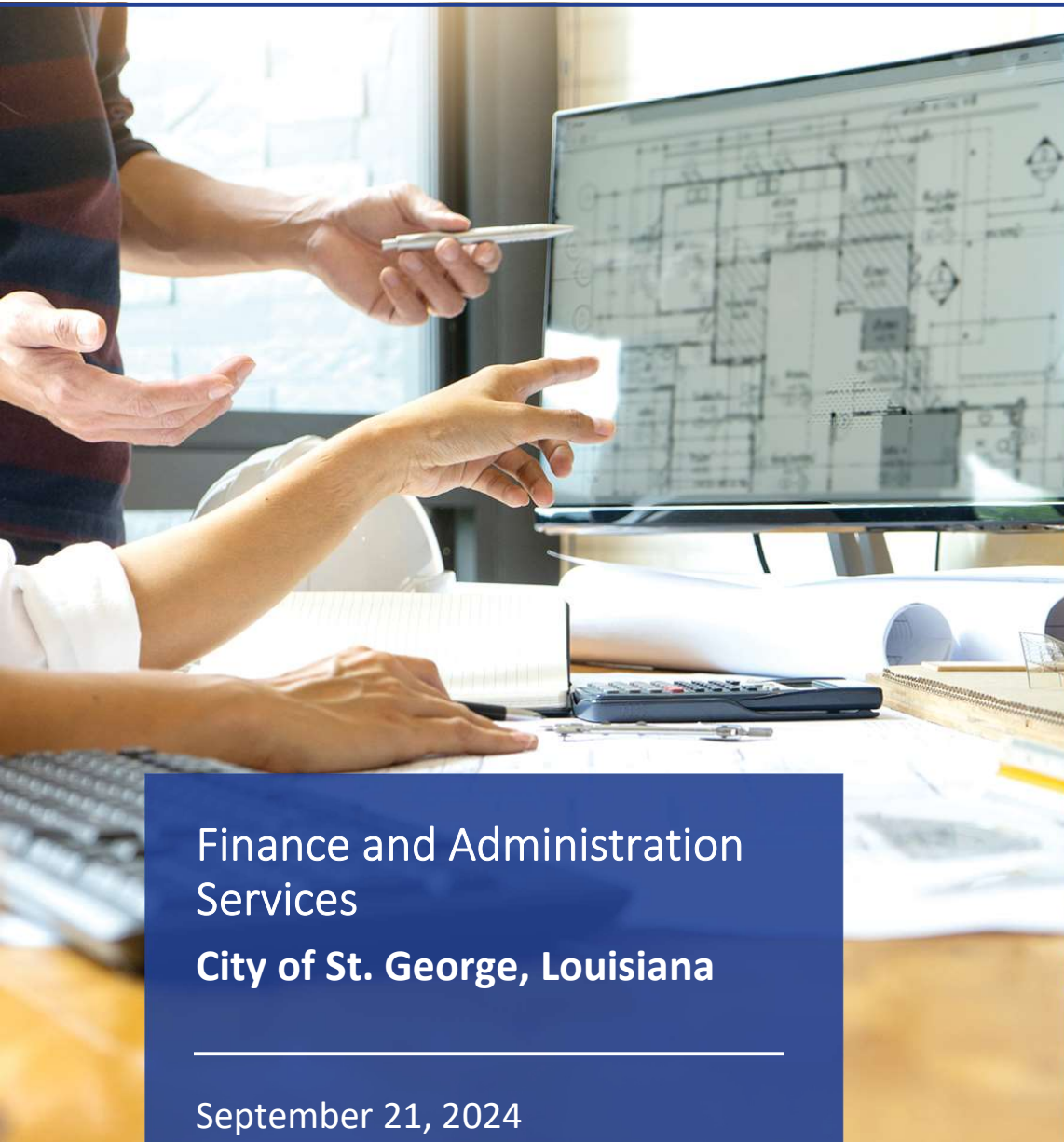




Institute for Building Technology and Safety
45207 Research Place | Ashburn, VA 20147



Finance and Administration Services City of St. George, Louisiana

September 21, 2024

Institute for Building Technology
and Safety (IBTS)

Point of Contact:

Chris Miller
Director, Local Government Services
Cell: 678.576.7352
cmiller@ibts.org

September 21, 2024

Mayor Dustin Yates
City of St. George
14100 Airline Hwy
St. George, LA 70817

RE: City of St. George Finance and Administrative Services

Dear Mayor Yates:

IBTS understands City of St. George's vision to provide better services with transparency and local control to meet the needs of your constituents. Our team is prepared to provide the proposed Finance and Administrative services listed in this proposal on or before **October 15, 2024**. To aid in this transition and proceed with project start up, we will assess the current financial information from the City-Parish prior October 15, 2024.

As part of our overall strategy for success, IBTS will meet with representatives from the Mayor-President's office to coordinate data sharing between the City of St. George and the City-Parish, ensuring alignment in financial and operational data. Our proposal outlines a comprehensive approach to Finance and Administrative Services, confirming the City's operations are streamlined and compliant with all local, state, and federal regulations. We will provide a fully staffed office open to the public during normal business hours based on a 40-hour work week. Below are the key highlights of our response:

Finance Department Services

Budgeting and Financial Planning: IBTS develops and manages the City's annual budget, track capital improvement budgets, and conducts long-term financial forecasting to ensure fiscal sustainability. This work is managed by an experienced and capable Finance Services Director provided by IBTS.

Accounting and Financial Reporting: We provide monthly financial reports, ensuring a 100% compliance rate with reporting deadlines. Our team maintains accurate financial records, manages accounts payable and receivable, and performs regular financial audits.

Revenue Collection: We oversee the collection of occupational taxes and manage the City's cash flow and financial reserves. IBTS notifies all businesses within the City of St. George of the requirement to direct their local business license payments to the City of St. George, effective in the upcoming fiscal year.

Administrative Services

Assistant City Clerk: IBTS provides a full-time Assistant City Clerk to assist the City Clerk in managing records, preparing agendas and minutes, and ensuring FOIA requests are completed within state-mandated timelines. We have established performance metrics, such as achieving a 100% compliance rate for FOIA requests and a 0% error rate in meeting minutes and official records.

Administrative Assistant: A full-time Administrative Assistant serves as the first point of contact for the public at the City's front counter, handling inquiries and correspondence. The goal is to resolve



90% of public inquiries within 24 hours, ensuring responsive and effective communication with residents and businesses.

IBTS is fully committed to delivering finance and administration services that meet the City of St. George's unique needs. By focusing on financial planning, accounting, revenue collection, and financial reporting, we provide a solid foundation for the City's fiscal health. Our approach emphasizes transparency, efficiency, and collaboration, and we look forward to the opportunity to support the City of St. George in achieving its financial goals. We are happy to answer any questions or provide additional information. Please contact me at 678.576.7352 or cmiller@ibts.org.

Sincerely,



Chris Miller
Director, Local Government Services

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Section I: Executive Summary

The Institute for Building Technology and Safety's (IBTS) mission, similar to that of the City of St. George, promotes the delivery of services that lay a solid foundation for the well-being and prosperity of residents and the sustainability of communities. IBTS is focused on the built environment and providing the greatest possible value to our government clients while delivering neutrality, transparency, and expertise.

IBTS Mission: to deliver quality services that meet the challenges of governance at all levels while enhancing public safety, economic development, and the general welfare of the community.

Incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 1998 in the Commonwealth of Virginia, IBTS currently has approximately 200 employees and 100 field consultants with headquarters in Ashburn, Virginia, and offices in 10 regional locations. We specialize in building and community development; natural

disaster planning and recovery; quality assurance; and energy and sustainability services. **Upon award of this contract, we will establish our 11th office location in St. George. This office will be a regional innovation hub and will supplement the IBTS team embedded at the City of St. George's City Hall.**

Our work is guided by a Board of Directors consisting of representatives of five national associations representing city, county, and state governments: the Council of State Governments, International City/County Management Association, National Association of Counties, National Governors Association, and the National League of Cities. Our Board members, elected and appointed officials, provide us with insight into the needs, challenges, and priorities of the public sector, which we use to serve our clients



IBTS Board-Appointing Associations provide IBTS insight into local government challenges and solutions from across the nation, bringing their experiences and lessons learned to guide IBTS direction and bolster customer-service philosophy.

better. Additionally, Team IBTS will collaborate with the Louisiana Municipal Association (LMA) to engage leaders who have contributed to the success of many cities throughout Louisiana.

IBTS delivers a turn-key scalable solution to provide professional services via a public-private partnership. We understand the City's desire to provide improved and more efficient services than those formerly provided by the City-Parish, ideally, at no additional expense to the City's taxpayers. Via the establishment of a Program Management Office (PMO) inclusive of a team of experts in the requirements for the stand-up of a new city, IBTS is ready to support St. George. The PMO structure allows for the flexibility, agility, scalability, local control, and efficiency a newly incorporated city requires.

This proposal includes our technical and staffing approach to support St. George's critical needs in a scalable and prioritized manner.



Section II: Approach and Scope of Work

IBTS serves as the primary point of contact (POC) for the City and overall manager for the City of St. George. As a partner and trusted advisor to the City, we work closely with the Mayor and Council, City-Parish, City Attorney, City Clerk, and other designated staff.

IBTS implements a PMO backed by the development and implementation of a Project Management Plan (PMP) and associated processes and procedures. The PMP addresses critical items such as stakeholders' communications and coordination, staffing and resourcing needs, financial management, strategy for the accomplishment of activities and projects, provision of qualified control measures for ongoing and potential future work, procedures for risk identification, tracking, and resolution, and schedules of activities to ensure timeliness and effectiveness.

Our proposed Program Director, **Chris Miller**, is IBTS' on-site and primary contact for the City and sits alongside city representatives at City Hall. He works collaboratively with the City and Corporate staff to execute this program. As with our other successful public-private partnerships and provision of shared municipal services in major metropolitan areas (i.e., New Orleans, Richmond, Washington DC), IBTS conducts ourselves as representatives of the City. One of the benefits we will bring to the contract is the ability to provide an economy of scale by having one project manager responsible for Community Development Services, Finance, and Administrative Services.

FINANCE SERVICES



IBTS offers the full suite of finance and administration services to the City of St. George. Our goal is to ensure efficient financial management, reporting, and transparency while aligning operations with the City's long-term goals. Our approach focuses on implementing best practices in municipal finance to support effective budgeting, accounting, and revenue collection.

Budgeting and Financial Planning

IBTS works closely with Mayor Yates to develop and manage the annual budget. We ensure that the City's financial resources are allocated efficiently and that the budgeting process aligns with both short- and long-term fiscal priorities. In addition, we conduct full financial forecasting, so the City remains fiscally sustainable, with capital improvement projects accurately tracked and funded.

Accounting and Financial Reporting

Our team manages all accounting functions, including maintaining the general ledger, ensuring accurate accounts payable and receivable processing, and preparing comprehensive financial reports. Monthly, quarterly, and annual financial reports will be provided to inform the City of its financial position. Additionally, IBTS works alongside the City in providing routine financial audits to promote transparency and fiscal integrity.

Revenue Collection and Management

IBTS manages the collection of all City revenues, including taxes, fees, and other sources of income. We oversee the City's cash flow and manage its investments to ensure financial stability. Our revenue collection processes are aligned with best practices, ensuring timely and accurate income to support City operations.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

IBTS provides comprehensive administrative services to support the City Clerk's Office, including a full-time Assistant City Clerk and a full-time Administrative Assistant. These positions deliver City's administrative functions are managed efficiently, meeting the needs of both City officials and residents.

Assistant City Clerk

The Assistant City Clerk assists the City Clerk in managing key functions of the City's administrative operations. Responsibilities include preparing and distributing City Council agendas, recording minutes, and maintaining official city records. The Assistant City Clerk manages public records requests, ensuring that all Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests are fulfilled within state-mandated timelines, depending on the complexity of the request. Compliance with local, state, and federal regulations will be strictly maintained, with all deadlines and reporting obligations carefully monitored.

The Assistant City Clerk handles the proper retention and disposal of records and coordinates public notices of City actions. To promote transparency, the Assistant City Clerk tracks key performance indicators, such as 100% compliance with FOIA request deadlines and a 0% error rate in meeting minutes and official records. These metrics ensure that the City's administrative operations meet the highest standards of accuracy and timeliness.

Administrative Assistant

To complement the role of the Assistant City Clerk, IBTS provides a full-time Administrative Assistant who serves as the front counter person, acting as the first point of contact for residents, businesses, and visitors. The Administrative Assistant handles phone calls, in-person inquiries, and correspondence, ensuring that requests are directed to the appropriate departments efficiently.

This role also involves managing office supplies, assisting with daily clerical tasks, and providing support to other City departments as needed. The Administrative Assistant provides timely customer service, with a goal of resolving or escalating 90% of public inquiries within 24 hours. This position is vital in ensuring a smooth flow of communication between the city and its residents, contributing to an organized and efficient administrative environment.

Together, the Assistant City Clerk and Administrative Assistant ensure that the City's administrative operations are handled professionally, efficiently, and transparently. These roles are critical to maintaining the City's legal and operational responsibilities while providing high-quality service to the community.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND TIMELINE

Our approach to service delivery is designed to ensure a smooth transition and effective implementation of financial operations. The contract will begin on October 15, 2024, and run through March 31, 2025. During this period, we undertake the following key activities:

- **Initial Assessment:** IBTS conducts an initial assessment of the City's financial operations between now and October 15, 2024, for readiness for service delivery upon the contract start date.
 - The Assistant City Clerk and Administrative Assistant is onboarded and familiarized with the city's specific administrative processes, procedures, and technology systems. This includes any necessary software training and a review of the City's record-keeping systems.

- Review the City's existing records and public notices. A transition plan is created to ensure all records are properly organized and easily accessible.
- **First 30 Days (October 16, 2024 – November 14, 2024):**
 - IBTS sets up the City's budget categories in a financial tracking software tool to facilitate effective tracking and reporting of revenues, expenditures, and key financial metrics. This step involves configuring customized budget fields that reflect the City's unique financial structure.
 - We meet with representatives from the Mayor-President's office to coordinate data sharing between the City of St. George and the City-Parish. This aligns financial and operational data, supporting collaborative governance and accurate reporting.
 - As part of this process, IBTS sends an initial letter to all businesses operating in St. George to inform them that they will now be required to pay their annual local business license to the City of St. George instead of the City-Parish. This communication delivers a smooth transition for business owners and compliance with the new requirements.
 - Public Notice System Setup:
 - The Assistant City Clerk establishes or reviews the current public notice system, ensuring that all statutory requirements for posting public meeting notices are met. This includes coordinating the publication of meeting schedules and City actions, aiming for 100% compliance with posting deadlines.
 - FOIA Response System Setup:
 - A system is set up for managing Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, so all requests are logged, tracked, and responded to within state-mandated timelines.
 - City Council, Board of Adjustment, and Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Preparation:
 - The Assistant City Clerk begins coordinating the preparation of agendas, packets, and minutes for all public meetings post-October 15. This includes collaborating with the City Clerk to prepare and distribute all relevant materials.
 - Front Desk Setup:
 - The Administrative Assistant establishes workflows for handling inquiries, managing documents, and supporting day-to-day clerical functions. The goal is to ensure that public inquiries are addressed efficiently, with 90% of inquiries resolved or escalated within 24 hours.
- **Ongoing Services:**
 - Monthly Financial Reporting: Financial reporting commences on November 15, 2024, and provides a bi-weekly or monthly basis. These reports provide detailed insights into the City's financial position and offer full transparency to the City Council and other stakeholders.
 - Final Annual Budget Submission: By December 15, 2024, IBTS will submit the City's final annual budget. This budget is developed based on sound financial planning, to reflect the City's priorities and its resources are utilized efficiently.
 - Public Meeting Support:
 - The Assistant City Clerk prepares and distributes agendas and minutes for all public meetings, including City Council, Board of Adjustment, and Planning & Zoning Commission meetings, aiming for a 100% accuracy rate in documentation. We schedule all meetings, and promptly update the public records after each session.
 - FOIA Requests and Public Records Management:

- FOIA requests will continue to be processed within state-mandated deadlines, with the Assistant City Clerk tracking compliance to ensure no delays. Public records are regularly updated, managed, and properly archived.
- **Customer Service Support:**
 - The Administrative Assistant manages the front counter and provides administrative support, handling public and staff inquiries, phone calls, and general clerical duties. Monitoring the 90% resolution target for public inquiries continues throughout the contract period.

Section III: Qualifications and Relevant Work Experience

QUALIFICATIONS

For 40 years, IBTS has been strengthening communities by reducing risk, enhancing public safety, and improving quality of life by providing professional building regulatory support services. We pride ourselves on being flexible, innovative, and responsive with sensitivity to the needs of our local government partners. As a non-profit, we place service above profits, tailoring our approach to the needs of each partnership. We work together with City-Parish staff to ensure we have a strong understanding of the City's policies and laws related to building construction and applicable trade-work.

IBTS municipal services support includes providing detailed administrative and financial services. We offer the city-parish the full suite of administrative support along with the necessary financial areas, including cash management, required to support a municipal government.

We provide similar services to the City of Central, setting up the new government for success. IBTS manages the processing of occupational licenses on a yearly basis. We provide oversight for the City contracts and the accounting of various city funds. As part of managing city vendors, we oversee accounts payable and obtain Certificates of Insurance (COI). An added value service, IBTS created a records retention policy that led to a more organized structure, and ultimately approved by the state of Louisiana.

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE



IBTS has been working in the State of Louisiana since the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and has supported multiple parishes and jurisdictions with building department services.

SNAPSHOT: CITY OF CENTRAL, LOUISIANA

The Finance Department is the financial arm of IBTS and the City. The department provides or assists with services such as accounting and financial reporting, budget preparation and analysis, and working with external auditors, as well as revenue collection.

Cash management was an integral part of this year's strategy. Cash management is the process of managing cash inflows and outflows to ensure it has sufficient cash reserves to operate effectively. Cash management also includes investing excess funds while ensuring the safety of the principal, managing liquidity, and improving yield.

As of December 31, 2023, the City invested over \$65 million, in accordance with the City's Investment Policy, generating over \$2.8 million in revenues.

The investment portfolio provided a total return of 4.29% for 2023. Additionally, the department administers Occupational Tax Licenses. In 2023, a record number of licenses were issued over the last five-year span, 638.

IBTS has two offices in Louisiana-in Bossier City to the north and the City of Central to the south with full-time staff that include administrative assistance, cash management, tax services, and accounting support.

IBTS highlights our City of Central project as a testament to our commitment to municipal services and providing administrative and financial services.

City of Central, Louisiana – Municipal Services

Client Contact:

Wade Evans, Mayor
wade.evans@central-la.gov

(225) 261-5988

Period of

Performance: 2011 - present

The City of Central is about 10 miles from downtown Baton Rouge, Central became an independent municipality in July 2005. It has approximately 30,000 residents living in a 66-square-mile area. The city has an annual operating budget of \$13.5 million and reserves of \$61 million.

As the boots on the ground for the City of Central, IBTS manages the delivery of services to citizens, and on behalf of citizens, for stakeholder of the community. IBTS routinely identifies subject matter experts and convenes meetings with the City Administration and City Council to discuss a variety of issues faced by the City. We work with the Mayor and City Council to ensure that all the city's processes, procedures, and documentation are properly implemented and completed and tracked for accountability and reporting. Specific support includes:

Finance and Administration: IBTS leads all finance and administrative functions in the city including:

- Management of 600+ occupational licenses on a yearly basis.
- Oversight of City contracts. IBTS is responsible for ensuring invoices match contract amounts and do not exceed budgeted amounts.
- Management of numerous City of Central funds, including the reconciliation of general ledger accounts for each fund and preparation of financial statements for each fund on a monthly basis.
- Manage approximately 300 vendors for the City, including accounts payable, obtaining W9s, and Certificates of Insurance when needed.
- Cash management. IBTS manages cash inflows and outflows to ensure the City of Central has sufficient cash reserves to operate efficiently including investing excess funds while ensuring the safety of the principal, managing liquidity, and improving yield.
- Developed Central's first Records Retention Policy, which was approved by the State of Louisiana.

Community Development: On behalf of the city, IBTS performs all functions of a Community Development agency at the local level, including planning and zoning, building plan review, all building permits, inspections, and code enforcement services. IBTS oversees the planning and zoning process, including handling appeals and waivers as well as convening public meetings on a regular basis. IBTS also administers the building code regulatory process for housing construction and commercial building. IBTS also conducts inspections and enforcement processes by which property maintenance issues are identified and addressed to ensure the appeal of the community meets established standards.

Engineering and Stormwater Management Services: IBTS provides engineering support services including flood plain management, storm water management and ground water permitting services.



City of Central, Louisiana – Municipal Services

IBTS offered disaster recovery support to the city because of a record flooding event that occurred in August 2016. The incessant rain isolated the city from surrounding jurisdictions, knocked out power disabling communications, and revealed several vulnerabilities such as lack of procedures and homeowners' insurance. Flood conditions made 6,000 City homes unsafe and required City residents to move to temporary shelters.

When the rains finally stopped, and damages were estimated to be in the billions, IBTS and the City set to work to maximize funding opportunities. IBTS' prior experience with disaster funders' regulations and requirements meant that they were able to alert residents, early on, of the most frequent missteps and points of confusion that can reduce or even eliminate FEMA assistance and National Flood Insurance Program claims. Such specific requirements included what constitutes substantial damage, base flood elevation guidelines and accessing manufactured housing units; these were areas where IBTS guided the city because of its prior disaster recovery experience.

Section IV: Staffing Approach

STAFFING



IBTS has assembled a team of subject matter experts, key personnel, and support contractors to help manage the City's requirements and develop a cohesive organization to quickly and professionally solve the City's needs.

Our proposed Program Director, **Chris Miller**, serves as IBTS's on-site contact for the city, working both at City Hall and IBTS St. George's office. Mr. Miller is embedded within the Finance Department and works closely with our Finance Director.

Other members of the PMO—**Chris Miller and Wayne Wright**—provide professional services, billed on an hourly basis. As the city transitions services, this staffing approach ensures resources needed to secure success is provided fully transparently while also positively impacting the containment of costs. Mr. Miller brings to this project over 30 years of local government experience including management responsibilities at other public private partnerships including Sandy Springs, Milton and Johns Creek, GA. **Figure 1** on the following page depicts our organizational structure.

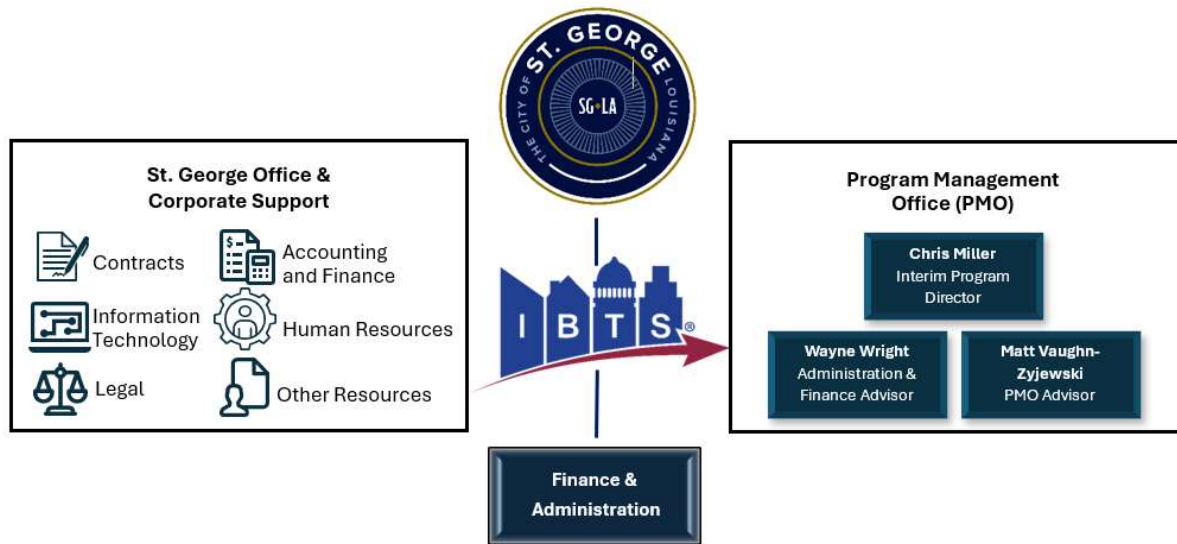


Figure 1. Our organizational structure will support the City of St. George through a flexible and scalable staff of professionals committed to the City's success.

Mr. Miller leveraged his experience working for other start-up cities like Sandy Springs, Georgia, will establish the initial SOPs, and work directly with the City's leadership daily and from City Hall. Mr. Miller also serves as a working representative for the city while services are transitioned from the City-Parish. Mr. Miller is assisted in this initial effort by Matt Vaughn-Zyjewski. Mr. Zyjewski, through his experience as Program Director in the City of Central, LA, brings his strategic vision and a hands-on management style to ensure that foundational systems are not only established but are also sustainable and responsive to the community's needs. Mr. Zyjewski applies lessons learned from Central's incorporation and best practices in municipal management to ensure that St. George is a pacesetter city. Mr. Zyjewski is vested in the creation of St. George municipal services as a St. George resident.

The final member of the PMO, Wayne Wright, performs most of his duties remotely during the initial start-up period. Mr. Wright's value to the team derives from his experience as a Program Director for three start-up cities in Georgia. For each of these cities (Tucker, South Fulton, and Peachtree Corners,) Mr. Wright selected and hired staff, negotiated leases, established SOPs, and ensured a seamless transition of services from the county to each new city. Figure 2 on the following page illustrates our overall staffing plan with our proposed full-time positions.

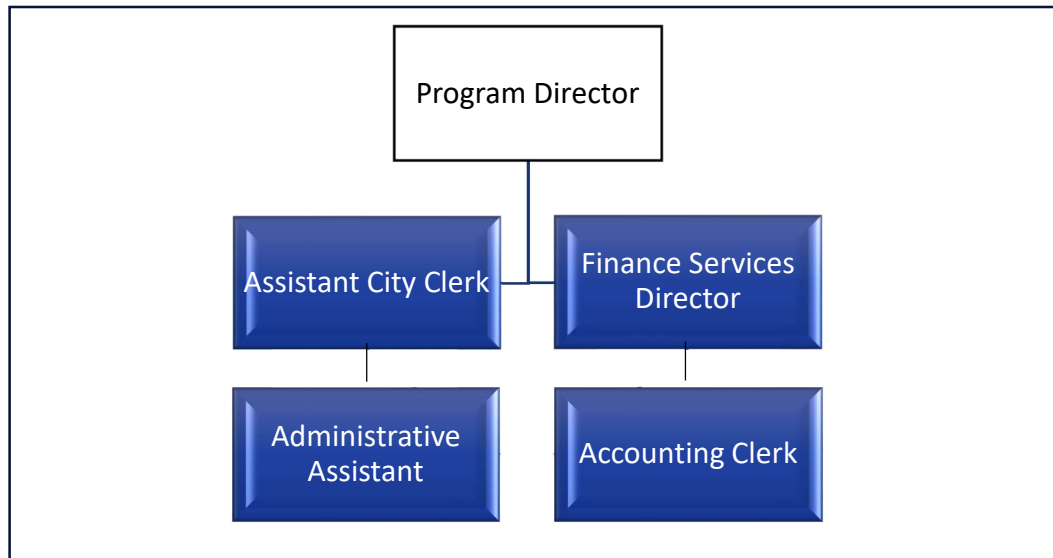


Figure 2. Finance and Administration Staffing

Section V: Price Proposal

IBTS proposes a monthly fee of \$143,000 for the services associated with this proposal. This fee includes all staff costs and financial services, including the initial letters sent to each business in St. George, alerting them to the change in jurisdiction relative to occupational taxes and then the subsequent occupational tax collection, remit payments, and monthly reporting. The City shall also pay an additional one-time fee of \$107,461 to IBTS to purchase a finance service software package and associated configuration costs.

ASSUMPTIONS AND ASSURANCES

1. Payment terms for all invoices will be net 30 days.
2. The city will provide office space for staff and public-facing services.
3. The scope of this proposal does not include online codification of St. George's codes (e.g., Municode).
4. A one-time mobilization configuration fee shall apply to transfer the accounting services software package to the City or its designee if the City does not utilize IBTS' services for a minimum of 12 months.