

IV. TECHNICAL APPROACH

Technical Approach

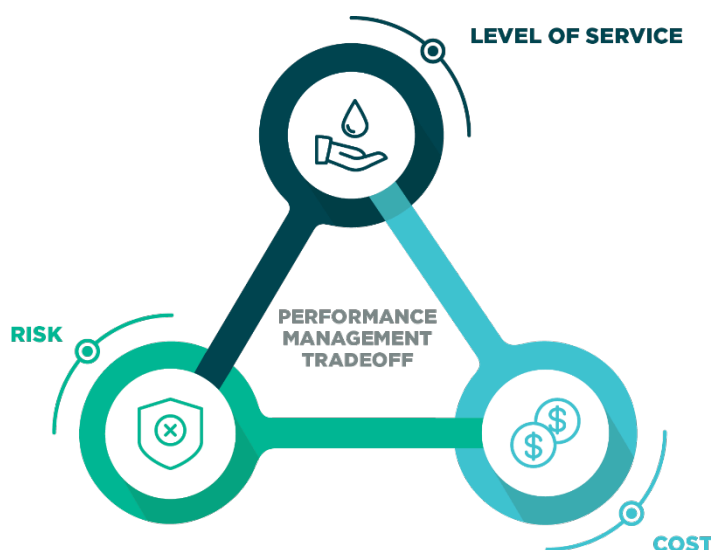
The City of Joliet seeks a knowledgeable and thoughtful consulting partner to evaluate current service levels and staffing. The goal of this study is to ensure optimal service delivery, improved efficiency, and align City services with current and future community needs. A key focus of this study will be identifying appropriate staffing levels for all City departments through reviewing peer communities and best practices. The City is committed to continually improving the quality and efficiency of services delivered to residents and businesses, emphasizing cost-effective and sustainable operations.

This assessment offers an opportunity to examine how work is organized, how resources are allocated, and how the City can adapt its operations to meet strategic priorities with clarity and confidence. Our work will help the City identify where operational efficiencies can be realized, where strategic investments may be warranted, and where service levels or delivery strategies may need to evolve to ensure organizational resilience and long-term affordability.

Our team brings deep experience supporting local governments nationwide, including communities managing structural deficits, workforce constraints, and cross-departmental transformation. We specialize in helping local governments identify practical, implementable strategies to strengthen operations within their existing fiscal and organizational capacity. We understand that the best recommendations are not just analytically sound—they are also actionable, locally tailored, and aligned with the values and vision of the organization and community.

We are known for our respectful, inclusive, and collaborative approach. We listen carefully, engage thoughtfully with staff and stakeholders at all levels, and prioritize relationship-building throughout the engagement. Rather than relying on off-the-shelf templates or assumptions, we take a custom approach—grounded in stakeholder input, operational realities, and best practices—to deliver solutions that the City can implement and sustain.

We are excited about the opportunity to support the City of Joliet with this engagement. Our team brings hands-on experience with nearly every facet of municipal operations—from capital-intensive functions like Public Works and Public Utilities to people-centered departments, such as Community Development, to internal service areas like Finance, Human Resources, and Information Technology. We approach our work with humility and respect, and we are committed to partnering with the City to create a path forward that balances fiscal responsibility, service quality, and organizational well-being.



ACHIEVING BALANCE: RAFTELIS UNDERSTANDS THAT LEADING AN ORGANIZATION IS ABOUT BALANCING LEVELS OF SERVICE, RISKS, AND COSTS.

To complete this work, our team will apply a project approach focusing on these specific objectives using our “Six R” approach. This involves soliciting and collecting information on City **Responsibilities**, **Resources**, **Requirements**, and **Results** to identify possible organizational and operational **Recommendations** with an associated **Roadmap** to implement positive change. This approach is depicted in the graphic to the right.



Responsibilities – What drives the need for your services? It might be the organization’s vision, mission, Federal, State, local ordinance, or community service standards or expectations. We review these drivers to better understand service level constraints and opportunities for change.

Resources – What assets are available to achieve your responsibilities? These may include time, human resources, staffing, management capacity, financial position, contractual services, technology, and equipment and facilities. We assess the adequacy of these resources based on the service level expectations.

Requirements – What direction is provided to staff? The method by which staff approach service delivery is often guided by laws, codes, policies, and procedures, or informal mechanisms like past practices or on-the-job training. These sources provide staff with direction on how they approach tasks and complete their work. We review these business processes to determine opportunities for improvement.

Results – What are the outcomes of your services? Our approach connects your responsibilities, resources, and requirements with the outcomes expected of your services. We assess measures of efficiency and effectiveness to assist in data-driven decision-making.

Recommendations – Are there opportunities for improvement? Based on our qualitative and quantitative analysis of your programs and services, we develop recommendations for improving organizational performance. These changes can range from high-level considerations (i.e., should we be in this business?) to strategic issues (i.e., should we consider alternative service sources?) to tactical issues (i.e., how can we improve the productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness of the activity or service?).

Roadmap – How do we get there? We develop a plan that will guide the organization through the implementation of the recommendations for improvement. The Roadmap offers the recommended priority order of implementation, suggestions for phasing, and key milestones for success. It also serves as a valuable tool for the organization and the community to promote accountability and communicate progress toward implementation.

Approach and Methodology

THE FOLLOWING DETAILS THE PROPOSED WORK PLAN FOR THE CITY.

Activity 1: Project Initiation

We will initiate this engagement by meeting with the City’s project leadership team to clarify expectations, review the project framework, and finalize the work plan and timeline. This kick-off meeting will include the Mayor, City Manager, and key department heads from across the organization to ensure early alignment, transparency, and shared ownership of the assessment process.

During this initial session, we will seek to understand the City’s vision for the project, including strategic priorities, operational concerns, and what success looks like from the perspective of senior leadership. We will confirm communication protocols, identify internal coordination needs, and agree on any departments, functions, or cross-cutting issues that warrant early or deeper focus. The outcome of this session will be a refined engagement plan, aligned expectations, and a strong foundation for collaboration across departments.

Following the kick-off, we will issue an initial data and documentation request to the City. This request will be tailored to each department’s operational context. These foundational materials will support early analysis and help shape how we engage departments in the following weeks.

To complement this review, we will conduct one-on-one interviews with the Mayor and each member of the City Council. These conversations will explore strategic priorities, operational challenges, long-term goals, and expectations for how the organization must adapt to meet both fiscal realities and community needs. These interviews will help ensure our assessment is grounded in the local context and responsive to the specific goals and values of the governing body.

Throughout the project, we will maintain a close and responsive partnership with the City’s project team and provide regular updates as needed. These touchpoints will allow us to share progress, troubleshoot emerging issues, and ensure continued alignment on scope, timing, and deliverables.

Meetings:

- Project kick-off meeting with City project team
- Individual interviews with the Mayor and each member of the City Council (in-person or virtual)

Deliverables:

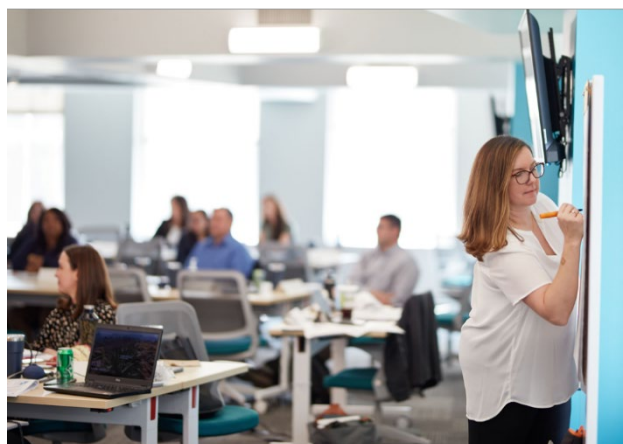
- Kick-off meeting agenda
- Draft and final project schedule
- Document and data request

Activity 2: Staff Engagement and Issue Identification

Building a complete picture of the City of Joliet’s organizational performance requires insight from documents and data and the people who plan, manage, and deliver services each day. This phase of the assessment is centered on listening to department leaders, frontline staff, and others who experience the City’s operations firsthand. Their perspectives will help us understand how Joliet’s structure, staffing, and systems support—or, in some cases, constrain—effective and efficient service delivery.

Our engagement efforts will explore organizational design, staffing models, roles and responsibilities, workflows, professional development, internal collaboration, and the practical realities of day-to-day operations. These insights will ground our recommendations in lived experience and help ensure that proposed changes are well-reasoned, implementable, and responsive to the City's context.

To develop a well-rounded understanding of how Joliet's departments operate—and how they can improve—we will engage staff through a structured and collaborative process. This will include interviews, focus groups, onsite observations, and document review. This activity is essential in identifying both process and structural issues and the cultural, relational, and operational dynamics that shape how the City works—and how it can improve.



Leadership and Staff Interviews

We will begin by conducting structured interviews with department directors, managers, and key personnel across all departments. These interviews will help us develop a foundational understanding of each department's mission, operational workload, staffing model, service priorities, and management systems. During this process, we will also review organizational charts and functional roles.

To ensure a complete picture of the organization, we anticipate interviewing individuals at all levels, from line staff to department heads and City leadership. This may include a combination of individual and small group interviews.



Onsite Observations

Our team will conduct site visits to allow us to observe work environments, understand how space and resources are used, and how services are delivered to the public. These visits will also help us understand the physical and operational context in which employees work daily.



Document and Data Review

We will carefully review and analyze all information collected in Activity 1 and request any additional information from departments that will assist with our review and analysis.

We will develop a comprehensive Core Service Inventory for each City department that clearly identifies and documents the essential services, programs, and operational functions delivered to the community. This inventory will serve as a foundational resource for understanding how the City allocates resources, delivers services, and prioritizes activities across departments.

We will create program-level organizational charts, staffing tables, and budget summaries for each department and its major divisions. These tools will help illustrate how personnel, funding, and organizational structures align with service delivery responsibilities. Each program or functional area will be described in terms of:

- Its purpose and scope
- The core activities it performs
- Assigned staffing levels

- Allocated budget resources
- The current and targeted service level goals or performance expectations, as available

Service level goals may be based on a range of sources, including national or regional best practice standards, peer benchmarks, or internal targets. We will reference guidelines and frameworks from a broad spectrum of professional organizations—such as the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), the American Planning Association (APA), and other discipline-specific associations relevant to the City's services. We will also consider locally defined expectations shaped by the City's strategic priorities, City Council directives, departmental leadership, community priorities, or regulatory requirements at the state or federal level.

Using both quantitative data and qualitative input gathered through interviews and documentation review, we will evaluate whether departments are currently meeting these service-level goals. Where there are performance gaps, resource limitations, or process inefficiencies, we will identify and document them.

We will also develop an initial issues summary for each department, identifying challenges or barriers that affect the City's ability to meet service expectations. These may include structural, staffing, operational, technological, or regulatory constraints. Issues will be organized thematically and reviewed with the City's project team in a virtual meeting. Issues and focus areas will be refined based on the City's feedback and will inform deeper analysis in subsequent project phases.

Meetings:

- Up to one day of onsite interviews with each department
- Virtual initial issues summary review meeting

Deliverables:

- Initial issues summary

Activity 3: Departmental Operations and Staffing Assessments

Following our engagement with City staff—and informed by the review of documents, budget data, and performance metrics—we will undertake a focused, data-informed assessment of Joliet's core departments and functional areas. Our objective in this phase is to identify practical, high-impact opportunities to improve organizational alignment, streamline operations, and ensure staffing models are responsive to service demands and fiscal realities. This phase will yield detailed departmental assessments that analyze organizational structure, staffing levels, workflows, service delivery, and performance management systems. These assessments will integrate both qualitative insight and quantitative evidence and will be guided by Raftelis' 6R methodology—ensuring a consistent yet tailored evaluation across the departments included in the study.

Each department and major function will be evaluated using a structured and transparent framework aligned with the City's strategic goals, operational priorities, and the scope defined in the RFP. While our review will draw from national best practices and professional standards, it will also reflect Joliet's distinctive context, constraints, and expectations.



We recognize that departments operate with complex mandates that span regulatory compliance, direct service delivery, infrastructure management, and community engagement. Departments must balance limited resources with increasing expectations, aging infrastructure, and service delivery models that often involve multiple layers of coordination.



Organizational Design and Structure

We will evaluate the structure and alignment of each department to understand how current organizational models impact service delivery, internal coordination, and decision-making. Our assessment will focus on several key elements of organizational design:

- **Clarity of Roles and Accountability:** We will examine reporting lines, spans of control, and delegation of authority to ensure responsibilities are well-defined and aligned with operational needs.
- **Functional Alignment:** We will assess whether programs and teams are logically grouped and whether current divisions or reporting structures support efficiency and effective service delivery.
- **Mandated vs. Discretionary Services:** We will distinguish between legally required or policy-driven functions and discretionary functions, providing context for prioritization in a resource-constrained environment.
- **Staffing and Workload Management:** Using workload data, service demand indicators, and comparative benchmarks, we will evaluate staffing sufficiency, gaps, and workload balance within and across departments.



People and Culture

Through the employee interviews and focus groups, we will develop a well-rounded understanding of the City's organizational culture, talent infrastructure, and employee experience. Specific focus areas will include:

- **Communication and Collaboration:** We will assess how information flows within departments and across functions—and where breakdowns may impact efficiency or morale.
- **Talent Alignment:** We will evaluate whether current position classifications, roles, and staffing models are aligned with operational realities and departmental goals.
- **Retention, Engagement, and Morale:** We will identify factors influencing turnover, burnout, and job satisfaction, including workload, training access, supervisory support, and workplace climate.
- **Professional Development:** We will assess the availability and accessibility of training, mentorship, and career development opportunities—and their alignment with workforce needs and organizational goals.



Operations, Service Delivery, and Customer Experience

We will evaluate core operational processes and how effectively each department delivers services. Our approach incorporates Lean/Six Sigma principles to identify inefficiencies and promote continuous improvement.

Focus areas will include:

- **Process Efficiency and Workflow Design:** We will examine key work processes to assess alignment with customer value, public benefit, and service expectations. Our recommendations will aim to reduce unnecessary complexity and free staff capacity for higher-impact work.

- **Customer Service:** We will assess how customer service is defined, measured, and prioritized across departments, including equity in service delivery.
- **Program Execution:** Our team will evaluate how success is measured and reported for departmental programs and services, identifying opportunities to improve feedback loops and accountability.
- **Support Systems:** We will assess the effectiveness of support systems such as Information Technology, Procurement, and Human Resources in enabling departments to deliver services efficiently.
- **Financial and Budgetary Management:** Using the GFOA standards as a framework, we will assess internal financial processes and resource planning practices.
- **Coordination and Collaboration:** We will evaluate intra- and inter-departmental collaboration, identifying silos or redundancies that could be addressed through better alignment or shared systems.
- **Continuous Improvement Practices:** We will assess how departments identify, share, and act on opportunities for improvement and what tools or training could further develop a culture of innovation and learning.
- **Performance Measurement:** We will review the presence and quality of performance measures, assessing whether they are aligned with goals and used to support decision-making and operational improvement.



Benchmarking and Peer Comparisons

To provide additional context and insight, we will conduct a targeted benchmarking analysis comparing Joliet's service levels, staffing models, and organizational structures with up to five carefully selected peer jurisdictions. This comparison will offer a view into alternative approaches, highlight emerging practices, and help identify areas of relative strength or opportunity. This benchmarking will be targeted rather than general to inform opportunities relevant to Joliet's unique service delivery requirements. It will draw on publicly available data, best practice guidelines, and our proprietary databases and sector knowledge. Peer cities will be selected based on similar characteristics such as population, budget, service offerings, and regional context.



Financial Context

This assessment will be undertaken with full recognition of the City's long-term fiscal constraints and ongoing structural budget challenges. Every recommendation will be evaluated for financial feasibility and implementation capacity. While some opportunities may require targeted investment in staffing, technology, or business systems, we will place strong emphasis on identifying cost-neutral or efficiency-driven changes wherever possible. We will also assess opportunities for shared services, realignment of responsibilities, or service delivery alternatives to reduce costs and improve sustainability.



Actionable Recommendations

At this point in the project, our project team will have conducted interviews, focus groups, field observations, and related data collection and document review in order to identify potential opportunities for the City and its departments.

Based on the insights from our assessment, stakeholder feedback, and benchmarking, we will develop a set of tailored, actionable recommendations for enhancing the City's service delivery, operational efficiency, and organizational resilience.

Our team will conduct a virtual meeting to review our preliminary observations and recommendations with the City. These will be designed to clarify the roles, responsibilities, and authority of management staff, eliminate duplication and overlap of responsibilities, improve delivery time and quality of service, and improve communications within between departments.

Additional follow-up on issues or analysis will be conducted as needed.

Meetings: Virtual preliminary observations and recommendations meeting	Deliverables: Preliminary observations and recommendations PowerPoint slide deck
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Activity 4: Prepare Project Report and Support Implementation Planning

Once we have shared our preliminary findings and draft recommendations with the City and received feedback, we will prepare a comprehensive draft report that documents the assessment results. This report will serve as both a reflection of the City's current state and a practical Roadmap for moving forward. It will begin with an executive summary that highlights key findings and prioritizes recommendations most critical to achieving organizational alignment, operational efficiency, and financial sustainability.

The report will include detailed departmental assessments that outline strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement in each area studied. These will be accompanied by summaries of our engagement efforts, relevant examples of best practices, and peer benchmarking to provide external context for the City's performance and organizational design.

To support implementation, we will develop a comprehensive Implementation Action Plan Roadmap. This Roadmap will organize the recommendations into short-, medium-, and long-term priorities. It will include the rationale for each recommendation, suggested sequencing, responsible parties, estimated timelines, and, where possible, resource or cost implications. This practical tool is designed to support decision-making and help the City manage change in a phased, coordinated, and financially responsible manner.

To further assist with translating the assessment into action, we will facilitate a one-day, in-person Change Management Strategy Workshop with key City staff and internal service departments. During this session, we will work together to review and refine priorities, identify quick wins, and align the recommendations with the City's broader operational goals and strategic initiatives.



The goal of this session is to foster alignment around the path forward, empower departmental leaders to take ownership of implementation, and ensure that change efforts are coordinated, inclusive, and supported at all levels of the organization.

The engagement will conclude with a final presentation of our findings and recommendations to the City. This presentation will be tailored to the audience and structured to support understanding, transparency, and momentum toward implementation.

Meetings:

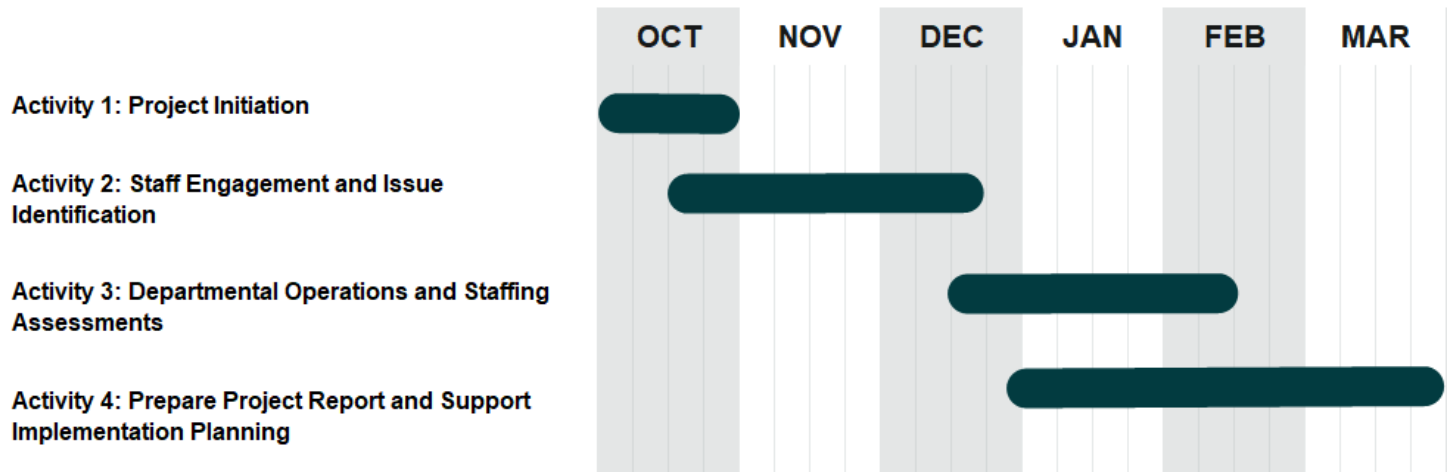
- Virtual draft report review meeting
- Change Management/Implementation Workshop
- Final presentation

Deliverables:

- Draft and final project report
- Implementation Action Plan Roadmap

Timeline

Below is a proposed project schedule. We expect to review and refine this with the City during Activity 1.



V. FEES

Fees

The total fixed fee to complete the scope of work outlined in this proposal is \$156,500, which includes all professional fees and expenses, including travel for Raftelis.

A breakdown of cost by project activity is provided in the table below.

Activity	Description	Estimated Hours	Cost
1	Project Initiation	34	\$13,988
2	Staff Engagement and Issue Identification	134	\$59,960
3	Department Operations and Staffing Assessments	178	\$47,202
4	Prepare Project Report and Support Implementation Planning	120	\$35,350
TOTAL		466	\$156,500

Hourly rates by team member job classification are provided below. Any agreed-upon additional work outside of the scope above will be charged at these hourly labor rates plus expenses at cost.

Classification	Hourly Rate
Executive Vice President	\$425
Senior Manager	\$340
Principal Consultant/Senior Advisor	\$310
Manager	\$295
Senior Consultant	\$260
Consultant	\$230
Associate	\$195

It is our practice to invoice clients for monthly progress payments based upon work completed.