

Review of Finances and Management
Practices
August 2011

Step 4: Management Audit

PREPARED FOR THE CITY OF CORRY

FUNDED BY A GRANT FROM THE CORRY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT
SOLUTIONS LLC

PREFACE

In 2011, the City of Corry, undertook an examination of its finances and management practices. This review followed the guidelines of the Department of Community and Economic Development's Early Intervention Program. The EIP guidelines focus on six steps:

Step 1: Financial Condition Assessment – A multi-year trend analysis of historic financial data and an assessment of current budget performance will be performed as a means to establish a realistic baseline of a local government's historic and current financial condition.

Step 2: Financial Trend Forecasting – Performed over a multi-year period, this analysis will project future revenue, expenditure, economic and demographic trends so that the local government can understand its future financial position and take action to counter act any negative trends. This step should include a review and integration of all other community and economic development plans for the local government.

Step 3: Plan for Current Fiscal Year – The Multi-Year Financial Management Plan should allow the local government to pursue both short and long-term strategies on parallel tracks.

Step 4: Management Audit – A management audit of all major departments and operations should be performed. The audit will include narrative summaries of each department comprised of budget and personnel information, as well as other relevant data. This data will be supported by interviews with each department manager and staff in order to facilitate the most comprehensive view of the local government's most critical operational needs. The audit should include a review of current and recommended technology needs and upgrades.

Step 5: Multi-Year Plan Adoption – The Plan shall include an identification of the local government's top three to five priorities. Additional prioritization to be conducted at the departmental level should be detailed in the Plan. Each objective should contain a detailed action plan which describes: 1) what is to be achieved; 2) the budgetary impact; 3) the timing and deadlines for each action step and 4) which employee or agency has the primary responsibility for the objective.

Step 6: Multi-Year Plan Implementation – The Early Intervention Program is an ongoing process and an adopted plan must be evaluated, adjusted and adopted anew each year.

This report is divided into four parts.

- The first part includes Steps 1, 2 and 3
- The second part includes Step 4 for the non-uniformed departments
- The third part includes Step 4 for the Police Department
- The fourth part includes Steps 5 and 6.

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CITY COUNCIL

MISSION, FUNCTION AND TASKS

Under the Third Class City Code the legislative and executive powers are placed in the hands of the five Commissioners or Council members. One of the Council members also serves as Mayor. The members serve as department heads.

The commission form of city government in Pennsylvania dates from 1913. In that year, the legislature replaced the mayor – council form government with the commission form. By 1926, all third class cities had adopted the new form. The legislative and executive powers that had been separated in the mayor – council form were combined in the commission form.

Since then, the legislature has provided additional options for cities under the Optional Third Class City Charter Law of 1957 and the Home Rule Charter and Optional Plan Law of 1972 that replaced the 1957 act. The options that are available today include a Home Rule government under a charter drawn up and voted on locally, a mayor- council government, and a council – manager government. Of the 53 third class cities in Pennsylvania, 20 have retained the commission form of government.

In 1964, the Corry City Council created the position of Chief Administrator and placed the administration of the Corry City government in the hands of the Administrator. This type of arrangement has recently been enacted into state law. Act 75 of 2011 amended the Third Class City Code to allow city governments to create the position of manager or administrator and to delegate day-to-day operations to the manager.

DEMAND FOR SERVICES

The demand for services has been relatively stable. The Commission form of government gives individual Council members responsibility for specific services. The Council has delegated the day-to-day operation responsibilities to the City Administrator.

DEPARTMENTAL SPENDING

The Council payroll and expenses make up a small portion of the administrative expenses for the City. Council pay and bonding and insurance has not changed

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Council has been credited with maintaining the City's services and finances during difficult times. In response to the deficit year in 2008, Council increased its efforts to monitor revenues and expenditures. It has also responded by increasing the real estate tax rate and raising the local services tax to the maximum allowed.

TIES TO THE COMMUNITY

An important role for any board, whether it is in the public or private sector, is to serve as a bridge between the organization and its constituents. The Corry area community and the City of Corry are very fortunate to have many committed community minded individuals and active civic based and economic development organizations and processes taking place. These individuals and groups support the City and region in improving its vibrancy and quality of life. This participation provides City government with outstanding opportunities to develop and implement programs and projects which it could not otherwise undertake. Elected officials and the staff serve on these boards, commissions and intergovernmental organizations.

A list of these organizations is appended to this section.

PERFORMANCE

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has developed a workbook for performance assessments, *Standards for Effective Local Government*, which includes standards for general municipal management.

The governing body delegates general administrative/management responsibility to a professional manager, secretary or administrator. Depending on the specific position, the responsibilities would include budget preparation and general financial administration; management of municipal departments and their operations; purchasing; and personnel management inclusive of hiring and firing employees with or without the consent of the governing body.

The Council has appointed a City Administrator who is responsible of the day-to-day operations of the City.

The individual hired as manager, secretary or administrator has been educated or trained in the field of municipal management/administration, or a related field, or is qualified on the basis of equivalent experience.

The City Administrator has years of experience in the City's government.

At the time of hiring, the governing body and the individual to be the municipal manager, administrator or secretary establish the terms and conditions of employment. Areas to be addressed include duties and responsibilities, mutual goals and expectations, periodic formal evaluation of performance, the formal and informal process for communication between the two parties, compensation and benefits, circumstances under which employment might be terminated, and severance provisions.

This standard calls for an employment contract between the governing body and the manager. This type of contract is now typically used in Pennsylvania when a professional manager is hired.

The governing body should clearly establish the lines of authority and communication between it and the municipal employees. And, except for the purposes of investigation and inquiries, individual members of the governing body and/or its committees do not give direct orders to any municipal department head or other employee, either publicly or privately, or interfere with operational duties of such persons.

The City has a commission form of government. The individual Council members, however, do not take an active role in the operation of individual departments. This responsibility has been given to the City Administrator.

The governing body, at least yearly, formally, in writing, provides the manager, administrator or secretary with an evaluation of his/her performance. This evaluation is based on predetermined, measurable goals and objectives – expectations - to which both parties agree.

Employees are not evaluated on a formal basis each year.

A weekly or periodic administrative report is prepared by the manager, administrator, or secretary for the elected officials which addresses what has taken place during the period; problems, things accomplished, emerging issues, progress on projects, personnel notes, financial matters, etc. This report is in a format which is easy for the manager to prepare and which allows for quick reading by the elected officials.

The City Administrator reports to Council on a regular basis.

The governing body should define the role of the manager, administrator, or secretary plays in the policy process. Most frequently, the elected officials expect him/her to support their policy-making role by providing needed information, developing options and indicating a recommended course of action. Once the manager, administrator, or secretary has fulfilled his/her role, final decisions are left to the governing body.

The manager, administrator, or secretary supports the policy-making role of the elected officials by providing needed information, developing options and even indicating a preference for a particular course of action. Once the manager, administrator, or secretary has played this supporting role, he/she yields to the decision of the elected officials.

This role is followed in the relationship between the Council and the City Administrator.

The laws governing open meetings and open records are strictly observed.

They are.

The governing body has adopted rules of procedure governing the conduct of its meetings. These rules provide for an orderly process by which elected officials address agenda items, and

the public may address the governing body and the business before it. The presiding officer conducts meetings in accordance with these rules.

The procedures are in place and they are followed.

A formal agenda is prepared by the manager, administrator or secretary for each meeting, inclusive of regularly scheduled public meetings, and executive sessions of the governing body. Except for work sessions where a department head or member of the governing body identifies the issues for discussion, the agenda is done in consultation with all members of the governing body following an agreed-upon process.

Agendas are prepared for all meetings, including meetings of board and commissions. The minutes of the most recent Council meeting are posted on the City website.

There is an agreed-upon timetable and process that provides that the agenda be available to elected officials at least several days in advance of the public meetings and executive sessions. Provided with the agenda are any materials, documents, notes or commentary essential to understanding the business that will come before the governing body.

Council members receive an agenda and information packet before each meeting.

The agenda is available to the public before and at each meeting.

It is.

Once established, the agenda is not amended except by a majority vote of the governing body, accompanied by a public explanation of the need for the agenda to be changed.

It is amended only by vote of Council. New items, however, may be brought up as new business at Council meetings without being added to the written agenda.

For issues or problems expected to generate more than normal interest and extensive discussion, the governing body schedules special meetings and public hearings.

The Council meets four times a month. The meetings include two regular meetings and two workshops. One of the workshops focuses on finances. Council schedules hearings as needed.

Meetings are run efficiently and in a manner that respects the time of elected officials and the public.

They are.

The municipality has adopted an administrative code which establishes the government's internal organization, including the major functions and responsibilities of departments, boards, commissions and committees.

The internal organization has been established by Council and is memorialized in an organization chart. The City operates under a modified Third Class City Code with a City Administrator established in 1964.

Written operating procedures have been developed for all major functions and services provided by municipal departments, boards and commissions.

Written operating procedures are not in place for all functions. Those that are in place may need to be brought up to date.

The local governing body, manager/secretary and department heads periodically review municipal services and administrative functions to determine whether existing operating methods are the most efficient and effective way to provide services and activities.

The Council members, the City Administrator and department heads are aware of alternative service delivery options. The City contracts out some functions, uses joint purchasing, and has intergovernmental agreements for other functions to provide them in a more efficient and effective fashion.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

Corry still faces the prospect of significant deficits in the coming years. The implementation of the new reassessment in 2013 may provide some relief. It will still be necessary to focus on maintaining the City's non-tax revenues sources and on managing expenditures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council should continue to take a close interest in the affairs of the City and support consideration of the recommendation found in this report.

CONTROLLER'S OFFICE

MISSION, FUNCTION AND TASKS

The City Controller is an elected City official, serving four-year terms of office. The Controller is responsible for examining, auditing and settling all City accounts. To perform this pre-audit function, the Controller receives lists of bills and payroll to be paid along with supporting documentation from the Treasurer. The Controller examines the lists of bills and payroll, makes corrections as needed, and reports to Council. Following Council action, the Treasurer and the City Administrator's assistant make the approved payments. The Controller examines the statements prepared by the Treasurer.

STAFFING

The staff consists of the elected Controller.

DEMAND FOR SERVICES

The Controller's duties can be completed in a couple of hours a week.

DEPARTMENTAL SPENDING

The spending is limited to the Controller's salary and bond.

DEPARTMENTAL FINANCIAL OBSERVATIONS

The functions are being performed at a reasonable cost.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Much of the work is being done on paper. The City has been reducing the reliance on paper through the use of information technology. This should be done for the Controller's function as well.

TREASURER'S OFFICE

MISSION, FUNCTION AND TASKS

In cities operating under the Third Class City Code or the Optional Third Class City Charter Law, the Treasurer is an elected officer. The Treasurer must be a competent accountant. Where a candidate for Treasurer had almost 30 years of practical experience in accounting, a court determined the person was a "competent accountant," and the lack of formal training and certification had no bearing.

Under the Third Class City Code, the Treasurer serves as collector of real estate taxes for the City, School District and the County. The Treasurer must possess a bond to cover all monies received in the capacity as Treasurer and collector of taxes. The amount of the bond is set by City Council, but any taxing district may petition the court to increase the amount of the bond.

Under the Code, the Treasurer must pay all warrants countersigned by the director of accounts and finance, and the City Controller. The Treasurer is also responsible for keeping public funds in such financial depositories as City Council directs. The Treasurer may appoint assistants and employees, but the number and compensation are determined by city council. The Corry Treasurer has one assistant.

REAL ESTATE TAX COLLECTION

In Corry, the tax collection functions are limited to the real estate tax for all three taxing bodies. The assessments that are the basis for the real estate tax are performed by the

County. The last reassessment was performed in 2003. A new reassessment will be implemented in 2013. The County provides the Treasurer with a tax duplicate that contains a listing of properties, assessments and taxes due. The Treasurer sends the tax bills to the property owners. Banks and mortgage companies are not billed. Some of the banks and mortgage companies obtain copies of the duplicate from the County. This facilitates payment by these banks and mortgage companies. The payments are received and deposited by the Treasurer. The City does not use a lock box to collect the taxes. Delinquent taxes are turned over to the County's Tax Claim Bureau.

The City is reimbursed by the School District and the County for salaries and wages but not benefits and other overhead costs. The reimbursement has not kept up with salary and wage costs. In 2010 the County and the School District paid the City \$40,009 for real estate tax collections.

The current real estate collection rate is low. The City collects about 89 percent of the current levy. The collection rate for both current and delinquent taxes as a percent of the current levy is higher. In 2010, it was 98 percent. This is an indication that the City and the County tax claims bureau are pursuing delinquent collections. This rate, however, is slightly less than the median collection rate of 99 percent for all Pennsylvania municipalities in 2009. It is, however, over the 97 percent median for third class cities in Pennsylvania in 2009. Cities, and to a lesser extent boroughs, are more likely to have tax delinquent and abandoned properties than townships are.

The actual collections will differ from the tax levy because of discounts, penalties and interest, and fees for delinquent collections. The collection rate calculations are based on DCED's compilation of 2009 Local Government Financial Information. This information can be found at <http://www.newpa.com/get-local-gov-support/municipal-statistics>.

The City Clerk collects the earned income tax.

OTHER DUTIES

The Treasurer manages the City's accounting system. The system was developed by a local Erie vendor, Advanced Business Systems. ABS still supports the system but may not do so in the future. The Treasurer would like to migrate to another system that will be supported in the future. The maintenance agreement and extra billing for the ABS system is about \$700 to \$800 a month. For the City, a change to a new system could be expensive in both time and money. If the current system is not supported, the City will have to incur this expense.

The system does an adequate job keeping track of multiple funds and generating monthly reports for review by the administration and Council.

The Treasurer also prepares the payroll. The Treasurer estimates that payroll preparation takes about ten percent of his time.

The Office is also responsible for depositing all monies received by the City, regardless of where they are collected. Most of the deposits are prepared by the Water and Sewer Department clerks. Deposits are then made by the Treasurer's clerk. The Treasurer does the bank reconciliations. Both cash and checks are usually deposited on a daily basis.

Both the Treasurer and the Controller endorse all City checks.

The Office has a staff of two, including the elected Treasurer.

DEPARTMENTAL SPENDING

The tax collection costs for salaries and wages, office supplies and some utilities are not high. These costs include some refunds. The changes in costs are primarily due to changes in refunds. These costs do not include benefits, occupancy costs, bonding, insurance and other overhead costs. The addition of these costs could easily add another \$62,000. The total cost of the office, less refunds but with overhead was about \$125,000 in 2010. The Treasurer estimates that half of his time is devoted to real estate tax collection. Assuming that one-half of the Treasurer's time is devoted to real estate tax collections, the cost of collections was \$62,500. The City received \$40,000 in reimbursements from the County and the School District. The net cost was about \$22,500. In 2010, the City collected \$1.44 million in current and delinquent real estate taxes. The tax collection costs were 1.5 percent of the collections. This figure is well within the range of typical collection cost rates.

Tax Collection Spending

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
TAX COLLECTION							
PAYROLL - TAX COLLECTION	55,788	57,478	58,005	51,288	58,475	59,633	62,382
R.E. TAX REFUNDS	4,514	2,451	164	3,313	1,304		469
LST TAX REFUNDS	400	630	2,463	11,703	8,836	4,130	3,899
SUPPLIES TAX COLLECTION	991	1,762	1,121	1,597	1,895	1,126	1,261
TREAS OFFICE - TELEPHONE	376	413	451	463	514	491	464
TOTAL	62,069	62,734	62,204	68,364	71,024	65,380	68,475

(The overhead calculation is based on total 2010 expenses less transfers to other funds, capital construction, grants and subsidies, contract refuse service costs, and CDBG program expenses. This reduced total approximates the ongoing expense associated with the activities of City staff. Salaries and wages made up about half of this reduced total. The overhead associated with the activity made up the other half. The calculation then is that overhead equals salaries and wages. This overhead rate is typical of service organizations.)

DEPARTMENTAL FINANCIAL OBSERVATIONS

The costs within the Office are reasonable.

DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since the current Treasurer assumed the Office, the operations have been moved off of Excel spreadsheets and paper into the accounting system. There are additional steps that could be taken, such as the use of bar code readers that could further improve the system.

REVENUE COLLECTION PERFORMANCE

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has developed a workbook for performance assessments, *Standards for Effective Local Government*. The manual includes standards for revenue collection management.

During peak revenue flows, moneys are deposited on the day of the receipt by the responsible collector. In other period revenues are to be deposited at least weekly.

The Treasurer meets this standard. Deposits are made on a daily or twice-daily basis during peak times.

Real estate tax rolls are audited annually to ensure accuracy and completeness.

The Treasurer reviews the initial certified assessment rolls and provides the assessor's office with corrections before the assessor's office provides the final duplicates.

Interest and penalty charges on taxes and fees comply with the law, or are adequate to encourage prompt payment.

They do.

The municipality periodically analyzes tax delinquencies and has a program in place which aggressively attempts to collect these delinquent taxes.

Delinquent real estate taxes are routinely notified that they are delinquent at the end of the year. Any taxes that remain unpaid are turned over to the county's tax claim bureau.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

There is a need for additional computerization not only in the Treasurer's office but throughout City government. Both the City Clerk and the Treasurer have been able to expand the use of information technology in their offices. There is more that can be done.

RECOMMENDATIONS

REAL ESTATE TAX COLLECTION

The current collection rate is low.

- The City should monitor appeals and transfers that could lower assessments; partner with the school district in challenging reductions; keep track of the ten largest taxpayers as reductions in this group could have a significant impact and identify and monitor chronically delinquent property owners.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- The Treasurer and the City Administrator should explore alternatives to the present accounting software. Any new software should be purchased as part of an overall information technology plan.

REIMBURSEMENT BY THE COUNTY AND SCHOOL DISTRICT

- The City should renegotiate the reimbursement arrangements with the other taxing bodies. The County and the School District should each cover one-third of the costs associated with collecting current real estate taxes. The reimbursements should cover overhead costs in addition to salaries, wages and payroll taxes.

ROLE OF TREASURER IN CITY GOVERNMENT

The Treasurer is a separately elected official with three principal functions – real estate tax collection, handling deposits and investments, and approving payments. Most elected Treasurers take on additional duties. The Corry Treasurer manages the accounting system, prepares periodic financial reports, handles payroll, and assists with budget preparation. These additional duties are ad hoc arrangements that have grown while the current Treasurer has been in office. The City should consider expanding the role of the Treasurer to include the following functions.

- Governmental Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Reporting
- Cash Management and Investments
- Debt Management
- Operating and Capital Budgeting
- Pensions & Benefits
- Risk Management
- Procurement

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends that a public finance officer should be able to be responsible for these functions.

The current Treasurer has some of these responsibilities. Some of them are handled by the Administrator and the Administrator's assistant. Combining these responsibilities in the Treasurer's office would free up other staff for other responsibilities. The consolidation of responsibilities in one office should still maintain a proper separation of responsibilities.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

The Treasurer should take advantage of professional workshops and classes offered by DCED, GFOA and other organizations.

CITY CLERK

MISSION, FUNCTION AND TASKS

The Third Class City Code requires Council to appoint a City Clerk on the first Monday in May for a four year term. The Clerk serves as the secretary for the City Council and is responsible for preparing and maintaining the records for the Council. The Clerk has the power of a notary public to administer oaths pertaining to City business.

In Corry, the Clerk's primary responsibility is to serve as the earned income and local services tax collector for the City. The Clerk also serves as the City's recorder of deeds.

STAFFING

The staff of the Office includes the Clerk, with clerical assistance as needed. The present Clerk has been with the City since 2005. She was promoted to City Clerk in 2006.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

The City Clerk is responsible for advertising meetings; preparing agendas, resolution and ordinances; preparing correspondence; keeping minutes; codifying ordinances; and maintaining other required records. Council may require the Clerk to prepare special reports for Council.

The City is in the process of scanning in records. This will improve access to records by City staff and visitors.

EARNED INCOME TAX COLLECTION

In Erie County, businesses within a municipality collect the earned income tax from their employees and forward the collections to the municipality's earned income tax collector. The Corry tax collector keeps the withholding from the residents of Corry and forwards the withholdings from the residents of other Pennsylvania municipalities to the proper tax collector. If the withholdings are from a resident of another state, the Corry tax collector keeps these withholdings. The Clerk estimates that about five percent of the collections come from out-of-state tax payers.

This collection system places a burden on the businesses. They are responsible for collecting resident information from employees along with the tax withholding. If this information is missing or incorrect, the taxes may not be sent to the right tax collector. The

Clerk estimates that there is less than \$1,000 a year that cannot be distributed to the proper tax collector.

The system also places a burden on the tax collector. The collector is responsible for maintaining records of residents to make sure that either their employers withhold the earned income tax or they pay the tax themselves.

Over the past five years, the Clerk has been able to computerize the tax collection system. About 95 percent of the tax collection system is now computerized. Because the City collects water and sewer bills that are in the residents' names, the Clerk has been able to build and maintain a data base of City residents. In addition to this, landlords report their tenants each October. The Clerk uses other sources, including the newspaper, to maintain the data base. This information is being made available in preparation for the 2012 county-wide collection system.

The Clerk also collects the local services tax on workers within the City. This tax is withheld by employers and forwarded to the City. Self employed workers pay the tax themselves. The local service tax will continue to be collected by the City in 2012. The City has the option of turning the collection over to the county-wide collector.

DEEDS

The City maintains duplicate copies of deeds that are filed with the County's Recorder of Deeds. The copies are sent to the City by the County. They are useful in that they provide a local source of information on property ownership and transactions. The City gets some visitors for genealogical queries. When the County puts the deeds on line, there will be fewer queries. The City also keeps property maps and plans.

DEMAND FOR SERVICES

The workload in the Office will be reduced in 2012 with the implementation of the county-wide earned income tax collection system. At least initially, the City plans to keep the resident tax payer files up-to-date as a check on the new system. Once the 2011 earned income tax work ends in mid-2012, there will be an opportunity for the Clerk to take on new responsibilities

DEPARTMENTAL SPENDING

The City Clerk's salary and some expenses are included in administration in the accounting system. Benefits and other expenses are reported on a non-departmental basis.

DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The major accomplishment has been the computerization of the earned income and local service tax collection procedures. The taxpayer data base could be used for other purposes as well. Municipalities with rental registration programs have used the tenant and owner information for code enforcement and emergency services.

REVENUE COLLECTION PERFORMANCE

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has developed a workbook for performance assessments, *Standards for Effective Local Government*. The manual includes standards for revenue collection management.

During peak revenue flows, moneys are deposited on the day of the receipt by the responsible collector. In other period revenues are to be deposited at least weekly.

The City Clerk meets this standard. Deposits are made on a daily or twice-daily basis during peak times.

There are established procedures, which attempt to ensure that all businesses and individuals liable for the payment of Act 511 taxes are on the tax rolls.

The City Clerk has developed a computerized data base of potential tax payers based on reports from landlords, water, sewer, and trash billing and other sources. This data base is being available to the countywide tax collector. The City plans to maintain the system as a check on countywide collections.

This data base could be used in a rental registration program.

The City does not keep a complete data base of businesses that could be paying taxes or withholding taxes from employees.

The municipality periodically analyzes tax delinquencies and has a program in place which aggressively attempts to collect these delinquent taxes.

Delinquent earned income taxes remain the responsibility of the City Clerk. The City Clerk has developed a database of potential taxpayers. With the advent of the countywide collection system in 2012, the City Clerk's responsibilities will be limited to delinquent taxes due before 2012.

The municipality has established an annual verification program to selectively audit Act 511 tax returns.

The City Clerk matches local earned income tax returns with state personal income tax returns that are obtained through the school district. The City audits employers if there is a concern that the withholding is not being done properly.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

The transition from City earned income tax collection to countywide collection could result in delays in tax revenues.

The ongoing computerization of the City's activities will bring new challenges to the staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The City Clerk's Office should continue with the increasing use of the City's website for Council agendas, minutes and other documents that could be of interest to the residents of the City.
- The City should adopt a business registration program to assist in making sure that all employers and self-employed individuals in the City are withholding and remitting earned income and the local services taxes. It is of particular importance to identify smaller business, sole proprietors and self-employed residents. These businesses can often go unnoticed for tax purposes.
- The City should monitor the performance of the countywide earned income tax collector to make sure that all of the revenues due the City are received by the City.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR

MISSION, FUNCTION AND TASKS

The position of City Administrator is not required in the Third Class City Code. In 1964, the Corry Council, created this position and delegated to the Administrator the day-to-day administration of the City. The legislature has amended the third class city code to define the duties of City Managers. Act 75 of 2011 provides a legal foundation for the City Administrator's position.

The Administrator is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the City. Additional responsibilities include maintaining ties with the community and community organizations, and code enforcement.

STAFFING

The Administrator has one assistant who also serves as the office manager. The assistant is responsible for purchasing, accounts payable, handling queries and complaints, issuing non-building permits, handling employee benefits, and other routine matters. (Building permits are handled by BUI.)

BUDGETING AND CONTROL

The City's budget is prepared by the Administrator with some assistance from department heads and the Treasurer. Monthly reports are prepared by the Treasurer. They are regularly reviewed by the Controller and City Council. The Council uses one of the two monthly work sessions to review the City's finances.

ACCOUNTING

The accounting system is managed by the Treasurer. The Treasurer is also responsible for accounts receivable and payroll. The Administrator's assistant is responsible for accounts payable. The accounting software may need to be replaced.

PURCHASING

Individual departments are responsible for their own purchasing. Larger purchases are approved by the department heads and the Administrator. The Administrator's assistant is responsible for managing the purchasing system. In addition to the City's purchases, the assistant handles purchasing and billing for the Airport Authority.

The City does not use a purchase order system but it can generate a purchase order if the vendor requests one. All bills have to be accompanied by original invoices. Bills are reviewed and put on the list of bills by the Administrator's assistant and the Controller before they go to Council. The bills are approved by Council. In some instances, in order to avoid late penalties or to take advantage of discounts, bills are paid before they go to Council.

Utility bills are tracked by the assistant on a separate spreadsheet to allocate expenses to individual departments. There are about 50 monthly electric bills that cover everything from traffic signals to whole buildings.

The City uses a few charge cards and charge accounts. The City uses two gas stations for fuel, and accounts with Sam's Club, Tractor Supply, and a lumber yard. Employees collect receipts and turn them into the assistant. The receipts are matched against the bills. There have not been problems with the accounts.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

With the exception of the department heads and two confidential employees, the staff is unionized. AFSCME Local 2041 represents the non-uniformed employees, the International Fire Fighters Association Local 2102 represents the six paid firefighters, and the City of Corry Police Department Collective Bargaining Unit represents the police. The police and fire contracts expire at the end of 2011. The AFSCME contract expires at the end of 2013.

The basic terms and conditions of employment, including pay and benefits, for most employees are covered by these contracts. The City does not have an up-to-date personnel policies and procedures or job descriptions for the non-union employees.

Usually, the lack of up-to-date policies and procedures, and job descriptions, should not pose a problem. When there are personnel problems, however, the lack of policies and procedures, and job descriptions, can pose a serious problem. Fortunately, during the course of the review of the City's operations, no personnel problems were reported. To avoid problems in the future, the City should review and up-date its personnel manual.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

With the exception of the waste water treatment plant and the water department, there are no up-to-date operating procedure manuals. The treatment plant and the water department are required to have manuals and job descriptions to keep their operating licenses. The police department does have written policies, but they need to be reviewed and up-dated.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

The City does not have a full-time code enforcement officer. The Administrator performs this function among his other duties. Given the size of the City and the potential for code problems in older cities, a full-time code enforcement officer would be worthwhile. (See below)

CASH MANAGEMENT

Most of the City's revenues come in by check. There are, however, some cash transactions. The water and sewer collations can bring in as much as \$4,000 a day in cash, and when real estate taxes are due, the City can take in as much as \$20,000 in cash. The City gives receipts for all cash collections. The cash and checks are usually deposited daily. The clerks taking in the cash and checks prepare the deposits. The Treasurer's clerk makes the deposits. The Treasurer performs the bank reconciliations.

The City keeps five small petty cash funds. The maximum balance in each fund is \$100. Receipts are kept for all payments and presented when the funds are replenished.

The City does not have parking meters.

INVESTMENTS

The City's funds are deposited with PNC Bank. They do have a sweeps account. The sweeps account currently does not pay interest. The City could consider investing with the Pennsylvania Local Government Investment Trust.

The non-uniformed pension plan and the police plan are managed by Northwest Savings Bank; the fire plan by PNC.

Because the plans are fairly small, the City could consider pooling the three plans for investment purposes or turning them over to the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System. PMRS is an independent state agency that has been managing local pension plans since 1974. The administrative costs for the three plans were high. In the 2009 evaluation, the administrative costs per active and retired member, including survivors, in the fire plan, the smallest plan of the three plans was \$770. In the larger police plan, it was \$733. In the non-uniformed plan, the largest of the three plans, it was \$474 per member. In 2009, the administrative costs for PMRS were \$229 per member.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The City's information technology, both hardware and software, is out of date. The City has two computer networks. The first, in the City building, is used by the DOS based accounting system. The second, in the police department, is used for a police software package.

Email is limited to the City building. Both systems have access to the Internet. Employees in departments that are not in the City building or the police department do not have access to either email or the Internet. One of the mechanics reports that he uses his home computer to check on parts prices.

The waste water treatment plant has a computer system that is designed to manage and monitor the operations of the plant. The plant does not have email or access to the Internet. The plant staff cannot monitor plant performance remotely. If there is an alarm, staff has to come into the plant to find out what the problem is. False alarms continue to be problems.

The City has consultants under contract for the three systems. The support for the accounting system is limited. The software firm, ABS, has reduced staff. The City recently contracted directly with a former customer service representative from the firm to maintain support.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The City has a comprehensive risk management and safety program. There is a safety committee that meets on a monthly basis and does safety inspections. The City's insurance agent attends meetings and receives meeting minutes. As a result of the program, the City's workers compensation insurance experience is good.

DEMAND FOR SERVICES

The demands on the Administrator's time exceed the available time.

DEPARTMENTAL SPENDING

The City Administrator and his assistant are accounted for within the General Fund as administration. The Administrator's time and salary is allocated to other departments and funds as well.

Administration Spending

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
ADMINISTRATION							
PAYROLL - ELECTED OFFICIALS	5,701	5,701	5,897	5,701	5,531	5,631	5,851
PAYROLL - ADMINISTRATION	20,412	20,971	21,236	21,584	23,009	22,428	23,304
PAYROLL - CLERICAL	28,108	24,769	25,210	25,993	26,505	26,790	28,629
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	8,403	9,730	8,619	10,310	8,467	9,793	9,271
POSTAGE	8,102	8,719	6,204	7,858	9,516	8,151	9,348
ADVERTISING & PRINTING	1,804	2,400	1,248	883	1,789	1,527	1,975
BONDS & INSURANCE	1,875	1,977	3,562	875	1,513	2,397	1,411
ASSOCIATION EXPENSE	5,544	4,691	4,485	4,295	5,150	5,750	4,542
PAYROLL - ENGINEERING	10,500	10,500	10,500	10,500	10,500	10,500	10,904
ADMINISTRATION PHONES	1,804	1,918	1,983	1,714	1,904	1,880	1,837
ADMIN-DONNA JOHNSON (ENGINEER)				4,948	4,313	122	
AUDITING SERVICES	6,878	8,848	9,747	6,359	7,808	6,905	5,500
PAYROLL - LEGAL SERVICE & LIEN	8,582	8,500	8,500	8,571	8,500	8,500	8,827
A/P - LEGAL SERVICE & LIENS							
TOTAL	107,713	108,724	107,191	109,591	114,505	110,374	111,399

DEPARTMENTAL FINANCIAL OBSERVATIONS

Spending for administration has increased at an average annual rate of 0.6 percent per year.

DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The City Council and the City Administrator have been able to continue to provide services with only limited real estate tax rate increases.

PERFORMANCE

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has developed a workbook for performance assessments, *Standards for Effective Local Government*, which includes standards for municipal management. The standards' for the Council and the relationship between the Council and the City Administrator are covered in the Council sector of this report.

BUDGETING

Budget preparation is the responsibility of an appointed official who has a general understanding of, or who has been trained, in the area of budgeting and municipal financial management practices.

The budget is prepared by the City Administrator with the assistance of the Treasurer and department heads.

The annual budget contains a budgeted message which, among other things, draws attention not only to positive situations but also to areas of concern.

The budget is comprehensive, covering all governmental, proprietary and fiduciary funds for each fiscal year. The budget is an essential element of financial planning, control, and evaluation, presents projected revenues and expenditures for both capital and operating areas for all funds.

The budget is comprehensive. It does not provide revenue and expenditure projections for future years.

There are established procedures, including a budget calendar, which guide budget preparation and adoption. The procedures include a stipulation that at least one public hearing on the budget be held after the budget is advertised as publicly available, and is at least one week prior to adoption.

The City follows the budget calendar for third class cities.

Each official responsible for a budgeted area presents his/her budget request for the coming year together with a justification. As appropriate in a prescribed format, such a statement is to include need, the volume of work involved, how the work is done, and supporting data for costs and possible benefits to be obtained.

Most of the work on the budget preparation is performed by the Administrator.

The budget format is to display all revenues and expenditures for the immediate past three years, in addition to projections for the coming year.

It does not.

Revenue and expenditure projections are realistic and based on valid supporting data.

In past years, there have been significant variances between budgeted and actual amounts for both revenues and expenditures. In the past few years, the budgets have been more realistic.

CAPITAL BUDGETING AND MULTI-YEAR PLANNING

The municipality has prepared and is implementing a multi-year capital improvement plan. It identifies the estimated cost, starting and completion dates for each project, the amount of money to be spent in each year, the methods of financing each project, and the impact each capital project will have upon the operating budget.

Current operating and capital fiscal decisions for the annual budget are based upon appropriate sections of the multi-year plan.

The City has not prepared a multi-year capital plan.

As part of the annual capital plan preparation, there is at least one public hearing at which the public can express its view on capital needs.

The City holds public hearings on its budget. These budgets do contain capital items.

Decisions with respect to long-term borrowing or other means of capital financing are made in accordance with the provisions in the municipality's fiscal plan.

The City does not have a formal capital budget or multi-year financial plan.

PURCHASING

All policies and procedures pertaining to the purchase of goods and services are in writing and are designed to provide the municipality with a cost-effective purchasing system which conforms to laws governing the purchase of materials and services. The local governing body has formally approved the purchasing policies and procedures.

The City does not have a documented purchasing policy that has been approved by Council. The City's purchasing practices do follow state law.

There is a system governing inventory and inventory control.

The City does not have an inventory control policy that has been approved by Council.

ACCOUNTING

The municipality has a formalized accounting system based upon generally accepted accounting principles. The responsibility for the accounting function rests with an individual who has had training in accounting procedures and processes, and who understands generally accepted accounting principles.

The City has an automated accounting system that is based on a modified accrual accounting system. The Treasurer and the Treasurer's clerk have training and experience in accounting.

Regular monthly reports of actual revenues and expenditures, as compared to budgeted amounts, are prepared and presented to the governing body each month, with appropriate commentary from the preparer.

Financial reports are prepared each month by the Treasurer and they are reviewed by staff, the Controller and Council.

An internal control system exists and provides for both administrative and accounting controls.

The duties related to financial transactions are separated. No single employee is responsible for more than one step in any series of transactions.

The local governing body has, by formal action, adopted policies and procedures governing the establishment and use of petty cash accounts within the general, or other appropriate funds.

The City does not have a petty cash policy that has been approved by Council.

The annual audit is conducted by an independent, professional auditor or accounting firm in accordance with generally accepted governmental auditing standards.

An accounting firm, Maloney, Reed, Scarpitti & Company L.L.P., prepares the City's Annual Audit and Financial report for the City.

The most recent annual fiscal report contains an independent auditor's unqualified opinion ("clean opinion").

The most recent audit, the 2009 audit, finds that the financial statements present fairly the City's financial position in conformity with a modified cash basis of accounting.

An exit conference between the auditor and local officials takes place at the conclusion of the audit.

The audit is reviewed by the Council.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

All positions to be filled are openly and publicly advertised in a manner which will reach a maximum number of potential applicants.

Positions are posted and advertised.

All qualifications/requirements for positions to be filled are job-related.

The current department heads have the appropriate experience and education.

For all positions to be filled, candidates compete on the basis of an examination which is job-related and fairly tests for the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for the position.

A formal process of administering job-related examinations is limited to the positions covered by civil service.

Job descriptions, based on an analysis of each job, are the basis for setting principal job requirements, and for structuring examinations.

There are no job descriptions for most positions.

The municipality has a formal performance evaluation plan which provides for the evaluation of all employees at least annually. The plan is performance-based, as opposed to a person-based method, and the plan's purposes and uses are clearly identified.

All employees are not evaluated annually.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The municipality's risk management program is comprehensive in nature, involving policy evaluation, control and funding.

The City has an active safety committee that meets monthly and performs inspections.

The nature and types of risks which generally confront local governments have been identified and analyzed by the municipality so that it can adopt a comprehensive risk manager program

The risk management record system is maintained so that responsible municipal officials may readily identify measure and treat risks.

The governing body has adopted an incident reporting system to enable the municipality to identify all incidents, their causes and their remedies.

The City has a standard incident reporting procedure. All incidents are documented and investigated.

The City's insurance agent attends meetings and receives minutes and reports.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Information technology industry has developed a number of best practice standards for the use of the technology.

Key policies, procedures and the current operating environment should be documented.

The documentation is limited to that provides with the hardware and software.

Policies and procedures should be communicated to the staff.

They are.

Adherence to computer system policies and procedures should be monitored.

It is.

Policies and procedures should be regularly reviewed and updated.

This is done on a limited basis.

Training for staff should be ongoing.

There has been only limited training.

User support should be provided.

The City has contracts for maintenance. The City Clerk serves as the in-house help desk.

Firewalls and antivirus software should be employed and monitored.

The City's systems do have firewalls and antivirus software.

A disaster recovery plan should be developed and backup procedures should be developed.

The data in the systems are backed up. The data in the accounting system is archived and stored off-site.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

Corry is a small city with a small city government. Most of the staff has been with the City for some time. Newer staff has been able to learn the system fairly quickly. This has made it possible to operate without established policies and procedures, multi-year budgets, long range plans and other operational tools.

There is a real risk in this type of operation. The sudden loss of senior staff, including the City Administrator, an unexpected law suit, or a significant drop in revenues can be challenges that would be easier to overcome with documented best practices.

Many of the City's operations, particularly outside of the City building, involve paper procedures and documentation. With the development of information systems for local governments, it is possible to transact most business electronically. For example, the City's present accounting system can handle some additional functions including keeping track of vehicle maintenance, code enforcement, and handling complaints.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Manager's Ordinance

The Council should create the office of City Administrator or Manager under the terms of Act 75 of 2011. This action would update the City Administrator's position, powers and duties. Act 75 provides for an administrator or manager who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the City.

Powers and duties generally.--Council may, by ordinance, vest in the city administrator powers and duties relating to the general management of city business and to the enforcement of city ordinances and regulations. The powers and duties conferred upon a city administrator in accordance with this section shall not be construed as diminishing powers granted to other city officers by statute or ordinance.

(b) Specific powers.--The powers and duties that may be conferred upon a city administrator by council may include, but shall not be limited to, any or all of the following:

(1) To be the chief administrative officer of the city responsible to the city council as a whole for the proper and efficient administration of the affairs of the city.

(2) To direct and supervise the administration of all departments and functions of the city, except as otherwise provided by ordinance or law.

(3) Except as otherwise provided by this act, to appoint city employees on the basis of merit system principles and suspend, remove or otherwise discipline employees, subject to the following:

(i) The city administrator may make recommendations to council concerning appointments or removals at the department head level.

(ii) Prior to any action being taken with regard to appointments or removals at the department head level, the city administrator shall confer with council.

(iii) Council must confirm appointments or removals at the department head level.

(4) To designate a qualified administrative officer of the city to perform the city administrator's duties during the city administrator's temporary absence or disability. In the event the city administrator fails or is unable to make such designation, or if the absence or disability continues more than 30 days, the council may, by resolution, appoint an officer of the city to perform the duties of the city administrator during the city administrator's absence or disability until the city administrator is able to return to work.

(5) To negotiate contracts for the city, subject to the approval of city council, make recommendations concerning the nature and location of municipal improvements and execute municipal improvements as determined by the city council.

(6) To see that all terms and conditions imposed in favor of the city or its inhabitants in any statute, franchise or contract are faithfully kept and performed, and upon knowledge of any violation, call the same to the attention of the city council.

(7) To attend all meetings of the city council with the right to take part in the discussions, but without the right to vote.

(8) To recommend to the city council for adoption such measures as the administrator may deem necessary or expedient, keep the council advised of the financial condition of the city and make reports to the council as requested by it.

(9) To investigate at any time the affairs of any officer or department of the city that is under the administrator's jurisdiction.

(10) To prepare and submit the annual city budget for review and approval by the city council. The recommended budget shall be submitted to city council for its review no later than the last stated meeting in November. The budget so submitted shall be accompanied by an enabling ordinance, together with such explanatory comment or statement as the administrator may deem desirable. The budget document shall be in such form as is required by law for city budgets, and shall contain such additional documentation or explanation of the various items of expenditure and revenue as may be required by council.

(11) To perform such other duties as may be designated by the city council in the enabling ordinance.

Information technology

The City should thoroughly review its information technology practices and develop a technology plan. As funds become available, the City should implement the plan. At a minimum the City should consider computerizing all routine functions in all departments, providing Internet and email access for all departments, and providing remote access to key employees.

- Designate a technology manager for the City. The manager could be an outside contractor
- Develop a vision for the use of technology in City government
- Partner with other municipalities, the County and other organizations as opportunities become available
- Develop a long-range technology plan to implement the vision
- Select hardware and software based on the plan
- Establish policies and procedures for technology use
- Limit access to data to those employees who need the data
- Provide training to all staff in the use of the technology
- Provide user support
- Regularly review the security policies and test security measures
- Develop a disaster recovery plan
- The plan should address immediate issues
 - Remote access to waste water treatment systems
 - The accounting software
 - A code enforcement package
 - Access to email and Internet in all departments

Budgeting and Finance Policies

- The City should develop a comprehensive set of policies covering budgeting and finance. These procedures should cover
 - A code of conduct
 - Accounting for revenues, expenditures, assets and liabilities
 - Procedures for
 - Accounts payable, including payroll
 - Purchasing and inventory management
 - Accounts receivable including grants, taxes, fees, fines, departmental changes and intergovernmental revenues
 - Monthly and annual reporting for all funds
 - Handling cash deposits and parking meter revenues
 - Administrative procedures including record keeping, filing and forms
 - Internal controls
 - Cash management
 - Separation of duties
 - Risk management
 - Investing
 - Auditing

Budgeting

- The City should develop procedures for preparing and using the budget. The process should include
 - A Budget Calendar
 - Budget guidelines and Instructions for department heads in budget preparation
 - Mechanisms for coordinating budget preparation and review

- Procedures to facilitate budget review, discussion, modification, and adoption
- Opportunities for citizen Input
- As part of the budget process, the City should develop
 - Three to five year revenue and expenditures projections based on the current level of operations and anticipated changes in operations
 - A separate capital budget that identifies equipment replacement and infrastructure repair goals and objectives
- The budget should include a budget narrative that identifies
 - Program goals and objectives
 - Major issues that are facing the City
 - The role that the City's government can play in tackling the issues
- Once the budget has been adopted, it should be used to control activities. The City should monitor, measure, and evaluate
 - Program performance – how well is the City doing in reaching its program goals and objectives
 - Budgetary Performance - how well are actual revenues, expenditures, cash flows and fund balances staying within budget
 - Financial Condition what is the long-term health of the City including the community's general social, demographic, and economic conditions
 - External Factors – what changes have occurred that can have an impact on performance
 - The Council should continue to scrutinize the City's budget performance on a monthly basis and make course corrections when needed.
 - Council should adopt a multi-year financial plan including a capital budget. The plan should be used as a guide during the budget process and with capital purchases. The projects prepared as part of this report can serve as the basis of the plan.

Purchasing

- The City should up-date its purchasing system to include purchase orders and tighter controls. There is not indication that there are problems with the present system, but a more structured purchasing system could avoid future problems.

Personnel Management

- The City should review and up-date its personnel policies, procedures and job descriptions.

With the exception of the waste water treatment plan and the water department, there are no up-to-date job descriptions and manuals. The treatment plant and the water department are required to have manuals and job descriptions to keep their operating licenses. The police department does have written policies.

Investment Practices

- The City should consider transferring the management of the three pension funds to PMRS.
- The City should consider transferring the management of its investments to PLGIT

THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

MISSION, FUNCTION AND TASKS

The Corry Fire Department is a combination department made up of a volunteer company, the Stanford Hose Company, and six paid firefighters. The department responds to emergency incidents, performs routine maintenance on its own equipment, keeps hydrants painted and maintains the Gamewell emergency call box system.

The normal first response to a structure fire is with the ladder truck, one pumper truck and the rescue vehicle. This provides two paid and two volunteer firefighters at the fire site. This response should provide four firefighters and three pieces of equipment within five minutes. The normal second response includes the additional four off-duty firefighters, additional volunteers, and an additional pumper truck within ten minutes. The policy is for an aggressive response to a fire including entry if it is needed.

FIRE SAFETY PROGRAMS

The department provides regular training and education in schools, in businesses and at community events. In businesses, it gives fire extinguisher training on all three shifts every other year.

The department promotes the use of smoke detectors. A few years ago, the department was able to give away smoke detectors. Because of perceived liability issues, the department did not install them.

Hydrant tests are conducted twice a year when the water department flushes the system.

STAFFING

The department is staffed with six paid firefighters and about 20 to 25 active volunteers. The Chief and Deputy Chief are volunteers. The six paid firefighters work a one day on, two day off schedule. This provides two paid firefighters on duty at all times. This schedule has them on duty an average of 53 hours a week. The career firefighters are responsible for driving vehicles to fires. One driver is stationed in each of the fire stations.

EQUIPMENT

The department has two fire stations. Number One is next to the municipal building and Number Two is on the other side of the railroad tracks on Washington Street. The department has kept the two stations because there are no bridges or tunnels around the tracks and a freight train can divide the City in two. At present, there is one long coal train that comes through the City each day. It is reported that this train can block access for 10 to 30 minutes. With less train traffic, a consolidation of the operations in one station has been considered. As neither station can hold all of the department's equipment, consolidation planning has considered the construction of a new, centrally located station.

The major pieces of equipment include a 75 foot aerial ladder truck, two pumpers with 1,000 gallon capacity, a pumper with a 500 gallon capacity, and a rescue vehicle. The most recent purchase was in 2004 for one of the larger pumpers. The oldest vehicle is the smaller pumper which is a 1988 model.

The City has about 180 fire hydrants. The department can reach any point in the City with the 1,300 foot hoses carried on the pumpers.

ISO RATING

The department has an ISO rating of 5.5. The last ISO visit was in 2008. Unless the City requests it, the next visit will be in about seven years. The rating could be improved. In 2008, there were problems with dispatch and the department did not get the ladder truck out enough. The oft repeated rule of thumb is that each one point improvement in the ISO rating can lower commercial and residential insurance costs by about ten percent. The ISO evaluates fire departments on the following criteria:

Fire alarms

Ten percent of the overall grading is based on how well the fire department receives fire alarms and dispatches its fire-fighting resources. Our field representatives evaluate the communications center, looking at the number of

operators at the center; the telephone service, including the number of telephone lines coming into the center; and the listing of emergency numbers in the telephone book. Field representatives also look at the dispatch circuits and how the center notifies firefighters about the location of the emergency.

Engine companies

Fifty percent of the overall grading is based on the number of engine companies and the amount of water a community needs to fight a fire. ISO reviews the distribution of fire companies throughout the area and checks that the fire department tests its pumps regularly and inventories each engine company's nozzles, hoses, breathing apparatus, and other equipment.

ISO also reviews the fire-company records to determine:

- type and extent of training provided to fire-company personnel
- number of people who participate in training
- firefighter response to emergencies
- maintenance and testing of the fire department's equipment

Water supply

Forty percent of the grading is based on the community's water supply. This part of the survey focuses on whether the community has sufficient water supply for fire suppression beyond daily maximum consumption. ISO surveys all components of the water supply system, including pumps, storage, and filtration. To determine the rate of flow the water mains provide, we observe fire-flow tests at representative locations in the community. Finally, we evaluate the distribution of fire hydrants.

ISO Website

STANDARD OF COVER

The appropriate staffing level for a fire department is determined through the development of a standard of response cover, or standard of cover, that establishes the response that is appropriate for the community. The development of the standard of cover is, in turn, driven by the nature of a fire. When a fire starts, it may be possible to control the fire with minimal resources. Within a few minutes, flashover may occur and more resources will be needed to control the fire. For this reason a standard of cover could stipulate how many firefighters will arrive at the fire scene in the first five minutes and how many additional firefighters will be needed within nine minutes. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends four firefighters at the fire site within five minutes 90 percent of the time to meet the first standard of cover. The second standard of cover depends on the level of development. In an urban environment, 15 firefighters should be at the fire scene within nine minutes, 90 percent of the time; in suburban areas, 10 firefighters within 10 minutes,

90 percent of the time; and in rural areas, six firefighters within 14 minutes, 80 percent of the time.

The Corry department is able to respond with two paid firefighters and two volunteers within five minutes. The equipment includes the aerial truck, one 1,000 gallon pumper, and the rescue truck. The City is able to respond with an additional pumper and at least four additional firefighters within ten minutes.

To meet the first cover, the fire equipment should be stationed within one and one-half miles of possible fire sites. With two stations, one on either side of the railroad tracks, only a portion of the northern end of the City, including part of the industrial park, is beyond the 1.5 mile limit. The entire City is within two road miles of the stations.

The City has mutual aid agreements with neighboring volunteer fire companies. The closest two, the Columbus VFC and the Elgin Beaverdam Hose Company are three or four miles outside of the City limits. The Springcreek VFD is seven miles away and the Spartanburg VFC, 19 miles. The responses are primarily for structure fires. When there is a fire, the neighboring companies can be called for backup in case there is a second incident.

DEMAND FOR SERVICES

In 2010, the department responded to 954 incidents. Among the fire calls, only 30 involved buildings or structures. This number, it is reported, has been declining with better fire safety education and the installation of smoke detectors. Rescue and emergency medical service incidents were responsible for almost two-thirds of the incidents. Most of these involved providing assistance to an emergency medical service crew.

2010 Fire Department Incidents

Type of Incident	Number	Percent of Total
Fire	46	4.80%
Rescue and Emergency Medical Service	629	65.90%
Hazardous Condition (no fire)	25	2.60%
Service Call	95	10.00%
Good Intent Call	50	5.20%
False Alarm	57	6.00%
Severe Weather & natural Disaster	46	4.80%
Other	6	0.60%
Total	954	100%

DEPARTMENTAL SPENDING

Spending by the department has been steadily increasing, primarily due to increases in payroll and a 2009 change in accounting that passes the state insurance money through the general fund budget on its way to the relief association. Other expenditures have fluctuated from year to year, but the overall trend has been stable.

Fire Department Spending

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
FIRE GENERAL							
PAYROLL - FIRE DRIVERS	194,353	196,094	235,943	212,531	219,183	193,796	239,425
PAYROLL - FIRE SUPPLEMENTAL	47,519	56,500	22,283	62,213	50,609	89,435	60,091
REIMBURSEMENT FIRE CHIEFS	9,416	9,337	9,868	9,576	9,992	10,461	9,768
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	7,964	13,315	13,812	15,583	6,010	9,349	6,408
FIRE UNIFORMS	1,680	1,860	1,962	1,980	2,220	2,164	2,220
HYDRANT & FIRE SERVICE	11,784	9,515	9,515	9,515	9,782	7,136	9,515
FIRE ALARMS	456	206	69	693	91	9	6
FIRE TELEPHONES	1,889	1,997	1,901	1,953	2,845	3,280	2,983
COMMUNICATIONS	3,024	1,346	595	2,416	1,289	1,295	427
TRAINING	43	324	332	19		74	244
FIRE - STATE INSURANCE MONEY						21,997	24,759
CONTRIBUTION TO STANFORD HOS	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	4,500	4,500
TOTAL	281,628	293,994	299,780	319,979	305,521	343,496	360,346
FIRE DEPARTMENT - VEHICLES							
PAYROLL - MAINTENANCE & REPAIR	5,086	2,825	3,970	1,696	7,312	3,188	3,466
MAINTENANCE & REPAIR	10,374	3,842	3,481	4,691	4,151	1,988	3,670
GAS & OIL	2,200					32	
TOTAL	17,660	6,667	7,451	6,387	11,463	5,208	7,136

The repair on the vehicles is accounted for separately and is a back charge from the City's mechanics.

These figures do not include employee benefits and overhead costs.

FIRE STATIONS

There has been some discussion on the feasibility of closing one of the fire stations or replacing both of them with a new station at a more central location. There are a number of issues that could play an important part in any decision.

The City is divided by the two railroad tracks. At one point in the past, there was fairly heavy rail traffic through the City and a need for a station on either side of the tracks. Since then, the traffic has declined to one coal train a day. Reportedly, that train can block access from one side of the City to the other for as long as 30 minutes. During the course of this study, the train was observed taking 22 minutes to cross Center Street. Any study should seek information on future rail traffic from the operators of the two lines.

The department's standard of cover and the ability of the department to meet the standard should be considered in all building scenarios. This should include the impact of potential rail traffic on response times.

If the stations are consolidated in a new building, the building should be sited north of the railroad tracks to be within one and a half miles of most of the City. One piece of equipment could be left at the Fire Station Number One next to the City building in case a train is coming through the City.

The two stations, although they are far from new, seem to be reasonably well maintained. Together, they can hold the department's equipment. A new station, however, would provide the department with an up-to-date facility that could house any future equipment.

There is no compelling reason from a financial perspective to change the preset configuration and staffing. Closing one station would not produce significant saving without reductions in staff. To provide the department's standard of cover, there should be two on-duty firefighters. Staff reductions may not be possible. The cost of constructing a new station and disposing of the present stations would probably eliminate any savings.

Before a decision is made to build a new station or to renovate one of the existing stations, the department should do a thorough review the public safety needs of the community and the equipment and staffing needed to respond to these needs.

DEPARTMENTAL FINANCIAL OBSERVATIONS

The cost of the fire department is low at \$51 per capita in 2009. The average for the 21 small third class cities was \$85. Locally, the per capita cost ranged from \$41 in DuBois to \$141 in Bradford. (See Revenue and Expenditure Comparisons in Step 2) There are neighboring municipalities with far lower costs as they have no paid firefighters and the volunteer fire companies raise most of their own revenues. The local government spending on fire services in Concord Township was \$5 per capita, in Wayne, \$10, and Columbus, \$17. Because the Corry has a built up urban core, it would be difficult for the City to reduce costs to these levels.

The challenge for the City is to keep personnel costs in check and to make the current firefighters more productive in terms of generating revenues for the City.

REVENUE OPPORTUNITIES

The members of the fire department have put forward a number of revenue opportunities for the department. These include adding new customers to the City's Gamewell fire alarm system, beginning an emergency ambulance service, performing code inspections, and assisting in a rental registration program. Of the four suggestions, the first two could produce significant revenues, but both could take significant up-front investments and be

risky. The second two, expanding code enforcement and a rental registration program, could produce some revenues soon after start up and have low risk.

The Gamewell fire alarm system

The Gamewell system could be marketed to increase the number of customers and revenues. The whole City is already wired. There are about 10 building customers and 66 street boxes. There are some departmental earnings. The system is making \$1,800 a year or \$180 per building customer. The maintenance costs have varied from year-to-year. They ranged from a low of \$6 in 2010 to a high of \$693 in 2007. In the long run, the expensive part of the system is maintaining and repairing the lines and street boxes. The building customers should be paying their own way.

There is some potential for an expanded system but it probably would not look like the present system. There are approximately 600 commercial, apartment, industrial, and tax-except properties in the City. If each averaged only one fire alarm box per building, there could be \$108,000 in revenues. Larger buildings, such as the Corry Memorial Hospital, already have installed alarm systems. Realizing revenues at this level could be difficult.

Before the Second World War, there were about 155 municipalities in Pennsylvania that had the familiar Gamewell pull down street boxes. By 2000, there were only about 20 municipalities in Pennsylvania that still had Gamewell systems. Some of the systems have been converted to wireless operation. Some of these systems may have been taken down. The Pennsylvania municipalities in 2000 included the Cities of Erie and Warren. The Erie system was dismantled in 2006 and the street boxes were sold to collectors. The trend is away from municipally owned and operated fire alarm systems. The widespread use of the telephone, and now the cell phone, competition from private other alarm companies, and the development of 9-1-1 systems have led to the reduction in the number of municipal systems.

Alarm systems in commercial buildings usually provide a range of features that are not found in the current Gamewell system. These features include integration with alarm, security and sprinkler and other fire suppression systems, remote monitoring and servicing, and multiple communication paths.

Marketing and then installing a large system, particularly with wired fire alarm boxes, would require the use of an outside contractor and the use of a system that is probably different from the present system. Gamewell systems are now supported by Gamewell FCI, a subsidiary of Honeywell International Inc. The company no longer makes the familiar Gamewell pull down street boxes but it continues to manufacture spare parts. There are companies that rebuild systems and provide service. Honeywell and other manufacturers make the newer alarm systems that are often found in larger office buildings, hospitals and other commercial and industrial buildings. They are installed by alarm companies.

These other manufacturers and alarm companies are already in the business of building and marketing their systems. They provide the competition for an expansion of the City owned system. Without matching the completion on the basis of product, service and price, it would be difficult for the City to be competitive in this market.

Ambulance service

Nationally, over 70% of emergency medical services (EMS) are delivered through fire departments. Fire departments regularly respond to EMS calls with personnel and equipment. The provision of ambulance services is a logical extension of regular fire services. The Corry Department has far more emergency medical incidents than it has fire incidents. The Department could expand its response to EMS calls the rescue to include emergency transport ambulance services.

Ambulance services are provided in the Corry area by the Corry Ambulance Service. The company provides both emergency response and non-emergency transport. When the company does patient transport it can be unavailable for emergency response. Corry Ambulance Service was founded in 1996 as a joint effort between the Corry Memorial Hospital and Emergycare Inc. to provide ambulance service to the Corry area. It provides advanced life support and basic life support services as well as non-emergency patient transport. In 2009, it had revenues and expenditures of over \$700,000. Emergycare was founded in 1983 with the support of Hamot Medical Center and St. Vincent's Health Center to provide ambulance services in the Erie area. It also operates in Titusville, Warren and Kane as well as in Erie and Corry.

It would be difficult to start an ambulance service that would be in competition to a well established, non-profit service that has the local hospital as one of its owners. The start-up could take as long as a year. Start-up costs would include providing EMT and, possibly, paramedic training for employees, leasing equipment and purchasing supplies. These costs could easily exceed \$50,000 before the first response.

Incident Billing

There are other opportunities. Many homeowners and automobile insurance policies have provisions to pay for charges for certain fire department services. Nationally, fire departments have begun to establish fee schedules and bill insurance companies for specific response types. The Corry Fire Department responds to more than 900 incidents a year. The City does not bill for most of these incidents. In 2010, the City received only \$500 for fire department accident response. It has received more in the past. In 2006 it received \$5,710. A more complete fee schedule and aggressive billing could provide significant increases in this revenue. The aggressive billing could be provided by an outside billing service.

The City of Meadville has recently passed a new comprehensive fee ordinance that established fees for certain fire response services. Fees include \$550 for structure fires, \$330 for car fires

and rescue fees from \$200 - 400 depending on the level of fire department actions. If the City of Corry adopts a similar fee ordinance and is able to recover the costs 50 percent of the time, the billing revenues could increase incident revenues.

Incident Billing

Type of Incident	Number	Fee	Revenue at 50% Recovery
Structure Fire	30	\$550	\$8,250
Vehicle fire	5	330	825
Extraction	5	200	500
Vehicle accident, no fire	40	100	2,000
Total			\$11,575

If this type of incident billing is enacted, the City should consider a third-party billing agency. These companies understand emergency services billing and also have the resources to follow up on accounts receivables. Most municipalities that establish an aggressive incident billing program that have used a billing agency have found that the revenues are higher than they would have been with in-house billing.

Code Enforcement

With the proper training, firefighters have taken over some of these responsibilities in Pennsylvania municipalities. Many departments do fire inspections. The State Fire Academy and other agencies offer training and certification in code enforcement activities including fire inspection. Firefighters have also been used in property code enforcement.

Corry does not have a full time code enforcement officer. The fire department's productive capacity could be used to expand the City's code enforcement efforts.

Rental Registration Program

A rental registration program could take further advantage of the productive capacity of the fire department by expanding the role of the department in code enforcement. The firefighters could be used to perform the inspections in the program.

OBSERVATIONS

The first two suggestions, expanding the Gamewell system and establishing an ambulance system, would provide services that are already available to the residents and businesses in Corry. Both would involve investment, considerable investment in the case of an ambulance service, and risk.

The second two suggestions, firefighter code enforcement program and a rental registration program, would provide services that are needed by residents and businesses to keep Corry an attractive place to live, work and do business. They also would involve less risk and take advantage of the department's productive capacity.

The consideration of ambulance service does lead to two actions that the City could take. It could be more aggressive in billing insurance companies to recover the cost of responding to incidents. The City could also begin a conversation with the Corry Ambulance Service on improving emergency responses and the potential role for the fire department in improving responses.

DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In an environment where it is increasingly difficult to recruit and retain volunteer firefighters, the Corry department has been able to maintain the volunteer memberships that it need to provide proper fire protection.

FIRE DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has developed a workbook for performance assessments, *Standards for Effective Local Government*, which includes standards for fire department management.

The municipality has received at least a mid-point rating (5) from the Insurance Services office (ISO)

In the last review, the department fell short with a 5.5 rating.

All fire personnel, whether paid or volunteer, have received basic, certified, training in firefighting and have regular and mandatory in-service training and drills. The training goals are based on the standards set by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

The firefighters, both paid and volunteer, participate in regular training two or three times a month.

Fire equipment is adequate and suited to the needs/experience of the municipality. Basic fire apparatus, and personal equipment and clothing of firefighters, meet NFPA standards.

It is.

Water, and water pressure, and pumper capacity, are always sufficient to met firefighting needs.

They are.

The procedures and equipment to dispatch fire equipment is adequate to support a rapid response to a fire call or other emergencies for which fire personnel are responsible.

They are. The department depends on the Erie County 9-1-1 system.

Adequate firefighting service is available seven days a week, 24-hours a day.

It is. The department has two paid firefighters on duty at all times.

Fire manpower is sufficient to provide a minimum of three persons on each apparatus responding to a fire.

The department's first standard of cover calls for four pieces of equipment, the aerial, two pumpers and a rescue truck as well as four firefighters in the first five minutes. The second standard calls for an additional four firefighters within ten minutes.

The response time to a first alarm is within eight minutes.

It is within five minutes.

The call taking and dispatch system service the fire department is in operation 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

It is.

The municipality has adopted a nationally recognized fire code or the equivalent.

It has.

Responsibility for the enforcement of the fire code has been placed with an individual certified by the State as a fire inspector and the fire code is regularly enforced.

It has.

The fire code enforcement officer participates in the review of construction plans to provide input as to compliance with the fire code.

It does not.

There are regular inspections and fire drills in such areas as schools, hospitals and other public buildings.

The department provides regular drills and training at businesses and in public buildings. Commercial, industrial and institutional buildings are inspected every three to five years. Residential buildings are inspected on request.

The government body has available to it on regular basis information on the number day and time of fires, property loss data, fire response time, fire prevention activities and training.

The department prepares a monthly report on the number of incidents by type. The report could provide additional detail.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

Among the continuing issues facing departments that rely on volunteers is the recruitment of volunteers. This problem is not limited to Corry. Proposed statewide solutions have included financial benefits such as tax breaks for firefighters, health benefits, and tuition assistance at state colleges and universities. In Pennsylvania, volunteers already have workers' compensation coverage and death benefits. A report issued by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, *Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment and Retention in Rural Pennsylvania* issued in 2006, identified non-financial issues as major problems with recruitment and retention. They include lack of time, lack of equipment, and increased training requirements including technical training for new hazards.

Corry's challenge is to maintain the present volunteer membership. One pool of candidates that has not been tapped is that of municipal employees. One employee is a volunteer, but in his home community, not in Corry. A number of municipalities have successfully encouraged employees to become volunteer firefighters.

A second challenge is the need for an increasing level of support from the City to keep up with inflation. The development of revenue producing activities could help.

A third challenge is the siting of the fire stations. The City currently has the two stations, one on either side of the railroad tracks. The City responds from both stations. Neither station house is large enough to hold all of the equipment. There have been discussions in the past on building a larger station on a central site or consolidating all of the operations at one site.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The City should explore the use of firefighters for code enforcement and for participation in a rental registration program. Both activities would take advantage of the productive capacity of the fire department and provide services that would benefit the community. They would also generate revenues for the City.
- The City should bill insurance companies for the cost of responding to incidents. The City should consider using a contractor to do the billing.
- The City should begin a conversation with the Corry Ambulance Company on improving emergency response times and the fire department's potential role in this matter.
- The City should encourage City employees to become volunteer firefighters for the City.

- Any discussion of building a new fire station or renovating one of the present stations should consider the evolving public safety needs of the community, the department's standard of cover, the ability of the department to meet that standard, and the financial impact of the project on the City's budget.

THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT - STREETS

MISSION, FUNCTION AND TASKS

The City's streets department is responsible for the general maintenance and repair of the City's infrastructure. The infrastructure includes streets and sidewalk; buildings; and parks. The department is responsible for plowing 34 miles of roads, including state highways. The City is paid by Penn DOT to plow the state highways within the City.

During the winter months, the department's primary goal is to keep the streets and sidewalks within the City free of snow and ice. The initial response is to salt the streets. This can be done in about two hours. The department plows during snow storms with up to 11 pieces of equipment. As the City gets about 200 inches of snow, plowing can be almost continuous at times.

Beginning in the spring, the department switches to street maintenance, primarily paving and sweeping, and to equipment repair. The winter's plowing can take a toll on the equipment. The department is also responsible for the maintenance of the storm water and sewer systems. The department cleans and rebuilds catch basins, and does work on the storm water and sewer lines.

In the fall, the department begins to pick up leaves. This takes two trucks, each with a crew of three, about a month to complete the pickup. The leaves are composted and the compost is given to residents and landscapers. This continues into December. In addition to leaf pickup, the department picks up brush including the slash from tree removals. The contract with the solid waste hauler does not include leaf and brush pickup.

The department does maintenance on the City's buildings. The department also maintains the street lights. Traffic lights and controllers are handled by the waste water treatment staff, and equipment, including vehicles, is repaired by the City's mechanics.

The level of service provided, particularly thorough responses to snow, sidewalk plowing and brush collections, exceeds that of most communities.

STAFFING

The department is staffed with a superintendent and five equipment operators. During the summer, the department has two seasonal employees. During the winter months, for plowing, the department staff is supplemented with staff from the water and sewer

treatment systems and the mechanics. The water department staff helps with leaf pickup in the fall. At the time of this study, the position of superintendant was vacant. The past superintendant had retired after 17 years in the position, and after a total of 36 years within City government. Some of the equipment operators are able to perform specialized functions including plumbing and electrical work. The seasonal employees are used primarily for paving.

EQUIPMENT

The plowing equipment includes two graders, three pickup trucks, four dump trucks, two salt trucks and two sidewalk plows. In addition to these major pieces of equipment, the department has a street sweeper, two backhoes, a sewer jetter and rolling equipment.

The department does not have milling and paving equipment. Any paving work that is done by the department is done by hand. Larger projects are contracted out. The department does not have a sewer vector. There is a need for a vector to clean out the salt, grit and trash that can stop up the storm water lines. Vectors can be rented, but this is expensive.

Some of the equipment is old. The two sidewalk plows are 1969 and 1976 models.

DEMAND FOR SERVICES

The demand for services has remained relatively constant, but the department has been reduced in size from 12 full time workers and five temporary workers to its present size of five full time and two seasonal workers. Fortunately, the department can draw on other departments for assistance.

The retiring superintendent believes that the department is not keeping up as well as it should. It is responding to complaints instead of taking the actions needed to avoid complaints. At times, the resources available in the department are not equal to the demands placed on it.

DEPARTMENTAL SPENDING

Departmental spending has been relatively stable over the past seven years. The fluctuations have come with overlay programs in 2006, 2007 and 2010. Also, beginning in 2005, gas and oil expenditures from other departments have been accounted for in the highway department.

Streets Department General Fund

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
HIGHWAY							
PAYROLL - GENERAL	134,398	116,729	115,193	129,980	118,664	116,088	121,020
PAYROLL - MECHANICS	26,138	22,756	16,730	23,880	19,910	20,098	25,397
SUPPLIES	7,000	6,294	7,267	7,924	7,030	8,990	8,811
HIGHWAY MATERIALS	48,374	46,200	43,998	41,277	53,946	46,804	49,306
EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE & REPAIR	26,521	24,286	24,437	31,184	26,453	21,773	29,674
GAS & OIL	30,563	54,184	53,279	67,974	76,389	43,580	64,915
PAYROLL - SNOW/ICE CONTROL	15,044	25,591	9,225	26,109	30,501	21,000	25,599
SALT/ANTI-SKID MATERIAL	11,404	10,051	14,563	11,081	9,768	17,878	14,606
STREET SIGNS & MARKINGS	5,619	7,054	6,791	6,239	6,967	5,855	1,478
HIGHWAY STREET SIGNS		4,511	2,133	4,975	6,240	3,420	
PAYROLL -SIGNS & MARKINGS							6,182
TOTAL	305,061	317,656	293,616	350,623	355,868	305,486	346,988
HIGHWAY OTHER							
STREET LIGHTING	64,212	71,070	69,650	59,171	60,708	68,375	80,951
PAVEMENT OVERLAY			40,000	40,000			40,000
MISCELLANEOUS CONSTRUCTION	2,008	46,491	4,860	242	7,650		4,730
TOTAL	66,220	117,561	114,510	99,413	68,358	68,375	125,681
GRAND TOTAL	371,281	435,217	408,126	450,036	424,226	373,861	472,669

Part of the two mechanics payroll is accounted for in the department. This is a back charge for work done on department equipment. There are also back charges for plowing by staff from other departments.

In addition to the General Fund, the activities of the department can be found in the Liquid Fuel Fund. The receipts in this fund are the state's distribution of the local share of the liquid fuel tax on gasoline and other fuels and interest earned on these funds. The expenses are devoted to the repair and maintenance of highways and bridges. In 2010, the major expenses were for anti-skid materials to put on icy roads, snow removal, construction and equipment repair. These funds are accounted for separately as the state restricts their use to only to activities highway and bridge related activities. The funds are not necessarily spent in the year they are received. This leads to surpluses in some years and deficits in others. At the end of 2009, there was a balance of \$58,964 in the fund.

Highway Department Liquid Fuels Fund

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
RECEIPTS	137,824	142,743	154,619	160,110	173,975	165,985	158,999
EXPENSES	138,513	148,654	148,816	155,427	143,837	206,272	178,399
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(689)	(5,911)	5,803	4,683	30,138	(40,287)	(19,400)

DEPARTMENTAL FINANCIAL OBSERVATIONS

The department's spending seems reasonable given the department's level of service.

In 2009, Corry highway and streets spending was \$106 per capita. The average for the 21 smaller third class cities in Pennsylvania was \$112. Locally, spending per capita ranged from \$63 in Oil City to \$158 in Titusville.

DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The department has been able to maintain a high level of service with modest recourses.

PUBLIC WORKS PERFORMANCE

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has developed a workbook for performance assessments, *Standards for Effective Local Government*. The manual includes standards for public works management.

The responsibility for the public works function is placed with an individual trained and experienced in the major areas of public works and in management.

The past superintendent had 36 years of experience with City government. The City is in the process of hiring a new superintendent.

Training is provided for all public works personnel on a regular basis.

Some training is provided. Due to the small size of the staff, there can be only limited time off for training.

There is a periodic plan covering public works operations and a system for monitoring plan goals and objectives.

The department has an established annual cycle of activities. These are not documented in a written plan.

There is a system governing the maintenance and replacement of the municipality's public works equipment.

The mechanics are responsible for the repair and maintenance of City equipment. The mechanic keeps a maintenance log.

The City does not have a formal capital budget for equipment replacement.

For all public works projects, in progress and completed, there is a system in place which provides for monitoring all projects by appropriate management personnel.

Major projects are contracted out and monitored by the City engineer. Those smaller projects done in-house are monitored by the superintendent.

There are regular progress reports on public works projects provided to the secretary and elected officials.

There are regular reports on the department's activities.

Municipal facilities are maintained in accordance with policies and procedures designed to preserve these assets and to reduce injury and liability claims.

The department has a regular annual cycle of activities undertaken to maintain the City's facilities. They are not documented in a written plan. There is a representative from the department on the safety committee. The committee conducts inspections.

Surfaces of all municipal streets are well maintained through a systematic and planned approach to maintenance, restoration and resurfacing.

The limits of the repaving program have been dictated by available funds. The Council decides what is to be paved based on cost estimates provided by the engineering firm.

The Corry 20/20 planning process identified street paving as an important issue.

There is a plan governing which streets will be resurfaced or restored and when. The plan is based on a needs analysis.

The City has developed plans for a regular paving program. The plans have not been implemented due to costs.

State standards and mandates governing procedures and materials for street repair and resurfacing are adhered to.

The repaving and resurfacing is managed by the engineering firm following accepted standards.

Streets, berms, catch basins and storm sewers associated with municipal streets are cleaned on a regular programmatic basis. Catch basins and storm sewers are maintained in accordance with an adopted work schedule.

The department has a regular annual schedule for these activities. The department has documented storm sewer maintenance and repair.

All streets are signed. Street signs are aesthetically pleasing, well maintained, and located for maximum visibility.

In accordance with traffic studies, all municipal regulatory signs are installed, well maintained, and are supported by appropriate ordinances

The department maintains the street and traffic signs. The lettering on some of the street signs is faded. With the implementation of the new federal standards for

traffic and street signs over the next few years, some of the signs will have to be repainted or replaced.

Planning street maintenance for winter months includes three major program components:

1. *Snow and ice control equipment is readied in advance of the start of the snow season;*
2. *A current snow and ice control plan exists. It includes procedures for crew call-out, route coverage and priorities, salt/cinder stockpiles and access to additional recourses in emergencies; and*
3. *A preseason snow and ice training program for all public works personnel.*

The department's winter maintenance program includes these components. The department follows equipment maintenance schedules. A mechanic has the responsibility for documenting equipment maintenance. The department has a well established routine for plowing. This has been documented in writing.

The municipal shade tree program is based on a comprehensive plan which has been developed from an analysis of the existing municipal "tree environment" and which has identified needs, fixed priorities and proposed means to finance the program.

The City has an active tree committee. The committee is developing a new plan. The City provides some funding for the committee's activities.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

The position of superintended is vacant with the retirement of the past superintendent. Because the water department and waste treatment plant superintendents may retire soon as well, the City could consider consolidating the management of the three functions under one superintended.

Plowing can be seen as a policy issue. The City's policy is to plow everything quickly. This means long hours for the drivers. All are called out initially in shifts lasting up to 12 hours and have to keep coming back in a heavy snow. An alternative would be to concentrate on the main streets and call out a smaller crew on a split shift schedule. This would allow more time between shifts. It could also reduce overtime. Side streets and some sidewalks would not be plowed as quickly.

Brush pick up can also be seen as a policy issue. It has been the City's policy to assist property owners in the removal of trees and brush. Some jobs can tie up a truck and crew for a day. The alternative would be to have the hauler or other contractors do the large brush pickups and to restrict the City's operations to keeping the City's rights-of-way cleared. The private hauler would charge to the property owner for the service.

The year round schedule for work in the department is fairly well understood, but it is not written down. The retiring superintendent did make some note on the tasks that are to be completed, but the notes are not a complete work schedule for the department.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The City should identify the expectations of the residents and businesses for the department. This could be done formally as part of a citizens' survey or informally through discussions with existing neighborhood and community groups. Some of this work has already been done in the Corry 20/20 process. As part of the process, participants should be made aware of the department's current operations and the costs associated with these operations.
- The City should identify the services that the department could provide to meet these expectations and the costs of these services. The results of this exercise could be a change in the department's priorities.
- The City should reduce to writing a procedures and policy handbook for the highway department. The recently retired superintendent had a good understanding of what is to be done, but not much of it has been put into writing.

This manual should have employee input. It should identify the city's maintenance standards and the maintenance tasks necessary to keep the public works' facilities and programs in good operating order. This manual would streamline operating procedures and instruct workers on the procedures and man-hours needed to perform certain functions. Operations are smoother when employees know what equipment, materials, number of men, and man-hours an operation requires.

- The city should develop a written annual, monthly, and weekly operational plan. This plan should also have employee input. This department should post these plans to give workers a sense of the work to be performed during that month or week. This would reduce preparation time at the beginning of shifts when workers are preparing for the day's work. The procedures and policy manual would detail the number of men and man-hours needed for specific operations. These work plans could be developed in the form of check lists where an employee could check-off the work as completed. This plan would establish a 12-month maintenance schedule and prioritize the public works operations to insure city infrastructure and facilities are clean, well-maintained, and safe.

An easy way to develop this manual is to spread the development over a year's time and to record the needed task descriptions as they are being undertaken by the department.

- The city should develop a five-year capital plan for the department of public works. The plan should be designed to:
 - Replace existing equipment that has reached an age where it no longer performs efficiently;
 - Replace existing equipment that is not cost effective to operate;
 - Purchase new or specialized equipment that would be labor saving; and
 - Purchase new equipment to respond to the needs of new facilities or programs.
- The City should also develop job descriptions for all employees. The description can be used in the hiring process and help avoid disagreements over job duties.

The Department of Community and Economic Development's *Public Works Manual* (2002) provides useful guidance on the paperwork side of public works. It contains sample job descriptions. The manual is available on the DCED website, www.newpa.com.

Sample Annual Schedule

Target Date	Description of Work Tasks
January 5	Steam clean trucks, trailers, and specialty equipment Begin winter preventive & corrective equipment repairs
January 9	Annual Crew Meeting
January 12	Begin repairs & paint park information signs
January 26	Cut & clear trees and brush along the road shoulders Begin to sandblast and paint equipment
February 5	Install new directional signs
February 15	Bid Surface Treatment of Roads & Parking Areas
March 1	Repair guide rail and low level vehicle barriers Check and clean drainage ways, catch basins, bridge drains Check road under drains, repair where needed
March 22	Remove and store snow fencing; mend or destroy unusable fence. Clean, paint, & store snow fence posts. Inventory and order replacement fence & posts. Treat road planters with pre-emergent weed controls
March 29	Begin repairs on road catch basins and head walls Remove, clean, and store winter sport signs Roll secondary roads & parking areas Make repairs to the road shoulders resulting from winter maintenance Repair and straighten vehicle bumper blocks
April 5	Order road crack sealing materials Sweep roads and parking areas Clean bridge decks & walkways
April 15	Hot mix asphalt available Clean, lubricate, and store winter snow maintenance equipment Begin to prepare roads & parking areas for surface treatment
April 20	Work with "PA Cleanways" for spring litter & dump cleanup
May 1	Seasonal Help begins Clean and straighten park direction & regulatory signs Treat guide rail, sign posts, and stone drainage ways with herbicides Begin mowing road shoulders & embankments
May 10	Begin Surface Treatment of roads & parking areas (Contract)
June 1	Begin road crack sealing program Begin summer catch basin repair & replacement program
June 15	Begin 2 nd mowing of road shoulders and embankments
June 15	Stripe parking area surfaces
July 1	Cut and clear brush & debris along the bridge abutments
July 15	Pressure wash, repair, and seal concrete bridge decks Asphalt pave the budgeted roads & parking areas (Contract)
July 26	Clean, sandblast, and paint winter snow removal equipment Order replacement parts for snow removal equipment
August 1	Pressure wash, clean, and paint service center Begin 3 rd mowing of road shoulders and embankment areas
August 16	Cut shoulders along the park roads as needed, reseed disturbed areas
September 1	Walk the roads & parking areas, begin to prepare for next year's budget
September 13	Prepare a list of signs needed for next year Prepare a list of equipment needs for next year
September 20	Complete last mowing of road shoulders & embankment areas
October 1	Prepare and service leaf clean up equipment
October 12	Complete all hot asphalt road and parking area repairs Order salt & anti-skid for winter road maintenance (Council of Governments)
October 25	Winterize all park vehicles & equipment Set up winter snow removal schedule (Crew Meeting) Prepare vehicles & equipment for winter snow removal
November 3	"Snow Tire Snow"?
November 8	Install winter sport signs Clean, lubricate, and store mowing equipment
November 15	Mark road catch basins & headwalls Install snow fencing where needed
November 22	Complete leaf pick up program Sweep roads & parking areas Clean, lubricate, and store leaf pick up equipment
December 1	Complete litter & debris pick up along park access roads (Good Neighbor Program), Clean catch basins

THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT – WASTE WATER TREATMENT

MISSION, FUNCTION AND TASKS

The water pollution control plant is operated by the city. The plant is responsible for treating the waste water from the City and Wayne and Columbus Townships.

The plant is owned by the City of Corry Municipal Authority and it is leased back to the City for one dollar a year. The Authority is responsible for raising capital for plant improvements. The Authority also owns the water system. For accounting purposes, the Authority is treated as a component unit within the City's accounts.

The plant is regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. The staff is properly certified. The department has a detailed set of operating policies and procedures. There are no problems with industrial waste. The plant does not treat Marcellus brine. The staff does most of the testing in-house. Due to changes in state regulations for testing, the department may have to contract out much of the testing at some point in the future.

The plant is automated. The plant systems include a monitoring system that provides an alert if there are problems. The monitoring information is available at the plant but not online. If the information were online, plant staff could monitor performance at remote sites instead of coming in when the plant is not staffed. The staff has already worked with the system consultant to reduce the number of false alarms and overtime. Remote monitoring could continue to reduce overtime.

Normally, the plant treats about 1.6 million gallons of waste a day. Based on water sales, the superintendent estimates that 40 percent of this is due to infiltration and flow from combined sewers. During a heavy rain which adds to the flow, the plant can treat up to six million gallons. When the flow goes over six million gallons, the plant can provide partial treatment for another three million gallons. Anything over nine million gallons cannot be treated. The City has been working to reduce infiltration into the system. Over the past ten years with smoke and die testing, it has identified and eliminated infiltration of about one million gallons.

The plant generates about one-third of the power needed for plant operation with methane generated by the treatment and with natural gas from a well on the site. In addition to the treatment plant, the department operates a number of pumping stations. Because of the expertise that the staff has with control systems, the department maintains the lights at the airport, and the traffic signals and control boxes.

Billing is done along with the water and solid waste bills by two clerks in the water department. About 80 percent are billed on the basis of usage. The remaining 20 percent pay a flat fee.

STAFFING

The staff at the plant includes the superintendent, an assistant superintended and two operators. During the summer they have a seasonal employee. The normal hours are from 7:00 to 3:30 on weekdays and one staff member comes in four hours on Saturday and Sunday to do lab work and pump sludge. The plant has an automatic monitoring system. On-call staff comes in if there are problems at other times.

DEMAND FOR SERVICES

There have not been significant changes in the demand for services. The City has been reducing the infiltration into the sewer system which has reduced the load on the plan. The recent recession also brought some reduction in service to industrial and commercial customers.

DEPARTMENTAL REVENUES AND SPENDING

The revenues and expenditures for the waste water treatment plant are accounted for in the sewer fund. The Sewer, Water and Golf Funds are considered enterprise funds. They are treated as business enterprises and the accounts are, in effect, profit and loss statements.

Some of the expenditures are effectively transfers into the General Fund from the Sewer and Water Funds. At the end of the year expenses for employee benefits, insurance, vehicle gas and oil, and some overhead costs are allocated to the Sewer and Water Funds from the General Fund. These are accounted for in the General Fund as transfers. Only a few expenditures are allocated to the Golf Fund.

Sewer Fund Revenues and Expenditures

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EARNINGS ON INVESTMENTS	2,152	4,359	4,956	5,613	4,108	810	323
METER SALES RESIDENTIAL	756,130	843,799	878,346	865,527	860,809	882,368	881,258
METER SALES COMMERCIAL	129,335	145,276	151,114	152,598	154,555	147,281	143,139
METER SALES INDUSTRIAL	154,850	175,830	184,358	181,381	192,168	152,374	173,603
METER SALES PUBLIC	12,559	14,081	16,883	17,627	14,521	13,613	13,272
INTERMUNICIPAL	44,644	56,504	87,066	89,747	75,749	74,116	72,026
COLUMBUS MAINT. FEES		(2,604)		2,993	2,159	4,362	2,064
OTHER SALES	9,146	8,614	15,685	17,357	15,429	19,104	24,831
SERVICE CHARGES			2,562				
ELECTRIC EXPORT	267	4,535	211	381	461	192	446
MISCELLANEOUS	17,957		(9,220)	(6,330)	(8,651)	(642)	
PENALTIES	13,513	15,256	16,372	15,993	14,542	15,770	15,930
PAYMENT OF BAD DEBTS	936	1,147	2,073	1,027	1,408	2,000	2,027
INTERFUND	26	(7,336)					
REVENUES	1,141,515	1,259,461	1,350,406	1,343,914	1,327,258	1,311,348	1,328,919

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
SEWERS							
PAYROLL - SEWERS	8,445	8,180	16,212	7,584	10,172	6,167	4,026
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	718	1,105	714	168	5,005	276	2,594
PUMP STATION							
PAYROLL - PUMP STATIONS	18,985	19,548	19,808	20,157	20,603	21,012	21,834
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	497	259	71	29	61	365	1,393
GENERAL EXPENSE		2,043	3,472	3,810	1,287	417	285
ELECTRICITY	17,793	14,042	14,643	14,699	15,197	14,154	11,644
OTHER UTILITIES	1,809	1,597	2,807	2,832	3,088	10,755	1,940
MAINTENANCE & REPAIR	4,866	3,755	4,504	5,376	4,251	4,556	4,576
PAYROLL - MAINTENANCE & REPAIR							4,922
TREATMENT PLANT							
PAYROLL - TREATMENT PLANT	130,962	135,359	140,217	140,164	143,542	141,532	149,308
LAB SUPPLIES & EQUIP	4,230	5,304	4,609	6,019	7,036	5,481	5,949
PLANT SUPPLIES & EQUIP	11,981	12,593	14,465	11,120	15,993	12,869	16,581
CHLORINE	1,794	3,293	3,566	2,721	4,234	3,654	3,555
CHEM-CLEAN (SODIUM HYPO)	20,461	27,615	17,526	18,839	10,786	10,629	11,173
GENERATOR LUBRICANT	5,059	8,796	5,918	10,007	12,105	12,897	9,278
GENERATOR COOLANT			1,465	710	2,604	1,718	1,493
GENERAL EXPENSE	3,206	1,588	2,049	4,039	1,222	2,864	1,997
ELECTRICITY	34,949	19,029	31,435	22,588	25,731	28,077	27,412
NATURAL GAS (PURCHASE)	90,145	118,368	101,487	83,552	126,023	69,838	69,546
OTHER UTILITIES	990	1,001	1,938	1,247	1,480	1,599	1,719
MAINTENANCE & REPAIR	40,189	16,433	31,754	25,042	34,539	28,204	31,252
VEHICLES	568	758	557	1,035	812	631	1,344
GAS & OIL (VEHICLES)	1,123	1,464	1,300	3,440	4,470	3,796	4,171
PAYROLL - VEHICLES							2,700
NATURAL GAS PRODUCTION				224			
DISPOSAL - SLUDGE	14,518	12,360	21,066	29,574	26,289	33,691	30,479
DISPOSAL - BAR SCREENING						17	
ANALYSIS & TESTING	2,346	2,369	2,185	10,786	3,511	3,329	3,737
ADMINISTRATION							
PAYROLL - ADMINISTRATIVE	38,657	37,773	38,580	39,261	40,277	47,100	46,133
SOCIAL SECURITY	15,303	15,891	16,767	15,822	16,197	16,301	17,046
ADMIN-CONTRACTOR DONNA JOHNSON		6,285	3,065	725	21	2,529	
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	26	187	351	237	142	316	290
POSTAGE	4,064	4,025	4,191	4,588	4,468	4,537	4,620
GENERAL EXPENSE	28,793	36,222	15,618	4,869	3,126	2,005	4,661
EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT							
HEALTH CARE/LIFE INSURANCE	53,130	49,800	50,940	53,740	58,260	65,400	70,440
GENERAL LIABILITY & AUTO	17,410	17,520	21,900	31,540	24,950	25,975	26,295
AUDIT	3,500	4,500	4,500	4,400	4,625	4,750	4,230
W-COMP & U-COMP	13,230	14,020	14,640	14,360	14,950	16,640	15,030
UTILITIES & GENERAL OPERATION	16,106	17,891	18,020	18,231	17,578	17,244	15,188
VISION & PRESCRIP. INSURANCE	5,530	6,000	6,420	6,429	6,420	6,530	6,840
BAD DEBT WRITEOFFS	14,150						
CAPTIAL IMPROVEMENTS							
LEASE RENTAL/DEBT SERVICE	624,715	734,078	797,552	522,385	446,500	434,124	615,923
CAP IMPRV-DEBT INTEREST DCED			111,842	177,932	186,887	176,715	
CAP IMPRV-DEBT ADMIN FEES				2,915	2,915	5,415	
REIMBURSEMENTS							
REIMBURSE (DUE TO) COLUMBUS							
REIMBURSE (DUE TO) WAYNE TWP							
EXPENSES BEFORE TRANSFERS	1,250,248	1,361,051	1,548,154	1,323,196	1,307,357	1,244,109	1,251,604
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(108,733)	(101,590)	(197,748)	20,718	19,901	67,239	77,315

DEPARTMENTAL FINANCIAL OBSERVATIONS

The department's revenues have increased in most years. There was a loss in industrial and commercial customers in 2009 with some recovery in 2010.

The costs for the waste water treatment plant are reasonable. Corry's sewer expenditures were \$72 per capita in 2009. The costs were higher in some neighboring third class cities. In Titusville, they were \$152 per capita and in Warren \$136.

Unfortunately, expenditures exceeded revenues before 2007. Since then, the plant has generated a surplus. The transfers to the General Fund have been possible because the enterprise funds, as a group, had substantial fund balances. They decreased from \$1,038,619 at the end of 2005 to \$571,108 at the end of 2009. The City has been using past surpluses to bolster its revenues. The City should consider raising the sewer and water rates so that it will be possible to continue transferring these funds into the general Fund.

Almost all of the City's debt is due to improvements at the plant. This debt is covered by plant revenues.

DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The plant has gone through an overhaul in the past five years. This has included upgrading the hardware and software that monitors the plant's performance. The department has also worked to reduce the number of false alarms from the system by over 60 percent. With fewer false alarms, there are fewer call-ins and less overtime. Very little of the record keeping remains on paper.

PERFORMANCE

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has developed a workbook for performance assessments, *Standards for Effective Local Government*. The manual includes standards for waste water management.

The sewage treatment plant is operated by property certified and trained personnel.

It is.

The municipality has a preventative maintenance program for sanitary sewers in its jurisdiction.

The maintenance of the plant and pump stations are the responsibility of the waste water treatment department. The maintenance of the sewer system is the responsibility of the highway department. The highway department keeps a log of sewer problems, cleaning, and repairs.

The municipality has a sewage facility plan, which is kept current with changing conditions.

It does.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

The plant is well maintained and in compliance with state rules and regulations. There is not significant growth in the customer base or the demands on the plant. The recent plant up-grade and the efforts to reduce infiltration have improved the wastewater system performance.

At some time in the future, the City may have to contract out testing due to changes in state regulations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The control and monitoring systems for the plant should be put online so that staff can monitor performance remotely. This could reduce call-ins and overtime.
- The department should explore alternatives to in-house testing to prepare for the potential impact of changes in state regulations concerning testing.

THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT – WATER TREATMENT

MISSION, FUNCTION AND TASKS

The mission of the water department is to deliver an adequate supply of potable water to the City residents and businesses. The system also serves portions of Wayne, Columbus and Concord Townships. There are about 2,500 customers in the City and another 1,200 outside of the City.

The water supply comes from wells. Chlorination is the only treatment that is needed. The pressure is supplied by two pumps and a covered reservoir next to the airport. There is an additional pump at the airport to provide the water pressure needed for firefighting in the upper parts of the City. There is water loss in the system. The original system was put in beginning in 1864. The superintendent estimates that the system pumps about 1.5 million gallons a day and bills for an average of 460,000 gallons a day. The department monitors the flow and repairs major leaks. Eventually some of the older mains will have to be replaced.

The system is regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources. There are two certified operators. The department has written policies and procedures that are updated annually. The department keeps an inventory of all equipment and a record of the maintenance on the equipment.

The customer meters are read regularly. About 87 percent have outside readers. As the City charges \$35 to convert to an outside reader, the last 13 percent probably will not make

the conversion. The billing is done by two clerks in the City building. The sewer and solid waste bills are combined with the water bill.

STAFFING

The staff consists of the superintendent, five laborers – operators and two billing clerks. Two of the laborers are responsible for reading meters. During the summer, the staff is supplemented with two seasonal employees. In addition to the work on the water system the, staff assists with plowing and leaf pickup, mows vacant lots and maintains the heating systems in the City's buildings. The highway department is responsible for maintaining the water lines.

DEMAND FOR SERVICES

The demand for services has not changed significantly.

DEPARTMENTAL REVENUES AND SPENDING

The water department is accounted for in the Water Fund. This Fund, the Sewer Fund and the Golf Fund are considered enterprise funds. The statements can be considered as profit and loss statements. The department's revenues have steadily increased with some loss in commercial and industrial meter sales in 2009 with a recovery in 2010.

The department's expenditures have increased as well. The department has had year end deficits. The size of these deficits has been small after 2006.

Water Fund Revenues and Expenditures

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
EARNINGS FROM INVESTMENTS	2,692	2,835	631	2,655	1,055	264	158
METER SALES - RESIDENTIAL	313,717	313,422	329,350	357,199	381,467	394,418	421,698
METER SALES - COMMERCIAL	52,957	52,861	52,134	57,075	62,373	61,759	66,190
METER SALES - INDUSTRIAL	51,133	51,048	52,272	58,969	63,243	48,919	59,978
METER SALES - PUBLIC	8,019	8,936	8,908	11,445	8,359	8,018	8,609
FIRE SERVICE - PRIVATE	7,205	7,802	7,990	7,990	7,585	7,990	7,990
FIRE SERVICE - PUBLIC	10,983	10,515	10,350	10,420	10,490	10,490	10,490
OTHER WATER SALES		2,114	335	6,452	5,927	1,590	1,015
SERVICE CHARGES	5,686	3,950	5,649	2,787	2,143	3,953	10,832
MISCELLANEOUS	9,745	11,157	8,244	10,214	6,975	22,771	23,104
PENALTIES	5,403	5,502	5,704	6,169	5,973	6,574	7,381
PAYMENT OF BAD DEBTS	910	989	1,512	761	966	1,457	1,424
CONTRIBUTIONS - MAIN EXT	75						
INSURANCE DEDUCTIBLE REIMB							(100)
INTERFUND	26	14,118					
REVENUES	468,551	485,249	483,079	532,136	556,556	568,203	618,769

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
PAYROLL - PUMPING	45,703	43,703	44,986	46,097	48,467	46,588	48,601
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	1,030	283	737	90	396	557	784
GENERAL EXPENSE M&R	259		1,470	81	2,046	130	2,131
ELECTRICITY	62,111	83,857	71,048	61,994	77,119	72,576	77,678
OTHER UTILITIES	777	908	2,305	960	1,239	688	935
PAYROLL - DISTRIBUTION	100,208	114,309	114,367	115,954	113,609	112,999	115,285
PAYROLL-METER READING & REPAIR	39,548	43,430	41,508	42,264	43,714	46,556	56,981
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	32,478	36,651	26,711	33,970	41,820	35,867	35,192
GENERAL EXPENSE	978	1,076	1,121	464	717	646	1,354
COMMUNICATION EXPENSE							
PAYROLL - VEHICLE MAINT&REPAIR	5,384	5,132	4,045	6,437	5,541	10,586	8,106
GAS & OIL	4,880	5,930	5,930	5,407	6,990	5,650	6,390
A/P - VEHICLES - MAINT & REPAI							5,772
ANALYSIS & TESTING	3,038	4,482	2,872	4,244	3,827	4,256	5,191
PAYROLL - ADMINISTRATIVE	59,533	58,946	59,132	60,564	63,092	68,748	67,915
SOCIAL SECURITY	18,957	20,297	20,128	19,792	19,858	20,872	21,606
EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT							
ADMIN CONTRACTOR DONNA JOHNSON		10,543	8,096	3,283	5,759	1,211	
W-COMP & U-COMP	17,110	17,960	17,800	17,870	18,410	18,730	18,630
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	260	1,142	1,775	1,744	225	2,034	1,692
POSTAGE	4,033	4,055	4,189	4,435	4,517	4,485	4,575
GENERAL EXPENSE	10,701	13,377	13,410	13,534	13,876	12,844	15,055
GENERAL LIABILITY & AUTO	17,960	18,400	14,890	13,500	13,860	14,220	14,400
HEALTH CARE/LIFE INSURANCE	66,410	62,250	59,090	62,330	67,580	75,860	81,710
UTILITIES	9,587	10,391	12,225	10,994	11,799	10,692	10,624
VISION & PRESCRIP. INSURANCE	6,910	7,490	7,440	7,440	7,440	7,580	7,930
CONTINGENCY & RESERVES	2,264			2,748	351	607	
VEHICLE & EQUIPMENT	18,677						
WATER DEVELOP/WELL CLEANING		4,753	27,963				16,250
TRANSFER - GENERAL FUND	126,140				129,510	136,920	
DISTRIBUTE GF TRANSFER	(126,140)				(129,510)	(136,920)	
EXPENDITURES BEFORE TRANSFERS	528,796	569,365	563,238	536,196	572,252	574,982	624,787
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	(60,245)	(84,116)	(80,159)	(4,060)	(15,696)	(6,779)	(6,018)

DEPARTMENTAL FINANCIAL OBSERVATIONS

As with the Sewer Fund, the Water Fund has had year end deficits. The City should consider further rate increases so that these funds will be available for transfer into the General Funds and to meet repair needs.

DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The department has been able to provide potable water to the Corry's residents and businesses.

PERFORMANCE

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has developed a workbook for performance assessments, *Standards for Effective Local Government*. The manual does not include specific standards for water systems, but the standards for public works management apply here as well.

The responsibility for the water system management is placed with an individual trained and experienced in the major areas of public works and in management.

The water superintendent has had 27 years of experience with City government, 21 as superintendent.

Training is provided for all public works personnel on a regular basis.

Training is available but limited due to the limited staff.

There is a periodic plan covering water system operations and a system for monitoring plan goals and objectives.

The water system is regulated by the state. The department has policies and procedures that are updated annually.

There is a system governing the maintenance and replacement of the municipality's public works equipment.

The mechanics are responsible for the repair and maintenance of City equipment. The mechanic keeps a maintenance log.

The City does not have a formal capital budget for equipment replacement.

For all water system projects, in progress and completed, there is a system in place which provides for monitoring all projects by appropriate management personnel.

Major projects are contracted out and monitored by the City engineer. Those smaller projects done in-house are monitored by the superintendent.

There are regular progress reports on water system projects provided to the secretary and elected officials.

The superintendent prepares monthly reports.

Municipal facilities are maintained in accordance with policies and procedures designed to preserve these assets and to reduce injury and liability claims.

The water system is regulated by the state. The department has policies and procedures that are updated annually.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

The water distribution system was begun with the construction of the reservoir in 1864. There are other portions of the system that date to the 19th century. Corry, like many third class cities and older boroughs, could be faced with significant costs for the upkeep and repair of the system.

The revenues that are generated by the system do not cover the expenses. The gap between the two has narrowed in the last four years.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The city should develop a five-year capital plan for the department of water. The plan should be designed to:
 - Address needs of the aging water distribution infrastructure
 - Provide a reserve funds that is sufficient to meet unexpected demands
 - Replace existing equipment that has reached an age where it no longer performs efficiently
 - Replace existing equipment that is not cost effective to operate
- The City should consider water rate increases to allow the department to cover its own costs and to build up a reserve for future infrastructure needs.

CORRY NORTH HILLS MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE / CORRY GOLF COMMISSION

MISSION, FUNCTION AND TASKS

The North Hills Municipal Golf Course (<http://northhillsgolf.com/>) is a heavily played 18 Hole public facility owned by the City of Corry and managed and operated by the Corry Golf Commission. The Commission is also responsible for the finances of the Course. The Commission consists of five members appointed periodically by City Council and assisted by City Council and the City Administrator. Corry City Council also has direct representation on the Commission.

North Hills began play in 1967 as a nine-hole facility and it was expanded to 18 holes in 1971. It is normally open during the year from April through October.

Management is performed under two departmental like operations, with separate supervisory personnel and employees: 1) Club House Operations and Manager and Staff, and 2) Course Operations and Manager and Staff. Each area functions largely independent

of the other. Both managers report to the Golf Commission and also work closely with the City Administrator. No consideration has been given to contracting out of operational functions, and none is proposed here.

Play on the Course has been relatively stable over the years, with 2010 being a very good year, but it is down slightly so far this year due to the exceptionally wet spring time weather. Course play levels are expected to be stable into the future.

STAFFING

There are 11 employees in club house operations in appropriate positions and nine in course operations side in appropriate positions. All are employees of the City of Corry. Job descriptions and annual performance evaluations do not appear to be readily available for all employees.

EQUIPMENT

The Course has the full range of equipment to serve its needs at the present time. There are also proper facilities to house, maintain and conduct minor repairs. There is a designated mechanic among the employees to work on the equipment.

SPENDING AND FINANCIAL OBSERVATIONS

The “departmental” sides are largely budgeted independently.

There is an annual transfer of funds to the City out of the golf generated revenues. The amount is determined in advance of the season through the annual City and Course budgeting processes. There are issues between the City and the Golf Commission regarding the level of the amount and the timing of the transfers. In 2011 the transfer amount is budgeted to be \$58,000.

There are currently no planned capital projects and there is no budget for equipment replacement.

The Course had no debt.

The Club House budget includes funds for local and regional advertising.

DEMAND FOR SERVICES

The Course is heavily used and it has the very lowest fees for play among competitor public and private courses in the region. Players come to North Hills from throughout western Pennsylvania and southwest New York State. Average full course play times are reported to be 4.5 to 5.5 hours depending on the time of day and the number of other players on the Course. Carts are available to all players.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Course is heavily used, appears to be very successful, and the facilities and equipment are well maintained and cared for. There is a strong sense of pride in the Course among the management personnel and employees, Golf Commission, and City officials.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

At the present time Course side employees are communicating with one another using personal cell phones and the Course Manager is using his own personal computer in the office to support day to day operations. In addition, only dial up Internet service is available for management functions.

There appears to be a need for greater coordination between the two managers relative to play times and when and where people enter the course to begin play.

Statistics relative to the amount of play on the Course are manually kept and those statistics are not readily available for analysis to support management decision making.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is inadequate electronic computer hardware and software to manage operations for both the Club House and Course, and there are inadequate communications devices provided to employees to be in touch with one another across the course for coordination of their responsibilities. The computer hardware and software, and communications devices used for the broad range of Course operations should be upgraded and high speed broadband Internet service obtained at the Course.
- Play statistics, and other pertinent statistics, should be regularly gathered electronically and made readily available and analyzed, and used for management decision making purposes.
- Although the Course currently appears to be high quality and well maintained, continued investments need to be made that will assure long term success and enhancements. Capital and equipment improvement plans and budgets should be established and implemented.
- Serious consideration should be giving to raising the greens fees for the purpose of producing revenues for investments in the Course and electronic needs.
- Job descriptions and annual performance evaluations should be provided for all employees.
- At some time in the future the Golf Commission and City may want to consider placing both the Club House and Course operations under a single manager.

MECHANICS

MISSION, FUNCTION AND TASKS

The City mechanics are responsible for the repair of most of the City's equipment from weed eaters to fire trucks. They do some metal fabrication of grates, railings and other metal work. They also do some work at the airport. They report to the City Administrator.

They do most of the work in house, sending out only emissions testing, diagnostic work, warranty work and, occasionally, regular work when they are busy. They maintain a small inventory of specialized parts. They buy parts locally and from the state contracts. They cannot shop for parts online from the garage.

They help with plowing.

STAFFING

There are two mechanics.

DEMAND FOR SERVICES

There has not been a significant change in the demand for services. The mechanics are able to meet most of the demand and to send the overflow out.

DEPARTMENTAL SPENDING

The mechanics' time and materials are regularly back charged to the department receiving the mechanics' services. The department heads can review these costs.

DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The mechanics have met the demands for service from other departments.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS

The Department of Community and Economic Development recommends that municipalities with smaller vehicle fleets, fewer than 25 vehicles, consider contracting out vehicle maintenance. (Governor's Center for Local Government Services, *Public Works Manual*) The size of the fleet puts Corry at decision point. The scope of the mechanics' services extends beyond vehicles to other types of equipment as well as to plowing. On the balance, it probably makes sense for the City to retain its mechanics.

RECOMMENDATIONS

If one of the mechanics position becomes vacant, the City should review the need for a second mechanic and consider contracting out some of the work. Because there is a no contracting out clause in the AFSCME contract, this would require some negotiations.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

MISSION, FUNCTION AND TASKS

Code enforcement and police protection are two municipal services that can have a major impact on a community. In older communities, code enforcement can enhance the business district, stabilize residential areas, and preserve the character of the community. Code enforcement can be unpopular, particularly with absentee landlords. Good code enforcement, however, can enable the community to decide what is permissible and what is not. The alternative is to allow individual property owners decide what the character of their neighborhood will be.

Code enforcement was effectively divided into two pieces in 2004 with the implementation of the Uniform Construction Code (UCC) in Pennsylvania. The UCC covers the construction of new buildings and the modification of existing buildings. With the implementation of the UCC, most municipalities in Pennsylvania chose to have an outside contractor administer the UCC permit and enforcement program. In Corry, the outside contractor is Building Inspection Underwriters of PA (BIU). A representative from BIU is in the City building three mornings a week. At the same time, municipalities retained the obligation to enforce the remaining codes. These include property codes that cover the up-keep of existing properties, on-lot septic system, swimming pool, and zoning codes. Municipalities can issue permits for signs, street openings, infringements on public rights-of-way, demolition, pools, and zoning. These responsibilities are typically handled buy a municipal code officer.

Corry does not currently have a full-time code enforcement officer. The City Administrator handles code enforcement for the City. There are three approaches that the City could take to support expanded code enforcement.

- A number of third class cities use Community Development Block Grant funding to support code enforcement.
- The City could contract out portions or all of the program and set fees and fines so that they cover the cost of the program.
- Firefighters could be used to expand the scope of enforcement. With the proper training, firefighters have taken over some of these responsibilities in Pennsylvania municipalities. Many departments do fire inspections. The State Fire Academy and other agencies offer training and certification in code enforcement activities including fire inspection. Firefighters have also been used in property code enforcement.

Given the availability and willingness of the firefighters to take on this responsibility, they should be given first consideration.

A code enforcement program within the fire department could include a number of elements

- An up-to-date set of municipal ordinances covering code enforcement
- An up-to-date fee ordinance covering all of the fees and fines related to municipal programs
- Additional training for firefighters and clerical staff managing the program
- Code enforcement software to track inspections, violations, fees, fines, liens and other program activities

Some municipalities have adopted model codes. Meadville has adopted the International Property Maintenance Code developed by the International Code Council, and Titusville and Sharon have adopted the National Property Maintenance Code developed by the Building Officials Code Administrators International (BOCA). The adoption of a model code makes it easier to contract out code enforcement functions.

STAFFING

The City Administrator devotes a portion of his time to code enforcement. The Administrator's assistant takes property complaints and follows up on enforcement.

DEMAND FOR SERVICES

During the course of the interviews for this project, it became apparent that many residents of Corry believe that there should be more vigorous code enforcement. Given the size of the community and the challenges that face older communities, it would not be surprising if one code enforcement officer would be needed to meet the demand.

Managing code enforcement can be difficult. There are software applications that can manage all of the activities associated with code enforcement. Some of these programs are modules for accounting programs making it easier to track the revenues and expenditures associated with the program. Property complaints are currently tracked on a spreadsheet.

Stand alone applications can cost at least \$10,000. The cost, however, is a legitimate expense that can be at least partially covered by the code enforcement fees and fines. The cost can be limited if the application is part of the municipality's accounting system.

CODE ENFORCEMENT PERFORMANCE

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has developed a workbook for performance assessments, *Standards for Effective Local Government*, which includes standards for code enforcement.

There is a comprehensive fee schedule, available to the public, setting forth costs and related matters for required permits (building demolition, occupancy, grading, street openings, etc.); and for hearings before the governing body, Planning Commission, Zoning Hearing Board and the UCC Appeals Board.

A fee schedule is available in the City building. There are plans to put more material on the City's website.

There is a comprehensive checklist available to citizens and contractors which outline all needed permits and hearings, and other requirements related to land development and construction activity.

A checklist is available to the public in the City building.

All permits and information related to local planning, building, zoning and code enforcement are centralized in a single office, or with a designated staff person, easily accessible to the public.

The Code Enforcement Office is located on the first floor of the City Building. The outside agency managing the UCC program has staff on site three mornings a week.

The City has adopted by ordinance a building, property maintenance and fire code.

The City has adopted all applicable ordinances that cover these codes.

Codes adhere to nationally and professionally recognized standards.

All codes do comply with the necessary building, property and fire codes.

Codes are periodically reviewed and updated as necessary. If nationally recognized codes, such as those from BOCA, are used, the latest edition is reviewed and considered for adoption.

The City has implemented the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code (UCC).

There are established procedures for receiving and following through on complaints concerning code violations.

The Code Enforcement Officer generally follows up on complaints that are brought to his attention, usually through the police or a citizen.

There is an established and effective appeals process for individuals who are aggrieved by code enforcement actions.

There is a UCC Appeals Board and a Zoning Board of Appeals.

All code enforcement personnel are selected on the basis of their competence, established through an open and competitive selection processes.

The City Administrator serves as Code Officer, a position he held before becoming the City Administrator. His scope is limited to non-UCC issues.

The City retains a third-party agency, BIU to manage the UCC program.

The activities of Code Enforcement personnel are carefully monitored through reporting and routine field inspection. Supervisory responsibilities are prescribed in writing.

The City Administrator reports directly to Council.

There should be a clear and concise Job Description outlining these issues.

There is no job description.

RENTAL REGISTRATION PROGRAM

Rental registration programs can achieve two goals. The first is to identify the residents in rental properties. This complements the information that is already available for owner occupied properties. The second it to protect the health and welfare of tenants by making sure the rental units are up to code.

The information on tenants and rental units can be used for tax collection purposes, by public safety officials, by landlords doing background checks on possible tenants, and for other purposes.

The City already collects tenant information for taxation purposes. Water and sewer bills are in the tenant's names and landlords have to register tenants once a year. This data base would be useful in the development of a rental registration program.

The programs can be used as code enforcement tools for rental properties. When the programs are coupled with inspections, they can encourage landlords to properly maintain rental properties, protect the health and safety of renters, and protect the rights of the landlords.

Rental registration programs have been adopted by many municipalities. They are particularly useful in municipalities with aging housing stock and a high percentage of rental units. Locally, the City of Erie has an extensive rental registration program that includes the registration of rental units, regular inspections, smoke detector requirements, residential resident licenses, and insurance requirements. The conditions that led Erie to adopt the licensing program included a general decline in the physical condition of rental properties and greater numbers of disturbances and code violations at rental units compared to owner-occupied units. The Erie program, however, does not include tenant registration. (Erie's ordinances and other program material can be found on the City of

Erie's website, www.erie.pa.us.) The City of Sharon has a program that includes both code enforcement and tenant registrations. The increase in the number of rental units led to the creation of the Sharon program. (Sharon's' ordinances can be found on the American Legal Publishing Corporation website, www.amlegal.com.)

Rental registration programs can pay for themselves. The City could charge a fee for licensing each rental unit as it changes ownership and it could charge a fee for regular inspections. In 2009, there were an estimated 989 rental units in the City. If the City inspects each unit annually at a \$50 fee, the fee income would approach \$50,000 a year. If the City chose to inspect the units every other year, the fee income could approach \$25,000 a year. In addition to the fee for initial inspections, the City could impose a similar fee if violations were found and a follow up inspection was needed.

FIRE INSPECTIONS

Municipalities routinely inspect commercial buildings and rental residential property for fire safety. They are required to do so with rental properties that are supported with federal housing funds. The scope of fire protection can be expanded to cover activities as well as buildings.

The International Fire Prevention Code, which has been adopted statewide, contains provisions for the issuance of fire permits and a mechanism for establishing fees for those permits. There are nearly 50 categories of building or occupancy operational activities covered by the Code. Examples of permits and fees are listed below.

Suggested Fire Prevention Fee Schedule

Description	Suggested Fee
Cutting and Welding	25
Tents and temporary structures	25
Open burning	50
Pyrotechnics (fireworks)	60
Torch applied roofing	30
Storage of aerosol products	25
Heliports, helistops	100
Battery systems	30
Combustible dust-producing operations	60
Combustible fibers	30
Compressed gases	30
Covered mall buildings	100
Cryogenic fluids	60
Dry cleaning plants	60
Explosives	120
Flammable and combustible liquids	30.00 – 70.00
Floor finishing	30
Fumigation and insecticidal fogging	20
Hazardous materials	100
High piled storage	30

Description	Suggested Fee
Hot work operations	30
HPM facilities	120
Indoor exhibits and trade shows	60
Industrial ovens	60
LP gas	60.00 – 100.00
Lumber yards and woodworking plants	90
Magnesium	60
Miscellaneous combustible storage	30
Open flames and torches	30
Organic coatings	60
Outdoor carnivals and fairs	25.00/event
Places of assembly	10.00 – 200.00
Private fire hydrants	10
Pyroxylin plastics	60
Remove paint with torch	30
Repair garages and fuel dispensing	30
Special amusement buildings	60
Spraying or dipping operations	40
Storage of scrap tires and byproducts	120
Tire-rebuilding plants	120
Waste handling	60

Each of the activities, processes or conditions listed in the above table would require an initial permit and a yearly renewal. A community the size of Corry with diverse business, manufacturing, health care, recreational and institutional facilities would have several hundred activities and conditions that could be permitted. A consistently applied and actively enforced program could easily yield \$5,000 to \$10,000 in yearly revenue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City should expand the code enforcement program. The additional hours needed to do this could be provided by the firefighters, with CDBG funding or with an outside contractor supported by program fees and fines

The City should implement a rental registration program that that licensed and inspected rental units and registered tenants.

The City should purchase and install a software application to manage the code enforcement program.

The City should review and, if necessary, expand its fire prevention permit and fee program.

CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

In Corry, as in all of Pennsylvania, the activities of the local municipal governments and of the civic organizations should be centered on the idea of complete regions and interconnected communities to achieve common goals. Proactive cooperation and collaboration for coordinated activities can go a long way to support a healthy City and region.

The Corry area community and the City of Corry are very fortunate to have many community minded individuals and active civic organizations. These individuals and groups support the City and region in improving its vibrancy and quality of life. This participation provides City government with outstanding opportunities to develop and implement programs which it could not otherwise undertake.

The City should proactively continue to take fullest advantage of these groups by encouraging and supporting collaborative partnering to advance joint goals and objectives. In order to do this effectively the City Council should:

- Work closely with the community groups and organizations to achieve common goals and objectives
- Designate the Mayor or a member of City Council to be a direct liaison with the community groups and organizations and report to Council as a whole through an agenda item on this topic at each public meeting of Council
- Dedicate a portion of a professional employee's time - either the City Administrator or a person reporting to the City Administrator - to be the principal interface and expediter for joint programs and projects
- Welcome, encourage and request presentations at public meetings from the various community groups and organizations

Much of this collaboration is already in place. Elected officials and the staff already serve on boards, commissions and intergovernmental organizations. Designating an elected official and member of staff to be the first point of contact can improve this collaboration.

The principal groups serving the Corry area are listed and described below, along with observations and recommendations:

- Northwest PA Tri-County Council of Governments, and Intergovernmental Organizations
- Erie County Broadband, eGovernment and Technology Assessment Project
- Corry Area Industrial Development Corporation, and Industrial Center Staff

- Corry Industrial Benefit Association
- Redevelopment Authority of the City of Corry
- Corry Community and Industrial Roundtables
- Corry Community Development Corporation
- Corry Area Chamber of Commerce)
- Corry Area Historical Society (and Museum)
- Corry Community Foundation
- Corry Higher Education Council
- Mead Park and Mead Park Association

NORTHWEST PA TRI-COUNTY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS, AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

The City of Corry participates with its neighboring municipalities in the Northwest PA Tri-County Council of Governments (COG). This COG, was formed in 1998 and consists of the City of Corry; Spartansburg, Union City and Wattsburg Boroughs; and Amity, Concord, Union, Venango and Wayne Townships. The COG is a meet and discussion group and it also does joint purchasing and regional transportation and infrastructure planning. Administration of the COG is ably provided by the Corry Area Industrial Development Corporation staff.

The Northwest PA Tri-County COG should be strengthened and transformed into a much more active organization for the provision of services supporting the region. In order to do this, the member governments should support the present COG administrators and establish subcommittees of the COG to propose and undertake additional, new programs in the areas of electronic government, public safety, public works, parks and recreation, and community and land use planning.

The City of Corry and Wayne Township have a multi-municipal comprehensive plan adopted in 1996 but each municipality around the City of Corry, in the Northwest Tri-County COG, continues to conduct its land use planning and zoning largely independent of the others. This is counterproductive for an ultimately vibrant Corry community because it unnecessarily divides the area as a whole for planning purposes into disconnected parts from a land use point of view. Future land use planning and zoning decisions would be better made on the basis of a single land use plan encompassing the entire Corry area community. In this way, each municipality would not be required to provide every conceivable type of land use within its jurisdiction. As a result, land use decisions could be made on the basis of geography, encompassing economic, social, and environmental values for the area as a whole, as opposed to competition among the governments for limited wealth.

It is recommended that a single comprehensive, land use plan be developed for the land area of all the Northwest Tri-County COG member governments and zoning ordinances in

each municipality made consistent with the plan. Once the joint planning and zoning is in place, tax revenue sharing could be instituted among the municipalities. Perhaps revenues derived in this way could be targeted to support public safety services such as police and fire protection.

Corry also participates in activities with the Erie Area Council of Governments, Erie County Planning Commission, Metropolitan Planning Organization, Northwest Regional Planning and Development Commission, and others.

It is recommended that the City of Corry's continue serious participation in the Northwest PA Tri-County COG, and the other intergovernmental groups. This participation is ultimately essential to the success of the City because it can produce efficiencies and improved services, and create a climate of confidence whereby more people will chose to invest in the City of Corry.

ERIE COUNTY BROADBAND, eGOVERNMENT AND TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT PROJECT
The City of Corry is currently participating along with the other municipal governments in the Erie County Broadband, eGovernment and Technology Assessment Project. This project is sponsored by The Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission, the Technology Council of Northwest Pennsylvania, and the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership, through a Broadband Outreach and Aggregation Fund grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

The goal is to devise plans for assisting the governments to manage electronic information and conduct electronic government related activities that the municipalities can accomplish individually and collaboratively.

Under this project, each municipality is provided an assessment of their electronic government status. The assessments have been followed by facilitated small group sessions of governmental officials, secretaries, public works directors, zoning officers, and others, for brainstorming specific objectives. For example, emphasis has been placed on internal (intranet) communications within and among the governments, and also external communications (internet) to the public. An important result already in use is the posting, meeting management and information sharing presently being done electronically by the Erie County Tax Collection Committee.

Other examples to be developed include a unified governmental calendar, public works equipment sharing program, and meeting and document management for the municipal governments and intergovernmental organizations such as the Erie Area Council of Governments, Erie County Associations of Boroughs, Erie County Association of Township Officials, Erie County Local Government Secretaries Association, Erie County Public Works Group, Erie County Zoning and Code Enforcement Officials Association, Northwest PA Tri-County COG, and others.

Training for Microsoft Office products is also currently being provided free of charge to municipal officials and employees.

The City of Corry will also soon have the opportunity to participate in a Microsoft SharePoint 2010 demonstration project sponsored by the Erie Area Council of Governments. Once implemented over the next year, the City will obtain SharePoint intranet capabilities for its internal communications needs and with the intergovernmental groups to which it belongs.

The Erie County Broadband, eGovernment and Technology Assessment Project, with the eGovernment initiatives of the Erie Area Council of Governments, can go a long way in assisting the City of Corry to modernize its internal and external communications in an internet based environment.

The City of Corry is strongly encouraged to take fullest advantage of these opportunities to improve its operations and obtain efficiencies through electronic enhancements.

CORRY AREA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AND INDUSTRIAL CENTER STAFF

CORRY INDUSTRIAL BENEFIT ASSOCIATION

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF CORRY

CORRY COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRIAL ROUNDTABLES

The Corry Area Industrial Development Corporation (<http://www.corryidc.org/>) and industrial center staff provide leadership and knowhow for economic development team efforts, and public-private partnerships that are vital to the City of Corry. The organizations include the Corry Industrial Benefit Association - which seeks, receives and allocates funding for many important projects, the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Corry, the advisory Corry Community and Industrial Roundtables, and the Corry Community Development Corporation. It is reported on the IDC web site that together these groups provide an industrial park, multi-tenant facility, and incubator facility, along with full service assistance, including "low interest financing, grant assistance, tax credit preparation, leasable facilities, fully built industrial sites, and an abundance of business support services. The outreach services include productivity and operations enhancement, research and development, application of technologies, export assistance, business planning, labor management relations, entrepreneurial training and development."

Additional tools include a Corry Enterprise Zone Program for the City of Corry and Columbus and Wayne Townships, and Revolving Loan Program. Both are administered by the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Corry. There is also a Local Economic Tax Revitalization (LERTA) abatement program within the City of Corry for industrial and commercial improvements to deteriorated properties.

Many other economic development grants, loans, infrastructure and other assistance programs are offered in conjunction with the Northwest PA Regional Planning and Development Commission, the County of Erie, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Federal Government.

The City of Corry should continue be a full partner with these groups and do all it can to support their economic development efforts.

CORRY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Corry Community Development Corporation

(<http://www.corrypa.com/ccdc/index.htm>) is a not-for-profit organization “dedicated to taking a leadership role to facilitate the identification of resources and linking them to the CorryVision plan and other strategic community initiatives.” CorryVision (<http://www.corrypa.com/ccdc/cv/index.htm>) was a comprehensive community input and planning process that took place in the late 1990’s. It produced five goals that have been focused on over the past decade:

- Facilitate local retail development
- Expand industrial development and retention efforts
- Foster an environment attractive to families
- Improve the external and self image of the community
- Develop regional relationships and linkages

A significant follow up to CorryVision is Corry 2020

(<http://www.corrypa.com/corry2020/index.html>). The latter is currently underway and is intended to continue progress with new accomplishments. Corry 2020 calls this the “Strategic Doing” of the future. Corry 2020’s stated project objectives in priority order are to:

- Develop a pride in Corry campaign, communicate Corry events, advertise/market/promote the area (i.e. update corrypa.com, develop Corry brochure/catalog, perhaps start a “public art” train campaign with passport)
- Revitalize existing structures downtown for community purposes
- Renovate a building downtown to serve as a Visual and Performing Arts Center
- Renovate a big building downtown into Youth Center /Teen Hangout
- Enhance Mead Park
- Open an "Art House" for kids and an after-school arts program for teens
- Start a two-day Fall Harvest Music Festival

- Start a Snow/Winter Festival/Cabin Fever, taking into account all ideas related to snowmobiling, paths, winter recreational activities, Winter Olympics, etc.
- Foster the development of an Amish Arts, Crafts, and Furniture Village
- Open Co-op Gallery downtown to showcase and sell the work of local artists and have workshops
- Research and create an Entrepreneurial mentoring program
- Create an attractive entrance to Corry
- Fix up homes
- Start a “Buy Local/Shop Local” 3/50 initiative to help people realize the benefits of supporting local merchants and Update the Shop Corry Brochure and Create a Bed & Breakfast Brochure
- Help Implement, Promote, Grow, Expand CorryFest—have all local vendors, artists, crafters dress up in period clothing, give walking tours of downtown Corry, showcase Amish and unique local handmade items to support the Arts by having concerts, plays, artwork, foods, all by local talent need more local talent involved; punch card/passport for going to several businesses; need a theme; need to sell Corry clothing in the park)
- Start a First Night Corry
- Capitalize on Natural Resources
- Connect Corry and Spartansburg Borough with Rails-to-Trails
- Figure out a way to show movies in Corry
- Start a Halloween/Fall Festival with scarecrows, cider, corn mazes, pumpkin-carving contest, pumpkin pie, etc. (Historical Society, YMCA, Chamber)
- Help Teens Find Jobs
- Start an Inventors Network—see Wisconsin Inventors Network
- Start an Inventors Network

The City of Corry should make it a priority to be fully informed of the Corry Community Development Corporation’s Corry 2020 findings, recommendations and “Strategic Doing” efforts. The City should support the “Strategic Doing” objectives and assist implementation as it can.

CORRY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Corry Area Chamber of Commerce (<http://www.corrychamber.org/>) is the leading organization representing the business community and promoting business and business interests in the Corry area. As part of its efforts it conducts the annual CorryFEST and numerous other community events.

The City should continue to support the Chamber in undertaking community wide events such as CorryFEST.

CORRY AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM

The Corry Area Historical Society (and Museum) (<http://www.corryareahistoricalsociety.org/>) is a tremendous community treasure and a wealth of history about the Corry area. The museum building is owned by the City and the Historical Society owns the artifacts and operates the museum.

The City of Corry should continue supporting the development and security of the museum in any ways that it reasonable can.

CORRY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

The Corry Community Foundation (CCF) (<http://www.corrycommunityfoundation.org/>) reports on its web site that it is “a collection of charitable endowments operating under the administrative umbrella of a single public charity” and that it is affiliated with the Erie Community Foundation. The statement continues that “in less than nine years, the CCF has established 42 different charitable endowments with a value of just under \$10 million. The CCF makes numerous and significant contributions in the community and it is a most important entity supporting the City of Corry and region.

The City should work closely with the Corry Community Foundation to proactively identify and advance common goals and objectives and apply resources to those ends.

CORRY HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL

The Corry Higher Education Council (<http://www.corryhied.org/>) reports on its web site that was incorporated in 1991 as an initiative of the Corry Industrial Roundtable to improve access to training and education for Corry-area adults. The mission statement reads that the “The Corry Higher Education Council promotes lifelong learning to empower individuals, produce a globally competitive workforce and enhance the community’s quality of life.” This is done by identifying the area’s education and training needs, and seeking to fill them in partnership with educational providers such as colleges, universities, technical schools and training organizations with an expertise in those areas. The Hi-Ed Council also states that its job “is to make it easy for those educational providers to serve Corry.” To this end, the Hi-Ed Council provides marketing assistance, office and administrative support, classrooms, computer labs and more.

The City of Corry should take fullest advantage of Corry Hi-Ed offerings of computer and other training and education opportunities for City employees and officials. The City should also partner with the Hi-Ed Council for eGovernment initiatives.

MEAD PARK AND MEAD PARK ASSOCIATION

Mead Park, in the City of Corry, is a significant 'Regional Asset' serving the citizens of the entire Corry area. It is a large and very attractive facility that is a source of considerable pride. The City owns the park and makes annual financial contributions to the Mead Park Association, which operates and programs the park.

The City and the Association must make sure they work very closely together for the park to realize its fullest potential. In addition, a much stronger internet web presence should be established for the park, and discussions should take place in front of the Northwest Tri-County COG member governments about the regional nature of the park and the need for it to be broadly supported. This may in turn lead to conversations among the COG governments about mutually supporting one another for regional recreation and park objectives and initiatives.