrie. The draft was presented to Steering Committee and facilitated a discussion of our findings and recommendations.
**Preparation of Final Report:** Based on the input received from members of Steering Committee, we prepared a final report for submission to the City Administrator that incorporates additional input received through the review process.

Phase One, delivers a high level “report card” on the efficiency and effectiveness with which the City delivers its current services to citizens and its internal operations. In part this is accomplished by using an external benchmarking exercise focusing on both qualitative and quantitative measurement techniques. The input derived from the interviews, focus groups and staff survey will also provide important cues about areas that may not be operating optimally. And, finally TkMC will use its own understanding of contemporary municipal operations and apply this towards observations within the City. Ultimately we will report on opportunities identified for change and improvement and the report card will help determine whether specific areas of the corporation might benefit from a more detailed level of analysis. The findings of Phase One will ultimately determine whether there are areas for improvement for the City of Barrie that should be subject to a more detailed analysis and recommendations for improvement that will make-up Phase Two of the overall Value for Service Delivery Review.
Findings

Interviews and Focus Groups

The first element used in the Information Gathering Stage involved the use of interviews and focus groups. As stated earlier, interviews were undertaken with 38 individuals including Council members, senior staff, representatives of unions and key stakeholders (nominated by council members) from the community. In addition TkMC held 4 staff input workshops or focus groups that included approximately 45 middle managers from the Municipal Corporation. The intent of these information gathering exercises was to give TkMC an understanding of the organization through the eyes of these individuals. The guide used for the interviews and focus groups was structured to derive opinions about how the organization was functioning, particular areas of concern and test perceptions about certain aspects of the culture. A prepared Interview Guide was used to facilitate all of the interviews (see Appendix “A”).

General themes were developed from the interviews and focus groups and no specific attributions have been included in the analysis. The purpose of this exercise was to start to develop a contextual awareness about how the organization is perceived.

The themes from the interviews and focus groups are presented below.

Strategic Priorities and Challenges

During the interviews and focus groups participants were asked to identify the key strategic priorities or challenges for the City looking into the future. These are not necessarily “problems” or “issues” impacting performance. They are, however, important contextual pieces that ought to be driving much of the focus of the organization. As an aside, there was a fairly strong relationship between those priorities identified through this process and those identified by Council as the “10 Priorities”. The main ‘concerns and challenges’ themes from the interviews were as follows:

- **Growth** – perhaps the single most commonly identified contextual matter included a range of perceptions about how much growth there should be, what kind, accommodating it and paying for it (and ensuring that it paid for itself). Specific comments had to do with the need for a more well-defined growth management plan which would represent a policy position of Council. With appropriate public input this could assist in determining the answer to the questions of what, how much, where, etc. This in turn would help define the argument for the need for more land and where.

- **Local government reform** – we heard consistently that coming to grips with local government structure was an important priority. This included resolving boundary issues with neighbouring municipalities, the relationship with the County and the ultimate make-up of municipal government in the area.

- **Maintaining clear strategic direction** – there is a strong, commonly held connection to the “Top 10 Priorities”. People understand them, refer to them and hold them up as a guide to priority-setting and decision-making. There is some belief that more can be done to help focus on strategy and priorities but that there is a good beginning in the City of Barrie in that regard. The 20-Year Vision is not as well understood and there is not the same level of connection to it and as a result it is less helpful as a strategic tool.

- **Ensuring best value for money** - Council has concerns about ensuring the “best value for money” from City services. This is expressed overtly and strongly and represents attention to the fiduciary responsibilities of Council.
• **Lack of resources** - Concern about the lack of money for a range of projects, the need for new and more diverse sources of revenue, and a new deal with senior levels of government. Also expressions of interest in finding ways of reallocating existing resources and making sure that the organization is leveraging technology and people to the extent possible.

**General Corporate Issues**

During the interviewing/focus group work some general issues were identified often with a corporate focus. These, and the more specific program issues articulated further along, represent matters that might potentially affect the efficiency and/or effectiveness of operations generally or operations in a specific area. They may also be indicative of less than optimal efficiency and/or effectiveness.

**General Corporate Issues**

- **Process-bound** – there was a general sense reported that the City Administration can be overly bureaucratic. This meant an impression that things often took too long to resolve, there was “too much red tape”, not enough flexibility and problem-solving. Some comments were noted that indicated a sentiment that things had improved over the last couple of years but still had a way to go.

- **Governance relationship** – a sentiment that administration did not always provide timely information and that Councillors’ requests did not seem to get appropriate priority. Some belief that when information is provided to Council it was not free of political screening. One would expect administration to apply some level of sensitivity analysis to issues but the reporting here suggested a need for some additional care about what level. The flip-side to that, in terms of governance relationship, was some assertion that Council needed to be more directive and policy driven and less involved in administrative matters. None of these comments suggested a need for concern – rather suggesting a need for some heightened awareness of roles and responsibilities.

- **Increased effectiveness of Executive Management Team** – a fairly broad-based belief that EMT was not acting in the strong strategic/policy role that was contemplated in the reorganization stemming from the Gazda, Houlné Report of December 2000. While documented efforts have been undertaken by the City Administrator to articulate and actualize the new structure, the strategic intent does not seem to have taken hold yet. Among other things there is a perception that EMT is too immersed in tactical administrative matters and not enough time spent on “policy development, continuous improvement initiatives, short- and mid-term planning, tracking developments/advances in the municipal field and VIP relations with citizen groups, commercial interests, government officials at the provincial and federal levels.”

  One of the unintended results currently is some expressed confusion about the respective roles and responsibilities of EMT versus The Senior Management Team (SMT).

- **Succession plan** - this issue has already acknowledged by the organization and some measures are underway to start to deal with this. The Canadian workforce demographics are such that succession planning is becoming one of the key performance issues for many organizations. The demographics in Barrie are at least similar to those in the rest of Ontario and Canada and the senior levels in particular represent considerable risk to the Corporation.

- **Management training** – there is a need to develop a management training program to ensure that all management in the Corporation share a common set of contemporary

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management skills. Line and technical staff have been promoted over time without a conscious plan to ensure that they possess the supervisory/management skills required in an increasingly complex organization.

- **Alternative service delivery** is on the table, for all but organized labour - an acknowledgement that the City currently uses alternative service delivery a fair bit already and should continue to look at that option wherever it may make sense.

- **No consensus on the level of staffing** – a range of opinion exists about what the staffing level issues may be. Most staff generally feel that there are not enough staff in most City departments to meet the demands in the community or internally. Other observations had to do with a perception that there has been a relative slow down in community growth over the last several years, and that there should be some reduction in some workload (planning and development in particular) resulting in fewer staff at City Hall. There is no empirical data or analysis at this level or at this time to resolve that question. Some further analysis, comparative work and definition of service levels would be needed to help answer those questions.

**Program Specific Issues**

- **Asset management** – concerns about level of long-range planning around asset management and including an understanding of what full maintenance and replacement might cost and how to plan for those requirements,

- **Traffic operations management** – update transportation master plan out of a belief that the system is not keeping up with development of the community and the volume of traffic being generated,

- **Cost of recreation and cultural services seen as high** – concerns expressed that the level of funding to support cultural and recreational opportunities within the City are not sustainable,

- **Lack of responsiveness and timeliness of work in Parks area** – this was expressed in particular around approvals required of this area for development purposes,

- **Capital/Operating Budget** – issues around planning, timing, process, etc - specific event was the 2005 Capital Budget deliberations but there seems to be a belief that the budgeting process needs to be improved. Be less of an accounting exercise and more of a policy exercise, be more strategic and perhaps longer range. Need to avoid the time crunch. **Note:** This issue arose at the outset of the VSDR which coincided with the introduction of the Capital Budget to City Council. The subsequent effort of Administration dealing with the Operating Budget was much more strategic and less of a strictly accounting exercise. This latter exercise was much more successful and is indicative of the kind of approach that needs to be developed and enhanced going forward.

- **Inconsistency in land development related processes** – perception that requirements are not clear and not consistently communicated

- **Level of Service, definitions, criteria, finding the right level** – there was a generalized feeling that there is a lack of well developed and shared understanding of service levels and ways of measuring service delivery

- **Recreation and Cultural services** - information presented, particularly through the stakeholder interviews, would suggest that there is a significant amount of discretion exercised within this area as it would relate to the development approval processes and requirements imposed without a mutual understanding about how that discretion can be exercised.
• **Reallocation of employee and fiscal resources** – some thoughts expressed about the possibility that there may be ways of reallocating resources (human and fiscal) from less priority areas to higher priority areas.

**Web-Based Survey**

The second element utilized in the Information Gathering Stage was a web-based survey tool accessible to all the Municipal staff. This survey was administered by TkMC and provided a channel for staff throughout the organization to provide thoughts, opinions and ideas about the City organization. The content of the survey was similar to the guide used for the interviews and focus groups and provided TkMC the opportunity to understand collectively the perceptions of the staff about how the organization was functioning, particular areas of concern and their perceptions about cultural aspects of the organization. A hard-copy of the survey was made available to the staff for those who could not or would not provide electronic input. A copy of the survey questionnaire is included as Appendix “B”.

During the 2 week period between March 1, 2005 and March 16, 2005, the web-based survey achieved a response rate of 295 participants, or approximately 51% of all full-time employees. The 18 questions posed in the survey focused on the respondent’s role in the organization, the perceived culture of the organization, importance of current services, and perceived challenges.

The web-based survey was open to all staff and the inclusion of the front-line staff at the municipality through this survey serves three primary purposes:

1) Because of the nature of their interaction with the public, front-line staff members are acutely aware of issues as perceived by the public. These perceptions are largely unfiltered and therefore very useful.

2) Staff know the details of work activity and their input provides a higher degree of detail potentially and a greater level of accuracy. Their input will provide feedback on areas that might be targets for further study.

3) Their inclusion provides greater validity and a broader sense of engagement for this project. The success in this project will result in greater responsiveness to future improvement projects. That being said, the opposite is also very much true should little to no action be implemented.

In the absence of general public opinion on topics of ‘value’ to the community, a general overview of the respondents for this web-based survey reveal they are normally the front line staff in direct contact with the general Barrie population. The staff are ‘agents’ of the City with the most direct contact, and as the segment of the surveyed participants that most closely share the same characteristics (they are often Barrie residents having experience with City services). They will often represent a proxy to the ‘quality of services’ as perceived by the Barrie public.

**Results and Analysis**

Below are summaries of the web-based survey results:

**Questions 1-4**

Please select the Commission that you are currently working for.

The purpose of this set of questions is to find out which segments were most proactive in participating in this survey.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th># of Survey Respondents</th>
<th>Total Survey Population</th>
<th>% of respondents from each dept.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Services</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Services</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development Services</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor’s/CA’s Office</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Analysis:** The overall response was quite high – a positive indication of staff engagement. The highest response rate appears to be in Corporate Services (the Mayor’s/CA’s office excepted) and the lowest in Community Services. Within Community Services, Fire and Emergency Services had the lowest response rate. The lower responses in Community Services may be an indicator of issues related to staff engagement, morale etc but could also be explained in part to the shift nature of the work environment and lessened access to computers.

**Question 5**

What do you feel are the MOST significant issues facing the City of Barrie today?

The identified perceived issues resulted in the following list. The top 11 issues are highlighted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Response Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managing growth</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining service levels</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress on current road infrastructure</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracting new business</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public safety</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial pressures of growth</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring a safe drinking water system</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of city staff resources</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating jobs</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borders/boundary change</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining roads</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown revitalization</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental protection</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving Council’s Top 10 Priorities</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting a new deal from government</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mgmt of Assets (buildings, property)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating with the taxpayer</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functioning sewage treatment system</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuter rail availability</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships with other municipalities</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Supply of residential land 18
Lack of revenue sources 16
Other (please specify) 16
Succession planning for workforce 16
Supply of industrial land 14
Providing space at the landfill site 12
Public transit 12
Revitalizing older neighbourhoods 6
Lack of technology in work env. 5

Analysis: Overwhelmingly, the largest single issue identified is with Managing Growth. This is completely consistent with the outcome from the interview process and clearly is top-of-mind for anyone living in or working in the City of Barrie. Managing growth (as opposed to driving growth), is understood to be the process of controlling growth at a steady, manageable, and sustainable rate.

While other issues appear less significant, it is important to note that if we combine “stress on current road infrastructure” with “maintaining roads”, “roads” actually becomes a very high and close second of those issues identified by staff. As a minimum, given the nature of the question, roads certainly seem to be top-of-mind for respondents.

A second point to note is that while many of these issues are aligned with senior staff and council, there are also areas that do not seem to align. From personal interviews, issues such as landfill space, lack of revenue sources, succession planning, downtown revitalization, and land acquisition, are clearly of interest to senior managers and councillors, but do not appear to rank high for general staff.

A reason for this discrepancy may lie in differing perspectives on planning - long-term vs short-term. Citizens and staff seem more focused on the immediacy of issues (getting the road paved) which may be a response to immediate needs. City council’s mandate to (minimally) maintain current standards of living is supplemented by the need to proactively plan in a manner that will sustain growth in the community in the longer term. While issues such as ‘space at landfill’ might not seem like a large issue to survey respondents, it may be due to a lack of information through respective marketing channels. Should council focus on the landfill issue, it could quickly become more top-of-mind for the community. A consideration, in that regard, may be to increase the level of communication with external stakeholders (ie. constituents) to keep them apprised of future concerns, particularly those that can impede proper growth and service sustainability.

Question 6

With respect to the City of Barrie Community Based Strategic Plan (Vision 2003 - 2023) is it clear to you as an employee of the City how your job/role fits into the overall plan including the expectations and accountabilities placed on you as an individual to help the City meet the strategic objectives outlined in the plan?

Yes: 31%
No: 28%
Somewhat: 42%
Analysis: This result is consistent with what we found through the interviewing process – people are not as aware of the 20-Year Strategic Plan as they are of other imperatives such as the “Top 10 Priorities”. This lack of relevance may be a function of communications gaps within the organization. A lack of understanding of how individual staff contribute to the ‘big picture’ could have a negative impact on effectiveness and efficiency.

Question 7

Please rate each service provided by the City of Barrie in the list below in terms of its level of importance to the City of Barrie and its citizens.

- Roads Maintenance (Level of Importance: 69%)
- Waste Water Treatment and Collection (Level of Importance: 68%)
- Fire Department Operations (Level of Importance: 68%)
- Snowploughing (Level of Importance: 67%)
- Fire Prevention (Level of Importance: 67%)
- Water main and Sanitary Sewer Maintenance (Level of Importance: 66%)

Analysis: Perhaps no surprise here as the staff has identified services that are normally identified by citizens in most municipalities as being the core services provided by their municipality. They reflect the importance of safety, infrastructure and basic water supply and treatment. Of note, once again, by combining “roads maintenance” and “snowploughing” we see the perceived importance of the transportation network.

Question 8

Please rate the following services provided by the City of Barrie based on the how well the service is currently being provided today.

Lowest Grades:

- Road Maintenance (54.1%)
- Asset Mgmt (56.7%)
- Design & Const. of roads and Facilities (57.9%)
- Traffic & Parking Planning (58.1%)
- Planning for Infrastructure (59.9%)
- Human Resources (61.3%)

Highest Grades:

- Fire Prevention (76.5%)
- Waste Water treatment & Prevention (75.8%)
- Snowploughing (75.0%)
- Recreation Programming (74.7%)
- Fire Dept. Operations (74.4%)
- Maintenance of Parks (72.9%)

Analysis: Here we begin to get the benefit of the staff who may be reflecting a combination of their own perceptions as well as the direct feedback they receive from the public. Of note we see a perception that roads-related services are not being provided as well as would be expected. Areas receiving high grades for performance are often areas cited (albeit anecdotally) as being relatively well resourced. Internal services are not obvious in either end of the ratings spectrum.
Question 9

Please rate the following services provided by the City of Barrie based on the how well you feel the service is currently meeting the expectations of the citizens of the City of Barrie.

Lowest Grades:
- Roads Maintenance (44.2%)
- Design and Construction of Roads and Facilities (46.8%)
- Traffic and Parking Planning (51.6%)
- Planning for Infrastructure (55.8%)
- Financial Services – taxation & budget mgmt. (56.0%)

Highest Grades:
- Fire Department Operations (72.4%)
- Fire Prevention (70.2%)
- Waste Water Treatment and Collection (70.2%)
- Clerk’s Administration (69.9%)
- Information and Communication Technology (68.4%)

**Analysis:** Similar question to #8 with similar results. Important distinction is that the question asks about perceptions about “citizen expectations” as distinct from the staff’s own perception. Once again it is important to note the ratings for roads related services.

Question 10

Within your service area do you use Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s) to measure the performance of employees services tools technology?

- Yes: (13%)
- No: (45%)
- Don’t Know: (42%)

**Analysis:** This result is consistent with what we heard in the interviewing and focus groups, which is that the organization does not have well developed or clearly articulated service levels / performance indicators. Further analyzing the comments provided by respondents on this question, there are indications that even for the 13% that responded yes to having KPI’s, many of the metrics reported are not measured metrics; suggesting that the true finding could be much lower.

Vague KPIs can produce a lack of incentives, or ‘drivers’, for goal achievement. When goals are not clearly set, and when targets are not identified / measured, staff have reduced motivation to perform. Without clear metrics to evaluate success on the job, personal focus decreases, and accountabilities can become blurred. This is in direct relation to the answer to question 16 on ‘Accountabilities’.

Questions 11 -17

Questions related to culture of organization.

While the results for this section of the survey are given, analysis will be provided in the next section.

- Solution Orientation (2.9 / 5.0)
- Time Focused (2.9 / 5.0)
- Accountability (3.2 / 5.0)
- Customer Orientation (3.4 / 5.0)
Value for Money (3.2 / 5.0)
Allegiance (2.9 / 5.0)
Team (2.8 / 5.0)

Analysis: See Section below.

Question 18

Are there any opportunities that you believe should be pursued by the City to improve a process, increase revenue, or result in greater efficiency?

Analysis: This question produced a total of 99 responses. The responses have been captured separately in their raw state and provided to the City Administrator’s Office as a separate set of opportunities. This inventory is a legacy from the VSDR that the City may be able to access for further use and value in subsequent phases of the Review or as independent improvement opportunities.

A scan of the ideas revealed some consistent themes that centred on internal process inefficiencies. A ‘process’ is defined as a set of linked tasks, producing a product with a specific end goal and customer or consumer at the end. Such processes might include typing a letter, obtaining a dog license, approving a project, approving a building permit or getting an internal policy approved.

Through the web survey, we clearly see 4 response patterns emerging:

1) There is a perceived large hierarchy impeding project success
2) Process inefficiencies generally are causing backup of tasks
3) Few incentives and drivers to motivate managers to research, solicit, and implement Business Process Improvement (BPI) changes.
4) Knowledge Management systems non-standardized.

Survey on the Culture of the ‘Corporation’
(From Questions 11 – 17)

Corporate culture comprises the established ways of thinking and doing things in the City. It includes the City’s policies, rules and procedures, its customs and practices, its shared values and belief systems, its traditions and assumptions, and the nature of the language used to communicate throughout the City. To the extent that we are able to ascertain through the interviews and employee survey, the city has done a reasonable job of defining its culture. Some of this has occurred due to the natural synergies that (through time) develop in an organization, and in other cases, there has been a deliberate effort by the City to define the culture.

The City has ascribed to the Community Vision, and it is being used on a limited basis throughout the organization in providing guidance to business plans, budget preparation and program delivery. The “Top 10 Priorities” are far more evident in defining the focus of the city at the present time. The priorities are also recognized by the external stakeholders as being the most visible element of the City’s direction statement. The Community Vision when combined with the “Top 10 Priorities” has all of the elements and conditions necessary for encouraging all employees to move in a common direction, to operate at their full capacity and to do so willingly.
and enthusiastically. There is a relatively strong sense that customer service should be an important part of the culture in the city as expressed anecdotally.

Although they exist, the Corporate Values and Corporate Operating Principles are not as evident in our review as one would want. These values express the corporate aims of the City but there is a requirement to get the employees to feel that their own personal values and City’s values are in line with each other. Values are prime drivers of behaviour, they determine what people choose to do and how much energy is put into each effort.

The Interview protocol delivered to Council, the EMT, SMT and external stakeholders canvassed a number of cultural indicators. In addition, the web-based survey, delivered to all employees, sought this same information.

The areas of culture explored included:

**Solution Orientation** (i.e. the organization’s consistency in developing and implementing a solution to problems/issues faced on a day-to-day basis).

**Time Focus** (i.e. the organization’s consistency in meeting deadlines on a day-to-day basis).

**Accountability Structure** (i.e. the organization’s clarity of who is responsible for the outputs of a work group, division, Department etc.).

**Customer Orientation** (i.e. the organization’s consistency in focusing and meeting the needs of the citizen/client on a day-to-day basis).

**Services to Citizens** (i.e. the organization’s ability to use financial, human, and technological resources efficiently).

**Employees Allegiances** (i.e. the alignment and loyalty of employees within their own work group or the corporate organization).

**Team Philosophy** (i.e., focus on the individual’s activity as opposed to contributing to council’s vision).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Solution Orientation</th>
<th>Time Focused</th>
<th>Accountability</th>
<th>Customer Orientation</th>
<th>Value for Money</th>
<th>Allegiance</th>
<th>Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Results</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>mid</td>
<td>Mid-low</td>
<td>mid</td>
<td>mid</td>
<td>mid</td>
<td>Mid-low</td>
<td>Mid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The intention with this question, comprised of the 7 factors, was to get a sense of the perceived culture around customer service.

Examining the consolidated results reveals some interesting detail on the staff culture, as well as areas of strengths and weaknesses. A striking finding is a lack of consistency amongst the
respondents, whether they were through interviewing, or through the web-based survey – responses ranged high to low. Through the seven characteristics TkMC consultants assessed, the overall culture metrics were pretty much at or around the mid-point of 3.0. Scores for each segment surveyed were by-and-large spread out between the range (1 being the lowest, 5 being the highest), with very few segments showing any clear indication (or peaks) for any characteristic. In the above analysis, the middle-point is 3.0. Characteristics ranked below 3.0 are considered to be poor. A quick scan of the segments reveals that generally, the external stakeholders have the most unenthusiastic view of the general culture, while staff members seem to rank the general culture highest.

The results give a general perception of customer service being relatively middle-of-the-road – neither very good, nor very bad. This question and evaluating perceptions is a particular area that would benefit from a much larger external audience input. Nonetheless, limitations aside, there is a kernel of a message to be considered if excellent customer service is the organizations goal.

**Peer Municipal Group Benchmarking**

Benchmarking is a process, widely used in the private-sector, to stimulate improvement through comparisons of services, processes, infrastructure, and the performance between organizations. The comparison of one organization to other similar organizations is a constructive method of studying how others conduct business. Through this comparison, methods that have helped other successful organizations can be identified and integrated into one’s own standard practice. The use of benchmarking or comparative data in the Ontario municipal sector is not yet a well developed field. The lack of common data gathering protocols, standard means of costing, etc has made such comparison difficult. That notwithstanding, making the effort to make such comparisons can be instructive. Taken together with other indicators it can start to provide a sense of how well the organization is performing.

Benchmarking can take several forms. Internal benchmarking is a form of continual improvement that studies the practices and performance within the client organization. It involves comparison of similar operations or functions within the same organization, with the objective of sharing knowledge from one successful part of the institution to another. External benchmarking, or process benchmarking, determines the performance of other, preferably leading municipalities.

Like private industries, municipalities are in “competition” and can be compared against each other directly. By identifying how efficiently and effectively others perform the same functional task or objective, clients gain insight and ideas they may not otherwise achieve. General processes such as customer services, service levels and financial costs are particularly suited to this type of benchmarking.

The approach taken for this review then was a benchmarking exercise that involved a peer group municipal comparison. Eleven municipalities in Ontario were chosen to be used for comparison with the City of Barrie. The comparators were chosen based on their being of relatively similar size, being in Ontario (Central and Southern), and having been used for comparison purposes in the past. TkMC ultimately completed the list and vetted it with the Steering Committee.

The municipalities used for the benchmarking were:

- Town of Pickering,
- Town of Newmarket,
• City of St. Catharines,
• Town of Oakville,
• Town of Whitby,
• City of Oshawa,
• City of Cambridge,
• City of Vaughan,
• City of Guelph,
• Town of Richmond Hill
• City of Burlington.

The peer comparison was done in two parts. In the first part, TkMC reviewed the most current (2003) public data available from the mandatory Provincial Municipal Performance Measurement Program (MPMP). This data was derived from the web-site of each of the comparator municipalities and the City of Barrie. Only a select set of factors was selected (15) as some of the factors were irrelevant or dealing with out-of-scope services (Police for example).

The second part of the peer comparison dealt with policies, structures and strategic planning behaviours within each of the eleven municipalities that help facilitate managed growth. The City of Barrie also provided a response to the questionnaire. (See Appendix “C” for a copy of the questionnaire).

Performance Measurement and Indicators

Citizens and Councils are looking for a measure of accountability for their tax dollars, progress towards the community goals and regular information on how it is going. The Executive Management Team (EMT) looks for knowledge of whether they are being the best and doing the right thing, demonstrating accountability, getting regular information updates to make better decisions and achieving better resource allocation. Given this type of system, there is the ability to eliminate surprises, develop an early warning system and improve the communication with Council. At the same time, employees are always trying to gain a better understanding of their role in the organization, understanding how their responsibilities are aligned with the corporate vision, and wanting to show that they are performing up to expectations. The key is to channel the energies at all levels of the organization in fulfilling the vision and priorities that have been established by Council, which by all accounts reflect the mutual goals of the community.

To be successful, the employees need to know and understand their performance measures, use the measures to create knowledge, improve service, and achieve targets that have been established to meet service levels. To facilitate this understanding, the Province of Ontario has introduced a new initiative called the Municipal Performance Measurement Program.

The Municipal Performance Measurement Program (MPMP) is an initiative designed to provide taxpayers with useful information on service delivery and municipalities with a tool to improve those services over time. The program requires municipalities to collect data to measure their performance in 10 core municipal service areas. The MPMP, administered by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, contains data on selected measures of municipal service efficiency and effectiveness from all of Ontario’s municipalities, beginning with the Year 2000.
TkMC has reviewed and analyzed the 2003 MPMP information from the previously identified comparator municipalities, summarizing the findings in the following section.

**MPMP Statistical Comparison**

Seven out of the eleven municipalities are two-tier municipalities and therefore do not report on all of the performance measurements. To acquire a fair comparison of performance measurements, comparisons are made where statistics are indicated in at least five municipalities. Another caution about the use of MPMP data for comparison purposes has to do with some limitations in the MPMP system itself. For example municipalities allocate costs differently so that comparisons may not always be fully “apples to apples”, the system does not account for differing levels of service and other policy differentials. That being said, however, to date it is one of the few data bases available for broad comparisons.

**Categories and Measurements:**

1) Local Government – Operating Costs (% of total municipal operating cost):
   a) Range: 2.2% - 15.2%
   b) Average for all comparators: 7.54%
   c) Median for all comparators: 6.24%

   ![Local Government Operating Costs Graph]

   The City of Barrie falls below the average and median at 2.5%.

2) Fire Services – Operating Costs ($ per $1,000 of assessment):
   a) Range: $0.76 - $1.83
   b) Average for all comparators: $1.25
   c) Median for all comparators: $1.13
The City of Barrie lies just above the median at $1.19 but below the average cost.

3) Road Services – Operating Costs for Paved Roads ($ per paved lane km):
   a) Range: $371 - $2,016
   b) Average for all comparators: $1,563
   c) Median for all comparators: $737

The City of Barrie’s costs fall just below the average at $1,454 yet well above the median. If data for the city of St. Catharines were factored out, Barrie’s costs are well above the comparator group average in this factor.

4) Road Services – Operating Costs for Winter Control ($ per lane km):
   a) Range: $580 - $2,297
   b) Average for all comparators: $1,853
   c) Median for all comparators: $1,481
5) Road Services – Condition of Roads (% of lane km):
   a) Range: 51% - 100%
   b) Average for all comparators: 79%
   c) Median for all comparators: 75%

   The City of Barrie falls just above the average and median at 82.2%

6) Road Services – Winter Event Responses
   a) Range: 95% - 100%
   b) Average for all comparators: 99%
   c) Median for all comparators: 100%

   The City of Barrie’s winter event response at 100% falls at the median of the comparators.

7) Transit Service – Operating Costs
   a) Range: $1.79– $4.78
   b) Average for all comparators: $3.23
   c) Median for all comparators: $2.86
The City of Barrie’s costs at $3.50 fall slightly above the average, and well above the median cost. This cost is well within range of the other municipalities.

8) Transit Service – Public Transit Use (# of trips per capita):
   a) Range: 9.95 – 56.9
   b) Average for all comparators: 18.89
   c) Median for all comparators: 13.95

The City of Barrie at 16.65 trips per capita fall just below the average number and just above the median.

9) Wastewater – Main Backups (# per 100km of main):
   a) Range: 0.8 – 6.5
   b) Average for all comparators: 2.77
   c) Median for all comparators: 1.88
The City of Barrie measures well below the average number and median at 1.30 per 100km of main.

10) Wastewater – Breaks in Water Mains (# of breaks per 100km of main)
   a) Range: 7.9 – 20
   b) Average for all comparators: 15.9
   c) Median for all comparators: 14.9

The City of Barrie measures well below the average number of breaks and median and lie out of range at 3.60 breaks per 100km of main.

11) Solid Waste – Complaints for Solid Waste and Recycling Collection (# of complaints per 1,000 households):
   a) Range: 16 – 238
   b) Average for all comparators: 78.5
   c) Median for all comparators: 42.9

The City of Barrie measures well below the average number of complaints and median and lie out of range at 9.3 complaints per 1,000 households.

**MPMP Benchmarking Summary**

It is apparent from this review that Barrie’s expenditures, based on the above key metrics, seem to be reasonable compared with expenditures for similar municipalities. The City of Barrie is performing at the mid-range or better on 8 out of the 11 factors reported in this survey, and this is consistent with the results in the BMA Study. Generally, the City of Barrie is providing services at a cost below the average of the comparators measured by MPMP data. There are, however, several exceptions and they relate to roads maintenance, winter control and transit.

The results must be carefully interpreted and considered in several ways. The first and perhaps obvious interpretation is that the City of Barrie is operating efficiently, the few exceptions notwithstanding. This is a valid and supportable assessment. It should not be allowed to promote complacency, however. Any organization, no matter how successful, can improve. It is also important to find out what’s behind the numbers in greater detail and this would be advisable as part of the approach if a more detailed review is contemplated. Caution needs to be applied here for at least three reasons:

1) There is little to no indication on whether these other municipalities are delivering adequate service levels to their constituents,

2) There is an assumption that the operating environment is similar (ie. geographic disadvantages), and

3) Two-tiered municipalities may have a cost advantage in that resources have a greater utilization rate. While a two-tier system has certain advantages/disadvantages in terms of utilization and costing, a comparison between a one-tier and a two-tier system is outside the scope of this study and so will not be discussed in great detail.

A second interpretation might be that these numbers may indicate an opportunity to drive out inefficiencies in the system. As mentioned earlier in this report, greater accountability for tax dollars is driving the Ontario Government to implement metrics like the MPMP. This program is
an opening which municipalities can take advantage of in order to provide better services through benchmarking and sharing of best practices.

A third important point around interpretation is that these data do not speak to policy decisions or measures of quality. Simply having the least expensive service delivery or product does not ensure customer satisfaction. In fact, a lack of quality may mean an unsuccessful program. As noted above, this concept should be taken into account in the methodology of any more detailed review that may follow. External comparisons are useful but other assessment tools would be valuable. Comparisons with other municipalities are useful but always the local circumstances must be considered. The values and priorities of communities will vary – there may be nothing inherently wrong with high expenditures in particular areas if it reflects the priorities of the community.

Ultimately, as a high-level indicator, and one of several, the interpretation that the City is doing relatively well is sound and useful.

MPMP statistics are by themselves simply numbers, or benchmarking information. The knowledge and action plans that result from these numbers are a part of a key to driving efficiencies and, hence, value for all stakeholders. Most of these items are intended to give Barrie a clearer picture of its ‘current state’- or an ability to see itself.

Despite the limitations of data available for comparisons, further partnering with fellow municipalities should be encouraged. Continuing to improve the data and the benchmarking tools will ultimately provide information that can be shared on costing and quality metrics more readily. This process brings several advantages:

- Spreads knowledge on best-practices
- Increases efficiencies by driving standardization of operations
- Helps streamline operations & activities
- Reduces bottlenecks / non-value-adding processes
- Helps align resources with business objectives

By having metrics that are quantifiable and measurable, staff and councillors of all municipalities will be able to rally around hard results that are controllable. By sharing this information, Barrie and its partners, will be able to give its staff targets to meet, annual goals to achieve, all of which will drive efficiency, thereby increasing attention by higher levels of government.

**Qualitative Benchmarking**

For this segment of the benchmarking exercise TkMC contacted the same eleven municipalities noted earlier in this Section. These are the same municipalities for whom MPMP data was collected in the first segment of the benchmarking exercise. Seven (7) of the comparator municipalities responded to the survey.

The external benchmarking step involved sending out a questionnaire to the selected municipalities to capture qualitative data, mainly: Planning and Decision Making, Corporate Strategy and Leading Policy Development. The questionnaire was related primarily to the current “leading practices” of municipalities from across Canada and other contemporary practices that our firm has documented from a number of “Core Service Reviews” and other organizational diagnostics that TkMC has completed for client municipalities and other levels of government.
It is important to emphasize that the purpose of this study was not to identify “less than optimal” operational standards, but rather to highlight those operational practices that can be considered by The City of Barrie in their pursuit of identifying operational and organizational improvement opportunities in order to raise the baseline for performance and productivity.

Despite the differences in policies and standards found in each of the municipalities polled, meaningful comparisons can still be made to aid readers of this report in evaluating their respective program approaches.

The following is a summary of all benchmarking results collected for the purpose of Barrie’s Value for Service Delivery Review.

The average population of the comparator group was 135,000 compared to Barrie’s population of 125,000. The comparator group’s average growth rate was approximately 3.3% compared to Barrie’s 4.5%. In terms of staff numbers, the comparator group averaged 712 full-time equivalent staff persons compared to Barrie’s 580.

Section 1: Planning & Decision Making

1. **Vision**: Of the municipalities surveyed, all have reported the presence of a Vision statement.
   
   Yes: 7, No: 0, In Progress: 0, Barrie - yes

2. **Mission**: A mission statement is present in most municipalities.
   
   Yes: 6, No: 1, In Progress: 0, Barrie - yes

3. **Defined Corporate Values**: Most municipalities have indicated the presence of corporate values to help drive day-to-day policies in decision-making.
   
   Yes: 5, No: 2, In Progress: 0, Barrie - yes

4. **Community Input / Decision Making Framework**: Most Municipalities have a formal framework in place to incorporate feedback from the community into decision-making processes.
   
   Yes: 5, No: 2, In Progress: 0, Barrie - yes

5. **Corporate Business Plan**: A corporate business plan is a forward-looking outline with the aim of aligning and managing internal departmental goals in relation to the corporate strategic direction. Most municipalities surveyed indicated the presence of a corporate business plan. The minority of the respondents showed some link to the strategic plan and similarly most did not have established KPIs. The majority did indicate alignment between their business plan and performance management.

   In some ways the City of Barrie is doing very well in this area. One area of opportunity, however, is in developing key performance indicators (KPI’s). KPI’s are measureable or quantifiable indicators of performance usually against some sort of standard. Inputs, outputs and outcomes may all have performance indicators attached to them and a simple example (output) may be “80% of phone inquiries returned within one day”. The matter of KPI’s also came up through the internal survey and anecdotally through the interviews. Having the ability to demonstrate how well an organization is performing in meaningful ways, is an important contemporary capability. Underlying this concept is the ability to clearly identify the “businesses” the organization is in, units and level of service, cost of delivering the units, who the customer is and so on.
6. **Capital Planning**: All municipalities, including the City of Barrie have indicated having a formal Capital Planning strategy to help guide future financing of projects. Of these municipalities, most have indicated that they are using a longer-term plan with a 10-year horizon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capital Planning</th>
<th>5-year</th>
<th>10-year</th>
<th>Wish List</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes: 7</td>
<td>Yes: 5</td>
<td>Yes: 7</td>
<td>Yes: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No: 0</td>
<td>No: 2</td>
<td>No: 1</td>
<td>No: 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>In Progress: 0</td>
<td>In Progress: 0</td>
<td>In Progress: 0</td>
<td>In Progress: 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barrie – yes</td>
<td>Barrie – no</td>
<td>Barrie – yes</td>
<td>Barrie - no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. **Planning for Intergovernmental Activities (ie. New Deal)**: Developing plans for engaging the senior levels of government and assigning the responsibility for managing those activities is an important contemporary undertaking given the emerging “new” relationships and the opportunities they represent. A little more than half of all municipalities surveyed and the City of Barrie have indicated some form of planning initiatives for Intergovernmental Activities.

Yes: 4, No: 3, In Progress: 0, Barrie - yes

8. **Presence of a Chief Information Officer**: The notion of a CIO here is that of a senior official having enterprise or corporate-wide responsibility for information or knowledge management. It assumes a comprehensive and integrated information system responsibility not singular responsibility for IT, archives, Clerks etc. As such a minority of the municipalities have installed a designated CIO.

Yes: 3, No: 4, In Progress: 0, Barrie - No

9. **Data Warehousing / Knowledge Mgmt Centre**: Similar to the previous question, even fewer municipalities have a formal knowledge management infrastructure in place

Yes: 1, No: 6, In Progress: 0, Barrie - yes

10. **IT Infrastructure Use**: Continuing with the trend of incorporating technology, most municipalities have indicated the presence of some form of IT infrastructure that provides a fully integrated platform or system for all areas and functions of the organization. SAP or People Soft are examples of proprietary systems providing that capacity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IT infrastructure</th>
<th>SAP</th>
<th>PeopleSoft</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes: 6</td>
<td>Yes: 1</td>
<td>Yes: 1</td>
<td>Yes: 5</td>
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<td>No: 1</td>
<td>No: 5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>In Progress: 0</td>
<td>In Progress: 0</td>
<td>In Progress: 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrie – yes</td>
<td>Barrie – no</td>
<td>Barrie – no</td>
<td>Barrie - No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. **GPS Technology**: GPS technology, used for tracking of assets, has a wide variety of applications. Most municipalities have indicated the use of GPS technology for various functions including the City of Barrie.
   - Yes: 5, No: 2, In Progress: 0, Barrie - yes

   Note: for the remainder of the surveyed questions in this section, an answer of ‘yes’ may indicate that the municipality does not have direct control of this plan as it is being delivered and/or managed at the Regional level. These are designated by an asterisk (*).

12. **Fire Master Plan / Station Location Study**: All municipalities have reported a recent and up-to-date Fire Master Plan

13. **Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan**: All municipalities have reported either having a PRC master plan, or are in the process of developing one.

14. **Transportation Needs Study**: Most municipalities have a continuous transportation needs study in place.

15. **Waste Management Plan**: the majority of the municipalities have reported either having a Waste Management plan, or are in the process of developing one.
   - Yes: 5, No: 1, In Progress: 1, Barrie – In progress

16. **Organizational Review**: All municipalities have an active organizational review, current within the last 10 years. In this fast-paced changing environment organizational reviews would be expected every 5 years or so.
   - Yes: 6, No: 1, In Progress: 0, Barrie – yes (2001)

17. **Transit Master Plan**: all municipalities have a formalized Transit Master Plan which they control.

18. **Growth Management Plan**: ½ of the surveyed municipalities have a formal growth management plan to help facilitate growth in the community. At the minimum this would be an Official Plan, but may also include a more comprehensive range of integrated planning including land use, economic development, infrastructure and so on.
   - Yes: 4, No: 2, In Progress: 1, Barrie – yes (1996 – update of OP at this time)

**Section 2: Strategy**

19. **Human Services Strategic/ Master Plan**: The use of a formal Human Services Strategic Master Plan (HSSMP) is varied. While many municipalities do not formally have a plan, many have elements of such a strategic plan in place. Of particular interest is the implementation of employee surveys, as well as follow-up action plans.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HSSMP</th>
<th>Succession Plan</th>
<th>Recruitment / Retention</th>
<th>Professional Development</th>
<th>Performance Mgmt</th>
<th>Leadership Development Program</th>
<th>Employee Wellness Program</th>
<th>Employee Survey (ES)</th>
<th>Action plan to follow-up to ES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes: 2</td>
<td>Yes: 4</td>
<td>Yes: 5</td>
<td>Yes: 7</td>
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<td>IP: 1</td>
<td>IP: 0</td>
<td>IP: 0</td>
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</table>

*IP = In Progress*

20. **Economic Development Strategy**: Most municipalities have indicated a formal Economic Development Strategy in place.  
Yes: 6, No: 1, In Progress: 0, Barrie – yes (2004 and update in progress)

21. **Corporate Strategic Plan**: As with the HSSMP above, most municipalities have various elements of a complete corporate strategic plan. Weaknesses were noticed in the budget link, where municipalities do not have a connection between the plan, and the financing for its implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Strategic Plan</th>
<th>Established Goals</th>
<th>Initiatives Identified and Assigned</th>
<th>Time Bound</th>
<th>Business Plan Link</th>
<th>Budget Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Yes: 6</td>
<td>Yes: 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barrie – yes</td>
<td>Barrie – yes</td>
<td>Barrie – yes</td>
<td>Barrie – yes</td>
<td>Barrie – yes</td>
<td>Barrie - yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*IP = In Progress*

22. **Formal Communications Strategy**: A little over half of the municipalities have a formal communications strategy to speak with internal / external stakeholders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal Communications Strategy</th>
<th>External</th>
<th>Internal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes: 4</td>
<td>Yes: 3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>In Progress: 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrie – In Progress</td>
<td>Barrie – In Progress</td>
<td>Barrie – In Progress</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
23. **Asset Mgmt Strategy (centralized):** Most municipalities have a formal Asset Management Strategy in place. This is one of the areas that Barrie has identified an opportunity. With the significant investment in infrastructure of all kinds, the City owns assets worth many millions of dollars. The assets are aging and typically investment in maintenance and replacement has not kept pace with that aging process. Identifying the inventory of assets, developing financial and operating plans to cover maintenance and replacement is an important part of due diligence for any municipal corporation.

Yes: 4, No: 2, In Progress: 1, Barrie – In Progress

24. **Use of Shared Services Model:** The use of shared services is a key driver in cutting down on costs of redundant tasks. Most municipalities have implemented some form of this model. This concept can apply to the provision of services to other organizations external to the municipal corporation including stretching to other municipalities.

Yes: 5, No: 2, In Progress: 0, Barrie – Yes

25. **Formal Revenue Generation Strategy:** Most municipalities have a formal Revenue Generation Strategy to support the financing of continued services and growth management. Such a plan is supported by some formal policy directions of Council and have well developed strategies across the organization for pursuing and maximizing revenue opportunities.

Yes: 5, No: 2, In Progress: 0, Barrie - No

26. **Customer Service Strategy:** A customer service strategy is key in delivering timely services and information to constituents, as well as allowing for a feedback mechanism for improvements and decision-making. This is another area where there is some opportunity for improvement for the City of Barrie. Most municipalities have some form of mechanism to support their customer service strategy.

Yes: 3, No: 3, In Progress: 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer Service Strategy</th>
<th>Citizen Survey</th>
<th>Call Centre Use</th>
<th>e-Gov’t Portal</th>
<th>Web Site Utilization</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Barrie – No</td>
<td>Barrie – no</td>
<td>Barrie – no</td>
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<td>Barrie – yes</td>
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* IP = In Progress

Section 3: Leading Policy Development

27. **Policy / Guidelines for Citizen Engagement (Non Legislated):** A formalized and structured set of policies and guidelines on how and when citizens may be engaged with the municipality to provide information, receive information, test opinion, provide direction etc.

Yes: 4, No: 3, In Progress: 0, Barrie – In Progress

28. **Purchasing Policy / Bylaw:** All municipalities have some form of control mechanism for purchasing / procurement. The use of technology is mixed, as purchase cards are widely used, as opposed to the slow rate of adoption of smart cards
Qualitative Benchmarking Summary

According to the results of the external benchmarking survey, the City of Barrie compares well with its comparator group. In most of these areas of inquiry the City has shown to be in line or ahead of the comparator group. The City has undertaken work in most of these qualitative areas. The results of the survey reinforce some other findings already established in the VSDR, however, and point to potential opportunities for improvement in the organization. Those areas are as follows:

- The need for performance metrics (KPI’s)
- A customer service strategy
- Citizen survey
- Asset management strategy

In each case the City of Barrie is not presently utilizing these contemporary concepts to assist with managing the Corporation and service delivery (although it is recognized that an asset management strategy is currently under development). We will speak more about these concepts along with related recommendations in the following section of the Report.
Overall Summary and Discussions

The approach taken in this review was to document certain findings flowing from each of several separate but related streams of analysis. Each stream (interviews, web-based survey and the two components of the external benchmarking work) has provided different perspectives on the performance of the City of Barrie. At a high level, each of the analyses has provided a certain sense of “opportunity” within the organization that might lead directly to improvements or onto another level of investigation. In this Section we will discuss the findings and provide, in summary form, a consolidated picture that has developed from the various streams of analysis.

The very general and high level picture of the Corporation of the City of Barrie is that it is actually a good performer. Our experience while working with the City, our observations relative to our understanding of the industry norms and the empirical data we have been able to gather and analyse would suggest that the City is providing a comprehensive array of services and are doing so in a reasonable way. Costs for service delivery, overall, seem low relative to the comparator group and the City is performing better than average in the areas of contemporary activities and policies, again in relation to the comparator group.

Review of the MPMP performance indicators shows the City of Barrie to be performing on most factors at a level that is average to better than average compared to the comparator group in this review. In its Municipal Study – 2004, BMA Management Consulting provided comparative data for 68 municipalities across Ontario and provided summary information for the City of Barrie that also shows that the costs of services in Barrie are relatively low and the tax burden required to pay for the services is low. The net levy per capita (taxes paid per person to provide services) was $822 in 2003 compared to the Provincial average of $955, according to that study. That placed Barrie in the lower 20% for the 68 participating municipalities.3

This would suggest that the City enjoys a good starting point from which to launch. Improvement in any organization is possible, however, and the focus of our inquiry was to surface such opportunities.

Each of the sub-sections that follow, then, are areas that we believe warrant consideration for further study and/or represent concepts that should be pursued to attain improved effectiveness and efficiencies. The first of these (a detailed review of the Community Services Department) represents a primary recommendation that directly meets the mandate of the review and the City should proceed with it as Phase 2 of the VSDR.

The second sub-section (developing a change management strategy) would be important to proceed with to optimize the benefit of the earlier corporate reorganization and could be used to help focus future change, including that which is initiated from the VSDR itself.

The remaining sub-sections represent potential areas of improvement for the City. They are, for the most part, leading practices in the industry that can help the City accelerate its improvement curve. However, they will require time and resources to implement. The City should weigh the benefits of proceeding with them against the costs and time for implementation as well as the organizations tolerance for change. This additional evaluation might be undertaken as part of a detailed implementation assessment and plan.

1. Community Services Division

The Community Services Division is comprised of 3 Departments (Fire and Emergency Services, Engineering, and Leisure, Transit Services and Works). It is by far the largest of the Divisions in the Corporation with approximately 71% of the full-time staff. Their activities represent approximately 80% of the expenditures of the City. Within the portfolio are service responsibilities for fire and emergency services (prevention, suppression, training, etc.) and a range of responsibilities focused on the planning, building, operation and maintenance of most of the City’s infrastructure, including transit.

We know from the findings earlier in this section that the services provided by this Division represent most of the (perceived) important services provided by the City (roads maintenance, waste water treatment, fire services and snowploughing). The review has also indicated fairly consistently that the lowest ratings for service delivery were also in this Division (road maintenance, asset management, design and construction of roads and facilities, planning for infrastructure, traffic and parking) and anecdotally through the interview process the most common program concerns were with asset management, traffic operations, responsiveness/timeliness of work in parks, and cost of Recreation & Culture.

From the MPMP data comparing Barrie with 11 other municipalities, several of the factors indicate that the City is operating services at a higher then average cost structure:

- Paved road costs are near average but Barrie’s costs are third highest; if the single extreme example is removed from the comparison, Barrie has above average costs.
- Barrie’s winter control costs are the highest among the comparator group by a significant margin.
- Barrie’s transit system, on a per customer travelled basis, is above average versus the comparator group.
- Waster water collection and treatment in Barrie is above average versus the comparator group (from the BMA Study).

It was noted earlier in the Report that the lowest response rate for the web-based survey of staff set up for the VSDR was from the Community Services Division. While there are a number of possible factors influencing the responses (e.g. access to computers at work and shift-work), this could be an indication of some level of dissatisfaction or disengagement on the part of staff. Coincidentally, in the 2003 Employee Survey, the lowest level of overall satisfaction was registered by the staff in the Community Services Division. And, finally it was our observation that there were some stresses in the Division which on the surface appeared related to the size, span of control and complexity of the Division.

Individually, the factors noted above may not necessarily lead one to conclude that further detailed review would be advisable and there might be some inclination to try and explain these one by one. However, the sum total of the various observations and analysis leads us to conclude that within the City proper, there would be merit in undertaking a more detailed review of the Community Services Division. The review, in addition to undertaking a more detailed financial and operational analysis, should focus on structure, people, processes, technologies, alternative service delivery options, partnering and revenue generating strategies to identify specific areas for improvement. In the context of such a review insights as to operating anomalies, policies and the like that serve to explain some of the high level findings will also be documented.
Recommendation # 1. That as part of Phase 2 of the VSDR, the City should undertake a detailed review of the Community Services Division focusing on operations, structure, people, processes, technology, alternative service delivery, partnering and revenue generation strategies.

2. Change Management Strategy

Throughout the review and in a number of ways, several related themes surfaced having to do with some residual issues left over from the reorganization undertaken in 2001. The creation of the Executive Management Team was a key component of the reorganization with sound intent that continues to be valid today.

Comments during the VSDR had to do with the perception that the intended purpose of having the Executive Management Team (EMT) had not been fully realized. That is that the EMT was not operating as the strategy and policy group to the degree that many felt was desirable or was envisioned in the Houlné study. As was described, the new structure was put in place but the rules were not effectively changed and so many of the old behaviours have persisted. These behaviours are characteristically described as the tendency to be ‘too involved in day-to-day management’ work that could/should be dealt with lower in the organization; a tendency to dwell on detail and a tendency to “rehash” work already dealt with at lower levels. The consequence of this has been some duplication of effort, some confusion about roles and responsibilities, inadequate focus on long range strategic planning, and the rise of non-value adding ‘scatter’.

Scatter is simply actions that make knowledge ineffective by disrupting its flow. The theory of it is that when an organization goes through a restructuring, subtle interactions that are required for teamwork are disrupted, requiring time to re-establish. Other effects of scatter include distractions to project management (purchasing, development) and overload of resources. The result of unmanaged scatter is a feedback loop that can worsen the effects of a change - managers spend more time ‘fighting fires’, staff spent more time responding to demands for information, and workers come under growing pressure to increase activity.

It is clear from various inputs, including the review of background documentation, that the plan for the organizational change was well laid out, thoughtful and logical in nature, and represented at least one version of a contemporary organizational structure. The strategic intent of the change was sound and the City Administrator went to some lengths to articulate expectations. Unfortunately, it would appear that the full intent and benefit of the change has not been realized. While this is not unusual for any change initiative, corrective action needs to be taken in a timely manner to avoid passive resistors becoming extremely active, and supporters reneging on commitments.

Research suggests that of 70% - 90% of change initiatives fail at implementation and that they fail because the change process is complicated and requires a well developed change management plan implemented over time. Change is difficult for organizations and people within them – typically they must move through various stages of acceptance over time before they are committed to the change initiative. Dennis Jaffe, Ph.D and Cynthia Scott, Ph.D. in their work on change identify four stages of the transition to commitment that people must pass through: denial, resistance, acceptance and commitment.4 Until there is a sufficient critical mass in the organization committed to the change, new approaches are fragile and subject to regression.

---

4 “Mastering the Change Curve”, Jaffe and Scott
Noted change management author John Kotter offers his view that there are a number of key components required in any significant change initiative, the absence of which will lead to sub-optimal implementation and possibly failure of that initiative. Typically, the most common errors cited by Kotter in a change initiative are as follows:

Common Errors in an Organizational Change Effort

- Allowing too much complacency
- Failing to create a sufficiently powerful guiding coalition
- Underestimating the power of vision
- Undercommunicating the vision by a factor of 10
- Permitting obstacles to block the new vision
- Failing to create short-term wins
- Declaring victory too soon
- Neglecting to anchor changes firmly in the corporate culture.\(^5\)

Somewhere in the discussion of change management plans lies the explanation for the apparent disconnect between the rather pervasive perceptions that the reorganization effort of 2001 has not changed things in a way that was intended or to the extent expected, despite the efforts of the City Administrator. Below is a chart that TkMC uses to demonstrate this same concept when it is helping a client manage through a significant change initiative – demonstrating the possible effects of missing elements.

We would suggest that to realize the full benefit of that initiative, that the City step back and develop a change management strategy around the organizational change initiative of 2001,

and incorporate the components of the VSDR that proceed forward. The typical elements of the plan should incorporate the following:

- Establishing a sense of urgency – why?
- Identify the guiding coalition – who will champion change?
- Set clear short-term and long-term goals
- Develop the Vision – what will it look like?
- Encourage the Mission - acting day-to-day with set values
- Identify the stakeholders
- Create the communication plan to reach the stakeholders
- Empower and train staff
- Celebrate short-term wins
- Sell the Change- Build the desire
- Process for continual feedback and evaluation.

As an aside, research has demonstrated that organizations that take the time to develop and fully explore this approach to change management are over time more successful at finding and embracing change and improvement on an ongoing basis.

A specific element might be incorporated into the plan might be to engage EMT and SMT in some work around defining roles and responsibilities, expected behaviours and outcomes so as to help delineate the leadership and management responsibilities. Again, much of this has already been articulated by the City Administrator, so the value in the effort will be in getting engagement, common understanding and commitment.

**Recommendation #2.** That the City develop a clear, long term change management strategy to incorporate the original intent of the reorganization initiative of 2001 and appropriate elements of the VSDR.

### 3. Assessment and Detailed Implementation Plan

The VSDR has resulted in a Report to the City complete with recommendations and a high level implementation plan. Once received, the organization will need to undertake its own due diligence and review the implications of the recommendations, assess costs, time and benefits. Out of that review (presumably undertaken by or in part by the Manager of Strategic Services), a determination will need to be made on what to proceed with. That in turn will require the development of a more detailed implementation plan to determine timing, resourcing and responsibilities.

All of the elements in the Recommendations from TkMC coming out of the VSDR will enhance the performance of the municipality over time. However, the more urgent and time-sensitive recommendations are #1 and #2 above. Those that follow may be considered discretionary, but strongly recommended if the City wants to move towards a better understanding of the wants and needs of the citizens, a better understanding of the costs of providing services and the opportunity to provide higher quality services than it is already achieving.

**Recommendation #3.** That the VSDR Report and Recommendations be referred to the City Administrator to undertake a review to assess the return on investment and feasibility of the recommendations and develop a detailed implementation plan.
4. Citizen Participation Strategy

One of the major changes confronting government generally and municipalities in particular in recent times, is the changing expectations of citizens. Evolving literature is currently documenting what is being described as the “new public organization”. According to work from the Institute of Public Administration of Canada, the new public organization is “citizen-centred”, insofar as it seeks to offer quality service to citizens (and clients/stakeholders) and is responsive to citizen demands for service. On the surface this may not sound like much of a change but the practical experience is that citizens increasingly are demanding more meaningful ways of influencing public policy decisions. The result is that municipalities need to develop more sophisticated policies and mechanisms to accommodate that demand. On the one hand is the need to allow the community to provide meaningful input; on the other hand is the need to manage it so that the business of the municipality does not come to a grinding halt.

One of the weaknesses of the VSDR has been that there is no mechanism to measure the expectations and/or level of satisfaction of the community relative to the services, their quality and their costs. Input from elected officials and frontline staff will stand as a proxy for that input. As part of a larger strategy, however, the City ought to develop a tool for regularly monitoring community expectations and satisfaction related to services on an annual or bi-annual basis. The City has understood the need to provide citizens with the opportunity to provide input and the value of gathering public opinion when it has been applied to certain specific issues. There are certain legislated requirements to engage the public on certain planning matters and the City has demonstrated on those and other specific issues the value of going beyond the legislated minimum. Community input during the budget process would be another example.

What is required is that the approach be formalized, broadened and tailored to meet different citizen engagement expectations.

Public Participation Strategy

The words are important. “Public participation” is a term used by many practitioners, including the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). Whether using IAP2’s term, or other related phrases, the intent is that “the public should have a say in decisions about actions that affect their lives”.

Part of the City of Barrie’s Strategic Plan refers to public participation in the following way as part of one of its key goals:

*The City of Barrie will, “promote a consultative approach to governance and provide direct access to a responsible local Council...improve access, efficiency and effectiveness by using technology, where possible, to ensure services meet the needs of our community.”*

Within the 2004 – 2006 Business Plan underlying the above goal are a number of stated objectives intended to support improved communication with the public. This is further enhanced through one of Council’s Top 10 Strategic Priorities in the Business Plan: “improve corporate communications”.

It is clear from these various references that the City wishes to improve its communications. The expectations of enabling legislation in the Province of Ontario supports appropriate

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6 The New Public Organization, Kernahan, Marson and Borins, IPAC, 2000
disclosure along with opportunities for appropriate and timely input. And it is also clear that effective communications can strengthen the governance and administration of a municipality.

**Mandatory Aspects of “Public Participation”**

Some elements of public participation are prescribed in legislation such as in public hearings on land-use deliberations and freedom of information and privacy legislation. It would appear that the City has established appropriate processes in that regard.

**Discretionary Aspects of “Public Participation”**

Where legislation does not provide a guide, Barrie, like other municipalities, is left to define its own approach to discretionary public participation. The City is faced with a need to redevelop its public participation policy and practices.

The material that IAP2 has developed, whether “core values”, the “spectrum”, or the “toolbox”, can provide useful guidance for the City of Barrie, in part because it provides a common language or set of terms. The IAP2 “spectrum” of participation illustrates the possibilities and key terminology and concepts. In practice, the role and governance responsibilities of Canadian municipalities means that their public participation practices most often fall within the IAP2 categories of “inform, consult, and involve”. Fundamentally, Barrie, like other municipalities, must determine the “why” of public participation before it determines the “how, who, when and where”. A policy based on IAP2 concepts could provide a level of clarity and certainty that is currently lacking in areas of discretionary public participation, and would form the basis for more effective public participation planning and practices.

Applications of these concepts have implications for both the short and long-term. In the long-term, a well-articulated and commonly understood public engagement policy will predict when and how the public will be engaged on new or changing policy. In the short term, developing some parameters for stakeholder engagement relative to this Report will assist with a thoughtful and constructive roll-out. Building on the existing experience of the City where public and stakeholder consultation has been utilized, should provide some very meaningful and proactive opportunities.

**Recommendation #4.** That the City consider formalizing the development of a detailed Citizen Participation Strategy or policy built on the principles already cited by the City, its past experience with citizen participation and utilizing the IAP2 guidelines.

5. **Governance Work**

A number of points were raised during the review process about the roles of Council and Administration and the performance of the respective duties. None of the comments suggested that there were serious problems in that regard, however, it is often an area that can be improved in any complex organization, be it a private-sector board or public sector council. Consciously spending time discussing issues outside of the day-to-day of the City’s operation can have positive impacts on effectiveness and efficiencies within the organization. The recommendation that follows here is suggesting that the City consider undertaking some off-sites involving Council and senior Administration focussing on various elements of “board development” that could include governance policy framework, roles and responsibilities, strategic issues deliberations and team-building. Again, the notion is not that the system is broken. To the extent that there may some confusions and some level of mistrust, however, some regular deliberation, coaching and focused discussion with Council and Administration can improve the mutual understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities and develop an ongoing framework for regular planning and improvement.
**Recommendation #5.** That the City consider the development of a regular series of governance development workshops for Council and Administration.

6. Customer Service Strategy

The analysis of the corporate culture questions used in the interviews and the web-based survey provide some shared perceptions about the organization. When all data was taken into consideration, all of the factors (7) showed scores right around the mid-point of the scale. Overall this would indicate that in none of the factors was the City particularly strong or weak. In many surveys and questionnaires having a mid-point score might be considered adequate or acceptable but our sense is that in the case of the City of Barrie that would not be the case. Together and individually they are intended to assess the “experience” of the customer/end-user and the assessment is that the experience is average. Describing your customer experience as “average” is not very compelling and there is an opportunity to develop a more customer-centric organization through a comprehensive customer service strategy.

The development of such a strategy, often known as a customer relationship management plan, needs to focus on the alignment of culture, processes and technology with the increasingly sophisticated needs of the municipality’s customers. It is more than training front-line staff on customer service excellence, although training is certainly a key component. The strategy or plan also must involve establishing philosophical and policy parameters at the Council level, engaging the citizens who will be the customer and other key stakeholders such as the customer-facing staff in discussions about what is expected and can be delivered, developing a comprehensive strategy and change management plan, changing business processes and leveraging technology to enable it.

The customer relationship management plan can be accurately defined as the integration of knowledge, process, technology and support needed to deliver the precise level of service to result in a preferred relationship with customers on a consistent basis. This is clearly different than using customer knowledge to up-sell goods and services. The holistic strategy in such a plan should address the following questions for the municipality:

- What is the role of the municipality in the next five years?
- Who are our customers? What are the natural segments?
- What constitutes a strong relationship with a customer?
- Why is a strong relationship with customer important?
- What will customers be asking of us in the next five years?
- What customers segments require various levels of service?
- What is the base level of service for all citizens?
- How will we know we were successful in the CRM strategy?
- What are our objectives for process efficiencies related to CRM?
- What is our objective for migrating consumers to various channels?

**Recommendation #6.** That the City consider the development of a comprehensive customer relationship management plan.
7. Performance Measurement and Service Levels

It is apparent from this review that there is a lack of key performance indicators in many areas of the municipality with exception of the traditional areas such as Fire, Environmental Services etc. where there is some history and experience with capturing measurable KPI's such as response time.

Overall we would recommend that the city undertake a Service Level Setting/ Key Performance Measure Program to:

- Relate measures to the Vision, Mission, Community Goals, Strategic Priorities (Corporate Business Plan)
- Relate measurements to the business activities
- Identify Service levels to:
  - Use data that exist or can be collected
  - Report results that are useful to the City and Community

The benefits of Performance Management include a strengthening of accountability, enhanced decision making, improved customer service, and resource allocation, and it supports the strategic planning model.

It has already been noted in the Report that like many municipalities the City of Barrie has not yet fully developed detailed performance measures or approved service levels. Understanding in a definitive way, what services are provided, at what level, at what cost and to whom, and then having metrics to measure against are fundamental elements of understanding how any business is performing. The additional element is having an understanding of what the customer/consumer expectations for timing, quality etc as well as sensitivity to price. Having good data, translated into good information, provides the basis for understanding how well a municipal corporation and its service areas are performing and provide a critical element for good policy decisions.

While these concepts have their genesis in the private sector they are applicable in the public sector as well. They are as yet, not well developed in Canada generally, and Ontario specifically, despite MPMP and other voluntary programs. Internationally, however, in the public sector, including local governments, there are some well developed reporting systems that allow for good individual assessments as well as comparative analysis about performance. The International City Management Association has a good data base for this kind of inquiry and a lengthy history of performance measurement at the local government level can be found in England.

Understanding how long it takes to process a building permit from start to finish, the resources (human and financial) required to process it internally and the cost being charged to the end user are basic elements of this process. Captured in an activity based costing/accounting system, this provides the basic data needed to answer the questions above (what produced, at what level, at what cost, for whom?) and therefore the current state of the “business”. In turn, however, the municipality must develop mechanisms to accurately assess the end-user’s (customer) satisfaction with the timing, quality and cost. All that information in total can help the organization understand how they are performing, relative to the citizen and other municipalities. In turn it provides part of the basis for understanding what adjustments need to be made to the system into the future – increase staffing, reduce cycle times, increase/decrease fees, and so on.
To emphasize, the City of Barrie is not alone in its quest to analyse how it is performing and developing systems to assess these metrics. Through the analysis done in this report, there is a recognition that comparable metrics from other municipalities can assist in driving up the urgency level for improvement. Benchmarking the data against other comparables allows the City to not only rate itself amongst other peers, but also allows the council to rally the staff out of complacency and into an action-oriented environment.

While many in the municipal sector would rightly feel uncomfortable disclosing information that can be used in a negative fashion, or jeopardize the probability of success for a ‘new deal’, the advantages of this process will allow the research and sharing of best-practices amongst all partnered municipalities. This kind of transparency demonstrates that the participating partners have acknowledged that they are looking to improve their performance in order to increase corporate efficiencies.

Some municipalities have developed systems individually and the City may want to explore this option and develop their own system. The Provincial MPMP provides some data, however there are questions about the level of detail and rigour in the program. While the City looks at options around its own specific needs it may, in the meantime benefit from joining the Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Institute (OMBI) – a group of Ontario municipalities that have banded together to develop meaningful performance and benchmarking measures.

**Recommendation #7.** The City should consider the development of a comprehensive performance measurement system for all of its services built on an activity-based costing/accounting system.

### 8. Business Process Improvements

In general terms a process can be described as a set of inter-related activities intended to produce an outcome at the end for a “customer”. Typically a process has certain inputs at the front end and travels across a number of points in the organization resulting in an output. Processes such as procurement, hiring, business planning and budget development, complaint tracking, Council reports, committee support processes and others are initiated by the need for an output (new truck, new staff person, a budget, etc) and require people in various capacities and in various departments to provide inputs until the final result is realized. Often these processes have unintended flaws in them resulting in added cost, delays in time and so on. Every large, complex organization needs to review its processes in some detail from time-to-time to ensure that inefficiencies, non value-add steps, duplication and/or gaps don’t occur.

In the VSDR for the City of Barrie, references were gathered in various ways suggesting that some business process reviews/improvement may be beneficial. In particular we heard concerns expressed about the policy decision-making process, land development approval processes and budget process for example. The comments were about perceived slowness, effectiveness and efficiency. It was also noted during information gathering that generally there did not appear to be a requirement for process review prior to the introduction of new information system applications.

The theory of it is that, when process bottlenecks and inefficiencies resulted in over-due and over-budget projects, managers will clamour for greater financing to ‘speed up’ the process. By throwing money into a system, projects can decrease critical time-lines by having workers perform over-time, hiring outside contractors, or procuring more materials from expensive suppliers. With the MPMP data, a hazard exists whereby senior municipal managers may justify not increasing budgets solely based on benchmarked data. In the end, however, the
greatest loser may be the end-customer, or constituent, that feels sub-optimal value for the tax dollar paid.

The concept of improving processes, then, becomes a requirement for any manager under pressure to do more with fewer resources. Each process incomplete inside the system (Barrie), whether it is an incomplete project, or an unanswered request for information, is an incomplete Work in Process, or WIP. The larger the WIP, the greater amount of financial resources are required to process them. By analyzing the way tasks are completed by workers, managers can redesign those steps to increase the flow of information, thereby reducing this WIP.

As recognized in the previous reorganization efforts, an overhaul of work habits and technology infrastructures are just some of the many steps involved in process optimization. By mapping out each process, eliminating many of the non-value adding procedures, and simplifying the flow of information, Barrie can justify financial costs of process improvement simply by tallying up the time saved by managers not having to search for information or previously acquired knowledge.

The conclusion is that any organization will benefit from regular reviews of its processes in terms of effectiveness and efficiencies. There is every reason to believe that this would be the case in the City of Barrie. It would be advisable to consider developing a program of review of 6 – 8 typical corporate processes.

Recommendation #8. That the City should consider undertaking a select program of business process improvements.

9. Management Training

In this changing world it should come as no surprise that there are changing expectations of management staff in any organization. This is no less true in the City of Barrie and this issue was raised a number of times throughout the review. It was the stated perception that the organization has tended to hire and promote from within, but that there is not enough attention paid to developing the needed management skills in those “technical” people who are moved up. This compounded by the fact that skills and competencies brought to the work-place in the past are not necessarily consistent with the needs of the present dictates the need for an approach to mitigate.

Contemporary public sector organizations are expected to be more entrepreneurial, empowering of staff, less rules-bound and so on. These changing expectations and performance requirements result in some shifting of competency expectations. Some of those include:

- Time management and delegation
- Communications
- Conflict resolution
- Management of change
- Leadership and management balance
- Innovation
- Understanding core values
Purpose

The purpose of a Training Plan is to ensure that employees have the skills and competencies required to function effectively in the organization’s Future State. To assess training needs, competencies required in future positions must be identified. Training needs are defined by the gaps between current levels of competencies and desired future levels of competencies. Training approaches and techniques, logistical issues, and resources needed are determined.

Process

Identify future position competencies required.

- These are identified through the examination of Future State process maps, and through interviews and focus groups with those who understand the Future State design.

Assess staff’s current levels of competency.

- Conduct interviews with staff and supervisors, read job descriptions, and examine Current State process maps.

Determine training needs by identifying gaps between staff’s current competencies and the ones needed in the Future State.

Develop a training delivery strategy.

- Determine the skills needed to be covered for each group to be trained.
- Divide training into modules.
- Determine the number of people to be trained in each module.
- Determine the instructional strategy. (i.e. self-directed, instructor-led, web based, etc.).
- Assess staff time and trainer time required for each module, the number of conducts that must be delivered to accommodate all who require training and the total amount of time required to conduct all training.
- Plan groups’ progression through the modules.
- Recruit trainers to develop training materials and deliver modules. These people will be the “super users” who will assist other staff post-project.
- Create training materials (i.e. handouts, user manuals, visual aids, develop training data bases (for systems implementation), etc.).
- Plan logistics (i.e. facilities, equipment, registration procedures, transportation, refresh schedules for computer-based training, etc.).
- Develop mechanisms for evaluating training effectiveness. For example, are people expected to have mastered new skills by the end of the session? If so, they need to be reassured on the achievement of their new skill.
- Design post-implementation support plan which includes ‘refresher’ training, training for new staff and a mechanism to keep training material current.
Sources and Inputs

- Current State and Future State process maps and competency assessments
- Interviews and focus groups with those who clearly understand the Future State design
- Staff interviews
- Facilities managers

Deliverables

A Training Plan that contains:

Assessment of gaps between staff’s Current State competencies and required Future State competencies Training curriculum including:

- Description of skill areas in which groups will be trained
- Training modules
- Staff and trainer time breakdowns by module
- Instructional strategy for each module
- Trainer recruitment
- Training materials
- Quick aids (i.e. cheat sheets)
- Logistical plan
- Training delivery approach
- Evaluation mechanisms
- Post-implementation support plan
Recommendation #9. That the City should consider the development of a management training program.

10. Achieving Benefits of the Review

Most of the recommendations in this Report should be viewed as a set of opportunities or pre-conditions for the City to fully optimize a change and improvement agenda. These pre-conditions represent changes to the City that we believe are fundamental to creating a more contemporary municipal organization and one that will continue to improve its performance even in the face of continued demands.

The Value for Service Delivery Review is really a potential transition point for the organization. The formal diagnostic process of the review has ended however the next steps will require the same, if not a stronger commitment to change and a heightened level of sponsorship. If viewed as the beginning of a change and improvement process capacity (along with appropriate strategy as noted earlier) will be necessary to realize success. Having asked the organization about opportunities for improvement there is heightened expectations as a result and some urgency to deal with the implementation.

Fundamentally this kind of review is all about change and the desire of the organization to move towards continuous improvement. It is not a condemnation of the past. It is a need for the City primarily to begin to look to the future and put into place the key ingredients that will transform the City and the organization. But the City must build the capacity to undertake and fulfill change successfully. Most organizations, and this is certainly true of the City of Barrie, do not inherently have that capacity and must invest time and resources in the development of the capacity.

Creation of a Program Management Office

Good management consulting work, including the VSDR is administered using project management to ensure timely delivery of the deliverables. A project requires rigorous coordination and control to make sure that timelines are met, expectations realized and costs are controlled. The recommendations in this Report actually represent a series of linked projects that together represent a program of change requiring an equally rigorous approach to ensure success.

If the City determines that it will proceed with all or most of the initiatives it will be prudent to consider the creation of a project or program management office. At the very least, it would be appropriate to increase the capacity of the Strategic Management function of the City Administrator’s office.

A centrally organized Program Management Office (PMO) is established to:

- Ensure consistency through the establishment of planning, reporting, and knowledge capture standards.
- Monitor compliance with established program standards and recommend corrective actions as needed.
- Promote efficiencies by providing shared administrative services.
- Provide planning methodologies, tools, techniques and knowledge assistance to project teams.
- Establish integration planning guidelines, timeline, critical path, templates, and tools.
- Facilitate cross-team communication and coordination.
• Establish, measure and track progress against performance measures and value targets.
• Ensure integration and coordination between projects.
• Allow project managers to lead, and focus on issue resolution.
• Focus project teams on developing and delivering high-quality training.

The Program Management Office is responsible for providing the following:
• Financial Tracking and Reporting.
• Integrated Planning and Support.
• Knowledge Coordination.
• Project Management Process Training.
• Risk and Scope Management.
• Resource Coordination.
• Administrative Support.

The VSDR, as mentioned, was administered using project management to ensure timely delivery of the project. A program requires coordination and control above and beyond what is typically provided by project management.

The City would benefit from the establishment of a PMO, or increased capacity in the Strategic Services area, and the use of program management in coordinating the various projects that make up this change initiative or program. There are also interdependencies that will likely emerge in some project areas, and a prime benefit of the PMO will be the structured environment that is focused on delivery and implementation of new initiatives. The PMO is also a proper forum to assist the senior administration in preparing an implementation plan, scheduling projects, monitoring progress and ensuring a strong accountability framework.

The VSDR has produced a potentially large agenda for change and improvement. This information and the fundamental change process itself will need support to succeed.

Recommendation #10. That the City should consider the development of a Project Management Office or project management capacity as part of the City Administrator’s Office to effectively define and manage the overall change initiative arising out of the VSDR.
Conclusions and Recommendations

The basic purpose of the Value for Service Delivery Review was to determine what, if any areas within the organization might not be operating optimally from an efficiency and/or effectiveness standpoint. The Phase 1 diagnostic was to be high level and provide indicators of sub-optimal performance. These indicators would point to those areas of the organization that warranted a more detailed review to more fully articulate what the apparent weaknesses are (or explain them) and develop plans for mitigation.

It is our conclusion that from the general and high level analysis we performed, the Corporation of the City of Barrie is actually a good performer. Our experience while working with the City, our observations relative to our understanding of the industry norms and the empirical data we have been able to gather and analyse would suggest that the City is providing a comprehensive array of services and are doing so in a reasonable way. Costs for service delivery, generally, seem low relative to the comparator group and the City is performing better than average in the areas of contemporary activities and policies, again in relation to the comparator group.

We further conclude, however, that there are areas within the organization that bear further review and other opportunities for improvement exist. Undertaking the recommendations in this Report would provide the City with the ability to continue to improve its performance.

The summary of the conclusions from this Report are as follows:

- Generally, the City of Barrie can be described as progressive by virtue of the contemporary work and activities
- The City has been proactive in assessing its organizational structure, seeking out opportunities for upper-tier funding, assessing boundary issues, and keeping the lines of communication open with its own human resources through the employee survey
- The overall picture of the City from the Phase 1 review is a positive one
- The comprehensive range of services provided by the City is provided at a relatively low overall cost.
- The comparator benchmarking undertaken as part of this review showed that on eight out of eleven factors the City was at, or better than average.
- The anecdotal and qualitative information gathered through the VSCR also supported a generally positive view of the organization and its performance.
- Like most organizations, it was possible to identify areas where improved performance is possible and/or areas that warrant more detailed review.

From the work of the review that focused on the improvement opportunities referred to in the final conclusion, a list of recommendations have been detailed in the Report and summarized below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Recommendation #2. That the City develop a clear, long term change management strategy to incorporate the original intent of the reorganization initiative of 2001 and appropriate elements of the VSDR.</td>
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Appendix “A”: Interview Guide

City of Barrie

Value for Service Delivery Review

Interview Protocol
CA, Commissioners, Directors

For Internal TKMC Use Only

Mood: Casual, informal, conversational
Goal: Insights regarding needs, priorities and opportunities within the municipal corporation
Elevation: 30,000 feet – high level and as strategic as possible

Steps:
1. Personal introductions and brief program overview.
2. Clarify objective for today’s interview.
3. Cover interview questions allowing for some digression
4. Provide opportunity for interviewee to ask questions. Answer as best as possible and offer follow-up if necessary.

Note: Stress importance of input and confidential nature of exchange.

Objective for the Interview:
Interviews will be undertaken with selected individuals:
- Executive and Senior Management Team in the City of Barrie;
- Mayor and Council
- Selected Business Ambassadors
- Union Representatives

These interviews will give the Value for Service Delivery Review Team an opportunity to understand the perspectives of stakeholders of the City.

TkMC is looking for input regarding needs, priorities and opportunities across all City departments and programs. The interview process is an opportunity for management, elected officials, labour representatives, key community partners and the TkMC consulting team to discuss your understanding of strategic directions, significant issues confronting the City, key service areas, and get a high-level feel for the critical directions necessary for the Value for Service Delivery Review.

Be comfortable. Give thought to what you and your employees do. Consider in what areas you are stretched and what areas need more attention.
**Question 1:** What are the high level, strategic priorities and challenges for the City? How does this impact your area of responsibility?

**Question 2:** Are there things within your sphere of influence in/with the City of Barrie that can’t be done today due to structure, resource constraints, external influences, policies, personnel issues or other? If so, which areas in particular and in what priority?

**Question 3:** What are the core operating processes that your Division/Department uses today? Can you briefly describe, at a high level, how each of these work today?
   a. Council/Admin Interface
   b. Planning and Budgeting
   c. Customer Service Roles
   d. Growth Management Roles
   e. Communication (Internal Staff and External Customer)
   f. Project Management

**Question 4:** Which communities do you use to provide comparison to the City, which ones do you believe represent “best in class”, which communities do you believe are your direct competition?

**Question 5:** Of all the program/process areas within your Department(s), which seem to generate most challenges or issues? What is the nature of those issues?

**Question 6:** Of all the program/process areas within the City, which seem to generate most challenges or issues? What is the nature of those issues (people, processes, technology, equipment)?

**Question 7:** Of all program/process areas within the City, which ones seem to have the most resources at their disposal and appear to be running smoothly? What do you believe is the reason for this?

**Question 8:** What do you believe are the opportunities that Barrie should be engaged in to provide top calibre services to its citizens?

**Question 9:** Attached to this interview protocol is the City of Barrie Vision 2003-2023. Are you familiar with these Statements? In what ways do you think outcomes of this review can contribute to these future visions? (Permit time to review the Vision)

**Question 10:** On the following page there is a “Draft Working Definition of Core Services” for Barrie. After reading this definition, provide your comment. (Allow time for person to read the draft definition)

**Question 11:** Are you familiar with the term ASD (alternative service delivery)? What, if any, services provided by the City do you think might be offered alternatively? Why and how?

**Question 12:** Describe the existing culture of the organization as you see it.
### Solution Orientation

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### Time Focused

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### Accountability

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Identifiable Point of Accountability</td>
<td>Diffused Accountability and lack of Clarity</td>
<td>Single Point of Accountability and Clarity</td>
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### Customer Orientation

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Product or Service Orientation</td>
<td>Customer Consulted Sometimes</td>
<td>Customer Centric</td>
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### Public Value/Value for Money

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Value Inefficient Use of Resources</td>
<td>Moderate Value Reduced Efficiency</td>
<td>High Value Prudent Use of Resources</td>
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### Allegiance

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<td></td>
<td>Business Unit/Portfolio Culture</td>
<td>Department Culture</td>
<td>Corporate Culture</td>
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### Team Philosophy

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<td>Independent Direction</td>
<td>Corporate Direction</td>
<td>Council Direction</td>
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**Note to Interviewers:**

Interviewers will need to summarize their notes for consolidation. Issues should be collapsed into logical groupings and captured in a word document. A heading for each issue with 3-5 sentences describing the issue should be adequate. The summaries from all interviewers will be synthesized by Ted Salisbury. This comprehensive document will represent background information for the Steering Committee.
Appendix “B”: Web-based Survey Questionnaire

Value for Service Delivery Review – Employee Survey

The City of Barrie has retained TkMC (Turnkey Management Consulting) to complete a Value for Service Delivery Review. The review will use both internal and external analysis, both qualitative and quantitative in nature to highlight service opportunities and create opportunities for different approaches to resource allocation. This survey will ask your opinion about where you work, the issues confronting the City, the services being provided, the culture of the organization and your suggestions for improvement.

This survey is an opportunity for employees to participate and add value to the information being collected from other sources.

The Review has the full endorsement of Council, Senior Administration, CUPE and the BPFFA. Your comments are being received directly by TkMC and shall remain confidential.

Note: There is no need to complete this paper survey if you have completed the survey on-line.

1. Commission
   Please select the Commission that you are currently working for.
   - Community Services
   - Corporate Services
   - Development Services
   - Mayor and City Administrator’s Office

2. Community Services
   Please select the Department that you work for in Community Services.
   - Commissioner’s Office
   - Fire & Emergency Service
   - Leisure, Transit & Works Department
   - Engineering Department

3. Corporate Services
   Please select which Department you work for within Corporate Services
   - City Clerk’s Office
   - Finance Department
   - Human Resources Department
   - Information Communications and Technology Department
   - Commissioner’s Office

4. Development Services
   Please select the department you work for in Development Services
   - Building Services Department
   - Economic Development Department
   - Planning Services Department
   - Commissioner’s Office
5. Issues and Services Provided
   
a) What do you feel are the MOST significant issues facing the City of Barrie today? Please select the top 5 issues you consider to be the most important.
   - Achieving Council’s Top 10 Priorities
   - Managing growth
   - Getting a “new deal” from government
   - Relationships with other municipalities
   - Communicating with the taxpayer
   - Borders/boundary change
   - Financial pressures of growth
   - Stress on current road infrastructure
   - Providing space at the landfill site
   - Ensuring a safe drinking water system
   - Ensuring there is a well functioning sewage treatment system
   - Public safety
   - Management of Assets (buildings, property, etc.)
   - Environmental protection
   - Downtown revitalization
   - Revitalizing older neighbourhoods
   - Attracting new business
   - Creating jobs
   - Lack of technology in work environment
   - Succession planning for workforce
   - Maintaining service levels
   - Level of city staff resources
   - Lack of revenue sources
   - Supply of industrial land
   - Supply of residential land
   - Commuter rail availability
   - Public transit
   - Maintaining roads
   - Other (please specify):

b) With respect to the City of Barrie Community Based Strategic Plan (Vision 2003 - 2023) is it clear to you as an employee of the City how your job/role fits into the overall plan including the expectations and accountabilities placed on you as an individual to help the City meet the strategic objectives outlined in the plan?
   - Not clear at all
   - Somewhat clear, but I would like some clarification on my expected role in meeting the City’s objectives outlined in the plan
   - I clearly understand my role and set of accountabilities in order to meet the City’s objectives outlined in the plan
c) Please rate each service provided by the City of Barrie in the list below in terms of its level of importance to the City of Barrie and its citizens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<td>Watermain and Sanitary Sewer Maintenance</td>
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<td>Maintenance of Parks</td>
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<td>Purchasing</td>
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<td>Traffic and Parking Planning</td>
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<td>Accounting Services i.e. payroll, accounting for local boards</td>
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<td>Fire Department Operations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
d) Please rate the following services provided by the City of Barrie based on how well the service is currently being provided today.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Service level below legislated/policy related targets</th>
<th>Service level meeting legislated/policy related targets</th>
<th>Service level exceeding legislated/policy related targets</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>
e) Please rate the following services provided by the City of Barrie based on how well you feel the service is currently meeting the expectations of the citizens of the City of Barrie:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Below citizen expectations</th>
<th>Meeting citizen expectations</th>
<th>Exceeding citizen expectations</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watermain and Sanitary Sewer Maintenance</td>
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Performance Measurement

a) Within your service area do you use Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s) to measure the performance of employees, services, tools, technology?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don’t Know

b) If you answered “YES” to the above question, please list and describe the performance indicators used in your service area in the space provided. If you answered ‘NO’ to the above question, please enter ‘N/A’ in the space below

---

Culture

Indicate the existing culture of the organization as you see it with respect to its solution orientation (i.e. the organization’s consistency in developing and implementation a solution to problems/ issues faced on a day-to-day basis).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solution Orientation</th>
<th>No Solution</th>
<th>Partial Solution</th>
<th>Complete Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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Indicate the existing culture of the organization as you see it with respect to its time focus (i.e. the organization’s consistency in meeting deadlines on a day-to-day basis).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Focus</th>
<th>Projects are never completed on-time</th>
<th>Projects are completed on-time some of the time</th>
<th>Projects are always completed on-time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

Indicate the existing culture of the organization as you see it with respect to accountability structure (i.e. the organization’s clarity of who is responsible for the outputs of a work group, division, Department etc.).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accountability Structure</th>
<th>No identifiable points of accountability</th>
<th>Diffused accountability and lack of clarity</th>
<th>Single point of accountability and clarity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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</table>
Indicate the existing culture of the organization as you see it with respect to customer orientation (i.e. the organization’s consistency in focusing and meeting the needs of the citizen/client on a day-to-day basis).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Product or service orientation</th>
<th>Customer/citizen consulted sometimes</th>
<th>Customer/citizen centric</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer Orientation</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</table>

Indicate the existing culture of the organization as you see it with respect to the City’s current ability to generate value from the resources used to provide services to citizens (i.e. the organization’s ability to use financial, human, and technological resources efficiently).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low Value - Inefficient use of resources</th>
<th>Moderate Value - Reduced efficiency with respect to the use of resources</th>
<th>High Value - Prudent use of resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Value/Value for Money</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</table>

Indicate the existing culture of the organization as you see it with respect to its employee’s allegiances (i.e. the alignment and loyalty of employees within their own work group or the corporate organization?).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Business Unit/Portfolio</th>
<th>Culture Department Culture</th>
<th>Corporate Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allegiance</td>
<td>☐</td>
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Indicate the existing culture of the organization as you see it with respect to a team philosophy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Independent Direction</th>
<th>Corporate Direction</th>
<th>Council Direction</th>
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<tr>
<td>Team Philosophy</td>
<td>☐</td>
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**Opportunities for Improvement**
Are there any opportunities that you believe should be pursued by the City to improve a process, increase revenue or result in greater efficiency? Please explain.

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**Thank You**
Your participation in this survey is appreciated and you may be assured that your comments have been received, will remain with TKMC and will be used as part of the review.
Appendix “C”: Peer Municipal Survey

City of Barrie  
Value for Service Delivery Review  
Benchmarking  
For Completion by Comparator Municipality  
February 2005

**Introduction:** The City of Barrie has retained TkMC to complete a Value for Service Delivery Review. The review will use both internal and external analysis, both qualitative and quantitative in nature, as well as benchmarking to highlight service opportunities and create opportunities for alternative approaches to resource allocation. The ultimate goal of the review is to:

“develop and apply an evaluation process in order to systematically review and determine the most appropriate way to provide services to citizens and ensure the selection and provision of high value services and performance to serve the rapidly changing community within the City of Barrie.”

As a part of this exercise we have, in cooperation with the City, selected 11 municipal comparators which have been selected on the basis of incorporation status, range of responsibilities, geography, size and growth rate that are being used as a part of a benchmarking exercise. This benchmarking is not a recollection of the Municipal Performance Measurement Program. The questionnaire is related primarily to the current “leading practices” of municipalities from across Canada and other contemporary practises that our firm has documented from a number of “Core Service Reviews” and other organizational diagnostics that we have completed for client municipalities and other levels of government.

Should you have any questions regarding the information being requested please contact Ted Salisbury 905-829-3919 x227/ ted.Salisbury@tkmc.ca or Sudha Dwivedi 905-829-3919 x 223 / sudha.dwivedi@tkmc.ca

We appreciate your cooperating in agreeing to participate in this exercise. Complete surveys may be emailed to carrie.stalteri@tkmc.ca prior to March 11, 2005.

This questionnaire is divided into three main sections:
- Planning and Decision Making
- Corporate Strategy
- Leading Policy Development

We kindly ask that you complete each section and respond to all of the questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality:</th>
<th>Status i.e. single tier, two tier:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Population:</td>
<td>Growth Rate, i.e. % change annually:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Full Time Equivalent Employees:</td>
<td>Value of Residential Building Permits 2004:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of Industrial/Commercial Building Permits 2004:</td>
<td>Area (size) of Municipality</td>
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These sections deal with the typical major planning activities, strategic/policy initiatives that are commonly undertaken by municipalities and are those that are generally beyond the legislated requires such as MPMP reporting etc. The intent is to determine the extent to which municipalities from the select group have these tools in their portfolio, are actively completing or updating.

### Planning and Decision Making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipal Initiative</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Date of Most Recent</th>
<th>Frequency/ Cycle</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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<td>Vision Statement</td>
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<td>Mission Statement</td>
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<td>Defined Corporate Values</td>
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<td>Community Input/Decision-Making Framework</td>
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<td>• Alignment to Performance Management</td>
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<td>• 5 Year</td>
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<td>- Call Centre Use</td>
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<td>- e-government Portal</td>
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Types of Applications
### Municipal Initiative Descriptor

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<th>Date of Most Recent</th>
<th>Frequency/Cycle</th>
<th>Descriptor/Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Web Site Utilization</td>
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### Leading Policy Development

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<th>Municipal Initiative</th>
<th>Date of Most Recent/ Comment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Policy/Guidelines for Citizen Engagement (Non Legislated)</td>
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<td>Purchasing Policy/Bylaw</td>
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<td>• Use of Smart Cards</td>
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<td>• Purchase Cards</td>
<td>Yes  No</td>
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