

## Strategic Asset Plan Recommendations

Draft: March 2018

### Document Space and Storage

1. **Develop a protocol for each department and/or division detailing what records and documents must be kept and for how long.** Clarifying this will reduce the amount of storage needed if departments/divisions no longer must store all documents in perpetuity. Many departments are unaware of current records laws and therefore store many documents to err on the side of caution.
2. **Develop a protocol and schema for digitizing records.** Departments/divisions should determine what records can be digitized and what records must be in paper format. The Town should consistently apply its digital record storage schema within each department/division and across Town departments to achieve efficiency and to promote the transfer of knowledge from current employees to new hires.
3. **Digitize and then purge paper documents.** The Town should begin digitizing all relevant documents related to historical records and those required by records laws, after which the physical spaces currently used for document storage can be cleared and organized.
4. **Invest in storage areas and equipment.** Once the documents in current storage areas are sorted, digitized, and purged, the Town can begin investing in more efficient storage systems and improvements to storage spaces. As was noted earlier, some basement storage spaces have water, air quality, and moisture issues that need to be addressed before documents and other Town-owned property can be properly stored. The Town should also consider investing in shelving units, cabinets, or rolling storage where appropriate.

### Equipment Space and Storage

1. Low Level of Investment: **Inventory and optimize current storage areas and facilities.**
  - a. Encourage each department to develop an inventory of all equipment and supplies. This would enable them to determine the location of all inventory. Examples of best practices can be found in the Open Space and Highway/Sanitation Departments, as these are good models of efficiency and space utilization.
  - b. Identify a central location within Town Hall to store basic supplies that are used across most Town buildings and most departments/divisions. This could include items such as paper towels, tissues, paper, office supplies, etc.
  - c. Decommission and sell off excess shelving units that the Library does not need for future book storage. These shelving units occupy storage space that could be repurposed for storing other equipment and supplies.
  - d. Invest in additional shelving units and wall hangers for Public Building Division facilities as a way to optimize existing space. This is most applicable to the facilities at the Larz Anderson complex.
2. Medium Level of Investment: **Centralize and improve storage at existing facilities.**
  - a. Create a centralized location for storing supplies and equipment used for events that are organized by the Diversity Department.
  - b. Create a centralized location within the Main Library for storing supplies and equipment related to programming and events.
  - c. Create covered structures for heavy equipment that stays outside when not in use during the season. Construct additional overhead canopies at the Municipal Service Center for DPW heavy equipment and machinery. Construct a parking deck or canopy system for the Police Department so that their vehicles are covered during winter.
  - d. Identify a location to serve as a centralized facility for the storage of equipment for the Police Department. Currently, their equipment is stored in the basement of the Public Safety Building, the Municipal Service Center, and outside at Larz Anderson.
3. High Level of Investment: **Construct new storage facilities to expand storage capacity for equipment and supplies.**
  - a. Build equipment sheds at each of the recreation fields so that the parks and Recreation Department employees and volunteer coaches/parents do not have to shuttle equipment from one location to another. Considerable employee time is spent moving sporting equipment from place to place.

- b. Build a new equipment storage facility at the Transfer Station for the Department of Public Works. This new facility would enable the Larz Anderson complex to be vacated and repurposed.
- c. Build a 40,000-square foot centralized facility for the Public Buildings Division which would enable them to consolidate their employees and equipment into one location.<sup>17</sup> One possible location could be at the transfer station if there is room to accommodate current activities, as well as a new storage facility for Public Works.

### **Employee Space**

1. *Low Level of Investment:*
  - a. Update the existing conference room reservation system.
  - b. Increase opportunities for conversations between departments that could lead to shared space solutions.
  - c. Increase the size of the female locker room and add lockers at the Police Station.
2. *Medium Level of Investment*
  - a. Optimize document storage through investments in shelving, filing cabinets, document digitization, and off-site archiving to free up space for employees.
  - b. Modify the existing departmental office configurations to accommodate more office and/or workspace for employees.
  - c. Create designated office space for both the Occupational Health Nurse and Human Resources Department to conduct private and confidential meetings with employees.
  - d. Construct a 1,500-square foot addition off the second story of the Elliot Recreation Building to house four additional employees, an extra bathroom, and a conference room. The first floor of the addition would be used for much needed equipment storage.
  - e. Continue the practice of leasing space from a private entity to house the forty-five administrative employees of the Schools Department until more permanent Town-owned space is identified.
  - f. Evaluate options for providing the Council on Aging with additional space to enable them to hire new staff members to help with transportation and programming needs.
3. *High Level of Investment*

Acquire land to build new administrative facilities which would house school department staff and potentially other departments that may have growth needs. This could be accomplished by purchasing land/buildings that come up for sale on the private market. When enough contiguous parcels have been acquired to meet the needs of the anticipated facility, the Town could then begin retrofitting the site/buildings or construct a new building(s) on the site.

### **Programmatic Space**

1. *Low Level of Investment*

Improve the coordination between the School and parks and Recreation Departments to ensure the use of recreational facilities by the Town is prioritized over other outside groups.
2. *Medium Level of Investment*
  - a. Streamline the process that inventories and stores books donated to the libraries through the Friends of the Library program.
  - b. Explore opportunities to expand Council on Aging program space in a location in South Brookline. Opportunities may also be available by partnering with other senior program providers within close proximity to the Senior Center.
3. *High Level of Investment*
  - a. Identify and purchase land for the construction of six rectangular fields and six baseball fields to meet the existing demand for recreation programs.
  - b. Build a standalone after-school space for children. Presently, the program is oversubscribed and is utilizing space in the schools that could be used for other purposes.
4. *Desirable Additions, but Not Critical to Departmental Functionality Today*

Throughout our assessment of Brookline's facilities and services, there were certain suggestions that arose where the Town may want to do further study to better define the programming and/or benchmarking. This

could include reviewing what or how peer communities deal with similar request. These desires were noted throughout the study process and are listed below in no particular order:

- a. Build a community performance space/community center. Several departments noted that a location in South Brookline may be ideal because finding current space for these types of programs is challenging in that part of town.
- b. Build a new indoor skating rink.
- c. Build a police training facility that serves the needs for training and equipment storage related to police training.

## **Parking**

### *1. Low Level of Investment*

- a. Create an incentive program for employees who want to carpool to work.
- b. Undertake a parking/transportation plan for the schools that do not currently have one. This will ensure that parking is sufficient for employees. At present, some employees are parking in neighborhoods and are subject to parking tickets.
- c. Create a permitting system (active only during work hours) for Town employees that allows them to park on the streets for longer than two hours. Presently, employees who do not find spots in the garage must periodically move their vehicles every two hours.
- d. Create a parking pass for approved volunteers which would allow them to park in the below ground Pierce and Town Hall garage after 5PM.
- e. Create a parking pass for seniors that enables them to park on the street while visiting the Senior Center; this pass could be for certain streets around the Senior Center.
- f. Provide members of standing (permanent, not topic specific) Selectmen-appointed Boards and Commissions a parking pass for vehicular access to garaged general space parking for Town Hall and Pierce school employees after 5:30pm, Monday through Friday.
- g. Designate additional handicap parking spaces for the Senior Center.

### *2. Medium Level of Investment*

- a. Fund a public transit subsidy for Town employees. This can encourage employees who live near transit to utilize it.
- b. Create a parking cash-out program where employees are required to pay for parking to encourage the use of walking, biking, public transit, and carpooling.
- c. Create/designate an offsite lot for employees with shuttle service to various Town facilities.

### *3. High Level of Investment*

- a. Build six to eight additional parking spaces for Fire Station 1 (140 Washington Street) to accommodate parking for Fire Department staff.
- b. Build additional parking at Harry Downes Field. This was identified as an issue by the Parks and Recreation Department but they fully recognized it is a very challenging issue.

## **Personnel**

### *1. Medium Level of Investment*

Evaluate opportunities/feasibility for offering overtime pay to current employees to complete additional service tasks on an as-needed basis.

### *2. High Level of Investment*

- a. Evaluate opportunities and costs related to hiring private contractors to help ease demand on existing departments.
- b. Budget for, and hire, new employees to fill staffing needs identified by department heads.