



MANAGING AMERICA'S CITIES

*A Handbook for Local
Government Productivity*

ROGER L. KEMP

ALSO BY ROGER L. KEMP
(AS EDITOR)

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A Handbook for Public Officials and Citizens*
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ROGER L. KEMP



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CONTENTS

| | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|-----|
| | <i>Acknowledgments</i> | ix |
| | <i>Preface</i> | 1 |
| 1 | INTRODUCTION | 5 |
| 2 | CITY COUNCIL | 28 |
| 3 | CITY MANAGER | 53 |
| 4 | CITY CLERK | 84 |
| 5 | LEGAL | 101 |
| 6 | FINANCE | 116 |
| 7 | FIRE | 149 |
| 8 | HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES | 175 |
| 9 | LIBRARY | 202 |
| 10 | PARKS AND RECREATION | 226 |
| 11 | PLANNING AND BUILDING | 253 |
| 12 | POLICE | 285 |
| 13 | PUBLIC WORKS | 314 |
| 14 | CONCLUSION | 345 |
| | <i>Municipal Resource Directory</i> | 369 |
| | <i>Bibliography</i> | 397 |
| | <i>Index</i> | 449 |

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PREFACE

City halls throughout America are undergoing a revolution in the manner by which municipal services are financed and delivered to citizens. Significant numbers of elected officials and public managers are striving to create more "user-friendly" organizations. Many public managers are embracing more flexible and adaptive management styles. Contemporary management practices are creating dynamic and responsive municipal organizations. These organizations are dynamic because they are accommodating change in a positive way. They are responsive because they are striving to improve the quality of their services. Citizens are also being empowered to coproduce public services. All parties—elected officials, public managers, and citizens—are now concerned about making their government more productive as well as holding down its costs.

The goal of today's local government is customer satisfaction at a reasonable cost. Citizen feedback instruments, process improvement techniques, improved planning practices, and the use of the new technologies have all helped to achieve this goal. Since organizations are mere legal entities, the employees that spend their working lives in municipal government should be recognized for embracing more positive service philosophies, work attitudes, and operational practices. To have effective government, roles must be clearly established and followed. Elected officials must adopt prudent public policies, city managers must hold department directors accountable for implementing these policies, and department managers must manage their employees to continually improve their operations and services.

Employee productivity has been greatly enhanced through the use of new computer hardware, software applications, and other technological innovations. It should be kept in mind that local government services have been and will always be labor intensive. While technologies may improve operations and services, they only assist employees in their efforts to better serve the public. For this reason, all technological applications are merely an instrument to help employees achieve the goal of improved customer satisfaction. Enhanced customer satisfaction means improving service quality and or reducing the cost

of these services. Unlike the private sector, the demand for public services is always high. Each public program has its own constituency, and these individuals continually desire to enhance the quantity and quality of their services.

The representatives of municipal government—elected officials, city managers, department directors, and employees—should never forget that their organization holds a monopoly over the public services they provide. If a citizen wishes to report a crime or a fire, or have a pothole repaired, they can only call their police, fire, or public works departments. For this reason, municipal employees should always strive to provide the highest quality services at the most reasonable cost. Some citizens feel that their municipal government should be operated like a private company, and that user fees are the answer to holding down property taxes. It should be kept in mind, however, that many citizens expect property-related services for paying their property taxes. For this reason, police, fire, and public works departments do not charge for many of their services. Other services, such as those provided by public libraries, have always had a tradition of free services. To charge for these services would alienate the very citizens they were intended to serve.

Municipal finance has also undergone drastic changes during the past decade. Many public services that only benefit selected users are now financed out of enterprise funds. This accounting arrangement treats certain public services as profit centers. User fees for these services are adjusted annually to cover their operating costs. Where appropriate, departmental user fees are being implemented and periodically adjusted to reflect the cost of doing business. In many sensitive public service areas, discounts are provided to young people, senior citizens, and families on fixed incomes. New financing tools such as development impact fees, utility connection charges, and assessment districts are being used to charge those who benefit from public improvements. It should be kept in mind that many citizens are willing and can afford to pay user fees for the public services they use.

Efforts to empower citizens to take responsibility for holding down the cost of their government are now commonplace. Recycling programs, conservation initiatives, neighborhood watch programs, medical screening clinics, fire and crime prevention services, and the like, all help to reduce the cost of public services. Citizens in many communities, for example, have significantly reduced their refuse collection and disposal costs through voluntary recycling efforts. Likewise, community crime and fire prevention programs have been successful in reducing the number of crimes and fire incidents. Citizens are increasingly aware that they can become active participants with their government in helping to hold down the cost of their public services. Citizen coproduction programs are increasing in popularity.

Since change is incremental, the future path of our municipal governments has already been charted and is firmly in place. While the goal of high

quality services at a reasonable cost will not change, the multitude of avenues available to achieve this goal are presently in a state of transition. While the interface between a municipal organization and its clients will primarily remain one-on-one (employee to citizen), a variety of processes are now available to streamline and improve the manner in which these services are provided.

For the most part, public officials in each community are "doing their own thing" in the dynamic and changing field of municipal government. This volume describes the operations of a typical municipal government and takes stock of the numerous productivity trends being initiated in our city halls. The goal of this work is to codify this information and make it available to others who have an interest in this field. Elected officials will obtain an essential overview of municipal operations and departmental productivity applications. Local government professionals will find this information invaluable to improve their operations and services. Citizens will become educated about numerous innovative ways to improve the quality of their services, increase the productivity of their city hall, as well as reduce the cost of their government. Students wishing to enter this field, or merely learn more about it, will find this volume highly instructional and informative.

This volume currently represents the most comprehensive codification of knowledge available about the operations and productivity applications in our nation's municipal governments.

ROGER L. KEMP
Summer 1997
Meriden, Connecticut

INTRODUCTION

EVOLUTION OF CITIES

The rapid growth of cities was largely the consequence of the development of new technologies and their application to the industrial and agricultural sectors of the American economy. The location of industrial facilities in our urban centers, and the surplus of labor brought about by agricultural advances in rural areas, provided the necessary labor supply for our industrial expansion. During the latter part of the 18th century, the United States witnessed a population migration of unprecedented proportions from rural to urban areas. Cities grew in size and flourished as this trend continued during the ensuing decades.

As our metropolitan areas flourished, a rapidly growing population base created the need to greatly expand the level of existing municipal services, as well as ways to finance them. One of the first local taxes—the municipal property tax—helped to generate the necessary revenues for local governments to finance property-related services. They typically include police, fire, and public works services. The rapid urbanization of America during the 19th century placed unanticipated demands on these municipal services. Local governments expanded services in these areas, and increased property taxes, in response to these new population demands.

New forms of taxes and fees evolved over the years to help finance a growing need for cultural and recreational programs. The decrease in working hours, evolving family patterns, and increased longevity created the need for new community programs in these nontraditional service areas. Communities, regardless of their size or geographic location, began to provide a full range of municipal services to their residents. The addition of these new services, and the expansion of traditional services, created the need for larger and more complex municipal service delivery systems. These factors led to the need for more professional management of America's cities to run the organizations that provided these services.

The magnitude of America's urban problems increased during the Great

Depression to the extent that local governments could no longer provide meaningful and workable solutions to their local municipal problems. The states, because of their restricted financial capability, were limited in the financial assistance they could provide to solve these problems. The federal government expanded its programs to fill this service vacuum. The central government began by providing direct programmatic, technical, and financial aid to cities to help ameliorate America's pressing urban problems. The height of federal involvement with localities, both operationally and financially, reached its peak during President Johnson's Great Society movement in the 1960s.

Federal aid to communities continued relatively unabated until the advent of the so-called "taxpayers' revolt" movement in the mid-1970s. Because of the mismatch between urban problems and municipal revenues, federal grant programs fulfilled the economic need of transferring tax monies from wealthier to poorer urban areas to balance the capability of local governments to cope with their urban problems. The growth of the taxpayers' revolt, Washington's preoccupation with balancing the federal budget, and the public pressure to eliminate the federal deficit all helped to form a change in the philosophical direction of the U.S. central government. Today, local problems mean local solutions. Local governments can no longer rely on higher levels of government for programmatic, technical, or financial support to tackle their urban problems.

This forced self-reliance has created the need for local elected officials to demand more of their management staffs, and for professional managers to seek out innovative and creative ways to reduce costs, increase productivity, and to maintain existing service levels. These tasks are particularly difficult in many urban communities that have witnessed an out-migration of their middle class population, an influx of low-income citizens demanding public services, and a declining property tax base. State governments, to some extent, have attempted to provide aid to their larger urban communities in an effort to counteract these negative trends. Because of limited state revenues, many pressing urban problems have gone unresolved, and are growing in both their enormity and complexity.

Changing societal trends and values over the past century have served to reshape municipal governments. As community governments grew in size to meet new service and population demands, three important national trends occurred simultaneously that facilitated our current form, structure, political processes, and administrative structures of America's contemporary municipal governments. These trends included the increasing popularity of business and corporate ideals, the progressive reform era, and the public administration movement. These three trends are briefly highlighted below.

Popularity of Business and Corporate Ideals. Businesspersons and the public concept of the corporation have been instrumental in determining public thought and values about community governments. The success of modern-day

corporations in the private sector has had a significant influence on American political and administrative thought. Probably no political or administrative philosophy reflects business practices and corporate ideals more clearly than the growth of professional management in our nation's cities. Many citizens still compare the operation of their city government with that of the private corporation. The elected representatives are the board of directors, the city manager is the chief executive officer, and the citizens of the community are the stockholders of the government. Economy and efficiency, two primary values of the business community, are foundations of the movement towards the professional management of our municipalities.

Progressive Reform Movement. Many of the effects of rapid urbanization, particularly the early political machines and large monopolistic corporations, met with disfavor among many citizens, who were commonly called Progressives. These individuals, who formed a significant movement because of their large numbers, felt that the best interests of the public were frequently not being served by the existing political processes and some of the large corporations were perceived as being too strong and having too much power over common people. One of the most significant municipal reforms developed and supported by the Progressives was the council-manager plan. The management concepts embodied in the plan ideally suited the Progressive political philosophy of the time—a competent professional manager and public policy established by nonpartisan elected representatives. The manager's apolitical qualities suited the Progressive values, which favored impartiality and looked down upon personality politics and favoritism. Two key Progressive ideals—equality of participation in the political process and centralized administrative authority—were well balanced in this form of municipal governance.

Public Administration Philosophy. The modern city management profession also fit the emerging concepts of public management in the early 1900s. Many administrative scholars espoused a sharp division between policy determination and policy implementation. Highly respected scholars of the time drew a sharp distinction between "politics" and "administration." The council-manager plan incorporated the ideals of the separation of policymaking and the implementation of public policy. The elected representatives should be responsible for setting public policy, while the city manager should focus on its implementation. The separation of these two distinct tasks—policy setting and policy implementation—formed the basis of the emerging trend to separate community politics from the operation of the municipal organization. This widespread public administration philosophy facilitated the growth of professional management in America's cities.

As the Progressive reform movement emerged and spread, the prevailing philosophy of public administration at the time and the increasing popularity of business and corporate ideals provided the positive background against

which professional municipal management blossomed into national popularity. All of these ideological and social forces provided the supportive environment in which professional municipal management spread from city to city across the landscape of America's local governments. The many changes and challenges currently facing our cities—increased service demands, fewer financial resources, citizen aversion to increased taxation, and fewer funds from higher levels of government—have tested the abilities of governing bodies to adopt policies to improve the condition of their cities and, at the same time, hold professional managers accountable for their proper implementation.

FORMS OF GOVERNANCE

There are several significantly different forms of local governmental structure that citizens can adopt to serve the needs of their community. The four most common types of municipal governance are the strong mayor form, the commission type, the mayor-council model, and the council-manager plan. Each structure's strengths and weaknesses are perceived differently by constituents, political officeholders, professional government managers, and the employees of the municipal organization. The particular form selected is not an easy decision for citizens to make. Elected leaders above all want to be responsive to their constituents. On the other hand citizens find equal treatment, an apolitical and objective service delivery system, and cost-effective government to be most important. The characteristics of each of these models of municipal governance are briefly described below.

Strong Mayor. In many large cities in the United States, the mayor is elected to "lead" the city, usually through partisan municipal elections. The mayor serves as the chief executive officer, while the city council serves as the legislative body. The mayor typically manages the municipal organization through mayor-appointed department managers. The mayor may have the authority to appoint a deputy mayor or chief administrative officer to run the daily operations of the city. This plan has its advantages and disadvantages, depending upon the qualifications of the person elected as the mayor. A good political leader is sometimes not a good municipal administrator. Hiring professionally trained administrators has served to overcome this shortcoming.

Commission. This form of government, which usually employs non-partisan, at-large elections includes a board of commissioners. Collectively they serve as the legislative body of their municipal government. Individually each commissioner serves as the head of one or more administrative departments (e.g., public works commissioner, police commissioner, and parks commissioner). The municipal reform movement in the United States has led to the near-demise of this form of local government. This model of municipal

governance fuses policymaking with implementation, since both roles are performed by the same officeholders. The other major weakness of this model is obvious, since few elected leaders possess the necessary requirements to professionally manage large portions of a municipal organization.

Mayor-Council. This form has a legislative body that is elected either at-large, by ward or district, or by some combination of the two (i.e., some at-large and others by district). There are two distinguishing characteristics of this plan. The mayor is selected separately through at-large elections and his office is officially designated as the formal head of the municipal government. Depending upon local laws, the powers of the mayor may vary greatly from limited administrative duties to full-scale authority to appoint and remove department managers. The mayor sometimes has veto power over the policies adopted by the city council. The mayor frequently has authority to appoint a chief administrative officer to run the daily operations of the city. The city council typically must confirm this appointment.

Council-Manager. This form of government typically has a legislative body selected by popular vote through nonpartisan elections. Although council members are usually elected at-large, they are selected through some combination of at-large and district elections. They are responsible for setting policy, while the management of the municipal organization is under the direction of an appointed city manager. The city council appoints and removes the city manager by majority vote. The city manager has the power to appoint and remove department managers. The mayor, frequently elected by the city council, is a voting member of the governing body with no special veto or administrative power. The mayor is, however, the community's recognized political and legislative leader and represents the city at all official ceremonies as well as civic and social functions.

Nearly 4,000 cities in the United States operate under the council-manager plan, which separates the policymaking duties of elected officials from the administrative role of professionally trained managers. This is the most successful and popular form of government in cities over 10,000 in population. This form of government has been adopted on the average of one each week by citizens in cities and counties throughout the nation since 1945. Because of its popularity among citizens, it is the fastest growing form of municipal governance in America. For this reason, the references made in this volume to mayors, city councils, and city managers refers to this governmental structure, although other titles such as city administrator, chief executive officer, and business manager may commonly be used in other forms of government to refer to the duties of the city manager.

The form of government that the electorate of a community selects should best serve the needs of its citizens. Voters elect their representatives based on their confidence in them to set the right policies, and to ensure that these policies are implemented into programs and services to serve their needs. If the

council-manager plan best serves this goal, then it is the most desirable form of government. If another model of local governance is adopted, it should embody the type of governance desired by citizens. The form of government best suited for a particular city should always be determined through the electoral process by popular vote. No system of municipal governance is perfect, nor can any single system represent the wishes of all of the people all of the time. When the form of local government selected represents the wishes of the majority of the electorate, this is the form that best serves the democratic process and the will of the people.

FORCES OF CHANGE

Dynamic changes are now underway in society that will have a dramatic impact on cities from political, managerial, operational, financial, and technological standpoints. These changes have created trends that will require local public officials to adapt and modify their municipal organizations in order to meet the public's changing expectations of effective governing. The milestone changes influencing cities throughout the country have been facilitated by political trends, demographic shifts, changing urban patterns, technological developments, and economic considerations. Many of these trends are firmly in place, and will have a measurable impact on municipalities across the nation for some time to come. They will also test the abilities of public officials, both elected and appointed, as they strive to restore the public's trust in their city government.

Gone are the more stable days for local governments. When revenues were plentiful and public officials could merely adjust tax rates to balance budgets, life for public officials was relatively simple and routine. The outside environment did not pose any significant challenges, opportunities, or threats. Public programs were merely increased in response to citizen demands for more services. When citizen demands could be met with existing revenues, taxpayers were relatively complacent and did not get actively involved in the affairs of their local government. Difficult economic times have fueled the public's desire to hold down taxes, make government more accountable and productive, and altered the traditional environment in which community governments function. In the future, both the scale and mix of public services, as well as how they are managed and financed, will be reevaluated in response to changes presently taking place in our society.

Traditional management practices, designed during more stable periods of steady growth and routine change, are being replaced by a host of new management techniques. Without predictability, the common management practices of the past will be found to lack both reliability and credibility, especially in the eyes of citizens and the mayors and city councils they elect. How

public officials adapt to this new environment will reflect on their abilities to successfully cope with the future. Public officials are typically preoccupied with the present, and are usually reactive to change. Most of the time governments, at all levels, attempt to respond to change after the fact. Events are occurring now at such a fast pace that the traditional management styles, financial techniques, and technological practices of the past are quickly becoming obsolete.

To briefly explain the extent and magnitude of these changes, and to make them easier to understand, they have been grouped into five general categories. They include emerging political trends, changing demographics, evolving urban patterns, technological developments, and economic factors. The dramatic changes taking place in each of these areas and their influence on our public officials and their municipal organizations are summarized below.

Political Trends. More federal and state laws and court decisions of all types will greatly usurp the home-rule powers of local elected officials. Citizens demand more services, but do not want increased taxation, making it difficult for public officials to set program priorities and to balance their annual budgets. Public officials will stress economic development as a vehicle to raise revenues without increasing taxes. Responsibilities will continue to be shifted downwards from higher levels of government to municipalities. Financing these responsibilities will fall on the backs of municipal taxpayers. Because of the serious mismatch between revenues and problems, cities with low tax bases will have to resort to service reductions. Federal and state grant funds to communities will be limited, but not curtailed entirely. These grants will focus on achieving national priorities, such as crime reduction, affordable housing, and shelters for the homeless.

Demographic Changes. There will be a growing number of senior citizens who, because of their available time, will become more politically active. An aging population will increasingly demand more cultural, recreational, and social services. A greater number of smaller households will require more high-density residential developments, placing greater demands on existing public services, including police and fire protection. There will be a greater number of women in the workforce, and they will become more politically active in the workplace. Such issues as comparable worth and sexual harassment will increase in importance. A greater number of minority and immigrant groups will place new demands for specialized public services and more bilingual public employees. They will also demand greater representation in the political process through neighborhood, or district, elections as well as appointments to city boards and commissions.

Urban Patterns. Urban sprawl will be on the increase but will be located primarily along major vehicle transportation corridors and public mass transit routes. Cities will witness greater in-fill development in already urbanized areas. Land areas that once were marginal will be purchased and upgraded for

new development. Older land areas, such as outdated industrial plants and aging commercial centers, will be upgraded and or retrofitted with new amenities to make them more profitable. In central city areas, continuing high land values will lead to increased gentrification, further exacerbating the need for affordable housing. New "ethnic centers" will evolve in metropolitan areas, with these residents desiring to maintain the cultural traditions, values, and customs of their homelands. Higher energy costs and greater traffic congestion will create more political pressure for public mass transit systems. Emphasis will be placed on multimodal systems which offer greater transportation options to citizens.

Technological Developments. There will be an increased use of microcomputers in the workplace, brought about by the more sophisticated systems, lower costs, and more user-friendly software. Information management will become increasingly necessary as computers make more information networks and databases available. Greater energy costs will continue to shape our building technologies. Computer management systems will become commonplace to monitor and regulate energy consumption in public buildings. More public meetings will be aired on public-access cable television stations. Programs will also be initiated to educate citizens on the key issues and problems facing their community. Advanced telecommunications systems, such as those with conference calling and facsimile transmission capabilities, will reduce the number of meetings and related costs. Because of expensive construction costs for underground mass transit systems, new light-rail systems will replace the underground subways of the past.

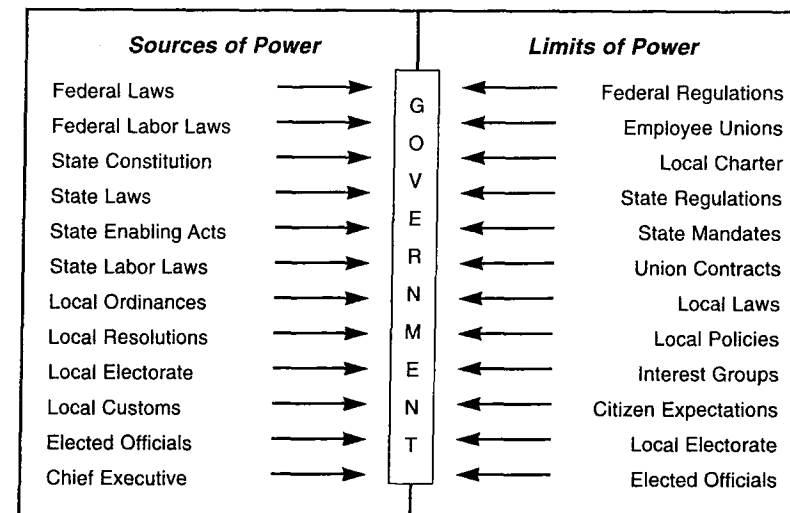
Economic Factors. The public's aversion to new taxes, and higher user fees and charges, will limit the growth of government services. Governing bodies will increasingly adopt new charges for selected users of public services, such as those fees charged to developers for the cost of public improvements. Public officials will attempt to get citizens more involved in holding down the costs of their public services. Such programs as recycling and composting, conservation, and volunteering to work for their community will increase in importance. Limited new revenues will be earmarked for those public programs with the highest payoff, both from a political and productivity standpoint. Federal grant programs will be limited, creating greater competition among cities for these funds. New grant programs will be earmarked for cities with low-income populations and related social, health, and housing problems. The public will continue to advocate for the "controlled growth" of government in order to hold down their taxes.

The magnitude of these changes will have a direct influence on the type of public services provided, how they are managed and financed, and the extent to which they fit the needs of the citizens being served. By being aware of the latest management, financial, and technological practices, as well as the numerous advances within with various functional and programmatic areas of cities,

elected and appointed officials can create a smooth transition into the future for their community. If this does not occur, public meeting halls in cities across the country will become forums for debating citizen demands for greater government accountability, responsiveness, and change. While public officials in local governments must successfully adapt to these changes, it should be kept in mind that many factors external and internal to the municipal organization control the power and authority of public officials in all functional service areas, from conducting assessments to setting zoning regulations.

The various sources of power for public officials and municipal governments are created by selected federal, state, and local laws, as well as numerous court decisions. Conversely, the limits placed in these same powers are also influenced by different types of federal mandates, state regulations, local laws, and court decisions. The political and administrative environment of community governments is increasingly regulated by a number of conditions beyond the control of locally elected officials and their management staffs. While elected officials, city managers, and department managers may wish to implement new human resources practices, for example, existing employment laws, personnel regulations, and labor agreements may place restrictions on the use of such practices. Existing labor contracts, may place restrictions on privatizing or contracting for municipal services, as well as regulate the use of community volunteers. Figure 1.1 highlights many of the common sources and limits of power in our community governments.

Figure 1.1
Sources and Limits of Power in Municipal Governments



MUNICIPAL ORGANIZATIONS

Every city government has a governing body consisting of a mayor and city council. How the mayor is selected and the number of council members are determined by state laws for general law cities and by the electorate in charter cities. In many general law cities, for example, there are typically five council members elected at-large. The mayor is selected by majority vote of the governing body. In charter cities, on the other hand, the mayor is usually elected at-large, while the members of the council are elected through some combination of at-large and district elections. The number of council members in a charter city is usually seven or nine, but varies greatly and may even be based upon population. Some charter cities also require the election of other municipal positions such as the city clerk, treasurer, and auditor. The powers of the mayor, as well as these other positions, are set forth in the municipal charter. For the purpose of this study, the term governing body refers to the mayor and members of the city council. It is also assumed that the governing body sets policy, while the city manager implements this policy, and that all department managers, with the exception of the city attorney, are appointed by the city manager.

The typical municipal government provides a variety of services to its residents. These public services are provided by individual city departments, which are organized by function. Each department performs those services related to its function. Some departments perform a narrow function, such as police and fire departments, while other departments encompass broader functions, like public works and health and human services. The type of services a city provides depends upon a number of different factors. Communities on coastlines, for example, may provide small craft harbors and public beaches, while larger cities may have museums, zoos, and golf courses. Some cities have municipal airports and also provide public transit services. To make matters more confusing, some states require certain functions to be performed by counties, such as health, welfare, property assessments, and tax collection. In many urbanized areas, some services are provided by special districts. These services may include public transit, water distribution, and wastewater treatment. Furthermore, many communities contract for certain services from other municipalities and counties, as well as the private sector.

A municipal organization can also be divided into line and staff departments. Line departments provide a direct service to the public, while staff departments serve the organization to keep it operating smoothly. For these reasons, the external services provided by line departments are more visible to the public than those internal services performed by staff departments. Typical staff departments include city clerk, city manager, finance, and legal. Common line departments encompass fire, health and human services, library, parks and recreation, planning and building, police, and public works. Some departments,

like city clerk, perform both line and staff functions. That is, they serve the public (e.g., the sale of public records, licenses, and permits) and also serve the needs of the organization (e.g., the preparation of meeting agendas, minutes, and staff reports, as well as the posting of public notices). Although the number of departments may vary from community to community, the above departments are so common that they are used to represent the typical municipal organization. Figure 1.2 graphically illustrates these departments.

Every department's operations can further be divided into specific programs, each related to a department's overall function. Each program represents a particular service and, taken together, these programs encompass those services provided by each municipal department. The number and types of programs in a municipal department may vary from department to department, as well as community to community. Variables that influence this phenomenon include each community's unique historical development, the privatization of services, the existence of contract services, and how each department director organizes their respective departmental operations. Individual municipal charters may also alter this program arrangement, but these changes would be the exception to the typical municipal organization rather than the norm. The chapters in this volume are organized around the typical municipal functions, or departments. The various programs indicated for each department are typical and common to its function. For these reasons, the programs shown in Table 1.1 represent the most common programs relating to each municipal department.

PRODUCTIVITY TRENDS

In the private sector, productivity occurs when an employee produces a good or performs a service in an effective and efficient manner. While private companies primarily produce individual goods and services in the general consumer marketplace, city governments perform a variety of services to citizens within the strict confines of their political boundaries. Most private managers have traditionally applied the following criteria when attempting to create a productive organization: Productivity = effectiveness + efficiency. Effectiveness refers to providing an improved service, while efficiency means performing the same service in a economical or cost-effective manner. Therefore, if managers do an excellent job but overrun their budget, they may be performing effectively but not efficiently. Conversely, if managers save budget funds at the expense of program quality, they may be performing efficiently but not effectively. In either of the above two examples, productivity does not exist using the traditional private sector definition of this term. Under this definition, for productivity to take place, managers must provide an improved level of service at a lower unit cost.

Figure 1.2
Typical Municipal Organization by Major Functions

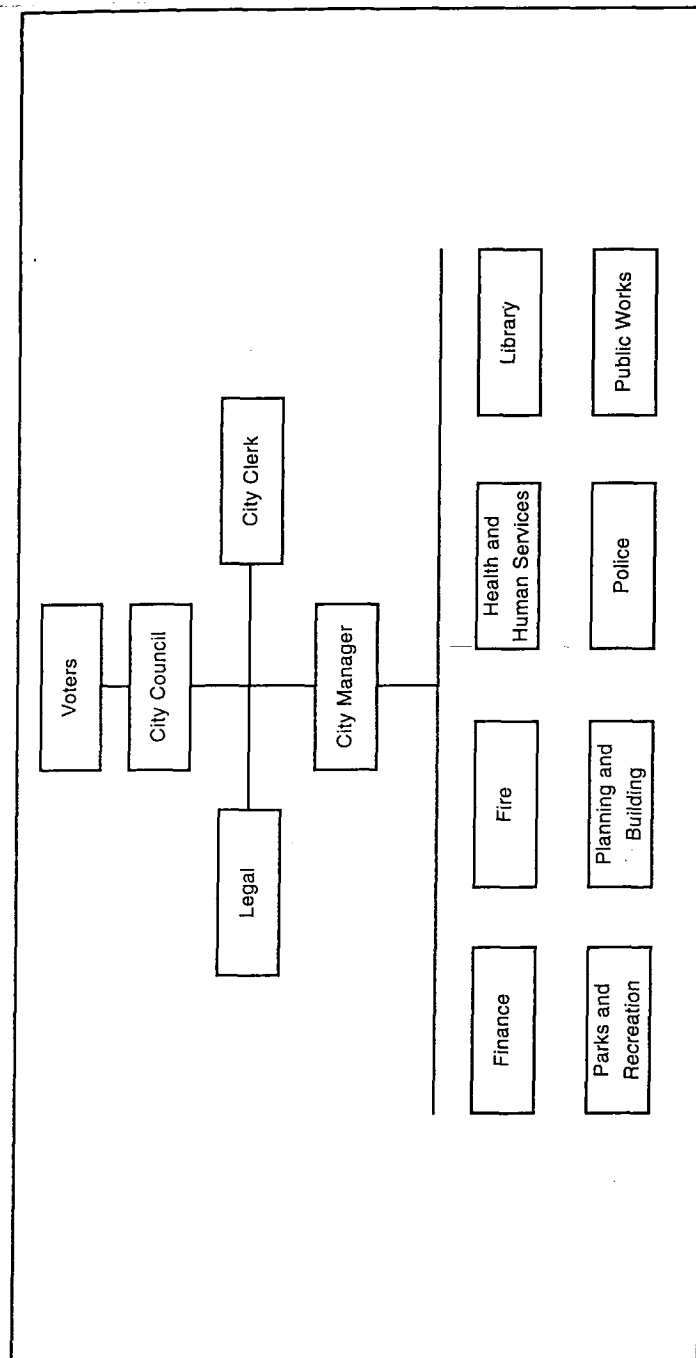


Table 1.1
Typical Municipal Organization
Major Functions and Programs

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| City Council Office of the Mayor Citizen Advisory Bodies Financial Policies Municipal Legislation Legislative Advocacy Standing Committees | Finance Treasurer Comptroller Debt Management Revenue Management Assessment Budget Preparation Purchasing Data Processing | Parks and Recreation Recreation Services Parks Management Youth Services Senior Citizen Services Community Events Special Programs |
| City Manager Administration Organizational Development Financial Management Personnel Labor Relations Citizen Inquiries Policies/Procedures Special Assignments | Fire Fire Suppression Fire Prevention Fire Inspection Emergency Services Emergency Preparedness Hazardous Materials | Planning and Building Land-Use Planning Zoning Control Development Regulations Affordable Housing Building Inspection Code Enforcement Economic Development Capital Improvements |
| City Clerk Public Documents Public Meetings Records Management Licenses/Permits Vital Statistics Election Administration Registrar of Voters Public Information | Health and Human Services Health Services Health Education Environmental Services Code Enforcement Community Clinics Social Services | Police Patrol Services Community Policing Investigations Crime Prevention Officer Training Records Management Dispatching Police Auxiliary |
| Legal Legislation Litigation Legal Counsel Legal Documents Public Meetings Safety and Risk | Library Information Services Technical Services Children's Services Community Services Circulation Control Literacy Programs | Public Works Engineering Services Transportation Systems Solid Waste Management Water Resource Systems Buildings and Grounds Central Garage |

For several valid reasons, the definition of the term productivity can be refined when it is applied to municipal organizations. City governments hold a monopolistic position in the marketplace for those services they provide. In the event of a fire, call-for-service is responded to only by the local fire department. When a burglary occurs, response only comes from the municipal police department. When roads are built or repaired, these services are provided only by the public works department. The consumer or taxpayer has

no choice in who provides these services. These same service patterns generally hold true for most other municipal services. There are generally only two exceptions to this rule: for the services provided by public libraries and the programs available at park and recreational facilities. Citizens may use a neighboring city's library for services and may use the recreational facilities available in the parks of an adjacent community. In both cases, however, citizens are paying for these services through their local property taxes even if they choose not to use them in their own community. Since user fees are typically not charged for these services, citizens most likely will only pay once for these services through their property taxes.

Some of the services provided by city governments cannot be substantially improved or made appreciably more effective. For example, the issuance of building permits by a planning and building department cannot be improved substantially except for speeding up the issuance process itself. Likewise, a police or fire department's response is fairly routine and, in many cases, cannot be improved upon except by having it decreased. Citizens are satisfied to receive street sweeping services. This service can only be made more effective by performing it more frequently. The only way to improve the services of a municipal swimming pool would be to expand the number of hours it is open to the public. When the quality of a municipal service is fairly constant, such as in the above examples, the only way to increase productivity is to reduce the cost of providing the service, to speed up the time in which the service is provided, or to expand the number of hours that the service is made available to the public. In this volume, therefore, the term productivity relates to several factors, such as improving the quality of services, reducing the cost of services, and or improving internal operations to make employees more productive. Public employees accomplishing these goals are deemed to be improving the productivity of their municipal organizations.

Taking the swimming pool example cited above, the availability of the pool is the service provided to citizens wishing to use this facility. If this swimming pool was operated by part-time employees, rather than full-time employees, operating costs could be reduced. Likewise, if a city purchased its pool chemicals jointly with another city, achieving a lower unit cost because of economy of scale, additional cost savings would be realized. Similarly, if new pool equipment was purchased, this would reduce the energy costs of operating this facility. Also, if water conservation shower fixtures and energy conservation light timing devices were used, these efforts would further reduce the utility costs associated with maintaining this swimming pool. Further, if the department director did a cost/benefit analysis of contracting for pool maintenance, and it proved less expensive to have this service performed by the private sector, a further economy could be achieved by contracting for this service. Even though the quality of pool services has not been improved, all of these efforts relate to increasing the productivity of operating this municipal facility.

The term productivity is frequently used to refer to the performance of employees, supervisors, and department managers, as well as the entire municipal organization. For an entire municipal organization to be productive, its governing body and city manager must work together with their department managers to achieve a greater level of system-wide productivity. This effort must be continually communicated by the city manager to department managers, by department managers to supervisors, and by supervisors to individual employees. With continuing support from a governing body and city manager, the desire to achieve productivity improvements should be engrained in the culture of the organization. The more astute governing bodies and city managers have developed vision and mission statements for their municipal organizations to give positive direction to all employees within the workforce. These vision and mission statements are typically developed jointly between the city manager and department managers, and ultimately approved and endorsed by the city council. These statements are then distributed to all departments and displayed in a prominent place, making this information available to all supervisors and employees.

Lacking this organization-wide commitment, productivity may only be exhibited by some employees, supervisors, and managers in certain individual departments. For a municipal government to continually exhibit a high level of productivity improvement, the elected officials must hold the city manager accountable, the city manager must hold department directors accountable, department managers must hold their supervisors accountable, and supervisors must hold their employees accountable. Ideally, an organization's reward system should be tied to these productivity improvements. Such a compensation program is easier to implement at the city manager and department manager level. It is almost impossible to implement with individual employees because existing labor agreements and personnel practices typically preclude this practice. Since many municipal organizations lack this system-wide incentive, the task of productivity rests, by default, with the city manager and individual department managers. Also, when a governing body and city manager encourage the use of the latest technological developments in municipal departments, they encourage department managers to use computers, software applications, and other state-of-the-art equipment, to improve their operations. Although the number of employees may not be reduced because of these efforts, improved services and more effective internal operations will be achieved.

The various productivity trends examined in this volume have been broken down by department, program, and whether the trend is primarily internal or external to the organization. Internal trends generally relate to those productivity improvements made within individual departments, and primarily include financial, staffing, operational, organizational, and technological improvements. External trends relative to those productivity improvements initiated outside of a department's operating environment, such as using

Table 1.2
Departmental Productivity Trends

| <i>Internal</i> | <i>Department</i> | <i>External</i> |
|--|---|-----------------|
| CITY COUNCIL | | |
| City Clerk Services | Budget and Service Reductions | |
| City Manager Selection | Budgeting Innovations | |
| Cost of Mandates and Decisions | Coproduction of Public Services | |
| Financial Management | Downtown Revitalization | |
| Fire Services | Economic Development | |
| Health and Human Services | Forms of Government | |
| Labor Relations and Personnel Issues | Growth Management Policies | |
| Legal Services | Increased User Fees | |
| Library Services | Legislative Advocacy | |
| Management/Union Relations | Local Elections Systems | |
| Organizational Downsizing | Privatization Concepts | |
| Parks and Recreation Services | Public Access Cable Television | |
| Planning and Building Services | Public Infrastructure and Development | |
| Police Services | Strategic Planning and Issues Management | |
| Public Works Services | Volunteer Programs | |
| Use of Computers and New Technologies | | |
| CITY MANAGER | | |
| Contemporary Finance Practices | Benchmarking Techniques | |
| Effectiveness of Elected Officials | Capital Improvement Plans | |
| Fiscal Impact Statements | Contemporary Budgeting Practices | |
| Human Resources Administration | Contract Staff Services | |
| Management Information Systems | Cost Containment | |
| Management Merit Pay Programs | Customer Satisfaction Surveys | |
| Management/Union Cooperation | Economic and Downtown Development | |
| Mission and Vision Statements | Educating the Public | |
| Organizational Downsizing | Growth Management Practices | |
| Public Liability Reduction | Innovative Community Services | |
| Real Estate Asset Management | Privatization Practices | |
| Revenue Management Practices | Public Service Impact Statements | |
| Role of City Manager and Mayor | Strategic vs. Traditional Planning | |
| Total Quality Management | Volunteer and Student Internship Services | |
| Use of Computers, Technologies, and Equipment | Working with the Community | |
| CITY CLERK | | |
| Automated Cash Register and Receipting Systems | City Clerk Internships | |
| Computer Security | Contract City Clerk Services | |
| Computer Usage and City Clerk Services | Election Consolidations | |
| | Fixed Terms of Office | |

| <i>Internal</i> | <i>Department</i> | <i>External</i> |
|--|-------------------|---|
| Cross-Training of Staff | | Knowledge of City Clerk Resources |
| Fiscal Accountability | | Licenses and Permits |
| Ordinance Codification | | Networking and Resource Sharing |
| Part-Time Employees | | Open Public Meeting Laws |
| Records Management | | Professional Certifications |
| Specialized City Clerk Training | | Role of the City Clerk |
| User Fee Increases | | Telephone Message Centers |
| LEGAL | | |
| Code Enforcement | | Claims Administration |
| Computer Usage and Legal Services | | Contract Computer Legal Services |
| Conflict-of-Interest Issues | | Contract Legal Services |
| Cost of Municipal Mandates | | Knowledge of Legal Resources |
| Cross-Training of Staff | | Legal Internships |
| Labor Relations and Personnel Services | | Model Ordinance Services |
| Liability Reduction Programs | | Networking and Resource Sharing |
| Records Management | | Outside Legal Services |
| Safety and Risk Management | | Professional Certifications |
| Settlement of Lawsuits | | Role of Legal Staff |
| Specialized Legal Training | | |
| FINANCE | | |
| Assessment Practices | | Contract Services |
| Auditing Practices | | Development Impact Fees and Special Assessments |
| Budgeting for Decision-Making | | External Economic Conditions |
| Capital Project Financing | | Federal and State Grants |
| Computer Systems and Software Applications | | Investing Public Funds |
| Creative Purchasing Practices | | Legislative Mandates |
| Debt Collection Administration | | Privatization Considerations |
| Financial Management Practices | | Professional Certifications |
| Financial Monitoring | | Revenue Diversification |
| Financial Policies | | Revenue Surveys |
| Pricing Municipal Services | | Revenues Without Taxes |
| Revenue and Expenditure Forecasting | | Sound Financial Practices |
| Revenue Management Practices | | Taxes and Economic Development |
| Special Fund Accounting | | User Charges and Regulatory Fees |
| Tax Collection Practices | | |
| Treasury Management Practices | | |
| FIRE | | |
| Budgetary Controls | | Contemporary Building Technologies |
| Civilianization Practices | | Code Enforcement |
| Evaluating Fire Services | | Codes and Regulations |
| Fire Prevention Practices | | Contract Services |
| Fire Station Location Decisions | | Development Standards |
| Fire Suppression Practices | | Emergency Services Practices |
| Human Resources Management Practices | | Fire Service Master Planning |

Table 1.2. Departmental Productivity Trends *continued*

| <i>Internal</i> | <i>Department</i> | <i>External</i> |
|--|--|-----------------|
| FIRE <i>cont'd.</i> | | |
| Incident Command Centers | Fire Station Closure Decisions | |
| Interdepartmental Cooperation | Intergovernmental Cooperation | |
| Management Information Systems | Professional Development | |
| Occupational Safety and Health Programs | Public Education and Citizen Empowerment | |
| Organizational Consolidation | Service, Disclosure, and Impact Fees | |
| Use of Computers, Technologies, and Equipment | Use of Volunteer Firefighters | |
| Work Shift Schedules | | |
| HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES | | |
| Departmental Inspection Referrals | Community Resource Centers | |
| Evolving Health Services | Contract and Coproduced Services | |
| Evolving Human Services | Interagency Cooperation | |
| General Assistance Programs | Private Cosponsorship of Public Programs | |
| Hazardous Materials Disclosure and Enforcement | Professional Development | |
| Human Resources Management Practices | Public Education and Citizen Empowerment | |
| Innovative Public Services | Public Health and Human Services Master Planning | |
| Knowledge of Available Resources | Sorting Out Responsibilities | |
| Organizational Structures | State and Federal Grant Programs | |
| Public Policies and Cost-Effectiveness | User Service Charges, Regulatory Fees, and Fines | |
| Role of Elected Officials and Advisory Bodies | Working with the Community | |
| Use of Computers and New Technologies | | |
| LIBRARY | | |
| Evolving Community Services | Alternative Funding Sources | |
| Evolving Information Services | Community Resource Centers | |
| Evolving Technical Services | Contract Services | |
| Financing Library Services | Library Service Master Planning | |
| Human Resources Management Practices | Library Service Trends | |
| Libraries and Children | Private Cosponsorship and Coproduction of Programs | |
| Management Practices and Organizational Change | Professional Development | |
| Organizational Structures and Advisory Bodies | Specialized Training and Citizen Empowerment | |
| Role of Citizen Support Groups | User Service Charges and Fees | |
| Staff Development and Internal Marketing | Working with the Community | |
| Use of Computers and New Technologies | | |

| <i>Internal</i> | <i>Department</i> | <i>External</i> |
|--|---|-----------------|
| PARKS AND RECREATION | | |
| Cost-Containment and Increased Services | Alternative Funding Sources | |
| Evolving Community Events and Special Services | Alternative Service Delivery Systems | |
| Evolving Parks and Open Spaces | Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance | |
| Evolving Recreational Services | Community Program Information Centers | |
| Financing Parks and Recreational Services | Parks and Recreation Master Planning | |
| Financing Parks, Open Space, and Recreational Facilities | Parks and Recreation Service Trends | |
| Management Practices and Organizational Change | Professional Development | |
| Organizational Structures | Public Liability Reduction Programs | |
| Role of Citizen Support Groups | Service Philosophy of Elected Officials | |
| Staff Development and Internal Marketing | User Fees and Service Charges | |
| Use of Computers, Technologies, and Products | Working with the Community | |
| PLANNING AND BUILDING | | |
| Affordable Housing | Comprehensive Community Code Enforcement | |
| Capital Improvement Plans and Financing | External Forces Influencing Planning | |
| Economic Development Planning | Financial Incentives | |
| Evolving Building and Zoning Controls | General Incentives and Assistance | |
| Evolving Planning Services | Growth Management Techniques | |
| Fiscal Impact Analysis | Land-Based Incentives | |
| Human Resources Management Practices | Marketing Programs and Services | |
| Interdepartmental Code Enforcement Cooperation | Professional Development | |
| Organizational Arrangements | Public/Private Partnerships | |
| Role of Elected Officials and Advisory Bodies | Regional Planning Practices | |
| Use of Computers and Software Applications | Traditional vs. Strategic Planning | |
| Use of Economic Development Incentives | User Fees, Impact Charges, Special Assessments, and Fines | |
| | Working with the Community | |
| POLICE | | |
| Budgetary Controls | Budget and Service Reductions | |
| Centralized Dispatching Services | Community Education and Citizen Empowerment | |
| Civilianization Practices | Contract Services | |
| Evaluating Police Services | | |