



# Municipal Assessment Program (MAP)



## Who We Are

At Hometown Consulting, we help small and mid-sized communities turn ideas into impact by bringing the tools, expertise, and extra capacity needed to get things done. Whether you need full-scale project leadership or targeted support, we operate as an extension of your team—working alongside staff and elected officials to strengthen what's already in place and fill in where needed most. Our Municipal Assessment Program (MAP) gives local governments a practical, affordable roadmap to operate more efficiently and plan more strategically, without adding to staff workload.



## Program Purpose

MAP provides municipalities with a strategic, third-party evaluation of administrative, financial, planning, infrastructure and economic development systems. Through this assessment, communities gain clear benchmarks, actionable insights, and a customized roadmap to improve operations, strengthen internal capacity, and increase competitiveness. All services are cost-effective and delivered with minimal disruption.



## Program Structure

### Phase I: Current State Assessment

HTC conducts a comprehensive review of a municipality's core operations and organizational health, organized into five strategic categories:

#### 1 Governance & Organizational Structure

- Human resources policies and staff development processes
- Market-based pay benchmarking for key roles
- Council-staff alignment and leadership structure

#### 2 Financial Health & Management

- Budgeting practices and capital planning
- Reserve and liability analysis
- Multi-year financial trend evaluation and planning

#### 3 Economic Development Readiness

- Assessment of existing incentives and program compliance
- Marketing, outreach, and strategic planning
- Grant readiness and past grant seeking efforts

#### 4 Planning, Zoning & Infrastructure

- Comprehensive plan and zoning code overview
- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) assessment

#### 5 Public Engagement & Communications

- Website audit for transparency, accessibility and usability
- Staff and stakeholder engagement interviews

#### **Deliverable:**

A report detailing the municipality's current state, benchmark comparisons, and foundational strengths and weaknesses.

# "Where You Stand"





## Program Structure

### Phase II: Strategic Recommendations

HTC develops tailored recommendations for improvement, categorized by timeframe and priorities identified in Phase I.

#### Short-Term (0-6 months)

- Adopt or revise key policies and procedures
- Initiate staff training and capacity-building initiatives
- Address compliance or implementation gaps in incentive programs

#### Medium-Term (6-18 months)

- Upgrade internal systems (HR, finance, communication tools)
- Implement grant strategy
- Marketing and branding enhancements

#### Long-Term (18+ months)

- Establish sustainable funding practices and reserve policies
- Execute long-range planning and infrastructure alignment
- Strengthening management practices and leadership coaching

#### Deliverable:

A strategic roadmap with next steps, cost estimates, and timelines.

*“How to Improve”*

### Phase III: Implementation Support

While the MAP program provides a comprehensive Strategic Roadmap with actionable recommendations, it is important to note that Hometown Consulting does not implement any of these recommendations as part of the MAP program contract.

Implementation of the Strategic Roadmap is the responsibility of the municipality and may be carried out independently, with assistance from a third-party consultant, or through a separately contracted agreement with Hometown Consulting.

HTC's role under the MAP program is strictly advisory following the assessment process. To support municipalities in moving forward, HTC offers optional guidance and consulting services that can assist with implementation planning — but these services are not included in the base MAP program and would require a separate scope of work and agreement.

HTC offers flexible guidance and advisory support to help communities take the next steps following the assessment process. See table on next page.

*“Moving the Needle”*





## Program Structure

Support Type	Description	Lead Organization	Cost Structure	Best For
<b>HTC-Led Full MAP Program</b>	Complete delivery of all MAP phases including staff interviews, analysis, and Strategic Roadmap.	Hometown Consulting	\$12,500 – \$15,000 (flat fee) or \$125/hr	Municipalities seeking a thorough, hands-off planning and evaluation process.
<b>HTC-Led High-Impact MAP</b>	Focused analysis of the top three strategic priorities jointly identified with the municipality.	Hometown Consulting	\$7,500 – \$10,000 (flat fee) or \$125/hr	Communities needing targeted assessment in key operational areas.
<b>HTC-Led Individual Focus Areas</b>	A la carte evaluation services such as zoning code review, grant readiness, or HR audits.	Hometown Consulting	Varies by scope or \$150/hr	Municipalities with specific goals or constrained budgets.
<b>DIY + HTC Coaching</b>	Municipality leads follow-up efforts using HTC's roadmap and optional expert coaching.	Municipality + HTC Support	Time & Materials basis at \$125/hr	Communities with internal capacity seeking strategic advice and check-ins.



## What can MAP do for you?

### Organizational Restructuring or Staff Turnover

#### *Significant Staff Turnover or Retirements*

When key department heads or long-term employees leave, institutional knowledge is often lost. MAP helps assess current staffing levels, organizational structure, job descriptions, and workflow to rebuild capacity with clarity and intention.

#### *Evaluating Outsourcing vs. In-House Operations*

Municipalities unsure whether to contract out certain services (e.g., planning, legal, code enforcement) can use MAP to assess cost-effectiveness, service gaps, and internal capabilities.





# **What can MAP do for you?**

## ***Stagnation or Community Frustration***

### ***Perception of Inactivity or Lack of Progress***

Residents or elected officials may express concern that the municipality isn't moving forward. MAP provides a structured, third-party evaluation to identify real versus perceived issues and offer a strategic action plan for momentum.

### ***Lack of Clear Goals or Departmental Priorities***

When departments operate in silos or without clear benchmarks, MAP can facilitate alignment through goal-setting, performance tracking recommendations, and interdepartmental coordination strategies.

## ***Intergovernmental and Regional Cooperation***

### ***Evaluating Shared Services or Consolidation Opportunities***

MAP can identify overlapping services with neighboring jurisdictions and assess potential cost savings or service improvements from shared staffing, facilities, or purchasing agreements.

### ***Alignment with Regional Planning and Infrastructure Goals***

Communities involved in MPOs, COGs, or regional utility and transportation planning can use MAP to ensure local plans are in sync with regional initiatives, unlocking greater funding and partnership opportunities.

## ***Compliance and Risk Management***

### ***Concerns about TIF, BDD, or Grant Compliance***

Mismanagement of special taxing districts or grant programs can expose municipalities to audits and clawbacks. MAP reviews compliance status and recordkeeping, helping municipalities avoid risks and maintain eligibility.

### ***Lack of Current Personnel Policies or HR Practices***

Many small communities lack up-to-date employee handbooks, evaluation processes, or job descriptions. MAP evaluates HR policies and provides recommendations to improve morale, retention, and legal compliance.

## ***Community Image and Market Readiness***

### ***Desire to Attract New Residents or Businesses***

Communities struggling to market themselves effectively can benefit from MAP's review of branding, messaging, and economic development materials—helping them build a compelling and coordinated identity.

### ***Vacant or Underutilized Downtowns or Industrial Areas***

MAP can assess barriers to redevelopment—such as zoning limitations, infrastructure needs, or lack of incentives—and propose a strategy to activate these areas for economic growth.





# What can MAP do for you?

## Planning and Policy Gaps

### ***Outdated Comprehensive Plans, Zoning Codes, or Ordinances***

MAP provides a high-level review of land use plans, subdivision codes, and development policies to highlight where modernization is needed to support today's goals.

### ***Preparation for Annexation or Growth Management***

Communities planning for annexation or facing pressure from new development can use MAP to evaluate service capacity, boundary agreements, and infrastructure readiness to make responsible decisions.