

Staffing Levels Report

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Report Summary

This report and presentation provide requested information related to staffing levels in response to Resolution FA2024-05.

Relationship to the Strategic Plan, Health Impact Assessment and Climate Action Plans

This report refers to operational matters.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Background

The purpose of this report is to respond to the request for information relating to staffing levels. On March 26, 2024, Finance and Administration Committee passed resolution FA2024-05 which states:

WHEREAS the City of Greater Sudbury employs 2,263 full time employees and on average 550 contract, part time and seasonal staff;

AND WHEREAS Council would like to better understand why the staffing levels differ from other Municipalities of similar size, how many new positions have been created since 2010 and the purpose of these new positions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Greater Sudbury directs staff to prepare a report with a presentation to the Finance and Administration Committee before the 2025 budget review process, which includes the following:

- The current level of staffing for each separate service
- The number of Union and Non-Union staff, including the management level (e.g. director, manager supervisor)

- A comparator of staffing levels and change year per year since 2010 (including union and non-union)
- A comparator of varying levels of service to other similar municipalities (example the number of WWW treatment plants, the number of services provided by single tier governments versus lower tier or upper tier towns, cities, regions or districts, # of lane Km's to service etc...)
- Based on the comparisons, options for service changes that could be undertaken to reduce headcount and the overall net budget for 2025 (for example, service options from the core service review).

Analysis

1. Current staffing levels for each separate service

A breakdown outlining the staffing levels based on services can be found in Appendix 1a.

For information relating to the staffing level of CGS service partners, please see Appendix 1b.

The analysis of hours worked highlights that Greater Sudbury's staff, both union and non-union, provide service efforts beyond their regular hours to support Council's desired service levels. For example, non-union staff collectively supplied additional (unpaid) hours equivalent to 26 full-time positions in 2023.

Using Financial Information Return (FIR) data from the Province of Ontario's open data portal, staff compared Greater Sudbury's staffing levels with all single tier Ontario municipalities where population exceeds 100,000. Combined full-time and part-time resources in Greater Sudbury are lower than typical levels.

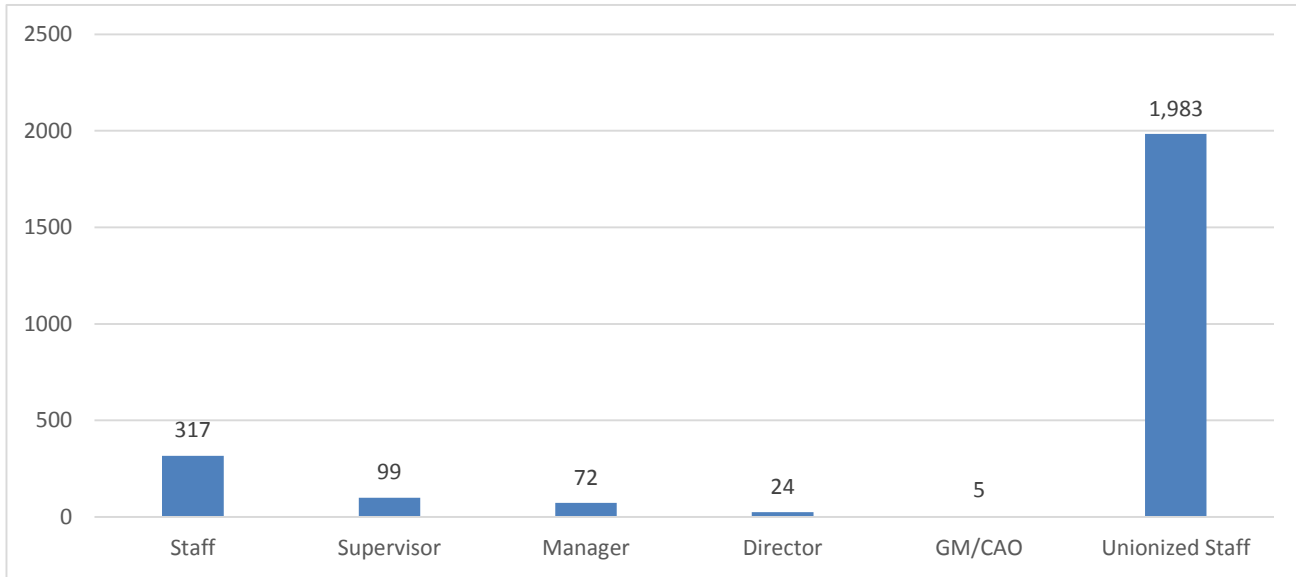
The median total full-time staffing level, which is the level where 50% of municipalities have a higher staff count and 50% have a lower one, is 2,112 full-time employees. Greater Sudbury's is lower, but close to, the median with 2,104 full-time employees. The median total part-time staffing level from those municipalities is 810.6 full-time equivalent positions. Greater Sudbury's part-time staffing level is significantly lower at 505 full-time equivalent positions.

More detailed breakdowns by service area are provided in Appendix 2. Given differences in how Canadian municipalities may report full-time and part-time positions (based on status, hours, partial year contracts, etc.), a data standard is used by all municipalities for annual FIR reporting. This allows for full-time and part-time employee counts to be compared and benchmarked across municipalities using a consistent, independent standard.

2. Union and non-union staff

The current number of unionized staff and non-union staff, including the management level (e.g. director, manager supervisor) is illustrated in table 1.

Table 1



As of the date of this report there are a total of 2500 permanent, temporary, full-time, and part-time employees or approximately 2,300 employees being managed by 200 supervisory staff. This means, compared to budgeted levels, there are currently approximately 100 vacancies. These vacancies result from retirements, resignations and the corporation's vacancy management practice of keeping vacant positions unfilled for a period to reduce salary and benefit costs.

3. CGS Budgeted staffing levels and changes (2020 to 2014) (excludes GSPS, Airport, Libraries)

City Council approves any increase in staff level, as described further in Appendix 3. In the period covered by this analysis, there has been a net increase in full-time non-union and union staff. The average annual growth rate for all positions over the 15-year period is 1.09% per year. Non-union positions increased 1.84% per year, while union positions increased 0.9% per year, as outlined in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Non-union and Union positions, 2010 - 2024

Year	Non-union	Union
2010	278	1,244
2011	288	1,279
2012	294	1,277
2013	295	1,280
2014	285	1,278
2015	291	1,274
2016	290	1,247
2017	294	1,243
2018	303	1,252
2019	315	1,253
2020	335	1,318
2021	333	1,337
2022	337	1,336
2023	343	1,357
2024	359	1,413

Operations and service levels have changed significantly since 2010. Several factors influenced changes over the past 15 years, including the following:

- a. Resolutions.
 - Examples: Resolution 2011-257 for 4 permanent positions at the Regional Geriatric Centre (+4). Resolution 2012-149 for 6 full time positions at Pioneer Manor (+2).
- b. Approved business cases to support service and service enhancements.
 - Examples: Expansion of Organic Program, W/WW Legislative Compliance staff, Animal Shelter staff, Enhanced security services, Investment in additional full-time ambulances, Conversion from part-time to full-time staff at Pioneer Manor, Increase to Transit Bus Operators staff, truck drivers, W/WW operators to replace contracted services, Conversion of part-time hours to full-time positions via budget deliberations.
- c. Service level changes supported by provincial funding.
 - Examples: Community paramedicine, Minimum care hours in long-term care following from the pandemic experience.
- d. Planned attrition through initiatives to reduce staff (Project \$6 million - 2015).
- e. Elimination of programs/services:
 - Example: Closure of Junior Citizens Daycare.
- f. The addition of Housing Services into the administration.

These net changes to the complement of full-time and part-time staff are reflected in figure 1 and figure 2 respectively, indicating the additions and subtractions to staff resources year-over-year.

Figure 1

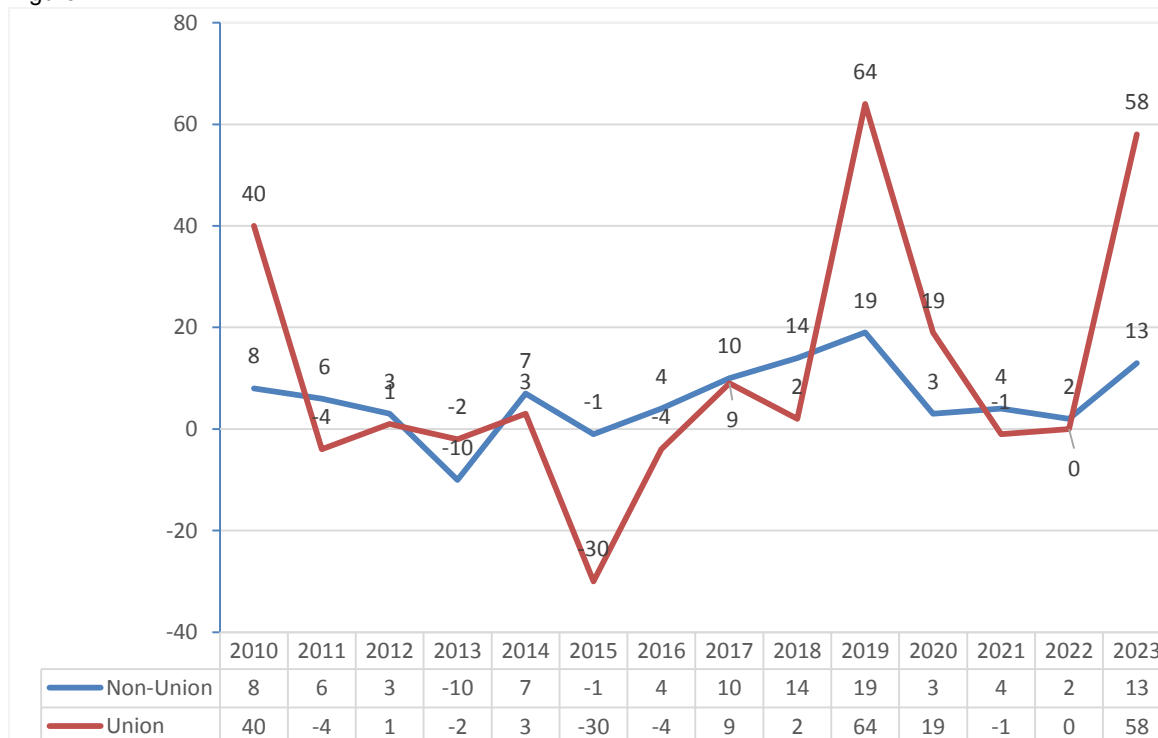
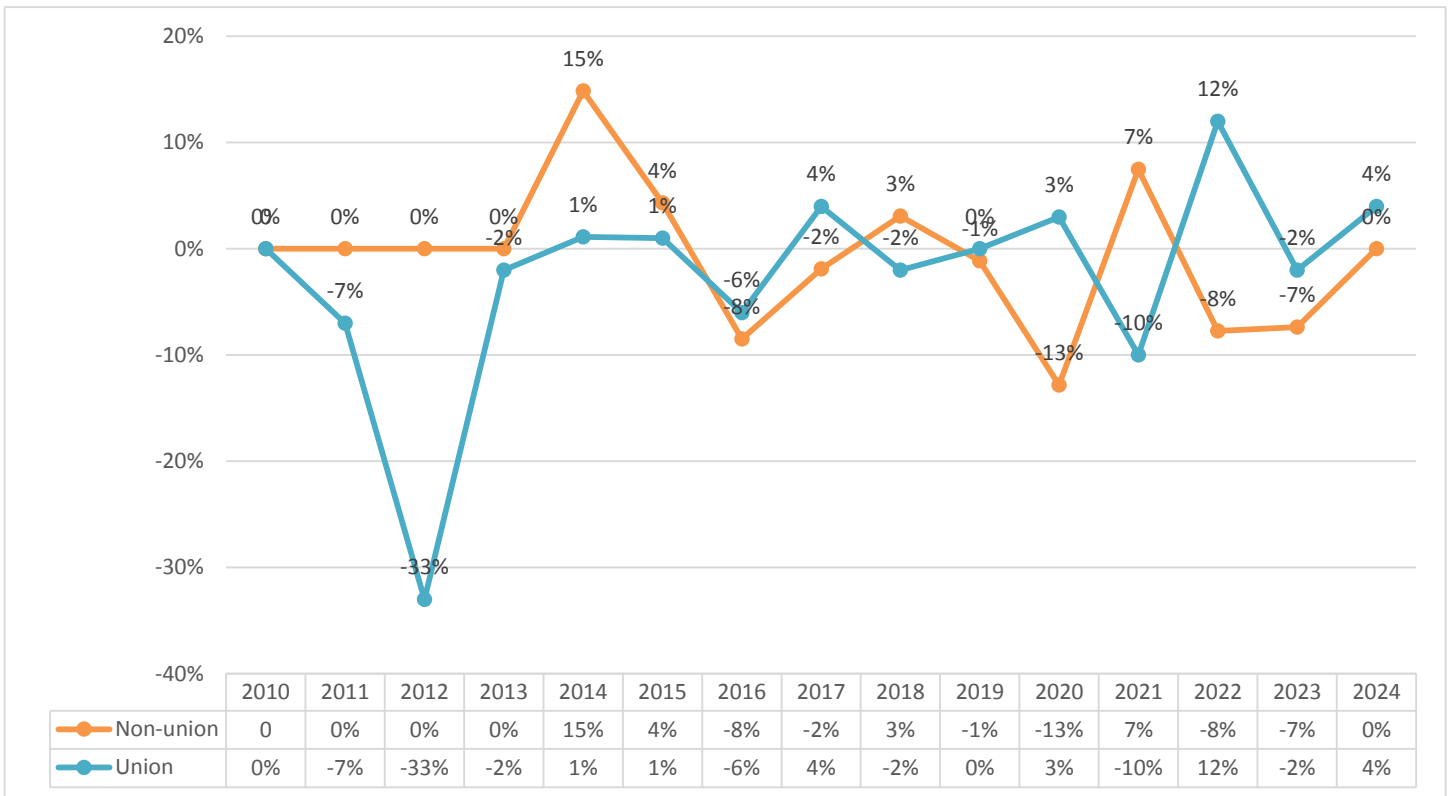


Figure 2 (Part-time staff are budgeted using a bundle of hours.)



For additional information relating to staffing levels for Greater Sudbury Police Service, Greater Sudbury Airport and Greater Sudbury Libraries, please see Appendix 4.

Figure 3 outlines that CGS has an average unionization rate of 80% (for the period 2010 to 2024) based on the budgeted headcount, with a current unionization rate of 79%. This is consistent with peer municipalities.

Generally, one of the attributes of a highly unionized workforce includes a structured approach for distributing work and producing outputs. Collective bargaining agreements define roles that are within the agreement’s scope so that certain work is consistently performed only by employees covered by the agreement. Roles with supervisory responsibilities are excluded. Also, unions are interested in so called “contracting-in” solutions that create bargaining unit work. In the period since 2010 there have been several instances where contractors were replaced by employees following a service review that determined it would be preferable to have the work delivered by employees. All of these changes were approved by Council as a part of the bargaining mandate for City negotiating teams.

4. Comparison of varying levels of service to other similar municipalities

Comparisons of staffing levels with other municipalities need to consider several factors that should influence the analysis, such as:

1. The governance structure under which the municipal corporation operates.
2. Choices about services and service levels offered by the municipal corporation.
3. Population and households.
4. Population density.
5. Operational and historical dynamics that influence the complexity of municipal operations.

A significant influencing factor in any discussion about staffing in a municipal corporation is its governance structure. The *Municipal Act* describes the broad authority of a single tier municipal structure stating that it “may provide any service or thing that the municipality considers necessary or desirable for the public”. As one of relatively few single-tier municipalities in Ontario, comparisons of Greater Sudbury with other jurisdictions

need to consider the combination of services available in a community that is served by both a Regional/District/County government and a local government to cover the same scope of services.

Service level choices is the factor over which Council has the most substantial control. Appendix 5 to this report provides a comparison of efficiency and service levels with other municipalities, where comparative data is available.

Population and the number of households often influence staff levels and a municipality's costs. There can be economies of scale with higher levels of population that make a service more efficient. Similarly, lower population levels could make it harder for some services to be economically delivered, as there are some high fixed costs in some services that make them appear less efficient in communities with fewer residents.

Population density is a significant factor for most municipalities, and it is a factor of primary significance for Greater Sudbury with the largest geographic service area compared to almost all other Ontario municipalities and certainly all of the single tier variety. Reflected in performance measures in Appendix 5, Greater Sudbury's vast geography means more water and wastewater infrastructure, operational depots and significantly more municipal facilities like libraries, arenas and community centers. Finally, other operational factors such as the age of these facilities and a relatively harsher climate result in staffing variations.

The table below offers population, population density and staffing information from the FIR. It also presents those Ontario municipalities in a reasonable population range of Greater Sudbury. These numbers use the aforementioned standard required to be used by all municipalities that allows for full-time and part-time employee counts to be compared and benchmarked across municipalities.

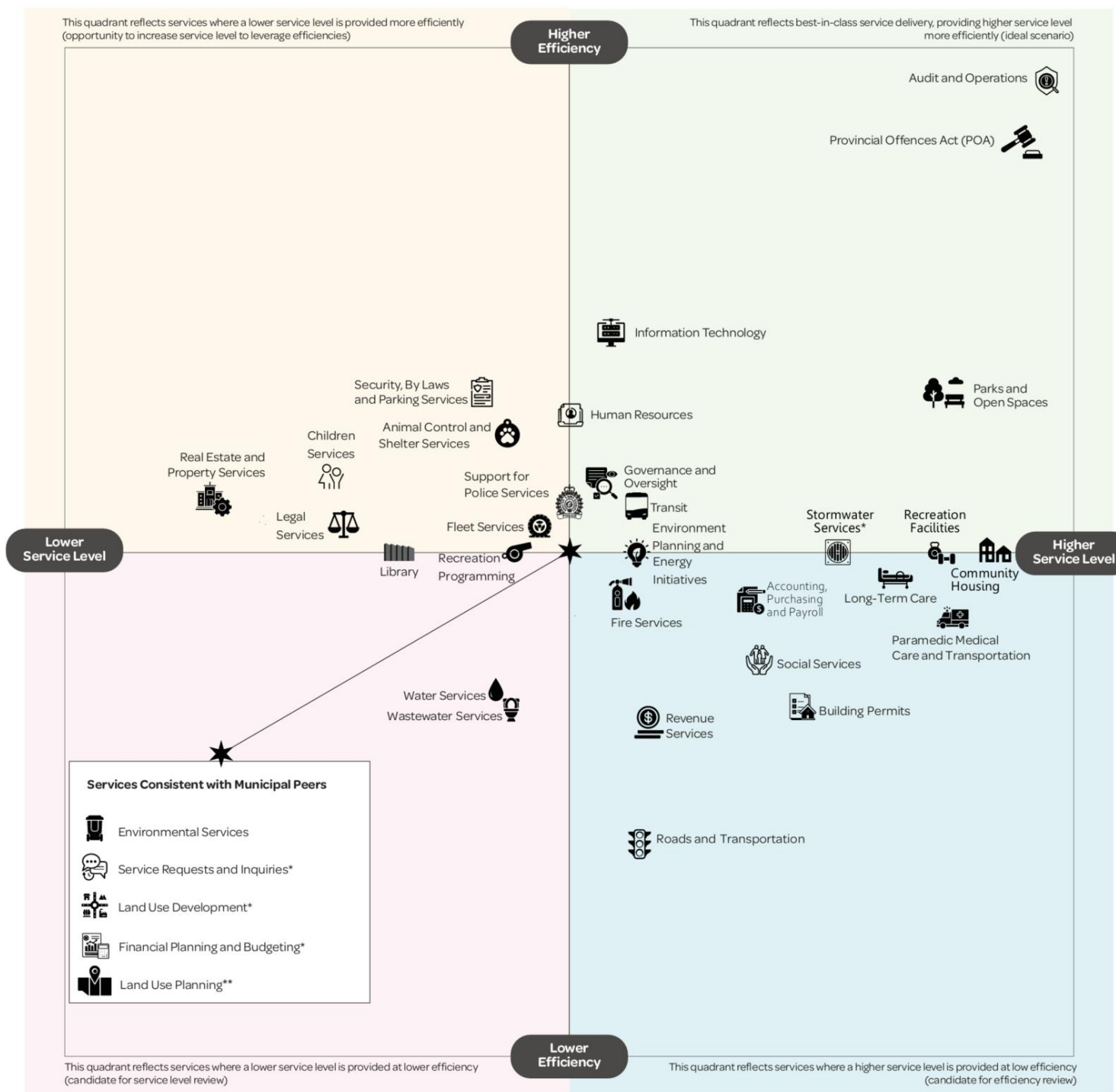
Municipality	Population	Households	Geographic Area Square Kms)	Budgeted Workforce Full-Time	Budgeted Workforce Part-Time
Barrie *	155,137	56,700	99.0	948	31
Brantford *	104,413	44,490	98.7	1,212	413
Chatham-Kent*	103,988	49,401	2,451.9	1,288	799
Guelph*	143,740	60,036	87.4	1,390	585
Hamilton	592,000	245,175	1,118.3	6,932	822
Kingston*	132,578	63,813	451.6	1,303	719
London*	430,770	184,650	420.5	3,434	233
Ottawa	1,067,310	457,070	2,788.2	15,122	1,723
Thunder Bay*	108,843	50,995	327.8	2,121	1,228
Toronto	3,025,647	1,256,980	631.1	31,264	18,130
Windsor*	231,900	100,639	146.0	2,839	399
Greater Sudbury	166,004	75,967	3,186.3	2,104	505
Median	<i>160,570.5</i>	<i>69,890</i>	<i>436.0</i>	<i>2,112.5</i>	<i>652.0</i>

The data in the table supports this report's earlier assertion that the level of staffing in Greater Sudbury is "on par" with other municipalities of similar size and scope.

All municipalities in the comparison table above marked with an asterisk (*) have a second local public sector organization – either a Region/County government or District Social Services Administration Board – involved in providing some services that are delivered here by the City of Greater Sudbury. Most significantly, the City of Barrie is served by the County of Simcoe for Emergency Medical Services, Long-Term Care and Social Services. Many others have similar relationships governing one or more of their Emergency Medical Services, Long Term Care or Social Services. This means that notwithstanding the fact that these full and part time employee numbers *do not* include the full array of municipal services provided by Greater Sudbury, Hamilton, Ottawa and Toronto, Greater Sudbury's budgeted workforce *is still lower* than the median level of staffing for this list of comparators.

As requested, a municipal comparison of current service levels has been provided in Appendix 5 of this report. In the context of this request, the analysis describes the efficiency and service levels based on available municipal benchmarks, and a summary of results can be viewed in the quadrant below.

Image 1: Greater Sudbury service level and efficiency comparison with other similar municipalities



*Indicates a service where service level benchmarks have been identified, but no efficiency benchmarks (assumed at median)

**Indicates a service where efficiency benchmarks have been identified, but no service level benchmarks (assumed at median)

“Note: The following 12 services were unable to be included here because there are not generally accepted benchmarks or comparable data available: Intergovernmental Relations, Public Infrastructure Design & Construction, Community Paramedicine, Emergency Management, Enterprise Services, Economic Development, Museums, Community Grants, Communications & Engagement, Support for Greater Sudbury

Airport, Support for Public Health and Support for Conservation Sudbury. Further research and analysis is being conducted to identify service levels and comparators for these services.”

How To Read This Chart

The midpoint, which is the intersection between the “efficiency” line and the “service level” line, represents typical municipal performance. Using a variety of benchmarks and data from other municipalities, the icons on the chart represent a unique Greater Sudbury service. Their placement on the chart shows their performance compared to typical municipal results. For example, the white box in the chart lists Greater Sudbury services that are provided at a level and with a rate of efficiency also found among peer municipalities. Generally, unless Council wants to distinguish Greater Sudbury’s services from other communities, it would be expected that service benchmarks show performance generally around the midpoint.

Services placed below the midpoint indicate Greater Sudbury’s efficiency is comparatively lower than in other municipalities. The distance from the midpoint reflects the relative difference between Greater Sudbury’s efficiency and typical efficiency levels for that service. This could be due to less efficient workflows, lower demand, environmental factors influencing performance, or some combination of all three. Conversely, services placed above the midpoint indicate Greater Sudbury’s efficiency for that service is higher than comparators. This could be due to more efficient workflows, higher demand, environmental factors influencing performance, or some combination of all three.

Services placed to the left of the midpoint indicate Greater Sudbury’s service levels are lower than comparators. This may reflect a policy choice Council made to fund a lower service level, reduced access to a service, or environmental factors that affect the potential for meeting service expectations. Services placed to the right of the midpoint indicate Greater Sudbury’s service levels are higher than comparators. This may result from a Council policy choice to provide a higher service level, greater access, or environmental factors that contribute to producing higher service levels.

A service reported in the “higher efficiency/lower service level” quadrant (top left) is a service the City performs relatively more efficiently than peer municipalities, but with lower service levels compared to those other jurisdictions. Changes to these services would typically increase the service level, resulting in a budget increase.

Services in the “lower efficiency/lower service level” quadrant (bottom left) are candidates for change. Presumably, a process review could be undertaken with the objective of identifying options to make the service more efficient and Council could choose to increase the service level. Alternatively, Council could contract a third party to provide the service instead.

Services in the “lower efficiency/higher service level” quadrant (bottom right) offer other options for change – reduce the service level to one found in other municipalities, and/or conduct a Value For Money (VFM) audit/process review to make the service more efficient.

A “higher efficiency/higher service level” service (top right) represents a “best practice” example. These services should be ones that other communities want to learn more about from us because the combination of workflows and service level represent generally higher performance than levels found in peer municipalities. Nevertheless, Council could explore reducing these so they are closer to service levels found in other communities.

Further details on service levels, staffing levels, efficiency and performance measures by service are also available in the [2023 Service Profiles report](#) which was presented at the October 24th 2023 City Council meeting. Work is currently underway to further refine this information in anticipation of the 2026-2027 Budget.

Conclusion – Staffing Levels Reflect Service Level Choices

Staff routinely provide Council with options for service level change that could be undertaken to reduce overall headcount and net budgets. Appendix 3 details annual reductions and instances of repurposing of roles to achieve service objectives. This report also provides extensive detail, by service, of performance measures in comparison to MBNCan and other relevant benchmarking networks that demonstrate service level choices over time that have significant impacts on overall staffing levels.

There is no better example of the combined impact of Greater Sudbury's single tier governance status and service level choices on staffing than long term care services. Pioneer Manor's service level is demonstrably higher than other public (and private) offerings. Many comparator municipalities do not offer long term care services, or they are offered by regional/county governments or social services boards in their area, or they provide a lower level of service on discretionary items. This means that in many cases, no Long Term Care employees are included in the comparison of staffing numbers in the table noted earlier. Yet, the provision of Long Term Care services accounts for 542 employees in Greater Sudbury.

Other examples reflect service choices that have increased staffing levels and added new and valued services, sometimes without a cost to local taxpayers. A good example of this type of service is the relatively new Community Paramedicine service. The service helps reduce hospital wait times, provides in-home care for persons with limited mobility and improves health outcomes. The additional 16 employees who provide those services are 100% funded by the Provincial government with 1 employee partially funded by the Provincial government.

Overall, Greater Sudbury's staffing levels are lower than other single tier municipalities that provide similar services in Ontario. Council makes choices about desired service levels and staff design processes and manage workflows to ensure they are delivered in an efficient and affordable manner.

Resources Cited

[2023 Service Profiles Report](#), presented to City Council October 24, 2023

[Core Services Review Update](#), presented to City Council February 21, 2023

[Core Services Review Update Q2 2024](#), presented to the Finance and Administration Committee May 22, 2024

[Financial Information Return Data](#), Ontario FIR Open Data, as accessed on June 5, 2024