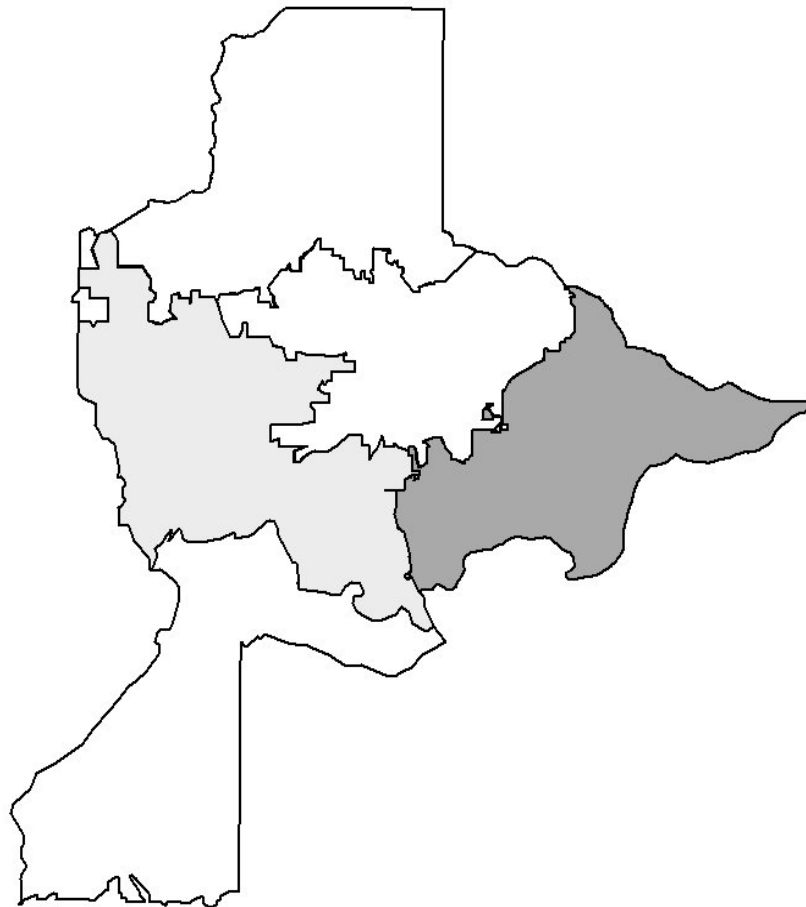


CREATING A NEW MILTON COUNTY

Report 5. New County Governance: Models and Choices for Policy Development and Service Delivery



Carl Vinson **Institute of Government**
The University of Georgia



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FISCAL RESEARCH CENTER

**STUDY REPORTS PREPARED FOR THE
CREATING A NEW MILTON COUNTY
PROJECT**

Number	Title	Author
	<i>Executive Summaries</i>	Governmental Services and Research Division, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia and Fiscal Research Center, Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University
1.	<i>Estimated Costs and Revenues for the Proposed Milton County</i>	Fiscal Research Center, Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University
2.	<i>The Fiscal Viability of a Milton County School System</i>	Governmental Services and Research Division, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia
3.	<i>The Impact of Creating Milton County on State Agencies</i>	Governmental Services and Research Division, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia
4.	<i>The Legal Impacts of Creating Milton County</i>	Governmental Services and Research Division, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia
5.	<i>New Governance Options for Milton County</i>	Governmental Services and Research Division, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, University of Georgia
6.	<i>A Comparison of County Services Provided by the Counties of Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett</i>	Fiscal Research Center, Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University

An electronic copy of all reports can be found at <http://vinsoninstitute.org/miltoncounty> and at <http://frc.gsu.edu/miltoncounty.html>.

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**New Governance Options: Models and Choices for
Policy Development and Service Delivery**

**Governmental Services and Research Division
Carl Vinson Institute of Government
University of Georgia**

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Executive Summary

The New County Study Team was tasked with examining new governance options that could be considered in establishing a new county in Georgia. In this regard, the study team was encouraged to think expansively about such options and possibilities without regard to traditional notions of political feasibility and not constrained by current state law. Consequently, the results of our efforts represent a broad spectrum of possibilities for which the study team has tried to identify advantages and disadvantages. However, it should be recognized that the inclusion of a new governance option does not represent an endorsement of that option by the study team.

New Governance Options

State operation of “arm of the state” functions currently provided by county government.

A case could be made for state government control of the “arm of the state” services. Rationales for such a governance structure include:

- The potential benefits of having the state agencies providing a model local delivery system.
- State agencies gaining a better understanding of local issues and conditions that would in turn help these agencies to work better with localities around the state.
- The ability of new computing and communication systems to allow for better management from a distance.
- The new county taxpayers could potentially be relieved of liability stemming from decisions made by state-appointed officials.

Adoption of a Charter/enabling legislation that provides for an elected executive form of government

More large, urban-area local governments are adopting the elected executive form of government. Many communities, particularly larger ones, believe that this form increases the potential for active leadership by giving the executive a community-wide popular support base. However, the case for a more activist form of government may not be as strong as it would be were the county to be a potential provider of urban-type services. That is, all urban-type services in the proposed Milton County would be provided by the existing cities that comprise the total of the proposed Milton County’s jurisdiction.

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Adoption of non-standard election districts and procedures.

At-Large versus Districts: There are advantages and disadvantages to both at-large and district-based elections. Most communities in Georgia are required to use district elections based on a need to follow the Voting Rights Act. However, some communities have created a system of mixed district and at-large elections (or districts of different sizes).

Adoption of non-traditional election procedures.

The following election procedures are reported to have some unique advantages in terms of improving representation of citizen wishes.

- *Choice Voting*
- *Cumulative Voting*
- *Limited Voting*
- *Proportional Representation*

Partisan versus Nonpartisan

While the Georgia Constitution currently requires partisan elections for counties, nonpartisan elections represent an alternative.

Term Limits

The new county could enact term limits for its elected (or appointed) officials.

Governance by Representation of Municipal Governments

In states that have established townships as the lowest level of government it is sometimes the case that the county government is comprised of representatives of the towns. These representatives are typically supervisors of the town. A supervisor is the town equivalent of a city mayor. In these cases, the county legislative body is called a Board of Supervisors. The report provides a summary of interviews conducted with local government experts in a state that uses the Board of Supervisors form of government.

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Length of the Ballot

While the center of county government tends to lie in a legislative body such as a board of commissioners, county governments in Georgia and in most of the United States also include a variety of independent or row or constitutionally independent offices.

In Georgia, the constitutionally defined independent offices include:

- Sheriff
- Superior Court Judge
- Probate Court Judge
- Clerk of the Court
- Tax Commissioner
- Coroner
- District Attorney
- Superior Court Judge
- School board members

It has long been argued by local government reformers that the length of the ballot should be made much shorter so as to better centralize the accountability for the condition of the local government. A shorter ballot would mean that either the functions performed by the current independent offices would be assumed by the county government or that the officials in these offices would be appointed by the county government.

Service Limits

The proposed new county is one that would exist without there being any unincorporated areas. As a consequence, there would be only a limited, if any, need for the new county to use the powers counties are given with regard to providing urban-type services. Limiting the power of the county to provide such services through the county enabling legislation could help to better define the roles and responsibilities of the county vis a vis the municipal government.

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New Administrative Structures

When governments produce their own services: The report outlines the potential advantages and disadvantages of administrative structures for local governments that produce the majority of their own services. Structures that represent alternative options to traditional local government administrative structures include:

- Separation of Direct and Support Services
- Strategic Business Operations
- Corporate Business Model
- Streamlined Local Government Model Streamlined Local Government-Corporate Model Mix

In addition, the report discusses the potential advantages of a general staff version of these structures. In a general staff function a clear distinction is drawn between the nominal right of direct access to the executive manager and the frequent use of that right. Normally, department heads are expected to take up all routine business through the appropriate general staff officer in the first instance. Only if they regard the matter as one of outstanding importance which justified them in approaching the executive manager -- and only after they had failed to secure a satisfactory settlement with one of his general staff officers -- would the executive manager accept a direct discussion. A general staff operation can help to strengthen the ability of the leadership to increase the span of control of the management teams as well as improve the social functions of leadership.

When local governments produce their own services, their ability to do so efficiently is strongly related to the operation of the staffing of these services with managers whose span of control is appropriate to the specific function being performed. Generally, the span of control of managers in local governments is narrower than is the case in parallel functions in the private sector. While it is not always reasonable to expand span of control in local governments (e.g., for reasons of scale and scope of work), attention to span of control measures can typically lead to overall productivity improvements. In addition to managing span of control, local governments can benefit from taking action to:

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- create career tracks for specialists.
- review the workload of working supervisors.
- communicate clearly with employees.
- manage for performance.
- manage within the structure of the personnel system (e.g., merit versus non-merit system).

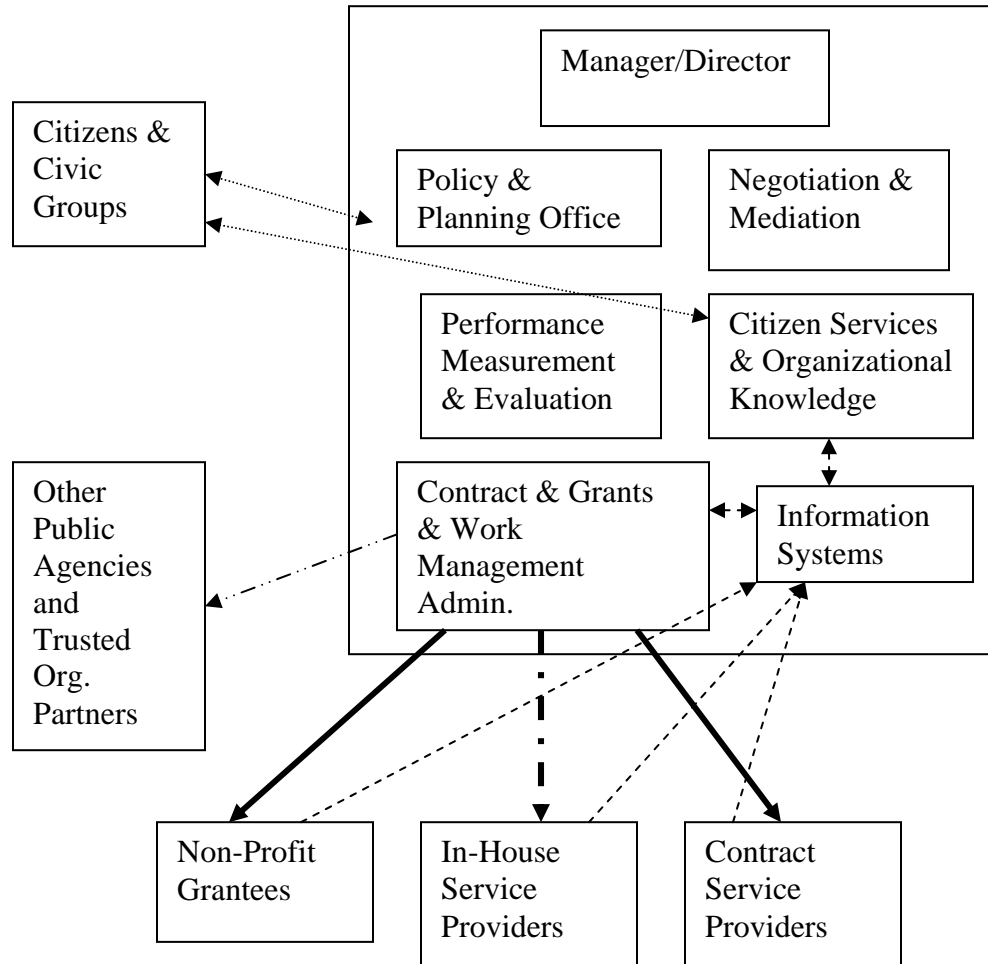
When governments outsource the production of their services: The report outlines the potential advantages and disadvantages of administrative structures for local governments that outsource the majority of their own services. In this regard, the literature on the new public management provides some guidance to local government officials working to build a structure for a government that will do “more steering than rowing.” In this regard, the chart below outlines how strategy, technology, accountability, and human capital management function differently in a new public management structure versus a traditional structure.

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	Traditional	New Public Management NPM
Strategy	Manager helps to define the strategy with controlled input from staff	Manager works with networks of service providers and citizens to help define strategy.
Technology	Technology is used primarily to support direct service provision activities	Technology is used both to support direct service provision activities and to allow networked partners to share knowledge, business processes, decision making, client information, workflow, and other data.
Ensuring accountability	Manager is restricted to the use of civil service (job classification and compensation) and individual job performance assessments	Manager can use a wider variety of incentives and measurements (e.g., of group performance) and must be able to make better and more nuanced assessments of trust and risk in order to achieve the possible levels of effectiveness and efficiency.
Human Capital management	Manager works within personnel classification schemes and hiring and firing guidelines	Manager continually negotiates work/employment/contract specifications and mediates among the different providers of services.

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As the role of management changes within a New Public Management organization, the structure of the organization should also reflect these changes. The following model represents an organizational structure based on NPM principles.



- Performance Contracts..... —————▶
- Information Links..... - - - - -▶
- Ideas.....▶
- Flexible Agreements,
Charters and Franchises.... - · - · -▶
- Performance Work Plans - · - · - · -▶

NPM Organization of Local Government

New County Governance Options

Purpose of the Document

The New County Study Team was tasked with examining new governance options that could be considered in establishing a new county in Georgia. In this regard, the study team was encouraged to think expansively about such options and possibilities without regard to traditional notions of political feasibility and not constrained by current state law. Consequently, the results of our efforts represent a broad spectrum of possibilities for which the study team has tried to identify advantages and disadvantages. However, it should be recognized that the inclusion of a new governance option does not represent an endorsement of that option by the study team.

Underlying this task is the assumption that governance structures matter. Governance structures certainly influence the way decisions are made and therefore can impact such values as:

- Degree of dialog and deliberation
- Checks and balances
- Speed of decision making and implementation
- Responsiveness
- Accountability
- Efficiency
- Continuity and dependability
- Actions in the public interest
- Thrift

Unfortunately, no one governance structure will maximize all the desirable values. Instead, it is often the case that a choice of structures will require certain trade-offs among public values. For example, having a strong executive is thought to provide a more active, responsive, businesslike and efficient form of government. At the same time, investing too great a power in an executive could reduce the level of dialog and deliberation and checks and balances in the government. In the literature on governance, many of the potential trade-offs in desirable public values are simply assumed to occur. Moreover, because of the complex and perceptual nature of some values (e.g., responsiveness), measuring the amount of any particular trade-off is difficult in the extreme.

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Given this limitation, the study group has attempted to review the literature and summarize the advice of scholars, practitioners, and experts in the field to the degree possible. Our efforts in this regard are categorized into the following main areas:

- Local versus State Government
- Form of Government
- Representation of Municipal Governments
- Length of the Ballot
- Service Limits
- Administrative Structures

Within the administrative structures area we address the need for structures that both address the traditional government role in service delivery as well as the need for structures that might allow the government to provide for services in ways that do not directly involve the government in the production of the services, but that nevertheless provide for their efficient delivery.

Background

Counties are created under the Georgia Constitution by way of enabling legislation. Compared to some states, Georgia law restricts the form of county government and many of its electoral and administrative features. In states that provide for more flexibility in the form and characteristics of county government, the alternative forms and features are typically provided for through the use of a “county charter.” In order for the proposed Milton County to adopt some of the options outlined below, it will be necessary for Georgia to institute a county establishment mechanism similar to the charter counties in other states.

Currently, Fulton County is governed by the commission-manager form of government. The commissioners are elected in districts, and the county has the typical set of constitutional offices. The county provides both countywide services and urban-type services that are delivered only in a Special Services District (SSD). Because the county applies a special tax in the SSD that is used to support SSD services, the SSD structure essentially resolves most of the tax equity and service delivery issues that might be raised by residents of municipalities in the county. (A tax equity issue arises when taxes paid by municipal residents or property owners are used to support

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services that primarily benefit residents of another jurisdiction, for example, those in the unincorporated area of the county).

The Service Delivery Strategies Act requires that Fulton County and the cities in Fulton County agree on a service delivery plan. These mandated service delivery plans are designed to help the county and the city governments within the county provide services in the most efficient manner by eliminating duplication and overlap, and aligning revenues sources with service beneficiaries.

The creation of the SSD essentially ensures that the police, fire, building inspection, planning and zoning, environmental regulation, engineering, and parks and recreation services are paid for only by the residents of the SSD and that there is no overlap with the services provided by the municipalities. What remains in terms of potential duplication or overlap are services that the county provides countywide.

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Fulton County Services Provided Countywide	Duplication/Funding
Economic Development	Potential. Both Fulton County and some of the cities provide this service.
Environmental Health	None.
Computer Maps/GIS	Potential. (Cities provide some of their own GIS; Fulton County provides its GIS from the general fund).
Housing	Fulton County provides this service to all the cities except for Atlanta and uses some general funds.
Water and Wastewater treatment	None since funding is from an Enterprise fund.
Tax Billing and Collections (Tax Commissioner)	None since all jurisdictions agree to a percentage charge for the service. SSD reimburses the county general fund for its tax collection services in a manner similar to the cities.
Tax Assessment	None.
Board of Equalization	None.
Management Information Systems	Potential. Fulton provides this service to the SSD through the general fund.
Airport	None (Service delivery agreement plans for the Airport to be run as an enterprise fund and for this fund to reimburse the SSD for special fire protections costs).
Indigent Care	None.
Purchasing	Some. Fulton provides this service to the SSD through the general fund.
Elections	None. Fulton County will provide services to cities on a cost reimbursement basis.
Voter Registration	None.
Sheriff	None.
Marshall (to State Courts)	None.
Jail	None. Some cities operate their own jails either as temporary holding cells or for offenders of city-specific ordinances. Fulton provides jail for all offenders of county/state laws.
Drug Task Force	Some. Fulton provides funding from the general fund.
EMS	Possibly. Fulton provides some general fund subsidy to the private providers of

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	EMS while at least one city provides its own EMS service.
Medical Examiner	None.
Probate, Juvenile, State and Superior Courts	None.
District Attorney	None.
Solicitor	None.
Public Defender	None.
Physical Health	None.
Mental Health	None.
Welfare (programs predominately funded by the county include: Dulaney House General Assistance Oak Hill Residential for Adolescents Food Stamps issuance staff	None.
Senior Centers	Potential. Fulton funds the centers for the unincorporated area and some cities through the general fund.
Disability Affairs	None.
Workforce Development	None.
Library	None.
Art Services Grants	None.
Art Programs	Slight Potential. Both Fulton County and some of the cities provide this program and Fulton County funds its program countywide, but it is also open to residents countywide.
Fulton County Services Provided in Sub-Areas of the County that Have Raised Service Delivery Issues in Recent Times	Issue
E-911	Service delivery agreement plans for SSD to take on its share of E911 costs.
Public Works	Service delivery agreement plans for SSD to take over Public Works.
Animal Control	Service delivery agreement plans for SSD to take over Animal Control.

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Local versus State Government

While county government has been established in Georgia as a form of local government, it has not always been the case that the governance of county government required the development of local legislative and administrative institutions. As has been noted by a number of scholars, the original purpose of county government was to provide access to state government services “within a day’s buggy ride.” This access did not necessarily mean that there would be a set of local elected officials overseeing the delivery of state services. In fact, because county officials were viewed primarily as representatives of the state government, many of these officials were appointed by state governors rather than elected by the voters in the county (Martin, 1993, Waugh, 1997).

Through constitutional changes and changes in county government enabling legislation, counties in Georgia have acquired a fair degree of home rule as well as the additional powers needed to provide urban-type services. Nevertheless, substantial state control of county-level offices and programs still exists. For example, the provision of social services and preventative health care in county offices is conducted by directors and staffs of these programs that are hired and selected by state agencies. While property tax assessment and collections are operated by local government officials, the rules by which these functions are carried out are set by the state government. Similarly, state rules define much of the operation of jails, election administration, and road maintenance. Even for mental health and social service programs operated by county governments, the state will set minimum standards.

For a number of functions (e.g., family and children services, mental health services, superior court services, district attorney services, public defender services, juvenile court services, and public health services), the state government provides a substantial portion of the resources needed for service delivery. Also, for many of these services, the state government defines the level of service (e.g., number of allowed positions) and the terms of the service (e.g., the guidelines for service eligibility and the rules regarding mandated services).

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Finally, state government plays as back-up governance role in numerous minor ways: For example, when there is an opening for a superior court judge in a non-election year, the governor of the state can appoint a judge for the interim period until an election can be held.

Whereas more autonomous county government is needed to provide for services in areas where community wishes are important to the type and level of services desired (e.g., services such as law enforcement patrol services, fire protection, and land use planning), autonomy may be less necessary when the set of services to be delivered are limited to the “arm of the state services” such as superior courts, jails, and tax assessment.¹ Given that the proposed new Milton County will be one where most of the services that are strongly linked to community wishes will be delivery by municipal governments (there being no unincorporated area in the new county), there may be less need to provide for local control of services.

Moreover, a case could be made for state government control of the “arm of the state” services.

Rationales for such a governance structure include:

- The potential benefits of having the state agencies providing a model local delivery system.
- State agencies gaining a better understanding of local issues and conditions that would in turn help these agencies to work better with localities around the state.
- The ability of new computing and communication systems to allow for better management from a distance.
- The new county taxpayers could potentially be relieved of liability stemming from decisions made by state-appointed officials.

As an alternative to having the state operate all county government functions, the new county could simply be responsible for a limited set of county functions while allowing the state to operate the remaining functions.

¹ ‘Arm of the state’ refers to the areas of county government that function in ways that support state-specified goals and programs.

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Part I: Form of Government

The key decisions related to the form of government include:

- the location, strength and positioning of executive vis a vis legislative powers
- representation of Citizen Wishes –Electoral Systems
- the role of party politics
- commission size
- the degree to which a hired professional is authorized to manage the day-to-day operations of the government
- service limits
- municipal input into county government

Background

Forms of local governments can be generally divided into three basic types: Manager (or Council- or Commission-Manager, e.g., Baldwin County or Ware County), Traditional Commission (e.g., Bibb County or Bacon County), Elected Executive (e.g., DeKalb County). In addition to these basic types, Georgia also includes a Sole Commissioner form that is still used in some small rural counties but is typically changed as counties grow in size and responsibilities. The key difference in these types lies in the way power is distributed. While each type may have a leader, perhaps called a Chair, in the Manager form of government the leader is predominately a legislative actor with the additional role of ceremonial head of the government. In this form, the professional manager is the administrative head of the government who is in charge of hiring government employees and managing day to day operations.

In the Elected Executive form of government, the Chair (or Mayor in municipal governments) acts as the executive and administrative head of the government who is sometimes assisted by a CAO or Chief Administrative Officer. However, the executive in this form holds the major mechanisms of administrative power, and in the strongest version of this form the leader will also have special voting, appointment and veto powers.

In the Commission form of government, the commission holds both the legislative and executive powers in common. In this form, the leader (typically called the chair) may take on some

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additional powers and responsibilities, but is generally seen as an equal to the other members. The administrative responsibilities are often split among the commissioners with certain commissioners having responsibility for particular departments.

While no form of government is necessarily superior to another, the typical pattern has been for the commission form to be used in smaller jurisdictions (in terms of population), the council-manager form to be used in moderate-size jurisdictions, and the executive form to be used in the largest jurisdictions.

For Progressive Era reformers, the council-manager form of government was the most favored since it helped to separate politics from administration and place responsibility for the latter in the hands of a single, professionally-trained administrator. While the council-manager form is still considered to be a good form of government, some political scientists believe that its virtues may have been oversold due in part to an inability to ever fully separate politics and administration without also affecting accountability in the process.

Moreover, there is some evidence that different socio-economic groups may choose different forms of government. For example, the council-manager form of government is most likely to be found in communities that have a young, mobile, white, middle-class population that is growing rapidly (Schnore and Alford, 1963).

While for simplicity purposes, it is useful to classify forms of government into the three outlined above, in reality more and more communities are creating hybrid forms of government that reflect different authority or power sharing between the commission, CEO, and manager. Recently, researchers have produced seven different subcategories:

- Classic Commission-manager,
- Commission-manager with at-large Chair,
- Commission-manager with an empowered Chair,
- Strong Chair–Commission with CAO,
- Strong Chair–Commission without CAO
- Weak Chair–Commission with CAO

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- Weak Chair–Commission without CAO.

In addition, these researches have identified communities that did not neatly fit any of these subcategories, even though a mayor-council structure existed. Specifically, these residuals are a result of the disjunction in many cities between a mayor's veto power and his or her budget and appointment role. Because of these emerging hybrid forms of government, these researchers caution that the literature on how forms of government might be associated with particular effects may be becoming obsolete (DeSantis and Renner, 2002).

A Need for a Reform-Type Government?

It has been argued that as county governments have come to provide a broader array of urban-type services, that the traditional form of county government (that is, a board of commissioners with no executive) is inadequate to meet the expanded service and administrative demands, particularly in counties with high levels of growth.

Researchers have noted that many counties (including those in Georgia) are no longer just record-keeping units or legal extensions of state government. Counties such as Gwinnett and DeKalb, for example, provide a wide variety of urban services such as fire protection, utilities, water and sewer services, solid waste disposal, and health care and social service programs. In fact, many metropolitan counties now provide more services than do suburban cities.

As a result of the expanded service delivery role for metropolitan area counties, counties (where permitted to do so by state law) have been abandoning the traditional commission form of government and choosing more activist forms such as council-manager or elected executive. (Benton and Menzel 1991, 1993; Marando and Reeves 1991; Strieb and Waugh 1991).

While the proposed Milton County will be an urban county, it will be one where all of the area is comprised of municipalities, and it will be the municipalities that will be responsible for the delivery of urban-type services. Consequently, the case for a more activist form of government may not be as strong as it would be were the county to be a potential provider of urban-type services.

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Relative Location, Strength, and Positioning of Executive vis a vis Legislative Powers

The organizations that promote model local governments argue that local governments that provide for the legislative body's selection of the executive leader should avoid two practices which diminish the prospect of effective leadership. First is rotation of the office of mayor among members. This approach may hinder the emergence of a respected leader by preventing any one member from acquiring experience and increasing competence in the exercise of leadership skills. It can also mean that the true leader of the legislative body is not the designated chair, which may create a misperception of inside dealing and secret manipulation. The second practice is to automatically designate as mayor the council member who receives the largest number of citizen votes. This awkward approach prevents the body from choosing its leader and does not give voters full knowledge for which office they were casting their votes—board member or executive.

Most cities operating with the council-manager form use the direct election at-large alternative, and more and more large counties have moved to an at-large election of the local government executive. Many communities, particularly larger ones, believe that this method increases the potential for leadership by giving the executive a community-wide popular support base. This is particularly important when all or most of the board members are elected from districts. A potential disadvantage of this method is that the executive leader may have views that diverge widely from those of a majority of the board on some important issues.

Experts in local government governance suggest that it is better to align the powers of the various actors in some consistent way so that citizen and government officials will have a clear idea of the basic responsibilities and powers of the various actors. For example, if one wants the leader to be more of a facilitator of the legislative functions, then it would be good to have the leader elected by the members of the council, and it could be inappropriate (or confusing) to also give this leader broad executive or administrative powers and responsibilities. Instead, these should be handed to a professional manager. Conversely, if one wants to have strong political leadership, then it may be appropriate to have the leader elected directly by citizens and provided with the executive powers of a strong mayor.

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While the idea of clarity in roles and expectations is a compelling one, there is not a substantial body of evidence to suggest that violating appropriateness principles will necessarily lead to bad government.

Sample Elected Executive Charter: <http://www.amlegal.com/library/md/montgomeryco.shtml>

Representation of Citizen Wishes – Electoral Systems

In most jurisdictions and through most of the history of American local government, the debate about the most beneficial electoral system was limited to the choice between at-large and district elections. In recent years, however, there has been increasing debate about and support for alternative electoral systems, including choice voting, cumulative voting, limited voting, and proportional representation which are described below. State law may not currently allow the use of some or all of the alternative electoral systems. However, some states have been amending their laws to allow certain types of local governments to employ these systems. For example, the California Assembly recently passed a bill allowing municipalities with home rule charters to use instant runoff and choice voting for local elections.

At-Large versus Districts

There is a long standing debate regarding the benefits and liabilities of office holders being elected by the whole electorate (i.e., at large) versus by a sub-group of electors (either by district or by other means). With at-large systems, all voters vote for all seats up for election (i.e. when electing four representatives, voters can vote for four candidates). However, at-large elections can also include district-specific residency requirements.

The use of at-large elections was promoted by Progressive Era reformers as a means of overcoming ward-level political machines that were widely viewed as corrupt at the time. More recently, some scholars have argued that the ward system worked as a means for new voter groups (e.g., recent immigrants and formerly disenfranchised groups) to participate in government and receive their share of government services and spoils.

In some at-large systems, all candidates run against one another, with the highest vote getter winning the election. In other at-large systems candidates may run for individual, designated

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seats. In some cases, runoffs will be used to ensure that all winners have majority support, while in others it is possible to win with a simple plurality. Georgia county elections require a majority. At-large systems are used to elect city councils in Cincinnati, Detroit and Seattle, as well as many other municipal and county governments.

At-large systems allow half of the voters to control 100 percent of seats, and in consequence typically results in racially and politically homogenous elected bodies. As a consequence, at-large systems have frequently been struck down under the Voting Rights Act for not providing opportunities for minority voters an opportunity to achieve fair representation.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both at-large and district-based elections. Most communities in Georgia are required to use district elections based on a need to follow the Voting Rights Act. However, some communities have created a system of mixed district and at-large elections (or districts of different sizes).

Choice Voting

Choice voting is a representation system “in which voters rank candidates in order of preference, putting a "1" by their first choice, a "2" by their second choice and so on. Voters can rank as few or as many candidates as they wish, knowing that a lower choice will never count against the chances of a higher choice. To win under choice voting, candidates need an *exact* number of votes called a "threshold". For example, in a ten-seat legislature, candidates need roughly 10% of votes to win, and the threshold would be approximately 10% of the total number of votes cast. After counting first choices, candidates with the winning threshold are elected. To maximize the number of voters who help elect someone, "surplus" ballots beyond the threshold are transferred to remaining candidates according to voters' next-choice preferences: in the most precise method, every ballot is transferred at an equally reduced value. After transferring surplus ballots until no remaining candidate has obtained the winning threshold, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated. All of his/her ballots are distributed among remaining candidates according to voters' next-choice preferences. This process continues until all seats are filled. Computer programs have been developed to conduct the count, although the ballot count often is done by hand.”²

² Program for Representative Government, <http://www.fairvote.org/?page=225>.

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A key attribute of choice voting is that the threshold of support necessary to win is lower than in winner-take-all elections. As such, the system is better able to provide some representation to minority points of view. The system also provide for a type of instant runoff since preferences are ranked during a single voting event.

Choice voting has been used primarily in English-speaking nations, in large part because of John Stuart Mill's strong advocacy. Choice voting is currently used for electing such legislatures as the parliaments of Malta and the Republic of Ireland; the federal senate in Australia; the regional assembly and most cities in Northern Ireland; all local health boards in New Zealand and the city council of New Zealand's capital Wellington; and the city council and school committee in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The Citizens' Assembly in British Columbia also recommended choice voting for future elections in the province. It is also frequently used to elect the boards of non-governmental organizations.

Approximately two dozen cities in the United States have used choice voting; it was highlighted in the model city charter of the National Municipal League, and has won recent support from charter commissions in cities such as Kalamazoo (MI) and Pasadena (CA).

Cumulative Voting

In cumulative voting, voters cast as many votes as there are seats. But unlike winner-take-all systems, voters are not limited to giving only one vote to a candidate. Instead, they can put multiple votes on one or more candidates. For instance, in an election for a five-seat body, voters could choose to give one vote each to five candidates, two votes to one candidate and three to another, or all five votes to a single candidate. Cumulative voting, like choice voting, allows minority points of view more of an opportunity to achieve some representation. e.g., by getting behind one or two candidates and providing all of their votes to these candidates.

Cumulative voting was used to elect the Illinois state legislature from 1870 to 1980. In recent years it has been used to resolve voting rights cases for city council elections in Amarillo (TX)

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and Peoria (IL), for county commission elections in Chilton County (AL) and for school board elections in Sisseton (SD) and more than fifty other jurisdictions.

Many corporations use cumulative voting to elect their Boards of Directors, in order to represent the interests of minority shareholders. About 10% of the S&P 500 use cumulative voting, including Aon, Toys 'R' Us, Walgreen's and Hewlett-Packard. Several condominium associations use cumulative voting so that all unit owners are represented on the board.

Limited Voting

In limited voting, voters cast fewer votes than there are seats to be elected. For example, if a commission had five seats, a voter may only be allowed to cast four votes. This system works to ensure that a majority group controls the majority of seats, but not *all* seats. Versions of limited voting are used in Washington, D.C., Philadelphia (PA), Hartford (CT) and many jurisdictions across North Carolina and Alabama. It has been used successfully to resolve several Voting Rights Act cases.

Proportional Representation

Proportional representation systems are typically based on voting for political parties who offer a slate of candidates. The offices are divided among the parties that receive at least the threshold level of support from voters (e.g., 5-10%). As a consequence, proportional representation ensures that a wider spectrum of points of view is represented in the legislative body.

Proportional representation is the norm in most European parliaments.

Role of party politics

Currently, Georgia law requires that county elections be partisan elections, so a change to non-partisan elections would require an additional change in Georgia law.

In partisan elections candidates run first in party primaries with the winners facing each other in the general election. If one party with a substantial majority has more than one strong candidate, only one will survive to be considered by all the voters (including unaffiliated voters) in the general election. In nonpartisan elections, the top two vote getters in the primary, regardless of party affiliation, would be the candidates in the general election. Partisan differences may be relevant to local policy decisions, e.g., positions on privatization and tax cuts at the local level

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may correspond to party differences, and nonpartisan elections do not necessarily eliminate efforts to mobilize party supporters. However, these efforts are less likely to have substantial impact when the partisan connection is weak. When elections are partisan, parties will be structurally connected to local elections regardless of relevance.

For Nonpartisan: Nonpartisan elections downplay partisan differences between candidates that are not relevant to local policy choices. In this sense, they avoid an unnecessary source of divisiveness in a community. Consequently, voters should be able to better focus on candidates' stands on issues and their relative skills. An incumbent official may be the target of the opposition party organization on the state level because he or she is a potential candidate for higher office, not because of the quality of performance in the local office. Also, nonpartisan elections can make it easier for members of minority parties to be elected. The ability to hold nonpartisan elections promotes local autonomy since the outcome of local elections is less likely to be determined by national or state political current, and it demonstrates that local politics differ substantially from state politics.

For Partisan: Nevertheless, partisan elections have advantages. Partisanship is part of politics even when not officially recognized. Parties can help candidates run better campaigns. Party affiliation conveys information to voters, who for the most part do not have time to evaluate the effectiveness or distinguish the claims of each candidate. This is especially important for voters who without a party cue would be less likely to identify their stakes in the outcome of an election. Partisan elections can also offset the overrepresentation of minority parties. Finally, partisan elections can assist voters who are not well-connected to the community. The mobilization efforts of parties offset the informational and resource disadvantages of such citizens and works to promote voter turnout.

In sum, there can be advantages to party involvement in elections, but the institution of partisan elections requires that party always be a dominant feature in campaigns. Local governments should recognize that nonpartisan elections can depress voter turnout.

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Degree to which a hired professional is authorized to manage

Reformed government is typically associated with the council- (or commission-) manager form of government. The key feature of this type of government is that the focus of administrative responsibility is on a professionally-trained manager who has the authority to hire and fire the staff from the department heads downward. The manager is hired and fired by the council or commission. A variation on this model is one where the chief elected official has the authority to hire and fire the manager. Because the chief elected official is only one person, this variation on the form comes very close to the elected executive form of government. Another variation, which is used in Athens-Clarke County is having the chief elected official nominate the manager, who the commission must then approve.

In theory, a professionally managed government should be more efficient in that a county manager has incentives that are similar to those of a corporate manager which should lead to higher productivity and lower costs. A county manager who can accomplish these goals should have greater job security and higher compensation. However, it can also be argued that an elected executive also has similar incentives to be productive and efficient. Some observers, however, note that whereas an elected official is responsible to a large group of relatively less knowledgeable persons (i.e., the public as a whole), a manager is responsible to a small group of more knowledgeable persons (e.g., commission members). Still other theorists argue that since both forms of government are ultimately responsible to the voters that they will be equally efficient. In the case of the elected executive this might translate into an executive hiring a well-qualified administrator who would act in a manner similar to a professional manager. To the degree that research methods are able to measure governmental efficiency, the existing economic literature tends to support this theory of “equal efficiency.” (Hayes and Chang, 1990). Similarly, management structures also do not appear to impact the level of total compensation provided to local government employees (Deno and Mehay, 1987). Also, while some studies suggest that the manager form of government is more active in economic development activities, other studies suggest that this association is only a casual one, not a causal one. However, there is some evidence that a professional manager will engage in more strategic planning and less purely opportunistic behavior than an elected executive. (Feiock and Kim, 2001). The separation of politics and administration, institutionalized in the council-manager plan, allows

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administrators and elected officers to more easily resist opportunistic behavior. Because the influence of strategic planning is evident in council-manager cities, but not in mayor-council communities, it is believed that in council-manager government development is carried out in a more discriminating manner, leading to lower levels of financial incentives provided to businesses but more loan and business-attraction programs.

Commission Size

The organizations that promote model local governments generally do not specify the exact number of members of the legislative body but do recommend that this body range from five to nine members. Larger communities may require a greater number of members in order to assure equitable representation and the ability of a representative to manage communications with their constituents. However, smaller legislative bodies, while potentially vulnerable to one or two members exerting undue influence, are believed to be more effective instruments for the development of programs and the conduct of business than are large legislative bodies. In the United States, it has been an exceptional situation when a large council or commission, broken into many committees handling specific subjects, has been able to discharge its responsibilities promptly and effectively. In large bodies of this type parochialism and 'log-rolling' --- bargaining for and exchanging votes on a quid pro basis--- distracts attention from the problems of the whole community. In determining the size of the legislative body, charter drafters should consider the diversity of population elements to be represented and the size of the community.

Term Limits

Pro Term Limits: Proponents of term limits believe that by limiting terms of office, the tendency for a government to become entrenched and for officer holders to identify with the bureaucracy more than with their constituents will be limited. Term limits also mandate that the government include “new blood” on a regular basis.

Against Term Limits: Limiting re-election restricts the citizens’ opportunity to keep in office council members of whom they approve. Unlimited terms allow voters to provide a vote of confidence for persons who represent majority sentiment and a vote of opposition for members in the minority. Finally, the government benefits from the institutional memory of re-elected

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council members. Term limits are also thought to increase the power of staff since, relative to newly elected officials, staff will have more historical perspective and information and knowledge about the working of the government.

Form of Government and Businesslike Practices

Proponents of government reform typically argue that the adoption of reform structures such as at-large elections of the executive official and a manager form of government tends to promote the employment of businesslike or professional practices and principles in the day-to-day operation of city government. This, in turn, should lead to greater efficiencies and assist in constraining taxing and spending. Social science research that has tested this proposition, however, has produced mixed results. On the one hand, a number of studies (Lineberry and Fowler 1967; Welch and Bledsoe 1988; Lowery and Berry 1983; Lyons 1978; Hansen 1975; Karnig 1975) have reported significant variations in policy outputs that are attributable to reformed versus unreformed types of city government. In particular, these studies find that reformed municipalities tended to tax and spend less than unreformed municipalities. On the other hand, a number of other studies (see Hayes and Chang 1990; Deno and Mehay 1987; Farnham 1987; Morgan and Pelissero 1980) find that city government structure has little or no effect on municipal revenue and expenditure behavior. Specifically, these studies indicate that reformed cities do not necessarily raise more revenue or spend more than unreformed city governments.

Representation of Municipal Governments

In states that have established townships as the lowest level of government it is sometimes the case that the county government is comprised of representatives of the towns. (In these state, towns are generally not allowed to span more than one county). These representatives are typically supervisors of the town. A supervisor is the town equivalent of a city mayor. In these cases, the county legislative body is called a Board of Supervisors. For this report, the project team interviewed representatives of two Board of Supervisors-type governments, a research and policy director for the state's association of counties, and the director of the state's commission on Local Government Efficiency and Governance. The key findings from these interviews are as follows:

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- The board of supervisors form of government was the first form of government used but has since been replaced in most of the larger and growth-oriented counties by other forms.
- Governments employing the board of supervisors form are generally quite pleased with how it works. Specific advantages cited include:
 - Good inter-governmental communications.
 - More ability to recognize and take advantage of opportunities to share services and work together.
 - Ability of each town to show leadership in a particular program area and then have other towns and the county as a whole adopt the innovation.
 - Ability to engage the county as a common resource for the individual towns.
- The board of supervisors form has been used in communities of up to 200,000 in population but not larger.
- Some city charters act to prohibit board of supervisor-type representation so for these areas there is no municipal representation on the county legislative body. The supervisors from these areas tend to be a bit less powerful than those who are also officials in a town due to their not having a local bully pulpit from which to speak.
- Citizens are sometime confused as to whether a representative is acting as a member of the county legislative body or as the supervisor of their town or city.
- As the county gets larger, the workload for the supervisors, which includes work for both their town and their county, can become too great and thereby shrink the pool of willing candidates for office.
- The respondents did not report that inter-town rivalry or conflict over county resources was a problem.
- Because of the one-man-one-vote requirement, this form of government typically requires weighted votes by supervisors whereby a representative from a larger town will have more voting power than a representative from a smaller town. Nevertheless, each town gets to have an equal voice in dialog and deliberations.
- The board of supervisors form might be improved or modified for larger counties by including a full-time chairman, a county manager or an elected executive.

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- Because of the need to represent each of the towns in the county, the board of supervisors form can potentially result in a board that is larger than what is generally desirable, e.g., board of 15 or more supervisors are not uncommon.

Length of the Ballot

While the center of county government tends to lie in a legislative body such as a board of commissioners, county governments in Georgia and in most of the United States also include a variety of independent or row offices. Row offices are separately elected offices known as “row” due to their appearance in a row on organizational charts or election ballots and the relative autonomy of each office from the central board. This autonomy or independence is built on their legal status and accountability to the electorate. Row offices are most common in commission- and board-structured counties, but they are also found in all other forms. In non-commission counties, row offices are usually fewer in number and may have less authority. In charter counties in some states, row offices may be appointed by the board or elected executive.

In Georgia, the constitutionally defined independent offices include:

- Sheriff
- Superior Court Judge
- Probate Court Judge
- Clerk of the Court
- Tax Commissioner
- Coroner
- District Attorney
- Superior Court Judge
- School board members

Having a large number of row offices will create a long ballot and a diffusion of accountability for the actions of the local government. In some states, the number of these independent offices is greater than twenty. While Georgia county government’s ballot is not excessively long by national standards, it has become longer in recent years because in the 1990s, Georgia moved from a system of appointed school boards to one of elected boards.

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In the early 1900s, the progressive municipal reform movement included a call for a “Short Ballot” so as to reduce the number of state and local elected officials. The short ballot was part of the larger progressive agenda that included creating the initiative, referenda, recall, direct primary, secret ballot, civil service merit systems, non-partisan elections and a council-manager form of government. The rationale for shortening the ballot was that, it would:

- Work to unify authority and help support strong policy initiatives.
- Increase the responsiveness of the government because power and responsibility would have fewer competing centers. Voters would know who got things done and who did not.
- Would make voting more rational. Because voters would only be voting on a small set of offices, they could become relatively knowledgeable about the limited set of races.
- Simplify decision making and thereby bring processes under control.
- Generate more willingness to vote. “The long ballot is the politician’s ballot; the short ballot is the people’s ballot.”
- Provide more positions that could potentially be filled by professional managers.

While the progressive political reform movement that swept the country during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had considerable impact on municipal governance, the same level of reform has been slower with regard to county governments. Nevertheless, most of the experts on county government consulted for this study were supportive of further limiting of the ballot.

Although limiting the length of the county ballot is seen as a favorable development by most experts, it is often politically difficult to accomplish as each independent office represents political power that are often stronger than the that of the general purpose local government officer. This is the case because the independent officers will typically run county-wide as opposed to in specific districts or sub-areas of the county.³

³ Local efforts to reduce the ballot length are sometimes successful. In 2005, voters in Allegany County, PA instituted their own change, voting to merge and replace 6 elected row offices with appointed positions. The elected offices of the register of wills, prothonotary, clerk of the courts and jury commissioner will be merged into one appointed position.

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While there has been little academic study of the practical implication of having multiple constitutional officers, the anecdotal and case study evidence suggest that having multiple centers of power will often lead to intra-governmental conflict particularly with regard to issues such as:

- budget appropriations (constitutional officers can and do go to court to ensure that they are provided the resources they feel are needed to meet their obligations).
- use of internally generated funds (e.g., jail-related fees) for purposes not approved by the commission.
- scope of work (e.g., a sheriff's authority to operate patrol services in areas designated for patrol by county police).

Perhaps most importantly, the structure of constitutional offices in Georgia is one that decouples taxing responsibility from accountability for services and expenditures. That is, because the constitutional officers receive their funding from the commission (rather than from a direct tax levy), they are not required to balance needs, resources, and citizen's desires in the same way as the commission. This decoupling of responsibility from accountability also exists with regard to the potential for liability. When a constitutional officer is successfully sued, it is the commission that has to raise taxes (or cut services) in order to meet the lawsuit obligation.

While the long ballot tends to receive little support from political reformers and most county government practitioners, having multiple centers of power is not without certain benefits. In particular, some constitutional officers can provide an effective counterweight or alternative voice to power that might become too centralized. In conversations with local government experts this "checking and balancing" role was seen as most needed in the area of financial management. That is, some experts saw a need for an independent official who would perform independent auditing, accounting, and fiscal advisory functions for the county government. This role would be more similar to the role of the treasurer in county governments (Georgia does not have a county treasurer office) than to the Tax Commissioner role in Georgia county government.

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Alternative Strategies for Maintaining an Accountability Focus

While limiting long ballots may be desirable in order to create conditions for more accountability in local government, the political reality may be such that it would be impossible to enact such limits. In this regard, some states have used alternative mechanisms that help to provide the county board with the tools needed to achieve its budgetary and policy goals vis a vis the constitutional officers. A key mechanism for this purpose has been allowing the board to set the salary for the constitutional officers. This provision can then provide the board with a kind of bargaining chip to be used in budgetary and other negotiations with the constitutional officers.

States with the Fewest Elected Row Officers

- Hawaii
- Alaska
- Florida
- Massachusetts
- Maryland

Service Limits

The proposed new county is one that would exist without there being any unincorporated areas. As a consequence, there will be only a limited, if any, need for the new county to use the powers counties are given with regard to providing urban-type services. Limiting the power of the county to provide such services through the county enabling legislation could help to better define the roles and responsibilities of the county vis a vis the municipal government. At the same time, however, such a limit on the ability of the county to provide services might also limit the ability of the municipalities to collaborate as a group so as to have the county provide certain services countywide that might be more efficiently provided in that manner. Similarly, a county that was limited in term of its provision of services might not be eligible for certain grants or categories of grants that it otherwise would be. It might be feasible to place service limits on the county government in terms of the actual production of the service while maintaining the county's ability to be a provider of the service. A "producer" of a service is one that actually employs staff to conduct the work involved in the day-to-day delivery of the service, while a

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“provider” of a service is an entity that provides the funding to whatever organization is producing the service.

Part II: Administrative Structures

Governance and Structures

State laws provide certain built-in powers and authorities for county governments but is relatively open-ended with regard to governance structures. Consequently, enabling legislation for county governments can vary a good deal in length and specificity. The only required element in such legislation is that a governance body (or simply a sole commissioner) be specified and that the manner of electing this body (or individual) be identified. The less specificity that is built into the enabling legislation the greater the opportunity for governance flexibility at the local level. While flexibility can be seen as a benefit in terms of local officials being able to shape their own future, extensive flexibility can also work to undermine consistency, direction, accountability and other values that citizens may desire in local governance. For example, if citizens have a strong desire for continuous self-improvement, they may want to “lock in” an office of accountability (or internal auditor) as part of the enabling legislation. Including such an office makes it more difficult for this office to be abolished if it were to become unpopular (e.g., were it to produce a report that sheds an unfavorable light on certain aspect of the local government).

Governance is frequently used as a synonym for government, where government is typically understood as the formal institution that has a monopoly of legitimate coercive power. However, in recent decades, the idea of governance has been expanded so as to better capture the ways in which community action, services, and development actually take place or could take. This expansive idea of governance can also lead to the generation of innovative governance structures. Elements of this expanded idea of governance include:

- Reference to self-government networks of institutions and actors that include institutions and actors beyond government itself. These institutions and actors would include economic and community development organizations, civic groups and regional planning bodies.
- Understanding the blurred boundaries of responsibility for social and economic action.

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- An emphasis on getting things done without resorting to the use of government authority. This is an emphasis on guiding and steering.

While this larger idea of governance provides for a number of new ways to build communities through private, public and non-profit partnerships, it also presents some challenges such as:

- A potential blurring of responsibilities which can lead to avoidance of responsibility, e.g., when there is uncertainty about who is responsible, government actors may pass off responsibility to privatized providers or vice versa.
- Misunderstandings due to a mixing of public and private sector norms and codes of conduct.
- Difficulties with the public and media understanding of how the government's role differs from the other actors who are providing public services.

A Wider Variety of Structures

Government is typically run as a principal-agent operation where the voters and their representatives are the principals and government staff are the agents who carry out the will of the principals. However, within the larger scope of governance, there are other structures through which services delivery and community development can be accomplished, including:

- Inter-organizational negotiation
- Inter-organizational coordination/collaboration
- Managed competition

With these new structural forms, government ceases to be only “activities under a set of rules” and becomes in part “activities that include games about the rules.” The latter structural forms allow for much greater flexibility and potentially greater productivity as actors blend “their resources, skills and purposes into a long-term coalition.” (Stoker, 1998, p.23). While allowing for more flexibility and productivity, these new structural forms also produce a higher level of uncertainty with regard to both means and outcomes.

For government, the expansive ideas of governance have dovetailed with the new public management movement which emphasizes the use of performance measures, disaggregation of

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agencies and activities, competition for service production, managing for results, greater flexibility in incentives structures, in-house and private-sector contracting, the development of quasi markets, and a larger role for the consumer/citizen.

Administrative structures refer to the level of government below that are represented by the policy decision making body such as a board of commissioners. Administrative structures are sometimes only sketchily defined in a county's enabling legislation, and if this enabling legislation provides a certain amount of home rule, the county is then allowed to revise its administrative structure without a further change in state law. However, if a community feels strongly that it wants to operate under an administrative structure that includes certain elements, it may want to establish these elements more definitively in the enabling legislation. Some examples of administrative structures that some counties have considered as important to specify include:

- An in-house versus contracted county attorney
- A county auditor's (selected either by the board or the executive)
- A county engineer/surveyor
- A chief of police
- A charter review committee
- A civil service merit board
- A chief of staff/staff for the legislative body

Administrative innovations that New Public Management local governments might consider include:

- Structures that feature a contract management office
- Structures that feature a customer service office
- Structures that are organized to take advantage of new "knowledge management" and e-government potential
- Structures that build on military experiences with general staffs

This section of the report is organized into three subsections:

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1. Organizational Structures for Governmental Service Delivery
2. Organizational Structures for Governmental Provision, but not Delivery
3. Other Administrative Structures

Subsection 1 focuses on the traditional model of government services, while Subsection 2 looks at provisioning systems that are closely associated with the New Public Management approaches. Whereas the former addresses all the issues involved in governments delivering services themselves using their own employee and staff, the latter examines how administrative structures might differ were the government to contract for or enter into partnerships with other organizations to deliver services that the government itself does not produce.

The section on governmental delivery of service is longer due to the fact that it needs to address the classical issues of organizational design (e.g., hierarchy versus more ad hoc structures, span of control, use of a general staff, etc.). These issues need to be explored because they affect how the governments will perform their service delivery operations. However, in the case where the government ceases to provide services itself, many of these issues become moot.

While it could be argued that the new county government will be organized in such a manner that it will deliver all of its services through contracts and inter-organizational agreements, this would be unrealistic in that county government, in contrast to municipal government, acts in large measure as an arm of the state. Consequently, it may be substantially more difficult for a county to outsource all of its services, particularly in the area of justice-related services. In this regard, it is likely that the new Milton County will remain in the service delivery business at least to some extent and will therefore have an interest in better administrative structures of this type.

Design Criteria and Performance Objectives of the New Organization

In developing the ideas on administrative structures, the study team assumed that the new county government will have a desire to:

- Make more effective use of managers' time by reducing the total amount of time needed to perform basic managerial functions of budgeting, reporting and directing of work.

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- Make more effective use of technology in communications.
- More exactly align responsibilities with authority.
- Streamline and integrate work processes that currently may cross departmental lines.
- Improve the transparency and responsiveness of local government to the citizens.
- Employ an organizational design that will maximize these goals.

Organizational Structures for Governmental Service Delivery

The Literature on Organizations

The structure of an organization reflects the value-based choices made by the organization (Zammuto & O'Connor, 1992); it refers to how tasks are formally divided, grouped, and coordinated. Quinn's (1988) competing values model shows how different value orientations of organizations can influence structure. One important dimension that is related to organizational structure is the control-flexibility dimension (Quinn, 1988; Zammuto and Krakower, 1991). One can conceive of this dimension as running from strong internal control, with little flexibility, to weak internal control, with greater flexibility. When strong internal control is absent, it does not mean necessarily that there is no control; rather, it means that the control that exists is less formal. Such external control might come from professional norms and standards, training, or a need to respond to customer or citizen needs.

Historically, efficient organizations were seen as ones that possessed a great deal of internal control. The scientific management movement (sometimes called Taylorism), which dominated organizational theory in the early part of the 20th century, essentially argued that the most productive organizations are ones where the manager identifies the optimal set of work tasks and ensures that workers follow these steps exactly as planned. Workers need not do much thinking once the most efficient set of time and motion steps have been defined. In scientific management, managers control every aspect of the work down to the smallest detail.

Scientific management represents a control-oriented value system where management control is consolidated and centralized. All decision making is in managerial hands with employees having little discretion or flexibility. This results in a highly mechanistic structure, emphasizing production efficiency through the use of formal procedures, centralized authority, direct

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supervision and specialized labor. Coordination and problem-resolution occur at high levels of the hierarchy. Employees are unlikely to recognize problems as they occur due to their limited understanding of the overall process. Even when employees recognize problems, they do not have the authority to correct them without management approval (Liu et al., 1990).

Organizational control processes are hierarchical (Barker, 1993) and involve vertical coordination and communication, and vertical dependency.

While some may disparage scientific management as being out of date, numerous companies still use scientific management techniques to improve their productivity. That is, scientific management and machine bureaucracies are still very effective organizational design principles when the work environment is fairly certain or stable and work is not overly complex.

As Perrow (1986) has argued, an internal command and control orientation may be effective when task complexity is low, but is less feasible in highly complex organizational systems. Similarly, when the external environment is complex and uncertain (i.e., there is a rapid pace of change and high level of competition) an internal command and control approach may be inappropriate, because it restricts the organization's flexibility and limits its ability to adapt to the changing demands and opportunities. Essentially, more complex work and work that involves interpersonal understanding cannot be organized as a machine or traditional bureaucracy.

Modern thinking about organizations has added a number of alternative organizational design archetypes to the traditional bureaucracy pattern.

For the purposes of this study we categorize organizational design options into two basic sets. The first set can be described as the basic organizational design archetype.

A. Organization Design Archetypes

Different kinds of work are more effectively undertaken within different organizational design archetypes. For example, if the nature of the work demands a high level of human-to-human integration among staff members, the human relations model of organization may be most effective. The following table outlines the key features of four organizational design archetypes.

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Table 1:			
Flexibility and Discretion (Collegial & Adhocracy)			
Internal Focus and Integration (Hierarchy & Clan)	<i>Collegial (Human relations model)</i>	<i>Adhocracy (Open systems model)</i>	
	<p>Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion, participation, consensus • Teamwork • Employee development <p>Ends:</p> <p>Morale & cohesion, Commitment, Human resource development</p>	<p>Means:</p> <p>Commitment to experimentation, individual initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptation • Readiness, insight <p>Ends:</p> <p>Creativity, Cutting edge output, Growth & external support</p>	
	<i>Hierarchy (Internal process model)</i>	<i>Market (Rational goals model)</i>	External Focus and Differentiation (Market & Adhocracy)
	<p>Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information management; Communication • Standardized decision making • Formalized & structured <p>Ends:</p> <p>Timeliness, Stability, Efficiency</p> <p>Stability and Control (Market & Hierarchy)</p>	<p>Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal clarification; External positioning • Direction, decisiveness, planning • Achievement of measurable goals <p>Ends:</p> <p>External positioning, Productivity, Goal achievement</p>	

The archetypes help to define how key elements, in the way the organization works (its means), are ideally related to the goal or ends of the organization which are in turn defined by the basic mission and orientation of the organization (i.e., internal versus external) and its environment (i.e., stability versus uncertainty).

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B. Organization Resource Grouping

In addition to organization design archetypes, organizations tend to group the resources of the organization in one or more ways as outlined in Table 2, which also presents some of the strengths and weaknesses of these resource groupings.

Resource Grouping	Strengths	Weaknesses
Geographical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Services are directly accessible to geographically dispersed clientele. . Allows for competition among geographically dispersed service centers. . Can achieve higher economies of scope. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Can result in lower economies of scale. . May make it more difficult to coordinate service delivery
Functional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Permits centralized control of strategic results. . Very well suited for structuring a single business. . Structure is linked tightly to strategy by designating key activities as functional units. . Promotes in-depth functional expertise. . Well suited to developing a functional-based distinctive competence. . Conducive to exploiting learning/experience curve effects associated with functional specialization. . Enhances operating efficiency where tasks are routine and repetitive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Poses problems of functional coordination. . Can lead to inter-functional rivalry, conflict, and empire building. . May promote overspecialization and narrow management viewpoints. . Hinders development of managers with cross-functional experience, because the ladder of advancement is up the ranks within the same functional area. . Forces profit responsibility to the top of the organization. . Functional specialists often attach more importance to what's best for the functional area than to what's best for the whole business. . May lead to uneconomically small units or underutilization of specialized facilities and manpower. . Functional myopia often works against creative entrepreneurship, adapting to change, and attempts to restructure the activity-cost chain.
Decentralized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Offers a logical and workable means of decentralizing responsibility and delegating authority in diversified organizations. . Puts responsibility for business strategy in closer proximity to each business' unique environment. . Allows each business unit to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . May lead to costly duplication of staff functions at headquarters and business unit levels, thus raising administrative overhead costs. . Poses a problem of what decisions to centralize and what decisions to decentralize (business managers need enough authority to get the job done, but not so much that corporate

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Table 2:		
Resource Grouping	Strengths	Weaknesses
	<p>organize around its own set of key activities and functional area requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Frees CEO to handle corporate strategy issues. . Puts clear profit/loss accountability on shoulders of business unit managers. 	<p>management loses control of key business level decisions).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . May lead to excessive division rivalry for resources and attention. . Business/division autonomy works against achieving coordination of related activities in different business units, thus blocking to some extent the capture of strategic fit benefits. . Headquarters management becomes heavily dependent on business unit managers. . Headquarters managers can lose touch with business unit situations, end up surprised when problems arise, and not know much about how to fix such problems.
<p>Strategic business unit (SBU) A strategic business unit (SBU) is a grouping of business units based on some important strategic elements common to each; the possible elements of relatedness include an overlapping set of competitors, a closely related strategic mission, an ability to accomplish integrated strategic planning, common key success factors, and technologically related growth opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Provides a strategically relevant way to organize large numbers of different business units. . Improves coordination between the role and authority of the businesses with similar strategies, markets, and growth opportunities. . Allows strategic planning to be done at the most relevant level within the total enterprise. . Makes the task of strategic review by top executives more objective and more effective. . Helps allocate corporate resources to areas with greatest growth opportunities. . Promotes more cohesiveness among the new initiatives of separate but related businesses. . Facilitates the coordination of related activities within an SBU, thus helping to capture the benefits of strategic fits in the SBU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . It is easy for the definition and grouping of businesses into SBUs to be so arbitrary that the SBU serves no purpose other than administrative convenience. . Adds another layer to top management. . The roles and authority of the CEO, the group vice president, and the business-unit manager have to be carefully worked out or the group vice president gets trapped in the middle with ill-defined authority. . Unless the SBU head is strong willed, very little strategy coordination is likely to occur across business units in the SBU. . Performance recognition gets blurred; credit for successful business units tends to go to corporate CEO, then to business unit head, last to group vice president.
<p>Matrix A matrix structure is a structure with two (or more) channels of command, two lines of budget authority, and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Permits more attention to each dimension of strategic priority. . Creates checks and balances among competing viewpoints. . Facilitates simultaneous pursuit of different types of strategic initiative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Very complex to manage. . Hard to maintain “balance” between the two lines of authority, i.e., violates unity of command principle. . So much shared authority can result in a transactions logjam and disproportionate

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Resource Grouping	Strengths	Weaknesses
two sources of performance and reward. The key feature of the matrix is that product (or business) and functional lines of authority are overlaid (to form a matrix or grid), and managerial authority over the activities in each unit/cell of the matrix is shared between the product manager and functional manager.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Promotes making trade-off decisions on the basis of “what’s best for the organization as a whole.” . Encourages cooperation, consensus building, conflict resolution, and coordination of related activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> amounts of time being spent on communications. . It is hard to move quickly and decisively without getting clearance from many other people. . Promotes an organizational bureaucracy and hamstrings creative entrepreneurship

C. Toward Customization of Organizational Design

The overall trend in thinking about organizational and management functions and effectiveness has been moving away from the generic toward the more unique and tailored. It is generally agreed that these trends reflect both changes in the nature of organizations and their external environment (toward more complexity, greater variability, and faster change) and an increased sophistication of thought gained from theory developments and empirical investigation (March and Simon 1958; Blau and Scott 1962; Grusky and Miller 1970; Mintzberg 1979; Scott 1987; Barnard 1938; Dessler 1982; Drucker 1985).

However, even within a single organization, particularly one with as many diverse services and functions as a local government, no one organizational design will be optimal. A local government may have a number of functions (e.g., water and utility billing, tax billing, etc.) that may best be operated as a machine bureaucracy, while other functions such as planning or engineering design may be better organized as a collegial or adhocracy agency. Still other functions (e.g., where citizen service and satisfaction is a priority) might best be organized as an internal market.

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Similarly, no one resource grouping principle is likely to be optimal for all local government services and functions. Some services, such as libraries, may need to be organized geographically so as to serve different client groups more effectively, while others such as accounting may benefit from a functional grouping. Likewise, law enforcement may need to combine some centralization (e.g., for crime labs, internal affairs, and tactical units) with some decentralization of patrol services in geographically distinct areas.

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Span of Control⁴

The term "span of control" refers to the number of subordinates who report directly to a single manager, supervisor, or lead. A correlation generally exists between the span of control and the number of layers within an organization. A low span of control (i.e., few subordinates per manager, supervisor, or lead) leads to a "tall" organization (i.e., one with many layers) whereas a high span of control leads to a flat organization.

⁴ Span of control, associated most closely with Luther Gulick (1937), has a straightforward logic; individuals in management positions should oversee a relatively small number of subordinates. Urwick (1956), in fact, claimed six was the maximum. As the number of subordinates under an executive's control increases, monitoring the behavior of subordinates becomes more difficult. Herbert Simon (1946) criticized this logic, claiming that a case could be made for adopting a contradictory principle of management. If the span of control is limited and executives oversee a relatively small numbers of subordinates, the number of levels within an organization's hierarchy will increase. As the number of levels within an organization increases, the amount of red tape moving across different organizational levels also tends to increase. To avoid this problem, Simon suggested that organizations be designed with few organizational levels -- a principle directly opposite to that implied by adherence to narrow spans of control in structuring relations between executives and subordinates. Scholars of public administration uncritically accepted the arguments in Simon's work. Attempts at proving or disproving the worth of the principles of management quickly faded as public administration shifted away from examining the structural attributes of organizations and toward the study of organizational behavior, as suggested by Simon (Hammond 1990). With the principle of span of control, for example, there was no systematic evidence about the effects of variations in span of control on organizational performance at the time Simon leveled his famous critique. As Hammond (1990, 160) points out, Gulick explicitly stated that it is not known what the span of control should be but instead called for additional research on the topic so that more precise answers might be obtained. As public administration shifted away from the principles approach, few efforts examined this question, leaving scholars with little knowledge about how variations in span of control affect organizational performance. The limited evidence available suggests that span of control is an important variable that must be considered when examining how organizations perform their tasks. Joan Woodward's (1980) classic study of British industrial firms revealed that span of control varies a great deal across different organizational settings. Within each organizational category (unit, large batch, and continuous production), successful firms used similar spans of control to structure relationships between executives and employees. Woodward's study remains one of the few systematic studies of span of control and organizational performance. Other studies of span of control (Holden, Pederson and Germane 1968; Hood and Dunsire 1981) tried to determine the exact span of control in organizations but did not relate it to performance. Gaining a better understanding of how varying spans of control affect organizational performance is important from the standpoint of informing our existing theories of management-employee relations. Should executives exercise narrow or wide spans of control over employees? The famous Theory X and Theory Y (McGregor 1960) management schemes call for entirely different approaches to structuring relations between executives and subordinates. Under Theory X, spans of control should be very narrow because executives cannot trust their employees. Under Theory Y, spans of control should be loose so as to encourage employees to achieve their fullest potential by working independently and taking on new responsibilities. Spans of control are also related to the principal-agent problem in organizations (see Brehm and Gates 1997). Narrow spans of control increase supervision and thus make shirking less likely. In situations where principals (supervisors) and agents (subordinates) have similar goals (Kaufman 1960), spans of control can be expanded with little increase in shirking. Spans of control are also relevant to individual responsibility in an organization and perhaps to theories of ethics as well. With narrow spans of control, supervision can be close, thus not permitting the individual employee to develop responsibility for his or her actions. Similarly, the importance of organizational ethics (Frederickson 1996; Wamsley et al. 1992) increases when spans of control increase and the organization cedes discretion to its members. (Source: Ode To Luther Gulick: Span of Control And Organizational Performance by Kenneth J. Meier).

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Theorists suggest that the relationship between span of control and performance for any given organization should have two key characteristics. Generally as spans of control increase, there should be an increase in performance as the organization gains a higher percentage of production workers relative to control (supervisory) workers, *ceteris paribus*. Performance gains due to increases in the span of control, however, should be subject to diminishing marginal returns. At even higher spans of control, perhaps at levels well beyond normal for an organization, the addition of each additional subordinate might well reduce overall performance as the absence of coordination, management, and supervision results in the organization moving toward entropy (Williamson 1990).

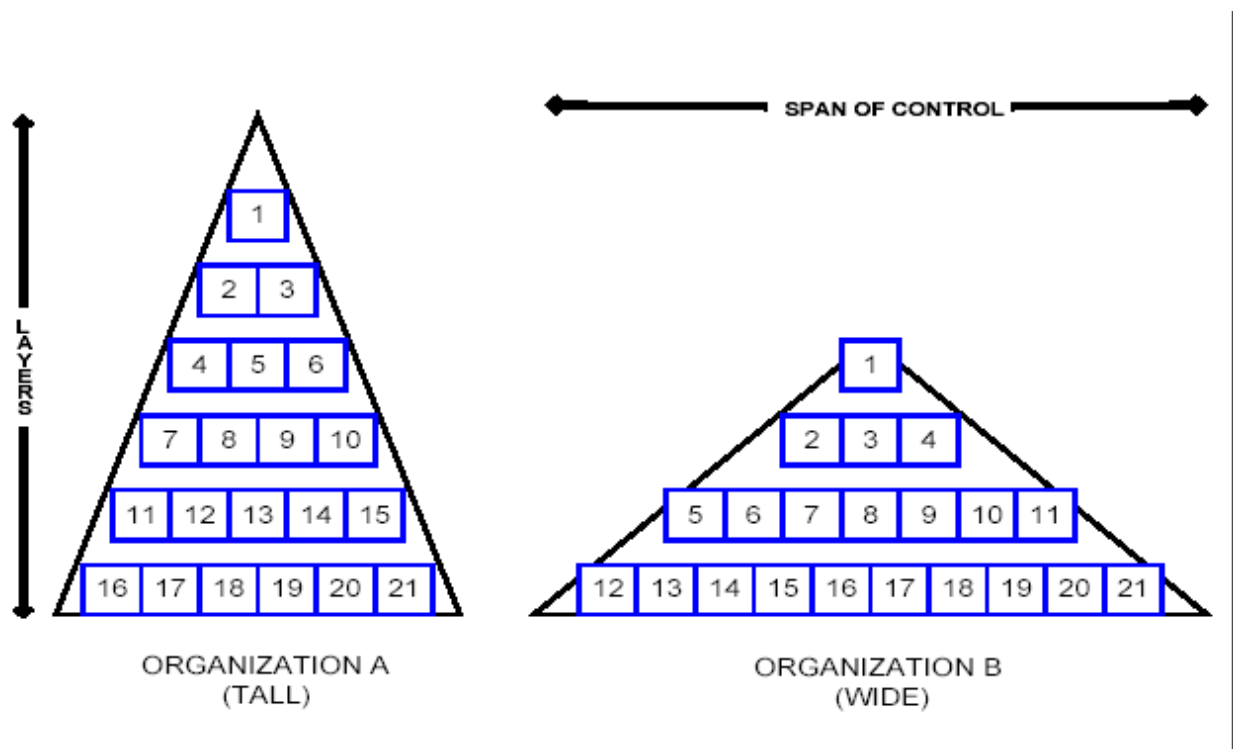


Figure 3: Comparison of Spans of Control

There are two main schools of thought in organizational management theory regarding span of control. Classical (i.e., pre-1950) authors following the precepts of scientific management and the machine bureaucracy model believed that supervisors needed to maintain close control over their subordinates, and they often specified the proper ratio as no more than 6 subordinates per supervisor. Contemporary management theory holds that such "command and control" organizations may be inefficient and therefore advocates higher spans of control and flatter organizational structures. Although a consensus on the ideal ratio for span of control has not

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been reached, ratios ranging from 15 to 25 subordinates per supervisor are suggested. Moreover, a number of authors recommend 4-6 organizational layers as the maximum for any large organization.⁵

In one of the most sophisticated studies of span of control in recent times, Meier found that the impact of changing span of control is also related to how well the organization is performing. . That is, he discovered that increasing the midlevel span of control in good organizations has a much larger impact than it does in all organizations. At the same time, in the more supervisory level span of control (i.e., administrative-teacher span in Meier's study), span of control for good organizations effectively reached to infinity (i.e., workers needed little or no supervision). From a managerial perspective this implies that organizations already performing at a high level can increase spans of control significantly.

While contrasting classic with reformist, "flat organization" theorists' ideas about span of control provides a good reference point for thinking about this issue, the reality is much more complex. In particular, the degree to which an organization can be made flatter and still remain effective and efficient is based on a number of factors, including the:

- Level of training and professionalism among the workforce.
- Organizational model being used.
 - Market, adhocracy, and collegial models are more likely to allow for wider spans of control.
 - Organizations that use teams who have clear performance measures do not need such close supervision.
- Degree of employee loyalty and availability of a career ladder

⁵ Peter Drucker, who believes that too few staff to managers ratios lead to the "deformation of management: levels upon levels" and that more staff per manager and fewer management layers lead to improved management and organizational performance. James O'Toole, professor at the University of Southern California, whose study of spans of control showed an average of 10 staff per manager. He concluded that American workers are over-supervised. Edward Lawler, author of *The Ultimate Advantage*, who states that organizations should never have less than 15 staff per manager, and should usually have more. Tom Peters, who recommends that high-performance organizations operate with a minimum of 25 workers for each manager and a maximum of five layers. President Bill Clinton, who directed the federal government to double spans of control to 14 staff per manager. The National Commission on State and Local Public Service, which recommended decreasing the ratio of managers to staff and flattening the bureaucracy to increase accountability, save money, and shift personnel to the front line.

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- Degree to which advanced communications and data technologies are available to the workforce and the degree to which the workforce has been adequately trained to use these technologies.

The following figure outlines how these and other factors affect the optimum span of control.

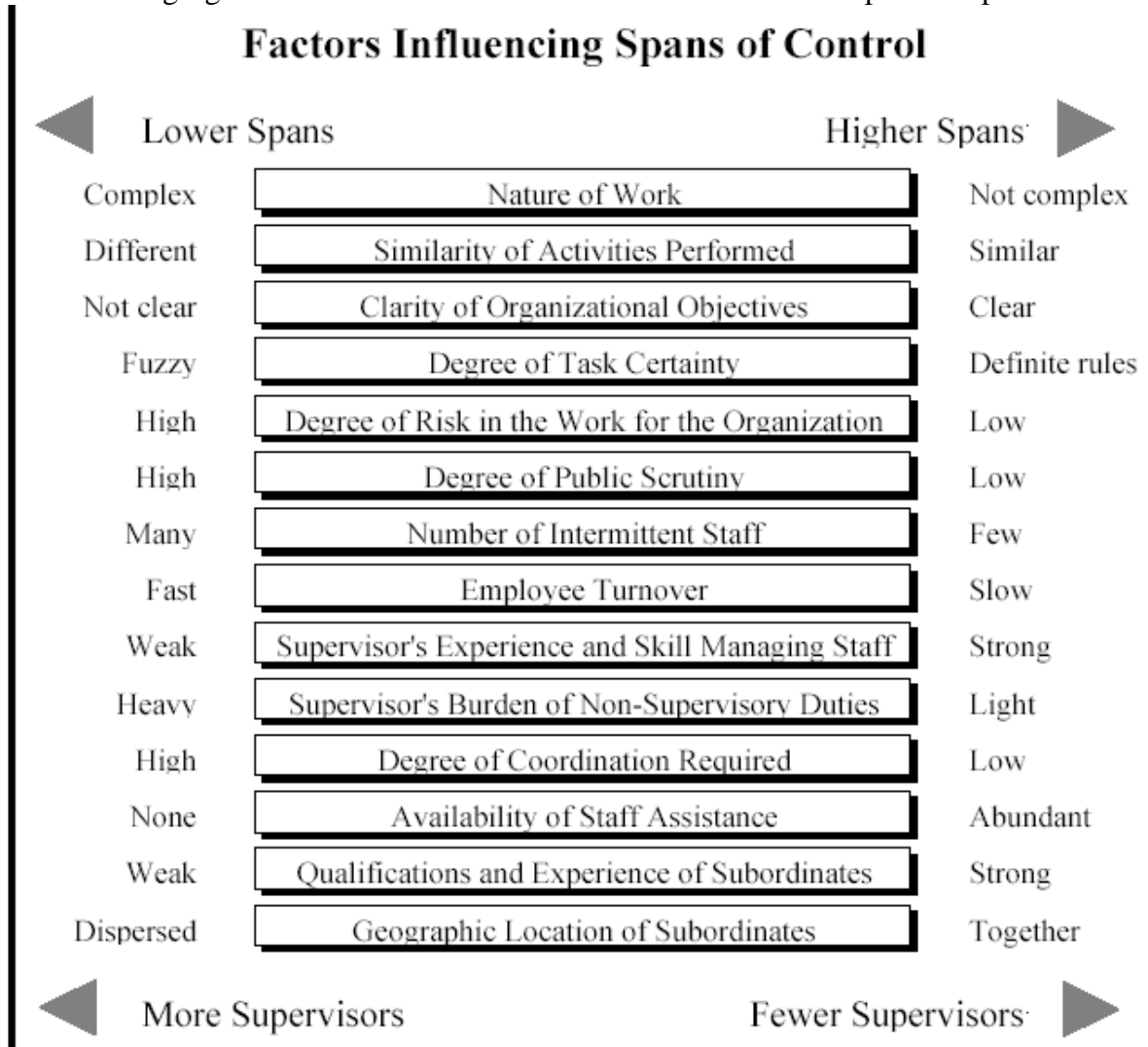


Figure 4: Factors Influencing Span of Control

In addition, persons advising about span of control limits sometimes neglect some of the subtleties of the classic view of span of control.

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Some of these subtleties include: ⁶

The Intertwined Qualification

Where various processes and work tasks are intertwined, work leaders will need to be able to manage complex relations among the actors in the processes. As a consequence of such added complexity, there may need to be a more narrow span of control.

The Importance of the Social Function of Leadership

The chief with too wide a span of control tends to frustrate the very proper wish to cultivate mutuality; in a loosely organized business with no strict limits on the executive's span of authority, subordinates will line up in a manager's secretary's office and will be constantly frustrated when they want a word with the manager. They will feel that the manager is too absorbed in business to take time to get to know his or her staff and to try to understand and appreciate their problems. Such a chief may violate the official regulation of the British Army in World War II: "The first duty of an officer is to care for, that is to know, his men."

The ability to use "General Staff" positions to maintain effective flatness with a narrower span of control

Urwick has described how the British Army command could be both hierarchical and flat at the same time through use of effective general staff positions:

"There were 18 persons directly responsible to our Divisional Commander -- a dozen more than we have said the ordinary business executive can effectively handle. And yet the Commander seldom spent more than a couple of hours a day in his office, and maintained very close contact with all his subordinates. How had this apparently successful neglect of the principle of span of control been made to work? First of all, a clear distinction was drawn between the nominal right of direct access to the Commander and the frequent use of that right. Normally, heads of specialized branches, and indeed all subordinates, were expected to take up all routine business through the appropriate general staff officer in the first instance. Only if they regarded the matter as one of outstanding importance which justified them in approaching the Commander -- and only after they had failed to secure a satisfactory settlement with one of his general staff

⁶ *Harvard Business Review*. May-June 1956 The Manager's Span of Control. by Lyndall F. Urwick

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officers -- would the Commander accept a direct discussion. However, the subordinates' right to require direct access to the top officer was clearly recognized, and this safeguarded their independent responsibility in the exercise of their functions as well as their professional or organizational status.”

A. Organizational Design

1. At the Government-wide Level

Organizational Design and Culture: Unlike most business organizations which tend to be designed around a small number of very specific core capabilities, the work of a general purpose local government is not easily contained within a single organizational model (e.g., a decentralized, externally oriented organization or a strategic business unit organization run as an adhocracy).

At the government-wide level (i.e., the level defining the relationship between the commission chair or county manager and the department heads), a typical local government organizational structure will appear to be hierarchical in character and practice. This is due in part to the large number of diverse departments that will often report to the chair or manager. Such a large number of department managers of very diverse functions make it difficult to operate the organization along collegial lines or as an adhocracy. Employing alternative organizational forms typically requires a management team that can develop a strong sense of shared vision and strong informal relations that allow managers to by-pass the inefficiencies of bureaucratic operations without simultaneously producing chaos. Such alternative organizational forms may also need a greater homogeneity across departmental functions, a strong sense of a joint mission, and consistent leadership over time. A functional resource grouping combined with the diverse challenges of general purpose local government tend to work against the sense of a joint mission, while having an elected chief administrative officer can work against consistency of leadership.

As suggested above, different types of work may be best organized around different models. Accepting the fact that the general purpose local government is responsible for a wide spectrum of work also suggests that no one organizational model will be appropriate. Because of the need for a diversity of organizational models within the various departments, it is impossible to

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develop the kind of single organizational culture at the government-wide level that might be suggested in the management literature.

While in an ordinary machine bureaucracy the CEO can gain efficiencies through hiring and firing in ways that meet the current demands, with an elected CEO or a city manager who must meet the political objectives of the council the tendency may be to save jobs and thereby not gain the efficiencies that might otherwise occur as a result of a change. Alternative organizational models that rely on having fewer layers and fewer job titles, a strong training component, more cross-trained staff, and more interdisciplinary teams, can avoid the problem of what to do with a newly hired unnecessary employee. Such employees can be quickly moved to new positions without the employee experiencing a loss of status or rank or the organization experiencing a dead weight loss in capability.

Number of Departments: Given the issues outlined above, it appears reasonable to expect that the new county of Milton (at the government-wide level) adopt a structure that has between 8-10 departments reporting directly to the chief administrative officer. The new county will not need to have as many specialized departments as currently exists in the Fulton County government. This is the case in large measure because Milton County will not need to supply any municipal-type services as there would be no unincorporated part of the new county that would potentially need these services. Grouping smaller departments together should create some efficiency with respect to tasks such as budget preparation, internal accounting, and performance assessment and monitoring.

2. At the Department Level

The department level of a city is the level of government immediately supervised by the chief administrative officer (e.g., county manager or county executive). As suggested above, it would be unrealistic to expect all the departments in a county to share a single organizational model, related culture, and span of control. The amount of diversity in the work being performed in these agencies is too great. However, we might expect that overall the government will achieve a span of control that is sufficiently wide so as to produce efficiencies in the use of managerial and supervisory skill. Unfortunately, achieving a relatively wide span of control in

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smaller governments can be difficult. A potential strategy for achieving a span of control goal in the case where the size of the demand for government services is not sufficient to require staffing in units large enough to achieve economies of scale with respect to the use of managerial skill would be to contract out some services, i.e., those that are too small to make efficient use of full-time professional managers. For example, if the county is likely to only need a couple of building maintenance workers, it may not be efficient to hire a manager whose work will be to supervise only these two employees.

B. Span of Control Comparisons to Other Organizations

New local governments can look to existing local governments to help identify span of control targets for their own administration. The following presents some findings from span of control studies in local governments that have addressed this issue:

- Seattle reports an average span of control of 5.9 (management staff only) and 4.4 (excluding managers who also perform the work being supervised).
- A study of spans of control and layers of hierarchy in the government of King County, Washington, which included 6,768 employees in 14 executive branch departments found a span of control of 8.9 (no leads), or 5.5 (with leads).
- A study of spans of control and layers of management in the municipal government of Portland, Oregon, which included 4,953 full-time equivalent positions, reported an average span of control of 6.0. Portland only has a few leads, and the study did not count them as managers.
- A study of spans of control and layers of management in private companies found a median span of control of 8.8. Spans found in this study range between 2.3 and 83.4 with clusters around 5-6, 10-12, and the mid-20s.

Current management literature advocates higher spans of control and flatter structures because they increase the efficiency and productivity of organizations by reducing problems such as: the distortion of information as it flows through the organization; slow, ineffective decision-making and action; functional walls and "turf games"; having to put energy into controlling the bureaucracy rather than into customer service; high costs due to the number of managers and

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management support staff; and, the tendency for overly managed workers to fail to assume responsibility for the quality of their work.

Portland Case Study

The Auditor of Portland (Oregon), in her report, Span of Control Study, recommended that, in all bureaus other than Fire and Police, the City require special justification for:

- middle managers with spans less than five,
- operations and maintenance supervisors with spans outside the range of 10 to 20, and
- administrative supervisors with spans outside the range of 6 to 12.

For the Fire Bureau, the report recommended an average span of 4.5 - 5.0, and for the Police Bureau, an average span of 8.0 - 9.0.¹

In conclusion, while general purpose local governments may have more difficulty than single-function organizations increasing span of control, it does appear reasonable to expect that a new county should be able to achieve a span of control of at least six to eight.⁷

Moving Toward Increased Span of Control

A major barrier to increased spans of control at the department level is the small size of some departments. When departments have fewer than ten employees, it is impossible to also achieve an average span of control of ten or greater. Hence, consolidation of smaller departments may be the most effective step in achieving increased span of control.

Some other methods which have resulted in increased spans of control and fewer organizational layers include process reengineering (i.e., the radical rethinking and redesign of business processes), self-directed work teams (i.e., highly trained work groups that are fully responsible for providing a product or service), and decentralization. However, implementation of any of these methods requires a fundamental change in the culture of an organization away from the

⁷ We recognize that in some cases the span of control that is specified in an organizational chart indicates an actual managerial or supervisory relationship in name only. The economic impacts of narrow spans of control are related in large measure to factors such as the efficiency of conducting supervision, work planning, work performance auditing, budgeting, and other managerial activities as well as the extra cost of a managerial salary supplement. In some cases, a person identified on a chart as a manager is in fact more of a team leader who does not perform managerial functions or receive a managerial salary supplement. Consequently, in order to calculate a real span of control it is necessary to assess the specific work of persons identified as managers.

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traditional control-oriented environment to one with an emphasis on customer service, where decision-making is pushed down to front-line workers.

Other methods can achieve more immediate increases in span of control without fundamental changes in the organizational culture. These include the elimination of management layers or positions through attrition and the conversion of management positions with fewer than 3 subordinates to non-management positions.

If the local government officials desire a fundamental change in the government's structure, they should consider establishing general organizational guidelines (i.e., target ranges for span of control and number of management layers), or reviewing and approving guidelines proposed by the independent agencies. The local government officials should request that the agencies develop their own implementation plans, with timeframes, for attaining target ranges.

In developing these plans, the span of each supervisory position must be considered in relationship to both the task it directs and the degree to which managers with lower spans of control are "working managers," – those who perform both supervisory and non-supervisory tasks. Consolidating these positions will require careful consideration of the workloads of other employees, as well as careful reappraisal of what work actually needs to be done. However, by consolidating management tasks over the long term, payroll costs can be reduced, and coordination among remaining managers should become easier.

In addition to increasing the average span of control where appropriate, a number of other changes to personnel policies could potentially make more efficient use of managers and staff. These changes include:

- **Creating career tracks for specialists.** When a government does not provide many advancement opportunities for technical experts except for promotion into management it creates a strong incentive for department managers to create management positions for technical experts they wish to retain for their technical skills. Providing higher paid, non-management positions could reduce this incentive to expand management staff. In addition, providing for easy lateral transfers may substitute for vertical career

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advancement for some staff.

- **Reviewing the workload of working supervisors.** Carefully reviewing the workload of working supervisors may lead to consolidating supervisory responsibilities, and thus, to wider spans of control. While the tasks involved in some functional areas may justify having a working supervisor, too many working supervisors with small staffs may result in higher payroll costs and coordination difficulties. Working supervisors may have a difficult time focusing on coaching, facilitating, and supervising while also providing direct service. Reducing the number of managers by consolidating the supervisory responsibilities of several existing managers will reduce the number of managers and time spent in managerial meetings. It may also improve communications by reducing the number of supervisors required to coordinate tasks.
- **Communicating clearly with employees.** Staff must understand what is expected of them, and what they can expect from the organization. Uncertainty about the limits of their discretion in performing tasks or in their future with the organization damage both morale and productivity.
- **Managing for performance.** Working with employees to improve performance is one of the hardest tasks of a manager. Providing managers with formal mentors or support groups will provide training and support for managers working with particularly challenging employees.

Models for Government Service Delivery

The following outlines a number of models or archetypes of administrative structures and describes some of the potential advantages and disadvantages of each. For informational purposes, a traditional local government structure is described so that the reader will have a foundation for contrasting this model with the more innovative structures that follow.

Traditional Local Government Model

The traditional local government organizational design tends to reflect a key characteristic of general purpose local governments, i.e., that they provide a wide variety of services—much wider than is typically the case in the business world. A key feature of this design is the use of independent function-specific departments. For example, in the traditional model each of the

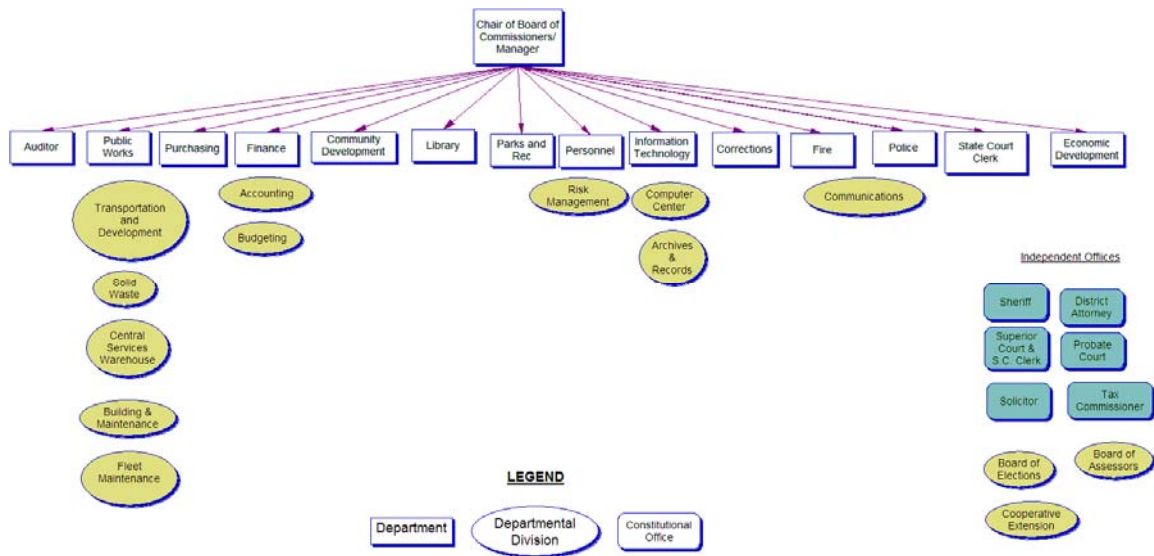
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emergency services, fire, police and EMS are operated as independent departments. In some versions of this model there may be 25 or more different departments as well as the regular number of independent constitutional offices.

While the traditional model creates an unwieldy span of control for the county manager/administrator, it is one that is generally understood by citizens and is supported by the organization of professional associations (e.g., for finance officers, police, fire, etc.). Also, there are reasonable arguments for maintaining independent Police and Fire departments, e.g., 1) these departments are already large enough to assure the basic economies of scale for labor-intensive activities; 2) these departments have strong profession-based traditions and very function-specific standard operating practices; 3) there are “separation of powers” arguments against including police with other judicial-branch-based criminal justice activities.

The following figure **roughly** shows how the current departments would be grouped under this design.

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Advantages

Able to build upon the traditions and independent professions found in fire, police and other services.

Disadvantages

Inability to capture economies of scale and scope that exist in departments that consolidate a number of services.

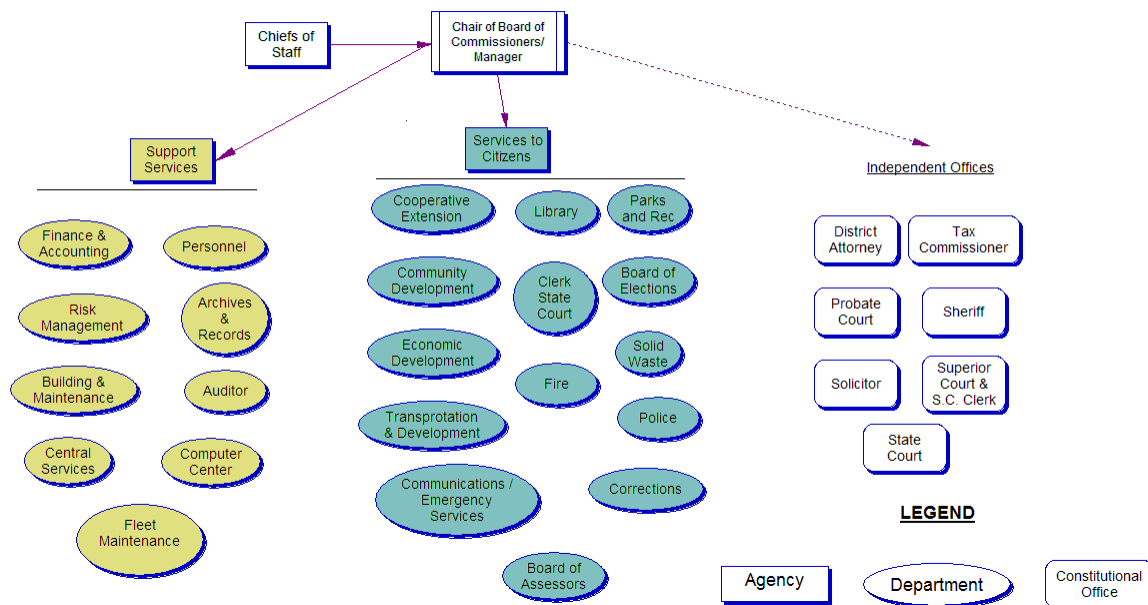
Span of control is highly unwieldy.

Relative weakness with regard to undertaking strategic planning and implementation.

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Model 1: Classic Separation of Direct and Support Services

In this model, there would essentially be two departments reporting to the Chair of the Board of Commissioners or County manager/administrator: a direct “Services to Citizens” department and a department of “Support Services.” The following figure shows how a typical group of service departments would be grouped under the two super-departments.



Advantages

- Gives priority of services to citizens.
- Would support greater collaboration and possible synergetic and innovative efforts to serve citizens.
- Would likely support more one-stop service efforts.
- Would support increased span of control at the department level.
- Would unify the majority of information systems under one director.

Disadvantages

- Would decrease span of control at the government-wide level to an inefficient two.
- Would create a department with a very diverse spectrum of the citizens being served (e.g., correction inmates to business prospects).
- Would create a department with a very diverse spectrum of the support functions (e.g., from carpentry to computer programming).
- Could lead to more difficulty in linking service and support processes.

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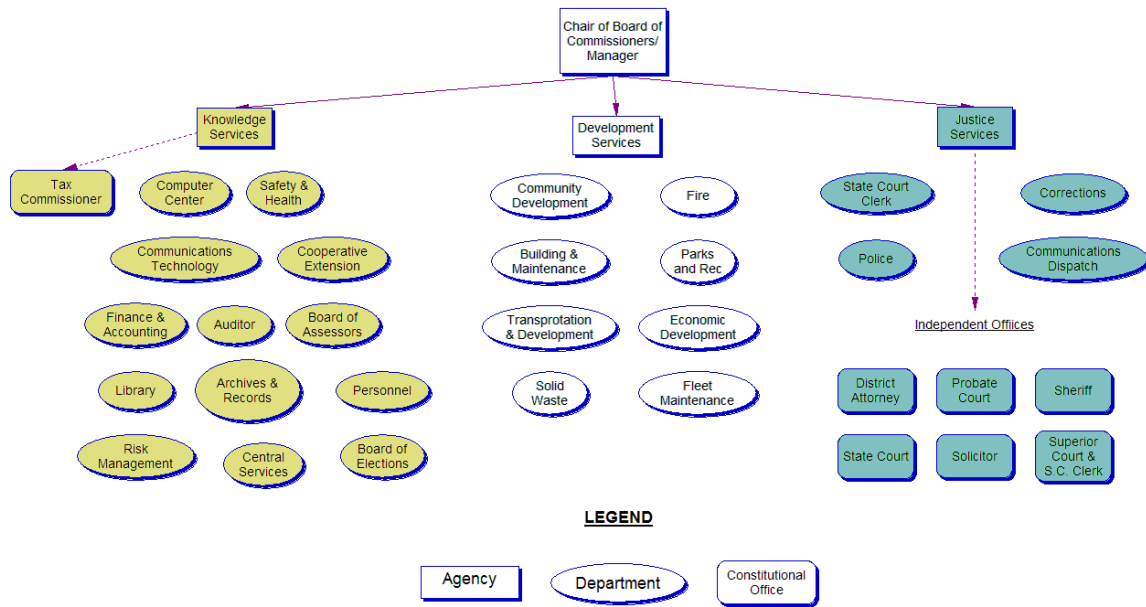
The General Staff Form of Model 1

The general staff form of this model would provide most of the advantages listed above, but would help to maintain the higher, more efficient span of control. However, given the large number of services, it is likely that the general staff would be unable to provide sufficient informal coordination and filtering of decisions so as to bring the chief executive's effective span of control into a more reasonable range.

Model 2: Strategic Business Operations

In this model, there would essentially be three departments reporting to the Chair of the Board of Commissioners/Manager: a "Knowledge Services" department, a "Development Services" department and a "Justice Services" department. The following figure **roughly** shows how the current departments would be grouped under this design. The principle for including a department under Knowledge Services is that the primary mission of the current department is the provision or manipulation of knowledge. The actual configuration of the three departments would involve some breaking up of individual department divisions or units of current departments. For example, GIS, department records, etc. would be pulled out of the Development and Justice services departments and placed in the Knowledge Services department. The rationale of this model is that knowledge is a highly valuable service provided by government and will likely become more so in the future. Organizing this service as a single department enhances its role and provides it with the kind of attention and management it needs to be effective.

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Advantages

Gives priority to the emerging importance of knowledge management.

Would unify the majority of information systems under one director.

Would support greater collaboration and synergetic and innovative efforts to use information technology most effectively.

Allows the director of Justice Services to manage flow of cases from arrest to recidivism more effectively.

Supports a focus on the full range of activities that comprise the development of community.

Would capture possible economies of scope and scale across numerous operational and support areas, but particularly in the management of knowledge and information.

Would support increased span of control at the department level.

Disadvantages

Would decrease span of control at the government-wide level to an inefficient three.

Would create a department with a very diverse spectrum of the citizens being served (e.g., correction inmates to business prospects).

Would create a department with a very diverse spectrum of information functions (e.g., from risk management to case management).

Could lead to more difficulty in linking service and support processes.

Departments with strong organizational identity (e.g., Fire, Police, etc.) may be difficult to manage as a unified department.

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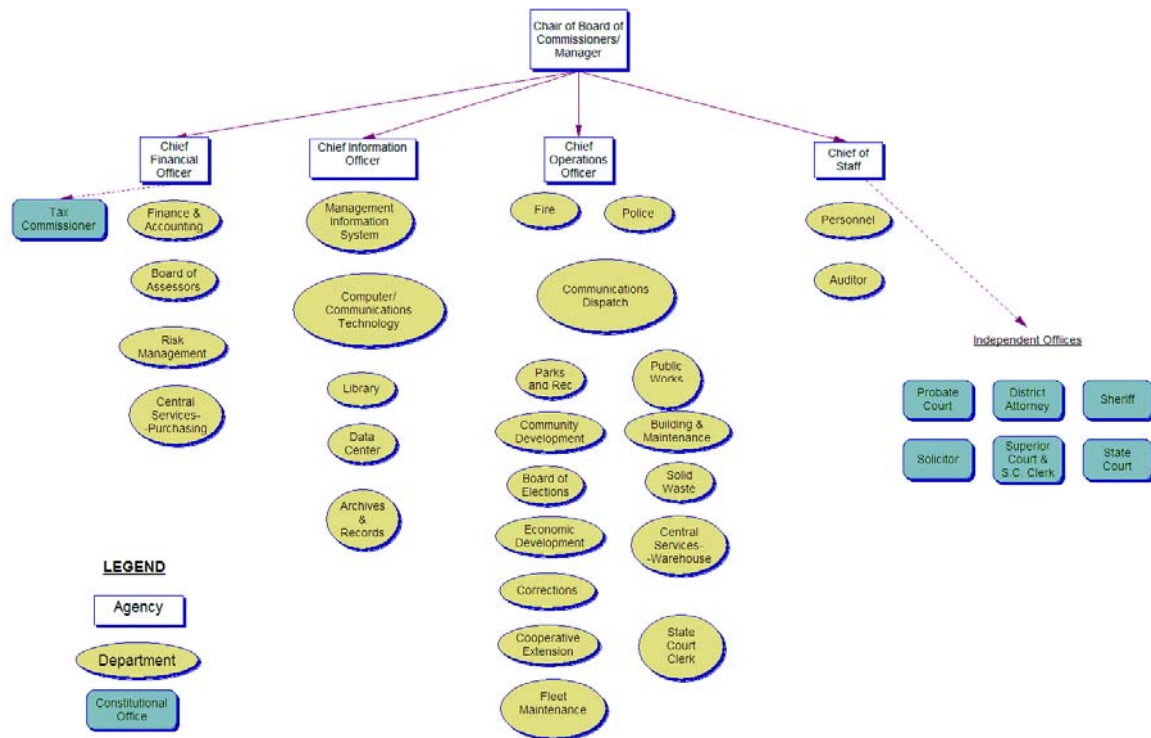
The General Staff Form of Model 2

The general staff form of this model would provide most of the advantages listed above, but would help to maintain the higher, more efficient span of control. However, given the large number of departments, it is likely that the general staff would still be unable to provide sufficient informal coordination and filtering of decisions so as to bring the chief executive's effective span of control into a more reasonable range (though this model would be superior to the Model 1 General Staff option).

Model 3: Traditional Corporate Business Model

In this model, there would essentially be four departments reporting to the Chair of the Board of Commissioners. These departments would have functions that are similar to the key titles of corporate officers: a Chief Financial Officer, a Chief Information Officer, a Chief Operations Officer, and a Chief of Staff, who would be responsible for the legal, auditing and personnel functions of government as well as the independent agencies that are unique to local government. The following figure **roughly** shows how the current departments would be grouped under this design. The actual configuration of the four departments would involve some breaking up of individual department divisions or units of current departments. For example, the information systems that are currently operated by the Finance Department, Central Services, and Transportation and Development would be pulled out of these departments and placed under the Chief Information Officer. The rationale of this model is that government can and should be operated like a modern corporation.

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Advantages

Clarifies responsibilities for key support functions (i.e., finance and information) but does not conflate the two.

Would unify all information systems under one director.

Would support greater collaboration and synergetic and innovative efforts to use information technology effectively.

Places a strong focus on operations of all kinds.

Would capture possible economies of scope and scale across numerous operational and support areas.

Would support increased span of control at the department level.

Disadvantages

Would decrease span of control at the government-wide level to an inefficient four.

Would create a department with a very diverse set of operations (e.g., from corrections to libraries).

Departments with strong organizational identity (e.g., Fire, Police, etc.) may be difficult to manage as a unified department.

Could potentially lead to difficulty for the Finance director and Operations director who are dependent on another department for their information technology.

New County Governance Options

The General Staff Form of Model 3

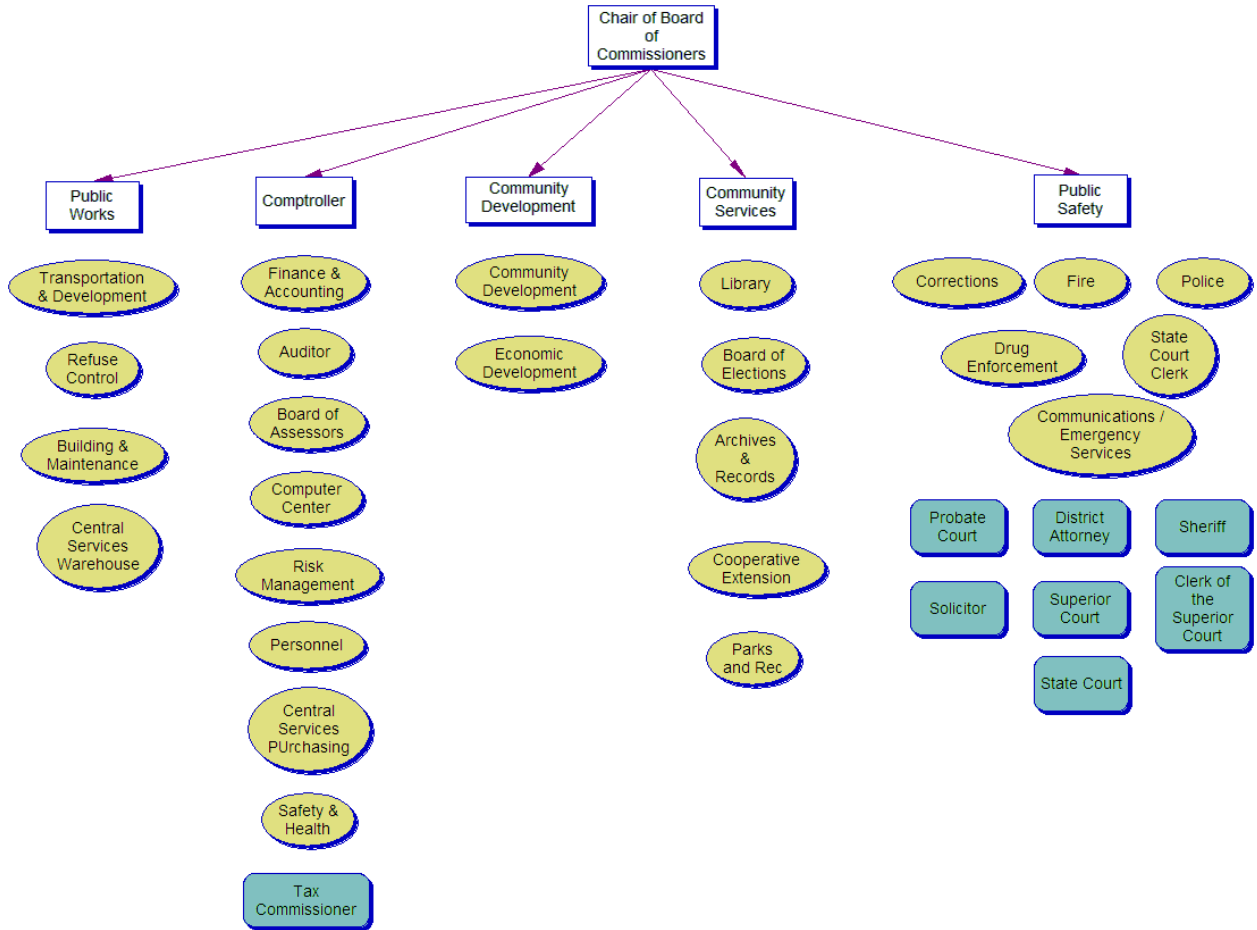
The general staff form of this model would provide most of the advantages listed above, but would help to maintain the higher, more efficient span of control. However, given four general staff positions, the potential to provide sufficient informal coordination and filtering of decisions so as to bring the chief executive's effective span of control into a more reasonable range is much greater than in the general staff form of Models 1 or 2.

Model 4: Streamlined Local Government Model

This model represents a composite of a number of organizational models for local governments that are slightly larger than the proposed Milton County and that have elements of a corporate organization as well as elements of the traditional local government model with its numerous government-specific departments.

In this model, there would essentially be five departments reporting to the Chair of the Board of Commissioners. These departments would include: Public Works, Comptroller, Community Development, Community Services, and Public Safety. In this design the Comptroller Office would include traditional accounting and budgeting functions as well as core information system, purchasing, and human resource functions as well as other functions that primarily involve the keeping of accounts. The following figure **roughly** shows how services would be grouped under this design.

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Advantages

Centralizes responsibilities for key support functions (i.e., finance and information) and provides clear lines of responsibility for major service areas (without fragmenting these areas into numerous independent departments).

Five is a practical number of department heads for the development of a management team.

Would unify all information systems under one director.

Would support greater collaboration and synergetic and innovative efforts to use information technology most effectively.

Would capture possible economies of scope and scale particularly in the area of public safety.

Would support adequate span of control at the department level.

Disadvantages

Most departments would still be attempting to coordinate numerous diverse functions.

Departments with strong organizational identity (e.g., Fire, Police, etc.) may be difficult to manage as a unified department.

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Model 5: Streamlined Local Government-Corporate Model Mix

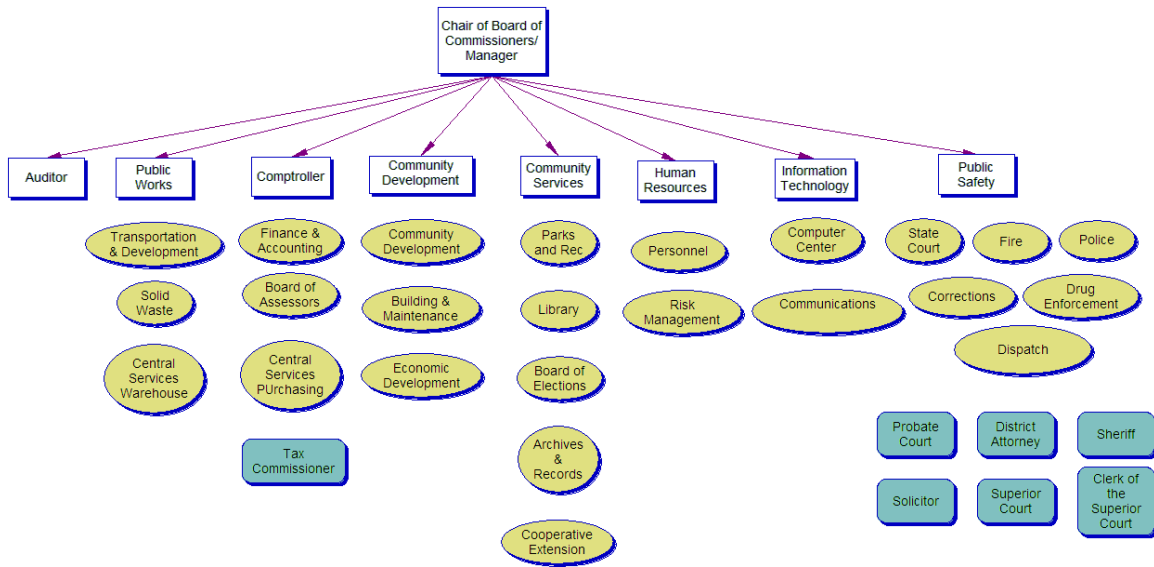
In this model, an independent Auditor and Information Technology (IT) department are established. These departments represent adaptations of the corporate governance model outlined above.⁸ The rationale for maintaining an independent Auditor department is that in order for this function to work correctly it should be entirely independent of the departments that it audits. It is recognized that in most local governments the Auditor department is very limited in its scope of work. This model suggests that the Auditor's function would be an expanded one that would include management and performance measurement and auditing in addition to compliance auditing. The rationale for creating an independent Information Technology department is recognition of the increasing importance and complex demands of this function.

Another key feature of this model (and a difference between it and a traditional design) is the consolidation of all emergency services into a public safety department.

The following figure **roughly** shows how services would be grouped under this design.

⁸ While the traditional corporate governance model does not include an independent auditor as a major department, it does typically involve independent financial auditing. Moreover, since the passage of Sarbanes-Oxley the importance of this function has increased substantially.

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Advantages

Same as Model 5, plus an increased emphasis and independence given to the Auditor's and IT functions.

Span of control at the government-wide level would reach beyond the classic recommended level of 6, while still somewhat below the reformist recommended level of 15-25.

Disadvantages

Same as Model 5, plus some potential for Comptroller to have insufficient authority over the information systems on which this department depends for financial accounting and budgeting.

New County Governance Options

Organizational Structures for Governmental Provision, but not Delivery

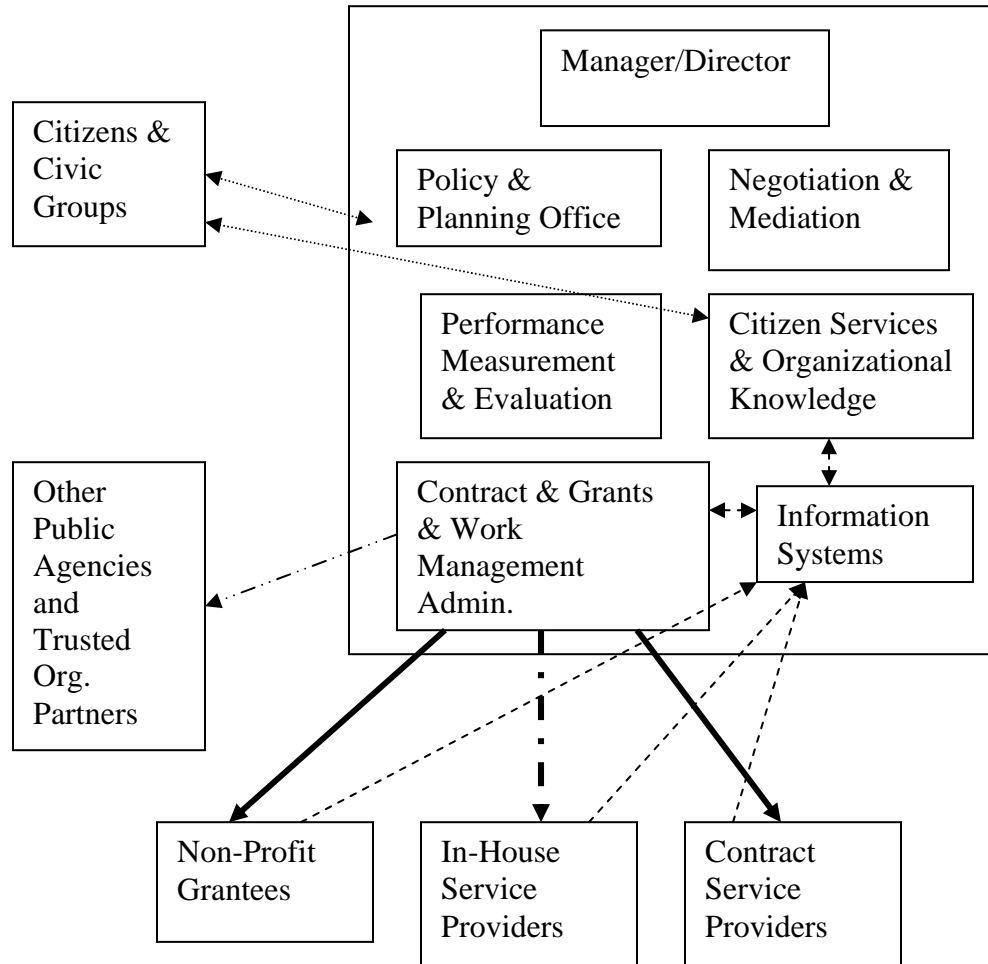
A traditional local government organization is one that is headed by a city or county manager who represents the bridge between the policy makers and the implementation of the policy through a number of public bureaus, departments or agencies. The manager is typically a person who has broad experience in working in or running one or more of the departments or agencies of the government. The manager is primarily a direct supervisor of the people (i.e., department heads or program managers) who carries out the work of the government. Much of the manager's work consists of insuring that all the government employees work within the constraints of civil service, budgeting, purchasing and accounting systems. These systems tightly define the ways in which a manager is allowed to influence the nature of the activities that are conducted and the manner in which they are accomplished. The following table outlines some of the key differences in the role of the manager in a traditionally organized local government compared to a local government organized around new public management principles.

Role of the Manager in Traditional versus New Public Management Governments

	Traditional	New Public Management
Strategy	Manager helps to define the strategy with controlled input from staff.	Manager works with networks of service providers and citizens to help define strategy.
Technology	Technology is used primarily to support direct service provision activities.	Technology is used both to support direct service provision activities and to allow networked partners to share knowledge, business processes, decision making, client information, workflow, and other data.
Ensuring accountability	Manager is restricted to the use of civil service (job classification and compensation) and individual job performance assessments.	Manager can use a wider variety of incentives and measurements (e.g., of group performance) and must be able to make better and more nuanced assessments of trust and risk in order to achieve the possible levels of effectiveness and efficiency.
Human Capital management	Manager works within personnel classification schemes and hiring and firing guidelines.	Manager continually negotiates work/employment/contract specifications and mediates among the different providers of services.

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As the role of management changes within a New Public Management organization, the structure of the organization should also reflect these changes. Model 6 represents an organizational structure based on NPM principles.



- Performance Contracts.....
- Information Links.....
- Ideas.....
- Flexible Agreements,
Charters and Franchises....
- Performance Work Plans

New County Governance Options

Model 6: Example 1 NPM Organization of Local Government

In Model 6, the actual government size would be much smaller, consisting of a manager and other staff who would have the skills needed to work effectively within a more flexible and networked inter-organizational environment. Different levels and types of agreements, work plans and contracts would be negotiated and implemented with different organizations and individuals who carry out direct services. Some central office staff would specialize in performance evaluation, while others would have expertise in negotiating both formal and informal understandings among the various providers of services. Still other staff would work with citizen groups to gather their ideas for improvement and to communicate those ideas to the diverse agencies, businesses, non-profits and other governments who may be participating in the delivery of services. What this structure indicates is that with increased flexibility to deliver services through a variety of in- and outsourced service providers, the issue of coordination and automated information sharing becomes more important to the overall effectiveness of the government.

Model 7: Example 2 NPM Organization of Local Government

The City of Charlotte has developed a structure for promoting managed competition, privatization and “right-sizing” of the government service delivery functions. The city manager based the restructuring on answering the question: “If we were to design city services anew today, what would they look like?” While the right-sizing effort began as a budgetary initiative, it quickly took on other functions. In particular, it helped to redesign the accountability, processes, and motivations of the city workforce. That is, right-sizing worked to empower employees at lower levels to make decisions appropriate to their responsibilities. It was also believed to promote teamwork, a focus on quality and productivity (Sizer, 2000). The right-sizing efforts included an attempt to answer questions regarding what services should be provided, how they should be financed, how should resources be organized to delivery these services, and what is the most efficient method of delivery.

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From this initial effort, the city made a number of changes, including:

- Implementation of a pay for performance compensation system.
- Implementation of a broad-banded pay and classification system (i.e., one that would provide managers with more flexibility in terms of moving staff among various roles and tasks and compensating employees accordingly).
- Establishment of a Privatization Task Force which was asked to evaluate services and facilities and determine if they might be more efficiently provided by the private sector. The Privatization Task Force recommended that the city promote competition between the public sector departments and potential private sector providers.
- Restructured the government so as to move from 26 independent department to 9 key direct service business sectors and 4 support service business sectors that were overseen by a leadership team. (This structure is very similar to the general staff model outlined in the previous section of this report.).
- Each of the business sectors were required to develop business plans, including vision and mission statements, expected accomplishments, and performance goals.
- Established a balanced scorecard for evaluating the performance of the key business sectors.
- Establishment of a citizen-based Privatization/Competition Advisory Committee to monitor the progress of implementing competition and contracts for services. This committee was positioned to advise the city as to the fairness of the competition process and ways to improve contracted service delivery.
- Establishment of a Council Employees' Replacement Policy. The goal of this policy was to provide notice to city employees that the city would make every effort to place city employees with good job performance in employment (either in the city or with a private provider).
- Established incentives for employees who are members of a business sector that meet or exceed performance and budget targets.
- Established managed competition guidelines that encouraged private providers to compete against city business units for providing services.
- Changed from line-item budgeting to activities-based cost (ABC) accounting. These ABC accounting methods allow managers more flexibility in procurement as well as help

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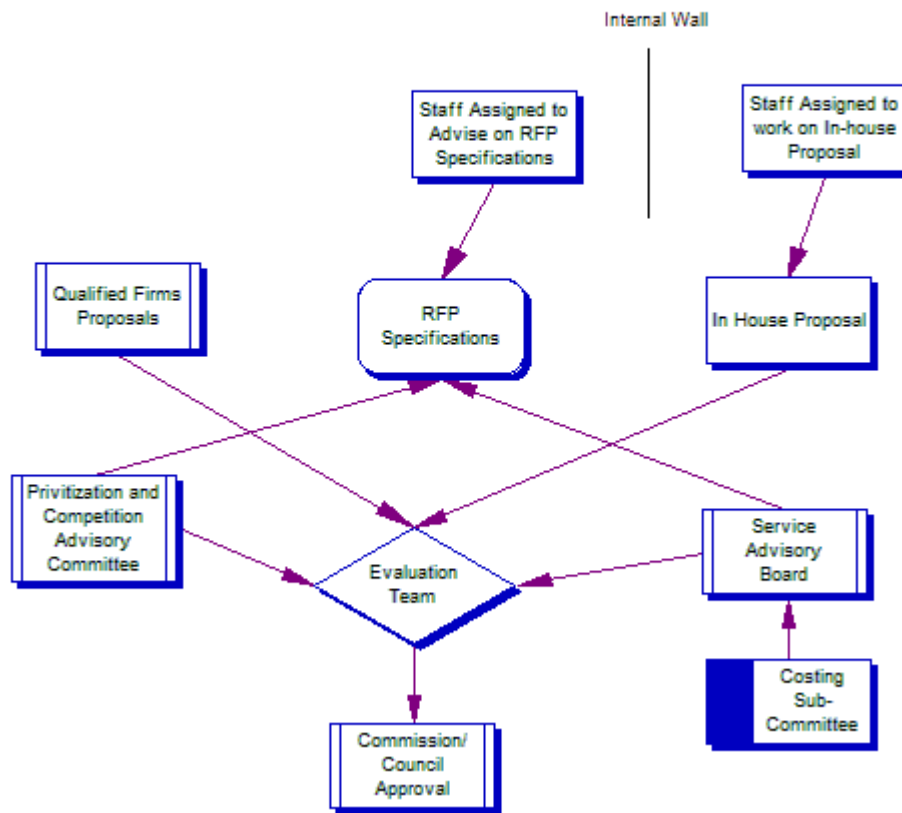
to better define the activities and associated costs of these activities in such ways as to allow for competitive bidding on delivery of the activity or service.

- Delegated decisions about human resources and purchasing that were formerly made at higher levels of government (or the commission itself) to the program managers within each of the business areas.
- The use of formal business agreements and negotiated costs between the direct service business units and the support services.
- Greater support for skill development among employees to allow city units to introduce more current techniques and technologies.
- Establishment of formal involvement of potential private sector vendors in development of the RFQs and RFPs.
- Establishment of an internal wall between public sector employees involved in the development of RFQs and RFPs and those involved in responding to the RFQs and RFPs.
- Establishment of a Service Advisory Board and Costing Sub-Committee for monitoring the appropriateness of the in-house cost accounting used in bids and proposals.

The key structures of the new process are outlined in the figure below.

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Structure for Promoting Competition for Service Delivery



While Models 6 and 7 suggest that much if not all of the government will be outsourced to private and non-profit organizations, these models nevertheless assume that there is some organization to the local government's policy development and service delivery functions. The following chart developed by the Center for Digital Government suggests one way in which governments might organize these functions. The approach taken by the Center is to simplify governance by reducing the number of departments and grouping functions in a way that could potentially allow new synergies to arise as well as to foster opportunities to integrate processes and share in their automation. Such simplified structures should also help to increase the policy board's ability to steer the organization as well as increase the ability of the organization to reach a more efficient span of control.

STEER BY 7 POLICY AREAS, DELIVER THROUGH 7 FUNCTIONAL AREAS

POLICY

1. Economic, Business, Community, and Workforce Development
2. Environment & Natural Resources
3. Education, Training, Arts & Culture
4. Finance
5. Transportation & Infrastructure
6. Public Safety (Corrections, Prevention, Emergency Management, Defense)
7. Health (Health, Medicaid, Medicare, Workers Compensation, etc.) and Human Services (Agencies, Institutions, Unemployment, and Non-Health Benefits)

DELIVERY

1. Law Enforcement (Civil, Criminal, Corrections, Inspections, Regulation, Appeals, Revocations)
2. Licensing (Licenses, Permits, and Permissions)
3. Disbursement (Benefits, Grants, Payments, and Loans)
4. Revenue (Taxes, Fees, Debts, and Financing)
5. Customer Service (Call Centers, Information, Intake, Help, etc.)
6. Administrative Services (IT, Facilities, Personnel, Contracts, etc.)
7. Service Delivery & Consulting

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Remaining Roles for County Government in a Fully Incorporated Jurisdiction

With all of a county's jurisdiction being incorporated, the effective set of county-run functions is limited. That is, when responsibility for roads, bridges, police patrol, land use planning, building inspections, and other urban-type services belong to the various cities in the county, and when a major amount of funding and responsibility for social services and health services belongs to the state government, the ability of a county government to exercise strength policy and program development initiatives is constrained. Nevertheless, county governments may still have important roles to play particularly with regard to regional planning and development, emergency management and coordination, inter-jurisdictional transportation and transit planning, and the development and maintenance of common geographic information system datasets and planning tools that would be much more expensive were each municipality to develop their own.

Other Administrative Structures

Merit Systems

The debate over whether to have a merit system is not typically a debate over the principles and goals of a merit system. There is generally strong public support for these principles. Also, governments cannot fully adopt employment policies that are like those in the private sector because governments must act in a constitutional manner and according to numerous federal laws regulating public employment. This can mean in some cases, that local governments cannot deny public employees their interest in their jobs without some due process. The U.S. Supreme Court has defined these cases as being those where the government provides assurances that an employee cannot be terminated without cause. A government could, of course, choose to not require that there be a cause for terminating employees. This provision, however, could leave government employment subject to the whims of the political appointment (or political influence) process if further measures are not taken (see below). Certain classes of employees (e.g., a limited number of positions to which a political appointment process can be justified and positions within the judicial branch of government) are not provided with a property right in their position and therefore are not given due process protections. However, most employees (or those that the government would not want fired without cause) are.

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When people talk about moving away from a merit system, the key issues have to do with: 1) the level of protection given to employees (can they be fired without cause), and 2) how much power and flexibility in personnel management will the government charter give to government or departmental administrators as opposed to an independent merit board. In this regard there are degrees of merit systems. At one end of the spectrum, administrators can fire without cause (non-merit system) and are provided with only minimal personnel guidelines and procedures (weak merit system). Even in the non-merit system when an administrator terminates employees, however, they must still follow court guidance as to unlawful behavior (e.g., it would be unlawful to terminate based on the advice from a politician). In the non-and weak-systems, however, there is often considerable room for more flexibility in hiring. In contrast, in the strong merit system a set of standardized procedures that have generally been tested in the courts as meeting due process requirements are laid out in considerable detail. As such personnel administrators lose a little flexibility, but can be more secure that their decisions are lawful. Also, these detailed procedures will apply to all personnel processes (hiring, firing, classification, etc.), and they will often include the establishment of an independent merit board that is focused exclusively on following merit principles in a standardized manner.

Trends: The national trend appears to be in the direction of weaker merit systems that allow departments and agencies greater control over personnel practices. The state of Georgia is one of only a few states that has adopted a non-merit system. In Georgia, the 'at will' employment standard means that employees have no recourse to appeals of adverse actions beyond the agency that took the action in the first place (Elmore, 2000).

Personnel system experts agree that while the move to weaker systems provides greater flexibility, it also requires: 1) increased knowledge of personnel law on the part of agency managers; 2) a higher level of insurance against political influence. Such insurance can be attained through legislation that makes it illegal (and provides penalty and enforcement mechanisms) for any elected official to use their influence or recommendation in any way to control, select, recruit, hire or terminate any person for a position government; and 3) an agency that is designed to report on the personnel practices of the individual agencies in light of their achievement of merit principles. That is, department heads will have much greater power to

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manage their personnel, but must do so in a way that is transparent so as to allow for legislative or executive correction.

The following table attempts to lay out the differences between these two poles in the merit system debate.

	Strong Merit System	Weak or Non-Merit System
Key Authority	In a Merit System, the authority to regulate the personnel system is placed in a commission or board that is independent of individual departments and local government managers. Personnel are separated into classified and non-classified. Non-classified personnel typically do not enjoy many of the protections of the system. It is possible to design a merit system where most of the employees would be non-classified, thereby making the system much more like a non-merit system.	The authority to regulate personnel practices in a Non-merit system remains with the government administration. This authority can take many forms. It can be decentralized, allowing individual department head a great deal of discretion; or it can be centralized into a personnel department. In either case, it is possible (but not guaranteed) that the procedures adopted by the non-merit mirror those of the merit system. However they can also vary tremendously.
Dominant Values	Fairness, objectivity, protection against abuse.	Flexibility, efficiency.
Probationary periods	New hire probationary periods are immediately fixed at 6 months.	No fixed period.
Testing and Hiring	Merit Board controls testing and initial interviewing of classified employees. Departmental discretion is limited to a set number (e.g., 3) of persons who have been ranked at the top by the Board.	No fixed process.
Classification reclassification and salary placement	Established by the Merit Board.	No fixed process; potentially at the discretion of the hiring department.
Employee discipline	Merit Board is the final authority.	No fixed process.
Hiring process	Merit Board can regulate the process and establish set way of hiring. Typically, they will prohibit casual status or employees with no known status or job description. Additional	No fixed process; typically much greater flexibility in terms of hiring temporary or casual workers.

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safeguards are usually placed on the hiring of temporary workers.

Establishes Minimum Job Qualifications.

The Merit Board and the Government may disagree over issues causing delays in personnel decisions.

- Following rules/filling positions can take more time.

- Managers have less choice in hiring.

- The Merit Board is subject to all the same political issues as a local government.

- Potential for hiring panel questions to be too abstract to judge unit-specific competency.

- Restricts Cross Training Opportunities.

- Restrictive Job Classifications.

Disadvantages

- Greater potential for Cronyism
- Greater potential for new employees to lack key competencies.
- No guarantee of a coherent and evenly implemented classification system.
- Potential for hiring panels to be haphazardly created.
- Potential for hiring panel questions to favor experience of pre-selected or in-house applicants.
- Excessive Number of Positions.
- Large number of Points Of Application.

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