



STRATEGIC ASSET PLAN

TOWN OF BROOKLINE

MARCH 2018

SASAKI RKG

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Introduction

Executive Summary

To plan for future capital and service goals, the Town of Brookline has contracted Sasaki and RKG Associates, Inc. to create a Strategic Asset Plan (SAP) and a Major Parcel Study (MPS) in order to understand current conditions and anticipate future development throughout the Town.

Over the past decade, Brookline has made excellent progress to improve the delivery of services to its residents and businesses through the application of new practices such as document digitization and on-line transactions.

However, the Sasaki Team's interviews with department and division heads has revealed further opportunities to increase the efficiency of Town services through better use of existing physical space including document and equipment storage, space for existing and new employees and service delivery, and parking.

Prior to any decision to build new space, we recommend that Brookline inventory the documents, equipment and supplies in existing space, determine what can be retained or thrown out, and organize the remaining materials more efficiently. Across the 77 buildings currently under Town management, we estimate that an additional 15,000 cubic feet of space could be identified if existing materials were more efficiently stored. Any capital investment in new space cannot be properly evaluated without this initial effort as illustrated in the graphic to the right.

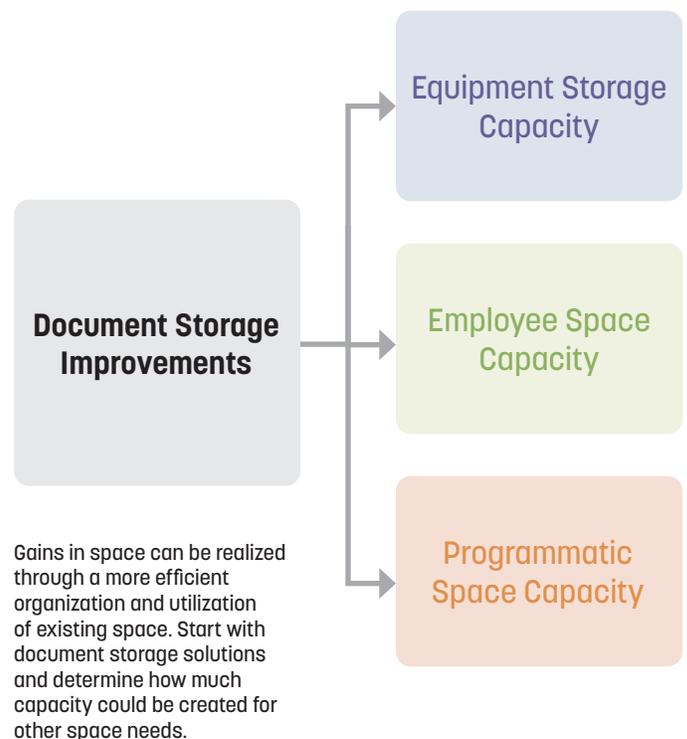
Beyond existing space, we also identified several large-scale capital projects that may or may not be needed in the future:

- A 40,000 square foot centralized facility for the Building Department.
- A 37,000 square foot storage facility to house seasonal equipment for the DPW.
- Six additional rectangular fields, and six additional baseball fields for recreation.

- Additional elementary and high school facilities to support Brookline Public Schools.

The recommendations of the Strategic Asset Plan should assist Brookline as it evaluates existing conditions and plans future operational and capital expenditures through its normal planning and budgeting process.

Figure 1.1: Recommendation for Space Organization







Introduction

Letter from the Town
Overview of Strategic Asset Plan

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Town of Brookline

Massachusetts

Planning Board

Strategic Asset Plan Subcommittee

Town Hall, 3rd Floor
333 Washington Street
Brookline, MA 02445
(617) 730-2130 Fax (617) 730-2442

Robert Cook, Chair
Carla Benka
George Cole
Betsy DeWitt
Linda Roseman
Neil Wishinsky

March 7, 2018

Dear residents of Brookline:

For many years now, planning for future facilities and services in Brookline has been embodied in the creation of the annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP), a budgetary process that projects Town expenditures for the next five years. Over the past five years, dramatically changing public school enrollment projections have triggered a need for a longer-term planning horizon of fifteen to twenty years in addition to the short-term CIP.

The Director of Planning and Community Development, along with residents serving on Boards and Commissions, called for a special planning effort unrelated to schools, to address two essential questions about the future. First, will existing Town facilities that support current services to its residents be sufficient for the longer-term future or will new facilities be required to maintain and improve this level of service? Second, under current zoning, how are parcels of land greater than two acres and with common ownership likely to change in the future in ways that might fundamentally alter the unique character of the Town?

To answer these questions, the Town contracted a team of two firms, Sasaki Associates and RKG Associates, to create two planning documents: the Strategic Asset Plan and the Major Parcel Study. The Town asked its Planning Board to establish a Subcommittee of six individuals to supervise this project. As a member of the Planning Board, I was appointed Chair of the Subcommittee and I worked closely with Kara Brewton, Economic Development Director.

Throughout the project, questions and comments were solicited from Town staff and from many residents of Brookline through interviews and public hearings. Together these two documents will provide the Town with a strategy for future facility management and a comprehensive set of land use planning tools to guide policy and zoning-related discussions about the future of Brookline.

Sincerely,

Bob Cook

Planning Board member, Strategic Asset Plan Subcommittee Chair

Introduction

Overview of Strategic Asset Plan

The SAP is intended to provide an assessment of Brookline’s municipally-owned buildings, facilities, and properties; which includes size, type, location, characteristics, and functionality as a baseline for understanding whether current facilities meet short- and long-term needs. This baseline set of information about Brookline’s public assets was then used to determine where gaps in facilities, personnel, and services exist, and the set of proactive steps the Town could take to begin addressing needs through capital and budgetary planning processes.

The SAP dovetails with the concurrent Major Parcel Study such that solutions requiring additional land resources are identified in the SAP first and locations for future facilities are recommended in the MPS.

For the purposes of organizing this report, the Sasaki Team developed six categories that allow for integration of concepts and information to overcome departmental and divisional barriers across town government. Many of the needs and potential recommendations are shared across departments and divisions, and a solution for one entity can have positive effects for other departments as well. This can lead to gains in efficiency and cost-effectiveness by identifying solutions that address issues across a wider spectrum of departments and divisions. The six categories used in the SAP report are as follows:

1. Document Space and Storage
2. Equipment Space and Storage
3. Employee Space
4. Programmatic Space
5. Parking
6. Personnel

This document presents the background information, evidence of needs and gaps, and potential solutions the Town can consider moving forward and integrate into future capital and budgetary conversations. This document is not intended to be a space needs study that goes into

a high level of detail for building and facilities layouts and utilization. At the direction of the Subcommittee, this study used as a starting point the professional expertise of department and division heads to identify issues and opportunities. These were then followed up on further by the Consultants. In some cases, staff recommendations were also supported by previous space needs studies and industry standards. The Planning Board recommends that staff continue to stay abreast of modern industry standards and explain with any new capital item request how their request compares with these standards or implements prior planning efforts.

Sources of Information

Throughout the SAP development process, the Town of Brookline provided the Sasaki Team with a variety of information: prior planning studies and departmental assessments; on-going studies that helped inform our analysis; and tabular and spatial data sets. The Team completed detailed follow up interviews with nearly every department and division in Brookline that were done either in-person or via phone conference. Finally, the Team also visited a number of town-owned facilities to better understand the way spaces were being utilized and help identify efficiencies that could be gained in existing structures to help solve specific needs. The sources of information are detailed below.

Previous Studies and Documents

The following studies and reports were provided to the Sasaki Team to inform the analysis and completion of the SAP:

- Department and Division Head Interviews and Needs Assessment (2016)
- FY 2018 Capital Improvement Program
- Housing Production Plan (2016)
- Park, Open Space and Recreation Master Plan (2006)
- Open Space & Recreation Plan (2010)
- Comprehensive Plan (2005)
- Municipal Services Center Facility Planning Study (2013)
- Public Buildings Division Operations Assessment (2016)
- Brookline Public Schools Information:
 - Preliminary Enrollment Reports
 - Public Schools Master Plan (2009)
 - Public Schools of Brookline Enrollment, Capacity, and Utilization Study (2012)
 - Brookline High School Concept Study Report (2013)
 - Brookline Schools Site Identification Study (2015)
 - Brookline 9th Elementary School Site Selection Report (2016)

Staff Interviews and Site Visits

The following is a list of department and division interviews and site visits that were completed by the Sasaki Team throughout the SAP process.

Department and Division Interviews

The Town of Brookline's municipal services are organized by department with smaller divisions falling under the larger departmental categories. During the SAP process, the Sasaki Team met with nearly every department and division head in town government.¹ These interviews provided an opportunity to better understand current space and staff constraints, discuss potential solutions, consider future trends in municipal services, and how each department/division may need to change or adapt over time. During each interview, the team asked questions regarding staffing levels, space needs and constraints, equipment needs, storage issues, trends or changes that might impact service delivery, and what benchmarks are

tracked to determine funding requests. Town staff were asked to respond to these questions by describing the current situation today, and also to think five to ten years in the future about how needs and service delivery might change. The interviews with staff provided a much deeper understanding of current service demands, constraints, and considerations for the future. The Sasaki Team recorded all the needs noted by town staff and developed a set of priorities that attempts to differentiate immediate needs related to the core functionality of a department/division from desired items that would be nice to have but are not critical. The prioritization and explanation of these items is further detailed in the Gaps and Recommendations section of this document. The following departments and divisions were interviewed during the SAP process:

- Town Administrator
- School
- Library
- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Town Counsel
- Planning and Community Development
- Finance Department
 - Comptroller's Office
 - Purchasing
 - Assessor's Office
 - Treasurer Collector Office
- Police
- Fire
- Building Department
- Public Buildings Division
- Department of Public Works
 - Engineering/Transportation
 - Highway/Sanitation
 - Parks and Open Space
 - Water and Sewer
- Recreation
- Health and Human Services
- Veterans
- Council on Aging
- Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Relations

Site Visits

To help visualize the opportunities and challenges at some of the Town's most prominent facilities, members of the Team completed site visits and tours led by department

and division heads. These site visits included an in-depth look at nearly every floor and room in the facility. The team used this opportunity to do a visual assessment of the site and its utilization and to take measurements of offices, common spaces, and storage areas. The following sites were visited as part of the SAP process.

- Brookline Town Hall
- Brookline Health Building
- Pierce School Basement Storage Area
- Brookline Main Library and Coolidge Library
- Municipal Service Center
- Public Works and Building Division Facilities at Larz Anderson Park
- Paint Shop on Route 9
- Brookline Transfer Station

Data

The following data sets were provided to the Sasaki Team to help with the analysis and completion of the SAP.

- Municipal Buildings and Properties Map
- Inventory of Town-Owned Land and Facilities (size, location, purpose, ownership, etc.)
- Assessor's Database
- List of Municipal Employees and Work Location
- Floor Plans for Town Hall
- Town Budget

Plan Development Process

In addition to working closely with Town staff from all departments and divisions, the Sasaki Team worked directly with staff from the Planning and Community Development Department who are overseeing the consultant's work. The SAP was also guided by a Strategic Asset Plan and Major Parcel Study Subcommittee of the Planning Board. The six-member Subcommittee provided guidance and comments throughout the process on the analysis completed by the Team and draft deliverables. The Team met with the Subcommittee several times throughout the SAP development process to discuss overall project goals and process, results of early data collection and synthesis, and recommendations.

Comment from boards and the public was sought at several points throughout the process. The Team met directly with the Planning Board and the Select Board to

better understand their concerns and ideas for addressing some of the Town's pressing issues. In addition to board meetings, two public meetings were held which included a presentation to the Planning Board and public, and an Open House component where the Consultants were stationed around the room to present information and answer questions. The public meetings took place on September 13, 2017, and November 30th, 2017, and were well attended.

The September meeting was focused on informing the public about the importance of the SAP and its overall process and methodology. In this public meeting, the Consultants defined the problem they were tasked with studying, and gave an overview of the approach. Members of the public provided positive feedback on the need to study current and future demand on public facilities and assets.

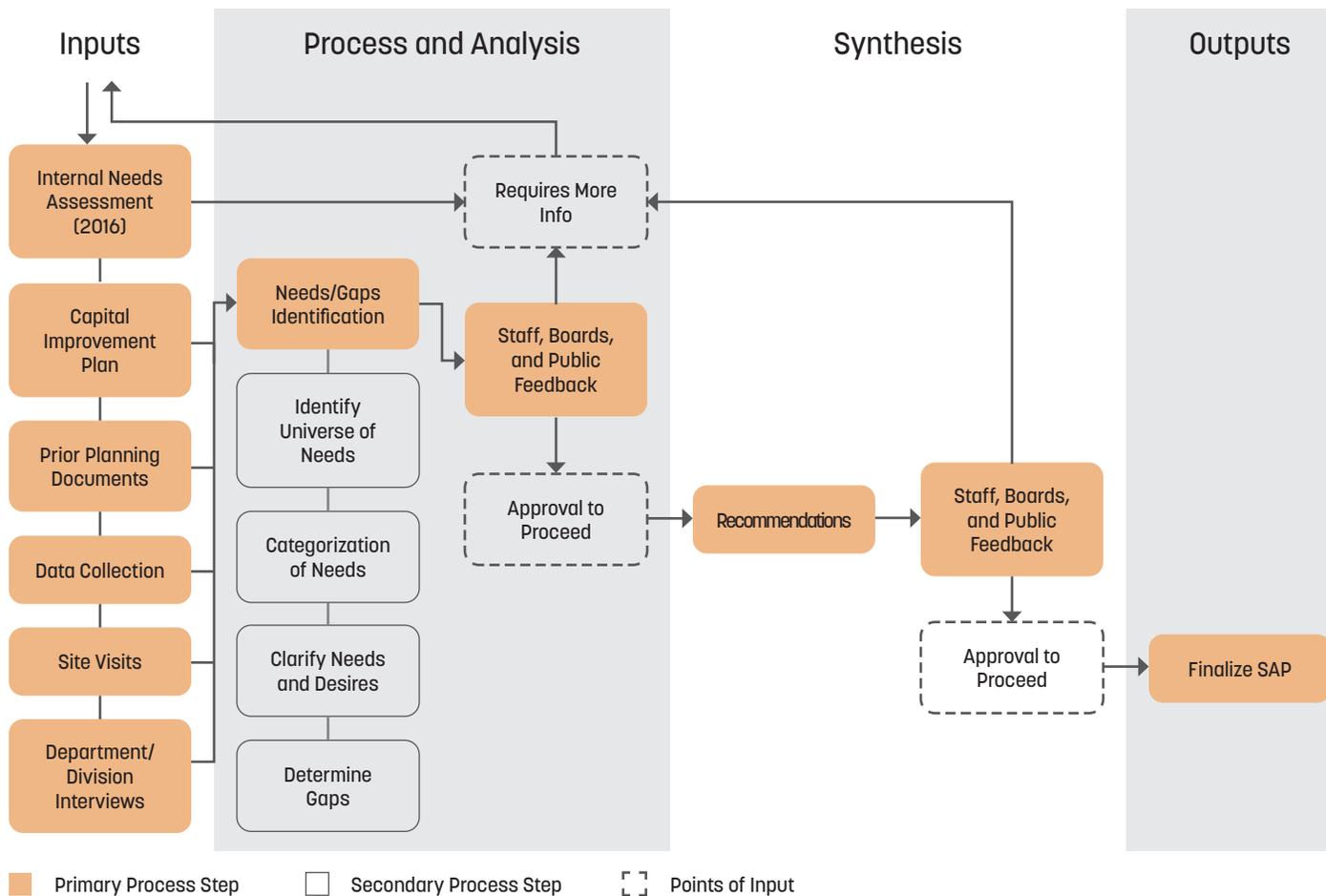
The second public meeting in November included a presentation from the Consultants on the key findings and recommendations from the SAP report. Similar to the September meeting, public reception to the presentation and findings was positive. The presentation showcased some of the existing gaps in facilities and services, and the recommendations for how the Town could improve existing assets. Many of the questions from the public related to the methodology of quantifying space, and the potential costs of the recommendations being put forward by the Consultants. Comments from the public and the Board were integrated into this report.

Figure 1.2 illustrates the process the Sasaki Team undertook to formulate the recommendations within this document. It includes the set of inputs, process for evaluating needs and gaps, synthesizing recommendations, and finalizing the SAP document.

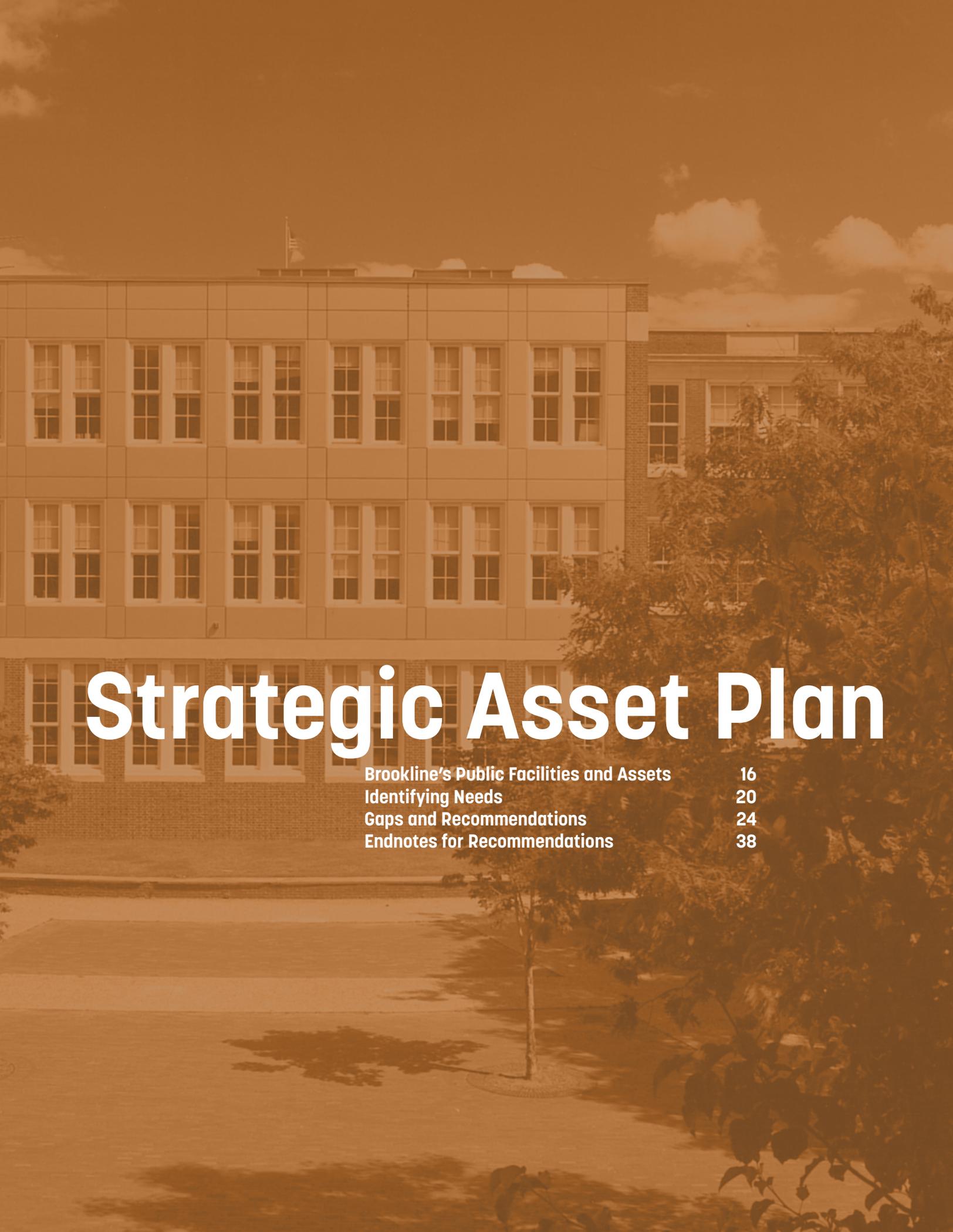
Planning Board Subcommittee for Strategic Asset Plan

The subcommittee includes: Planning Board – Bob Cook, Select Board – Neil Wishinsky, Previous Board of Selectmen – Betsy DeWitt, Building Commission – George Cole, Advisory Committee, Capital Subcommittee – Carla Benka, and Brookline Neighborhood Alliance – Lynda Roseman.

Figure 1.2: Strategic Asset Plan Process







Strategic Asset Plan

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Brookline’s Public Facilities & Assets

As a governmental entity, the Town of Brookline owns and rents physical spaces and facilities used to administer services across town. These assets are essential for serving the day-to-day needs of residents and businesses. As the Town grows and changes, the SAP takes a holistic approach towards evaluating town assets to ensure efficient and effective usage both in terms of municipal operations and benefits seen by residents.

The Brookline Municipal Buildings and Properties Map (Figure 2.2) presents the geographic location of Town-owned properties. Geographically, there is a higher concentration of town-owned buildings north of Boylston Street, and a concentration of large tracts of town-owned open space and recreation facilities in South Brookline. The Town’s north to south orientation, as well as the population and employment density north of Boylston Street creates the opportunity to serve more people and increase accessibility in the northern portion of town.

The character of South Brookline is quite different from the north. The urban amenities and character of the north transitions quickly to larger open spaces, waterbodies, and a more varied landscape. While South Brookline may have a lower number of municipal facilities, the ones that do exist in the south are large and have generally more capacity. These include the Municipal Service Center, Transfer Station, the former incinerator site, and the building department shops at Larz Anderson Park.

Developed Properties

The Town of Brookline owns or rents 77 buildings which account for more than 2.1 million square feet of space. Today, 96 percent of that space is owned by the Town, with the remaining 4 percent rented for specific uses. As part of the SAP process, these developed properties were classified by their use. Figure 2.1 provides a listing of the types of properties and aggregate building square footages.

Town Office/Administration buildings total about 125,000 square feet of space. These buildings typically house the

Figure 2.1: Developed Properties in Brookline

Developed Buildings	Buildings	Total Space (sqft)
Town Office and Administration Buildings	5	125,075
Libraries and Community Centers	10	186,807
Schools	17	1,498,120
Utility, Maintenance, and Storage Buildings	13	46,310
Police, Fire, and Safety Buildings	10	115,770
Recreation and Open Space Facilities	20	99,992
Parking Garages	2	87,054
Surface Parking Lots	10	228,098
<i>Total</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>2,309,794</i>

municipal departments that operate key functions within town government. The largest building is Town Hall. It is 112,000 square feet and holds many town departments such as: Public Works, Finance, Town Administrator, and the Town Clerk. This building has a number of offices, conference rooms, and storage spaces that are used for the everyday business of the town.

In Brookline, schools account for about 69% of all municipal building space, with nearly 1.5 million square feet dedicated towards schools and associated facilities. Schools are generally distributed across the town and serve as important neighborhood centers. The quantity of municipal space dedicated to schools is set to increase based on some building proposals being considered by the Town today. The growth in school space will also

have an impact on the space needs for other departments and divisions because the increased building footprint and projected increase in the population will require additional service delivery above and beyond what is provided today. Utility/Maintenance and Storage buildings account for about 46,000 square feet in Brookline. These spaces are used primarily by the Building Department and Department of Public Works for shop and equipment storage space. These buildings are distributed across town, with the largest concentration located on the grounds of Larz Anderson Park.

Currently, both the Fire Department and Police Department are in separate buildings owned by the town. The combined total of municipal building space dedicated to both the Fire and Police is about 116,000 square feet. The Fire Department accounts for about 57 percent of the space, while the Police Department accounts for 43 percent. The Fire Department has a bigger footprint because Brookline has five fire stations spread across the community, as well as a few buildings that act as training centers. At some point in the future, the Town may wish to re-evaluate station locations and look at response times to determine whether all fire stations are necessary. This could open the possibility of repurposing one of the stations for other Town space needs. The Police Department is currently housed in a centralized Public Safety Building.

Brookline maintains 20 buildings, or 100,000 square feet, that are related to Recreation and Open Space facilities. The buildings have various dedicated uses such as the golf pro shop, the swimming pool, and the ice rink. These buildings are counted as accessory to park and recreational spaces.

The Town also maintains several surface parking lots and parking garages as part of its municipal assets. The two surface parking lots listed in Figure 2.1 are separate parcels that show up in the Town’s parcel database. The remaining surface and structured parking areas across Brookline are not broken out as separate parcels, and therefore have been included in the acreage totals for other buildings. For example, the surface lot at Town Hall is included in the acreage total for Town Hall. That surface lot is not broken out as an individual parcel. The Town is currently undertaking a Transportation Demand Management and Parking Study which will include detailed information on municipal parking across Brookline.

Parks and Recreation Commission

Due to land use restrictions and the current need for additional parks and open spaces, the SAP assumes that

all land currently managed by the Parks and Recreation Commission will remain in the long-term under control and management by the Parks and Recreation Commission for primarily park and recreation purposes. Furthermore, the departments that oversee parks and recreation amenities have recently completed plans and do not contemplate changing the use or divesting any of these properties at this time. Figure 2.3 shows the categories of properties identified as undevelopable through the SAP classification.

Figure 2.3: List of Properties

Category	Properties	Area (acres)
Parks and Playgrounds	42	171
Golf Course (partially undevelopable)	2	351
Conservation Areas (Conservation Commission)	11	284
Cemetery (Cemetery Trustees)	3	83
<i>Total</i>	<i>58</i>	<i>888</i>

The town has 42 properties which are classified as Parks and Playgrounds and account for nearly 171 acres of land. These properties are spread throughout the community and provide amenities such as walking trails, recreation fields, and leisure space for residents. Furthermore, the departments that oversee parks and recreation amenities do not contemplate divestment of any parkland at this time.

In addition to parks and playgrounds, Brookline has eleven additional sites that are categorized as conservation areas. These areas account for nearly 284 acres of land. Examples of conservation areas include Larz Anderson Park, Brookline Reservoir Park, Hall’s Pond Sanctuary and Amory Woods.

Undeveloped Properties

The undeveloped spaces identified across the town include many parcels which are small in size and are maintained by the Town. These open spaces include traffic islands, buffer lands, and utility rights-of-way. These properties account for about 53 acres of land, most of which are maintained by the Department of Public Works. (see Figure 2.4 below)

Figure 2.4: Other Properties in Brookline

Category	Properties	Area (acres)
Small Open Spaces and Buffers	24	53

Strategic Asset Plan

Identifying Needs

Using information gathered through the review of existing plans and documents, department and division interviews, site visits, and data collection, the Sasaki Team organized, quantified, and prioritized identified needs. The needs and priorities were also informed by feedback from the Strategic Asset Plan (SAP) Sub-committee, the Planning Board, and the public.

Figure 2.5 illustrates the Team’s approach to identifying needs, determining existing gaps to filling those needs, and developing a set of recommendations to help the Town fill unmet needs.

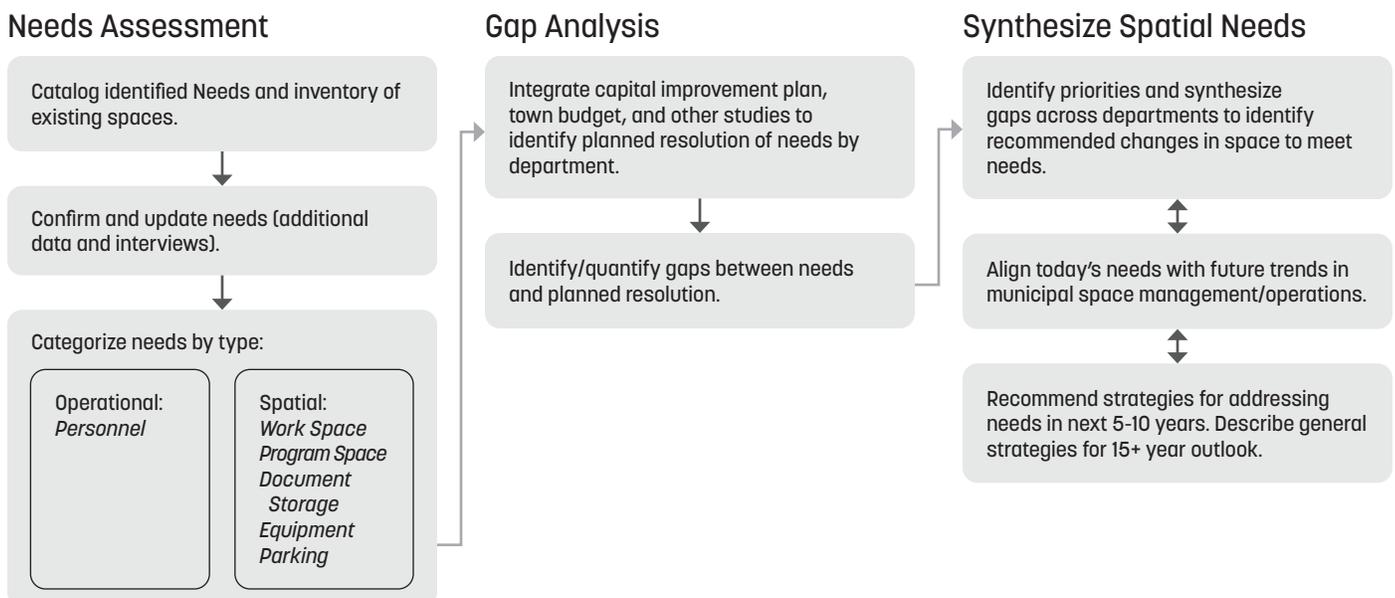
An Evidence-Based Approach to Need Identification

Throughout the SAP process, the Sasaki Team compiled a list of needs and desires for each of the departments and divisions in the Town of Brookline to evaluate their effectiveness in filling service and facility gaps. This list

was drawn from background research, prior studies and reports, interviews, site visits, trends in the industry, and best practices from other communities. Departments and divisions already do an incredible job tracking performance metrics year to year and use the results to help define program improvements, staffing adjustments, and space/equipment requirements. A potential next step could be aligning those metrics with specific goals or standards.¹ As we talked to department and division heads and compiled a list of gap filling measures, it was necessary to create a distinction between needs and desires.

¹ The City of Toronto is a model for performance-based measurements in municipal government and could offer best practices for Brookline.

Figure 2.5: Strategic Plan Methodology Flow Chart







For the purposes of this report, the Team identifies a **need** as:

Something that increases the efficiency of delivery of the quality and quantity of services currently offered to the community, taking into account industry best practices, changing demographics, and standards mandated by law.

For the purposes of this report, the Team identifies **desire** as

Something that is not a need, but is likely to expand or improve the quality of services with measurable societal benefits.

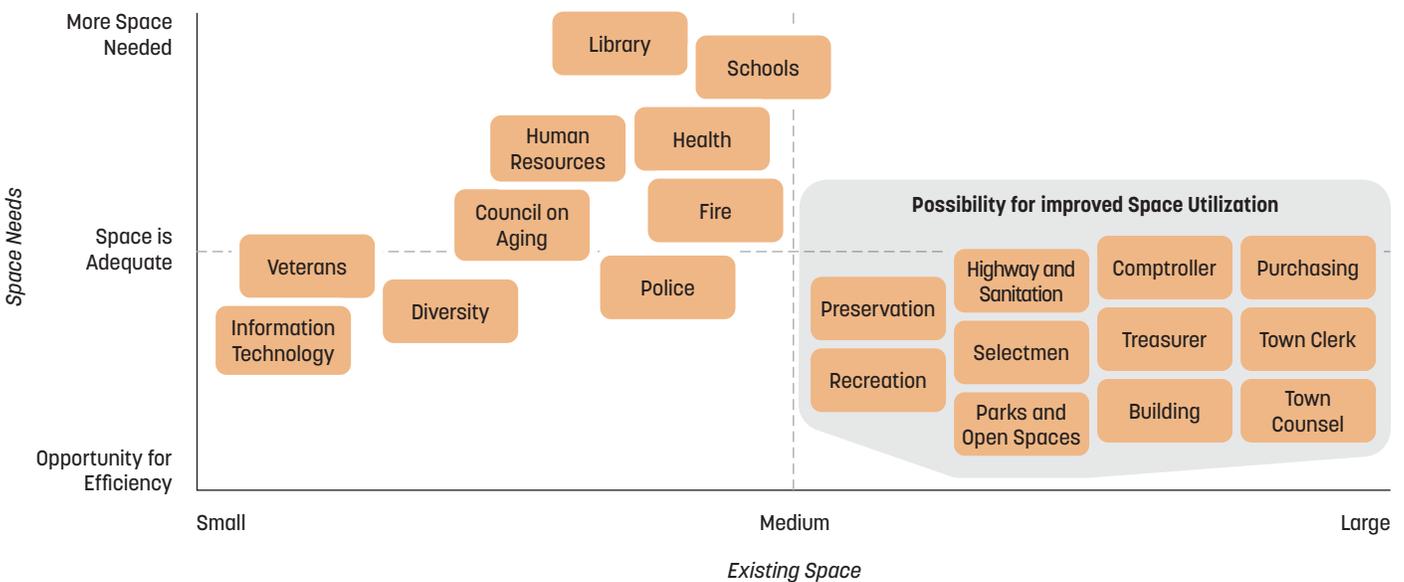
The Gaps and Recommendations section includes ideas that the Town can consider for improving the functionality and efficiency of departments and services. The recommendations are analyzed and assigned a level of investment (low, medium, high) to identify what potential

solutions may be implemented more quickly and with less cost and effort. Some of the proposed solutions may take longer (time) than others and some may be costlier (money) to achieve than others; therefore, evidence about the necessity of these solutions helps inform the longer-term capital planning process.

Organizing and Tracking Needs and Gaps Across Departments/Divisions

Like many communities, the Town of Brookline faces challenges when it comes to expanding or changing the way services are delivered or the size and functionality of a Town-owned facility. Cost implications may be the most immediate obvious challenge, but for Brookline the lack of readily available land that could be used for new facilities or facility expansions may be the most significant constraint. As a community on the edge of Boston, surrounded by other cities, Brookline is relatively land-locked and “built out.” Practical solutions for building new facilities or expanding existing facilities must often rely on either a redevelopment solution, vertical expansion with increased density, or the leasing or acquiring of property. These solutions are typically more complex and expensive than building on a piece of undisturbed or vacant Town-owned land. Therefore, it was important for the SAP to consider categorized needs across all departments and divisions to try to identify common solutions that could

Figure 2.6: Document Storage Space Gap Analysis



directly help multiple entities. The recommendations with multiple benefits across departments are highlighted, such as a space saving solution in one location that could also free up space for another purpose in a different location.

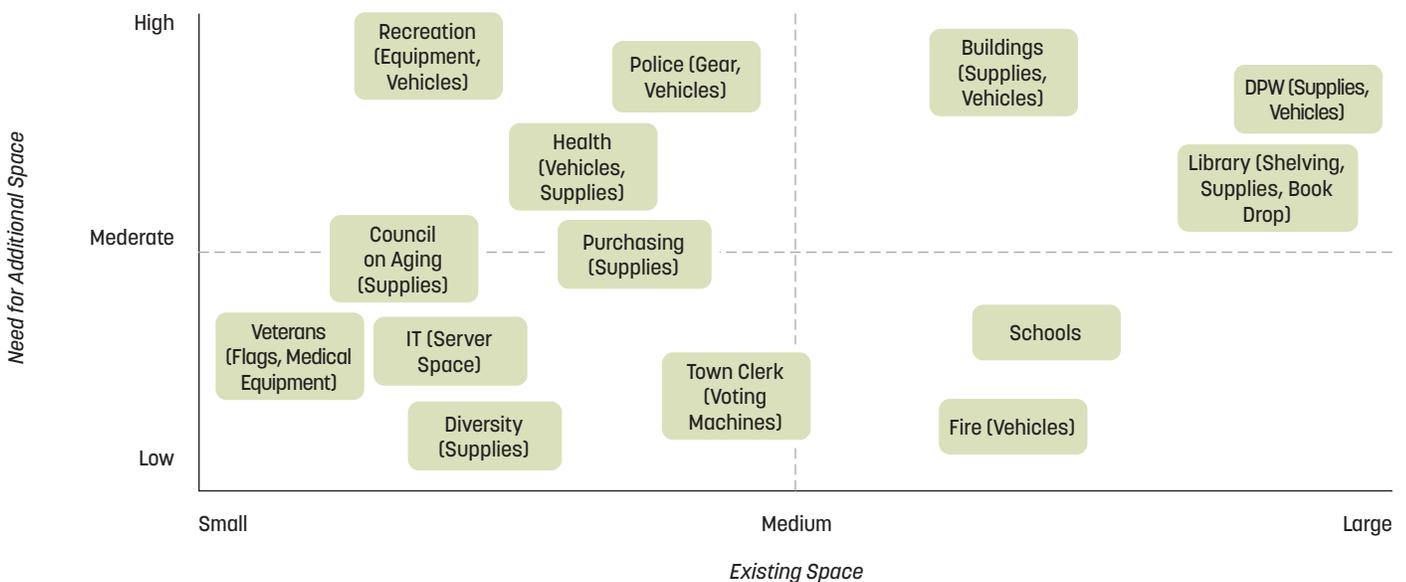
In order to consistently track the overlaps of needs across departments and divisions, the Sasaki Team developed a tracking matrix (Figure 2.6). The matrix identifies which entities had needs across the six categories and whether those current or future needs would be partially or fully met through existing plans and capital budgeting. This allowed the Team to look comprehensively across all departments, understand the greatest areas of overlap, and determine solutions that help multiple departments and divisions in a cost-effective manner.

Finally, the needs were quantified, where possible, across departments and divisions to describe how substantial the projected gap is between what exists today and what will be needed in the future. The charts on this and the previous page visualize the relative difference among the Town’s departments and division needs. By quantifying and visualizing the needs, synergies among the various governmental entities in Brookline can be discerned. For example, Figure 2.6 on the previous page depicts all the departments and divisions with known space constraints related to the storage of paper documentation. It locates each entity on the graph to show how much storage

space they currently have to work with and how much storage space they will likely need. For example, many storage areas in the Town Hall and in the Pierce School are inefficiently organized and utilized. The departments and divisions that use those spaces could realize greater efficiencies for themselves, as well as free up space for other entities in town by undertaking a series of steps to purge, digitize, and reorganize their spaces and to create common shared storage across multiple departments and divisions.

A similar analysis and graph was created for space related to the storage of equipment (Figure 2.7). While it is a bit more challenging to find single solutions that help multiple entities, there are some solutions that would make existing spaces more efficient and would free up additional storage space for smaller equipment needs, particularly in Town Hall. These recommendations, and others, are described in the following Gaps and Recommendations section.

Figure 2.7: Equipment Storage Space Gap Analysis



Gaps & Recommendations

This section details the existing gaps and challenges across Brookline's departments and divisions, and offers a set of recommendations for addressing them.

As was noted in the introduction, the gaps and recommendations are organized into six different categories as a way to think about recommendations that could address needs and gaps across multiple entities. In some cases, there are commonalities between the needs of different departments and divisions. For others, there are direct recommendations to improve their ability to deliver exceptional service. The six categories described in this section include:

1. Document Space and Storage
2. Equipment Space and Storage
3. Employee Space
4. Programmatic Space
5. Parking
6. Personnel

Within each category, there is a description of the types of needs and gaps, a set of recommendations organized by level of investment, and a description of the reasons/evidence behind the recommendations. This document provides the Town with options for addressing the needs and gaps across departments and divisions. It will help Town leaders determine the best way to program funds in the longer-term Capital Improvement Program and the annual Town budget process.

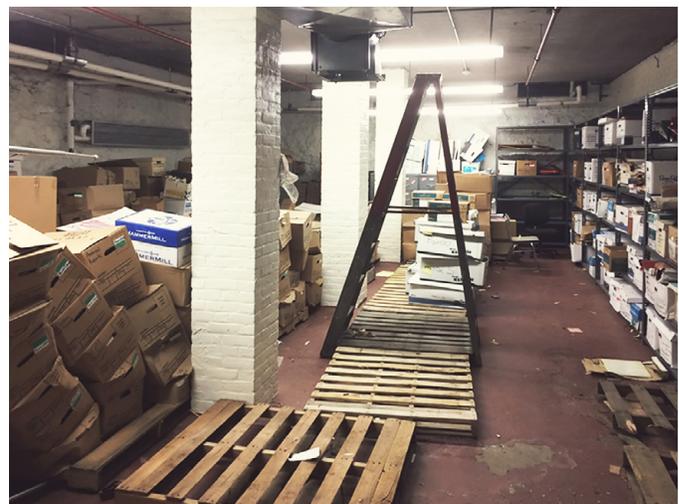
Document Space and Storage

Document storage refers to any paper documentation generated and stored by a department or division. This may include bid documents, maps and plans, historical voter records, and permits and applications. The types, sizes, and volumes of paper documents vary considerably across departments and divisions and this necessitates different space requirements for storage. Likewise, the way

documents are currently stored varies considerably from department to department, by the volume of storage space available, the volume of physical assets that need to be stored, progress toward digitization and archiving, and the efficiency by which storage space is organized and utilized.

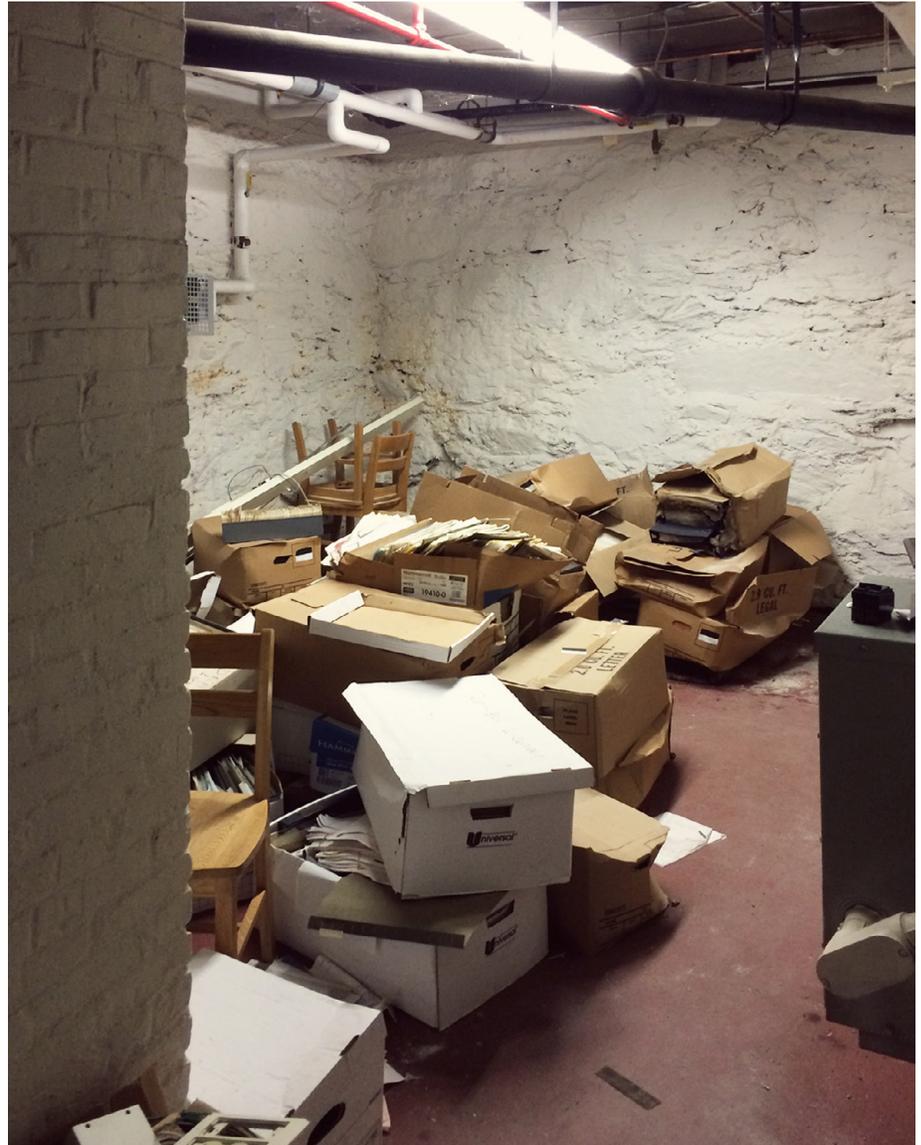
Some departments and divisions have begun the digitization of existing paper documents while disposing existing paper copies. While this helps free up storage space and reduces the amount of storage needed, there are many underlying questions across all departments with regard to local and state record laws, as well as appropriate user-friendly schema or syntax for filing, archiving, and retrieving digital documentation.

Twenty departments and divisions noted needs and gaps when it came to space for the organization and storage of documents. Buildings such as Town Hall have far more than others. In addition to cabinets, file drawers, desks,





(Left Page, Above, and Right) Document Storage Locations in Brookline



and shelving, the basement of Town Hall and the basement of the Pierce School serve as storage areas for both documents and small-scale equipment. Some of the rooms in the Town Hall basement are well-organized, while others lack organizational systems. The basement at the Pierce School is not well-organized. The photos above illustrate two of the spaces at the Pierce School and one area of the Town Hall parking garage that is being used to store boxes of paper documents.

Key Conclusions

- The Town currently has a substantial amount of document storage space. That space is in several different locations, with documents stored in boxes, cabinets, filing cabinets, on shelves, in bins, and in flat shelf storage units.
- The Team estimates the total storage capacity of just Town Hall and the Pierce School basement to be approximately 33,190 cubic feet. Several of the basement storage spaces in both buildings are not organized efficiently and could be modified to maximize space.
- The four storage areas in the basement of the Pierce School hold about 15,000 cubic feet of storage space. A more efficient use of those storage areas could result in an additional 5,000 to 7,500 cubic feet in additional storage space.
- Risk of occasional flooding, poor air quality and its moisture content currently limit how certain basement storage locations may be used.
- Improved organization of existing storage spaces could reduce the current storage “gap” that appears to exist among departments.
- While some departments are integrating the digitization of physical documents and moving to online platforms for the submittal of forms, plans, and permits there are other departments that have not but should.
- The Town should seek legal and archiving assistance to determine what documents can be discarded and which must be kept and archived. This is a critical first step in the document optimization process.



(Left) Example of Mobile Rolling Shelving Units

Organizing Around Space Efficiency

Space efficiency has the potential to create space in existing building footprints that can be used not only for document storage, but also for equipment storage and employee space. The Sasaki Team has identified four primary steps the Town could take to help departments and divisions make more efficient use of space.

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.

It is clear that document storage is an issue, as the following example illustrates. It also shows how a more efficient use of storage space can assist with other needs across Town government.

An interview with the Chief Diversity Officer in the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations revealed that as Brookline continues to grow in population and diversifies, there may be a need to add one additional full-time staff person and one part-time intern. Within the division's current space in the Health Building, there is an additional office that could be used for these two staff members if and when they are hired. Unfortunately, that space is currently taken up by storage for documents and equipment related to the events put on by the staff. If document storage space in Town Hall or at the Pierce School were reorganized, it could free up additional space for documents and event equipment for the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Relations. This in turn could free up the spare office in the Health Building to be used for future staffing needs.

Additional information and reasons behind some of the recommendations are provided in the end notes section of the report.

Recommendations

There are different ways the Town could address the four steps to achieving space efficiency. The Team has detailed three options below that require varying levels of investment in time and money, but all should result in a more efficient system of document storage and maximization of space efficiency.

Low Level of Investment

Engage staff and volunteers in an internal process to sort, structure, digitize, and dispose of records, documents, and plans. This recommendation places the responsibility on staff, interns, and volunteers to develop a protocol and schema for sorting, organizing, and digitizing paper documents. Building staff or contractors could be used to improve existing storage spaces and install more efficient filing systems.

- Engage Town Counsel in clarifying document retention laws for each department and for each type of document currently being stored.²
- Develop a file storage schema for each department and train staff in how to effectively store and retrieve documents.
- Dedicate staff time toward the digitization of paper documents.³
- Train volunteers to scan and archive documents.⁴
- Purchase more purpose-built cabinets and shelving to utilize existing space more effectively.

Medium Level of Investment

Hire a space planning and document consultant.

- Engage Town Counsel in clarifying document retention laws for each department and for each type of document currently being stored.
- Contract with a consultant to work with Town staff to review all stored documentation, determine what can be digitized or disposed of, and how best to arrange storage areas to maximize efficiency.
- Contract with a consultant to design an electronic document storage and retrieval system and train to all staff in how to use the technology.

Centralize document storage within one building.

- Invest in movable shelving, e.g. library book stacks. This will optimize existing storage space by condensing the overall footprint of documents. The current storage arrangement has documents stored in a linear manner and modifying storage vertically will help increase efficiency.
- Invest in climate control in existing storage rooms.

High Level of Investment

Hire a firm to digitize and archive all records.⁵

Hire a full-time employee to oversee/manage document and storage needs.⁶

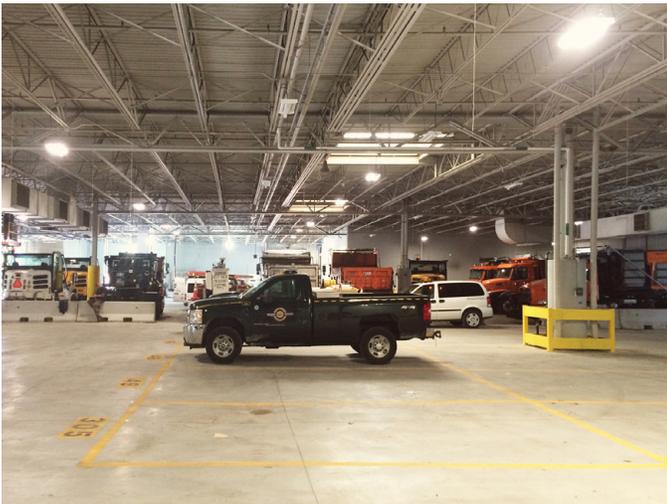
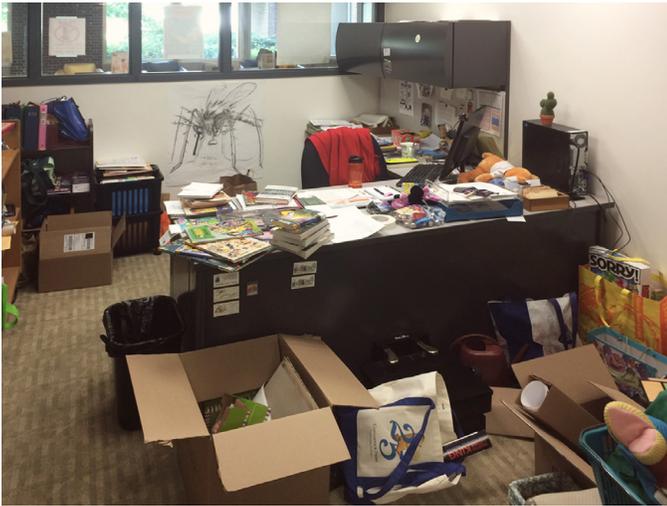
Store archived documents at an offsite location.⁷

Equipment Space and Storage

In addition to document storage needs, numerous departments expressed difficulty in their ability to find places to store equipment. The size and scale of equipment storage varies considerably and is based on the core functions of the department or division. For example, the Library Director would like to find a centralized space to store supplies and games used during children's activities. Public Works would like to find covered space to store heavy construction equipment and roadway sanders. Both storage challenges have implications on service delivery, how space is used inside and outside public facilities, and the lifecycle of supplies and equipment when improperly stored.

Key Conclusions

- Improved equipment inventory management systems can help streamline departmental operations within the Town. Some departments have equipment spread across multiple locations or lack the storage capacity to maintain a ready supply of goods such as lumber, plumbing supplies, or electrical equipment.
- The Building Department's lack of centralized storage and work space creates unintended consequences such as the need to make individual trips to lumber yards or supply stores for materials on an as-needed basis. Tools are shared across maintenance crews which creates issues if a crew at one end of town needs a tool that a



(Top Left) Library supplies taking up office space
 (Bottom Left) DPW heavy engine equipment storage area

(Top Right) Building Department supply and equipment garage
 (Bottom Right) Seasonal equipment storage at Larz Anderson Park

crew on the other end of town has in their vehicle.

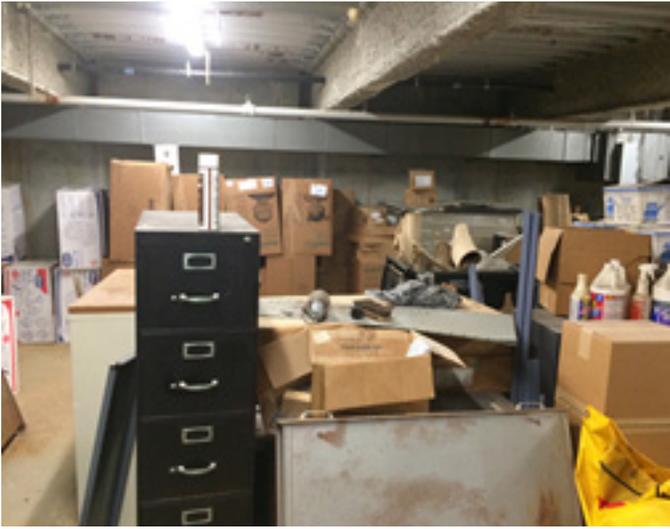
- Additional covered spaces for small and large engine equipment is needed. Currently, departments are cycling their equipment seasonally, effectively storing winter related equipment in the summer, and vice-versa. This is a stop gap measure some departments have undertaken because equipment stored outside will degrade faster from exposure to inclement weather.
- Present spaces for storing current equipment are, in some cases, not large enough. This has resulted in questions arising around how to consolidate and where to build new space. These needs are mentioned in the context of a scarcity of land in Town and the expense that would be incurred if land were purchased.

Inventory, Organize, and Centralize

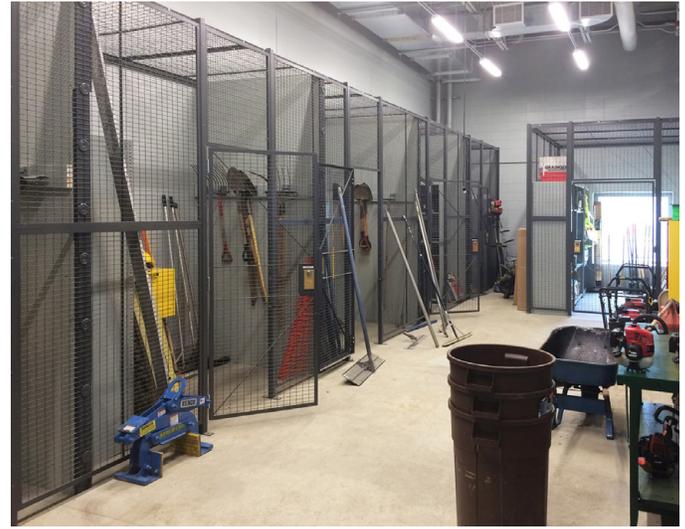
Brookline’s public facilities and assets are spread all across town. Getting to facilities to perform work or maintenance, or to gather supplies and equipment can be time consuming, particularly during commuting

hours. In Brookline, some departments and divisions have centralized dedicated storage for supplies and equipment, others have locations spread across the town, and some have very limited storage capacity overall. A common thread the Team saw and heard throughout the SAP process was a desire to inventory, organize, and centralize storage facilities wherever possible to increase the efficiency of operations. The Sasaki Team has identified three primary steps each department should undertake to evaluate their supply and equipment needs.

1. **Inventory existing supplies and equipment.** Begin with an inventory of existing supplies and equipment which will have two primary benefits. The first will be the creation of a baseline inventory of what each department/division has on hand and where it is currently stored. Second, the inventory process will identify supplies and equipment that may no longer be needed and can be sold or discarded to free up space in storage areas.
2. **Organize existing storage areas.** Each department/division should organize their storage areas to



(Above Left) The basement of the Municipal Service Center could be better organized to maximize efficiency of storage space.



(Above Right) DPW crews have their own caged storage areas with organized equipment.

maximize efficiency. This may involve purchasing shelving, cabinets, or wall hangers to help organize supplies and equipment.

3. **Centralize storage.** Some departments and divisions have no centralized location for storing their supplies and equipment and/or the building they are housed in does not have adequate storage space. By creating an inventory and organizing existing space should the Town can begin to assess the merit of creating more storage space.

The efficiencies gained through the organization, digitization, and purging of paper documents will free up space in municipal buildings to be used for other purposes. As spaces in the Town Hall and Pierce School basements are cleared and organized, room can be made for departments/divisions looking for additional storage space for supplies and small equipment.

A Case for Centralized Storage

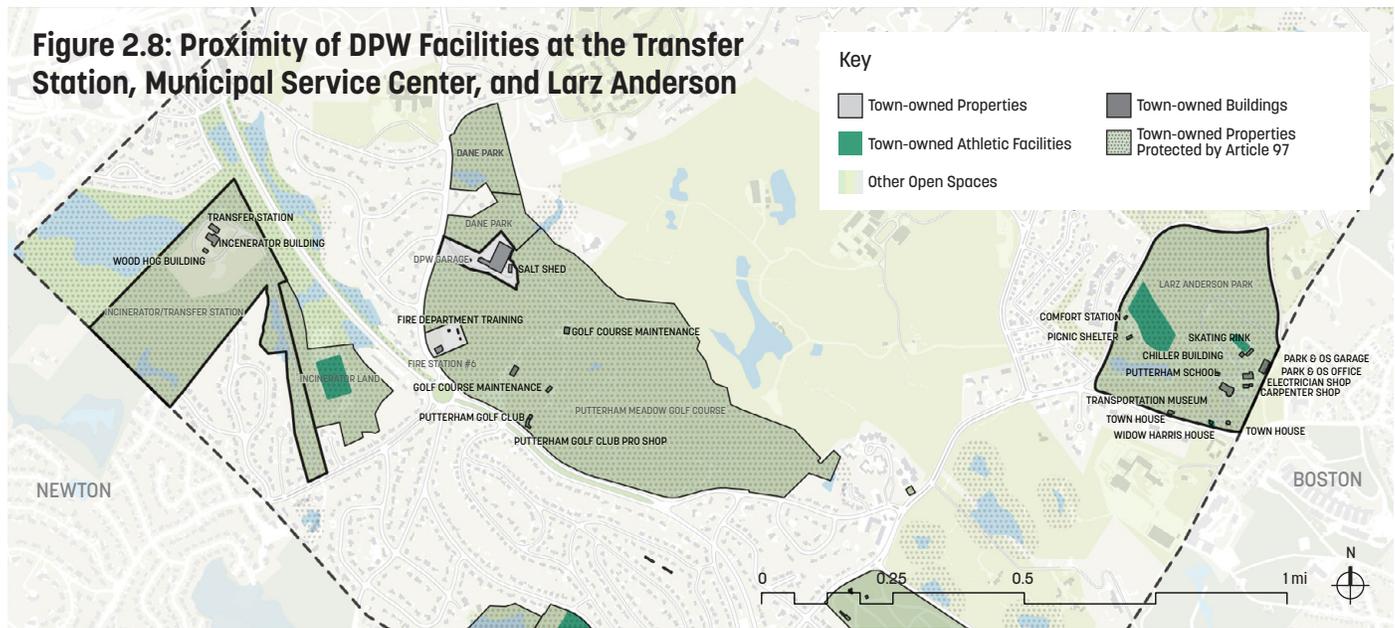
The following example illustrates how a centralized storage space could improve the efficiency of service delivery for the Public Building Division.

The Public Building Division within the Building Department is responsible for maintaining all the Town-owned buildings in Brookline. That equates to roughly 77 facilities and over 2.1 million square feet of maintainable space. As was shown in Figure 2.2 (Facilities Map), these facilities are spread across town requiring building craftspeople to travel in their work vans from place to place, often during peak travel times when traffic is heavy. One of the challenges the division faces is the inefficiencies created by the lack of centralized storage for both equipment and supplies.

The Public Buildings Division has three primary facilities for employees, fabrication, and storage of supplies and equipment. The electric shop and carpenter shop are located at Larz Anderson. The paint shop is located in a large garage space below the Old Lincoln School and is accessed off Route 9. The two shops at Larz Anderson total about 4,000 square feet, but are used for employee work space, fabrication space, and storage space. The garage off Route 9 is just under 2,000 square feet and is used primarily to store paint supplies, scaffolding, and lifts. While there may be some ability to gain efficiencies through inventorying and organizing these spaces, such opportunity is limited. A consolidated and centralized facility would be far more beneficial to the Division and could result in a more efficient delivery of services.

This limitation in the storage for supplies creates inefficiencies in the way the division employees conduct their day-to-day work orders. The lack of centralized supply storage results in employees having to drive to lumber yards and supply stores during the work day (mostly during morning commute times) to pick up supplies in order to complete work orders. An interview with the Director of Public Buildings revealed employees may be spending up to 42 hours a week in aggregate making supply runs. This is time not spent on building maintenance. With additional public buildings slated to come online in the coming years, the demand on the Public Buildings Division will grow as will the need for additional space.⁸

Additional information and reasons behind some of the recommendations are provided in the end notes section of the report.



Recommendations

Low Level of Investment

Inventory and optimize current storage areas and facilities.

- 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.
- 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.⁹
- 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.¹⁰
- 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.¹¹

Medium Level of Investment

Centralize and improve storage at existing facilities.

- Create a centralized location for storing supplies and equipment used for events that are organized by the Diversity Department.¹²
- Create a centralized location within the Main Library for storing supplies and equipment related to

programming and events.

- Create covered structures for heavy equipment that stays outside when not in use during the season.
 - o Construct additional overhead canopies at the Municipal Service Center for DPW heavy equipment and machinery.¹³
 - o Construct a parking deck or canopy system for the Police Department so that their vehicles are covered during winter.¹³
- 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.¹⁴

High Level of Investment

Construct new storage facilities to expand storage capacity for equipment and supplies.

- 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.¹⁵
- 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.¹⁶
- 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.¹⁷ 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

Employee space is the square footage in municipal facilities that is used by employees for day-to-day work. Offices, cubicles, common areas, and conference rooms. Throughout the SAP process, the Team discussed employee space needs and gaps with department and division heads. Much of the discussion revolved around limitations on hiring due to space constraints in existing offices. The hiring of additional employees relies on a budgetary decision to fund new positions, but also relies on the ability of the departments and divisions to find space to house new employees. For some departments and divisions, this appears to be one of the biggest hurdles to hiring new employees.

Key Conclusions

- Town Hall does not have enough conference space to accommodate staff meetings, bid meetings, and board and committee meetings. More cross-departmental flexibility is needed with regard to using and reserving meeting space.
- There appears to be a protocol for reserving conference rooms/meeting rooms, but not all departments are clear on how space is reserved.
- Additional space for training purposes is desired.

A Multi-pronged Approach to Space Efficiency

As was discussed earlier in the SAP, there are ways in which greater organization and efficiencies from document and equipment storage could help free up additional employee work space. If more paper, supplies, and equipment are moved to basement locations or spaces specifically organized for storage purposes, additional space in some departments and divisions may become available for employees. However, this is not the only way the Town could make more efficient use of existing space. Many private companies are moving toward flexible work schedules, working from home, and shrinking employee space footprints using smaller workspaces or shared workspaces. The Town could also consider similar policies to improve the efficiency of space and create opportunities for shared work spaces across multiple employees. This could work well for part-time employees who have more flexibility in their schedules. During the Team's interview with the Town Administrator, it was noted that more flexible work place and space policies are possible but would need to be vetted

through legal counsel and employee unions to ensure there are no issues with existing contracts.

It is important to note here that the Town should prioritize the low and medium level investment recommendations before building or acquiring new space or property. The Town should demonstrate the specific need cannot be accommodated on property already owned or controlled by the Town, and secondly, that the property being considered is the single best property to acquire for that use, according to criteria established for that specific need. Prior to restricting, leasing out, or selling property, the Town should demonstrate that there are no known future municipal uses that could partially or fully be accommodated on that property, and secondly, that use accommodated on the property is no longer needed by the Town or can be better accommodated on another Town controlled site.

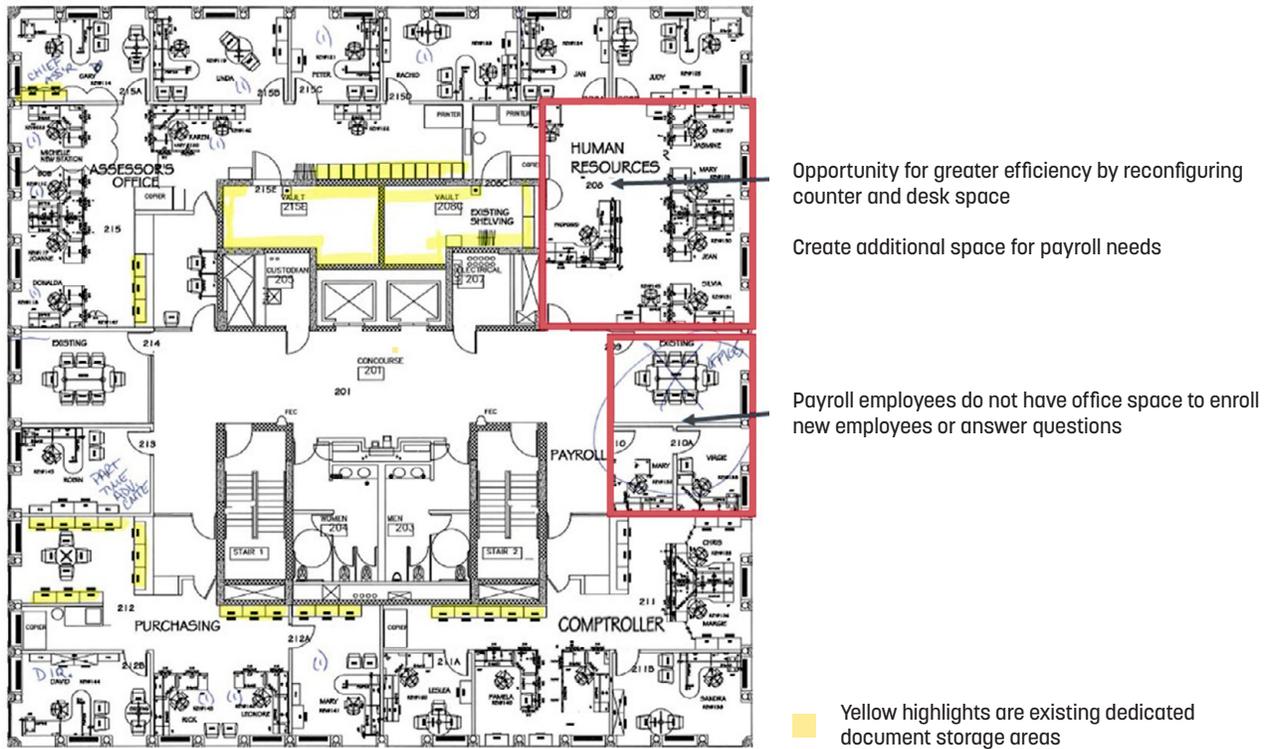
A Case for Space Efficiency

Consider the following example that illustrates how more proactive and progressive work policies could help alleviate employee space concerns, particularly as they relate to the spaces in Town Hall.

The Town could use a suite of space efficiency solutions to create additional employee space at Town Hall. According to an analysis completed by Brookline's Public Buildings Division, there are 156 employees working in Town Hall at an average of 218 square feet per employee. This figure accounts for work spaces and common spaces inside each department/division, but does not include hallways, elevators, stairs, and storage spaces outside the walls of each department/division. Across the departments/divisions, there is a wide range of square foot averages. For example, Payroll has an average of 96 square feet per employee while the Clerk's Office has an average of 363 square feet per employee.

One issue the Team discussed with Payroll staff was the lack of space for new employees to sit with Payroll staff while being entered into the Town's system, and having questions answered. Currently, Payroll staff sit at a small desk in the open hallway to have these conversations. The staff would be better served with a more private interior space for these discussions. One opportunity is to make more efficient use of the interior space in the Comptroller's office, particularly the larger open area in the front section of the office. Figure 2.9 illustrates the

Figure 2.9: Town Hall Space Efficiency Example



proximity of the Comptroller and Payroll and the amount of space used by each.

Additional ideas which arose through the interview process and site visits of Town facilities include allowing employees to work from home who may not be responsible for day-to-day interactions with the public. Employees could be allowed to work from home certain days of the week which would create flexibility in work schedules and allow the sharing of work space. Another option is to examine opportunities to create flexible work schedules for part-time workers to avoid overlapping hours where possible. This could open opportunities for sharing work spaces across multiple employees. Finally, the Town could consider reconfiguring office and cubicle spaces to lower the average space per employee. This may be challenging in a building like Town Hall where it would require moving walls and partitions to shrink an office. There may also be objections from current employees who would lose square footage.

Additional information and reasons behind some of the recommendations are provided in the end notes section of the report.

Recommendations

Low Level of Investment

- Update the existing conference room reservation

system. The current system is inefficient and requires coordinating with the Building Department. Transitioning to Microsoft Outlook for conference room reservations can streamline the process. The Building Department could still help resolve scheduling conflicts as they come up, but it would not oversee the initial scheduling for conference rooms.¹⁸

- Increase opportunities for conversations between departments that could lead to shared space solutions. This could be applicable in cases where a department needs space for an additional employee or function and this space doesn't necessarily need to be housed within the department's existing floor plan. One option for ensuring these conversations occur at regular intervals would be to include this as an agenda item at monthly department head meetings.
- Increase the size of the female locker room and add lockers at the Police Station. There are approximately fifteen female lockers, but more space is needed, particularly as more women are hired on the police force.

Medium Level of Investment

- Optimize document storage through investments in shelving, filing cabinets, document digitization, and off-site archiving to free up space for employees. This recommendation goes hand-in-hand with those listed under the Document Storage recommendations.
- Modify the existing departmental office configurations

to accommodate more office and/or workspace for employees. One option could be moving the Advisory Staff to the Select Board's Office and then using the Advisory Office for a private meeting room.

- Create designated office space for both the Occupational Health Nurse and Human Resources Department to conduct private and confidential meetings with employees.¹⁹
- 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.²⁰
- 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.²¹
- 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.

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.²²

Programmatic Space

Programmatic needs often walk a fine line between what a Town truly needs to support service delivery and what residents and departments/divisions would like to have. This category covers public spaces that are programmed for specific purposes, often for public use. These include recreational playing fields, gyms, parks, community centers, training facilities, childcare facilities, etc. Often, the addition of programmatic space requires the acquisition or repositioning of land and construction of new space to meet the current or projected needs of the community. The requests for programmatic space tend to be very department-specific except where spaces can be shared across departments and divisions.

Key Conclusions

- The Recreation Department has the most programmatic space limitation placed upon it, as they coordinate or organize many programs such as: Early Childhood Education, After School Program, and Youth Sports. Demand for these services outstrips existing capacity of physical spaces such as classrooms, playing fields, and parks. Without additions to the existing physical spaces presently in use, programmatic services will remain at maximum capacity.
- The high demand placed on recreation facilities, particularly natural grass fields, makes it difficult to take a field out of service to perform proper maintenance.
- Space limitations inhibit Town departments from expanding programmatic services desired by residents. While desirable, venues such as a community center or performance space are difficult to develop given their size and financial costs. The Town should undertake a feasibility study to determine if the space is necessary, where it might be located, how large it should be, and what it might cost.

Partnerships to Address Deficiencies

The following example illustrates some of the challenges facing the Town of Brookline's Recreation Department with regard to increased utilization of fields and facilities.

Brookline's Recreation Department is under tremendous constraints when it comes to having enough recreation facilities (both indoor and outdoor) to handle and sustain the demand from residents. Current projections from the Park, Open Space and Recreation Master Plan show a need for up to six additional rectangular playing fields and six additional baseball fields to keep pace with the use needs established in 2006. Without the additional fields, it becomes extremely difficult to take fields out of rotation for routine maintenance. This results in overuse, more frequent and costly maintenance, and disruptions to playing schedules. Brookline's population has grown since the Master Plan was established and is projected to grow over the next ten to fifteen years which will only exacerbate the current problem if solutions are not found.

One way the Recreation Department has tried to mitigate these circumstances is by partnering with other local



(Right) Library book donation sorting and storage area.

entities that have recreation facilities that are not used as frequently as the Town-owned facilities. Agreements are in place with nearly every private school in Brookline and some in Boston. The Town also has facility sharing agreements with nearby colleges and universities like Boston College, Boston University, Northeastern, and Simmons. These agreements are reciprocal, meaning these partners can also use Town facilities when they are not scheduled for Brookline recreation purposes. As of 2017, the Recreation Department has entered into partnership agreements with every entity in Brookline with recreation facilities except Pine Manor College.

While additional space for recreation fields and facilities is challenging to come by in Brookline, recreation programs are important to the health, development, and social cohesion of the town’s residents.

Additional information and reasons behind some of the recommendations are provided in the end notes section of the report.

Recommendations

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.²³

Medium Level of Investment

- Streamline the process that inventories and stores books donated to the libraries through the Friends of the Library program. The sale of these books is an

important funding source for the Library.²⁴

- 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.

High Level of Investment

- Identify and purchase land for the construction of six rectangular fields and six baseball fields to meet the existing demand for recreation programs.
- 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.²⁵

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:

- 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.
- Build a new indoor skating rink.
- Build a police training facility that serves the needs for training and equipment storage related to police training.²⁶

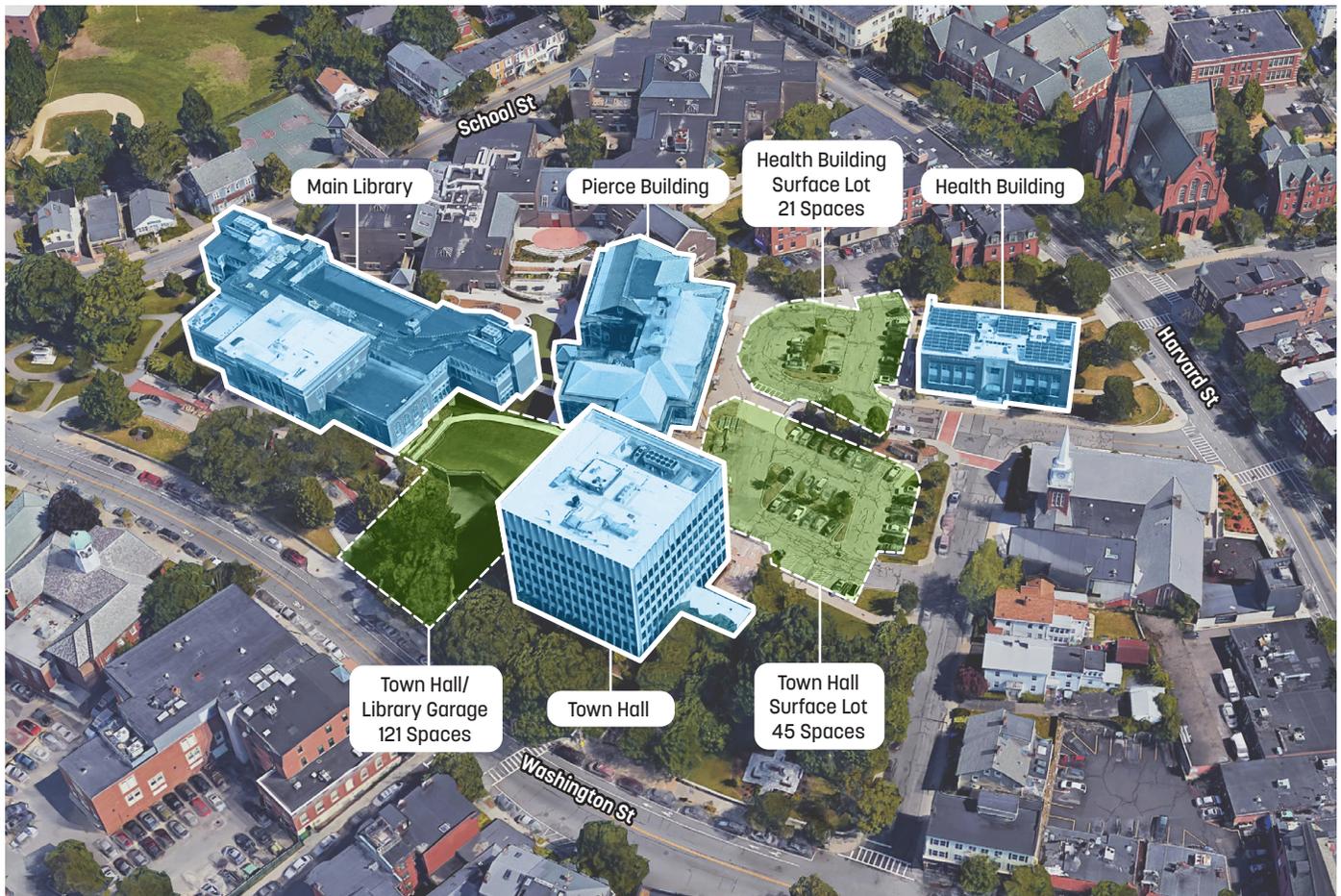


Figure 2.10: Municipal Buildings and Selected Parking Lots

Parking

Parking is a challenging issue in Brookline for employees, residents, and visitors. The parking footprint at Town Hall is limited to underground structured parking, a relatively small surface parking lot, and on-street parking spaces (Figure 2.10). Nearly every department interviewed as part of this process noted parking as a substantial challenge. While many acknowledge the issue, they also acknowledge that it cannot be solved by building more parking, at least not at the Town Hall site. It is more sustainable and fiscally-prudent to identify other measures to reduce parking demand or to make more efficient use of the existing parking assets of the Town. During interviews with department and division heads, parking issues appeared to be most severe at Town Hall, the Senior Center, several school sites, and the libraries. In an attempt to find creative ways to solve some parking challenges, the Town has hired Howard Stein Hudson (HSH) to analyze parking needs and constraints at Town-owned facilities and develop recommendations for parking policies and programs. The SAP recommendations in this document will be coordinated with the work of HSH over the next few months.

Key Conclusions

- Existing parking demand exceeds supply in and around municipal buildings. The Team estimates that Town Hall and adjoining buildings have 309 parking spaces, while the potential number of users is 431. The imbalance of supply and demand results in wasted time by Town staff as they search for on-street parking.
- If employees leave during the work day to conduct site visits or business outside Town Hall, parking is often very difficult to find when they return. This results in having to park on-street and potentially move the vehicle every two hours.
- Many committee and board members cited difficulties parking at Town Hall as well when they are required to come in for meetings.
- There are several school sites that currently lack a comprehensive transportation plan.
- The Town does not offer any incentive programs for employees to walk, bike, or utilize public transportation to get to work.
- The Senior Center lacks parking for employees and senior residents. The Senior Center does not have enough handicap parking for which demand is likely to increase over time.

Maximizing Existing Parking Resources and TDM Policies

The following example illustrates the challenges and potential solutions for employee parking in Brookline.

After speaking with nearly every department and division in the Town of Brookline, the team identified parking as the number one challenge. Parking is very tight at Town Hall, at the Municipal Service Center, at the Senior Center, at the libraries, and at many recreation fields and parks. Building more parking is not only cost-prohibitive, but would likely encourage more people to drive to work or to Town facilities which the Town wishes to discourage.

One key challenge at Town Hall was garage parking, particularly for employees who do site visits throughout the day. Once an employee drives to a site visit, the parking space is quickly filled by another vehicle. Returning to Town Hall, the employee usually has to find a space on a nearby street. Many of these streets have two-hour time limitations which requires the employee to periodically leave the office, move their car to a new on-street space, and return once again to work. This is time consuming and inefficient.

The Town would be best served by maximizing the on- and off-street parking assets already in place and looking internally to implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) policies to reduce the overall number of employees arriving at work in personal vehicles. TDM strategies range from transit pass subsidies to bike share membership and carpooling incentives. Howard Stein Hudson recently completed an assessment of where Town employees live. The assessment found that 229 (15%) of Brookline Town employees live in Brookline. While a percentage of those employees may not be driving to work today, there are many that could potentially use other non-automobile modes of travel and thereby reduce the demand for parking spaces at Town-owned facilities.

Additional information and reasons behind some of the recommendations are provided in the end notes section of the report. It is important to note here that the Town should prioritize the low and medium level investment recommendations before building or acquiring new space.

Recommendations

Low Level of Investment

- Create an incentive program for employees who want to carpool to work.
- 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.
- 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.
- Create a parking pass for approved volunteers which would allow them to park in the below ground Pierce and Town Hall garage after 5PM.
- 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.
- 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.
- Designate additional handicap parking spaces for the Senior Center.

Medium Level of Investment

- Fund a public transit subsidy for Town employees. This can encourage employees who live near transit to utilize it.
- 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.
- Create/designate an offsite lot for employees with shuttle service to various Town facilities.

High Level of Investment

- Build six to eight additional parking spaces for Fire Station 1 (140 Washington Street) to accommodate parking for Fire Department staff.²⁷
- 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

In Brookline, like most communities, the need for additional personnel stems from either the need to provide more of the services that are in place today, or from a desire to offer new services different from or in addition to what are in place today. Overall, most departments recognize the budgetary challenges of adding new staff, as well as the space constraints on where new employees would be located. These two constraints result in modest requests for staffing and an effort to find efficiencies in service delivery in order to meet the demands placed on departments.

Key Takeaways

- The Team estimates a total of 48 new employees may be needed over the next five to ten years to meet current and future service demands.²⁸
- Using an estimate of 150 square feet per new employee (assuming they all need dedicated office space), the 48 new employees would need 5,000 square feet of space.²⁹
- Not factored into the employee space gap calculation are the 45 school administration staff currently working out of leased private commercial space. As the team understands it, the lease runs out in 2019 if it is not renewed, there will be a need to replace the 10,000 square feet of leased space in another location in Brookline. While these are not new employees, there is the potential for a significant space need should the lease not be renewed.

Recommendations

Medium Level of Investment

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

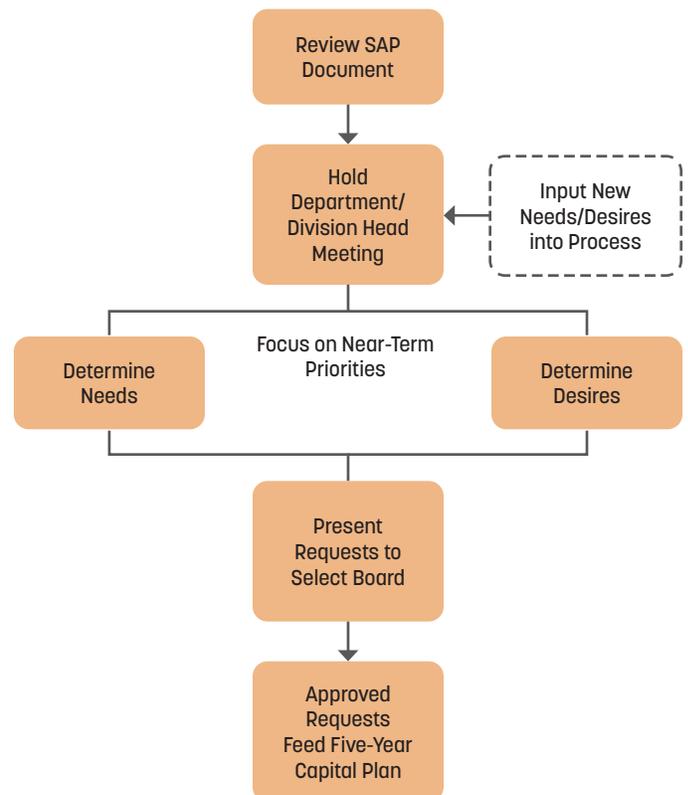
High Level of Investment

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

Process for Evaluating Future Needs

It is important that the SAP be continually evaluated each year under a coordinated approach that involves all department and division heads to ensure near-term needs and desires are captured and communicated. The Sasaki Team recommends the Town undertake a process similar to the one shown in Figure 2.11. Departments and divisions would lead an initial review of the SAP document and determine what needs continue to go unmet. Coordination across departments and divisions could lead to shared ideas and resources that can be applied across departments to solve similar needs and gaps. It will be important to determine the difference between near-term needs and desires critical to the delivery of services. This information should then feed into the Select Board’s capital and budget process, and ultimately into the five-year Capital Plan.

Figure 2.11: Evolution Diagram



Endnotes for Recommendations

1. All departments were interviewed with the exception of the Town Clerk's office due to time constraints and inability to schedule.
2. Determining a document lifecycle policy is important for each department/division. Currently, many staff members do not know how long paper documents need to be retained. This has led to a very cautious approach to document retention. This is the first step in determining what can be disposed of and what needs to be kept for records law. Town staff should also not discard historical documentation central to the Town's records. One suggestion is to involve the Library's archivist to determine what should be kept for historical purposes and what could be disposed of consistent with records laws.
3. The challenge becomes finding the time for existing employees that can be dedicate toward this task while also completing their day-to-day required tasks. A directive would have to come from the Select Board and/or Town Administrator's office to provide the flexibility for staff to work on document organization tasks.
4. Some departments are already using part-time staff and volunteers (senior work-off program) to scan and archive paper documents.
5. The Town could consider hiring a consultant to develop a digital schema for organizing and archiving documents and to digitize documents for each department. This would save staff time and allow them to focus on their day-to-day tasks.
6. The Town could consider hiring a full-time document and storage management staff person. This would come with recurring salary and benefits cost and the Town would need to find work space for this employee.
7. There are a number of private companies that offer secure off-site archival storage for government entities. The Sasaki Team received a price quote from one such company and estimates a cost of \$1.00 per cubic foot per month to store paper documents in 1.2 cubic foot banker's boxes. Storing 80 bankers boxes could cost the Town as much as \$100 per month, or \$1,200 per year.
8. Interview with Charlie Simmons, Director of Public Buildings. October, 2017.
9. During site visits to different Town facilities, the Team noted that basic supplies are stored in small closets, kitchens, and offices because of the lack of centralized storage. The Main Library was a perfect example where supplies are stored in electrical closets and utility closets because there was no other place to put extra supplies.
10. The role, functionality, and media offerings at Brookline's libraries are changing. This has an impact on the sizes and types of spaces needed to continue serving the resident population. iPads are replacing books, computers work stations are replacing reading tables, and the library is expanding offerings beyond books to include items like cake pans, board games, coloring books, and video games. Storage is no longer limited to book shelves, in fact, the library currently has many unused shelving units that could be repurposed or sold to make room for today's storage needs. Interviews with the Library Director, as well as site visits to the Main and Coolidge Libraries, revealed a need for better organization of existing storage areas, as well as a centralized location to store supplies and equipment. While on-site, the Team noted that the children's librarian's office was being used to store supplies for children's activities (paper, art supplies, games, etc.) because there was no other alternative identified. If that space were freed up, that office space could probably fit an additional employee as needed.
11. This recommendation could serve as a short-term, lower-cost fix for the Public Buildings Division while decisions are made on building a larger centralized facility.

12. Currently, the Office of Diversity uses an employee office for storing supplies and equipment. If storage space were optimized in the Town Hall basement, this would offer a nearby centralized alternative for storage.
13. A site visit to the Municipal Service Center (MSC) revealed that there is not enough storage space in the garage to store all DPW equipment and vehicles indoors. From the Team's review, there were several plows, salt spreaders, and some heavy construction vehicles that were exposed to the elements. It may be possible to construct a canopy on the backside of the MSC, but vehicle clearance heights would need to be considered because of the proximity of the garage bays to these potential canopy structures.
14. The basement of the MSC houses some police department supplies now. With reorganization and clean-up, this could offer a centralized location for small-scale supplies and equipment that do not need to be accessed regularly. The police department also has trailers and equipment at the Larz Anderson facilities which are outside and exposed to the elements. If a canopy system were put in place at the Police Station, it's possible some of those trailers could be moved and protected under a canopy.
15. One of the key challenges facing the Recreation Department is equipment storage for sports and activities at the fields in Brookline. Currently, parents, coaches, and Recreation staff members have to drive equipment to the various fields around town for practices and games. This results in considerable staff time spent driving and equipping fields that may otherwise be directed toward other tasks. An interview with the Recreation Director indicated that 18 of the 22 Town-owned recreation fields do not have any equipment storage facilities. Ideally, each field would have a 10x10 equipment locker or shed for storage purposes. A basic metal shed might cost the Town between \$500 and \$700, depending on quality and durability.
16. The 2013 Municipal Service Center Study recommended that a 37,000-square foot unconditioned storage facility for equipment be constructed at the Transfer Station. This storage facility would allow DPW to store their seasonal outdoor equipment indoors and it would centralize storage at this facility. Currently, seasonal equipment is stored at the Municipal Service Center and in a building at Larz Anderson. DPW staff are now required to switch out seasonal equipment as needed from two different locations. This space would not house any employees from the Municipal Service Center or Town Hall.
17. The 2016 Public Buildings Division Operations Study indicated the Public Buildings Division needs a centralized facility of approximately 40,000 square feet, of which 4,000-5,000 square feet would be used for employee and common area space. The other 35,000 square feet would be used for equipment storage, vehicle storage, supplies, and work/fabrication space. This facility would be large enough to accommodate longer-term storage of supplies and help eliminate the inefficiencies of staff driving multiple times a week to pick up supplies from local stores. This larger facility would also allow the Division to hire the additional craftspeople they need to keep up with current and future building maintenance demand. As was noted in the body of the SAP, one major challenge in constructing this building is the availability of land and the cost of developing such a facility. Therefore, this is listed as a high investment recommendation.
18. In addition to employee work space, conference space is at a premium in Town buildings. Town Hall is a focal point for this issue as there are many departments, boards, committees, and Town groups that all compete for the same limited conference and meeting spaces throughout the day. One of the issues that arose from conversations with staff were the challenges with the current reservation system and how it is managed. Switching over to a more reliable and consistently-applied reservation system could help free up conference space and reduce employee frustrations with reservations. The other option is to look into the possibility of holding meetings in other ways by incorporating video conferencing and phone conferencing technology. To be sure that potential solutions meet Open Meeting Laws, Town Counsel should provide guidance on the types of meetings where this could apply legally.
19. One challenge the Town has, particularly in Town Hall, is the lack of small-scale private meeting space that could be used by staff in Human Resources or in the Health Department. During our interviews and

our site visits to Town Hall and the Health Building, the Team noted a clear lack of small meeting spaces that could comfortably seat one to three individuals. The size of this space would be between 75 and 100 square feet. It's possible that a reconfiguration of office space on the first floor of Town Hall could open up an opportunity to turn an existing office into a private meeting space.

20. The Elliot Recreation Building is in need of expansion to accommodate additional employees, a conference room, and more storage on the first floor. The Town does have plans to develop a 1,500 square foot addition to the building, but it has not been budgeted in the Capital Improvement Plan. While this is not the ideal situation for Recreation staff, it does offer a shorter-term, lower-cost solution. Other alternatives that have been discussed include substantial renovations to the Tappan Center to create a centralized Health and Wellness center that would improve the current facility, centralize staff, and add storage capacity. This solution is far more expensive and would push immediate space needs off much further into the future. Early estimates from the School Department placed a renovated and expanded Tappan Center at around \$60 million and included a link to the pool, a competition gym, dance studios, locker rooms, and more.
21. The School Department is currently leasing 10,000 square feet of private space at 24 Webster Place for school administration staff, testing space, and small conference rooms. There are 47 employees occupying the space today. The School Department leases other properties around Brookline as well for school functions and after-school care. According to School Department officials, the cost of leased space is nearly one million dollars a year. Many leases are coming due in 2019, but in the absence of available land or buildings to purchase, finding that amount of space in existing buildings is challenging. For now, the Town is better off extending existing leases unless an opportunity presents itself between now and the end of the lease agreements to purchase space or buildings for these school functions..
22. One challenge with this approach is the time and money it takes to purchase multiple contiguous, individual sites to accommodate the needs of the Town. The Town, unlike private developers/property owners, is much slower to react to pending real estate deals because it needs Town Meeting approval to appropriate funds to purchase land on the open market.
23. During an interview with School Department staff, it was noted that there is room for further improvement in communications between school staff and recreation staff to ensure Town-run programs are always receiving first priority.
24. A substantial number of book donations are sorted and processed at the Main Library, but the room where those books are first sorted and stored is too small. During an on-site tour of the library and after an interview with the Library Director, it was clear that more space is needed in the Main Library for the purposes of accepting book donations, sorting the books into categories/genres, and preparing the books for periodic sales. The Friends of the Library collect around \$50,000 per year from book sales which helps to offset costs the Library incurs outside its line items in the annual Town budget.
25. Interviews with both Recreation and School Department staff indicated that the current after-school programs for Brookline students are oversubscribed and space for these programs is in high demand. Recent estimates show a waitlist of approximately 10 families in Brookline who cannot enroll in after-school programs run by the Recreation Department, and a total waitlist (recreation and school programs) of about 150 families. With the conclusion of the Devotion School project and the future construction of a 9th elementary school, there is the possibility of accommodating more of the current waitlist. As noted by the School Department, there is less space for classrooms and other school-related programming when they are being used by after-school programs. A recommendation has been made by the Recreation Department to find dedicated space for after-school programming outside of the schools to relieve some of the pressure on existing spaces.
26. A second option would be to approach other cities/towns in the region to see if a regional police training facility could be constructed to serve more than just Brookline.
27. The Fire Department noted that some parking at the Housing Authority property across from Station 1

may be lost due to the reconfiguration of roadways as part of the Brookline Village Gateway transportation project. The Fire Department currently uses four of those spaces for staff vehicle parking.

28. During staff interviews the following departments and divisions noted staffing increases.
- Building Department – 2 full-time administrative staff, 7 full-time tradesmen.
 - Council on Aging – 1 full-time administrative staff person.
 - Diversity – 1 full-time administrative staff person.
 - Health Department – 3 full-time administrative staff members.
 - IT – 1 full-time administrative staff person.
 - Library – 10 full-time administrative staff members.
 - Public Works – 16 full-time administrative staff members.
 - Recreation – 7 full-time equivalent staff members. Most of the projected employee needs are for part-time workers which were converted into FTE's by the Recreation Director.
29. The Sasaki Team estimated a need for about 150 square feet for each full-time administrative office worker and about ten square feet for trades workers in the Public Buildings Division. After discussion with the Director, it was determined that trades workers only need a work station and computer on a small desk because they spend the majority of their time in the field. Most work orders are now handled through tablets, cutting down on the amount of space needed per employee. Additional employees in the Recreation Department were assumed to need no space because most of them would be part-time and in the field as well.



Brookline is a dynamic town with a diversity of landscapes, variety in its development pattern, and ever-changing community needs that are influenced by its proximity to Boston and its location in the region. These forces, some of which are internal and some external, are putting pressure on the town to change and adapt. Within this context, the Town has begun taking proactive steps toward understanding current conditions, looking forward to future trends, planning for longer-term capital and service needs, and seeking to better understand the capacity and potential for change of larger properties within the Town. This proactive approach to planning has led Brookline to undertake a Strategic Asset Plan (SAP) and Major Parcel Study (MPS) .

Digital versions of the MPS and SAP are available online at: <http://www.brooklinema.gov/>