

Memorandum

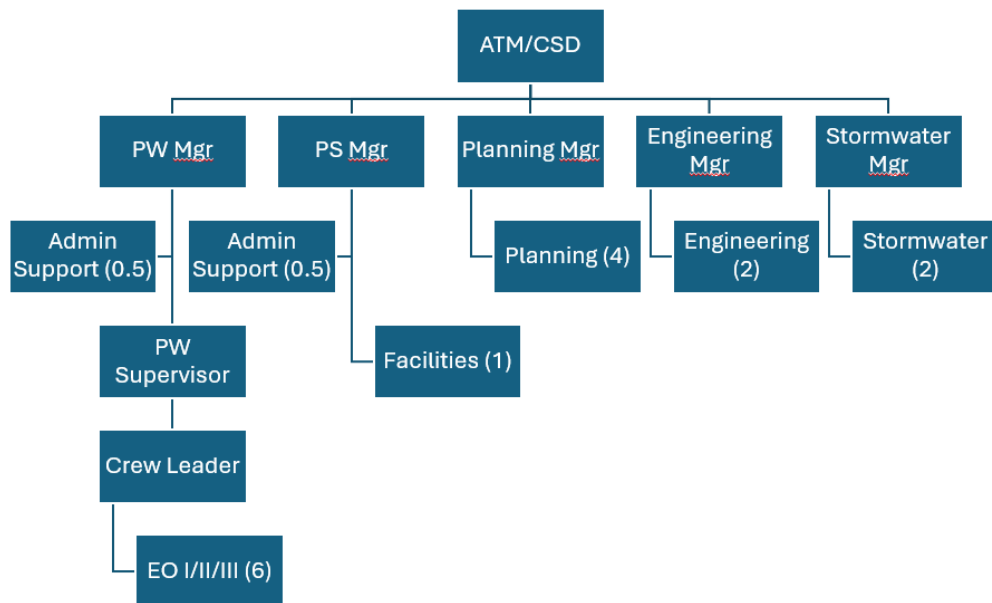
To: Eric Peterson, Town Manager
From: Matt Efird, Assistant Town Manager
Date: 3/1/2026
Subject: Proposal for Community Services Reorganization



With the resignation of the Public Works Manager, there is an opportunity to evaluate and adjust the structure and alignment of both the Public Works division and the Community Services department. I am not including in this memo a number of iterations that have been reviewed but will focus on the recommended preferred alternatives. The accompanying powerpoint slide deck contains visual references for the different options.

Background

As currently situated, the Community Services Department (“CS”) consists of 24 authorized full-time equivalent (“FTE”) employees. The Community Services Director, or Department Head, role is part of the assigned responsibilities of the Assistant Town Manager. There are five operating divisions within the department, Public Works (“PW”) , Public Spaces and Sustainability (“PSS”), Planning & Economic Development (“PED”), Stormwater & Environmental Services (“SES”) and Engineering Services (“ES”). Each division is lead by a division manager. PW has an additional 8.5 FTE, PSS has 1.5, PED has 4, SES has 2 and ES has 2. See the organizational chart below.



Current Structure

- 1 Dept Head
- 5 Division Mgr
- 18 line staff
- 24 FTE total

Within PW, the Public Works Manager position supervises the Public Works Supervisor and shares supervision of a Senior Administrative Support Specialist with PSS. The Public Works Supervisor has day-to-day supervision of the Crew Leader and Equipment Operators. The daily responsibilities of the

department include collection of household trash, collection of bulk items and brush, collection of public trash in parks and public spaces, repairs to Town-maintained streets, construction and repair of sidewalks, construction/repair/maintenance of town-owned stormwater conveyance infrastructure, and maintenance to various ground elements, including tree/bush trimming, banner hanging and other needs as requested by PSS. Crew members also work various special events and serve in weather emergencies clearing debris and treating/plowing streets. Additionally, the division performs curbside leaf pickup during leaf season (November – January). All Equipment Operators are cross-trained to perform any of the above listed tasks. On a given day, 3 Equipment Operators would work on solid waste collection (under direction of the Public Works Supervisor) and 3 would work on street/sidewalk/stormwater detail. At the conclusion of their daily routes, the employees assigned to solid waste perform supplementary tasks, most often grounds maintenance related.

Needs and Opportunities

The former Public Works Manager was a unique employee. Over the span of nearly twenty years he worked his way up from an entry-level Equipment Operator to the division manager position, through the succession of crew leader, supervisor and ultimately manager. His skill set was mainly operational in nature, though over the past several years his skills in the management and administrative areas of the role had improved significantly. His major self-identified weak point was in the plan review function – reviewing engineering drawings for compliance with various public works and solid waste regulations. Because of his unique background and skill set, a one-for-one replacement will be difficult to recruit. Candidates will either be more operations-focused or more suited for higher-level administrative tasks. Public Works employees have great respect for the previous Manager having “been there and done that” and his ability and willingness to get out and perform manual tasks with the crews as needed. Having received that feedback, it does not seem like a higher-level administrative hire would be successful. They also expressed strong desire for opportunities for growth from within, at the management, supervisory and crew leader levels. Additional feedback from the current public works employees revealed a lot of concern about the quantity and differing types of work they are being tasked with on a daily basis. Another potential opportunity cost for a higher-level recruitment is that the previous Manager was an extension of the workforce. He could and would drive trash routes, work a leaf truck, and plow streets during snow events. Given the near -term budget outlook and the lack of capacity for adding additional PW staff, this would further exacerbate the concerns with workload. The final concern raised by PW staff is lack of focus or prioritization in the workload – daily needs of solid waste/streets/sidewalks vs. grounds maintenance/public space needs vs. stormwater maintenance needs.

In other divisions of Community Services, there are also growing needs for additional staff. The most frequently expressed needs are for a GIS Analyst, Economic Development Planner, and Transportation Planner¹. After evaluating our use of GIS technology within the division and the current lack of a cohesive strategy for the use of that tool, the need for a dedicated resource is not the highest priority at this time. In lieu of that, staff is currently working on a comprehensive governance strategy for GIS, consolidating licenses and consultants, and developing staff capacity across multiple departments – essentially cobbling together an “employee” out of pieces of multiple employees. The current workload for an Economic Development Planner is being borne by the Planning and Economic Development Manager, and mostly

¹ This is being used as a working title. The concept for the position would include transportation planning, greenway/trail/mobility planning, grant application and management, etc.

consists of managing the town’s tourism programs and engaging with downtown merchants and the Chamber of Commerce. The town does not have an active economic development recruitment strategy or effective incentive programs, nor is the level of commercial development at the scale that it needs a dedicated resource. Unless there is a shift in priorities in the comprehensive sustainability plan or by the town board, it does not seem that there will be a large increase in the near-term need for additional economic development resources. Transportation planning duties have been shared between the Assistant Town Manager/Community Services Director and Public Space and Sustainability Manager. The current level of engagement is significant, including serving on the Triangle West TPO technical committee and multiple ad hoc working groups, Orange County Staff Working Group, and coordinating with NCDOT on projects within and around town. Because of the lack of dedicated transportation planning staff, the town’s projects and priorities are not being effectively advocated for, we are not effectively competing for funding, and internal project coordination and management is split between multiple staff resources. Of the current identified needs, transportation planning is the area in which new, dedicated staff could immediately impact the workload.

Given the identified needs within the PW division and the CS department, it seems as if there is an opportunity in the unfortunate loss of an exemplary employee to address several needs by realigning the structure of the division and department and reallocating the funding formerly dedicated to the Public Works Manager position.

Proposal

The proposed realignment of the Community Services Department and Public Works Division is intended to address multiple current pain points:

- Need for additional PW operating staff
- Need for transportation planning resource
- Shifting priorities and increasing demands on PW staff
- Advancement opportunities for existing PW staff
- Alignment of time/energy on advancing and delivering town priority projects

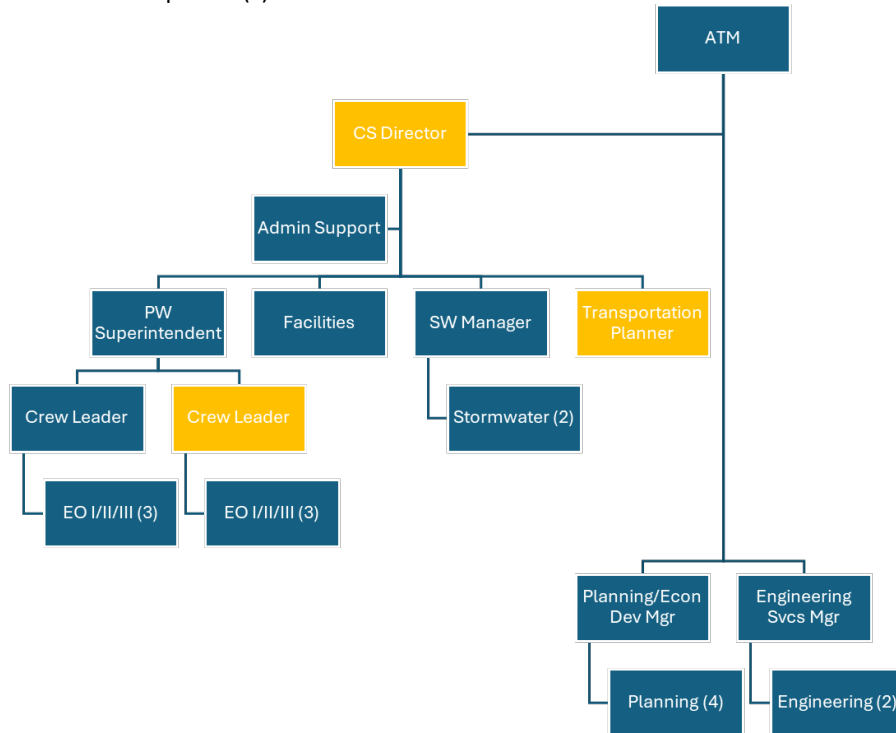
Multiple iterations and versions of the proposed realignments below were examined and the proposed structure herein addresses many of the concerns above. In the chart labeled “Option 3(c)”, the PSS, PW and SES divisions are merged, the current PW supervisor position is converted to a superintendent, and additional positions for a Crew Leader and Transportation Project Coordinator² are added (net increase of one position). This creates greater coordination between PSS, SES and PW workloads, adds additional operational staff and a transportation planning resource, provides an advancement opportunity in PW. Reducing the supervision load on the department head allows for more time to focus on other priorities – including affordable housing, train station development, and new fire station development.

The Public Space Manager would be reclassified as Community Services & Sustainability Director and become a department head, and the Assistant Town Manager would serve in a dual role with oversight of a portfolio, which would include the reconstituted CSS department, and a new Planning & Development Services Department that includes the divisions of PED and ES. This provides a very valued and long-serving division manager with a career growth opportunity to serve as a department head while leaving a

² Working title.

single control point for the related functional areas that constituted the former Community Services Department.

Chart – Option 3(c)



Action Items and Next Steps

If the reorganization plan is supported, there are a number of follow up items to address in order to move forward with putting this into action. A number of these steps are listed below, but more will probably be identified as the proposal is discussed.

- Job description needed for Transportation Project Coordinator (working title)
- Job description and organizational structure for PW supervisory position(s)
- Edits to job descriptions for PS Manager/CSS Director and Assistant Town Manager
- The PW supervisory position should be an open internal recruitment. In the event that the current PW Supervisor is not selected, there will need to be additional structural/position adjustments.