



The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

RDGL: 7/17/46 Vol.I

15th February, 2019

Speaker of the House
The Honourable Bridgid Annisette-George
Speaker's Chambers
Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Level 2, Tower D
International Waterfront Centre
1A Wrightson Road
Port of Spain

Dear Honourable Speaker,

The Nineteenth Report of the Public Accounts Committee on the Examination of the Audited Financial Statements of the Chaguanas Borough Corporation (CBC) for the Financial Years 2008-2011

Reference is made to your correspondence, Parl.:5/3/5, dated December 31, 2019 on the above captioned subject.

In that regard, on behalf of the Honourable Minister of Rural Development and Local Government, please find attached as requested, the response to the recommendations/comments contained in the Report.

For further information or queries you may contact Mrs. Gaynell Andrews-Vegas, Senior Planning Officer, at 628-5220 or email: Andrews-Vegasg@gov.tt.

Respectfully

Permanent Secretary

Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government

Office of the Permanent Secretary

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Appendix I

Status of Strategic Plan 2013-2016

The Chaguanas Borough Corporation's (C.B.C.) existing Strategic Plan 2013-2016 is outdated and a current one will be created as the funds become available. Whilst the C.B.C. recognizes that a proper Strategic Plan is critical for any Organization/Council/Administration to plan and achieve quantifiable goals within set timelines we are guided by current financial constraints and a lack of clear timeline for implementation of new roles outlined in the reform for Local Government Municipalities.

The Chaguanas Strategic Plan 2013-2016 (see attached) identifies goals which are still relevant and are in different stages of completion. Below is a tabular status report of the goals/objectives, achievements and reasons for non-achievements.

Goals/Objectives	Achievements/Non-Achievements	Reasons for Non- Achievements
1. Achieve City Status for the Borough of Chaguanas	Ongoing	Research, justifications and council approval has been forwarded to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of a Rural Development for consideration, guidance and subsequent drafting of cabinet note and upon approval the drafting of the "City of Chaguanas Act"
2. Improve internal efficiency within the Corporation	Several initiatives have been implemented with varying degrees of success. Ongoing	Vacancies in critical positions in the Corporation Organizational Structure limits success of initiatives.
3. Improve the nature and quality and delivery of services to the burgesses	Several initiatives have been implemented with varying degrees of success. Establishment of customer service desk and training for staff has been achieved. Ongoing	Retaining staff for these specialized roles is hampered by lack of motivating options and high transfer turnover.
4. Launch an increased number of youth programs	The Chaguanas Borough Council continues to support and coordinate youth programs	Limited funding and inability to generate and utilize income severely compromises social delivery.
5. Promote healthy lifestyles throughout the Borough	The Chaguanas Borough Council and Administration continues to maintain and upgrade recreational and sporting facilities. The CBC also supports other agency and group initiatives.	Limited funding and inability to generate and utilize income severely compromises social delivery.
6. Modernize city center	Initiatives in collaboration with other Ministries and Chaguanas Chamber of Commerce are ongoing.	Limited funding and inability to generate and utilize income severely compromises social delivery.

7. Complete and outfit the Townhall		Achieved	
8. Establish a regional facility/cultural center		The Chaguanas Tourism Park is near completion to highlight the Cultural and Historical identity of Chaguanas. Coordination with Ministry of Arts and multiculturalism as well as other ministries is required to construct a Central Academy for the Performing Arts.	Central Government Funding and policy directives of other Ministries input is required for National projects.
9. Acquire develop establish the Charlieville center	land, and the cricket	Not Achieved.	Coordination with Commissioner of State Lands and Ministry of Sport is Required
10. Establish for senior and youth	facilities citizens	Not Achieved	Coordination with Ministry of Health and additional Budgetary Allocations is required.
11. Establish facilities differently children	home for abled	Not Achieved	Coordination with Ministry of Health and additional Budgetary Allocations is required.
12. Create ecotourism and sports tourism opportunities		Projects such as the creation of a facility to co-ordinate and manage Eco tourism initiatives is included in Chaguanas Draft Estimates.	• Cabinet Approval being sought • Environmental Management Authority approval being sought • Land Acquisition in progress
13. Develop a first class cremation site at Lakhon Karriah, Felicity		Not Achieved	No clear feasible proposals have been approved. Land dispute issues hamper progress of initiatives
14. Enhance the road network inclusive of overpass		Not Achieved	No National Directive and no Ministry of Works intervention results in no coordinated projects and continued traffic problems.
15. Enhance efficiency by putting in place electronic approvals		Not Achieved Ongoing	Local Government and Rural Development Reform proposes to streamline approvals process.

16. Improve stakeholders' relationship		Ongoing Initiatives in collaboration with other Ministries, Chaguanas Chamber of Commerce and burgesses are ongoing.	
17. Implementation of hidden and open CCTV in the Borough of Chaguanas		Ongoing	Collaboration with Central Police is ongoing.
18. Preserve Historical/Heritage Sites		Ongoing	Coordination with other Ministries is required.
19. Develop facility for organic waste treatment		Ongoing	Coordination with SWMCOL, Sugar Cane Feed Center, Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Management Agency is required.
20. Build multi storey car park facilities in order to address car park issues		Not Achieved.	Limited funding and inability to generate and utilize income severely compromises social delivery
21. Chaguanas upgrade	Market	Ongoing Roof works completed, other areas are identified for improvement.	Limited funding and inability to generate and utilize income severely compromises social delivery.

We look forward to guidance and funding for the creation of a current Strategic Plan for Chaguanas which is aligned with National directives.

Appendix II

*List of Financial Officers at CBC
from 14/08/06 – 01/02/18*

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CHAGUANAS BOROUGH CORPORATION

#154-164 Chaguanas Main Road, St. Thomas Village, Chaguanas.

Tel: 665-5351, 665-5320, ext 3065, Fax: 671-0577

"Labor Omnia Vincit"



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Date: 31st January, 2019

LIST OF FINANCIAL OFFICERS

NAME	PERIOD		COMMENTS
	FROM	TO	
Hannah Mohammed	14 th August, 2006	13 th August, 2007	One (1) year contract
	1 st October, 2007	30 September, 2010	Three (3) year Contract
	1 st November, 2010	1 st May, 2011	Resigned
Gulabchand Maharaj	2 nd September, 2011	1 st September, 2013	Two (2) years Contract
	2 nd September, 2013	12 th September, 2013	Resigned
Jeffery Samaroo	1 st January, 2015	31 st December, 2015	Retired Accountant II - Employed on Contract as Accounts Support Officer
Rajendra Sawh	1 st February, 2016	31 st January, 2018	Financial Officer
	1 st February, 2018	31 st March, 2018	Financial Officer - Monthly Contractual Basis.


45/107
8/1/19
ADMINISTRATION OFFICER II
CHAGUANAS BOROUGH CORPORATION

No.	ISSUES	RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSES
1	Outdated Strategic Plan	*The Corporation should formulate an updated strategic plan/ action for fulfilling its immediate obligations and have the same approved by the line Ministry, while awaiting the guidelines pertaining to Local Government Reform; *The MRDLG should develop guidelines pertaining to operational and strategic flexibility whilst awaiting Local Government Reform; *The Corporation should develop an Implementation Process Map to track the progress and the implementation and or achievement of its strategic objectives by February 28, 2019 and *The MRDLG should set up structures to evaluate and review all the strategic objectives of the Municipal Corporations on a monthly basis by February 28, 2019	The Chief Executive Officer CBC will liaise with Permanent Secretary MRDLG and the Chaguanas Borough Council as to the formulation of a current strategic Plan for CBC. MRDLG will collaborate with the Corporation to develop operational and strategic guidelines as it undertakes the establishment of a Change Management and Transformational Unit under the rubric of the Local Government Reform. The current status of strategic objectives identified in the CBC Strategic Plan 2013- 2016 are stated in the Status Report attached as Appendix I. A process map for outstanding strategic objectives will be formulated. MRDLG to set up structures to evaluate strategic objectives.

Inadequate Retention of Institutional Knowledge and Succession Planning	*The CBC in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders, the MRDLG and the Service Commissions Department should devise appropriate solutions/alternatives for staff shortages and identify key roles for succession or replacement planning; *The CBC should identify pools of talent that could potentially fill and perform highly in key roles and develop employees to be ready for advancement into these roles; *To ensure business/operational continuity, the CBC in collaboration with the MRDLG should: - Conduct a workforce assessment to document and identify the critical knowledge held by existing employees; - Have tenured employees write their work processes down in the form of standard operating procedures; - Enlist the assistance of existing and departing retirees to serve as mentors; - Institute job-sharing between veteran employees and newer employees; *The Permanent Secretary should ensure that top management positions at the Corporations under his/her purview do not remain vacant for extended periods of time. *CBC should implement an Exit Interview process to facilitate a proper and effective change in Executive Leadership; *CBC should seek to maintain appropriate documents and develop a handover procedure to facilitate an appropriate and effective change in Executive Leadership; and *The CBC should submit a status update on the recruitment of a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) by February 28, 2019.	The recommendations are endorsed and no doubt shall be of significant value to the CBC. Implementation of the recommendation will necessitate a fully staffed and operational Human Resource Management department within the CBC. The CBC currently has no Financial Officer and is working with PS MRDLG to fill the vacancy with an authorized person. A list of Financial Officers and their terms of hire is attached. (Appendix 2).
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Inadequate financial resources to effectively satisfy the need of stakeholders	Taking into account the shortfalls in monthly subventions from the MRDLG, Municipal Corporations should formulate a list of goals/objectives for the fiscal year based on priority and allocate the subventions received accordingly. While formulating this listing, the Corporations should: i. Evaluate the needs of the residents and businesses that would arise from the Corporations' intervention; ii. Consider the precedence of the reoccurring need for the service(s) in the burgess(es); iii. Assess the resources needed to achieve the provision of the service(s), including the likelihood of success; and iv. Implement measures and evaluation systems to assess the use of the limited resources at the Corporations' disposal	Priorities are determined by members of Council upon receipt of allocation.
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Status of Outstanding Financial Statements	*The CBC should develop and implement internal accounting controls and processes to ensure the timely preparation and submission of Financial Statements to the Auditor General's Department(AGD) by the statutory deadline; *The CBC should undertake a quarterly closing process of financial accounts to ensure the ongoing completeness and accuracy of data collected; *CBC should urgently complete the audited financial statement for the years 2012 and 2013 and put steps in place for the timely completion of the audited financial statements for the years 2014 to 2017 and submit a status update on the outstanding financial statements no later than February 28, 2019;and *The MRDLG should exercise their oversight functions and strengthen its overall capacity and take a more proactive role in monitoring and evaluating the management of the operations of Municipal Corporations to ensure the timely submission of audited Financial statements and all other relevant documents to the Auditor General and Parliament	Up to 2011 is completed and is currently receiving the attention of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC). 2012-2013 is currently being finalized and subsequent years will be completed thereafter.
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