JIM PETRO
AUDITOR OF STATE

STATE OF OHIO

CITY OF WARREN
PHASE 4
PERFORMANCE AUDIT

NOVEMBER 21, 2002

To the Citizens of the City of Warren:

At the request of the City of Warren (the City) to complete comprehensive performance audits of all departments, the State Auditor's Office is pleased to provide the performance audit report for those departments selected to be included in the fourth phase of this project. The City requested that the performance audits be conducted to provide a resource in the City's ongoing effort to improve the efficiency of its operations, establish internal accountability over the use of tax dollars, improve the quality of life and responsiveness of city government to its constituents, and help address the financial difficulties the City is experiencing.

This report assesses several key City departments and areas, including the Mayor's Office, Human Resources, Technology, Purchasing and Law. The State Auditor's Office conducted an independent assessment of these departments with the objective of providing recommendations to the City of Warren in areas where the City can either recognize financial benefits or achieve efficiency improvements in operations and service delivery.

An executive summary has been prepared which includes the project history, City overview, objectives and scope, and methodology of the performance audit. The executive summary also includes a summary of significant findings, commendations, recommendations and financial implications. This report has been provided to the City of Warren and its contents discussed with members of City Council and department management. The City has been encouraged to utilize the results of the performance audit as a resource in improving its overall operations, service delivery and financial stability. Additional copies of this report can be requested by calling the Clerk of the Bureau's office at (614) 466-2310 or the toll free number in Columbus, (800) 282-0370. In addition, this performance audit can be accessed on-line through the State Auditor's Office website at http://www.auditor.state.oh.us/ by choosing the "On-Line Audit Search" option.

Sincerely,

JIM PETRO
Auditor of State

November 21, 2002

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project History

The mayor, the city auditor and the director of public service and safety (City Officials) of the City of Warren (the City) contacted the Auditor of State's Office requesting a performance audit be conducted on all operations within the City of Warren. The City Officials were seeking assistance on how to improve the efficiency of operations and effectiveness of the delivery of services to the citizens of Warren as well as to help address the financial difficulties the City was experiencing. As a result of this meeting, it was determined that because of the City's current financial and staffing conditions, a prioritization approach would be used whereby those operations determined to have the most significant impact on revenues, expenditures and public safety would be the first departments to be assessed, with the remaining departments being reviewed in subsequent phases. The first three phases of the City of Warren performance audit covered: Income Tax, Operations, Fire, Police, Municipal Court, Finance, Health, Packard Music Hall and the Engineering, Planning and Building Departments. This phase of the performance audit included the following areas:

- Mayor's Office;
- Human Resources;
- Technology Utilization;
- Purchasing; and
- Law Department.

Objectives and Scope

A performance audit is defined as a systematic and objective assessment of the performance of an organization, program, function or activity to develop findings, conclusions and recommendations. Performance audits are usually classified as either economy and efficiency audits or program audits.

Economy and efficiency audits consider whether an entity is using its resources efficiently and effectively. They attempt to determine if management is maximizing output for a given amount of input. If the entity is efficient, it is assumed that it will accomplish its goals with a minimum of resources and with the fewest negative consequences.

Program audits normally are designed to determine if the entity's activities or programs are effective, if they are reaching their goals and if the goals are proper, suitable or relevant. Program audits often focus on the relationship of the program goals with the actual program outputs or outcomes. Program audits attempt to determine if the actual outputs match, exceed or fall short of the intended

outputs. This performance audit contains elements of both an economy and efficiency audit and a program performance audit.

The Auditor of State's Office has designed this performance audit with the objective of reviewing systems, organizational structures, finances and operating procedures to develop recommendations for reducing operating costs, increasing revenues or improving efficiency. Specific objectives of this performance audit are the following:

- Identify opportunities for improving the City's effectiveness, responsiveness and quality of service delivery which is cost beneficial;
- Identify opportunities for improving the City's procedures, work methods and capital asset utilization which should result in higher quality and/or reduced costs;
- Determine if the departments' current organizational structures are flexible and effectively structured to meet future demands;
- Evaluate management policies and procedures and provide recommendations for enhanced revenue flows, expenditure reductions, delivery of service or employee productivity; and
- Provide recommendations for the City to use in its attempt to maintain financial stability.

Methodology

To complete the performance audit, the auditors gathered and assessed a significant amount of data pertaining to the City's operations; conducted interviews with various groups associated with the City, as well as national trade organizations and peer cities; and reviewed information from the peer cities, other government entities and private nonprofit organizations. The methodology is further explained below.

Studies, reports and other data sources

In assessing the various performance audit areas, the City was asked to provide any previous studies or analyses already prepared on the subject areas. In addition to reviewing this information, the auditors spent a significant amount of time gathering and assessing other pertinent documents or information. Examples of the studies, reports and other data sources which were studied include the following:

- Organizational and staffing reports for the City;
- City of Warren Codified Ordinances;
- Various revenue, payroll, expenditure and budgetary reports from the City's financial systems;
- Various management reports generated from systems within the human resources, data processing, water pollution control, law and purchasing departments, as well as the mayor's office;
- Negotiated labor contracts;

- Various departmental policies and manuals;
- Hardware and software inventories;
- Purchasing records, including supplier lists and contract samples;
- GFOA recommended financial practices;
- Information and reports from best practice agencies and firms; and
- Various sections of the Ohio Revised Code.

Interviews, Discussions and Surveys

Numerous interviews and discussions were held with many levels and groups of individuals involved internally and externally with the City. These interviews were invaluable in developing an overall understanding of the City's operations and, in some cases, were useful sources in identifying concerns with the City's operations and in providing recommendations to address these concerns. Examples of the organizations and individuals that were interviewed include the following:

- The mayor, safety and service director and administrative coordinator;
- The human resources director and personnel supervisor;
- The director of water pollution control;
- The manager of data processing;
- The network system supervisor;
- Various data processing and network services staff;
- The equal opportunity coordinator;
- The law director;
- Various law department staff; and
- Private vendors specializing in technology.

Benchmark Comparisons with Other Cities

Two municipalities, Mansfield and Middletown, were selected to provide benchmark comparisons for the City's operations. These cities were selected based upon demographic and operational data. Performance indicators were established for the various performance audit areas to develop a mechanism for determining how effectively and efficiently the City of Warren is providing services. The information was gathered primarily through information requests and interviews held with appropriate personnel at each city. Key comparative data for the City of Warren and the respective peers is presented in each section of the report. Peer averages do not include Warren unless stated otherwise.

Project Overview

The City of Warren is located in Trumbull County in northeastern Ohio. The City functions as the county seat and encompasses approximately 16.3 square miles. Over the past decade, the population has steadily decreased. The 2000 census population of 46,832 represents a 7.8 percent decrease from the 1990 population of 50,793.

The Warren Mayor's Office (WMO) represents the citizens of Warren in matters concerning the management and interests of the City. WMO provides leadership in establishing priorities, coordinating implementation of programs, and, when necessary, providing crisis management. WMO is also responsible for appointing board members and department heads with the exception of elected officials and the police and fire chiefs. WMO also oversees the budget for the City and supervises all service departments including the police and fire departments. While WMO has pursued both economic and cultural programs to benefit the City, these activities have not been guided by a comprehensive strategic plan. Additionally, some City commissions are no longer active. Some of these commissions are no longer necessary, although the City's records commission is statutorily-mandated and could help the City control its records maintenance and storage problems.

Human Resources (HR) is responsible for administering the personnel functions of the City. These functions include recruiting and selecting potential employees, administering employee benefit programs, monitoring compliance with employment and safety standards, facilitating employee performance evaluations, and administering bargaining unit policies and procedures. HR is currently operating with a staffing level below peer and industry standards and could benefit from an additional clerical staff. The addition of a clerical position could allow the City to implement various personnel administration practices used by the peers, including developing a comprehensive policies and procedures manual, developing an employee newsletter, monitoring the effect of health and safety training and implementing a performance evaluation program. Finally, the City could benefit from renegotiating several provisions within select union contracts. These provisions include shortening time frames in which employees can submit grievances, increasing the levels of review of grievances, and adding monetary retribution as a form of discipline.

Technology implementation and management in the City of Warren is performed by the Data Processing Department (DPD) and the Water Pollution Control Department (WPC). DPD is responsible for the New World software package, related software and the IBM series I server. WPC is responsible for the network, network-based software and ancillary functions. The City could experience greater service levels and efficiency by combining these functions in a single department, along with telecommunications, which is currently handled by the administrative coordinator. With the formation of a unified department, the City could realign staff and reconfigure job functions to support departmental needs such as the formation of a help desk, in-house maintenance of the Web site, and additional mainframe utilization. Incorporating these types of initiatives into a strategic

technology plan would ensure that technology activities are in line with the overall goals and objectives of the City.

The administrative coordinator within WMO is responsible for coordinating the City's procurement processes, which mostly consists of monitoring, advising and managing daily individual purchases among all departments in the City. Reorganizing the City's purchasing operation would allow the administrative coordinator to spend more time on the research and planning necessary for effective procurement. This would allow the implementation of best practices such as using formalized, mandatory and scorable requirements for competitive bidding, establishing consistent pricing instructions, enhancing the use of automated purchasing capabilities and using blanket purchase orders and term agreements more effectively.

The City of Warren Law Department is divided into two functional divisions: civil and criminal. The civil division provides legal assistance to City boards, departments and Council by preparing, drafting and reviewing all legal documents pertaining to the City and its sub-entities. The criminal division's primary responsibility is to prepare criminal charges for the prosecution of individuals for offenses committed within the jurisdiction of Warren Municipal Court. The Law Department provides prosecuting attorneys and legal advice and reviews and files criminal charges with the various law enforcement agencies operating within the City's jurisdiction. Developing or updating some administrative and governing documents, such as a strategic plan, job descriptions and performance evaluations, could enhance the effectiveness of legal services in the City.

Summary Results

This performance audit addresses Warren's mayor's office, human resources, technology utilization, purchasing and law department operations. A summary of major findings, commendations, and recommendations and financial implications is provided here, although more thorough analyses are contained throughout the report. All interested parties are encouraged to read the entire report. The results of this performance audit should not be construed as criticism of City of Warren management. Rather, the performance audit should be used as a management tool by Warren and the community to improve operations within the City.

Mayor's Office

Findings: A summary of major findings in the Mayor's Office section is as follows:

- The City of Warren does not provide training or orientation to newly-elected or appointed public officials. This has somewhat hampered the effectiveness of city council meetings, specifically as a venue to document and address citizen concerns. The Mayor has worked to increase citizen access to public officials as well as City Hall, although more work can be done to involve Warren's citizens in the governing process and to address citizen concerns.

- The City does not have a comprehensive strategic plan. The Mayor and administration have worked to implement various programs and initiatives to streamline operations, improve service delivery and generally benefit the City. However, these activities have not been guided by a strategic plan and do not work towards an established mission for the City.

- Several commissions established by the City have been inactive for several years. Some of these commissions are no longer needed as they were formed to address specific problems or situations within the City that have since been addressed. However, the records commission, which is required by State law, has also been inactive for several years. Several deficiencies exist in the City's record-keeping, including a lack of minutes for all council committee meetings and a lack of a formally-approved records retention policy, which has contributed to excessive storage needs for the City.

Recommendations: Major recommendations in the Mayor's Office section include the following:

- The City should provide a formal training and orientation program to new public officials to benefit the City's management practices and foster better citizen relationships. Additionally, the City should implement procedures to apprize citizens of City initiatives and to incorporate citizen participation in the governance of the City. A communication plan, outlining methods such as e-mail lists and a newsletter, could help the City garner citizen participation.

- WMO should initiate a formal strategic planning process for the City. The Mayor should continue to pursue programs and initiatives that benefit the City, but should incorporate such concepts into the strategic plan.

- The City should consider controlling the number of commissions by reviewing current commissions for relevancy and establishing sunset clauses in the legislation creating future commissions. The City's records commission should be reactivated and charged with adopting a formal records retention and storage policy for Council's approval.

Commendations: The following summarizes the major commendations in the Mayor's Office section:

- The Mayor has established a personal commitment to citizen accessibility and spends a significant amount of time performing outreach activities. Additionally, the mayor and administration have worked diligently to develop diverse and creative programs to improve the City.

Human Resources

Findings: A summary of major findings in the Human Resources Department includes the following:

- The City's HR staffing level is below peer and industry standards. The low staffing level has prevented the City from implementing some functions employed by the peers, such as developing an employee newsletter, monitoring the effectiveness of health and safety training, and developing employee development and evaluation programs.

- Warren's managerial span of control is below the peer average and best practice standards. The City has not implemented recommendations from previous performance audits that would have lifted the span of control above the peer average.

- Warren maintains an applicant pool for general labor positions but does not have a formal hiring process for all positions. Additionally, the City does not have an exit interview process or a formal employee development program. Some training is provided, specifically in the area of health and safety, but the effectiveness of such training is not tracked.

- Warren does not have procedures in place to regularly update job descriptions or to conduct annual performance evaluations on all employees. The City's bargaining unit agreements do not clearly provide City management the variety of disciplinary options available at the peers.

Recommendations: Major recommendations in the Human Resources Department include the following:

- The City should hire an additional clerical position for the HR Department at an annual cost of $43,400. Pursuant to filling this position, the City can implement such concepts as a City-wide policies and procedures manual, an employee newsletter, and employee training and evaluation programs.

- Warren should strive to increase its managerial span of control by implementing recommendations from previous performance audits and reviewing all supervisory positions with fewer than four direct reports.

- Warren should develop an employee hiring policy and subsequent procedures and should consider maintaining an applicant pool for technical and vocational positions. Additionally, implementing an exit interview process and monitoring the effect of employee training could improve overall personnel administration at the City.

- Warren should implement the necessary procedures to regularly update job descriptions and perform annual performance evaluations on all employees. The City should also attempt to negotiate more specific disciplinary capabilities into its bargaining unit agreements.

Commendations: A summary of major commendations in the Human Resources Department section includes the following:

- The City's effective use of health and safety training has reduced the number of claims filed with the Bureau of Workers' Compensation, and the Train the Trainer program has empowered employees to take accountability for the effectiveness and safety of their departments.

Technology Utilization

Findings: A summary of the significant findings in the Technology Utilization section includes the following:

- The data processing, network services and telecommunications operations are fragmented at the City. Although personnel from various departments coordinate through the City's Technology Steering Committee, the division of duties has prevented some functions from being performed, such as the provision of centralized help desk services and the development of a long-term strategic technology plan.

- Because network services and data processing are handled by separate departments, the City does not have cohesive processes for equipment purchasing and replacement, repair and maintenance or technical training. Some untapped technical capabilities exist in the City, both in the IBM I Series platform, which can perform web and network hosting and e-business functions, and in technical staff, who can manage the City's Web site and telecommunication functions.

- The City has strived to maintain and improve its network and has benefitted from a trade for services, receiving free wireless network access in exchange for space on the City's tower. Department-level technology varies significantly based on funding, and data processing services are billed to departments through an internal service fund. Telecommunication services are inconsistent across the City, and use of the intranet is limited.

- Warren does not have comprehensive technical training programs for technical or non-technical staff. DPD staff attend more training and user group meetings than WPC staff, but certification is not formally required or encouraged for either department.

- DPD maintains the City's IBM I Series in a secure environment and has appropriate back-up procedures and a disaster recovery plan to recover operations in the event of an emergency. The City also has Internet and Network Use Policies, although security and recovery procedures for network systems are not formally documented.

Recommendations: Significant recommendations in the Technology Utilization section include the following:

- The City should consider centralizing its technology functions in a single department. Administering data processing, network and telecommunication services from a single department would allow the City to implement a centralized help desk and ensure the consistency of services such as email and computer maintenance.

- The City should consider expanding the use of the IBM I Series to provide Web hosting and e-business and should consider managing the Web site operations with in-house personnel. Also, the City should develop comprehensive and cohesive plans for the purchase, replacement, maintenance and repair of technology assets.

- The City should take steps to ensure the effective utilization of communication resources. The City should make more effective use of its intranet capabilities and should provide email to a higher number of employees. Additionally, consolidating telecommunications services could reduce costs and provide a standardized level of service.

● The City should develop a comprehensive technical training and certification program for technical and non-technical staff. City personnel should attend user group meetings for pertinent hardware and software in place in the City, and technical certification should be encouraged for technology staff.

● The City should ensure that its technology assets are appropriately safeguarded and that security and recovery procedures are sufficiently documented to provide meaningful guidance in the case of an emergency.

Commendations: A summary of the significant commendations in the Technology Utilization section includes the following:

● Warren is the only city among the peers that has implemented a wireless network. By using the City's tower as a bargaining tool to receive network services and additional revenue, Warren has maximized the use of its resources to heighten service levels to its employees.

● Warren has taken steps to ensure the security of its technology assets. The I Series platform is maintained in a secure environment and is supported by effective back-up and recovery plans.

Purchasing

Findings: A summary of major findings in the Purchasing section includes the following:

● The City does not have a purchasing department, and the administrative coordinator's duties largely revolve around the basic processing of purchases for City departments. This has inhibited the development of strategic purchasing functions, such as a purchasing manual, a system to monitor supplier performance, and bulk buying or term pricing agreements.

● The City has a board of control to review and approve purchases and contracts for $15,000 and above. Such purchases and contracts are documented in packets that are indexed to project execution forms. These forms, while helpful to the overall process, do not clearly delineate that all statutory steps were taken, nor do they outline a formal selection process.

● Internal controls on purchasing are inconsistent within the City. Not all departments obtain appropriate quotes for all purchases, and quotes are not obtained for blanket purchase orders. Emergency purchase orders are used excessively, and the purchasing procedures lack sufficient separation of duties between ordering and receiving goods.

- The City uses an automated purchasing program that has streamlined much of the process, although the program does not include modules for commodities management or pricing, and some departmental staff do not effectively use the system to monitor purchases.

- The City has procedures for disposing of surplus and obsolete items. The procedures for disposing of usable equipment could be improved, and better management of the entire process could facilitate more effective purchasing planning for the entire City.

- The City has policies establishing purchasing preferences for both local and minority business enterprise (MBE) suppliers. In many instances, these policies conflict, which affects the number of MBE suppliers used. Additionally, the equal opportunity coordinator works to ensure legal compliance but does not focus on developing the local economy by assisting MBEs.

Recommendations: Major recommendations in the Purchasing section include the following:

- The City should change the administrative coordinator position to a purchasing agent position. This position should be responsible for strategically managing purchasing functions and implementing additional concepts, such as a purchasing manual, a system to monitor supplier performance and annual term pricing and just-in-time delivery agreements. A purchasing agent could also improve the City's procedures for disposing of usable equipment by coordinating an annual auction.

- The City should improve the internal control environment for purchasing. This could be done by revising the project execution form to reflect statutory requirements and a selection model, increasing the use of quotes for purchases, decreasing the use of blanket and emergency purchase orders, and creating appropriate separation of duties.

- The City should augment its automated purchasing system with a commodities module and pricing package. Additionally, the City could further streamline the automated purchasing process by ensuring that staff are sufficiently trained on the package and encouraging the use of email to resolve discrepancies in the system.

- The City should ensure that the equal opportunity coordinator focuses on economic development for MBEs and the City as well as working to ensure legal compliance. A change or clarification of the City's purchasing priorities could ensure that purchases are made from both local and minority suppliers.

Law Department

Findings: A summary of major findings in the Law Department section includes the following:

● Warren's law department has the second highest staffing level when compared to the peers. Using software to streamline some procedures currently performed manually could allow the City to eventually reduce its support staff in the law department. Warren does not have procedures in place to update attorney job descriptions or conduct performance evaluations on attorneys after their probationary period.

● Warren's law department does not have a formal mission or strategic plan. Attorneys are encouraged to resolve cases creatively and effectively, but measures are not in place to ensure customer satisfaction or an overall client service focus for the department. Guidelines and performance measures are not used to establish or monitor turnaround times on various legal services.

● Warren has general guidelines for its attorneys, although few of these are formalized or written as policies. The City does not have formal policies for attorney cross-training or case assignment or for case reviews by supervisors. Attorneys are allowed to maintain private practices as long as conflicts of interest do not arise, although there is not a formal policy providing guidance on what constitutes a conflict of interest.

● The law department has very limited capabilities in the area of technology. Case and time management practices are not tracked, and research capabilities are limited. Additionally, email is only available at two workstations. All records for the law department are maintained in paper form.

Recommendations: Major recommendations in the Law Department section include the following:

● Warren should increase the use of technology in the law department, which may allow for the eventual reduction of a clerical position. Additional procedures should be implemented for updating job descriptions and conducting performance evaluations on all employees.

● Warren's law department should develop a formal mission and strategic plan and should implement measures to ensure that customers are pleased with the level of service provided by the department. The law department should establish formal guidelines for service turnaround times and should develop a performance measurement system to monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of its activities. The law department should also develop formal policies to guide attorney actions in the areas of cross-training, case review and conflicts of interest.

●   The law department should increase its use of technology. Email should be available for all employees of the department, and functions such as case management and legal research should be improved with the use of technical resources. Some of these functions are available in the prosecutor's module of Courtview 2000 at a cost of $33,000.

Summary of Financial Implications

The following table summarizes the performance audit recommendations that contain financial implications. These recommendations provide a series of ideas or suggestions that the City should consider. Detailed information concerning the financial implications, including assumptions, is contained within the individual sections of the performance audit.

Ref. No.	Recommendation	Estimated Cost Savings (Annual)	Estimated Implementation Costs
Human Resources Department			
R3.1	Hire an additional clerical staff for the HR Department		$43,400(annual)
R3.3	Purchase desktop publishing software		$130(one time)
Technology Utilization			
R4.3	Purchase help desk software		$1,700(one time)
Purchasing Operations			
R5.4	Negotiate bulk buying and term pricing agreements for office supplies	$49,000	
R5.13	Purchase NIGP commodities pricing module		$4,898(one time) $895(annual)
Law Department			
R6.4	Reduce one criminal division support staff	$39,000	
R6.16	Purchase the prosecutor's module of Courtview 2000		$33,000(one time)
Total		**$88,000**	**$44,295(annual) $39,728(one time)**

The financial implications summarized above are presented on an individual basis for each recommendation. The magnitude of cost savings associated with some recommendations could be affected or offset by the implementation of other interrelated recommendations. Therefore, the cost savings could vary depending on the implementation of the various recommendations.
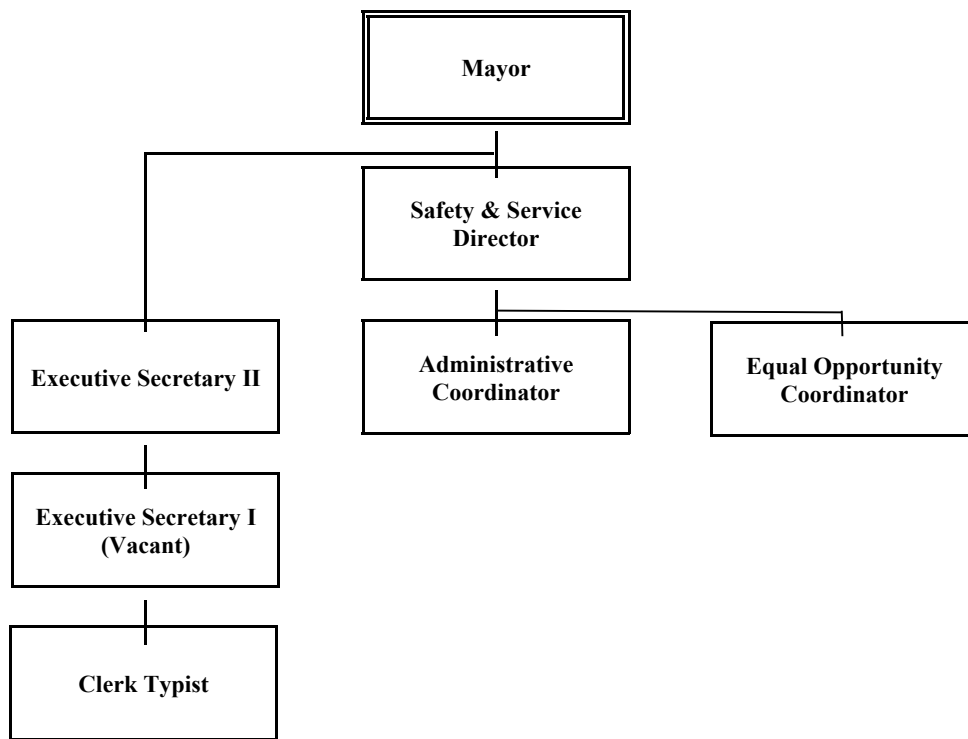
Mayor's Office

Background

This section of the performance audit focuses on the City of Warren's Mayor's office (WMO) and the office of the Safety & Service Director.

Organizational Chart and Staffing

Chart 2-1 provides an overview of the organizational structure for WMO and the office of the Safety & Service Director as of December 31, 2001. All positions are full-time.

Chart 2-1 Warren Mayor's Office

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                          ┌─────────────┐
                          │    Mayor    │
                          └─────────────┘
                    ┌────────────┴──────────────┐
                    │              ┌──────────────────────┐
                    │              │   Safety & Service   │
                    │              │      Director        │
                    │              └──────────────────────┘
                    │                ┌──────────┴───────────────┐
        ┌──────────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐
        │ Executive Secretary II│  │  Administrative  │  │ Equal Opportunity│
        │                       │  │   Coordinator    │  │   Coordinator    │
        └──────────────────────┘  └──────────────────┘  └──────────────────┘
                    │
        ┌──────────────────────┐
        │ Executive Secretary I │
        │      (Vacant)         │
        └──────────────────────┘
                    │
        ┌──────────────────────┐
        │     Clerk Typist      │
        └──────────────────────┘
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Source: Mayor's Office

Warren City Council consists of the President of council, ten council members, of which seven are council ward members and three are at-large council members, a clerk of council and a deputy clerk. The clerk and deputy clerk of council are full-time employees of the City of Warren.

Organizational Function

The Mayor of Warren is elected to a four-year term and acts as the City's chief executive officer and represents the citizens of the City. In this capacity, WMO provides leadership in establishing priorities, coordinating implementation of programs, and, when necessary, providing crisis management. All department heads, except elected officials and the police and fire chiefs, are appointed by the Mayor and report directly to the Safety & Service Director.

The Mayor, executive secretary, administrative coordinator and clerk typist comprise WMO personnel. The executive secretary and clerk typist also serve as support staff to the Safety & Service Director, the administrative coordinator and equal opportunity coordinator.

WMO is responsible for media/public relations. The Mayor speaks on behalf of the City to civic organizations, representatives from the business community and other officials to advance Warren's interests and promote the City. WMO also serves as the principal advocate for the City at the local, state and national levels. In the role of citizen representative, the Mayor and his staff work to ensure that citizens and other interested parties are accurately informed of City activities, programs and policies.

The Mayor makes appointments to all boards and participates in approximately 30 City boards and committees. For example, the Mayor is the head of the board of control, which approves all contracts. The Mayor attends all City council and board meetings. The Mayor and his staff work closely with other elected City officials and department heads to develop new strategies, policies and programs that improve or maintain the strength of neighborhoods and the City economy. An example of this is the purchase and implementation of side loader garbage trucks, which reduced the number of men needed for garbage collection in the City. This type of improvement often results from simply responding to the suggestions of constituents, community-based organizations and business groups. Individual requests for service are also answered either by mayoral staff or through appropriate representatives.

The Safety & Service Director is hired by, and reports directly to, the Mayor. The following outlines the Safety & Service Director's responsibilities:

●   Supervises the chiefs of the fire and police departments and serves as administrator for all other service departments, including sanitation, water pollution control, human resources, operations, and engineering, planning and building.

- Oversees the budget for the entire City and holds budget hearings every three months. The budget team is made up of the Safety & Service Director, City Auditor, Administrative Coordinator and the Compliance Coordinator. The compliance coordinator position was vacant from January 2001 to March 4, 2002, and during that time, the budget team responsibilities were performed by the director of service operations.

- Provides final approval to all vouchers and purchase orders.

- Manages all City-owned public buildings, including maintenance and tenants.

- Responds to citizen complaints and concerns.

City council is the legislative body for the City of Warren. There are 11 standing committees of city council, each requiring a chairman, a vice-chairman, and at least one member. Each member serves on at least three committees as either the chairman, the vice-chairman, or member. Department heads also serve on relevant committees.

Financial Data

Table 2-1 shows the historical spending for WMO for years 1999 - 2001 and the appropriations for 2002.

Table 2-1: WMO Expenditures

	1999	2000	2001	2002	% change from 1999-2002
Salaries and Wages	$253,504	$235,289	$244,294	$269,770	6.4%
Fringe Benefits	$88,120	$77,280	$111,226	$141,728	60.8%
Contracted Labor/Services	$19,573	$16,918	$17,605	$26,225	34.0%
Supplies	$3,456	$2,218	$8,479	$11,731	239.4%
Vehicle Maintenance	$372	$433	$55	$1,044	180.6%
Capital Outlay	$0	$0	$0	$0	0%
Total	$365,025	$332,138	$382,658	$450,498	23.4%

Source: City of Warren Auditor's office
Note: Includes Safety & Service Director, Equal Opportunity Coordinator but not Administrative Coordinator because that position is budgeted separately from WMO staff.

As shown in **Table 2-2,** salaries and benefits have gradually increased since the spending freeze of 2000. Contracted labor, supplies and vehicle maintenance have also increased. The increase in contracted labor in 2002 can be attributed to the hiring of the income tax director as a consultant until the term officially began. This allowed income tax collections to continue without a disruption during the change in administration for the City treasurer's office.

Due to the staff cuts in 2000, salaries, wages and benefits were reduced from the 1999 levels. Expenditures for salaries and wages increased as staff returned from lay off status in 2001 and the executive secretary I position was filled for 2002. This position has been reclassified to a secretary position to better reflect the nature of the work required and moved to directly report to the administrative coordinator.

Overall, since 1999, there has been a 23 percent increase in WMO expenditures, which can be attributed to the increase in supplies, which was for computer-related equipment, and fringe benefits which include PERS contributions, workers' compensation and health insurance. In 2000, and 2001 the city received refunds from the Bureau of Workers Compensation (BWC). The City will not receive the refund in 2002 and anticipates paying BWC. Also included in fringe benefits is FMLA leave for the clerk typist for 2001.

Expenditures have also risen slightly for city council since the spending freeze in 2000. Since 1999, total expenditures have risen by 5.5 percent. Very slight increases in salaries, wages and contracted labor account for the rise. A proposed increase in supplies for 2002 from $8,479 to $11,731, includes a request for a computer terminal, printer and scanner as well as ledger books for recording minutes for the clerk of council office.

Performance Measures

The following performance measures were used to analyze the Mayor's Office:

- Assess the economy, efficiency, and productivity of the organizational structure and function of the Mayor's office.
- Assess the effectiveness of the working relationship with outside organizations, city council, department heads and other city officials.
- Assess the adequacy of strategic planning activities.
- Assess the compliance of the Mayor's office with the ORC and city ordinances.
- Assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of Mayor's office programs and initiatives.
- Assess the use of technology.

Findings / Commendations / Recommendations

Staffing Levels

F2.1   **Table 2-2** displays staffing levels of the WMO as of December 31, 2001 and staffing levels for 1999 and 2000.

Table 2-3: Mayor's Office Staffing

Position	Authorized Positions	FTEs 1999	FTEs 2000	FTEs 2001	FTEs 2002
Mayor	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Safety & Service Director	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Administrative Assistant	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Administrative Coordinator	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Executive Secretary II	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Executive Secretary I	1.0	1.0	vacant	vacant	1.0[2]
Equal Opportunity Coordinator	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Clerk Typist	1.0	1.0	0.0[1]	0.5[1]	1.0
Total	8.0	7.0	7.0	6.0	7.0

Source: Mayor's Office
Note: An FTE refers to a full-time equivalent employee
[1] The clerk typist position was in layoff status from January 2000 through July 2001.
[2] The executive secretary I has been reclassified to a secretary for 2002 and reports to the administrative coordinator

As seen in **Table 2-3**, as of December 31, 2001, WMO is staffed with six employees, which include the administrative coordinator and the equal opportunity coordinator. While the City's Codified Ordinance outlines the administrative assistant position, the Mayor has not requested this position be filled through the budget as long as he has been mayor. The executive secretary I has been reclassified to a secretary for 2002 and reports to the administrative coordinator.

Table 2-4 provides an illustration of staffing for WMO and the peer cities.

Table 2-4: Peer Mayor's Office Staffing Analysis

	Warren	Mansfield	Middletown	Peer Average
Supervisor	2.0 [1]	1.0	2.0 [2]	1.5
Clerical	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.5
Service Personnel	3.0	2.0	7.0	4.5
Vacancies	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	7.0	4.0	11.0	7.5
Current City Staffing [3]	451	632	447	540
Total City Residents	46,832	49,346	49,574	49,460
City employees per Mayor's Office FTE[3]	75	158	41	72
City residents per Mayor's Office FTE[3]	7,805.3	12,336.5	4,506.7	6,594.7

Source: Cities of Warren, Mansfield and Middletown as of September 2001
[1] Includes the Mayor and Director of Safety Services.
[2] Middletown council elects a Mayor and employs a City Manager.
[3] Does not include vacancies. In Warren, 38 positions were vacant; in Mansfield 73 positions were vacant; in Middletown, 16 positions were vacant.

As shown in **Table 2-4**, WMO appears to be performing near the peer average for number of total WMO staffing. The number of city residents served is approximately six percent less than the peer average. The ratio of WMO FTEs to City employees is four percent greater than the peer average. However, the number of city residents served per WMO FTE is nearly 16 percent greater that the peer average. Based on this analysis, it appears that staffing for WMO is appropriate. While the position of administrative assistant remains available through the codified ordinances, the current administration has no interest in filling the vacancy. There appears to be no opportunities for further cost savings through additional staff reductions without negatively impacting service to the citizens and employees of the City. Also, there is no documented need to increase staffing

The City of Middletown employs a City Manager, an Assistant City Manager and each of these positions employs a chief administrative assistant and an executive assistant. The City Manager also serves as the Safety Service Director. The administrative coordinator or purchasing agent is a function of the finance department and is not reflected in the Mayor's office staffing. City council elects a Mayor and Vice Mayor annually and a secretarial position is provided for administrative support. In addition, the clerk of council and the deputy clerk are considered service personnel.

In Mansfield, the Safety Service Director position is not within the Mayor's office but in a separate department. Also, there is no administrative coordinator providing the services of a central purchasing agent, each department has that responsibility.

The Mayor's office of the City of Mansfield includes the following positions:

- Mayor;
- Administrative Assistant;
- Grants and Public Relations Officer; and
- Special Events Coordinator.

The grants and public relations officer (GPRO) at the City of Mansfield was created in 1994 as a response to a need in Mansfield for a coordinated effort of research and application of grants apart from CDBG grants for the city. In addition, the GPRO also assists the City's school district, community agencies, civic organizations and small businesses with the grant process. Since the establishment of the position, the City has received $1.2 million dollars in grants, and the other organizations have received approximately $300,000. Since 1995, the City and school district have successfully collaborated on approximately seven grants. The GPRO maintains a database of types of grants and sources and categorizes them in a variety of ways to facilitate research. The position is responsible for approximately 90 percent of the grants written for the city, and very technical grants account for the other 10 percent, which may be passed on to engineering or a similar department. A report is prepared monthly for the Mayor and council of the status of current grants and any noteworthy activity. This position is also the network administrator for the City web site. The community development department continues to be responsible for CDBG grants.

The City of Newark has published a directory, "Finding Funding in Your Backyard and Beyond," with a listing of 100 grant sources for nonprofit agencies. The directory was written by that city's grant writer. The directory was written as a response to frequent requests by non-governmental groups in that community in search of grant funding.

The City subscribes to a number of publications for grant research, some of which follow:

- Grants for Cities and Towns Hotline Monthly;

- Federal Register, an internet resource; and

- *GrantSource*, an Auditor of State quarterly newsletter which highlights grant opportunities for state and local governments and non profit organizations.

Unlike the City of Mansfield, the City of Warren does not employ a single position that is responsible for the oversight, coordination or reporting responsibilities of total grant

management. The grant coordinator of the City of Warren community development department is responsible for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). The executive secretary II in the WMO receives grant information in the mail and passes it on to the department most likely to benefit from the grant. Currently, there is not a report or any type of recording documentation to detail grants that have been applied for or awarded, the services that can be expected to be provided, whether a community match is required, and the expected duration of the project.

While a formal record of grants has not been kept, a discussion of recent grants reveals that the City receives most of its grant funds through CDBG, although the total amounts are unavailable. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends that all government bodies adopt a policy that encourages a diversity of revenue sources in order to improve their ability to handle fluctuations in funding flow and not become dependent on a single source. Grantors often help cities develop new and creative ways to address persistent urban obstacles and become self-sufficient in the process. Grant funding to address those obstacles is normally initiative-based and does not last more than a couple of years. In order to ensure that these initiatives continue, entities should show that they can continue to fund projects after the initial funding cycle is complete.

R2.1   The City of Warren should adopt a policy that provides for grant research, writing and application beyond CDBG. The policy should be developed to provide the City with the opportunity to seek additional funding sources and encourage the development of new and creative programs to serve the needs of Warren's citizens.   Funding from sources independent of the local economy could also ensure the continuation or enhancement of some vital services during periods of reduced income. An existing position should be identified to assume the role as the initial contact person to work in conjunction with the WMO and further manage the grant process, including the application, oversight, coordination and reporting duties. Reports should be developed to track grants, their status, community match requirements and the success of the programs that have been adopted. The position of grant writer and its role in the community development department will be further examined in a subsequent performance audit of the City.

Working Relationship with Council, City Employees and Citizen Groups

F2.2   The City of Warren does not provide formal training for new members of council or other elected officials to help them become acclimated to the business of running a city and the roles and responsibilities of members of council. The Mayor and Safety & Service Director have attempted to inform new members of council of responsibilities and expectations, but, according to them, members of council often have a strong desire to appear independent of the administration and are cautious of its guidance. The lack of instruction fosters an

atmosphere of frustration and distrust on the part of the administration, the members of council and the citizens.

Programs are offered by a number of organizations. The Auditor of State offers a general, on-line training to local government officials that is based on the Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Elected Officials Guide series. The cost of the on-line training is $65 per person. Extensive training for members of council is also available from the Ohio Municipal League (OML) and results in certification. The cost of this training is $85 per person for a two-day session.

R2.2   The City of Warren should develop a formal orientation or training program to include a brief description of rights, responsibilities and public expectations for elected office holders. Adequately trained council members, coupled with a strategic plan that identifies a unified vision for the City will foster a more cohesive environment of progress for the City. To facilitate the acceptance of a training course, an independent or professional organization should be used in conjunction with the in-house orientation. The agenda for such a training should include the following topics:

- Effective city council meetings;
- Better working relationships between members of council, City employees and citizen groups;
- Economic development; and
- Financial management and planning.

Financial Implication: The cost of providing training for all council members, at-large members and the president of council for one year would be approximately $950. This cost is based on 11 participants using the GFOA Elected Officials Guide series. The actual cost to the City of Warren would depend on the type of training chosen and the number of elected officials that participate.

F2.3   Because the purpose of city council meetings is to pass legislation and keep the public informed about city business, it is not an effective means of communicating the concerns of residents. Currently, city council meetings serve as the only public forum available on a regular basis. Because the intent of the meetings is to conduct City business, open and unplanned public participation is discouraged. Guidelines have been adopted by the city council to maintain effective, orderly and constructive public participation at the meetings. These guidelines are available at council chamber doors at the onset and throughout every council meeting. The guidelines inhibit public participation by limiting the number of speakers, the amount of time allowed for speaking and the topic of the speech. The policy is a source of frustration to residents, who may have legitimate concerns and are unaware of other avenues for resolution, and to council members and City administrators who are not prepared to diffuse urgent, and, sometimes emotional concerns without previous notice.

Furthermore, the guidelines are not consistently implemented by city council, which causes the meetings to appear unorganized and creates the opportunity for counterproductive discussions and displays. The City lacks an established avenue to keep citizens informed or encourage participation in City initiatives.

R2.3   The WMO and city council should develop a plan to incorporate citizen participation on a formal and regular basis that is independent of city council meetings. This plan should contain a communication strategy that includes e-mail, telephone or postal responses to citizens from the Mayor, city council or their representatives; a web-site that chronicles City initiatives and allows for citizen feedback; and a calendar of events that includes breakfasts, symposiums, town-hall meetings and special initiative planning sessions throughout the year.

By providing citizens with regular, frequent and productive opportunities to air concerns with their council representatives, the Mayor and other key administrators, the regular sessions of council could become more legislatively oriented. Residents should always be encouraged to attend council meetings and observe their concerns acted upon through legislation.

F2.4   Although citizens have limited participation in the business of the City as discussed in **F2.3**, the Mayor has provided the citizens many opportunities for access to him and City Hall. The following are some examples of how the citizens of Warren could "get in touch" with their Mayor:

- An open door policy is in effect, whereby any citizen interested in meeting with the Mayor is welcome to drop in. Appointments are generally preferred, but the Mayor also receives walk-ins when he is available.

- The Mayor has an e-mail address that is available for the public to communicate concerns.

- The Mayor has been a guest on a local talk radio show and has fielded questions from the listening audience.

- Tours of City Hall, a historical mansion of an early Warren industrialist, are common place for school and civic groups as well as private citizens.

- The Mayor is a frequent guest at schools and uses a *PowerPoint* presentation to explain the local political process and stress the importance of civic responsibility. Letters from students are displayed around the Mayor's office.

- In the spring, many school groups use Perkins Park which adjoins the city hall property for school picnics. The Mayor often visits with the children for lunch.

- A quarterly city newsletter is being developed that will be mailed with each citizens' water bill.

- A customer survey is included in the water bill mailing to every tenth customer. Return postage is guaranteed to encourage responses. However, only 40 to 50 responses are received per year. The mayor personally responds to customer surveys addressed to his attention.

While all of the above-mentioned activities provide access to the Mayor, WMO has not developed activities that solicit citizens' opinions and on a large scale regarding all of the city services or create a method to compile, distribute and use the information gathered as mentioned in **F2.6**.

C2.1   The Mayor has established a personal commitment to citizen accessibility. This sincere commitment is shown through his many activities aimed at inspiring civic responsibility and pride in young people.

R2.4   The City of Warren and the Mayor should be encouraged to move forward with the quarterly newsletter. This newsletter could also be used as a vehicle to conduct a citizen survey regarding all city services. The use of the water bill/newsletter mailing would be an appropriate and cost-effective method of obtaining the opinions of a wider group of the citizens of Warren regarding all services and the operation of the city in general. The results of the survey could identify areas of emphasis to be included in the strategic plan. See **F2.7** for further discussion of the strategic planning process.

F2.5   Three commissions: the Citizens Advisory Committee on Energy and Utilities, the Commission on Employment Practices and the Intergroup Relations Commission are no longer active. The codified ordinances that created the commissions do not provide the founding purpose of the commissions, therefore it is unclear what the City's lawmakers envisioned as the goals for the three commissions. Also, the codified ordinances have not provided a "sunset clause" that would pre-ordain the time frame for completion of the commissions' goals. The commissions did, however, provide for citizen participation in processes deemed necessary by the City's lawmakers.

The Citizens' Advisory Committee on Energy and Utilities was created in 1987 to "serve the Public Utilities Committee of Council by providing advice, information and concerns of the residents of the City with regard to energy and public utility matters."

The Community Relations Board was established in 1957. The Intergroup Relations Commission, which reported to the Community Relations Board, was responsible for studying and preparing recommendations regarding intergroup tensions. Another function of the Community Relations Board is the Commission of Employment Practices. The

commission was established in1964 to "receive, investigate and seek to adjust all complaints of unfair employment practices."

These commissions have been provided for through the codified ordinances and have not been rescinded, neither have they evolved into another group to serve the public good.

R2.5   Commissions that are no longer active should be reviewed for relevancy or quality of purpose. The commissions that are found to be necessary should be reactivated by recruiting enthusiastic citizens. The commissions that are no longer purposeful should be repealed and replaced with new directives enlisting new participants to satisfy the current needs of the city.

As new commissions are created, the legislative language creating them should include the purpose and duration of the committee or commission. The effectiveness of the commission will be fostered by defining these elements at inception.

In addition, WMO and city council should develop a City-wide agenda of initiatives to be administered by citizen commissions. This planned participation will provide residents that have specific concerns or expertise the opportunity to design, direct and advise on those matters. To improve the operations of the City, the citizens should be encouraged to collaborate with city council and WMO in identifying and implementing priorities for the City's future. See **F2.7** regarding citizen participation in the strategic planning process.

F2.6   The City does not have a formal process to receive, address or track citizen complaints, comments, questions or concerns. Citizen calls can be received by a number of city employees such as the clerk of council, the mayor, his executive secretary and the Safety & Service Director These calls are logged by each individual in a variety of ways before being referred to the appropriate employee or department, but the calls are not logged collectively to review the number, type or location (such as ward or street) of calls. Also, there is no formal device in place to track complaints, comments or questions and the resolution of the issues raised. Without a formal system to monitor citizen feedback, information is lost that could be valuable for the management of the City. The Mayor, department heads, and the members of council are not receiving the information that could be useful in measuring the effectiveness of City operations.

In addition, City employees who must interact with the public do not receive customer service training that enables them to effectively, efficiently and diplomatically receive complaints, field questions, defuse negative situations or direct citizens to the most appropriate source of information or assistance.

R2.6   The City of Warren should develop and implement procedures that address the following needs:

- Uniform recording of citizen inquiries and comments;

- Monitoring of progress and follow-up;

- Goal setting for prompt and accurate responses and the measurement of results; and

- Distributing relevant information to the appropriate departments, members of council and/or administration members.

Goals for response time should reflect best practices prescribed in *Ammons Municipal Benchmarks.* According to *Ammons*, prompt response to citizen requests is described as 98 percent of citizen requests being resolved within three workdays for the first year measured and 100 percent for the second year. As the procedures are put into place, a customer service training process that would include telephone inquires should also be instituted for all employees. The training process, while focusing on citizen relations, should also ensure that all city employees understand the services provided by the City and its departments so that they can respond to inquiries with accurate and reliable information.

Strategic Planning

F2.7   The City has no process to formally define, prioritize, and report long term and/or annual mission, goals, objectives, and strategies for the city as a whole and for each department. Without such a process, it is very difficult to ascertain whether departments are meeting customer needs. Furthermore, it is difficult for the City to make appropriate allocation changes since it is unable to evaluate the performance of departments or programs within the City because there is no baseline against which performance can be measured. The City may not accurately determine the impact of a resource allocation or change without information on baselines or the expected outputs and outcomes of each department.

A major priority of the Mayor is to develop a strategic plan for the City. A strategic plan, while important in establishing the City's overall mission, is difficult to implement over time and throughout administrations without the input and support of the stakeholders. Therefore, it is important that any strategic planning process begin with a formal process of citizen engagement to define, prioritize, and report long-term goals and objectives. Effective strategic plans incorporate a broad base of representatives from the business, labor, education, art, entertainment, nonprofit and faith-based communities.

Mahoning County authorized the "Citizens Advisory Committee" to develop long term goals to ensure a future for the County. The Citizens Advisory Committee was made up of leaders from all sectors of the community such as industry, banking, service, nonprofit, labor

unions and interested citizens that shared a common desire to improve the county and provide for a viable future.

The City of Rockford, IL has recently been given a best practice award in the area of consolidated planning by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The reward recognized a community-wide planning process called "Blueprint for Rockford's Future: 2005." The "Blueprint" was spearheaded by the mayor and involved over 500 citizens in a nine-month effort. What resulted was a vision and implementation plan to achieve that goal within a ten-year time frame.

R2.7   The City should establish a strategic planning system. This would involve enlisting key internal and external decision makers or opinion leaders. By involving the key external leaders, it is unlikely that the agendas of future administrations could jeopardize the success of the strategic plan. However, to reflect a dynamic process, the strategic plan should incorporate planned reviews to provide for adjustment over time. A strategic plan would, in fact, ensure the continuity of relevant and necessary services to the citizens.

The following issues should be addressed in the City's strategic plan. These issues are critical to the City's future and warrant attention from the citizens:

● The future of City Hall and other historical buildings and documents owned by the city;

● Storage, including records, and security needs of the city offices;

● Recreation and tourism development;

● Industrial base revitalization;

● City technology;

● Public or mass transportation; and

● Important services such as police and fire.

In addition to determining the priority of projects or issues for the City of Warren, the strategic plan participants should determine how the goals will be achieved by establishing key elements such as: proposed funding sources, time lines for accomplishments, and who will be responsible for the implementation, monitoring and maintenance of the plan. When the strategic plan is developed and adopted, it should provide a framework for the development of department operational plans. The plans should be updated annually and

submitted with department budget requests as support for appropriations. The annual budget requests should also include a report of performance against the plan for the previous year.

Facilities master plans and information systems strategic plans should also be developed to support the strategic and operational plans. The facility master plan should specifically address the use of City Hall and its renovation. No information system development and facilities additions or dispositions should take place until these long term plans have been developed. See the **technology utilization** section for further discussion of information system development.

Compliance with ORC and City Ordinances

F2.8   The following Ohio Revised Code (ORC) sections define some of the authority and responsibilities of the WMO:

- ORC 705.75 Veto power. The process by which a mayor can veto legislation and how council can override that legislation is established. The mayor may return any legislation or part of legislation to which he has objections. This must be done within ten days. Council then has the option to override the mayor's objections with a two thirds vote. If the mayor does not sign the legislation and does not return the legislation to council, it will pass as though he had signed it.

- ORC 705.77 Executive power. The executive powers of a municipal corporation belong to the mayor, department heads and executive officers of the city. Executive powers relate to the administration of the city by acting on the laws established by the legislative branch - the city council.

The City of Warren is a statutory city, which provides for a popularly-elected mayor and council members. Local control allows the City to establish further restrictions or grant additional powers to the Mayor and council that are not specifically outlined in the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). The codified ordinances of the City, in addition to establishing laws for the citizens, also detail these powers and restrictions. A review of the City's practices and policies showed no compliance issues except with the Records Commission as discussed in **F2.9**.

F2.9   The Mayor is identified as the chief executive of a statutory city and his powers and relationship to city council are briefly defined by (ORC) Section 705.77 as shown in **F2.8**.

In addition to the State's definition, the following Warren codified ordinance provides additional responsibilities of the Mayor or his appointed representative as the chairman of the records commission.

- Chapter 145 establishes the Records Commission "whose principal responsibility is records retention policies for the City. The records commission is composed of the Mayor or his appointed representative, as chairman, the auditor, the law director, and a resident appointed by the Mayor. The commission shall meet once every six months and upon call of the chairman. The functions of the commission shall be to provide rules for retention and disposal of the City records and review records disposal lists submitted by municipal offices. When municipal records have been approved for disposal, a list of such records shall be sent to the Bureau of Inspection and Supervision of Public Offices of the Auditor of State. Before public records are otherwise disposed of, the Ohio Historical Society shall be informed and given the opportunity to select for its custody or disposal of public records."

The codified ordinance is a re-creation of the ORC Section 149.39 mandating a city record commission. The following non-compliance issues with regards to the Record Commission were found:

- The records commission has not met on a regular basis of at least every six months;

- A citizen member has not been appointed; and

- Minutes of the meetings are not available.

Because of the lack of recent activity by the Records Commission, several storage problems have gone unresolved. The storage of paper files for WMO is difficult. There is not enough space in the office to store the amount of paper that is generated. A computer file index is maintained by the Mayor's secretary to aid in the location of old correspondence and executive orders. The basement of City Hall is too damp to be used for paper storage and the administration is reluctant to alter the configuration of the building to facilitate greater storage because it would compromise the historic integrity of the building.

Printed or handwritten minutes of city council meetings that date back to 1854 were available for review at the clerk of council's office. Also, a variety of records such as council meeting notes, annexation records, variances, liquor applications, financial records and council meeting summaries were also on hand. Some information dated back to 1966. Boxes of the original tapes of council meetings were also stored at the clerk of council's office. The oldest tapes reviewed were dated 1998.

While the ORC mandates some retention schedules, many record retention schedules are left to the discretion of the local government. The City has developed a records retention policy, although it has not been formally approved by Council. The Ohio Historical Society is by law the archive for the State of Ohio. As such, it collects, preserves and makes available to the public, documents pertaining to the operation of state and local governments. The state

archive assists local government agencies with establishing records management and archival programs through the Local Government Records (LGR) program. The LGR provides extensive advice and assistance regarding records management through eight network centers and on their website, www.ohiohistory.org. Also available through the website are publications, on line training that is free and suggested retention schedules for a variety of records.

The Auditor of State has established record retention policies to cover a variety of documents. A sample of those policies that would also be relevant to the City follows:

- Minutes of agency staff meetings that document internal policy decisions are to be retained two years.

- General correspondence that is informative in nature and does not attempt to influence agency policy is to be retained for 6 months and then destroyed.

- Directives, manuals and handbooks detailing operations, regulations and/or procedures should be retained until superceded, obsolete or replaced.

- Transient documents such as phone messages, post-it-notes and other limited documents which serve to convey information of temporary importance in lieu of oral communications should be retained until no longer of administrative value.

R2.9 The Records Commission should resume activity, with a six month schedule being the minimum meeting frequency as prescribed by ORC. A more rigorous meeting schedule can be adopted until current storage issues are addressed. The members of the commission should attend as required and a citizen member should be appointed. In addition, minutes should be taken and kept on file at an office of the commission's choosing. The records commission should review the information available from the Ohio Historical Society concerning the Local Government Records Program and incorporate the information into additions or revisions to the record retention policy.

In addition, the records commission should consider the following:

- The off-site storage of non-essential printed materials from WMO should be considered to alleviate congestion and prevent a fire hazard.

- A policy for the storage and destruction of records should be adopted and adhered to. Also, the policy should be distributed to all City departments and should be posted wherever City records are stored.

- Items of historic value should be discussed with the appropriate personnel at the Ohio Historical Society. It should be determined if these items could be donated to a local historical society or library, where than can be preserved, stored and viewed in a more appropriate and secure manner.

- The retention and storage of old and duplicate tape recorded copies of council and committee meeting minutes on file in the clerk of council's office should be addressed with regards to length of time stored as well as manner and location.

- The record retention policy should incorporate the conversion and storage of electronic records as the City increases the use of computers.

F2.10   The City's Rules of Council define the rules and procedures regarding meetings, members, ordinances and resolutions. Included in this document, which is updated and adopted at the beginning of every term (every two years), is the following provision regarding the recording of council committee minutes:

Section 7.13 "No ordinance, resolution, petition or other matter referred to a committee for action shall be approved or disapproved and reported out of Committee until it shall have first been considered at a Committee meeting called as provided herein and a written Warren City Council Committee Report be made available to the clerk."

The following ORC section defines some of the authority and responsibilities of council members, particularly with regards to public meetings:

ORC 121.22" Public meetings. The minutes of a regular or special meeting of any such public body shall be promptly prepared, filed and maintained and shall be open to public inspection."

The City's codified ordinances included the following chapters outlining specific administration activities the City:

- Chapter 107, Codified Ordinances, entitled "Open Meetings," specifies that all meetings of council, committees and/or decision making bodies will be open and public "Nothing herein, however, shall be construed to mandate public participation in such meetings unless specifically required by law or ordinance." Public and personal notification of the public for regular, special and emergency meetings is provided for. The minutes of all meetings shall be recorded promptly and open to the public for inspection. However, the minutes for executive session only need to reflect the general subject matter.

- Chapter 111, Codified Ordinances, entitled "Council", outlines the activities of city council meetings, duties of the clerk of council, how legislation will be furnished to the library, sale of codified ordinances, the Citizens' Advisory Committee on Energy and Utilities and how copies of reports to council will be distributed. Also included are appropriate references to the Ohio Revised Code.

The clerk of council makes audio tape records of council meetings and types the minutes the next business day from the tape to provide for verbatim recording of the proceedings. The council meeting minutes are typed by the clerk of council and the summaries are typed by the deputy clerk. If a committee meeting occurs in council chambers, the clerk of council sets up the tape recorder as a courtesy to that committee. If a committee meeting occurs elsewhere, the committee is responsible for the audio recording of the minutes. All tapes are then brought to the clerk's office where they are stored and made available for citizens. The typing of committee meeting minutes is the responsibility of that committee's chairman. Issues have arisen with regards to minutes of council committee meetings as follows:

- The clerk may not be aware of meetings that do not occur in council chambers and then cannot provide for the tape recording of such meetings.

- The local newspaper has reported on a few meetings that have convened without minutes taken.

- The typing of committee meeting minutes is not being done, contrary to the City's codified ordinance, Chapter 107 and ORC 121.22 Section C.

R2.10 All council committees should submit complete written records of their meetings to the clerk of council to comply with ORC sections, the City's own codified ordinances and rules of council. The chair of each committee should ensure that the following procedures are in place for all committee meetings:

- A member of each committee should be designated the minute taker. This could be on a permanent or rotating basis.

- The minutes should be typed within five working days.

- The typewritten minutes should be presented to the clerk of council to file and distribute as necessary.

Initiatives and Programs

F2.11   The Mayor has initiated and continues to develop a broad range of creative programs that address economic base diversification, as well as service and revenue enhancement, and financial savings. For example, in keeping with the historic nature of the City of Warren, the mayor has sought to attract museums to further promote tourism as an industry for the City, including a perambulator (baby carriage) museum and a trolley museum.

In addition, the City has seen a number of recent innovations to reduce the cost of city services while enhancing the service provided. For example, the purchase of side loader garbage trucks reduced the number of men needed per truck for municipal garbage collection.

Unfortunately, the programs that have been initiated by the Mayor are not part of a strategic plan and the continuation of his efforts are not assured through future administrations as discussed in **F2.7**.

C2.2   The Mayor and his administration have been diligent in their efforts to develop diverse as well as creative programs for city improvements. Much work that has been done to diversify the economic base such as the attraction of museums to enhance the historic nature of the City. Also, programs that enhance city services and reduce costs have been pursued and implemented, such as the acquisition of side loader garbage trucks.

R2.11   To ensure that the administration's initiatives continue to be successful from inception through completion, these initiatives should be included in an overall strategy that has acquired genuine support in from all aspects of City government: City workers, members of council, citizens and businesses. The Mayor should incorporate economic development and service enhancement into a strategic planning process as recommended in **R2.5** to position the Administration's priorities as part of an overall City agenda. The Mayor, as the top elected official, should work with city council to engage stakeholder groups in identifying goals and objectives to support the agenda, define tasks to support the goals and objectives, and develop evaluation methods that include quantifiable goals, measurable goals, and time lines to determine whether the City is accomplishing its mission.

Use of Technology

F2.12   The use and availability of e-mail and Internet in WMO, as well as throughout the city, is not consistent. As cited in the **technology utilization** section, only 66 of the 128 stations for management/administrative employees have Internet capabilities as of December 31, 2001. The clerk typist work station does not have e-mail or Internet access. The services that

are available are not used to the fullest extent to reduce the number of phone calls and decrease the routing of paper documents.

There is only one computer station, one Internet connection and no e-mail service provided for the two employees in the clerk of council office. This is an office whose chief responsibilities are the creation, maintenance, and dissemination of vital city records and information, and there is limited current technology to manage the task. In 2002, council budgeted funds to buy an additional printer, terminal and scanner for the clerk of council.

R2.12 The Internet and e-mail should be available throughout the City to facilitate the economical use of personnel and time. E-mail is an efficient method for moving information. Documents, reports and ideas can be easily transmitted without the excessive production and storage of paper. The use of e-mail could also alleviate occasional work overload for the WMO secretarial staff by delegating work to underutilized secretarial staff in other departments without causing anyone to physically leave the assigned work area. E-mail also provides an effective method for citizens to communicate with members of council and city departments. A wealth of information is available through the Internet regarding grants, best practices for cities and new economic opportunities. It also allows for less expensive and more efficient communication with groups dedicated to the advancement of cities and their citizens such as the Ohio Municipal League and the US Council of Mayors.

Conclusion Statement

WMO has pursued creative programs for city improvements, both economic and cultural that illustrate a desire for diversification of the economic base and City services. These initiatives include the pursuit of museums to create a tourism industry for Warren, as well as side loader garbage trucks that provide service enhancement and cost savings. To ensure the future of these programs, and to ensure that a vision for Warren continues beyond the current administration, the Mayor should encourage the development of a strategic planning process. A strategic planning process should incorporate initiatives for economic development and service enhancement. In addition, the process could be used to resolve other issues such as citizen accessibility, the future of City Hall and training for city employees and elected officials. The strategic planning process should enlist the citizens of Warren and key civic and business leaders to determine priorities for the future of the City.

Through its initiatives, WMO has provided opportunities to the citizens of Warren that reinforce a sense of ownership and accessibility. However, more options could be made available to incorporate citizen participation on a formal and regular basis that is independent of city council meetings. Citizen participation should also be encouraged through involvement in council commissions and committees such as the records commission. Formal customer service procedures could help to ensure that citizen interests and concerns are addressed effectively and consistently by the City.

Because of the lack of recent activity by the Records Commission, several storage problems have gone unresolved. The storage of paper files is difficult for WMO and at the clerk of council office. As the use of computers increases, the record retention policy should also include the storage of electronic data. While the Records Commission determines the policy for record retention, the strategic plan could address the physical demands of records storage. The City should continue to incorporate both City ordinances and the ORC as it reviews and/or revises its record retention policy.

Finally, the need for training is present in several areas. Training should be provided for all newly elected office holders. The training should provide the means for more effective council meetings and lay the groundwork for understanding the business of city government. Furthermore, customer service training should also be provided for all employees. Citizens will then be assured prompt, courteous and reliable responses to their inquires.

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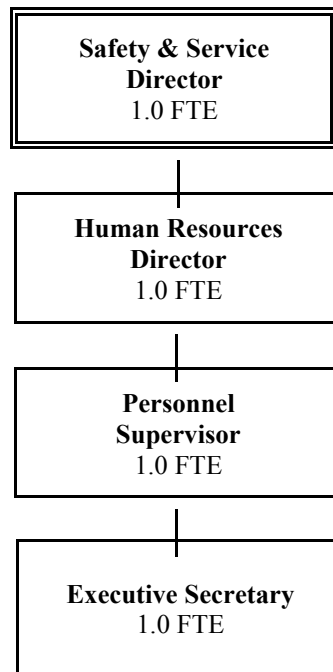
Human Resources

Background

This section focuses on the organizational structure and administration of human resources functions within the City of Warren (City). The objectives are to compare personnel policies and administration within the City to peer municipalities. The two peer cities examined in this section are Mansfield and Middletown. From these comparisons, findings and recommendations have been developed to assist the City in improving personnel and human resource operations.

Organizational Chart

The central human resources department (HR) is comprised of three staff members: a human resources director, a personnel supervisor and an executive secretary. **Chart 3-1** provides an overview of the human resources department's organizational structure and staffing levels.

Chart 3-1: City of Warren HR Organization Chart

```
        ┌─────────────────────┐
        │   Safety & Service  │
        │       Director      │
        │       1.0 FTE       │
        └─────────────────────┘
                   │
        ┌─────────────────────┐
        │   Human Resources   │
        │      Director       │
        │      1.0 FTE        │
        └─────────────────────┘
                   │
        ┌─────────────────────┐
        │      Personnel      │
        │      Supervisor     │
        │      1.0 FTE        │
        └─────────────────────┘
                   │
        ┌─────────────────────┐
        │ Executive Secretary │
        │      1.0 FTE        │
        └─────────────────────┘
```

Organization Function

The individuals performing human resources functions are responsible for coordinating the activities and programs for recruiting and selecting potential employees, administrating employee benefits programs, monitoring compliance with employment and safety standards, facilitating employee performance evaluations, administering and monitoring grievance policies and procedures, negotiating and administering union contracts, conducting disciplinary hearings and participating in new employee orientation.

Summary of Operations

The director of human resources (director,1.0 FTE) reports to the City's Safety & Service Director. The director is responsible for planning, organizing, coordinating, administering and evaluating the functions of the City's HR department. Concurrent responsibilities of the director include supervision of all HR department staff activities, management of collective bargaining agreements, formulating and developing employee policy and procedures and advising City leaders on personnel issues. The director also has extensive contact with City departments and employees, representatives of other organizations and the public.

The personnel supervisor (1.0 FTE) reports to the director and performs functions encompassing various aspects of personnel administration. The personnel supervisor provides support to the City administration by participating in employee policy formulation and development, administering employee health insurance and workers' compensation claims, organizing activities and informational meetings for City employees, and preparing employee communications. Additional undertakings of the personnel supervisor include processing confidential information, participating as a committee member for various City programs, and assisting in the development of the annual financial plan and budget.

The HR executive secretary (1.0 FTE) provides clerical support for the City's HR department. The executive secretary carries out the function of receptionist for the HR department, performs mail distribution, provides customer service to the public on routine matters and responds to phone inquiries. The executive secretary also coordinates the administration of promotional testing, processes and posts job openings, creates and maintains spreadsheets used for wage and benefit analysis and comparisons, and helps to ensure the City's compliance with various federal policies. Other aspects of the executive secretary's responsibilities include preparing written correspondence and reports, maintaining filing systems and databases and performing specialized administrative tasks to cross-reference information, search records and organize data and statistics for reports.

Performance Measures

The following is a list of performance measures that were used to review the City of Warren's human resources operations:

- Assessment of roles, responsibilities, accountability and authorities of key participants in personnel administration;
- Assessment of personnel resources in relation to workload;
- Assessment of management to staff span of control;
- Assessment of employee recruitment, hiring, retention and termination procedures;
- Assessment of employee training for the work environment and professional development;
- Assessment of performance appraisal procedures;
- Assessment of disciplinary and grievance procedures; and
- Assessment of workplace policies pertaining to federal requirements.

Findings/Recommendations/Commendations

Organization

F3.1   The City's HR department is staffed with three FTE's. In comparison, the City of Mansfield HR department is staffed with five FTE's and the City of Middletown uses four FTE's. The City of Middletown serves city personnel through the City's "Personnel Program," which is located within the City Manager's office.

The City of Mansfield's HR Department is staffed with five municipal employees. There is the Director, a Benefits Coordinator, a Personnel Coordinator, a Confidential Secretary and a Secretary. Personnel staff for the City of Middletown includes a Senior Personnel Specialist who reports to the City Manager, a Personnel Specialist, a Secretary II and a Secretary III.

Table 3-1 compares the City's HR department staffing level with those of peer municipalities. Ratios of HR staff to the total number of city employed FTE's are calculated based exclusively on September 27, 2001 staffing for both the City and the peers. Figures for total authorized positions are shown to further illuminate how the City's HR staffing level compares to that of peer municipalities.

Table 3-1: 2001 City Employees per Human Resources Personnel

	Warren	Mansfield	Middletown	Peer Average
City Employee FTEs [1]	451.0	632.0	447.0	539.5
City Employee FTEs [2]	489.0	705.0	463.0	584.0
Human Resources FTEs	3.0	5.0	4.0 [5]	4.5
City Employee per Human Resources FTE [3]	**150.3**	**126.4**	**111.8**	**119.9**
City Employee per Human Resources FTE [4]	**163.0**	**141.0**	**115.8**	**129.8**
Human Resources Staff per 100 FTE [3]	**0.67**	**0.79**	**0.89**	**0.83**
Human Resources Staff per 100 FTE [4]	**0.61**	**0.71**	**0.86**	**0.77**

Source: Human resources department and interviews
Note: Municipal court judges are not included in computations
[1] Staffing level as of September 27, 2001
[2] Total authorized positions
[3] Calculation based on September 27, 2001, staffing level
[4] Calculation based on total authorized positions
[5] Employees perform human resources activities but work in the City Manager's office.

As indicated in **Table 3-1**, each member of the City's HR department is responsible for 150.3 FTEs. In addition, the City's HR staff serve 16 percent more FTEs than Mansfield's HR staff and 26 percent more FTEs than Middletown's HR staff.

An additional measure used to compare HR staffing levels is an analysis of the ratio of HR staff per 100 FTEs. This measure is derived from the Bureau of National Affairs (BNA). As a qualifier, BNA publishes, among other things, news, information, analyses, and reference products regarding coverage of legal and regulatory developments pertinent in business and government. A survey of human resources departments conducted by BNA and the Society for Human Resource Management, subsequently reported in July 2000, reveals that the median HR staff per 100 FTEs is 0.8 for the education/government industry sector. The City's HR staff to 100 FTEs ratio is 0.67, which is approximately 19 percent below industry standard, approximately 18 percent below the City of Mansfield's ratio and approximately 33 percent below the City of Middletown's ratio.

Based on the comparisons to peers and the BNA benchmark, it appears that the City's HR department is understaffed, impacting certain activities that need to be performed by the HR department such as the following:

● Developing and disseminating a succinct city-wide policy and procedure manual (see **R3.2**);
● Developing an employee newsletter to help communicate key information to employees (see **R3.3**);
● Updating job descriptions (see **R3.4**);
● Implementing an employee development training program to assess the training needs of its employees (see **R3.10**); and
● Implementing a performance evaluation program (see **R3.11**).

Table 3-1a shows how the HR department could benefit by adding one additional clerical FTE. Along with assisting in routine service to City employees, additional responsibilities related to initiatives outlined above could fall to this person.

Table 3-1a: 2001 City Employees per Human Resources Personnel (Revised)

	Warren	Mansfield	Middletown	Peer Average
City Employee FTEs [1]	451.0	632.0	447.0	539.5
City Employee FTEs [2]	489.0	705.0	463.0	584.0
Human Resources FTEs	4.0	5.0	4.0 [5]	4.5
City Employee per Human Resources FTE [3]	**112.8**	**126.4**	**111.8**	**119.9**
City Employee per Human Resources FTE [4]	**122.3**	**141.0**	**115.8**	**129.8**
Human Resources Staff per 100 FTE [3]	**0.89**	**0.79**	**0.89**	**0.83**
Human Resources Staff per 100 FTE [4]	**0.82**	**0.71**	**0.86**	**0.77**

Source: Human resources department and interviews
Note: Municipal court judges are not included in computations
[1] Staffing level as of September 27, 2001
[2] Total authorized positions
[3] Calculation based on September 27, 2001, staffing level
[4] Calculation based on total authorized positions
[5] Employees perform human resources activities but work in the City Manager's office.

Increasing the staffing to four FTEs in the City's HR department would draw it closer inline with the peer average and the industry standard. Additionally, adding a position in the HR department would ensure sufficient staffing to make changes to current operations that will ultimately lead to a more efficient administration of human resource services.

R3.1   The City should consider adding one additional clerical staff member to the HR department to ensure that the City's workforce receives service at a level commensurate with the peers and comparable to the BNA benchmark. The additional clerk could assist the HR director and personnel supervisor in their duties. After receiving cross-training, the additional staff member could fill in for the HR executive secretary during times of absence. Further, responsibility for implementing initiatives listed within this report, whole or in part, could be assigned to this person and thereby help the HR department operate at a level of service that optimizes staff resources while striving to achieve organizational goals.

Financial Implication: The base salary for City of Warren Executive Secretary 1 is $16.06 per hour. If the City chooses to hire an additional clerical employee for the HR department and pay that person a wage commensurate with that of an Executive Secretary 1, the annual cost, inclusive of benefits equal to 30 percent of salary, would amount to approximately $43,400.

F3.2   The City does not have a city-wide policy and procedures manual. The City refers to its Executive and Administrative Manual as the reference manual to seek guidance when questions arise regarding various personnel related activities and issues. This manual is

approximately six inches thick and contains written orders from the mayor and the Safety & Service Director. Each department has portions of this manual depending on the activities that pertain to their division. However, the manual lacks personnel procedures that would apply to all city employees. In addition, each department has written policies called "Work Rules." Making employees conduct themselves without a city-wide policy and procedures manual and in accordance with a policy manual that does not clearly delineate basic personnel information can lead to confusion and hasty grievance filings.

The City indicates that the reason for not having a policy and procedures manual is that in order to have one employee handbook, it would have to combine all of the information contained in the Executive and Administrative Manual along with information contained in union contracts.

The City of Middletown's Policy and Procedure Manual has sections addressing general operating procedures, employee conduct, safety and employee compensation. The City of Mansfield's Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual covers many of the same subject areas, including topics such as employee compensation and hours of work, equal employment opportunity/non-discrimination policy and reporting of on-sight accidents. Both manuals address matters that have general application in the day-to-day activities of all city employees and provide guidance to bargaining unit and non-bargaining unit personnel regarding work regulations, general expectations, employee conduct, and reporting procedures.

R3.2 The City should develop a city-wide policy and procedures manual. The manual does not necessarily have to include each and every item contained in the Executive and Administrative Manual, nor should it necessarily reiterate bargaining unit contract language. Rather, the manual should be broad in scope, covering such areas as personnel procedures, employee conduct, sexual harassment, Equal Employment Opportunity information and other like topics having general applicability for all city employees.

To facilitate in this undertaking, the City should contact the peer municipalities for guidance regarding development of a policy and procedures manual. The City of Mansfield and the City of Middletown have developed policy and procedures manuals that address topics applicable to all municipal employees. These manuals could serve as a starting point for the City in its efforts to develop a similar guidebook.

City employees will not benefit from such a manual if they do not have free and easy access to a copy for their use. Therefore, after the City has compiled sufficient information to develop and publish a policy and procedures manual, it should ensure employees have a copy at their disposal. This can be accomplished by issuing a manual to each employee, or, as a cost savings measure, the City may elect to make a copy accessible to employees in each specific work area.

All City employees should sign a form that will be placed in their personnel file indicating they have read and understand the policies of the City. Included in the employee agreement should be a statement specifying that City policies change from time-to-time and that the City will provide any changes in writing to its employees.

F3.3 The City does not have a means of disseminating personnel related information to City employees nor does it have a means of conveying noteworthy information to its workforce. The lack of clear, consistent communication between the City and its employees often leads to distorted reporting of facts regarding City policy, union contracts and arbitration / grievance decisions. The dissemination of an official City newsletter could be used to enhance communication between the City's administration and its employees by reducing the circulation of erroneous information.

The City of Mansfield HR department disseminates two circulars to city employees. The first is titled "Supervisor's Report." The targeted audience for this newsletter is management/supervisory personnel. It is produced quarterly and addresses topics dealing with union contracts, promotions, grievances and discipline. The second newsletter produced by HR is called "The Scope". It is produced monthly and distributed to all city employees. It is a single sheet of paper, front and back, and lists employee birthdays, significant family events and union activities, and serves as a general source of city news for employees. A representative from the City of Mansfield HR department states that the newsletters are well-received and are a useful vehicle in disseminating information among employees.

The City of Mansfield has a HR staff person compile information to be included in a newsletter, who then uses a desktop publishing software package to produce the document. Copies of the newsletter are printed from an office printer and subsequently distributed to city employees.

R3.3 The City should begin formulating and distributing an employee newsletter. A City newsletter can easily be used as a vehicle for disseminating information such as changes in City policy, results of union contract negotiations, announcement of training opportunities, and also serve as a general public service announcement platform. The newsletter could be published biweekly, monthly or quarterly. It may be to the City's benefit to disseminate a newsletter corresponding with a payroll date as a way of garnering the largest readership.

To facilitate the publishing process, the City should purchase a desktop publishing software package. Use of a desktop publishing software package would enable the City to produce newsletters on its own and avoid printing expenses. The purchase price for a software package that would meet the needs of the City is approximately $130. Other factors the City should consider that could increase initial costs include printer capabilities, and supplies such as paper and toner cartridges.

Financial Implication: Depending upon features and capabilities the City desires of a desktop publishing application, the cost to purchase and install this type of software is approximately $130. The City can also expect to realize a minimal increase in expenditures for paper and other printing supplies.

Staffing

F3.4   The City has not updated employee job descriptions since 1987. As a result, City employees may not be provided with clear and consistent job descriptions. The City has the authority to make minor updates and changes to job descriptions at any time without violating union contract provisions. Without having up-to-date job descriptions, the City cannot effectively and accurately evaluate personnel performance. The City of Middletown delineates performance measures within its job descriptions. Although the City's job descriptions contain duties and responsibilities, they are not directly tied to performance measurement.

According to industry norms, job descriptions should describe the job and not the individual who fills the job. Job descriptions should be specific in describing standards of performance, which include phrases like how much and how frequently. Job descriptions are often a result of a job analysis, which includes a systematic ordering of all facts about a job. The purpose of a job analysis is to study the individual elements and duties of the job. This requires that all information relating to the salary and benefits, working hours and conditions, and typical tasks and responsibilities should be compiled. Job descriptions should also perform the following functions:

- Establish individual performance expectations;
- Provide criteria for recruitment and selection; and
- Avoid legal liability.

Although the City has employee job descriptions, the documents do not contain the elements that are consistent with the present day standards . Furthermore, outdated and deficient job descriptions detract from the City's ability to effectively recruit, evaluate, and, if necessary, discipline employees.

The lack of clear and updated job descriptions can result in uncertainty of job functions and cause difficulty in conducting an effective and fair performance evaluation (**F3.13**). Additionally, maintaining up-to-date job descriptions may enable the City avoid having to defend itself in frequent union grievance proceedings. Listing what is expected of an employee in a clear, concise and formal format may deter submission of grievances attributable to not knowing employer expectations.

R3.4   The City should establish procedures to review and update all job descriptions. The job descriptions should follow a consistent format and should be updated every two years or as

needed. The job description should detail examples of the work associated with the position, list desired knowledge and skill set typically needed to carry out assigned tasks and list necessary experience and training. Also, the City should ensure job descriptions include performance measures. Job descriptions should be used to reference and assess employee performance and productivity. This will facilitate an annual performance evaluation as discussed in **F3.13** and **R3.12**.

Employees should be given the opportunity to participate in the process to ensure that job duties are reflective of work responsibilities that are performed by employees. City employees should complete a job analysis which would highlight key functions and duties of jobs performed, making the creation of job descriptions more accurate. In order to ensure that this process is completed, each director should compile the results of the job analysis and manage the process of regularly updating job descriptions. Once this process is completed, the job descriptions should be submitted to the HR department to ensure that the language is consistent with the union contract and other city employees. With up-to-date job descriptions, City employees will fully understand their job functions and responsibilities.

F3.5   Manager to non-manager ratios provide a method for examining overall organizational efficiency. Since management resources are typically more expensive than subordinate staff, organizations should strive to leverage management resources by optimizing the span of control. These measures are important because they indicate the extent to which an organization leverages its management resources in overseeing and monitoring the performance of the organization.

         AOS conducted a comprehensive assessment of the management organizational structure of the City. Staffing changes are made on a continual basis in a municipality such as the City of Warren. This factor, and the need for an equitable comparison of departments, makes it necessary to take a snapshot of the organization at a specific point in time. Therefore, this organizational analysis is based on the City's organization as it existed at the commencement of this review, specifically, as of September 27, 2001, and figures correspond to the number of full-time staff. **Table 3-2** summarizes the City's management organizational structure. The information contained within **Table 3-2** is based upon interviews and information provided by the director.

Table 3-2: Analysis of Warren's Management Structure

Department	Management (Supervisory)	Clerical Staff	Service Personnel	Department Total	Manager to Non-Manager Ratio	Percent Administrative
Packard Music Hall	2.0	0.0	1.0	3.0	1 to 0.5	66.7%
Law Department	1.0	0.0	8.0	9.0	1 to 8.0	11.1%
Income Tax	1.0	1.0	5.0	7.0	1 to 6.0	28.6%
Finance	2.0	0.0	4.0	6.0	1 to 2.0	33.3%
Mayor's Office	3.0 [1]	1.0	2.0	6.0	1 to 1.0	66.7%
Municipal Court [2]	2.0	15.0	14.0	31.0	1 to 14.5	54.8%
Board of Health	3.0	0.0	9.0	12.0	1 to 3.0	25.0%
Police Department	26.0	6.0	55.0	87.0	1 to 2.3	36.8%
Water Department	8.0	8.0	65.0	81.0	1 to 9.1	19.8%
Fire Department	28.0	1.0	42.0	71.0	1 to 1.5	40.8%
Human Resources	2.0	1.0	0.0	3.0	1 to 0.5	100.0%
Operations	3.0	2.0	44.0	49.0	1 to 15.3	10.2%
Data Processing	1.0	0.0	2.0	3.0	1 to 2.0	33.3%
Engineering, Planning and Building	4.0	2.0	8.0	14.0	1 to 2.5	42.9%
Water Pollution Control	3.0	2.0	43.0	48.0	1 to 15.0	10.4%
Community Development	1.0	2.0	3.0	6.0	1 to 5.0	50.0%
Sanitation	1.0	0.0	14.0	15.0	1 to 14.0	6.7%
Total	**91.0**	**41.0**	**319.0**	**451.0**	**1 to 4.0**	**29.3%**

Source: City of Warren

Note: Figures current as of September 27, 2001, and numbers are representative of full-time staff. Table reflects classification of staff enumerated in previous performance audits.

[1] This number includes the Mayor and Safety & Service Director, who both administrate City operations.

[2] Two judges for the municipal court are not included in span-of-control computation.

As shown in **Table 3-2**, the overall manager to non-manager ratio (span-of-control) for the City is 1 to 4.0. Additionally, the City's managerial ratios for each department ranges from a low of 1.0 manager for 0.5 non-manager to a high of 1.0 manager to 15.3 non-manager. The departments with high total staffing levels and a span of control less than the City's average are police and fire. Span-of-control levels for the fire department and police department have been discussed in previous performance audits. In those reports, AOS noted that the span-of-control for those departments was the lowest among the peers in those audits

and made subsequent recommendations that would bring the number of supervisory staff more in line with the peer departments. Further, factors such as the services provided to citizens and type of work performed by the different departments impact the number of managers and span-of-control necessary to effectively operate these departments.

Although standards vary, the KPMG LLP (KPMG) Organizational Model for Change, Organizational Assessment Criteria, suggests a ratio of eight to twelve staff per manager. Other sources have established more aggressive criteria. For example, Edward Lawler, author of The Ultimate Advantage, believes an organization should have a span of control of 1 to 15.0 or greater. Similarly, the National Performance Review recommended in 1994 that the federal government move from an average ratio of 1 to 7.0 to an average of 1 to 14.0.

Current management literature advocates higher spans of control and flatter structures because they increase the efficiency and productivity of organizations by reducing problems such as:

- The distortion of information as it flows through the organization;
- Slow, ineffective decision-making and action;
- Increased functional walls and "turf games;"
- Greater emphasis on controlling the bureaucracy rather than on customer service;
- Higher costs due to the number of managers and management support staff; and
- Less responsibility assumed by subordinates for the quality of their work.

Similar conclusions can be derived when comparing the overall number of administrative staff in relation to total staffing. Administrative staff include managers and clerical staff whose primary duties do not routinely involve direct service to the public.

Table 3-3 outlines the managerial and administrative makeup of the City and peer municipalities based on full-time employees. The information contained in **Table 3-3** illustrates not only manager and non-manager comparisons, but also shows what the ratio would be if all full-time vacant positions were filled for each entity. Additionally, the percent of administrative staff, managers and clerical employees is listed in **Table 3-3** to illustrate the composition of non-service personnel in each organization.

Table 3-3: Management and Administrative Structure Comparison

	Warren	Mansfield	Middletown	Peer Average
Management (Supervisory)	91.0	129.0	76.0	102.5
Clerical	41.0	100.0	21.0	60.5
Service Personnel	319.0	403.0	350.0	376.5
Vacancies [1]	38.0	73.0	16.0	44.5
Total Positions [2]	**451.0**	**632.0**	**447.0**	**539.5**
Total Positions [3]	**489.0**	**705.0**	**463.0**	**584.0**
Management to Staff Ratio [2]	**1 to 4.0**	**1 to 3.9**	**1 to 4.9**	**1 to 4.3**
Management to Staff Ratio [3]	**1 to 4.4**	**1 to 4.5**	**1 to 5.1**	**1 to 4.7**
Percentage Administrative [2]	**29.3%**	**36.2%**	**21.7%**	**30.2%**
Percentage Administrative [3]	**27.0%**	**32.5%**	**21.0%**	**27.9%**

Source: City of Warren and peer municipalities
[1] Based on September 2001 staffing levels
[2] Calculation excludes vacant positions
[3] Calculation includes vacant positions

The manager to non-manager ratio for the City appears to be significantly below best practice standards but similar to the peers. Whereas several industry standards suggest that an organization's span-of-control range between a low of 1 to 8.0 to a high of 1 to 15.0, the City's span-of-control (1 to 4.0) is well below what is considered a best practice. However, as **Table 3-3** shows, the City's management to staff ratio of 1 to 4.0 is comparable to the City of Mansfield's (1 to 3.9), but is approximately 22 percent below the City of Middletown's ratio (1 to 4.9).

The makeup of administrative staff for the City is 29.3 percent of total employees, which is 6.9 percent lower than Mansfield (36.2 percent) but 7.6 percent higher than Middletown (21.7 percent). As a result, the City appears less efficient in the allocation of administrative staff when compared to Middletown.

Minimizing resources allocated to management and administrative staff allows Middletown to allocate more staffing resources to provide front-line and direct services to its citizens. In addition, judicious classification of employees on the part of Middletown could contribute to the lower percentage of administrative staff as depicted in **Table 3-3**. The City can potentially increase accountability through the delegation of authority, speed the decision-making process, and reallocate resources to areas of greater need. Reassessing the level of supervisory or management staffing makes it possible to leverage valuable management resources, and delegate authority to empower service employees. By increasing span of

control, the City can improve organizational efficiency, and could find cost savings through the reallocation of supervisory and administrative resources.

R3.5   The City should revise the current organizational structure to achieve a more efficient and effective level of management and supervision staffing. Previously-released performance audits found that both the police and fire departments are overstaffed at the officer level. Pursuant to those audits, redistribution of 11 police department and 9 fire department rank officers would increase the City's span-of-control to 1 to 5.4, which would be the highest of the peers and above the peer average. The City should also require other departments to assess staffing to determine where further reallocation or reduction of supervisory and administrative resources can be achieved. Specifically, departments should determine the necessity of supervisory positions overseeing fewer than four people.

The City should continuously monitor staffing, especially at the supervisory level, and take advantage of opportunities to flatten the organizational structure. Normal reduction in workforce, such as resignations and retirements, provide an opportunity to scale back on managerial positions through attrition. These events afford the City the ability to further address its inefficient level of supervisory administration by empowering service staff with oversight responsibilities. Furthermore, the City can take steps to identify areas where staffing will change and can seek Council approval for changes to authorized staffing levels.

Appointments and Termination

F3.6   The City does not have a written policy detailing a procedure for hiring new employees. Although HR staff know what steps to take during the hiring process, the methods used for hiring employees should be outlined in a published document such as a city wide policies and procedures manual (**F3.2**). Having a documented method of engaging in recruitment, selection and hiring of new employees may help to prevent the appearance of impropriety in the hiring process.

The City of Mansfield and the City of Middletown, outline the process through which new employees are appointed to the workforce. For instance, the City of Middletown's policy and procedures manual lists definitions of applicable terms such as Appointing Authority, Employment Status and Pay Step. It also enumerates procedures for appointments to classified and unclassified positions. Similarly, the City of Mansfield's personnel policy and procedures manual details its employee hiring process for classified and unclassified positions. In both cases, the respective policy and procedures manuals specify that a review of eligible applicants, based upon submission of application materials and/or civil service testing, is the initial step taken towards filling an entry level position. If the vacancy exists in a collective bargaining unit, job bid procedures apply.

R3.6   The City should formulate a detailed employee appointment policy by which all new hire employees are hired. The policy should enumerate in sufficient detail who has the authority to appoint a new employee and how the appointments are made. If the City develops a policy and procedures manual as recommended in **R3.2**, it should ensure that the process for appointing new employees is included within the manual. The City should consult with other municipalities such as the peers for this report, for further guidance on how to address the topic of hiring new employees.

F3.7   The City maintains a pool of applications for general laborer vacancies. However, the City does not solicit applications for general laborer, rather it routinely accepts applications for future openings and places them into an applicant pool file. For fairness, the applications are placed into the folder in order which they are received. Whenever there is a general laborer vacancy, the HR department takes from the file the top application and contacts the applicant to see if they are interested in the position. This process continues until an applicant accepts an appointment to a general laborer position. In comparison, the City of Middletown maintains a file of "Interest Cards," that people desiring general labor or special skills employment submit to the city so they can be contacted whenever vacancies occur and are permitted to be filled.

Although the City maintains an application pool for general labor, it does not maintain an application pool file for special skill vacancies. Whenever a vacancy occurs that requires specialized training, for example water purification or civil engineering, the City will first try to fill the vacancy from within a bargaining unit if applicable. After the City exhausts all means to fill the vacancy from within a bargaining unit, it will then initiate a recruiting effort to fill the position with a new employee.

The City's recruitment effort consists of advertising in the local newspaper and forwarding position announcements to local college career placement centers. Should the position be so unique that a sufficient pool of candidates can only be garnered by additional advertisements, then the City will advertise in the Columbus Dispatch and distribute vacancy announcements to additional higher education institutions. Additionally, the City notifies the Warren-Trumbull Urban League in an effort to receive applications from eligible minority candidates. However, the City currently does not advertise position vacancies in trade journals and business periodicals.

After the application deadline passes, the director reviews submitted paperwork to determine which candidate truly possesses the necessary qualifications. Qualified applicants are then contacted by the executive secretary who inquires whether or not the candidate is willing to meet the City's residency requirement. Should the candidates respond affirmatively, then a preliminary interview is arranged. Qualifying candidates that reside within the City are also invited to a preliminary interview conducted by the director. The preliminary interview is used to narrow the field of candidates to those whom the City believes are the most qualified.

Also, if the position requires a special skill that can be tested, the test is administered and the results placed into the applicants application packet.

Upon determining a field of candidates, the City contacts eligible persons to come back for a second, more in-depth interview. The City uses an interview panel made up of the HR director, the Safety & Service Director, a member of city council, the head of the department having the vacancy and a racial minority member of the City of Warren Civil Service Board for the second interview. The panel conducts interviews and narrows the field to the top three people. However, this is dependant upon the number of persons eligible to assume the duties associated with the vacancy. The panel may only have one or two candidates to interview and therefore may make recommendations in line with the number of eligible candidates. After the panel has completed interviewing candidates, the candidates are ranked and a "short list" is given to the director. The director then forwards the list to the Mayor who conducts a final interview prior to making an appointment.

This procedure is similar to that used by Middletown to select technical skilled employees. In a subsequent stage of the hiring process, Middletown convenes an interview panel consisting of the department head, immediate supervisor, and personnel specialist which interviews potential employees and recommend a candidate to the city manager, who has final authority in the hiring process. Mansfield has a slightly different process whereby HR personnel submit a list of candidates directly to the department where the person would work. The head of the department and associated personnel conduct interviews and afterward submit the name of the person who proves to be the most qualified to the appointing authority for final consideration.

R3.7   Along with maintaining a pool of applicants for general labor position vacancies, the City should consider extending the concept to technical/special vocations similar to the method used by Middletown. By maintaining a list of qualified candidates for future consideration, the City can expedite hiring of personnel in specialty areas.

In instances where the City does not amass a sufficient number of qualified applicants by advertising through newspapers and listing with local higher education institutions, the City should expand its solicitation efforts to include placing vacancy announcements in trade journals and similar periodicals. The City is more likely to capture the attention of persons possessing the necessary qualifications by advertising in publications that have a readership associated with the work that the candidate will be expected to perform.

The City will likely incur additional advertising costs whenever it is compelled to advertise in trade or professional publications. These costs will depend on the amount of hiring done throughout the year and therefore, cannot be quantified.

F3.8   The HR department does not have an exit interview process which would assist in identifying issues related to turnover, employee concerns, and reasons for terminating employment. Exit interviews are conducted on retiring employees, but when an employee resigns, no interview is done. According to the HR director, the City does not have retention problems, which is supported by the figures reported to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. However, an exit interview can still help to identify such issues as recruiting deficiencies, training needs, working conditions and the quality of supervision.

R3.8   The HR department should implement an exit interview process to encompass not just retiring personnel, but resigning staff as well. The process can be a bifurcated procedure entailing the employee completing an exit interview form and attending a one-on-one interview. The exit interview form should contain questions that provide feedback on specific areas of operation and encourage employees to elaborate upon their written statements. The form should be given in advance of the employee's last day along with a stamped envelope with the agency's return address to facilitate the HR department receiving the information in a timely fashion.

Monitoring reasons for separation from employment may identify specific issues that would allow the City to improve management policies, procedures and future recruiting strategies. Receiving feedback from departing employees could also assist the HR department in identifying steps it could take to improve employee relations, and could lend itself to reducing the filing of employee grievances. Exit interviews are critical for the following reasons:

- Defining the reasons for turnover;
- Establishing potential trends for future assessments;
- Gauging the morale of employees; and
- Providing criteria for changes in future contractual issues.

Employee Training

F3.9   The personnel supervisor requires that each City department conduct safety training once a month as part of the City's Employee Safety Program. The City's safety program was first established in 1996. Since that time, the City has strived to enhance workplace health and safety training to encompass topics having broad application in an employee's work. The training is based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration training materials. An employee's attendance is annotated in the employee's Health and Safety Training Record, which is maintained within the department where the employee works. Notation is also made in the employee's training record maintained by the HR department.

Workplace health and safety meetings are conducted by a "Responsible Person." The term Responsible Person refers to an employee that has been selected to oversee each

department's safety program. The Responsible Person, acting as an ex officio representative for the City's safety committee, oversees all aspects of the department's safety program, including conducting monthly safety training. Health and safety training subjects include topics such as Bloodborne Pathogens, Confined Space Entry, and Noise Exposure. The Responsible Person in each department also ensures that minutes of safety meetings are supplied to the HR personnel supervisor. The Responsible Person also oversees incident/accident investigations occurring within their respective work environments.

Responsible Persons also conduct routine safety inspections of the associated workspace. A detailed report is compiled and if there are any hazards that need to be cleared up, the Responsible Person details them in writing. Subsequent followup review, detail how hazards were eliminated.

The City uses a software program called Prognos to track on-the-job injury claims. Each claim is entered into the database and the information is compiled into an annual report as required by the BWC and the Occupational Safety & Health Administration. These injury reports are also reviewed by the personnel supervisor prior to being submitted to the respective monitoring agency. According to the personnel supervisor, internal review of Prognos reports show that there has been a noticeable reduction in the number of Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) claim filings since the inception of the City's health and safety training program. A review of BWC claim records by AOS supports the City's assertion. According to the BWC, claim filings for the City decreased by almost 25 percent in 2001 and have remained steady in 2002.

Both peers conduct safety training but indicate that training is limited to departments where safety concerns are most prevalent, such as in the service department and in safety services (police and fire department). The peers also track injury claims but neither perform statistical analyses to determine the effectiveness of their safety training programs.

C3.1   The City maintains a safety training program that is commensurate with the needs of the City's workforce. Additionally, the City models its health and safety training program after standards put forth by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Finally, the City has evidence that its efforts to ensure safety training takes place increases employees health and safety awareness and thereby reduces on-the-job injuries.

F3.10   The personnel supervisor is responsible for the Train the Trainer program. Under this program, an employee who is designated as a Responsible Person is given instruction by the personnel supervisor on how to conduct safety training and accident/incident investigation. At the conclusion of each investigation, the Responsible Person specifies in writing what changes were made to remedy the situation that precipitated the incident.

In addition to maintaining the Train the Trainer program, the HR Supervisor and all Responsible Persons attend the annual state safety conference where health and safety persons receive updates on the latest safety issues and receive training that can be brought back and passed on to the employees of their respective departments.

C3.2 The Train the Trainer program empowers employees designated as Responsible Persons through the delegation of authority to conduct safety training and accident/incident investigations. Serving as the direct link to a department on behalf of the HR supervisor, the Responsible Person exercises responsibility to disseminate relevant safety information in an efficient manner. Additionally, through attendance at safety conferences, the HR supervisor and Responsible Persons are afforded applicable learning opportunities to heighten their awareness of pertinent safety issues for inclusion in monthly safety training meetings.

F3.11 The City does not employ a uniform method for documenting and tracking staff training. As a result, each department has developed a unique system for tracking training to ensure that employees fulfill certification and licensing requirements. However, there is no centralized process for compiling this data which impacts the ability of the HR department to effectively monitor the training needs and requirements of personnel having to maintain professional requirements.

R3.9 The HR department should maintain a central database to monitor and track training and certification requirements for all employees and departments. Centralizing the tracking of training and staff credential documentation will enable the HR department to more efficiently and effectively monitor that staff are meeting all professional training requirements. The HR department should coordinate this effort with departments and thereby develop a standard tracking system which will enable each department to transmit training information in a fluid and seamless fashion.

F3.12 The City does not have a comprehensive training policy, and the HR department does not conduct training needs assessments or develop training plans for its employees aside from safety training (**F3.9**). For instance, the City does not have a formal training program in place for management personnel. The City also does not have a formal, systematic, training program for hourly employees. Department heads are responsible for the on-the-job training of new employees. Because annual performance evaluations are not done at the City (**F3.13**), there is not a formal process to identify training needs.

Accel-Team.com, a web based human resources administration and management consulting service, specifies that an assessment of current skills and training needs is needed to develop effective training plans. The needs and goals assessment process is often completed through the use of an Individual Development Plan (IDP) that is developed by both the supervisor and employee. Though IDP's differ, they typically comprise five sections:

- Training needs;
- Career goals, both short-term (within two years) and long term (two to five years);
- Education and development needs;
- Development objectives (specific performance to show how needs have been met); and
- Development activities (ways to achieve the development objectives).

Once each of these sections have been completed, the employee and supervisor develop a training plan. According to Accel Team, the planning process follows these steps:

- Establish a priority ranking of each need and goals for when they can be reached;
- Describe in writing the performance standards that will demonstrate when each need and objective has been met;
- Discuss alternatives or future training courses needed to accomplish objectives; and
- Set a review date to discuss progress.

Without IDPs at the City, the following is likely to occur:

- Supervisors and employees are unable to identify the competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed for their current position;
- Employees are unable to plan for future job duties and career development;
- Employee retention and morale suffers;
- Employees' level of commitment to the organization is decreased;
- Management is unable to forecast training costs and needs; and
- The City does not have a tool that establishes a commitment from the employee to target their growth.

R3.10 The City should develop an employee training policy that incorporates the principles and goals that form the basis of an IDP for each employee. IDP's should be completed annually thereafter. As part of the performance assessment process, the immediate supervisor should meet with the employee quarterly to determine whether they are achieving the goals outlined in the plan and if additional assistance is needed from HR. Implementing this plan could ensure that staff obtain the necessary training to achieve organizational and personal goals.

The HR department should also begin to monitor the effectiveness of all internal training programs at the City. Furthermore, employees should be encouraged to forward training requests to the HR department. Once the information is received by the HR department, it should be entered into a database or spreadsheet format and assessed annually.

The HR department should require staff to comment on the effectiveness of offsite training courses and have the comments recorded in the training database. This will afford the HR department a means of assessing whether other staff should attend. Furthermore, the director

should develop a survey to assess the effectiveness of training sessions offered onsite. This survey should be distributed to staff at the end of every training session, and the results should be put into a database and assessed.

Staff should also be required to establish a means for disseminating information learned in offsite training sessions. Ways of disseminating information can include the following:

●   Staff can summarize what they learned in the session and include the information in the employee newsletter;
●   Staff can use the shared drive to post available training resources and write-ups of attended training; and
●   Staff can provide training to other staff.

The HR department could make use of the additional staff person as discussed in **F3.1** and **R3.1** to monitor and track this function of training.

Employee Evaluations

F3.13   The City does not require annual performance evaluations of its employees. Rather, the City only requires written assessments on probationary employees that are either new to the work force or recently promoted. New hire employees are regarded as "probationary employees" until completing 120 days of actual work or nine months of service, which ever comes first, as a full-time City employee. Promotional employees serve a probationary period of 60 working days effective from the date of promotion. Both the City of Mansfield and the City of Middletown have a performance evaluation program and stipulate in their respective personnel policy and procedures manuals the degree and frequency of performance evaluations.

The City conducts three performance appraisals during the first six months of a new employee's tenure. Newly promoted employees are assessed twice during the 60-day probationary period. The executive secretary for the HR department sends the applicable evaluation form to the department head who then writes the assessment. After the employee and supervisor meet to discuss the performance assessment, the completed form is sent back to the HR department for review and processing.

A performance appraisal process is essential to determining the employee's strengths and weaknesses and should be used as a means of enhancing future performance. James E. Neal, Jr., author of *The #1 Guide to Performance Appraisals* suggests that employees receive annual performance appraisals. Neal also writes that performance evaluations should be based upon specific and up-to-date job descriptions. As indicated by Neal, clearly established and specific performance standards enumerated in a job description allow employees to know how they are doing compared to expectations. A well-written standard

of measurement such as a job description creates a level playing field and provides a mutual understanding that leads to superior performance. See **F3.4** and **R3.4** for further discussion regarding job descriptions.

Other resources like Neal illustrate the benefits that can be realized by organizations and employees through an effective performance evaluation process. For instance, an article titled *Defining Your Goals* by HRnext.com state that an organization benefits by having documentation that provides the basis for raises, promotions and other personnel actions. Similarly, performance evaluations allow the entity to convey its goals and objectives to an employee so that the person can better direct their efforts. The *10 Minute Guide to Performance Appraisals* outlines more reasons why performance evaluations benefit employees and employers. Performance evaluations provide insights by which an employee can improve individual performance. Employers who conduct performance evaluations are better able to match employees' strengths and interests to help reduce mismatched workloads and skills.

R3.11 The City should institute a performance evaluation program in order to routinely assess the performance of all City employees. Each City employee should be evaluated at least once per year. The evaluations should provide constructive feedback to employees about how their performance could be improved. In addition to evaluations, supervisors should meet with employees frequently to discuss how productivity and performance can be improved and to commend employees for areas of improvement. The HR director should be responsible for distributing, collecting and reviewing evaluation forms. The responsibility for completing employee evaluations in a timely manner rests with the respective employee's immediate supervisor, with oversight by the HR director. The supervisor should hold a meeting with the employee to discuss the evaluation and to identify training needed to improve performance in weak areas. This process will allow employees to better maximize their potential.

Frequent evaluations allow for the following:

- Providing employees with clear feedback on areas for improvement;
- Discovering and documenting disciplinary problems;
- Providing evidence about the quality of employees' professional performance;
- Improving efficiency and effectiveness of the employees in carrying out the duties of their job descriptions;
- Improving employee morale; and
- Monitoring an employee's success and progress.

There are numerous resources available to assist the City in developing an effective performance evaluation process. Some of the resources listed in **F3.13** can help the City in this endeavor. Additionally, the City should consult with the City of Mansfield and the City

of Middletown regarding development and implementation of a performance evaluation program.

Employee Discipline and Grievance

F3.14   The City recognizes the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Local 74 and Ohio Council 8, AFSCME, AFL-CIO as the representative of its service/clerical staff. The agreement is effective January 1, 2001 and expires no earlier than December 31, 2002. The City also has a collective bargaining agreement with the Warren Management Association (WMA). The bargaining unit includes personnel who either oversee department operations or whose job entails managing personnel on a day-to-day basis. The agreement is effective January 1, 2000 through December 31, 2002. The City also honors provisions contained within police and fire bargaining unit contracts. Those contracts were assessed in separate phases of the engagement with the City.

The City of Mansfield has a collective bargaining agreement with AFSCME, Local 3088 and Ohio Council 8, AFSCME, AFL-CIO. The agreement covers service/clerical staff, corrections officers and telecommunicators. Likewise, the City of Middletown recognizes AFSCME, Local 856 and 856-A and Ohio Council 8, AFSCME, AFL-CIO. The AFSCME, Local 856 contract pertains to the city's department of public works employees and the Local 856-A contract covers the city's transit system employees. The peers do not have a bargaining unit contract comparable to WMA.

F3.15   The City has experienced difficulties in defending against grievances brought forth by unionized employees. The City and aggrieved employees generally fail to come to an agreement on their own, precipitating the need to seek redress through a fact finder. The fact finder makes recommendations, and if the recommendations are not accepted by city council or the union, which is frequently the case, the matter moves to final and binding arbitration.

The City states that arbitrators routinely rely on past practices when rendering most of their decisions. For example, past practice affords police officers who are not assigned to work on a holiday the opportunity to work a holiday shift and thereby receive holiday pay, which is paid at one and one-half the officer's hourly rate of pay. When the City tried to prohibit non-assigned officers from working on a holiday, a grievance was filed and arbitrators ruled in favor of the officers based on past practice.

The Ohio State Employment Relations Board (SERB) stated that it is not uncommon for arbitrators to base their decisions on the concept of past practice. Past practices have to be bonafide and well established. They can be as binding as contract language. However, past practice cannot displace terms of a union contract. If there is a provision within a union contract that specifies how something is to be handled, then a decision must be rendered based upon contract language and not past practice. Although a past practice can shed light

on a contract provision and how it had been previously carried out, it cannot replace it as remedy to a grievance. Therefore, only if there is not a provision within a union contract that covers the issue being raised can past practice be used as the means by which to render an arbitration decision.

The book *How Arbitration Works* by Elkouri and Elkouri, provides examples minimizing the argument of past practice. It entails crafting union contract language on the part of the City to lessen the extent in which past practice can play a role in the outcome of arbitration proceedings. The status of unwritten practice and custom may be dealt with specifically in the written agreement by the addition of a well-constructed clause, which may commonly take the form of either an acknowledgment that the written contract constitutes the parties' entire agreement and is a waiver of the right to bargain about other conditions, or a specific affirmation that management rights are not limited by prior practices.

R3.12 The City should seek to develop specific and constructive language that will enable it to effectively resolve grievance cases brought forth on the premise of failing to comply with past practice. The City should endeavor to insert the language into collective bargaining agreements during subsequent triennial collective bargaining contract negotiations. The City should ensure that language contained in such a clause is clear and concise to afford it sufficient leverage to effectively gain favorable outcomes from associated grievance proceedings.

As a matter of reference, the City should review applicable materials to become effective at collective bargaining grievance resolution. The City should also collaborate with SERB to identify areas where improvement in contract negotiation and administration on its part could minimize negative outcomes.

F3.16 The City has mechanisms at its disposal to facilitate building harmonious work relations between itself and its organized labor force. For instance, the contracts between the City and the WMA, as well as AFSCME Local 74, outline the purpose and means by which labor-management meetings take place. According to both contracts, when meetings are convened, parties are present to "discuss and resolve potential problems and to promote a more harmonious labor-management relationship." However, HR personnel indicate that labor-management meetings do not routinely occur, and the few meetings that do take place are on an informal basis.

Another resource available to the City to help enhance labor relations is the mediation service offered by SERB. This service, which is provided by trained professionals at no charge to the parties, entails varied sorts of mediation assistance. One type of support offered through SERB's Bureau of Mediation is labor-management committee assistance. This support service is modeled after the Committee Effectiveness Training Program published by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Relations and Cooperative

Programs. Other types of services that SERB offers through the Bureau of Mediation include collective bargaining mediation, interest-based bargaining, grievance mediation, unfair labor practice mediation and representation issue mediation, all of which are at the disposal of the City.

R3.13 In order to facilitate harmonious relationships with WMA and AFSCME, the City should ensure that every effort is made to initiate labor-management meetings in accordance with existing contract provisions. By addressing bargaining unit issues early on, there is a greater potential for avoiding conciliatory and arbitration proceedings.

In cases where the City finds that support services become necessary to help foster consensus to resolve labor relation matters, the City should look to SERB's Bureau of Mediation for assistance. The variety and availability of no-cost mediation service is something that the City should actively seek to employ whenever it finds that discussions are at an impasse.

F3.17 As discussed in **F3.15**, the City has not enjoyed favorable resolutions to employee grievances. Contributing factors to these outcomes may be precipitated by grievance provisions contained within bargaining agreements. **Table 3-4** compares the City of Warren's grievance process with those of peer municipalities.

Table 3-4: Union Contract Grievance Process

	Warren WMA [1]	**Warren AFSCME, Local 74**	**Mansfield AFSCME, Local 3088**	**Middletown AFSCME, Local 856**	**Middletown AFSCME, Local 856-A**
Time frame for submittal of grievance	Within 15 work days	Within 10 work days	Within 7 days	No later than 3 work days	No later than 3 work days
Time frame for supervisor's response	Within 10 calendar days	Within 3 work days	Within 7 days of meeting	Within 2 work days	Within 2 work days
Time frame for Department Head response	N/A [2]	Within 5 work days of meeting	Within 7 days of meeting	Within 3 work days of meeting	Within 5 work days
Time frame for Director's response	N/A [2]	Within 7 work days of meeting	Within 10 days of meeting	Within 5 work days of meeting	Within 5 work days of meeting
Time frame for submission to Binding Arbitration	Within 30 calendar days	Within 30 work days	Within 7 days	Within 10 work days	Within 10 work days
Disposition of proceedings	Within 30 calendar days	Within 30 calendar days	Within 20 calendar days	Not specified	Not specified

Source: City of Warren bargaining unit contracts and those of peer municipalities
[1] Persons represented by WMA are department heads / managers reporting directly to the Safety & Service Director.
[2] There is only one level of review of WMA grievance filings since members report directly to the Safety & Service Director.

Overall, City personnel covered under the WMA and AFSCME Local 74 collective bargaining contracts have a lengthier opportunity to submit grievances than peer municipal employees. For instance, the WMA contract provides a person up to 15 work days (three weeks) to submit a grievance and Warren's AFSCME Local 74 contract specifies that employees have up to 10 work days to file a grievance. In comparison, AFSCME Local 856 and 856-A contracts in the City of Middletown allow for submission of grievances no later than three work days after the relevant incident. Mansfield's AFSCME contract requires submission of grievances within seven days of the time when an incident occurred.

Middletown's AFSCME contracts require supervisors to respond within two work days to an employee's grievance. Warren's AFSCME contract requirements are similar, allowing three work days. Mansfield supervisors must respond within 7 days of the initial meeting regarding the grievance. Warren's WMA contract specifies the City's Safety & Service Director is required to respond to filed grievances within 10 calendar days.

Whereas other labor agreements allow for three levels of review of a grievance prior to the employee having the opportunity to move to binding arbitration, there is only one level of review in the WMA contract, that being the Safety & Service Director. Having only one level of review lessens the chances for resolving grievances before going to binding arbitration.

Warren WMA and AFSCME union employees also enjoy a substantially longer time to submit unresolved grievances to binding arbitration. For employees organized under the WMA, the contract provides for submission to binding arbitration within 30 calendar days. For Warren AFSCME employees, it is within 30 work days. Comparing to the peers, Mansfield's AFSCME Local 3088 union members are allotted 7 days for submission of unresolved grievance to binding arbitration and Middletown allows for submission within 10 working days from department director's response.

R3.14 During the next collective bargaining contract negotiations, the City should seek to shorten time frames by which employees can submit grievances to be more in line with the peer time frames. The City should also endeavor to include at least one additional level of review of WMA grievances. Finally, the City should seek to reduce the time in which employees may submit grievances to binding arbitration. Through successful negotiation of these changes, the City could lessen the likelihood of misguided grievance filings and for those grievances that are filed, a more expedient resolution to the matter at hand.

Union personnel will also benefit from these changes. For instance, grievances will be resolved more quickly, allowing the employee to know the outcome sooner. Corrective measures, if warranted, can be instituted by the City in a more timely manner. In short, an expedited process means that both the City and aggrieved personnel will be able to discuss and resolve matters so that work can continue unimpeded by ill feelings and general unrest.

F3.18 **Table 3-5** outlines select bargaining unit disciplinary processes for the City and peers. The disciplinary process for unionized employees for the City and the peers requires notification of violation and issuance of disciplinary action. All collective bargaining agreements specify the time in which disciplinary action has effect on future matters except for the WMA contract.

Table 3-5: Bargaining Unit Disciplinary Process

	Warren WMA	**Warren AFSCME, Local 74**	**Mansfield AFSCME, Local 3088**	**Middletown AFSCME, Local 856**	**Middletown AFSCME, Local 856-A**
Time frame for notifications of violation	Within 10 calendar days	Within 10 work days	Within 10 work days	Within 10 work days [1]	Within 20 calendar days [2]
Time frame for issuance of disciplinary action	Within 10 calendar days	Within 7 work days	Within 30 calendar days	Not specified	Not specified
Time frame when disciplinary action ceases to have force and effect in future disciplinary matters	Not specified	Disciplinary action lasting less than 3 days - 12 months. Disciplinary action lasting greater than 3 days - 24 months	Record of verbal/written reprimands - 12 months. Record of suspension, reduction in pay/position - 24 months	Verbal reprimands - 8 months. Written reprimands [3] - 12 months. All other occurrences - 18 months.	Verbal reprimands - 8 months. Written reprimands - 12 months. All other occurrences - Not specified.

Source: City of Warren bargaining unit contracts and those of peer municipalities
[1] Time frame specification applicable when discipline entails suspending the employee. The contract is silent on notification time frames regarding other types of disciplinary action.
[2] Applicable in instances where employee suspension or discharge will ensue. The contract is silent on notification time frames regarding other types of disciplinary action.
[3] Applies only to those written reprimands not concerning monetary loss. The contract is silent in cases where the written reprimand does pertain to a monetary loss.

As shown in **Table 3-5**, time frames for notification of violation are similar for Warren's WMA and AFSCME agreements and Mansfield's AFSCME contract. There is a slight difference regarding Middletown's AFSCME contract which specifies notification time frames only for either suspension or discharge. Middletown's contracts are silent regarding notification on other forms of discipline.

Both Warren bargaining unit agreements require that disciplinary action be levied approximately 20 days sooner than Mansfield's AFSCME contract. Middletown's contracts do not specify a time frame for issuance of disciplinary action after notification.

The WMA contract does not enumerate the length of time that disciplinary action can be considered for future disciplinary matters. Therefore, it is unclear if the City administration

can implement progressive discipline for WMA repeat offenders. However, given the City's arbitration history, it could be advantageous to negotiate specific progressive disciplinary capabilities into the WMA contract with corresponding time frames. In contrast, Warren's AFSCME contract, along with the peer contracts, delineate how long disciplinary action can be factored into future disciplinary matters.

Table 3-6 illustrates the forms of disciplinary action that can be dispensed as outlined in respective bargaining unit contracts.

Table 3-6: Bargaining Unit Disciplinary Action

Form of Disciplinary Action	Warren WMA	Warren AFSCME, Local 74	Mansfield AFSCME, Local 3088	Middletown AFSCME, Local 856	Middletown AFSCME, Local 856-A
Oral Reprimand	X	X	X	X	X
Written Reprimand	X	X	X	X	X
Suspension with Pay	X [1]	X [1]	Not specified	Not specified	X
Suspension without Pay	See footnote 1	See footnote 1	X	X	X
Reduction in Pay	Not specified	Not specified	X	X	X
Reduction in Position	Not specified	Not specified	X	X	X
Discharge	X	X	X	X	X

Source: City of Warren bargaining unit contracts and those of peer municipalities
[1] Suspension is a disciplinary option available to the City. Suspension with or without pay is not specified in the contract.

Information derived from respective bargaining unit agreements indicates that the City is limited to disciplinary actions that do not have a monetary effect, except for discharge. The City may have the right to suspend an employee without pay, however, that is not made clear in the contracts. Conversely, peer contracts delineate various forms of punishment including actions that may have some affect on the employees pay.

R3.15 As part of future collective bargaining contract negotiations, the City should seek to amend contract provisions regarding employee discipline. The City should strive to enumerate in the WMA contract the length of time that disciplinary action will be considered in future disciplinary matters similar to Warren's AFSCME and peer union agreements. Likewise, the City should negotiate to have the ability to take monetary action against offending employees. Although the City is afforded the option of suspending an employee, it is not clear if the City can suspend without pay. Therefore, the City should seek to have language inserted into collective bargaining contracts specifying that employees may be suspended with or without pay. The City should also negotiate to have the authority to reduce an employee's pay or reduce their position within the organization and be able to exercise such disciplinary action as warranted.

Federal Policy Compliance

F3.19   As is required by fair labor standards, the City must comply with pertinent federal regulations. The following is an overview of certain federal laws particularly applicable to the administration of the City's workforce by the HR department.

Table 3-7 provides a breakdown of the provisions contained within select federal regulations and indicates the City's compliance. Compliance notation contained within the table is based on evidentiary documentation obtained from the City, the State of Ohio and the federal government.

Table 3-7: Federal Policy Compliance

Federal Policy	City Compliance
Family and Medical Leave Act • Provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave. • Maintain group health benefits during leave • Restoration of employee to original or equivalent job • Allowance of intermittent or reduced scheduled leave	The City is in compliance with the provisions contained within the Act as indicated by clauses contained within the union contacts and no reporting of violation to the Ohio Civil Service Commission.
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) • Non-discriminatory application procedures, qualification standards and selection criteria • Make reasonable accommodation to the known limitations of a qualified applicant or employee	**The City is not in compliance with the provisions contained within the Act. However, compliance requires the City to make certain capital improvements which are not necessarily under the purview of the HR department. See R3.16 for corresponding recommendation.**
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) • Requires employers to report statistics that include information on ethnic origin, annual salary and type of service performed by employees and records of all promotions that occurred during the reporting period. • Submission of information is mandated in order to enforce legislative acts that prohibit discriminatory hiring, firing or promotional practices.	The City is in compliance with the reporting requirements as indicated by information contained within EEOC reports.
Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) • Provide continuation of group health benefits in cases of termination, reduced hours, employee entitlement to medicare, divorce, or legal separation, death or loss of dependant child status	The City is in compliance with the provisions contained within the Act as indicated by the employers copy of the COBRA Notification form.

Source: Federal labor standards, City documents and interviews

With exception of certain provisions contained within ADA, the City is in compliance with requirements set forth in federal law. During calendar year 2001, the United States Department of Justice conducted a compliance survey of the City and found that some of the City's public property did not meet ADA requirements. Consequently, the City must undertake certain capital modifications in order to meet ADA standards before compliance can be achieved. Although the City lacks full compliance with ADA, the HR department does maintain non-discriminatory application procedures, employment qualification standards and employee selection criteria.

The City, in cooperation with the United States Department of Justice, has an ADA compliance plan in place in order to address necessary capital modifications. The plan entails the City spending approximately $730,000 through calendar year 2005 to make necessary changes that will increase accessibility to City-owned property. Should the City fail to implement the compliance plan, it could incur legal defense expenditures, along with payment of civil and punitive damages should an aggrieved citizen bring suit against the City. If the court were to rule in favor of a plaintiff, the monetary cost to the City could be significant. Therefore, the City is avoiding costs associated with such judicial proceedings that could far exceed the planned monetary outlay for modifications to existing City assets.

R3.16 The City should continue to work in cooperation with the United States Department of Justice to ensure that required changes to City owned property are performed in a manner that is consistent with the provisions set forth in the ADA. Through this sort of undertaking, the City will be able to achieve ADA compliance and reduce the likelihood of having to defend itself in civil proceedings that could result from the inaccessibility of City grounds and buildings.

Financial Implications Summary

The following summarizes the implementation costs for the recommendations in this section of the report. For the purpose of this table, only recommendations with quantifiable financial impacts are listed.

Summary of Financial Implications

Recommendations	Estimated Annual Implementation Costs	Estimated One-Time Implementation Costs
R3.1 Hire one additional clerical staff member for the HR department	$43,400	
R3.3 Purchase of desktop publishing software		$130
Total	**$43,400**	**$130**

Conclusion Statement

The HR department endeavors to efficiently and effectively administer the City's personnel functions. Day-to-day activities include, among other things, monitoring compliance with employment standards, employee grievance administration, conducting disciplinary hearings, negotiating and administering union contracts, monitoring employee safety training and oversight of employee benefits administration. However, given the size of the City's workforce and noting that current staffing in the HR department appears to be below industry standards, the City would benefit by reassessing how the HR department is staffed. Applicable analysis indicates that the City would benefit by increasing staffing in the HR department by one clerical FTE. The person could undertake administrative duties similar to the executive secretary and assist in implementing associated recommendations contained within this section.

A governing body such as the City should have a comprehensive personnel policy and procedures manual and ensure that copies are made available to all employees. The policy manual should cover a broad spectrum of topics that delineate how the City manages its employees as well as the expected conduct of employees. Another useful instrument to keep employees apprized of city policy, as well as circulate newsworthy information and communicate outcomes of meetings and initiatives, is an employee newsletter. The dissemination of an official City newsletter could be used to enhance communication between the City's administration and its employees, and serve as a general public service announcement platform.

Annual performance evaluations are an excellent tool to convey goals and objectives to an employee. Employees benefit by receiving feedback on past years' performance and by participating in followup talks with managerial staff to address career development training opportunities. However, in order to have a fair and effective evaluation, the assessment needs to be based on an up-to-date job descriptions. Job descriptions should be specific in describing standards of performance and specify salary and benefits, working hours and conditions, and typical tasks and responsibilities. By instituting a comprehensive annual review of all employees, the City could better address the training needs of staff while garnering evidence to support changes in pay and discipline.

There are provisions contained within select union contracts that the City should consider renegotiating during upcoming collective bargaining sessions. The City should seek to shorten time frames by which employees can submit grievances as well as the period of time an employee can submit to binding arbitration. The City should also increase the layers of review of WMA grievances to increase the possibility of resolving the matter before having to expend efforts on binding arbitration. Insertion of plain language into bargaining unit contracts will help mitigate any ambiguity of possibly levying monetary penalization on offending City employees. Having the clear ability to impose monetary disciplinary actions increases the viability of the disciplinary process and affords the City an effective means of eliciting acceptable employee conduct through financial deterrence.
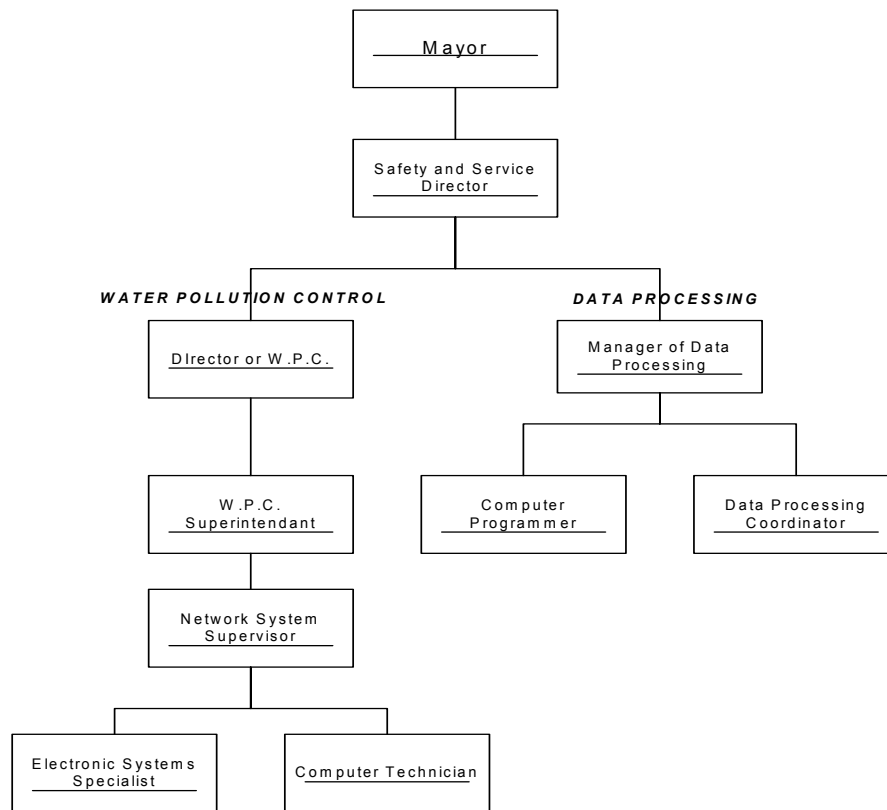
Technology Utilization

Background

Organization Chart

Technology implementation and management in the City of Warren are performed by the Data Processing Department (DPD) and Water Pollution Control Department (WPC). DPD is responsible for the New World software package, related software and the IBM I Series server. The technology function of WPC is responsible for the network and network based software and its ancillary functions. Both service the city in their separate roles. The organization chart below illustrates the organizational structure for technology in Warren.

Chart 4-1: Technology Organization Chart

```
                        ┌──────────────┐
                        │    Mayor     │
                        └──────┬───────┘
                               │
                        ┌──────┴───────┐
                        │ Safety and   │
                        │ Service      │
                        │ Director     │
                        └──────┬───────┘
                   ┌───────────┴───────────┐
        WATER POLLUTION CONTROL         DATA PROCESSING
           ┌──────────────┐          ┌──────────────┐
           │ DIrector or  │          │ Manager of   │
           │ W.P.C.       │          │ Data         │
           └──────┬───────┘          │ Processing   │
                  │                  └──────┬───────┘
                  │                  ┌──────┴───────┐
           ┌──────┴───────┐     ┌────────┐   ┌──────────┐
           │ W.P.C.       │     │Computer│   │Data      │
           │ Superintendant│    │Program-│   │Processing │
           └──────┬───────┘     │mer     │   │Coordinator│
                  │             └────────┘   └──────────┘
           ┌──────┴───────┐
           │ Network System│
           │ Supervisor   │
           └──────┬───────┘
          ┌───────┴────────┐
    ┌──────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
    │ Electronic│      │  Computer    │
    │ Systems   │      │  Technician  │
    │ Specialist│      └──────────────┘
    └──────────┘
```

The DPD consists of a Data Processing Manager, a Data Processing Coordinator, and a Computer Programmer. The Water Pollution Control Department's systems staff consists of a Network System Supervisor, an Electronic System Specialist and a Computer Technician.

Organization Function and Staffing

The financial challenges the City of Warren confronted during the last several years generated an unlikely structure in its technology sector. WPC initiated a PC-based network for its own operation and gradually implemented the PC-based network for the City's other departments. The DPD's role is installing, maintaining, modifying, testing, querying and upgrading the mainframe and software that resides on it. WPC network systems staff install, maintain, modify, test, query and upgrade the software and hardware relating to the City's wide area network (WAN). Both departments' staff serve on the Technology Steering Committee; assist, train and instruct users; order and track supplies; research, analyze and resolve problems; and assess and advise purchases relating to their responsibilities.

The **Data Processing Manager** reports to the safety and service director and is responsible for the following duties in addition to those listed above:

- Plans, organizes, budgets and supervises the overall activities of DPD;
- Evaluates feasibility of potential future applications and determines the amount and type of equipment and clerical procedures required to perform the applications;
- Instructs and trains assigned computer operating personnel to perform duties in accordance with established methods and procedures; and
- Maintains adequate inventory of supplies, proper use and preventative maintenance of equipment in the department, and corrects malfunctions or requests contract assistance as deemed necessary.

Other positions in the DPD and a brief description of duties are as follows:

- **Data Processing Coordinator:** Coordinates the work flow for the I Series platform and other peripheral equipment.

- **Computer Programmer**: Trains users in the operation of data processing, word processing and other application software.

The following other duties, in addition to general departmental functions, are performed by both the Data Processing Coordinator and Computer Programmer:

- Write and test new programs;
- Record, track, resolve or direct, and pursue repair and service requests to appropriate technical area or vendor;
- Regulate and maintain scheduled jobs during the year using the IBM system calendar and job schedulers;
- Perform internal billing for computer maintenance, services and supplies for each department;

- Remove and dispose of the City's obsolete technology equipment;
- Research, evaluate, and recommend software and hardware for departmental purchase; and
- Track and balance encumbrance and expenditure accounts for the DPD.

The **Network Systems Supervisor** reports to the WPC superintendent and is responsible for the following general activities in addition to the functions listed for both departments:

- Develops and implements equipment and software as needed for single computer systems, local area networks (LAN), and WANs, in all of the City departments;
- Supervises the Electronic Systems Specialist and the Computer Technician;
- Develops new systems and clerical procedures based on approved future identified applications or hardware needs;
- Approves Internet and email request applications in conjunction with the Technical Subcommittee;
- Installs, maintains, and monitors Internet accounts and monitors inappropriate use incidents; and
- Manages all on and offsite data storage pertinent to the network systems.

Other positions in the WPC and a brief description of their technology-related duties, which does not include their duties related to WPC, in addition to those stated above are as follows:

The **Electronic Systems Specialist** duties include the following:

- Designs, develops and implements computer systems and software used in different City departments ;
- Creates and implements report forms, presentations and databases used throughout the City;
- Installs, maintains and monitors Internet accounts and the proxy server and monitors inappropriate use incidents; and
- Restores and maintains data from on and offsite data storage pertinent to the network systems.

The duties of the **Computer Technician** include the following:

- Oversees all software licenses, registration material and inventory control;
- Files all work orders for billing purposes;
- Develops and implements administrative, maintenance and operation programs, and creates and implements report forms, presentations, databases and worksheets throughout the City;
- Removes and disposes of City's obsolete technology equipment; and
- Maintains all existing ground level wireless equipment for connectivity.

Summary of Operations

All major technology-related functions at the City of Warren are the responsibility of either the DPD or WPC network systems personnel. Their roles include the support and maintenance of current systems and applications as well as the integration of new technology. DPD supports the I Series platform and all the applications it supports. DPD purchases and maintains all dumb terminals in the City, printers attached to the I Series platform, and the PC's used within the DPD.

Water Pollution Control's network systems personnel are responsible for the network and related equipment for the City. Most recently, WPC has implemented wireless technology for the WAN. Departments purchase their own software and PC's after approval from technology personnel. The WPC network systems staff recommends and negotiates the costs of compatible software and hardware not residing on the I Series platform as departmental needs arise. Application use is the responsibility of the department. Connection and maintenance of the network hardware, along with the Internet access and email, and querying some software not on the I Series platform is also the responsibility of the WPC network systems staff.

Technical Architecture

The City of Warren provides City-wide network connectivity for City departments. Warren's WAN and I Series are accessible to the departments shown in **Table 4-1**.

Table 4-1: Departmental Use of the WAN and I Series Platform

Department	Wireless WAN	I Series Connection
Mayor's office	X	X
Board of Health	X	X
City Council	X	X
Civil Service Commission	X	X
Community Development	X	X
Data Processing	X	X
Engineering Planning and Building	X	X
Finance Department	X	X
Fire Department	X	X
Human Resources	X	X
Income Tax		X
Law Department	X	X
Municipal Court	X	X
Operations Department	X	X
Packard Music Hall [1]		X
Police Department	X	X
Sanitation	X	X
Water Department	X	X
Water Pollution Control	X	X

Source: WPC network systems personnel and DPD.
[1] Packard Music Hall is in the process of being connected to the WAN.

The City of Warren has established WAN connections using wireless technology with an 11 MB backbone which is approximately 7 times faster than a T-1 connection without the recurring costs. Most of the DPD applications on the I Series platform are also delivered via the wireless connection on a 5250-Client Access emulation package. Departments unable to fund a WAN connection receive software via digital telephone lines through a modem. Once a department is connected to the WAN, costs decrease since the phone lines are more costly. Some of the key statistics describing the platform are outlined in **Table 4-2**.

Table 4-2: Midrange Platform Overview

Model	IBM I Series
Location	Data Processing Department
Initial Installation	2001
Memory	512 MB
Tape Drives	2 - 8mm Model 6390 1 - 8mm Model 7208
CD ROM	2
Integrated File Server	1
Disks	120 GB
Operating System	OS/400
Upgrades	September 2001[1]
Language	RPG (ILE version)
Servers	15[2]

Source: DPD
[1] First installation was in 1986 of an IBM S38. An AS/400 was installed in 1986 and was upgraded to an IBM AS/400 in 1991and an IBM I Series in 2001.
[2] Servers are dispersed throughout the City to host the LAN for network functions.

There are approximately 245 computers connected to the City's network, including both desktop and laptop models. Not all employees of the City have email user accounts or network connectivity. Department heads recommend to the Technology Steering Committee which positions need the services. Each department is responsible for the purchase of computer hardware, software, and other equipment, subject to technology staff approval.

The administrative coordinator is responsible for purchasing telecommunications equipment (telephones, radios, mobile units, etc.). This position oversees the bidding and acquisition process of the radio and telephone systems including cellular phones and pagers. The City uses a Centrex system through Sprint telephone lines, but the phones and various services available are different for each department due to existing leases, budget problems and varying departmental satisfaction with existing systems.

Table 4-3 presents technical statistics comparisons for Warren and the peer cities**.**

Table 4-3: Peer City Operational Statistics and Ratios

Technical Information	Warren	Mansfield	Middletown
Mainframe/Midrange Computer	IBM I Series	IBM AS/400	UNIX
Mainframe Users	296	156	450
PC workstations	212	81	252
Dumb terminal workstations	71	24	48
Laptops	33	0	78
Functional LAN	Yes	Yes	Yes
Functional WAN	Yes	Yes	Yes
City Web site	Yes	Yes	Yes
Technology Expenditures			
1998	$519,366	$443,952	$421,271
1999	$565,349[1]	$601,232	$476,270
2000	$659,718[1]	$548,988	$771,205[2]
Other Demographics			
Area (sq. miles)	16.3	29.1	25.0
Population (1998 Census)	46,866	49,802	48,590
Number of City Employees[3]	451	643	463
Number of Technology Employees	6	4	7

Source: Various sources
[1] Includes WPC Network staff
[2] 2000 budget includes increased responsibility for telephone payments, leases, and maintenance
[3] Full time equivalents

Major Applications

New World Systems, residing on the I Series platform, provides administrative functions in financial systems, human resources, payroll, utility billing and collection, public safety, Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) and police and fire. DPD programs and modifies its software to customize reports for users. The court and income tax modules (see **income tax department** section) were inadequate for the City's needs, and the commodities package was deemed too time-consuming to develop. However, the income tax package does not interface with New World Systems software due to

confidentiality of the income tax information although it does reside on the I Series and is maintained by DPD. See the **purchasing** section for additional information on the commodities package. The court package was replaced with a Windows NT platform package at no expense to the general fund. All other modules are installed and integrated to reduce duplication of effort.

Although departments within the City of Warren purchase and implement software for their own specific needs, it is maintained by technology personnel. Some software is used throughout the City including various Microsoft packages, Norton Virus software, HP Scanner software and Timbuktu Professional, which makes a computer available to the system administrator to assess and repair problems remotely.

Financial Data

Technology purchases, except for software residing on the I Series Platform, at the City of Warren are financed at the department level. When departments develop their annual budgets, they must provide for any technology they plan to purchase, including PC's, printers, copiers and fax machines, software packages and any other technology-related items needed by the particular department. Although purchases are the responsibility of the departments, all purchases must be approved for compatibility by the Technology Steering Committee.

Departments are also responsible for funding the DPD which operates as an internal service fund. The DPD bills each department by device connected to the I Series, based on a formula developed by its Certified Public Accounting firm in 1986. The amount billed by device has remained unchanged since then. Warren's unused funds are carried over to finance capital expenditures in future years. **Table 4-4** exhibits a comparative budget for the peer cities for 2000.

WPC, an enterprise fund, funded the upgrade of the City PC's for Y2K. In addition, WPC funded the initial wireless backbone and supplementary software. These projects had a cost of approximately $200,000. At that time, WPC network systems services were not billed. Recently, upon intervention from the Auditor of State's office, departments will be charged for the services in the future.

Table 4-4: Expenditures for Warren and peers for 2000.

Expenses	Warren	Mansfield	Middletown

Wages and Benefits
  DPD
  WPC Network
Total
	
	$197,782
	$128,190
	$325,972
		
		$211,444
			
			$366,735

Supplies
  DPD
  WPC Network
Total
	
	$12,566
	$6,330
	$18,896
		
		$40,000
			
			$8,000

Capital Expenditures	$81,412	$50,000	$69,340
Other Expenses	$145,264	$247,544	$327,130
Transfer Out	$88,174[1]	$0	$0
Total	**$659,718**	**$548,988**	**$771,205**

Source: City budgets submitted 2000 and WPC Network expenses

[1] Bond repayment for initial setup of DPD

Performance Measures

The following performance measures were used to conduct the review of technology at the City of Warren:

- Assessment of technology organizational structure and staffing levels;
- Evaluation of overall planning and technology management, including the role of the Technology Steering Committee;
- Assessment of the overall technical operations;
- Assessment of budgeting procedures and technology funding sources, including grants;
- Assessment of technology training opportunities for both technical and non-technical staff;
- Assessment of the use of telecommunications services; and
- Evaluation of security measures, backup procedures and disaster recovery plan.

Findings / Recommendations / Commendations

Organization and Staffing

F4.1   Technology functions at the City of Warren are divided between the DPD and the Water Pollution Control Department. DPD has existed since 1986 to maintain the City's mainframe and to support the various administrative functions provided by the New World Systems software. WPC implemented a LAN in 1987 that included a complete Data Acquisition and Monitoring System with radio telemetry. This became the model that was used in future LAN systems. In 1991, WPC began installation of two LANs (Engineering and Water) and upgraded the WPC LAN to include CAD capability. The intent of the project was to share drawings of the water, sewer and storm water lines on a common platform. The network was integrated into the AS/400 in 1996. In anticipation of Y2K, WPC spent $200,000 to upgrade the City's PC's and for the initial wireless backbone and supplementary software. Each department funded its own LAN, subsequent components, and software. WPC funded the City's WAN with surplus monies from the enterprise fund and has maintained and supported network functions since then.

       The comprehensive requirements of consistency and coordination in technology suggest that a coordinated services approach may be more appropriate for the provision of technical services. Although the Technology Steering Committee establishes extensive coordination of all technology staff within the City, there are situations and instances where technical service delivery has been inconsistent within the City. For example, both departments responsible for technology provide some level of user support. However, depending on the nature of the problem, users may be redirected as DPD only provides support for mainframe functions, and WPC only provides support for network or PC-related issues. According to the codified City Ordinance 129.16, the Data Process Systems Department shall coordinate the computer-related functions of the City.

R4.1   The City of Warren should consider consolidating all of its technology staff in a single department pursuant to codified City Ordinance 129.16. This new department should include technology staff responsible for both the mainframe, the network and telecommunications. Individuals should be hired and consolidated with the DPD staff into a new centralized technology department. The department should be headed by a Director of Technology or Chief Information Officer (CIO) that reports directly to the Mayor or Safety Service Director. The CIO's experience should include management, budgeting, disaster recovery, systems engineering, and contractual oversight. A proactive attitude would enable the candidate to implement a vision compatible with the future growth of technology in Warren. The City should determine who is qualified to be the CIO from the technology individuals involved. Although no additional staff is required at this time, there is a redistribution of financial charges within departments in the City.

Upon the creation of a unified department, the WPC enterprise fund will no longer be able to supplement network services in the City, and a budget and funding methodology will have to be developed for the department to function as an internal service fund. Technology funding within the City is discussed in greater detail in **F4.16** and **R4.13**. Combining the departments will require adequate planning, which could take two to three years, to accommodate the modifications necessary to maintain present services and implement additional recommended changes.

As the consolidated information technology department, telecommunications should be incorporated to take advantage of today's technological advances. Telecommunications are discussed in **F4.23** and **R4.19**.

F4.2 Warren's technology staffing is shown in **Table 4-5** including both the WPC network systems staff and the DPD.

Table 4-5: Organizational IS staffing for Warren and Peer Cities

Position	Warren	Mansfield	Middletown
Department Manager	1	1	1
Supervisor	.6[1]	1	0
Electronic System Specialist	.6[1]	0	0
Analyst/Programmer	1	2 (1 Vacant)	4
IS Technician	.6[1]	0	1
IS Operator/Coordinator	1	1	1
Total FTE'S	**4.8**	**5 (1 Vacant)**	**7**

Source: Job charts and descriptions

[1] Approximately 60% of network staff time is relegated to network functions and 40% of their time is spent on WPC services.

The WPC network staff have responsibilities outside the network function that include managing the systems at WPC and other duties at the plant. Part of their function also includes developing various reports and presentations for other departments. They have worked on the Golf Course Study, HR functions for the union in Excel, electric aggregation of deregulation of utilities, empowerment zone presentation, bonding issues, information gathering for presentation for layoffs, EPA demonstration, and a monthly newsletter for the Northeast Ohio Water Environment Association (NEOWEA.)

Although staffing is low compared to the peer average, Middletown's technology department responsibilities include telecommunications. A consolidated department would relieve some

existing repetitive functions and non technology related duties to provide enough staffing to also administer telecommunications.

R4.2   Warren should consider redistributing the duties of some employees to accommodate all technology functions within the centralized technology department. Since 40 percent of the network staff's time is spent on WPC duties, one person out of the three in the network department could remain as systems analyst for WPC, while the two others are hired into the consolidated technology department. However, this could compromise the success of incorporating telecommunications and the additional recommended responsibilities into a consolidated technology department. An additional person for WPC will be required to perform the technology functions that the Network staff would no longer be responsible for. Duties outside the technology function should be transferred to others to relieve the staff to administer   the   recommended   additional   technology   responsibilities   of   the telecommunications (**R4.20**), help desk (**R4.3**), Web site and e-business management (**R4.8**), grant researching and writing (**R4.17**), and additional record keeping (**R4.7**).

The person assigned should be adequately trained for the responsibility of the SCADA system and other WPC technology functions by the Electronic Systems Specialist prior to the transfer of the network systems staff. Fair market value of computers, printers and other devices that will be transferred to the new department along with the personnel, should be recorded as revenue for WPC and expense for the consolidated technology department. Any significant travel costs to the different network sites should be reimbursed to the additional employees of the new department.

Since telecommunications was the responsibility of the administrative coordinator, this position as directly involved in the administrative function of the Mayor's office, would be a logical replacement for the Warren network staff, to complete specific assignments as a special projects coordinator for the City. The equipment and software in place at WPC, and training to use them would need to be addressed.

F4.3   The City of Warren does not have a centralized help desk. Technology staff in both DPD and WPC are responsible for providing support to City technology users, depending on the nature of the problem. Neither of these departments has the necessary funding or staffing to effectively operate a help desk.   Warren's lack of a centralized help desk potentially requires technology users to call or fax several different people before finding a solution to their problems. This causes unnecessary and extensive downtime for City employees and affects all City departments. Additionally, service has been inconsistent at times due to priorities and the time available by technology personnel.

There are many software packages available for help desk services at diverse prices, dependent mainly on the quantity of users and selection of available options. It can track warrantees, time spent for billing purposes, contracts, schedules, software upgrades, vendor

information, PC configuration, security, and training. The provision of centralized help desk services affords technology users a simple and direct path to resolving technology-related problems. Because technology is a support service in the City of Warren, its focus should be on meeting the needs of the users, which includes efficient and effective help desk services.   Costs are presented in **Table 4-6.**

Table 4-6: Help Desk Software Costs

Functions	SDS HelpDesk	Blue Ocean Track-It	LBE Help Desk	Kemma BridgeTrak
Single User License Fee	$300	$495[2]	N/A	N/A
Up to 5 users License Fee	$1,200	$1,585[3]	$595	$995
Training	Tutorial - $0	$1,200[4]	$0	$1,250[7] or $150/Hr.
Installation	$0	N/A	$0	$150 / Hour[8]
Support	$75/hr[1]	25% of License fee[5]	$275	$450
Other Costs	N/A	N/A	$35[6]	N/A

[1] No charge for most occasional support

[2] Cost includes support for 100 PC's

[3] Cost includes support for 300 PC's

[4] Training is available in Tampa, Florida only

[5] Includes 800 number for technical support, 2 hour response time, top priority in queue, and free upgrades for 1 year

[6] Printed manual or CD

[7] Cost includes training for up to 3 people in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

[8] Software can be installed by technology personnel in Warren at no cost

R4.3   Pursuant to the creation of a consolidated technology department, the City of Warren should consider creating a centralized help desk. The current division of technology duties impedes any one department from developing or maintaining a help desk. However, a centralized department could have greater potential to dedicate the necessary resources toward this function. The creation of a centralized help desk should enhance the overall level of service provided to City technology users, while decreasing the amount of time lost due to technology-related problems.

Financial Implication: Based on the average cost of the packages identified in **Table 4-6**, Warren could obtain help desk software and training for approximately $1,700.

Planning and Management

F4.4   The City of Warren Technology Steering Committee (Committee) is an integral part of technology within the City. Originally, the Committee formed to regulate technology purchases for standardization and compatibility. Currently, the Committee meets to formulate direction, serve as the advisory panel, reject or execute requests and plan future technology initiatives. It administers and assists department heads to implement new policies and procedures and monitors projects from inception to completion. Projects are usually prioritized based on available funding. With continued monitoring and foresight, the Committee should function effectively as it seems to have in the past.

Middletown has a technology steering committee consisting of the MIS director, City Manager, Assistant City Manager and Finance Director. The functions of Warren's Technology Steering Committee are the following:

● Provide technical recommendations to departments;
● Review progress of technology projects;
● Help resolve significant technology issues impeding project progress;
● Establish technology standards and revise them as needed;
● Ensure that the implementation and operation of technology is consistent and compatible with business and administrative goals;
● Oversee the implementation, progress and effectiveness of significant technology programs; and
● Oversee the centralized procurement and tracking of technology.

C4.1 The Technology Steering Committee is involved in most aspects of technology and works well as a committee as it creates a forum for departments to voice their concerns. Minutes are kept, and City departments cooperate with the Committee members whose knowledge and technical proficiency is respected.

R4.4 The City should expand the role of the Technology Steering Committee. The Committee should consider adding the following functions:

● Develop and revise the City-wide strategic technology plan;
● Evaluate the justification for new initiatives to determine if the project is consistent with the strategic technology plan and priorities;
● Evaluate and revise the internal service fund; and
● Maintain a cohesive approach to technology for the City.

F4.5   The members of the Technology Steering Committee represent the technology personnel within the City and those whose jobs require the most information about City technical needs. It is comprised of the following:

- Mayor
- Administrative coordinator;
- Municipal court systems administrator;
- City auditor;
- Director of WPC;*
- Safety services director;**
- WPC network systems supervisor;*
- WPC electronics systems analyst;*
- WPC computer technician;*
- Data processing manager;*
- Data processing coordinator;* and
- Data processing programmer.*

* Technology subcommittee members
** Committee chairman

Meetings are held on a quarterly basis and other department representatives are welcome to attend. Minutes are usually taken at each meeting. During 2000, due to funding cutbacks and layoffs, no meetings took place since no funds were available for discussion. Although the Committee members are all technologically qualified, a broader base of participants could supplement the Committee with a different perspective and additional experience.

R4.5   The Technology Steering Committee should add a community member to the committee for advisory purposes. A technologically proficient citizen could bring different experiences and perspectives to the committee. Representatives from area businesses could expand the technology capabilities, knowledge and contact base. Businesses are frequently willing to visibly participate in their communities to maintain contacts and goodwill.

F4.6   Although meetings are held regularly, primarily short term problems and solutions are discussed. The City does not have a long-term strategic technology plan, and a review of Technology Steering Committee minutes for the past four years indicated that the Technology Steering Committee tabled all long range planning when fiscal problems arose in 1999. Long term planning contributes to organized and systematic development of prioritized objectives and related funding without the resulting impediments from the absence of a documented plan. Without a written strategic plan, long range and short range proposals, especially those that require extra funding will not be focused upon or communicated to the boards that can requisition the funds to implement the projects. Available funding may be dissipated into small projects that may not yield the largest return on investment.

R4.6   The Technology Steering Committee should develop an in-depth written strategic technology plan that addresses both short and long-term technology needs. In essence, the plan should describe long-term objectives and how technical staff, funding and resources

will help them achieve these long-term objectives. The plan should also be presented to Warren management who must fully support the goals and objectives stated within the plan and ensure that adequate funding is provided. In addition, Warren should establish an annual review and revision process that will allow the strategic technology plan to evolve with changes both internal and in the community. Effective strategic planning establishes sound leadership with a staff focus, as well as more effective process management to accomplish the goals outlined in the plan. The following steps should be taken to develop the planning process:

- Identify and analyze the business environment that the strategic technology plan must support;
- Define key goals and objectives of Warren and establish measurable success factors for those areas;
- Evaluate how existing hardware and software applications support the long-term goals and objectives of the City;
- Research significant industry trends relating to technology and government organizations or other public sector organizations;
- Determine what technology is needed to help Warren achieve its long-term goals and objectives;
- Identify user requirements for City-related and financial software applications, as well as e-mail and Internet software;
- Clarify internal training issues, such as basic computer skills development for all staff, and establish an internal process for scheduling more in-depth software training for particular staff members;
- Establish management reporting lines of communication with the Technology Department Manager and the Mayor; and
- Develop an implementation plan.

Effective technology planning can result in a computing environment that allows more efficient use of staff time. The result of this process should be a step-by-step action plan detailing how Warren expects to meet its long-term goals and objectives given the existing technical architecture. The proposed strategic technology plan should contain the following elements for each initiative:

- A timetable;
- Funding requirements and sources;
- Individuals responsible for implementation;
- An estimate of resource requirements to implement actions, including consultants, contractors or in-house staffing and the source of these resources;
- Staff development requirements;
- A statement of expected benefits; and
- Benchmarks to determine progress in meeting stated goals.

The timetable should be realistic in estimating Warren's commitment to the implementation of new technologies. A sound methodology will help the City implement high quality applications with less risk and at a lower cost. The plan, along with the budget, should also address the issue of upgrades and future replacements of computer equipment, as well as software and associated staff development.

F4.7   The City of Warren does not use performance measures to determine if it is accomplishing goals and objectives. Performance measures are defined as a system of client-focused quantified indicators that let an organization know if it is meeting its goals and objectives. Performance measures are a management tool that measure work performed and the results achieved. These same measures form a basis for management to plan, budget, structure programs, and control results. Measurement of performance helps to ensure continuous provision of efficient and effective services. The City of Middletown initiated performance measures for technology that succinctly identify areas that need improvement and areas that perform adequately.

Because Warren does not use performance measures or indicators, it is unable to track the performance levels of daily operations, link operations to objectives, or determine overall performance. Additionally, Warren does not require the assisted employees to formally report on the status of technical work performed. Currently, complaints about technology services are the only measure of the quality of services.

R4.7   Warren technology staff should consider developing a method to obtain and analyze the results of performance. It is important that the measures be aligned with the strategic technology plan. Establishing performance measures can ensure that the technology staff is meeting its own goals as well as those of the City. Warren should be vigilant in developing, updating, assessing and reporting performance measures for all facets of operation. Performance measures are an important component of establishing trust and accountability. The implementation of a performance measurement system is an evolutionary experience in which measures will likely improve with experience. Initially, technology staff should focus on common indicators. The types of performance measures most commonly used in government include:

- **Inputs:** resources used (what is needed);
- **Outputs:** activities completed (what is produced);
- **Outcomes:** results achieved;
- **Efficiency:** how well resources are used; and
- **Quality:** effectiveness (how much have services improved).

Each measure is designed to answer a different question. It is not always necessary to use all types of performance measures to determine if an objective is being achieved. Good performance measures need to be specifically defined and identified. Clear explanations are

necessary to indicate what is being measured, the source of the information, and how the value is calculated. The use and reporting of performance measures may increase efficiency and should keep management and staff, technology users, and City management better informed of the performance of the technology staff and private technology contractors.

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Web site includes performance information available with specific measures that can be applied to technology departments in any City. They recommend indicators such as the following:

- Help desk calls received during the reporting period;
- Percent of help desk calls resolved with certain time periods;
- Help desk calls resolved at time of the call;
- Operating and maintenance expenditures per workstation;
- Ratio of intelligent workstations to FTE's;
- Ratio of dumb terminals to FTE's;
- Percent of jurisdiction operating budget (not capital budget) allocated to information technology; and
- Percent of users who rate services of each of the systems as good or excellent rather than fair or poor.

Some information included in the City of Middletown's Performance Measures are shown in **Table 4-7**.

Table 4-7: Performance Measures for Information Systems

Service Quality	Objective	Input
Responsiveness to Requests for Service (RFS)	RFS responded the same working day that they are received.	Statistics from Incident Tracking Schedule.
Resolution of critical hardware and software RFS	Critical hardware and software RFS are resolved within 24 hours.	Statistics from Incident Tracking Schedule.
Resolution of system maintenance & modification RFS	System maint. & modification RFS are resolved within the time limits acceptable to customer.	Collection from completed Maint. & Modification forms. Manual data collection and tabulation.
Quality of systems analysis and programming	System maint. & modification RFS meet the design and specifications established by the customer.	Collected from completed Maint. & Modification forms. Manual data collection and tabulation.
User satisfaction	Users are satisfied with hardware & software support services.	Manual data collection and tabulation from quarterly user satisfaction survey.
Timeliness of computer operations	Scheduled production jobs are completed within the time limits established by the customer	Manual data collection and tabulation from completed Operations Production Schedule.

Source: New Middletown IT Department

Although these performance measures are suitable for Middletown, they should be revised to meet Warren's needs and strategic plans. For example, training objectives should be added as well as internet and email issues, and long and short term goals. Goal rates and frequency should also be added to meet the objectives Warren establishes and should be updated regularly to continually motivate improved results.

Technical Operations

F4.8   The City of Warren has been attempting to create a Web site outside the technology staff's function. An effort was made several years ago, but due to several problems, it was not completed until recently. Multiple employee's suggestions have been incorporated into the Web site but have stalled its release. The Technology Steering Committee had no involvement. Although the contract specified the date of completion February, 2001, it was delayed a year and completed in May 2002.   The cost to develop the site was $2,500 with a $35 monthly hosting fee. Updates cost $40 per hour with a maximum of $400 billable per month. Estimated time is 8 to 10 hours per month.

ICMA and other government organizations have web hosting services that partner with cities to help them create Web sites as well as host them. Some allow municipalities of any size to build and manage their own high tech Web site without any special technical skills or

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training at an affordable cost without extra IT staff. The technology allows additions and updating dozens of content and interactive sections, polling residents, soliciting feedback on issues and posting late-breaking information for citizens. Pricing for some is based on population.

ICMA also has a "Best Practices for Local Government Web Site Development" manual available on the Internet. It is intended to provide general recommendations regarding best practices for local government Web sites, such as advertising and copyright policy, community involvement, hit counters, navigation, PDF documents, privacy policy, scanners, tourism, and virus and hacker protection among other constructive material. For example, advertising on the Web site is not recommended due to current case law, unless all local businesses are listed or the City could risk legal challenge. An alternative ICMA suggests is to incorporate a link to the Chamber of Commerce site. Bulletin boards are also not recommended as appropriate due to the inability to censor a public forum for speech. However, feedback by the community, a copyright policy statement, and privacy policy are recommended to help build a constructive site. Digital cameras, scanners and other technical devices are discussed in detail.

Middletown's Web site has e-business capability. The following illustrates its available e-business services:

- Bill payment;
- City income tax payment;
- Building permit status research;
- Citizen requests for service.

R4.8   As part of a unified technology department, one staff member's function should include Web administration to update and monitor the Web site as e-business is expanded in Warren and to eliminate the fragmentation of the Web site responsibility. The IBM I Series could function as a cost efficient Web host if the current Web host does not perform. ICMA is also available for servicing if the current arrangement is not satisfactory. There is a one time fee of $3,000 which includes designing the Web site and a monthly fee of $105 that includes Internet hosting, comprehensive training and additional online/telephone customer service. Custom design is available at an additional charge. Two email pop accounts per site are available for free and more at a nominal cost. Broadcast e-mailings of up to 5,000 text only messages each month are also provided.

The Web site should be promoted by advertising in City brochures, flyers, billings or by other methods. It should be reviewed and monitored by the Technology Steering Committee on a continual basis to ensure it is upgraded as needed.

Some of the transactions available on line could include the following:

- Requests for service (potholes, streetlight repair, etc.);
- Requests for records;
- Business license applications;
- Permit renewals and applications;
- Interactive maps;
- Employment applications; and
- Utility bill and income tax payment and account information.

F4.9   The City of Warren does not have a formal written repair and maintenance policy. Both of the peer cities purchase five-year maintenance agreements with their computers. After five years, the equipment is considered obsolete and either donated or used for replacement parts.

Great Lakes Computer Corporation contracts for the maintenance of equipment not under warranty that DPD does not repair. At a cost of $12,000 to $13,000 per year, time and staffing constraints are relieved, and maintenance is ensured by the company in a timely manner. An equipment maintenance form is completed by DPD personnel and kept in a file that details the department, device, nature of the problem and the resolution. Smaller equipment such as keyboard, logic units and monitors are addressed on an as needed basis by the staff. Great Lakes is summoned when repairs are to be done on the following:

- Equipment that is critical or in critical departments;
- Equipment without a replacement on hand; and
- Newer equipment that is not under warranty.

WPC Network Systems purchases computers with a three to five- year warranty and performs much of the repair in house, citing cost savings and employee convenience as priorities. By repairing in-house as frequently as possible, downtime for system users is minimized. However, if timeliness of repairs and consumption of the staff time is compromised by cost savings for repairs, this could jeopardize efficiency and be less productive than outsourcing.

R4.9   The Technology Steering Committee as a whole should review procedures in place and develop a written policy that specifies when to repair in-house and when to outsource in a comprehensive manner for the City. Analyses should be made of repair requests, and time and cost required to perform the repairs. At that time, decisions can be made to outsource or maintain the devices in house. A maintenance log helps to determine the status of the equipment and to determine if it is worthwhile to repair. Additionally, a time log on the maintenance report would help to ascertain if this repair is worth the time spent or should be outsourced. This will also help to decide if similar equipment should be maintained in the agreement with Great Lakes. Since the network staff repairs equipment on a more

routine basis, a consolidated department would enable staff to maintain devices that would ordinarily be subcontracted to Great Lakes to economize on costs that would not compromise efficiency.

Most major computer manufacturers have a self maintainer plan to save costs on computer repair by providing maintenance training for employees. A rebate is issued by the manufacturer to compensate for labor costs. Minimum requirements and a yearly fee are usually required. Gateway, the primary supplier for Warren, charges a $500 annual fee but requires a minimum of 200 Gateway computers to maintain. They rebate $50 for each laptop and $75 for each desktop repair. This could be a significant cost savings for the City.

F4.10 The city of Warren does not have a formal obsolescence or replacement policy for technology equipment. When equipment is considered obsolete, a form is completed and sent to the administrative coordinator for approval. A policy would specify the conditions that would entail equipment removal or maintenance. Therefore, equipment that has some functional use would not be discarded by a person making a unilateral decision. It would also alleviate the decisions that could lead to excessive time spent on inefficient or costly repairs, or the cost of outsourcing the repairs. See the **purchasing** section for more information regarding the City's obsolete equipment.

R4.10 An obsolescence and replacement policy should be implemented for consistent disposal of used technology equipment. A policy that explicitly details the procedure to decide what should be discarded or not would be beneficial and ensure consistent, dependable decisions. The Technology Steering Committee should be responsible for formulating and implementing the policy which needs to be monitored and updated as obsolescence is redetermined on an annual basis.

F4.11 The City of Warren has strived to upgrade its network and maintain it. It grew from a departmental convenience into a City-wide asset. T-1 lines costing $1,800 per month or $21,600 annually, and 56K leased lines, which are cheaper, but slower, costing approximately $18,000 per year, were used for connectivity. Since the addition of the wireless network, most of the leased 56K and the T-1 lines have been eliminated with a connection that is seven times faster than the T-1 lines. This has saved the City $39,600 per year by providing an 11 MB backbone without recurring lease costs.

C4.2 The wireless technology implemented in the City is superior to many cities the size of Warren and even larger, including both peers. Middletown has some wireless technology similar to Warren's. The proactive attitude toward technology, while also being cost effective, has enabled Warren to engage in advanced systems and be prepared for future technology.

F4.12 A Commodities program is available through New World Software. Due to the volume of data that is required for configuration, it was not viewed as cost effective to initiate. There are cost effective solutions, including software that works with New World Systems, that are addressed in the **purchasing** section.

F4.13 The IBM I Series has capabilities beyond its current use. The IBM AS/400 was recently upgraded to the I Series platform. See **Table 4-2** for further features. It is housed in a very secure environment and could be much more functional. Web hosting, e-business, and replacing remote servers are just some of the capabilities that could be explored. Although there would be additional costs for the T-1 line for Web hosting connectivity and the existing servers could be retained for alternate backup, the I Series is still a consistent solution to many issues. The cost to upgrade the IBM AS/400 was $78,387 payable over 24 months with an interest rate of 5.8%. Since the I Series was purchased prior to September 1, 2001, a rebate was received of $21,000 for a net cost of $57,387. This cost needs to be justified, and incorporating new applications would benefit the City. For example, there are several remote servers interspersed throughout Warren in insecure environments. The new I Series could replace them in a secure, efficient manner.

R4.11 The City of Warren should expand the use of the I Series. The capabilities need to be further researched and compared to the existing or potential future functions for which the unified technology department will be responsible. The Steering Committee should incorporate the capabilities into long range planning as well as immediate solutions.

F4.14 Although several software programs are used by multiple departments, Warren buys software departmentally. Departments purchase their own software as needed mainly due to varying levels of departmental funding.

Some software is used throughout the City. Examples include various Microsoft packages, Norton Virus software, HP Scanner software and Timbuktu Professional. Documents on later releases of software cannot be shared easily with documents on PC's with earlier versions. However, if city-wide purchasing of software were in effect, sharing would not be an issue and uniform training could be developed.

The interactive mailing software, the business directory, Office Vision/400 BS and the property inquiry taken from Trumbull County are Citywide applications residing on the I Series.

R4.12 Warren should consider purchasing software used throughout most departments in the City centrally with site licenses for each location, or licenses for each PC or for the operating system, whichever is most cost effective. If the City were to purchase software centrally, software expenditures would be reduced, and the consistency of programs would enable version conformity for more accessible, shared data. The Technology Steering Committee

should monitor the necessity, purchase, and training of upgrades of software for City-wide use.

F4.15 Funding can determine the amount and cost of technology that departments purchase. Although departments within the City of Warren purchase and implement software for their own specific requirements, it is maintained by technology personnel. **Table 4-8** presents specialized department software.

Table 4-8: Software by Department

Department	Software	Developed In-House	Department Support
Mayor's office	Vehicle Inventory, Daily Reports Ivision, PSBOS (bond purchasing for payroll)	X	DPD WPC
Board of Health	Garage Sale, Rentals, Receipts for Rentals, Birth & Death Certificate	X	DPD
Community Development	Loan & Grant IDIS, Paint Analytical, Quickbooks Pro, Sprintlink, WordPerfect, CPS, Enters , MapInfo,. Kodak camera software	X	DPD WPC WPC
Data Processing	Hawkeye, Blue Ocean, Kronos Time Clock, Optio Forms, Workright Mailing Code, Powerlock, Checkout Plus, File Flash Daily Backups, Real Estate Inquiry	X	DPD DPD DPD
Engineering Planning and Building	ICES (Permit package), AutoCadd, AutoCadd 2000 Cartegraph, HP Plotter software, Signview and Pavementview		WPC WPC
Finance Department	Human Resources, Finance PSBOS,		DPD WPC
Fire Department	Run Cards, Daily Reports, Fire Payroll, Firehouse software, Visio, Cameo InfoQuik, Seagate Backup, Marplot, ChemManager, Aloha	X	DPD WPC WPC
Human Resources	Drug Testing Prognos database	X	DPD WPC
Income Tax	Tax Software		DPD
Law Department	Ordinances & Resolutions West Law		DPD WPC
Municipal Court	Warrant & Capias, Criminal Inquiry West Law	X	DPD WPC
Operations Department	Work Orders, Inventory, Cemetery Plotting Invoices Computerized Fleet Management	X	DPD WPC
Police Department	Police Software including Dispatch Property Processing, Daily Reports Microsoft Picture It, LEADS (national database)	X	DPD DPD WPC
Sanitation	Invoices	X	DPD
Water Department	Sensus Meter Processing, Utility Billing (shared with Trumbull County), Work Orders EPA Drinkware , Kentucky Pipe, EPA CAD, Seagate Backup, Adobe PageMaker,	X	DPD DPD WPC WPC
Water Pollution Control	SCADA, Swimwater, AutoCAD, AutoCAD 2000, Quickbooks Pro, Adobe Pagemaker and Photoshop, American Sigma Incorporated (Insight for flow meters), Carte'graph, OH EPA SWIM ware, Maintenance View, MGI PhotoSuite SE, Corel Draw, Adaptec CD, MiroVideo, Report View, Win Morph, Power Chute (for UPS's)		WPC WPC WPC WPC WPC

Source: WPC and DPD information

Software for City Council, Civil Service Commission and Packard Music Hall are not included.

Some departments without funding require more sophisticated software to help accomplish their goals. See the **law department** section for details concerning its technology. Previously released reports, including the Police and Operations Departments, address technology within their respective departments.

Financial Data

F4.16 Technology services are billed to departments through the internal service fund for DPD and at year end for the network services. Data Processing receives $250 per device connected to the I Series per month through an internal service fund. This amount was calculated by the Certified Public Accounting firm in 1986. The amount billed by device has remained unchanged since then. WPC funded the network systems staff, materials and equipment through an enterprise fund to service the entire City. Last year, since WPC is now tracking service, it billed the departments for their time and materials.

Excesses of revenues over expenses in Data Processing are applied to future capital expenditures for technology purchases. This amount has been approximately $60,000 per year for the last few years.

Both Mansfield DPD and Middletown receive revenue through internal service funds. Mansfield bills by an average of percent of use that has been in place for several years. Middletown's technology department receives funds without a billing process assigned by the general and enterprise funds.

Without long-term planning for technology needs, billing will continue to be fragmented. At present, the WPC network tracking is kept weekly with no hours allocated. Adequate tracking of service including time spent and materials used will insure correct billing of services for WPC network staff. Otherwise, allocation of service dollars will be skewed and departments will be responsible for inequitable payment. Since a budget does not exist for the WPC network unit independent of WPC, strategy for future City technology growth cannot be realistically planned or monitored.

R4.13 The City of Warren should develop mechanics to appropriately fund the new consolidated DPD for technology services. When the system is implemented, it should be assessed to determine its effectiveness in billing technology services. This assessment should be done by the Technology Steering Committee or some other committee, but not solely by Warren financial personnel. Some possible measures for assessing the system include the following:

- Is the fund covering costs for Technology;
- Are accurate and appropriate costs being billed to departments;

- Is the cost of using the system justified by the benefits; and
- Are administrative and operational costs of the system appropriate given the levels of billing?

Assessing the system against a list of goals or objectives ensures that Warren is operating efficiently and appropriately billing departments for technology services. Additionally, such assessments can provide Warren technology users with a measure of accountability.

Although it is most beneficial to unify the technology in Warren, if independent departments remain, minimally, a budget should be implemented for City technology services provided by WPC to plan, compare and monitor revenues and expenditures.

With the combination of the DPD and the network systems staff, a comprehensive charge could be billed to each department through the internal service fund. There are several billing methods available. However, whatever method is chosen, it should be straightforward and able to be budgeted. Some examples include the following:

- Billing as it exists currently, by device;
- Billing by service requested with total amount of expenses apportioned to each department according to service requests; and
- Apportioned expenses by department by amount of time spent on each department;.

F4.17 Grants are not pursued by the technology staff in Warren. Other than Community Development and some small grants for projects sought by other departments, grants are not researched. The peer cities technology departments have never researched or received any technology grants. Without grants, some potentially valuable services may not be provided. The Internet and government organizations are a good resource for finding grant funding. For example, the US Department of Commerce as well as The National Science Foundation provide available grant funding through the Internet for municipalities. Most grants are limited to rural or under served localities. However, occasional regular monitoring of some sites may offer suitable sources for possible grants that may apply to Warren.

R4.14 Due to funding cutbacks, long range planning should be focusing on the greatest return on the investment and more creative funding arrangements. Although the peer cities do not pursue or receive technology grants, a designated person should be aware of and vigilant about technology grants available and found on the Internet as well as other sources. If a designated employee is not available for technical grant research and writing, a City grant writer should research all grants including technical grants. The Technology Steering Committee should monitor technical grants. Grant writing is further addressed in the **mayor's office** section.

F4.18   Implementing a trade for services, Warren's Internet service is provided at no cost. In 1999, in exchange for housing an Internet Service Provider's (ISP) equipment within a City-owned structure, the Internet was connected at no charge to the City. This saved the City $8,664 annually based on the peers' average cost for Internet implementation.

After this contract ended, bids were taken for a high speed line, again with a trade for services. The bids approximated $54,432 over a two year period based on the correlating cost of leased lines to accommodate the bandwidth and included Email and Internet services. The City received a minimum one MB wireless connection directly to the ISP in exchange for a location on the communication tower for the vendor's antenna at again, no cost to the City. To date, Warren is using about seven MB of bandwidth directly to the ISP.

Internet services are traditionally bid for the lowest price. ICMA has a low cost web hosting service that also entitles the City to Internet access at $10 per user. Most Internet services charge between $10 and $20 per month per user. This service could cost several thousand dollars per year for a City with just 20 or 30 users.

Mansfield uses a DSL line for $450 per month for unlimited service. There is one additional dial-up connection for $20 a month. This is an annual cost of $5,640. Middletown pays $699 a month for unlimited users and $275 per month for a T-1 circuit. The yearly cost totals $11,688.

C4.3   The WPC network services staff has strived to upgrade the City's technology in the most cost-efficient manner possible. By participating in situations like the trade for services and the wireless WAN to enhance capabilities and minimize costs involved, Warren has demonstrated its ability to manage technology problems with cost effective, creative solutions.

F4.19   Three telecommunication companies rent space on City-owned water and police towers. Registered and bonded businesses showing proof of insurance and workers compensation are permitted to submit competitive bids to the City. The highest bidders are accepted subject to space availability. Prior to climbing the towers, drawings are design reviewed in the building department and go to a design review architect which is paid for by the business. All three contracts are within the first five year term, which is rented at a base amount. Four additional terms of five years each are available with 15% increases for each term. **Table 4-9** presents the revenue detail for existing agreements. Revenue for 25 years totals $917,910.

Mansfield does not rent space on its towers due to safety concerns. The city reserves its space for public service and emergency personnel only, thereby avoiding conflicts that could occur between competing businesses. Middletown does not routinely rent space either since there are few inquiries. One company is currently leasing space for $1,000 per month or

$12,000 annually. Most of the available space is used for police and fire radios and repeaters (signal amplifiers).

Table 4-9: Tower Revenues for Telecommunications:

Years	Company 1	Company 2	Company 3	Annual Revenue
1-5	$72,000	$100,000	$90,000	$52,400
6-10	$78,000	$115,000	$0	$38,600
11-15	$95,220	$132,250	$0	$45,494
16-20	$109,500	$0	$0	$21,900
21-25	$125,940	$0	$0	$25,188
Total	**$480,660**	**$347,250**	**$90,000**	

Source: City of Warren Engineering, Planning and Building Department

C4.4   Warren has successfully maximized the revenue from their towers using the competitive bid process. They are currently preparing for additional bids by using a standard bid book and blanket ordinance that allows for space rental without having to approach council each time space is available.

Technical Training

F4.20   Each department is responsible for training on software that it purchases. The DPD has a training facility and trains all employees on the I Series and the related software. WPC Network Systems trains users on network equipment and PC's as required. Attendance, records and trainee satisfaction are surveyed in DPD. WPC does not track or survey for results of training. This can result in unsatisfactory or inconsistent training for users. Additionally, many departments have underutilized software due to insufficient training and maintenance.   Inadequate implementation and utilization can result in lost time and efficiency.

R4.15   The Technology Steering Committee and staff members who recommend and approve software purchases should ensure that the departments adequately prepare for training and funding requirements for software implementation.   They should also supervise the progression of the training and usage.

Training records for all technology training should be kept with a satisfaction level assessment to ensure that quality and consistent training is provided, whether in house or outside. From this information, better training methods could be developed.

F4.21   Training within the technology departments is inconsistent. As a budgeted line item, DPD employees receive training as needed. However, funding cuts in 1999 caused training to be curtailed for that year. In 2000 and 2001, $863 and $1,086 were spent on continuing education respectively. In 2001, this included the DPD manager attending a New World System software user group meeting. Both years include the cost of periodical subscriptions and textbooks.

IBM offers annual five day conferences where users can update and learn about new information and uses available for their I Series. IBM chooses locations that are appealing to their customers, many of whom are international. The DPD manager would benefit from this exposure and information. However, the City has rejected his request for attendance possibly due to concern that citizens would misconstrue the motives for attendance in resort locations.

Outside training and education are not available to WPC network staff, although it is a budgeted item in Water Pollution Control. They obtain their knowledge from researching on-line resources, reading periodicals or from performing the work necessary. Yet, due to satisfactory project completion in the past, training is not viewed as a priority, and staff are expected to perform new tasks without actual training, whether it is efficient or not. Both the Data Processing Manager and Network Systems Supervisor feel additional training would be valuable for their staff. With perpetual evolution, technology personnel require constant updating of information. Persistent lack of continuing education can lead to morale and informational problems.

R4.16   As part of a consolidated department, the continuing education budget should include the network systems personnel who would benefit from discussion with their peers to better grasp and administer their proposed projects as well as the information they receive to implement new projects in a timely and more efficient manner. The DPD manager should attend IBM conferences to update his knowledge and network with peers to better utilize the I Series platform. Benchmarks for training hours should be determined and assessment records kept for quality and relevance of the courses. Benchmarks for training all personnel should be a reasonable percent of the technology budget or a specified dollar amount per employee. The amounts spent for 2000 and 2001 would be sufficient per employee, however not for the entire staff.

Many computer suppliers offer a self maintainer program further explained in **R4.9**. The training required for eligibility would coincide with the training for the employees to best serve the City's needs. The cost for the training would be offset by the reimbursements from the self maintainer program.

F4.22   Certification in technology is not pursued for the network staff in Warren. None of the them has certification in network systems. Training is a low priority and staff frequently pays for

training personally. Although funding is the cause of lack of training, certification gives the employee validity and a gauge for their accomplishments As the employee earns respect for his achievement, the City earns respect for encouraging professionalism and accomplishment. The DPD manager is a Certified Systems Professional and the Computer Programmer is a Microsoft Certified Professional Systems Engineer.

R4.17 Certification for various job functions should be addressed as part of the centralized department. Additional training will contribute to morale and workplace satisfaction in addition to the valuable expertise of the staff. It is important that Warren seeks the best certification for their needs among the many programs available. Since Warren uses Microsoft products, there are Microsoft certification programs available that would benefit the employees as well as the City.

F4.23 The network systems staff do not attend user group meetings that may address some of the software they maintain or networking systems. The Data Processing Manager attends supplier group meetings for the midrange computer and New World applications when possible and sometimes brings a person from another department if the subject is applicable. Cost effectively, sending one staff person to a meeting could be sufficient to gain insight into new technology without sacrificing the needs of the organization. Without meeting attendance, no benefit can be gained from the expanding knowledge available, answering questions, and networking with other users.

R4.18 In the consolidated department, staff should be sent to meetings for the I Series and associated software, as well as the network and associated software. Networking with other peers could help achieve goals, discuss and solve problems, or learn other methods to fulfill their job functions. For example, alternate billing methods or some of the I Series capabilities could be discussed at these meetings along with software solutions.

Telecommunications

F4.24 Telecommunications (radios, telephones, mobile units) are managed outside the IT function. At one time telephone communication was a simple solution with few options. However, today's communication has a direct relationship with voice over IP and data and video functions all capable of utilizing the same technology. Tomorrow's technology could be even more intertwined. Continued separation of these functions could impede telecommunication service growth in Warren.

As technology is advancing, many entities are exploring the advantages of voice over IP. This enables the use of the network backbone for telephone service and saves money by eliminating the need for as many Centrex lines, which cost $14.50 per line. Warren has 267 Centrex lines, which costs the City $4,507 per month, or approximately $54,000 per year. Last year, the City of Middletown decided to incorporate the telephone responsibility into

the IT department. It has eliminated many of its Centrex lines and incorporated a central PBX to access its 17 remote sites, which are networked through a combination of wireless, copper lines, and T-1 leased lines. Because it uses less Centrex lines, it is charged approximately $30 per month per line. However, since Middletown was dissatisfied with its service from its provider, it was eager to be released from the contract. Although the costs are similar, it has better service and equipment with more features.

R4.19 Telecommunications should be part of a comprehensive technology department for future growth potential and proactive vision for the City of Warren. Warren may be able to use the I Series platform to run future software for telecommunication activities. As telecommunications evolve and continue in its current direction, it will necessitate more extensive technology resources

A great deal of research and careful planning is necessary to be at the leading edge of technology. Quality equipment is necessary for superior transmission to succeed and avoid problems with voice over IP during heavy loads. Warren should consider installing Quality of Service (QOS) modules for adequate throughput, preventing dropped data packets, as well as assessing other considerations of a PBX, such as the number of outside lines needed for a quality, cost efficient telecommunications system.

F4.25 Telephone services are inconsistent in the city. Some departments have more services than others due to the cost of changing the original services contracted with Sprint. The administrative coordinator discourages any changes in service since they would notably impact the rates that were grandfathered in years ago. Although this may be cost-effective, it can reduce the services available to the departments and hinder efficiency.

The administrative coordinator functions as the liaison with the telephone company. The phone company salesman advises the administrator of available cost savings. The administrative coordinator receives prequotes prior to work being performed to ensure cost savings during project completion.

Digital and analogue lines are used in Warren. Less expensive analogue lines can function as a modem or fax machine like a digital line. Digital lines are faster, but more costly. Centrex lines are used for all departments, with independent departments having a system of their choice. The variety is due to funding problems and varying satisfaction with existing systems.

A central PBX could be an option for Warren although there may be some obstacles due to the many remote locations it would need to service. The Centrex system, since it is housed at the telephone company's site, has capability to handle a multi-location office.

R4.20 Once telecommunications is centralized, Warren should assess standardized communication services. Not only does telecommunications tie into the network system and connectivity issue, it would alleviate the inconsistency in telephone systems and may be a cost savings if upgraded technology is incorporated into telecommunications using the Internet for transmission.

The person in charge of telephone services should be proactive in investigating other cost efficient options. Telephone services as well as radio communications should be monitored for technological improvements on a continual basis. Alternatives outside the current avenues should be explored and analyzed.

F4.26 Email and the Internet are only available to some users. See **Table 4-10** detailing accessibility of these services to administrative and service employees by departments. Availability is at the discretion of the department heads and the WPC Network Systems Supervisor. The Network Systems staff monitors the usage but cannot monitor it at all times. Therefore, to alleviate misuse, only those employees specifically requiring the services for job performance, have access to it

Although 60 employees in Mansfield have Internet access, managers, supervisors and secretaries may have a need for an Intranet, which is being explored. With controls in place, Middletown has Internet service available to all employees unless there is a restriction by department managers.

Table 4-10:   Email/Internet Access

Department	Administrative & Management Employees	Service Employees	Employees with Email/ Internet
Mayor's office	6	0	4
Board of Health	6	6	5
City Council	2	0	1
Civil Service Commission	0	0	0
Community Development	6	0	5
Data Processing	3	2	3
Engineering Planning and Building	6	8	4
Finance Department	6	0	3
Fire Department	5	66	3
Human Resources	3	0	2
Income Tax	7	0	0
Law Department	5	4	2
Municipal Court	23	8	5
Operations Department	5	44	2
Packard Music Hall	2	1	0
Police Department	18	69	12
Sanitation	2	13	1
Water Department	20	61	5
Water Pollution Control	5	43	9
Total	**128**	**325**	**66**

Source: Water Pollution Control systems chart

R4.21 The Technology Steering Committee, in conjunction with network services staff, should expand the use of email and Internet throughout the City. Email availability to all systems users would lend itself to better communication within the City. Implementation for limited users restricts the technology available or the potential applications of the technology. Savings would be realized in time, efficiency and paper costs.

Internet use also needs further analysis. Many employees do not realize the benefit Internet accessibility could contribute to their job functions. As long as the existing Internet and email use policies are adhered to and monitored, the Internet would be a valuable tool for most employees. Staff training and education to explain Internet capabilities would serve as a catalyst to understanding its effectiveness.

F4.27 Although the I Series has Intranet capability, its functionality in Warren is limited. Messaging availability is used by DPD primarily, sending messages to employees and messages sent to DPD. There may be occasional peer to peer communication via this medium. Although it is not widely used, several paragraphs or even a page are able to be transmitted.

Office Vision 400 is also available on the Intranet through the I Series platform, with a calendar, a directory, and word processing available. The word processing was widely used prior to the introduction of the PC's. The employees using the dumb terminals are still using this word processing program. However, none of these programs is widely used throughout the City. Although there is no graphical capability, the Intranet would be very useful and would enable better communication throughout the City. Uses for an on-line Intranet available to employees could include the following:

- City telephone and address directories;
- Strategic plans;
- City policies and procedures;
- Handbooks and other reference materials;
- Technical memos on commonly asked computer or software questions and problems;
- Standard City forms such as payroll, evaluation, address change requests, fax cover sheets, training requests, etc.;
- Employee newsletters; and
- Bulletin board where staff can share information.

R4.21 The Technology Steering Committee in conjunction with the DPD, should consider expanding the functionality of the City's Intranet. Widespread use of the Intranet would enable better communication throughout the City. Since the availability exists, better use of the technology would bring immediate up-to-date information with reduced paper costs, postage and time. However, to encourage the use of the Intranet, department heads should encourage employee use, and DPD should offer structured training programs for all employees that have use of the technology.

Technical Security

F4.28 The City of Warren uses alpha-numeric passwords for technology users. Since changing passwords in Warren has met resistance from employees, the passwords are not changed

often due to the users' possible inability to retain them without writing them down, which would breach the security measures in place. IBM security establishes and monitors user profiles, passwords and permitted applications on the I Series. Warren sets its system security level at 40 which maintains password, object and operating system integrity. Only one higher level, level 50, is available in which the operator has limited access and the security officer solely has total access. DPD uses Hawkeye software to review user profiles on the I Series monthly to assess the users accessibility and authority. Additional security is maintained using Powerlock, software that controls accessibility to certain commands and sign on actions.

F4.29   The IBM I Series is located in a controlled environment with a raised floor protected by a halon fire extinguishing system, fire and smoke alarms that are alarmed directly to the police department, an uninterruptible power source and a separate generator. Mansfield and Middletown have comparable environmental controls. They also monitor profiles and activity. This environment contributes to security for the system in case of most emergency situations.

C4.5   DPD has an advanced housing environment for the I Series platform. The room where the system is lodged is impressive and secure. Warren should continue to update security as technology evolves

F4.30   Warren has a comprehensive written Disaster Recovery Plan for its data processing functions but not for the network system. The plan in place was tested April 9, 2002. Trumbull County, in case of emergency, would allow Warren to use its AS/400 after 5:00 p.m. if contacted by 2:00 p.m. that day. Cold site recovery, in the event that all of Trumbull County was subject to a disaster is available through a joint agreement between Warren, Lakewood, and Cleveland Heights. If these services also become inaccessible, IBM is willing to rent a mobile unit for the City's use. These plans should provide for functional accessibility in case of a failure.

No formal plan documentation exists for Disaster Recovery for the network data. Onsite data backup is performed nightly while offsite data is also backed up at the WPC centralized backup station. All backups are done without incurring any additional expenses, including overtime.

On Saturday, July 7, 2001, lightning struck the communications tower. No one was contacted until the following workday, Monday, July 9. At that time, it was backed up by the redundant antenna located at an inverted position on the tower. All radios affected were switched to communicate with the backup.

C4.6 DPD has a comprehensive disaster recovery plan. By agreement with the other cities, down time in case of an emergency should be minimal. Services would not be interrupted for any length of time and continuity would be maintained.

R4.22 Written documentation should be prepared and a formal document test should be performed for the WPC Network system's disaster recovery plan. With a written plan, the scenario of July 7, 2001 could have been more promptly dealt with, due to employee awareness of the policy. If a key employee is unavailable, written procedures would be in place to cover most emergencies.

F4.31 The DPD daily and weekly complete backups are kept offsite. Sizable records when deleted are archived and kept in a controlled environment offsite. Active files are available on-line, including payroll and three years of police reports. DPD performs daily back up on all files unattended. The weekly backup is done on Saturday mornings when fewer users access the system because users are automatically thrown off the system during a full backup. An employee is necessary on site to determine if backup should be postponed due to Police or Fire Department emergencies.

Middletown conducts unattended complete backups nightly. Mansfield has daily unattended backup for files and libraries. The weekly backup is an unattended record backup with auto loading and additional programming to forego the need for an attendant. The monthly backup is a system save, staffed to replace the tapes. The City of Elyria, which uses the same platform and the same software as Warren, uses unmanned backup at 6:00 am during department shift changes to minimize interruptions while the users are logged off for a total of five minutes. Since Warren's DPD backs up on weekends, overtime is paid to the attendant. This leads to approximately two and a half to three hours of overtime every week.

At this time, attended backup is the best way for Warren to perform backups. Overtime costs are insignificant, and tapes are immediately transported to the offsite storage location, whereas Middletown does not transport the tapes to offsite storage until the following day. Middletown uses Legato NetWorker for its backup utility. However, Legato and some similar utility software is unavailable for the I Series platform. Being vigilant for moderately priced software, when available, that can alleviate the need to shut down the entire system while backing up would benefit the City. Driving the backup to the storage site could then be postponed until the following workday.

F4.32 An Internet Use Policy and Network Policy are in place for all users. The Internet has a proxy server that has a firewall and multiple security and logging passwords. There is minimal virus protection which has been adequate so far used with the desktop anti virus software. There is suitable virus protection for desktop users, with the exception of routine updates, which are not monitored by the technology department for regular updates. All viruses have been intercepted to date and isolated at the desktop level.

The Wired Equivalent Privacy (WEP) was part of the software purchased for the WAN. Security has been tested. The staff has tried to hack into its own systems and has been unsuccessful so far. Daily checks are made of the system usage to check for hackers. A hacker attempted to access the available bandwidth, through the Socks protocol but did not attempt to get into the system. Since the hacker was successful, the protocol was shut down to prevent further access until more protection could be implemented with an improved firewall.

Due to the nature of radio signals, security requires frequent monitoring. The main tower has an OMNI antenna providing 360 degree directional motion. The rest of the 11 antennae are YAGI's (directional) and dishes. The YAGI is accessible for 180 degrees but has a lower signal strength. Dishes have higher signal strength but only directional functionality. Security requirements must continue to be monitored to ensure the integrity of Warren's systems.

C4.7 The security in place has been well-planned and sufficiently tested although not fully documented. The Electronics System Specialist took a class in security and has monitored the security thoroughly. With each new technological improvement, security appears to have been addressed.

R4.23 Security measures should be documented for the City of Warren for the network systems. Except for the Internet Use and Network Use Policies, no other security documentation exists. As with the disaster recovery plan, documentation needs to be addressed for security to promote a consistent approach toward security risks. As with most technology, updating all documentation needs perpetual vigilance.

Financial Implication Summary

The following table summarizes the implementation costs for the recommendations in this section of the report. For the purpose of this table, only recommendations with quantifiable financial impacts are listed.

Recommendation	Estimated One-Time Implementation Cost
R4.3 Purchase help desk software	$1,700

Conclusion Statement

The division of the technology function within the City of Warren precludes it from becoming a comprehensive, coordinated department with consistent objectives. Telecommunications should be incorporated into the unified technology department as the area is evolving into more technology- related communication. Although staffing is sufficient for the City, with a consolidated department, job functions could be redistributed to include some deficiencies that are not currently supported. There is some level of service overlap, as well as gaps that are not addressed including the formation of a help desk, Web site, additional main frame utilization, and staffing.

Although the City has a functional Technology Steering Committee, its role should be expanded to generate, prioritize, and monitor long range strategic planning, as well as analyze and revise the internal service funding in a cohesive department. A unified department would alleviate time constraints on staffing for the Committee to implement the necessary performance measures to evaluate the measure and quality of service and objectives.

Continued cutbacks in City businesses will necessitate the search for alternative sources for funding and cost saving strategies. A unified technology department would allow the staff to accommodate more of the City's technology needs. A staff member should be responsible for technology grant research and writing to help alleviate the effects of the recent funding losses. More cost saving measures, such as Warren's creative Internet solution for a trade of services should be sought. The I Series capabilities should be explored to further its use in the City especially in its capabilities to house network solutions for Web hosting, e-business, and network backup. The internal billing for a centralized department would streamline the billing process as well as help the other departments budget for technology services.

Although Warren's technology department should be restructured, the overall operations is well maintained and secure. Security requirements should be continually monitored and documented to deflect potential risks in the future. Innovation and resourceful cost effective solutions are sought and implemented. Staying cognizant of the latest developments in technology can be a daunting task. However, Warren's technology departments have proven to be proactive and capable.

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Purchasing

Background

This section focuses on the purchasing and contract administration functions within the City of Warren. The major aspects of purchasing administration are processing purchase orders and requisitions; maintaining supplier lists; preparing bid specifications and requests for bids; selecting contractors; and monitoring the implementation of the city's purchasing priorities, including purchases from minority/disadvantaged suppliers and local suppliers.

Organizational Chart

Purchasing functions at the City of Warren are administered by the administrative coordinator with monitoring and oversight from the finance department and the equal opportunity coordinator. The safety and services director has final approval for all purchases. The relationship of these staff in terms of purchasing administration is depicted in **Chart 5-1**.
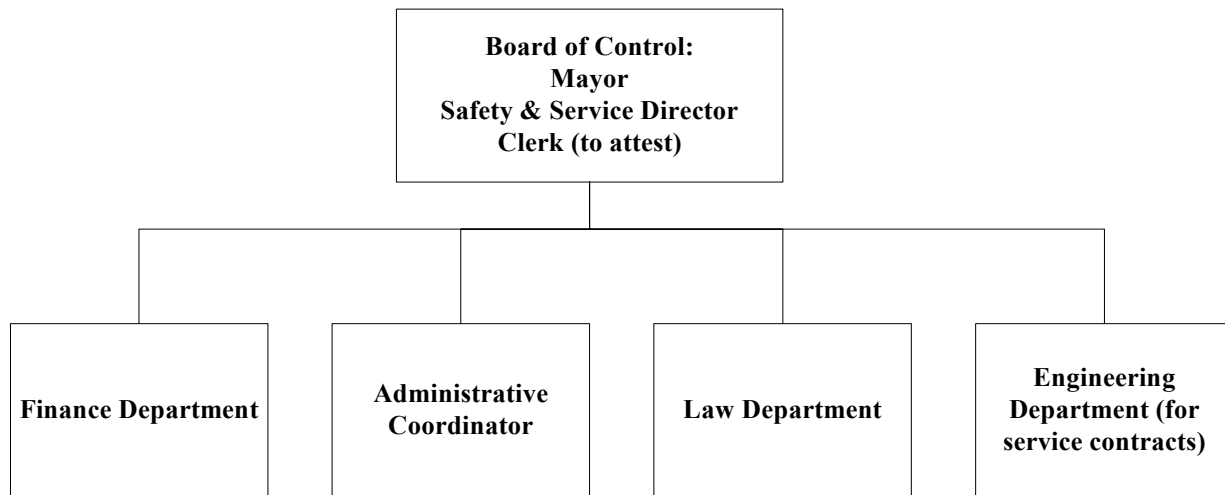
Chart 5-1: Purchasing Organization

```
                    ┌──────────────────┐
                    │      Mayor       │
                    └──────────────────┘
                             │
                    ┌──────────────────┐
                    │ Safety Services  │
                    │    Director      │
                    └──────────────────┘
                             │
              ┌──────────────┴──────────────┐
     ┌─────────────────┐           ┌─────────────────┐
     │      Equal       │          │ Administrative  │
     │   Opportunity    │          │   Coordinator   │
     │   Coordinator    │          │                 │
     └─────────────────┘           └─────────────────┘
```
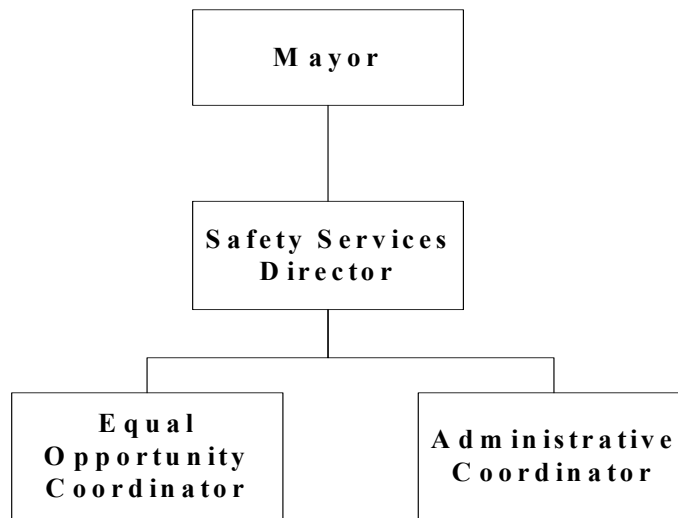
Source: City of Warren

The board of control monitors contract administration. Contract administration includes the oversight and decision-making functions for the City for competitively bid contracts which include any purchase of goods or services totaling $15,000 or more. The organization of the board of control and its relationship with other departments is depicted in **Chart 5-2.**

Chart 5-2: Board of Control

```
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │   Board of Control:     │
                    │        Mayor            │
                    │ Safety & Service Director│
                    │    Clerk (to attest)    │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
```

Finance Department	Administrative Coordinator	Law Department	Engineering Department (for service contracts)

Source: City of Warren

Organizational Function

The City does not use a centralized purchasing department, nor does it maintain a central warehouse operation. As a result, each department is responsible for procuring its own goods and services as well as storing items that are not immediately needed.

The major functions of purchasing performed by each department include preparing purchase orders and requisitions for the procurement of goods and services. The administrative coordinator and the finance department are responsible for monitoring the appropriateness of purchases and the availability of funds. The equal opportunity coordinator and the safety and service director also perform functions pertaining to purchasing, including preparing minority supplier lists and monitoring the purchasing process to ensure minority participation.

The functions performed by the administrative coordinator include the following:

- Oversee all purchasing from City funds;
- Update and maintain a comprehensive City-wide supplier list;
- Maintain catalog of all state-approved contracts and commodities;
- Review/prepare bid specifications for certain departments or projects;

- Maintain vehicle inventory;
- Oversee disposal of surplus or obsolete equipment;
- Initiate collections for damage to City property;
- Coordinate budget reviews; and
- Work with administration to establish City-wide procurement policies and procedures.

The purchasing functions performed by the finance department include the following:

- Verify accounts and certify availability of funds for issued purchases and proposed contracts;
- Process supplier payments and expense reimbursements;
- Transfer funds when necessary and appropriate; and
- Monitor departmental and City-wide budgets.

The purchasing functions performed by various individuals within City departments include the following:

- Identify and select sources of goods and services;
- Obtain supplier quotes for proposed purchases of goods and services:
- Prepare purchase requisitions and purchase orders;
- Receive, inspect and store supplies and materials delivered to the department; and
- Authorize payment for goods and services received.

Summary of Operations

The City's purchasing policy summarizes four types of purchases: those under $100; those between $100 and $14,999; blanket purchase orders which consist of multiple individual purchases that, together, do not exceed $5,000 in a three month period; and those that cost $15,000 and more.

For goods or services that cost less than $100, an employee submits a receipt or invoice to the purchasing contact in the respective department. The purchasing contact within each department is usually an administrative assistant or office manager that is acquainted with the New World purchasing system and the departmental budget. The departmental contact will encumber the amount through the New World purchasing system and print three copies of the requisition/encumbrance: one for the files, one attached to the voucher when the invoice is paid and one to be signed by the department head and sent to City Hall for review by the administrative coordinator and the finance department. The administrative coordinator reviews the requisition for form and content, and submits it to the deputy auditor who, in turn, and sometimes in conference with the city auditor, reviews the form for fund availability and verifies that the good or service matches the account number provided. After review and approval by the finance department, the requisition is filed at City Hall.

If, through any part of the cycle, a problem occurs with either the fund availability or the accounting fund, the requisition is returned to the department for editing. If funds are not available, the auditor may in some cases transfer funds from other accounts to cover the expense. There are no employees outside of the auditor or deputy auditor that have the capability to transfer funds among accounts.

For purchases between $100 and $14,999, purchase orders (PO) are issued. For these purchases, the department purchasing contact submits a purchase order electronically through the New World purchasing system to the administrative coordinator. After the purchase order is submitted electronically with noted approval from the department head, the administrative coordinator prints and reviews the order for form and content. If the order appears complete and pertains to an appropriate purchase, it is printed as a five-page form and submitted to the finance department for review. If the order is not acceptable, the administrative coordinator calls the initiating department with questions. If the form is acceptable, the finance department certifies the funds, verifies the account number, and returns the PO to the administrative coordinator. The administrative coordinator submits the PO to the safety and service director for his final review and signature and submits the remaining four parts to the supplier, the purchasing files, the finance files and the initiating department.

Blanket purchase orders are used for regular and frequent suppliers of goods or services. Using blanket PO's allows departments to anticipate the payments to a heavily-used supplier for a specific good or service, and issue a purchase order to accommodate multiple individual purchases over a finite time period. When a negotiated amount, usually $100, is spent on the PO, the department purchasing contact sends the PO to the administrative coordinator to be paid. When the blanket PO amount is spent, another may be issued at the discretion of the finance department and the safety and service director. All purchases on a blanket PO are reviewed by the administrative coordinator, the finance department and the safety and service director.

For purchases that cost more than $14,999, the City, in compliance with ORC, requires a competitive bid process. This process is managed by the board of control with input from the administrative coordinator, the city auditor, the engineer and the law director. The board of control is charged with making sure that specifications are in accordance with the City's interests.

Performance Measures

The following purchasing and competitive bid areas are examined in this review:

- Organizational structure and staffing;
- National best practices for the overall purchasing function;
- Competitive bidding and board of control administration of contracts, including specification preparation, bidding process, bid review, recommendation process, and contract preparation;
- Internal controls over purchasing and invoice payment;
- Automated purchasing, including methods for emergency procurement;
- Surplus/obsolete material management;
- Purchasing programs, including minority, disadvantaged and local buying priorities; and
- Compliance with ORC regulations.

Findings / Recommendations

Organizational Structure and Staffing

F5.1   The City of Warren does not operate a purchasing department. The administrative coordinator within the office of the mayor is responsible for coordinating the City's procurement in conjunction with the departments and with the oversight of the independently elected city auditor (the finance department).

       While the administrative coordinator's major responsibilities relate to the purchasing function, other duties include handling disposition forms, maintaining the City-wide telephone directory, maintaining the vehicle and telecommunications inventory, monitoring travel and communications programs, and overseeing purchases for the City's technology. In addition, the administrative coordinator is a member of the City's technology committee.

       Prior to January 2000, the administrative coordinator supervised a clerical assistant who handled many of the clerical duties leaving the administrative coordinator free to assist departments with researching suppliers, determining appropriate specifications and developing purchasing procedures. The administrative coordinator's job duties were not adjusted when the office staff size was reduced. As a result, daily job responsibilities have become more clerical and administrative in nature with a focus on immediate needs, while higher level planning functions have been reduced.

R5.1   A purchasing agent should be added to the organization and the position description should reflect the purchasing functions such as researching suppliers, developing more efficient purchasing processes and engaging in purchasing planning strategies, such as assisting departments with budget planning, bulk buying, lease versus buy options and interdepartmental consolidated buying. In addition, the purchasing agent should develop supplier evaluation tools so that departments can monitor supplier performance in terms of quality and timeliness of delivery. All clerical and administrative duties outside of the purchasing scope, including vehicle inventory, maintenance of the telephone directory, travel and communication programs should be assigned to other clerical staff to accommodate the restructuring.

Purchasing and Asset Management

The City of Warren has implemented strategies for purchasing and asset management. **Table 5-2** compares national purchasing best practices from Government Accounting Office, the State of Ohio Auditor of State's office and the San Antonio performance review to the City of Warren's activities. Information from this table is presented in findings **F5-2** and **F5-3**. Recommendations for improvement are provided in **R5-1** through **R5-12**.

Table 5-2: National Best Practices for Purchasing and Asset Management

Best Practices	City of Warren
1) Volume purchases are annually negotiated for discounts	The City of Warren does not negotiate purchases on an annual basis but purchases on an as-needed basis by department. **See R.5.4**
2) Annual bulk purchases are consolidated	The City of Warren does not consolidate bulk purchasing on a regular basis. **See R.5.4**
3) Analyses are conducted on lease versus buy options to determine the costs and benefits	The City of Warren has conducted lease versus buy analyses; most recently regarding the procurement of new police cruisers. Lease versus buy analyses should be incorporated into the general purchasing practices and included in the job description of the purchasing agent. **See R.5.1**
4) Supplier performance is monitored	The City of Warren can review quantity and timeliness of deliveries through its systems but does not generate them regularly. It does not have a formal process to generate reports on quality or ensure that the delivery is in line with the agreement. **See R.5.3**
5) A list of recommended or preferred suppliers (including minority suppliers) is compiled	The City provides a preferred supplier list but the standards for qualification are not clear. A preferred supplier list should include qualifications such as verification of previous performance, membership in the Better Business Bureau and documentation with the EEOC. **See R.5.3**
6) Purchasing policy and procedure changes are disseminated to appropriate people on a timely basis with instructions and means for follow-up education, if necessary	A policy manual should be developed that includes instructions on following the policies and procedures for purchasing including encumbrance, receipt of the good and record keeping. This should be in addition to the New World Purchasing System manual that is currently distributed. **See R.5.2**
7) Vendor catalogs - containing item numbers, descriptions and prices- are maintained and accessible	The administrative coordinator maintains vendor catalogs and keeps track of online vendor catalogs. Current catalogs need to be accessible to the department heads.
8) Auctions of surplus furniture and equipment are conducted.	An auction was held on November 3, 2001. Various surplus and obsolete items were sold with the revenue totaling approximately $29,000. **See R5.16**
9) Procurement policies and procedures are summarized with processes of how to get goods and services, how to prepare requisitions, and an explanation on the approval process.	A policy manual that encompasses the ordinances currently summarizing the purchasing policies should be developed and distributed to all staff that handle purchases at any level. **See R.5.2**

10) Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for Purchasing and Financial staff involving contract bidding, purchasing, and requisition.	Duties are separated and defined.
11) Internal controls are effective and consistent	Existing controls do not ensure that the quote-generating process accommodates City priorities such as minority/disadvantage and local buying. There is inconsistent application of controls pertaining to quote-generation of purchases under $15,000. **See R.5.7 and R5.9.**
14) Emergency purchasing procedures are appropriate	Emergency purchase orders are used frequently and could be curtailed if purchasing planning strategies were implemented. **See R5.11**
15) Time between purchases order submission and issuance is assessed	Cycle time between submission and issuance is roughly 24 hours due to the automation of the system.
16) Inventory and fixed assets are tracked	Fixed assets are tracked from a base-line inventory that was conducted in 1997 and a process is in place to document each fixed asset purchase and disposal. Departmental checks are conducted annually in addition to periodic auctions. No one is assigned to follow the inventory beyond the annual checks by each department, however. There is a procedure in place to dispose of fixed assets when obsolete or otherwise not needed. They are either sold, auctioned, relocated or disposed of according to City policy.
17) Cycle time for supplier payment is assessed	Cycle time for supplier payment is assessed and is approximately two weeks.
18) Internal Controls for receiving and warehousing are appropriate	Receiving is monitored by the affected departments. Receiving should be checked by someone outside of the department to comply with the need for separation of duties. **See R.5.12**
19) Warehouses are used effectively	Warren does not operate a warehouse. **See R5.4**
20) Information transmittal between Purchasing and Accounting/Finance is efficient and effective	Communication is daily between the administrative coordinator and the finance department. A noticeable exception is when a problem occurs on a PO and the administrative coordinator is not notified of the problem until the affected department calls with questions.

Source: General Accounting Office statement for Contract Management, ''Trends and Challenges in Acquiring Services; Financial Systems, State of Ohio, AOS, "Preliminary Assessment of Functional Areas"; City of San Antonio Performance Review.

F5.2   The City currently establishes its purchasing and contracting policies through its Codified Ordinances. Beyond a supplier-provided manual for use on the automated purchasing program, there are no procedures manuals available.

Procedures manuals, with appropriate instructions, should be updated frequently to reflect policy-changes and state mandates. Without current procedures manuals, staff are not made aware of recent changes in practice which makes the City susceptible to misfeasance.

R5.2   As part of the purchasing agent's duties, a policy manual should be developed that includes instructions on following the policies and procedures for purchasing, including encumbrance, receipt of the good and record keeping as well as any ordinances that summarize current policies. This manual should be distributed to all staff that handle any stage of making purchases.

F5.3   The City of Warren currently uses a list of preferred suppliers, but the standards for qualification are not clear and the frequency of updating could not be verified. A preferred supplier list can be very important in locating minority and disadvantaged suppliers as well as increasing the cost-efficiency of the purchasing process. In order for a preferred supplier list to fulfill that function, however, it must include qualifications such as verification of previous performance, membership in the Better Business Bureau and documentation with the EOC. In addition, the purchasing agent can include performance indicators such as cycle time and number of quotes per purchase to evaluate factors such as timeliness of quote generation, invoicing and delivery.

R5.3   The purchasing agent should develop evaluation tools for departments to monitor supplier performance (see **R5.1**).The City of Warren should then implement a list of preferred suppliers that includes a supplier history with a summary of the evaluations; a statement of whether it is a minority/disadvantaged supplier; a statement that it is a member of the Better Business Bureau; and any other appropriate contact information.

F5.4   The City of Warren does not negotiate its purchases on an annual basis or engage in consolidated bulk buying. These practices, if initiated, could reduce the number of purchase order transactions as well as reduce the unit cost of each purchase because most suppliers offer lower costs if a higher volume of purchases can be guaranteed. Operational materials consist of $914,900 of the total 2001 budget, and office supplies consist of $64,000 of the total budget.   Together these expenditures represent about 7   percent of the total appropriations for 2001. These are two areas where consolidated and bulk purchasing can be utilized to lower the number of transactions as well as the overall cost of the goods.

Office supplies are purchased primarily from five local supply companies. During a one-month period in 2000, there were nine separate office supply purchase orders generated among these five companies. None of these purchases were specialized, rather, all were for

a single department, and with the exception of a purchase of file cabinets, all purchases totaled less than $500 and were, therefore, not subject to the competitive bid process. All of these purchases could have been anticipated through periodic purchasing planning and should have been in stock had bulk buying occurred at the beginning of the year. By relying on purchases on an as-needed basis, the City risks purchasing goods on an emergency basis and not receiving the best possible price. Operational supplies are also purchased frequently through a general group of suppliers. As most operational supply purchases can be planned for in advance, they are best acquired through bulk purchasing agreements that allow for just-in-time delivery throughout a contracted period.

By planning office supply and operational supply purchases for a six-month period, these separated purchases orders could be greatly reduced. By negotiating bulk buying agreements with the five local suppliers on an annual or semi-annual basis, many of these purchase order transactions could be eliminated. Furthermore, because the local suppliers depend on the City's purchasing, each would likely be willing to develop discounted rates for bulk purchases as well as a plan to provide these supplies as they are needed throughout the year.

R5.4   The City of Warren should negotiate annual bulk buying agreements with its suppliers through the competitive bid process. While the bid process must be open and the best bids would be chosen, local and minority/disadvantaged suppliers could still be prioritized based on the City's purchasing policies (**see F5.20 and R5.17**). It should be clearly defined in the specifications that appropriate bids would incorporate agreements to consolidate purchases across departments and allow for delivery on an as-needed or "just-in-time" basis. This qualification is essential to ensure that departments can operate with a just-in-time inventory to avoid a need for unnecessary storage capacity. By negotiating bulk purchasing and consolidated purchasing agreements, the City will be better able to reduce emergency purchases, ensure better prices and reduce its monthly rate of purchase order transactions.

Financial Implication: Total purchases for supplies and operational materials cost the city approximately $978,900, (see F5.4). If the city were to engage in bulk purchasing and negotiate an across the board discount of five percent, the city could save approximately $49,000 annually.

Contract Administration

The City of Warren engages in many contract administration functions that mirror nationally recognized best practices for monitoring contractual processes. **Table 5-3** depicts these national practices and explains the City of Warren's application of them. The information presented in **Table 5-3** is used in **F5.5** through **F5.8**.

Table 5-3: National Best Practices for Contract Administration

Best Practices	City of Warren
1) Supplier performance is monitored.	Contract controls include supplier performance tracking. Evaluation tools are not currently available to departments for the purpose of monitoring supplier performance. **See R5.3.**
2) Information about purchasing policy and procedure changes are disseminated to appropriate people on a timely basis with instructions and means for follow-up education, if necessary.	Purchasing policies are delineated in writing and monitored by the board of control and the finance department. Packets are kept that document all changes and the meetings held to monitor those changes. The contract administration process should be incorporated into a purchasing manual that is disseminated to all staff involved with purchasing. **See R5.2.**
3) Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for purchasing and financial staff in contract bidding, purchasing, and requisitions.	The finance department and the board of control clerk have clearly defined roles in the process and each cross-checks the other in the bidding, purchasing and requisitioning process for each contract.
4) Bidding process is in compliance with applicable state laws.	The bidding process is in compliance with Ohio Revised Code.
5) Internal controls are effective and consistent.	The internal controls within the bidding process allow for cross-checking among departments and monitoring by the City Auditor and Safety Services Director.
6) Cycle time for supplier payment is assessed.	Contract administration tools used by the City track supplier payment cycle times, but no assessments are available. The purchasing agent should assess cycle times. **See R5.1.**
7) Information transmittal between Purchasing and Accounting/Finance is efficient and effective.	Information between the board of control and the finance department is on a shared electronic file.
8) Standard Contract Monitoring exists, complete with checklists, controls and performance measures.	Checklists and controls are not uniform among the projects. The purchasing agent should implement performance measurements that will allow for consistent monitoring and tracking among projects. **See R5.3.**
9) Complete documentation of contract objectives, changes, history and interpretations to ease transition for new staff.	Documentation of objectives, changes, history and interpretations is complete but lacks some potentially important tracking measures. See **R5.6.**

Source: GAO statement for Contract Management, "Trends and Challenges in Acquiring Services; Financial Systems, State of Ohio, AOS, "Preliminary Assessment of Functional Areas"; City of San Antonio Performance Review.

F5.5   The board of control oversees the bid selection process for purchases over $14,999. The board's duties comprise monitoring the development of bid specifications, advertising bid openings, estimating costs, and reviewing and selecting bids. Contract monitoring is done through the following departments:

● The engineering department makes cost estimates (or contracts that function out).
● The contracting/affected department monitors the project status and reports on time-lines.
● The board of control reviews performance and handles all the contract objectives, changes, history and documented interpretations.
● The law department reviews the contract for legality.
● The finance department reviews the funding availability and ORC compliance.

F5.6   Competitively bid contracts are monitored through a shared file that is accessible via computer by the effected department, the data processing department, the mayor's office, the administrative coordinator and the finance department. The finance department is the only department that can make changes to the contract; for all others, access is read-only.

All documents necessary for making major purchases are available in a packet from the controlling board. Most of the elements of the packet are indexed with a project execution form. The paper file documents the following:

● Project name, department and ordinance number;
● Minutes to advertise and bid opening date;
● Project identification number;
● Department head letter of receipts;
● Minutes accepting bid;
● Name of contractor, address and phone number;
● Proof of performance bond payment;
● Date of contract presented to finance department and law department;
● Date of contract letter to contractor;
● Date of tax affirmation; and
● Date of minutes accepting change of order and minutes of change order to finance department, law department and contractor.

All documentation is tracked independently by the board of control and the finance department. The two entities use each other as a check on the progress.

In addition to the project execution form, the board clerk files the engineer's estimate, the actual bid amount and the amount of the selected bid for each account. Although these are legally-required events in the competitive bid process, these events are not part of the tracking form (see **R5.6**).

F5.7   The City of Warren uses the project execution form as an indexing tool for each bid packet. AOS staff reviewed three separate bid packets for content and consistency. AOS staff reviewed the entire contract packets of three large competitively bid contracts that were selected, at random, from the Mayor's office. All three packets were up-to-date with the execution form and all necessary signatures were in place. Not all of the documents were dated, however, so matching documents with dates on the execution form was not possible. The project execution form does not include a line to reflect proof of advertising. In addition, one of the packets did not include documentation of three bids provided. It was not clear from the packet contents whether three bids were provided at all, or simply not included in the packet. Although the project execution form has been a valuable tool in the City's procurement process, more cohesive use of this document to organize major purchases could help the controlling board ensure that all steps are followed and thoroughly documented.

R5.5   In order to show compliance with ORC regulations, contract administration tools need to reflect the procedural requirements outlined in the ORC. Therefore, the project execution form should include lines for documentation of proof of advertising and public notice and the documentation showing the contractors' bids. In addition, all correspondence and documentation should be dated in order to show chronology, proof of delivery and receipt.

The City of Warren should maximize its use of this monitoring and tracking tool by redeveloping the project execution form to use as a complete index of all the required steps in the competitive bid process. In addition to its present contents, the form should include documentation of public advertising, response to bids, the engineer's estimate and the development of specifications. It should also be modified to include two additional columns to accommodate a memo line that would provide explanation for any missing information and a date line to include when the information was processed on the form. This additional information should fill any gaps that can occur during the duration of a contract and provide the City with a more accurate historical account of the contract. The project execution form should be added to the shared file so that all steps in the process are accessible to pertinent City representatives and any gaps in the process can be readily identified and rectified.

F5.8   The City of Warren's competitive bid process incorporates requests for bids for its service and materials contracts of $15,000 or more. Elements of a good bid request include project overview, submittal instructions, terms and conditions, mandatory requirements, scorable mandatory requirements, desirables, pricing and objectives for evaluation.

While the City incorporates detailed submittal instructions, terms and conditions of the bid, mandatory requirements and pricing, other components are not sufficiently addressed.

First, it is essential that the evaluation process be clear and concise and include the scoring methodology within the evaluation section. A complete evaluation process, according to the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, incorporates the following steps:

- Judges on the evaluation committee review mandatory requirements. These are pass/fail.
- Judges assign points to the scorable mandatory requirements.
- Judges assign points to the pricing proposal. This section is judged independently of the requirements proposals.
- Judges meet as a committee to add up the scores from the previous three steps.
- Committee assigns a consensus score to each proposal.

Second, desirables are a part of the proposal process that allow local governments to request features, services or products that exceed the mandatory requirements. Desirables have defined point values assigned based on their value to the project. Suppliers are not required to provide responses to desirables, but can earn additional points in the evaluation process if they do.

For the evaluation committee to fairly assign points, the scoring process should be clear in the Request for bid and provide a value system that explains the process for assigning points. For example, a well-written value system might say, "up to XX points will be awarded if the proposer demonstrates that the proposed system supports more than XX number of active users."

Third, a request for bid needs to define how pricing information should be submitted. Providing a pricing form ensures that bidders provide their cost information uniformly. Like the scorable mandatories and desirables, the pricing section is rated using a point system. In most situations the proposal with the lowest cost receives the maximum number of points. All other proposals receive a percentage of the points based on how their costs compare to the lowest priced proposal. Pricing proposals are normally submitted separately from the mandatory and desirable sections which increases the likelihood that the evaluation committee is unbiased when judging those sections.

R5.6   The City of Warren should revise its proposal process to incorporate all the elements of a good request for bid. The elements include the project overview, submittal instructions, terms and conditions, mandatory requirements, scorable mandatory requirements, desirables, pricing and evaluation.

The request for bids should include mandatory requirements that have specific thresholds and outcomes listed. By incorporating specific thresholds and outcomes with a corresponding scoring methodology, the likelihood of acceptable proposals coming forth is

greater. In addition, the more specific the requirements, the less likely that cancellations and legal problems with the contract will occur.

The City of Warren should tailor each proposal or bid request to best meet its desired qualities. This includes incorporating desirables that allow the City to reward suppliers or service providers with abilities to provide important, but not necessary, services or products.

All of the City's requests for proposals should provide a pricing form so that all submitting organizations will provide their pricing in a uniform manner. The more defined the pricing structure, the less difficult it will be for the evaluation committee to compare costs. By using a pricing form that allows for a point system for rating purposes, the pricing component will become one rated portion of the proposal, thereby increasing the likelihood that the "best," as well as the "lowest," bid will be chosen.

Finally, the City should restructure the evaluation process to a committee format that utilizes specified evaluation criteria outlined within each Request for bid. In addition, the scoring methodology should be included in the evaluation section with specified language to indicate that only the criteria identified in the request will be used in the evaluation process.

By upgrading and clarifying the proposal process, the City of Warren will be able to ensure that its contracts are based on sound and necessary criteria tailored to meet the needs of the City within its financial means.

Internal Controls

F5.9   The purchasing process in the City of Warren allows for invoices or receipts to be presented to the department contract prior to encumbrance. This is in violation of accepted accounting principles and the ORC. City policies should be upgraded to reflect that encumbrance of any purchase, regardless of price, must be made prior to a purchase.

R5.7 The City's formal policies should be adjusted to clarify the ORC prohibition of purchasing goods or services prior to encumbrance. All receipts and invoices presented to department contacts should be checked against the encumbrance date at both the department and finance department levels, and any purchases made before encumbrance should be challenged. A clarification of the law within city policy and stricter monitoring of the process should allow for established and consistent adherence to the law and the City's established internal controls.

F5.10   The oversight function for purchasing varies among the departments in the City of Warren. Although the process for handling purchase orders between $100 and $14,999 follows a general flow of events, the internal process is not identical for every department due to a lack of written requirements or established practices for purchases that are neither considered as

capital nor cost less than $1,000. Inconsistency is also due to the varying degrees of input from department heads. Inconsistency among the departments is compounded by the fact that quotes are always required for capital purchases and any purchase totaling $1,000 or more, but are only required on request from the purchasing coordinator or safety and services director for other purchases.

The inconsistent practices among the departments results in the real or perceived lack of internal controls. The policy of requiring multiple quotes for only certain categories of purchases lends a perception of inconsistency in terms of monitoring purchases and compliance with the City's minority/disadvantaged and local buying priorities.

R5.8   The City of Warren should implement a written procedure that requires three quotes for every purchase totaling more than $500, unless there is an attached statement from the department head that only one viable supplier is available. The minority bid list that has been provided by the EOC should be attached to the document showing the three quotes to show whether appropriate and available minority suppliers were contacted for quotes. Although it is perfectly appropriate for staff to identify and initiate purchases, department heads should not approve purchases without the appropriate documentation to show that quotes were sought to ensure the most appropriate purchasing and that appropriate funds are available for that purchase.

A telephone bid tabulation form should be included in the written procedure. This form should be attached to every purchase order request for $500 or more. The form should include for each three bidding suppliers, the following fields:

- Supplier name;
- Quantity of goods;
- Part number;
- Product description;
- Unit price;
- Total price;
- Whether the supplier is listed on the City's MBE list;
- Whether the supplier is listed on the City's preferred vendor list;
- Total bid, including any discount; and
- Delivery time.

In addition, the form should include fields for the final recommendation, the reasoning for the recommendation and any other considerations necessary.

F5.11   The City of Warren currently utilizes a blanket purchase order option for purchasing goods or services that are frequently obtained from the same supplier. Based on a three-month sample, an average of seven purchase orders were canceled on a monthly basis, which

presumes that an average of 14 blanket purchase orders remained open at any given time because an average of seven purchase orders were issued in each of the previous two months. However, most blanket purchase orders were renewed after their three-month, $5,000 cycles expired, which resulted in the same catalog of blanket purchase orders.

The use of blanket purchase orders can be important to relieving the overuse of individual purchase orders because it anticipates a heavy volume of purchases with a single supplier. In addition, it can prevent the use of emergency purchase orders which is prevalent in the City of Warren. However, because the blanket purchase orders are fixed at a set amount for a finite period of time, the controls for seeking quotes for the best price are not utilized. Furthermore, the City's purchasing priority to offer opportunities to minority/disadvantaged businesses is not monitored within this system. None of the blanket orders within the three-month sample were issued to any of the firms found on the City's list of minority/disadvantaged suppliers.

R5.9   The City should cease its use of blanket purchase orders. While it is practical in some cases the supplier to remain the same over time, in those instances, an invitation to bid would be appropriate. This would require the City to plan its purchases annually and aggregate the procurement of goods into a single competitively bid contract against which individual purchases would be procured. This will ensure a more competitive and economical process, as well as alleviating the administrative efforts associated with generating the multiple purchase orders.

F5.12   The use of emergency purchase orders is frequent within the City of Warren. The administrative coordinator processes 15 emergency purchase orders within a typical month. The use of emergency purchase orders allows departments to attain a purchase order number prior to the processing of the request.

Methods to allow for emergency needs are necessary, but should not be used to the extent that internal controls are sacrificed. Consistent monitoring of emergency purchase order use can allow a city to identify goods and services that might be insufficiently anticipated as well as those departments affected by incomplete planning.

R5.10   The City of Warren should monitor on a regular basis its use of emergency purchase orders and use the data collected to assist in the purchasing planning for the affected departments. Preparing periodic reports on emergency purchase orders will enable the City to develop a planning document to assist in its bulk and consolidated buying that is recommended in **R5.2**. By doing so, the City can avoid the higher costs associated with purchasing on demand as well as have more of the necessary goods available by using "just-in-time" clauses in contracts, thus avoiding the financial losses that result from delays in service or production when goods are not available.

F5.13 Currently, the various departments monitor the receipt of their purchased goods. In order for the execution of proper controls, however, there should be a separation of duties between the department ordering/purchasing an item and the receipt of said item. Without this separation, the City puts itself at risk that individuals will make personal purchases at the expense of the City.

R5.11 The City should make sure that someone outside of the affected departments checks the receipt of goods and the proper separation of duties is exercised. This should ensure that all purchases are delivered to the appropriate department and that inappropriate purchases are quickly noted.

Automated Purchasing

F5.14 The City of Warren uses the New World purchasing system for automated purchase requests, approvals and processing. Based on interviews with various departments and a sampling of purchase order cycles, a purchase order request normally takes less than 24hours to travel from the initiating department through the administrative coordinator, the finance department, the safety and service director and back to the department. Furthermore, fifty percent of the purchase orders tested were initiated and completed in the same 8-hour working day.

Because the system is automated, the first two steps of the process require no actual paper transfers which results in considerable savings in time and labor as compared to a purely non-automated system.

The initiating department can monitor the progress of the PO from the New World system up through the finance department review. When the system reads "edit," the administrative coordinator has reviewed and approved the purchase for form and content; and when the system reads "open," the finance department has reviewed and approved the funds and accounts. There is no code delineating approval by the safety and service director, however, and the department must wait for the purchase order number before it can contact the supplier for the final purchase.

In many situations, according to the administrative coordinator and further observed by AOS staff, initiating departments will call the administrative coordinator to inquire about the status of a PO. In some situations the department has not looked at the system to determine the status, and in other cases the department is concerned that the PO is held up in the safety and service director's office. Fielding these phone calls is time consuming for the administrative coordinator and could be alleviated by more prevalent use of email between departments rather than phone calls. In addition, more diligent monitoring of the New World system by affected departments before contacting the administrative coordinator for updates is necessary for efficiency in the purchasing flow.

R5.12 The City of Warren should augment its automated purchasing capabilities by encouraging departments to be more self-reliant in monitoring the progress of their purchase orders on the New World purchasing system. When questions occur outside the capability of the system, reliance on e-mail communication should be encouraged. The City should expand its use of e-mail, as e-mail correspondence will require all departments and staff that handle purchasing activities to have e-mail access (see **technology**). It will also require the finance department and administrative coordinator to encourage correspondence via e-mail as a primary mode of communication for regular and frequent questions and concerns. By relying on e-mail correspondence, questions can be answered with the benefit of a paper-trail which will lesson the likelihood of misunderstandings. Furthermore, the administrative coordinator would not be fielding numerous interruptions on a daily basis which would allow more time for e-mail correspondence to increase the ease, speed and efficiency of responses.

F5.15 The City of Warren has access through its contract with New World to a commodities package that would enable the City to track purchases by supplier, commodity type and amount. Using this capability would enable the City to generate periodic expenditure history by department for fiscal planning, budget execution and accounting. The commodities package, if matched with an expanding coding system, could also automate bidder selection, produce no-bid response reports, supplier performance reports, minority business and historically underutilized business. Purchase histories can also be captured. However, because the City does not currently have the National Institute of Government Purchasing (NIGP) codes and has not developed its own coding system, the commodities package is currently unusable.

In order to take advantage of the commodities package, the City will need to procure a commodity coding system such as the one provided by the NIGP. According to New World, the financial package the City uses would accommodate the integration of the NIGP codes without additional maintenance and New World would not consider the adding of the codes as a change to the system, thereby eliminating the warranty risk that is possible when adapting contracted equipment. Therefore, the next step for the City is to contact a NIGP code provider and develop a contract to secure the appropriate services.

R5.13 The City of Warren should maximize the use of its report generating capabilities by purchasing the NIGP Commodity/Service Codes at the 5- digit level. This level contains more than 7,600 descriptions to distinguish various services and supplies. This level categorizes suppliers by class-item to allow the procurement software to automate bidder selection, produce no-bid response reports, supplier performance reports and minority business and HUB reports by code. This is an efficient means of capturing purchasing history that can be used for fiscal planning, budget execution, accounting and overall purchasing planning.

The City of Warren should consider purchasing the NIGP Commodity/Service Codes at the 11-digit level after careful consideration of whether it would utilize the information provided. The 11-digit level is generally used to create, manage, and maintain line-item term contracts. The City of Warren would also benefit from its ability to identify stock items in inventory. This level code contains more than 214,000 descriptions that can be used to develop specifications files and comprehensive purchase descriptions.

The City of Warren should make sure that prior to contracting with NIGP, the administrative coordinator, a representative from data processing and any other pertinent city officials coordinate with NIGP and New World to ensure that the systems are compatible and that no extra costs will be incurred. Specific language in the contract with New World and NIGP should delineate compatibility with the two systems.

Financial Implication: The National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc. and Periscope Holdings, Inc. provide and license the use of the NIGP Commodity/Service Code. According to the NIGP order form and license agreement, securing the use of the commodity/services code at the 5-digit class-item code would cost approximately $388 ($250 start-up licensing fee, $130 annual subscription and $8 for shipping and handling), and additional $130 annually to maintain the subscription.

The 11-digit commodity code package would cost the City a one-time fee of approximately $4,898($3,995 start-up licensing fee, $895 annual maintenance fee and $8 shipping and handling). In addition, a yearly maintenance fee of $895 would be assessed.

F5.16   The City of Warren has access to the State cooperative purchasing program and makes many of its purchases through the State bids. In order to use this option effectively, it is essential that the administrative coordinator follow the State bids closely. One capability available to the administrative coordinator is the State's E-Buy site. All Cooperative Purchasing Program members from local governments now have access to this program which enables members to access supplies and suppliers on the State site immediately, thereby enabling them to by-pass the competitive bid process on any item available through a State contract. The administrative coordinator is able to peruse the E-Buy site for necessary items and make the purchases electronically. This is yet another option for the administrative coordinator to streamline the purchasing process City-wide.

R5.14   The administrative coordinator should keep apprized of all options through the State of Ohio Department of Administrative Services that allow for more efficient and stream-lined buying. Programs such as the State's cooperative purchasing option and the upcoming E-Buy catalogue and purchasing system offer beneficial tools to ease the purchasing process and ensure economical pricing.

Surplus/Obsolete Management

F5.17   The City of Warren disposes its obsolete and surplus equipment through a process managed by the administrative coordinator. Although there is no formal process outlined in a manual, the City follows a report of surplus and obsolete equipment that provides disposition instructions.

      The process allows for disposition of any item that is not working or otherwise unusable. If the item is considered worth less than $50 it can be "scrapped" per the instruction of the safety and service director. Other items must be sold for an appropriate cost or put up for sale at a public auction.

      Every item, whether sold, auctioned or scrapped, must be disposed of according to this process in order to keep track of the inventory. Therefore, a complete record of the manufacturer model number, age, original cost, item location, item name, department and quantity are kept. While the complete record is not kept for each and every item, a good-faith effort is made for each item, enabling the City to adequately monitor its inventory.

F5.18   The City is able to dispose of its unusable equipment fairly efficiently; however, disposal of its usable obsolete equipment, those items that can be sold or used by others, is not as efficient. An efficient way to rid the City of excess equipment is through a public auction. In November 2001, the City conducted a public auction earning $29,000 in revenues. This auction was the first one held in the City since 1999. By organizing public auctions more frequently and in accordance with a regular schedule, the City would be able to rid itself of obsolete equipment to free storage space and working areas, as well as receive additional revenues to offset costs. Additionally, by conducting auctions regularly, the City's various departments could analyze their inventory surplus adequately, predict possible revenues from auction sales and prepare their purchasing needs based, in part, on their auction sales.

R5.15   The City should organize its calendar to accommodate a yearly auction. By scheduling it early and consistently, those who frequent municipal auctions would be well-informed and attendance would likely be favorable. Furthermore, scheduling would help to quantify the need for additional (or fewer) auctions. By scheduling the auctions as a regular yearly event, departments within the City would be able to prepare for the auction all year long, thereby assessing their purchasing needs with this in mind. Disposition planning as well as acquisition planning is important to each department in assessing its associated purchasing needs. For example, if a department is planning to dispose of a series of printers, it will be better able to assess its purchasing needs for the necessary cartridges and toners. Planning for disposition and acquisition is essential for each department to plan its bulk and consolidated purchasing needs as described in **R5.2.**

Purchasing Programs, including Minority, Disadvantaged and Local Buying Priorities

F5.19   The City of Warren operates from two different priority statements for purchasing - one from the office of the Equal Opportunity Coordinator, the other from a City ordinance stating local residency priority buying - resulting in the interpretation of conflicting priorities. In 1992, The City of Warren resolved a "Policy for Local Residency to be Used as a Criteria in the Consideration and Awarding of Public Construction Projects within the City – Resolution No. 3778-92." The resolution states that the local residency of individuals and/or business entities submitting bids on public construction or improvement projects, or similar contracts, be considered as a criteria in making the qualitative determination as to what is the "lowest and best" proposal.

The City has interpreted this ordinance by establishing that all purchases, including competitive bids, will be awarded by the following priority:

- City of Warren;
- Trumbull County;
- State of Ohio; and
- Other.

The City of Warren also has an Equal Opportunity Coordinator whose intent is to help build minority businesses in the City of Warren to be competitive. Part of the EOC responsibility is to manage the City's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) program that empowers internal buyers to "establish creative and innovative procurement concepts that will facilitate the use of disadvantaged businesses while adhering to our purchasing practices." The City's list of minority suppliers includes very few, however, that are actually within the City of Warren, thereby removing them from the likely candidates of bidders or quotes. Of the 41 businesses on the minority supplier list, only 11 are actually located within Warren.

Based on the ordinance and the defined duties of the equal opportunity coordinator, these two priorities could be interpreted as conflicting, thereby reducing the use of minority suppliers among City departments in favor of local suppliers.

Clear and concise purchasing policies that provide guidelines reflecting the spirit of the City's purchasing priorities will assist the City in reaching its goals. This is especially important for those purchases that do not fall within the competitive bid parameters, but within the PO parameters (between $100 and $14,999). Guidelines that represent a balance between economical and efficient buying with priorities that encourage local economic and tax-based development will better reflect the goals of the City.

R5.16 In order to reflect the City's policy of purchasing from local and minority/disadvantage owned businesses, purchasing practices should include requirements of documentation of quotes that include both minority/disadvantaged and local suppliers; maintenance of a current preferred supplier list that includes local and minority/disadvantaged suppliers; and frequent comparisons between quote-lists on PO's with the preferred supplier list. In addition, department heads should have the ultimate responsibility over supplier choice and be accountable for adhering to the policy.

These practices should ensure the following:

- Departments seek three quotes for all purchases totaling more than $500 which increases the likelihood that the lowest cost is actually found;
- Departments contact minority/disadvantaged suppliers for frequent and regular purchases, thereby augmenting their participation and ability to compete in the local economy;
- EOC maintains records regarding minority/disadvantaged businesses to enable the tracking of issues regarding minority/disadvantaged business pricing and incorporates that information into a supplier performance review; and
- EOC, with assistance from the administrative coordinator, records how suppliers are sought in order to eliminate the occurrence or perception of the occurrence of "late-date matching," when minority/disadvantaged suppliers are called after all quotes are in to match the quotes of those already in process.

F5.20 The MBE program is coordinated by the EOC, who works under the safety and service director. The intent of the office of the EOC is to expand minority/disadvantaged businesses in Warren. The EOC is charged with accomplishing that mission through a three-fold approach that includes the following duties:

- Assist minorities, women and disabled people by helping them with business plans, registration with the City as an MBE and assisting them with the MBE loan program through the City and the Warren Downtown Development and Planning Board;
- Provide a forum for MBE's to market their services and products to corporations that serve as buyers (done through trade fairs and seminars); and
- Establish goals for the City to purchase 15 percent of the City's goods and services from minority, disabled and women-owned businesses.

There is currently not a process to ensure compliance with the EOC's goals and objectives for purchasing in Warren. Department representatives complete purchase orders and send them on to the administrative coordinator for checking and the safety and service director for approval. The safety and service director and the administrative coordinator monitor the PO's and often send the request back to the department head and have them investigate whether an MBE business can provide a matching quote.

In order to comply with applicable City codes and the ORC, the City, as a subdivision of the State of Ohio, must make a good faith effort to establish a MBE program to accomplish goals and objectives that satisfy minority participation in the City's purchasing. The intent of the ORC is to assist minority/disadvantaged businesses to exist, expand and succeed in an effort to strengthen the City's overall economic viability, thereby supporting its tax base.

There is not a single position identified as responsible for processing each purchase to comply with the City's minority/disadvantaged purchasing policies. The EOC can and does provide lists of suppliers by type to assist department heads with purchases, but the department heads seek their own quotes. In addition, the safety and service director will try to mitigate the effect by submitting names of known suppliers for the department heads to call for quotes, but sometimes not until the PO gets to his desk. This can result in delays in purchasing and can be mistaken for impropriety.

R5.17 The overall intent of the EOC should be to develop the City's economic development, thereby increasing its tax base, by assisting minority/disadvantaged businesses to compete successfully in the local economy. This objective is consistent with Warren's priority to purchase goods and services from local suppliers. Therefore, the City should establish criteria in its purchasing policies that clarify the priorities for City purchasing in a clear and concise way that can be easily transmitted into practice.

Procedures for purchasing should include the following:

- All purchase orders totaling more than $500 must be accompanied by the verified quotes from three suppliers (if three quotes are not available, an explanation signed by the department head should be attached).
- All three quotes must come from the provided preferred supplier list that includes minority/disadvantaged suppliers (if not, an explanation signed by the department head should be attached) and a minority/disadvantaged supplier must be included among those sought for a quote.
- If a local supplier appears on that preferred supplier list, it must also be among the three sought for a quote. If there are multiple local and/or minority suppliers, the third quote should represent one of the prioritized suppliers.
- The lowest quote among the three should be the supplier named on the PO (if not, an explanation signed by the department head should be attached).

In order to comply with MBE goals and objectives and prevent the appearance of impropriety in the purchasing process, all purchases should be processed in the same manner and monitored by the EOC. Monitoring of this process would include the EOC developing and maintaining a current and updated MBE supplier list and monitoring the quote sheets submitted to the administrative coordinator with each purchase order. In addition, the EOC should work regularly with the administrative coordinator to maintain the preferred supplier list to make sure that it includes minority/disadvantaged suppliers.

Financial Implications Summary

The following table represents a summary of the cost savings for the recommendations in this section of the report. For the purpose of this table, only recommendations with quantifiable financial impacts are listed.

Summary of Financial Implications for Purchasing

Recommendation	Implementation Costs	Cost Savings
R5.4: Negotiate annual bulk buying agreements with suppliers for office and operation supplies through the competitive bid process.		$49,000
R5.13 Purchase NIGP commodities pricing module	$4,898 (one time) $895 (annual)	
Total	**$4,898 (one time) $895 (annual)**	**$49,000**

Conclusion Statement

The City of Warren does not operate an independent purchasing department. The administrative coordinator within the office of the mayor is responsible for coordinating the City's procurement in conjunction with the departments and with the oversight of the finance department. While the administrative coordinator's major responsibilities relate to the purchasing function, the position description is too broad for one person to cover effectively. Therefore, the organization should be restructured to designate a purchasing agent that is assigned with carrying out the research and planning duties necessary for effective procurement management.

The major function of the administrative coordinator should be purchasing and asset management with an emphasis on planning. Best practices of purchasing management include consolidated and bulk purchasing among departments, conducting cost benefit analyses for leases and purchases of major equipment, effective monitoring of emergency purchasing and consistent application of internal controls. Currently, the administrative coordinator, though responsible for overall management, deals mainly with the daily monitoring, advising and management of individual purchases among all departments in the City. This situation does not allow for strategic planning that is necessary for the City of Warren to experience cost-savings.

The City of Warren should maximize the benefits of contract bidding by expanding the request for bid process to incorporate formalized mandatory and scorable requirements as well as consistent pricing instructions. Furthermore, the City should expand the competitive bid process to include goods and services currently procured through blanket purchase orders. By converting the contracts obtained through blanket PO's to competitively bid contracts, the City is more likely to secure the best cost as well as ensure a perception of fairness in the contract process.

The oversight function for purchases varies among the departments due to inconsistent practices among departments and varying degrees of input in the process from department heads. The City should implement a written procedure that requires three quotes for every purchase totaling $500 or more, unless there is an attached statement from the department head explaining that only one supplier is available. By incorporating local and minority/disadvantaged business priority within the three quote process, the City will be able to acknowledge its priority practices within the context of propriety and fairness.

Finally, the City should engage in an overall planning strategy to better use its automated purchasing capabilities. Priority should be given to enhancing overall communication efforts that include on-line documentation, e-mail correspondence and special attention to on-line catalogs and State-based purchasing options.
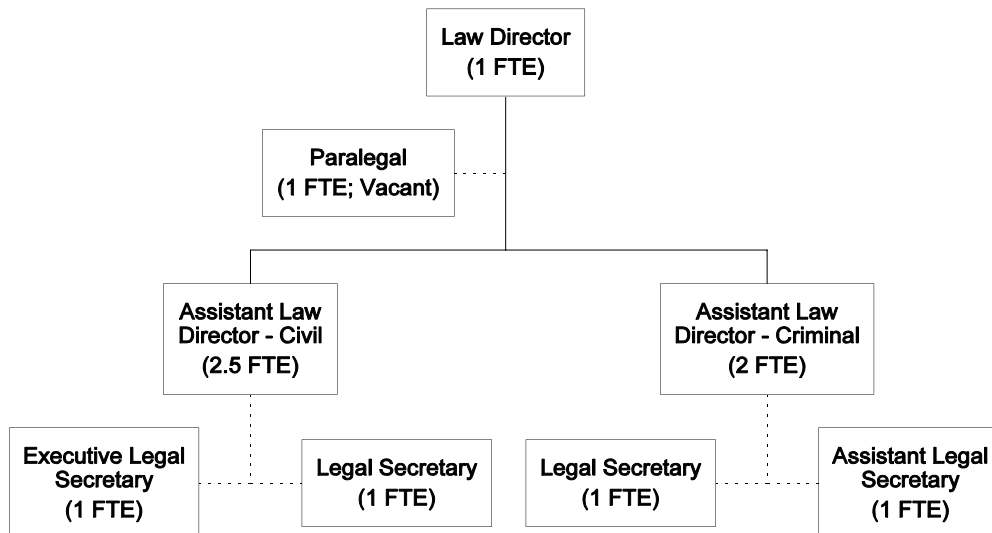
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Law Department

Background

This section focuses on the operations of the City of Warren Law Department (the department). Comparisons are made to law departments in the cities of Mansfield and Middletown. **Chart 6-1** illustrates the organizational structure of the department as well as the staffing levels in full-time equivalents (FTEs).

Chart 6-1: Organization Chart

```
                          Law Director
                           (1 FTE)

                Paralegal
            (1 FTE; Vacant)

        Assistant Law                    Assistant Law
       Director - Civil                 Director - Criminal
          (2.5 FTE)                         (2 FTE)

Executive Legal                                      Assistant Legal
  Secretary      Legal Secretary   Legal Secretary      Secretary
   (1 FTE)          (1 FTE)           (1 FTE)            (1 FTE)
```

Organization Function

As illustrated in **Chart 6-1**, there are two components which comprise the legal operations of the department: civil and criminal. The civil division provides legal assistance to City boards, departments and council. Further, the division prepares, drafts and reviews all legal documents pertaining to the City and its sub-entities; researches, prepares and drafts legislation for city council; reviews and approves legal forms and some contracts; provides legal representation to the City and its entities for any local, state or federal litigation; operates the risk management assessment review board; and provides legal representation during all city council meetings.

The criminal division reviews and prepares criminal charges for the prosecution of individuals for offenses committed within the jurisdiction of the Warren Municipal Court. The jurisdiction of the court includes the City of Warren and Champion, Howland and Warren townships. The division provides the prosecuting attorneys for the trial of offenses in the City's municipal court; and gives legal advice, including the review and filing of criminal charges and the preparation of search warrants, to the various law enforcement entities operating within the court's jurisdiction. Those agencies include the city and township police departments, the county sheriff's department, Ohio Department of Natural Resources enforcement officers, Ohio Department of Liquor Control agents and the Ohio State Highway Patrol.

Summary of Operations

Table 6-1 presents the Warren Law Department annual expenditures for 2000, 2001 and 2002 (budgeted).

Table 6-1: Expenditures

Line-item Categories	2000 (Actual)	2001 (Actual)	2002 (Budgeted)	Percent Change (2000 to 2002)
Salaries and Wages	$420,667	$482,759	$468,448	11.4%
Fringe Benefits	$171,770	$213,217	$251,706	46.5%
Contracted Labor and Service	$42,934	$46,808	$51,564	20.1%
Supplies	$3,555	$6,149	$6,990	96.6%
Maintenance	0	0	0	0%
Capital Outlay	0	$10,589	0	0%
Totals	**$638,926**	**$759,523**	**$778,708**	**21.9%**

Source: Budget reports for 2000, 2001 and 2002.

The Warren Law Department General Fund expenditures in 2001 represent an increase of approximately $120,000, or 21 percent, when compared to actual expenditures in 2000. The increase in 2001 salaries and wages is attributed to the lay-off of an employee in 2000 and one time severance and separation payments made to two former employees in 2001. The laid-off employee was reinstated at the end of 2000. Severance pay-outs and hospitalization rates have increased across all departments. Contracted labor and services increased primarily due to legal fees, education and dues for two new criminal attorneys in the department and an increase in supplies. Due to the city's financial situation in 2000, capital outlay was not budgeted. However, the department purchased computers and leased office equipment in 2001.

Performance Measures

The following performance measures were used to conduct the analysis of the law department:

- Assessment of organizational and staffing issues;
- Assessment of overall planning and management operations;
- Assessment of compliance with Ohio Revised Code (ORC), Ohio Administrative Code (OAC), city ordinances and legal ethical standards; and
- Assessment of the use of technology to gain operational efficiencies.

Findings / Recommendations / Commendations

Organization and Staffing

F6.1   The law department for the city of Warren consists of 10.5 FTEs. The law director is elected and serves a four year term. There are four full-time assistant law directors, one part-time law director, one executive secretary, two legal secretaries, one assistant legal secretary and one paralegal (currently vacant). Of the assistant law directors, two are assigned to civil cases, while two are assigned to criminal cases and are housed in the court house. The part-time assistant law director is responsible for those issues involving community development, housing maintenance and real estate codes. **Table 6-2** provides the total number of FTEs and the percentage of total employees in each classification for Warren and the peer departments.

Table 6-2: Number and Percent of Employees (FTE) by Classification

Classification	Warren[3] Staff (FTEs)	Warren[3] % of Total Employees	Mansfield[4] Staff (FTEs)	Mansfield[4] % of Total Employees	Middletown[5] Staff (FTEs)	Middletown[5] % of Total Employees	Peer Average Staff (FTEs)	Peer Average % of Total Employees
Civil Division Attorneys	3.2	32.0%	3.0	23.0%	2.0	34.0%	2.5	28.5%
Criminal Division Attorneys	2.3	19.0%	5.0	38.5%	2.0	35.0%	3.5	37.0%
Support Staff	4.0	38.0%	3.0	23.5%	1.8	31.0%	2.4	27.0%
Paralegal[1]	1.0	10.0%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%
Other[2]	0.0	0.0%	2.0	15.0%	0.0	0.0%	1.0	7.5%
Total	10.5	100.0%	13.0	100.0%	5.8	100.0%	9.4	100.0%

Source: Warren and peer law departments.
[1] The paralegal position in the Warren Law Department is currently vacant.
[2] The Mansfield Law Department employs two victims' advocates, however these positions are funded through the municipal court.
[3] Warren law director staffing breakdown: .7 FTE civil and .3 FTE criminal.
[4] Mansfield law director staffing breakdown: approximately 100 percent civil.
[5] Middletown law director staffing breakdown: approximately 100 percent civil.

As indicated in **Table 6-2**, the Warren law department has the second highest total staff among peers. For comparative purposes, law directors are included in **Table 6-2** according to their estimated breakdown of time between civil and criminal work. In comparison to the peer average, Warren has a slightly higher percentage of attorneys dedicated to civil law. Conversely, the department has about half the peer average dedicated to criminal law which is partially due to Warren's high number of support and paralegal staff. Support staff

include executive legal secretaries and legal secretaries, of which the department has the highest percentage compared to the peer average. However, support staff complete more functions when compared to peers (see **F6.22**). Moreover, the department is the only one to have a paralegal position.

F6.2   The paralegal position in the department is currently vacant and, due to the City's current financial situation, unfunded. The job description for the paralegal position outlines duties pertaining mostly to the civil division, providing assistance in the following areas:

● Tracking and organizing files;
● Checking court dockets to verify if the dockets were filed on time;
● Providing support to attorneys;
● Performing legal research;
● Preparing briefs;
● Filing motions;
● Attending meetings of the Public Record Committee; and
● Assisting attorneys as needed.

Currently, staff attorneys complete paralegal functions, which is a consistent practice among the peers. While a paralegal could reduce the workload of staff attorneys, there is currently not a documented need for this. Additionally, other options are available to reduce attorney workload, such as outsourcing, as discussed in **R6.3**.

F6.3   Job descriptions have not been formally revised. While clerical staff recently updated their own job descriptions, there was no mandate by the City's human resources department and no check on the accuracy of the updates. Updated job descriptions are important for the following reasons:

● To clearly articulate job content to employees and supervisors;
● To establish individual performance expectations;
● To provide criteria for recruitment and selection; and
● To avoid legal liability.

Updating job descriptions is the responsibility of the City's human resources department. However, the law department has a responsibility to provide and verify all appropriate job specific information. Each position should have a detailed, formal, and accurate job description in order to provide employees tangible guidance in performing their job duties and to provide management with a basis of evaluating employee performance (see **F6.4**). For further explanation, see the **human resources** section of this report.

R6.1   The department, in conjunction with the human resources department, should develop and update job descriptions periodically. A comprehensive job description will provide the

foundation for establishing internal equity within the City and department. The job descriptions should include the following:

- Job title;
- Salary information;
- Job summary;
- Specific responsibilities;
- Knowledge, skills and abilities requirements; and
- Qualifying education, training and experience.

The department should specifically focus on documenting any job responsibilities which may change over time.

F6.4   According to the bargaining unit agreement between the City and support staff, departments are only required to conduct performance evaluations on new support staff employees during their probationary period. The department does not have a formal policy on conducting performance evaluations. In addition, evaluations are not conducted after the probationary period. Evaluations are important for developing employees skills, establishing communication and shaping performance. Frequent evaluations improve employees' efficiency and effectiveness by providing employees and supervisors the opportunity to discuss strengths and weaknesses. Peers conduct performance evaluations regularly as a means of rating staff efficiency and effectiveness. Mansfield and Middletown conduct performance evaluations of all non-supervisory staff annually and evaluate aspects such as knowledge of job skills, quality of work, quantity of work, judgement and dependability.

R6.2   The department should require annual performance evaluations for all staff. As support staff are under union contract, stipulations should be made when renegotiating contracts. Additionally, the department should develop a job specific performance evaluation for staff attorneys. The evaluations should be based on job descriptions (see **R6.1**) and peer performance evaluations, with necessary changes for department specific nuances. For further discussion of this issue, see the **human resources** section of this report.

F6.5   The department has one recurring contract for outside legal services. The contract is for telecommunications cable negotiations and is annually contracted for approximately $2,000 to $3,000. The department also outsources for specialized cases, such as cases involving the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The department may also contract out legal services in instances where conflicts of interest arise in the criminal division. In these cases, the department has unwritten agreements to use the services of other local prosecutors. The department, in turn, reciprocates as needed. The department incurs no cost, other than covering for their prosecutors when they are providing services to other cities. According to the law director, this does not happen often. Peers also outsource telecommunications

cases, as well as other specialized cases, including those involving EPA. **Table 6-3** illustrates the cost of outsourcing for Warren and peers.

Table 6-3: Legal Outsourcing Costs

	Warren	Mansfield	Middletown[1]	Peer Average
2000	$2,447	$58,815	$67,744	**$63,280**
2001	$8,951	$16,379	$42,000	**$29,190**
2002 (Budgeted)	$4,082	$60,000	$50,000	**$55,000**

Source: Request for information
[1] Middletown figures are actual for 2000; budgeted for 2001, 2002.

As indicated in **Table 6-3**, Warren spends less on outsourcing legal services compared to peers. This may contribute to the higher cost of legal services per attorney (see **Table 6-5**). Outsourcing specific legal services, such as real estate or contract negotiations, may allow outside experts to work more efficiently and effectively on a city's legal matters. Mansfield outsources all city insurance issues through the Ohio Municipal League. Outsourcing legal services would reduce attorney workload, while possibly increasing support staff workload. Still, outsourcing may be a cost-effective means for the department to conduct business.

R6.3   The department should periodically consider outsourcing other legal services such as real estate and contract negotiations. Further, the department should conduct a cost benefit analysis to determine possible cost savings of outsourcing certain legal services. If the department determines outsourcing is efficient and cost effective, the department should outsource pertinent legal matters.

F6.6   Due to the nature of software in the prosecutor's office (see **F6.22**), support staff are often required to do tasks manually, making information sharing difficult. Support staff often retype historical, criminal or case information and spend time coordinating schedules between judges and prosecutors. Updates to current software (see **R6.16**) could provide several time-saving opportunities for the prosecutor's office and possibly reduce support staff workload up to 70 percent.

R6.4   The law department should purchase the software recommended in **R6.16**. Upon installation, the department should monitor support staff workload to assess the software's efficiency. If the department finds a significant reduction in support staff workload, it should subsequently consider reducing one support staff. To ensure ample coverage of workload, the department may need to initially consider all appropriate and applicable alternatives, including changing a support staff to part-time. As support staff are unionized, the department should discuss this option during the next union contract negotiation.

Financial Implication: If the department reduced one support staff at the criminal division the department would assume an annual cost savings of approximately $39,000 in salary and benefits.

F6.7   **Table 6-4** represents a comparison of the cost per city resident to operate the Law Departments between Warren and the peers in 2000.

Table 6-4: Legal Cost per Resident

	Warren	**Mansfield**	**Middletown**	**Peer Average**
Population	46,866	48,558	49,802	**49,180**
Annual Expenditures	$649,227	$716,531	$450,900	**$583,716**
Cost per Resident	**$13.85**	**$14.76**	**$9.05**	**$11.87**

Source: Request for information

As indicated in **Table 6-4**, the department spends more money per resident than the peer average. According to Ammons Municipal Benchmarks, national standards for efficient city law department legal cost per resident are set between $10 and $20. However, the department does not monitor annual costs per resident, which would act as a check on departmental efficiency. This is important as the population of Warren has steadily declined over time. Middletown's legal cost per resident is lower than peers due in part to the low staffing numbers (see **Table 6-2**) and level of outsourcing (see **F6.5**). Calculating cost per resident annually helps to indicate whether the department is serving the city in an efficient manner and if expenditures are justified by changing demographics.

F6.8   **Table 6-5** presents the cost of legal services per attorney for Warren and the peers.

Table 6-5: Cost of Legal Services per Attorney

	Warren	**Mansfield**	**Middletown**	**Peer Average**
Number of Attorneys	5.5	8	4	**6**
Annual Expenditures	$649,227	$716,531	$450,900	**$583,716**
Cost per Attorney	**$118,041**	**$89,566**	**$112,725**	**$97,286**

Source: Request for Information

As indicated in **Table 6-5**, the department spends more per attorney than the peer average. This could be because of the low number of attorneys compared to number of support staff (see **Table 6-2**) and low outsourcing costs (see **F6.5**). The department could lower the average cost of legal services per attorney by following other recommendations in this report, such as **R6.3**, regarding outsourcing and **R6.4**, regarding support staffing levels.

Planning and Management

F6.9   The law department does not have a mission statement or strategic plan. A strategic plan assists a governmental entity align its resources and structure to its clients' expectations. The plan allows for periodic assessments of a department's mission and client needs and provides a basis for addressing those needs. The department's strategic plan should be consistent with the City's overall strategic plan. See the **mayor's office** section for further explanation.

R6.5   The department should develop and implement a strategic plan which addresses both short and long-term objectives. In essence, the plan should describe how staff, funding and resources will help Warren achieve these objectives. Objectives in a department's strategic plan should be linked to a City's strategic plan (see the **mayor's office** section). The plan should also be presented to City officials who must fully support the goals and objectives stated within the plan and ensure that adequate funding is provided. This funding should be based on the initiatives and activities identified in the strategic plan. In addition, Warren should establish an annual review and revision process that will allow the strategic plan to evolve with changes, both internal and in the community. Effective strategic planning establishes sound leadership with a staff focus, as well as more effective process management to accomplish the goals outlined in the plan. The following steps should be taken to develop the planning process:

- Identify and analyze the business environment that the strategic plan must support;
- Define key goals and objectives of the department and establish measurable success factors for those areas;
- Evaluate how existing hardware and software applications support the short and long-term goals and objectives of the department;
- Research significant industry trends relating to legal organizations or other public sector organizations;
- Determine what technology is needed to help the department achieve its long-term goals and objectives;
- Establish management reporting lines of communication with the Mayor; and
- Develop an implementation plan.

A strategic plan should contribute to the overall organization of the department and serve as a guide for present and future department goals.

F6.10   The department encourages attorneys to solve client problems creatively. However, as is the case with many law departments, the department is unaware of how to judge client satisfaction. Altman Weil, a legal consulting firm, cites the use of client satisfaction surveys and development of client satisfaction procedures, by a client service group, as best practices and judges of performance for city law offices. Clear commitment to client satisfaction is

the top service priority. Formal, systematic implementation and regular analysis of client satisfaction surveys helps to determine opportunities for improving services and client communications. Law departments may make use of client needs data to generate specific departmental performance measures. Surveys range from all-inclusive to narrow, depending on their purpose.

Peers actively seek client feedback on law department performance. The City of Mansfield Law Department encourages feedback on department performance from all elected officials and department heads. The City of Middletown Law Department periodically conducts surveys to rate department performance. Confidential surveys are sent to each city department to rate overall services provided by the law department including the following:

- Responsiveness to queries;
- Professionalism;
- Accessibility; and
- Knowledge.

The survey data are primarily based on needs and quality of service. The data are aggregated to rate overall department and individual attorney performance and as a management tool to assist in determining how to better serve clients.

R6.6 The law department should incorporate formal and regular client satisfaction surveys into its operation. The surveys should be compiled by the client service group and focus on timeliness of services and responsiveness of staff. The survey should consist of the following performance measures:

- Time required to provide formal opinion and draft a contract;
- Attorney availability;
- Outcome of services; and
- Quality of services.

Further, the survey should include open-ended questions to provide respondents the opportunity to voice any concerns which may not be covered in the survey. The makeup and length of the survey should be directly related to its purpose. This should be considered and included in the client service policies and procedures. To further solicit responses from departments, the survey should be confidential in nature.

Client satisfaction surveys will give a measure of staff and department performance. The surveys should be a basis for individual performance evaluations (see **F6.4**), departmental evaluations and should be used as a management tool for the department to assess effective and efficient services to clients. To perpetuate positive responses on client satisfaction surveys, the department should incorporate a formal client satisfaction approach to daily

work. The approach should include the installation of an electronic filing system (see **R6.17**) and include performance measures, such as attorney timeliness of services. This approach should be developed by a client service group and included in the departmental strategic plan (see **R6.5**). Further, the department should periodically review the accuracy of the client satisfaction procedure. The results of these periodic reviews should be incorporated into training or other client service policies and procedures.

After gathering data from the survey, the department should form a plan of action and send a summary to clients based on their responses. Providing feedback and a course of action will encourage a positive work environment between the law department and its clients.

F6.11   While a client satisfaction survey will provide the department feedback on performance, the department does not have formal client service policies or procedures or a client service group to ensure client services are met. Client satisfaction policies and procedures should be completed by a client service group with the fundamental goal of providing quality and timely service to clients.   The client service group, made up of all levels of a law department's staff, ensures client satisfaction surveys, policies and procedures are adequate and appropriate. Adopting appropriate client service policies and procedures contributes to the understanding of client needs and leads to more effective operation of a law department. Effective client service policies and procedures serve as a guide for law department staff interactions, explaining the department's vision, staff and client expectations. The goals of client service should include the following:

- Making client satisfaction a service precedence;
- Conducting client surveys;
- Analyzing client surveys;
- Striving for timeliness of service (see **F6.13**);
- Implementing an electronic filing system (see **R6.17**); and
- Seeking creative solutions to specific cases.

The outcome of client service policies and procedures will enhance the stature of the legal function and set a standard for effective client service.

R6.7   The department should develop a client service group to implement formal client satisfaction procedures focusing on effectiveness and timeliness of legal staff. The client service group should include representatives from all levels of departmental staff. The following goals should guide the activities of the client satisfaction group:

- Establish a service-oriented organizational structure;
- Develop a service-oriented staffing model;
- Attract and retain outstanding staff;
- Enhance performance, supervision and training;

- Improve the management and utilization of support resources;
- Improve the management of outside legal services; and
- Provide for performance measures.

Incorporating these functions into client service procedures will aid in achieving quality client service and satisfaction. Once implemented, the client satisfaction procedures should encourage more efficient and effective relationships between law department staff and clients. This should serve as the basis for performance measures including client satisfaction surveys.

F6.12 While all city attorneys have developed areas of expertise within the city, attorneys may assume duties in different areas. While there is no formal requirement for attorneys to develop expertise in areas outside their own, the department does cross-train attorneys on an informal basis. Having attorneys with areas of expertise benefits clients by allowing them to identify attorneys assigned to their field. Attorneys could act as technical advisors in their respective fields of expertise. Without cross training, in the absence of an attorney, the department could not as effectively perform the appropriate duties. According to Altman Weil, providing cross training is an effective way to attract and retain qualified governmental lawyers. Having cross training would improve overall employee performance by enhancing attorneys' knowledge and skills in other areas of the law. Further, it would benefit the department by allowing attorneys to fill in for others when needed and could contribute to staff retention.

R6.8 The department should provide attorneys the opportunity to cross train. In order to accomplish this, attorneys should be assigned to core competencies where they can serve as technical legal specialists to other departmental attorneys. By having access to a technical legal specialist, attorneys could further develop in other concentrations of legal practice areas. The department should identify attorney's core competencies to verify which areas attorneys may serve as technical legal specialist. In essence, attorneys will have primary responsibilities in their own field of expertise, but also be designated as technical legal specialists. Examples of core competencies include real estate, annexation and contract negotiation. By identifying technical legal specialists, attorneys will know the core competencies of coworkers. Further, this will improve internal communication and staff communication. Warren should ensure the core competencies cover appropriate concentrations.

F6.13 City attorneys' job duties include rendering written and oral opinions on various issues related to city government. The department has an informal policy to prioritize requests for legal assistance and render opinions as each attorney deems appropriate. While the department has no official policy on the timeliness of responses, several cities have policies setting time restrictions on attorney response time. **Table 6-6** shows city response time for Warren and the peers.

Table 6-6: City Response Time to Request for Legal Assistance

	Warren	**Mansfield**	**Middletown**
Requests for Written Opinions	None	10 Days[1]	21 Days from Date of Request
Review of Contracts and Documents Requiring Department Certification	None	10 Days[1]	5 Days of Receipt of Contract

Source: Request for Information.
[1] Initial response time.

As indicated in **Table 6-6**, peers address the importance of response time to clients' requests for legal assistance. Mansfield has a formal policy requiring all requests for legal assistance to be in writing. While the time frame for completion of requests varies based on complexity, availability of information and documentation, an initial response is given within ten working days. Middletown ensures timeliness of services by requiring city attorneys to provide responses to written requests for opinions within 21 days of receipt and reviews contracts and documents within five days of receipt.

There are several national timeliness standards on attorney preparation of legal opinions. These standards usually range from 10 to 15 days. Some cities have set more precise performance goals regarding city civil attorneys' responsiveness to requests for legal opinions. In Overland Park, Kansas, city attorneys are expected to render legal opinions according to the following guidelines:

- Routine oral opinions - 1 day;
- Non-routine oral opinions - 30 days;
- Routine written opinions - 15 days; and
- Non-routine written opinions - 30 days.

Adopting a formal policy on response time to requests for legal assistance is a best business practice which helps to ensure the efficient operation of the department and enhances client relationships.

R6.9 The department should establish guidelines for responsiveness to requests for legal assistance. The guidelines should include time limits for oral and written opinions and differentiate between routine and non-routine issues. Based on national standards, the department should strive to prepare legal opinions for routine matters in 10 to 15 days, and non-routine matters within 30 days. The success rates for meeting these goals should be documented and coordinated with an electronic work tracking system (see **F6.24**).

F6.14 **Table 6-7** shows the total number of criminal cases handled annually by City criminal divisions and cases per attorney from 1999 to 2001. Data for civil cases handled annually was not available.

Table 6-7: Criminal Cases Handled Annually

	Warren (2.3 FTE)	Cases per FTE	Mansfield (5 FTE)	Cases per FTE	Middletown (2 FTE)	Cases per FTE	Peer Average	
1999	20,291	8,822	32,096	6,419	16,145	8,073	**24,121**	**7,246**
2000	14,563	6,332	31,537	6,307	16,850	8,425	**24,194**	**7,366**
2001	14,283	6,210	29,861	5,972	16,643	8,273	**23,252**	**7,147**
Three year Average	**16,379**	**7,121**	**31,165**	**6,233**	**16,546**	**8,273**	23,856	7,253

Source: Request for Information.

As indicated in **Table 6-7**, Warren's number of criminal cases handled annually is near to the peer average for all three years. However, Warren experienced a reduction in the number of cases handled from 20,291 in 1999 to 14,283 in 2001, or approximately a thirty percent decline, while the peer average remained relatively constant. This decline may be due to police lay offs in the City or the department not addressing cases in a timely manner.

R6.10 The department should monitor cases handled annually to determine criminal division attorneys' workloads. While monitoring workload, if cases handled annually decline over time, criminal attorneys may be able to provide limited assistance to the civil division. This would contribute to a reduced workload for the department, allowing for possible cost savings through the restructuring of staff.

F6.15 City attorneys are expected to perform in a professional manner and have a high level of self-autonomy in regards to the level of supervision. The department does not use an active supervision approach, such as periodic case reviews. While supervisors are always accessible to assistants, this management style requires questions or concerns to initiate from the assistant. Peer law directors periodically conduct case reviews with attorneys to assure casework proceeds efficiently and effectively.

R6.11 The department should require supervisors to initiate reviews of casework. This will ensure staff attorneys collaborate and confer with the law director on all city legal business as well as provide an avenue for attorneys to communicate with the law director. By communicating with the law director, attorneys may also be able to enhance their breadth of legal knowledge.

Compliance

F6.16   According to ORC §1901.34, the city law director is responsible for prosecuting all criminal offense cases within the territory of the municipal court. The law director estimated approximately 50 percent of legal services are provided to clients outside of the City of Warren, but in the court's jurisdiction. Peers similarly attribute 50 percent of work to areas outside the city, but in the court's jurisdiction.

F6.17   The department has an informal policy on City attorneys maintaining their own private practices. According to the informal policy, attorneys are permitted to conduct private practice so long as conflicts of interest do not arise. Additionally, it is unclear whether all staff are required to sign a statement of independence. An approved statement of independence ensures that any conflicts will be promptly disclosed.

R6.12   The department should develop a guideline regarding conflict of interest. The policy should be based on the code of professional responsibility and canons of ethics as prescribed by the Ohio Supreme Court. The policy should state that city attorneys are permitted to have a private practice as long as they meet certain restrictions, such as not doing private practice work on public time and not using public computers for their private practices. Further, all attorneys should be required to annually sign a statement of independence to ensure an appropriate degree of separation between their private and public work.

Technology

F6.18   The civil division currently has five personal computers connected to the City's mainframe. Once station has internet access, Westlaw and a scanner. Westlaw is an online legal research tool. The civil division also has two laser printers and two dictation/transcription machines. The criminal division has two personal computers connected to the City's mainframe.

F6.19   Law department employees do not track the amount of time spent on specific cases. Cases are charged based on the "worth" of the case, which is based on previous, similar cases. Altman Weil cites the use of automated work tracking systems as a best practice for quality legal services. An automated work tracking system may be kept on a simple spreadsheet consisting of the following sections:

- Work subject;
- Work number;
- Date received;
- Date completed; and
- Work type.

Identifying these areas not only provides accountability for city attorneys, but also provides the department with criteria to rate the performance of legal staff. Moreover, the following caseload management techniques are recognized as best practices for City law offices:

- Regular attorney caseload reports;
- Proper case assignment process;
- Effective performance measures per case; and
- Effective timekeeping techniques.

R6.13 City attorneys should be required to maintain specific time records. To track this, the department should consider tracking time records on a spreadsheet. Tracking work on a spreadsheet should provide the following capabilities:

- Monitor work timeliness;
- Monitor work status; and
- Register new work requests.

The automated work tracking system should be incorporated with the installation of E-mail (see **F6.21**) to notify clients of the contact attorney and expected completion date. The law director may use attorneys' outcomes based on the work tracking system when adopting performance measures and evaluations for legal staff (see **F6.3** and **F6.4**). Support staff should update the work tracking system for every new assignment given to civil and criminal attorneys.

By adopting an automated work tracking system, the department can establish several caseload management documents such as: monthly caseload reports for attorneys, which would provide updates on individual and total office workload status; proper case assignment procedures depending on attorney availability and case complexity; individual case performance measures such as outcome and timeliness based on time restraints and case complexity; and more accurate timekeeping data. The department would incur no extra cost in establishing a work tracking system as it currently possesses these capabilities.

F6.20 The civil division has access to Westlaw Online, a legal research software package, to conduct legal research electronically. Currently, Westlaw Online is not available to the criminal staff due to the lack of proper telephone lines at their office. The department holds a joint contract with the municipal court for unlimited access to appropriate parts of the software, including the Ohio Revised Code and some federal case law. However, it is unclear how often Westlaw Online is used as civil attorneys do not document the extent to which they use the software. Further, although Westlaw Online is available to civil attorneys, many employees have insufficient knowledge regarding the software. Both peers use Westlaw for legal research and have contracts which only allow them access to sites they

need. The department ensures Westlaw is used appropriately by having attorneys provide initials while performing legal research.

The Ohio State Bar Association currently provides members access to Casemaker software, a free online research tool. Casemaker is an online library of various information including the following information:

- Ohio Revised Code;
- State and Appellate Court opinions;
- Unreported Opinions from 1981 to present;
- Ohio Attorney General opinions;
- Ethics opinions;
- Verdict reporter; and
- Court rules.

Software, such as Casemaker, provides legal researchers free access to materials online.

R6.14 The department should periodically evaluate sites which provide free information similar to Casemaker. While Westlaw Online provides City attorneys access to legal documents online at a cost, there may be other sites which provide similar or adequate services at a lesser cost. With the growing trend towards free information available over the internet, legal research capabilities may change quickly.

F6.21 E-mail is available both at the civil and criminal divisions. Having E-mail access could afford attorneys the ability to receive and respond to legal queries quickly, as well as provide an electronic paper trail for work tracking purposes (see **F6.24**). E-mail capabilities allow City departments to communicate information more efficiently and enhance the department's client relationships. For further discussion on E-mail installation, see the **technology utilization** section of this report.

F6.22 Currently in Warren, support staff retrieve and sort mail daily. Any correspondence requesting legal services is sorted according to those which may be answered quickly and those requiring more in-depth research. Requests not requiring research are typed and sent back to clients via mail. Support staff often complete the initial request for legal assistance. Copies of requests and other legal information requested by clients are filed in appropriate file cabinets. Having electronic filing capabilities would allow for easier retrieval of files and save substantial amounts of office space (see **F6.24**).

While support staff in Warren sort requests manually, attorneys in Middletown use E-mail to transfer information between departments, especially initial requests for legal assistance from City departments which do not require significant legal research. Further, Middletown attorneys complete initial requests for legal assistance. This proves an efficient and effective

way to communicate with clients, allowing for a quick response time and electronic tracking of completed work.

R6.15 The City should assign E-mail addresses to all law department employees. E-mail should also be installed at the criminal division. Having E-mail would streamline operations between the department and its clients. Clients requiring legal assistance could e-mail concerns to the law department, allowing secretaries or attorneys to provide quick, paperless and trackable responses. E-mail responses could be sent to all appropriate clients and be saved electronically.

The City would incur minimal if any extra cost associated with E-mail installation, as the City's agreement with its E-mail provider allows the City unlimited E-mail addresses. Conversely, there may be minimal cost savings with installation of E-mail associated with lower costs for supplies.

F6.23 Currently, the prosecutor's office uses the case management module of CourtView 2000, a software package also used by the clerk of courts and municipal court. As the clerk of courts, municipal court and prosecutor's office use the same software, information may be shared easily. However, this access only allows the office to enter new case information; they can not add, modify or delete any existing information. They may view case information, but are unable to fill out subpoenas electronically. The prosecutor's office enters case information electronically and shares this information with the clerk of courts who prepares paperwork for court. However, the prosecutor's office must fill out certain forms manually which is often time consuming.

If the office purchased the prosecutors module, issuing complaints, inputting case information, filing, issuing subpoenas and sharing information with the common pleas court could all be done electronically. Eventually, information sharing can be tied to the county prosecutor's office as well, further reducing workload. According to the software vendor, if the prosecutor's module was installed, workload would be reduced by an estimated 70 percent for prosecutors and support staff. Further, according to the system administrator for the Warren Municipal Court, the clerk of courts office would be willing to jointly purchase the software as the module would reduce the clerk's workload as well.

R6.16 The law department should purchase the prosecutor's module for CourtView 2000. The department should strongly consider jointly purchasing the software with the clerk of courts office. The main benefit of purchasing the prosecutor's module of CourtView 2000 is information sharing between the law department, clerk of courts and municipal court. For this reason, it is important for the law department to work with these entities when implementing new or different software to ensure compatibility. Sharing appropriate information between these departments would reduce the need to retype historical, criminal or case information. For example, if an arraignment came through the clerk of courts office,

the prosecutor's office could view an electronic copy and simply copy it, rather than viewing and manually retyping the arraignment information. The prosecutor's office could further accept or reject any documents filed through the clerk of courts office electronically. The prosecutor's module also provides an integrated electronic calendar, which would minimize scheduling conflicts between the judge and prosecutors. Additionally, purchasing the prosecutor's module would allow the department to reduce one support staff as discussed in **R6.4**.

Financial Implication: By purchasing the prosecutor's module, the department would assume a one-time cost of approximately $33,000. However, if the software is jointly purchased with the clerk of courts, the cost would be approximately $16,500.

F6.24 The department keeps all legal opinions in a file index book, but does not keep them electronically. Lawyers will rarely ask for opinions, and when they do, the administrative assistants find the opinions within minutes as they know where the opinions are located. Letters are kept in miscellaneous correspondence for each City department to which the law department provides services. Litigation forms are kept in a notebook including the name, date filed, who filed, what type of suit and who handled it. According to the administrative assistant, it is very easy for them to pull opinions as they know exactly where everything is stored. However, an electronic index of files on a spreadsheet would provide an easier file locating system for the entire department.

R6.17 The department should maintain an electronic file index in a spreadsheet. The department should develop a repository including all opinions and letters electronically and an electronic file folder system. Maintaining an electronic filing system would allow lawyers to have access to opinions, save time for administrative assistants and provide a database of departmental information. The department would incur no extra cost in establishing and electronic filing index as they currently possess these capabilities.

Financial Implications Summary

The following table represents a summary of the annual cost savings and implementation costs discussed in this section.

Summary of Financial Implications

Recommendation	Cost Savings (Annual)	One-time Implementation Costs
R6.4 Reduce one criminal support staff.	$39,000	
R6.16 Purchase the prosecutor's module of CourtView 2000.		$16,500 - $33,000
Totals	**$39,000**	**$16,500 - $33,000**

Some of these recommendations are based on other recommendations and research to be done by the department. For instance, hiring a part-time paralegal and reducing a part-time attorney is based on the reduction of staff workload due to outsourcing and adopting some technological advancements. Therefore, actual cost savings may vary based upon the implementation of these other, interrelated recommendations.

Conclusion Statement

The Warren Law Department could improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of its planning and management operations. While the department has developed and implemented an organized structure, it is lacking updated job descriptions and performance evaluations for each position within the department; an in-depth and comprehensive strategic plan; and a thorough and detailed policy manual. These formal, written documents are necessary for any agency in order to effectively define authority and the reporting structure; communicate workplace policies and responsibilities to employees; and define the job functions, position qualifications, position responsibilities and evaluation criteria for each position.

Planning and management could further be improved by increasing departmental accountability. Incorporating formal and regular client satisfaction surveys, encouraging attorneys to develop various concentrations of legal expertise and accurately documenting workload will provide the department with a system to promote both departmental and staff accountability. Coupled with the possibility of outsourcing and possible technological advancements, the department may be able to reduce a support staff position.