



Working with Public Officials:
a “Driving Guide” for Leaders –
Observations from the Road

**24th Annual Southern Leisure
Management and Trend Institute**

**South Carolina Recreation and
Parks Association**

Newberry, South Carolina 2015



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A “Driving Guide” for Local Leaders: Observations from the “Road”

Local governmental leaders are responsible for "driving their community to the future". Every generation of governmental leaders comments that their challenges during the "trip" are greater than the prior generations. In reality, the challenges today are just different. Successful leaders focus on the future by understanding and acting on today's *REALITIES* and anticipating and preparing for tomorrow's *OPPORTUNITIES*. These leaders focus on "driving their community to the future" by looking through the windshield and not by focusing only on the rearview mirror.

LEADERSHIP is working with the residents, businesses and employees to define the "destination", to develop the "road map", to identify "key milestones", to establish an "itinerary", to define the "vehicle" and to find the "right fuel"

Destination = a valued based description of the preferred future

Road Map = a five year plan with outcome-based goals

Key Milestones = indicators of achievement/success

Itinerary = one year action plans with specific deliverables

Vehicle = the service responsibilities of governments

Right Fuel = having the "right" people sharing common core values

REALITIES FOR 2015

1. **POLITICS OVER GOVERNANCE** - personal agendas and getting re-elected over collaborating to produce results that add value to the community.
2. **ANTI-GOVERNMENT/ANTI TAX** - small vocal group, which is against government, always negative and never satisfied by any decision or action.
3. **SHIFT FROM A "REPUBLIC" TO "DIRECT DEMOCRACY"** - turning responsibility for governing and managing over to the public through inappropriate community engagement, everyone is or can become an expert.
4. **OVER EXPOSURE/"FLASHING" THROUGH FULL TRANSPARENCY** - making "sausage" in public even as research is being done, show everyone everything now and show everyone else through social media
5. **INSTANT NEWS SHARED WITH THE WORLD** - social media is the No. 1 news sources for people today, give it to me quick and short without verification or in-depth debate/discussion then share with the world.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2015

1. **PLAYING "MONEYBALL" FOR GOVERNMENTS** - capture the "important and critical" outcome-based data and using the data to make recommendations and decisions.
2. **EXPANDING RESOURCES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS** - reality that governments have limited/static/shrinking resource base and can expand resources through non-traditional public-public and public-private resources.
3. **WINNING AS A TEAM** - governmental units working as a team to achieve common goals, knowing and playing your role and sacrificing to team/community success.
4. **CAPTURING TRENDS** - times are a changing with emerging life styles and leisure activities, looking for and understanding societal trends, evaluating emerging trends and preparing your community to response and take action.
5. **TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR COMMUNITY'S FUTURE** - every decision, non-decision, indecision and re-decision creates the community's future, leaders can intentionally and strategically make decisions or they can decide by reacting to each moment and in the end wondering "how did we end up here".
6. **CREATING POSITIVE COMMUNITY MOMENTUM** - taking time with the community to celebrate major successes and their value to residents and businesses, creating true memories that will help during the tough times and encourage others to contribute and participate.

Governance vs. Politics: A Simple View

By Lyle J. Sumek

Governance is serving the community;

Politics is getting elected or re-elected.

Governance is being guided by vision, goals and value to the community;

Politics is being guided by ideology, a cause or philosophical principle.

Governance is shaping the community's future for the long term;

Politics is responding to the moment and current "crisis".

Governance is taking responsibility;

Politics is making promises.

Governance is exercising an ability to influence others;

Politics is the use of power.

Governance is finding pragmatic solutions to problems through collaboration;

Politics is starting with solutions in mind.

Governance is being data driven;

Politics is playing to people's emotions.

Governance is negotiating by trading off to find a workable compromise;

Politics is demanding and advocacy to win.

Governance is educating and mobilizing support;

Politics is rallying supporters and creating zealots.

Governance is creating community benefits and value;

Politics is taking personal credit and receiving personal recognition.

TODAY'S CRISIS: Politics trumping Governance

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE IS WORK, BUT BORING

Twenty Rules for Success

by Lyle J. Sumek

Effective Governance

is developing and maintaining relationship based upon mutual trust and respect,
not developing conditional relationships or relationships based upon convenience.

Effective Governance

is respecting personal responsibilities and their institutional role,
not taking over the responsibilities of others nor telling others how to do their job.

Effective Governance

is working together and collaborating,
not thinking about "I" over "We".

Effective Governance

is a willingness to sacrifice to the greater good,
not focusing on personal gains or protection.

Effective Governance

is communicating in an open and timely manner,
not providing partial information or surprising with last minute information.

Effective Governance

is addressing today's issues with the future in mind,
not reacting to the moment with easy solutions or quick answers.

Effective Governance

is unbiased analysis reports,
not starting with the outcome in mind.

Effective Governance

is speaking to the issue,
not grandstanding or personal attacks.

Effective Governance

is having an open, candid conversation and discussion,
not avoiding real and sensitive topics.

Effective Governance

is listening to understand,
not prejudging based on the individual or jumping to conclusions.

Effective Governance

is negotiating with others,
not demanding or withdrawing.

Effective Governance

is recognizing that it takes a majority to decide,
not one or vocal minority.

Effective Governance

is making a timely closure,
not recycling or delaying to gain advantage.

Effective Governance

is providing clear direction and decision,
not leaving the room with different interpretations.

Effective Governance

is deciding based upon what you believe is "right" for the community,
not deciding for personal or political gains.

Effective Governance

is consistency of process and direction over time,
not making changes reacting to the current moment.

Effective Governance

is supporting and representing the decision to others,
not acting in a manner to undercut the decision.

Effective Governance

is learning from setbacks and failures,
not finding fault or someone to blame.

Effective Governance

is being nimble and willing to change when circumstance change,
not being rigid or denying.

Effective Governance

is maintaining your sense of humor and perspective,
not taking yourself too serious.

BOTTOM-LINE:

Effective Governance is work and pays off for the community, but is viewed by others as boring

Leaders' Dilemma

by Lyle J. Sumek

DILEMMA: How did we end up **HERE**?

Leaders create **HERE** by their decisions, indecisions or non-decisions.

Leaders are responsible for defining **HERE**, the vehicle to take you to **HERE** and the route to get to **HERE**.

Leaders have a choice: to intentionally create **HERE** or to react to each situation that then defines **HERE**.

Leaders intentionally shape **HERE** through a *Strategic Plan*, which defines **HERE** as a value-based future *vision*, defines the vehicle to take you to **HERE** as the government's *mission* and *services* and the route/map to **HERE** as a *plan for five years* with milestones.

Leaders take the trip/journey to **HERE** through a *Strategic Process*, which is using the *Strategic Plan* to guide daily decisions and actions.

Leaders demonstrate the courage to confront the true realities facing them, and to have candid discussions of options and differences as they define **HERE**.

Leaders use their judgment and make difficult decisions to implement the *Strategic Plan* by setting the direction and policies, by defining expectations, by raising the revenues, by allocating resources to build the road to **HERE**.

Leaders exercise their influence to mobilize community support even in light of personal agendas and strong opposition to **HERE** because it is the right **HERE** for the community.

Leaders encounter the unforeseen during the trip to **HERE** – unanticipated events happen, unintended consequences occur, environments change, opportunities emerge.

Leaders evaluate the unforeseen and make adjustments to get to **HERE** learning from setbacks and remaining nimble and resilient.

Leaders end up **HERE**: either a great trip with successful outcomes or ask: how did we get **HERE**.

REALITY: Leaders did it themselves and are responsible for **HERE**.

Decisions: The Exercise of Power

by Lyle J. Sumek

Leaders govern by exercising their power to *decide* – make *decisions* that define the community's future

Deciding is using

1. "Best" available data and information
2. Input from others
3. Analysis of options against desired outcomes
4. Common sense

to make a judgment

Decisions

1. Answer questions
2. Settle something in doubt
3. Select a course of action
4. Resolve a dispute and differences
5. Come to closure or conclusion

which are a definitive choice.

Effective Decisions...

link Direction to Outcomes - vision, goals, performance measures;

use Data and Input - listening and applying;

reflect the Interests of the Community - "best" for all;

provide Clarity of Direction - all leaving with the same expectations and understandings; and

deliver Closure - "final" choice on direction to guide planning and activities.

A ***Decision*** in reality is a series of ***Decisions***. The ***Decision Tree*** is a model with the seed and each branch representing a choice between alternatives with risks, costs, probabilities and results, and requiring a ***Decision*** – the first ***Decision*** shaping future ***Decisions***.

Leaders ***decide*** on ***DECISIONS OF INTEREST AND INVESTIGATION, DECISIONS OF THE COURSE OF ACTIONS*** and ***DECISIONS OF IMPLEMENTATION***.

DECISIONS OF INTEREST AND INVESTIGATION

1. *Decide on Expectations*
2. *Decide on Outcomes*
3. *Decide on Parameters*
4. *Decide on Key Issues*
5. *Decide on Direction on Interest and Investigation*

DECISIONS OF THE COURSE OF ACTIONS

1. *Decide on Data Gathering*
2. *Decide on Analysis and Options*
3. *Decide on Negotiations*
4. *Decide on Recommendations*
5. *Decide on Direction on Actions*

DECISIONS OF IMPLEMENTATION

1. *Decide on Program Development/Project Plans*
2. *Decide on Evaluation and Refinements*
3. *Decide on Resources*
4. *Decide on Operations*
5. *Decide on Direction on Implementation*

BOTTOM-LINE: Every *Decision* is an exercise of power to create our future. Every *Decision* that we make is a difficult choice among options. Every *Decision* has risk, consequences and impacts. Ultimately, we are responsible for every *Decision* that we make.

Strategic Planning: Connecting the “Dots”

Strategic planning is not a strategic plan. Strategic planning is developing and institutionalizing a process that connects the "Dots" linking a long term vision and mission of the city with goals for five years and performance expectations to a one year "to do" list for Mayor and City Council, management and the City.

A simple way of conceptualizing this model is to think about taking your city to a trip to the future. One difference is that the city is going on a trip to the future, the question is – who will lead the journey? Will city leaders react to the situation/moment or lead with intention. Strategic planning is a tool for leading to the future. You begin with determining the destination, then selecting the best vehicle for the trip, then making a map to the designation, then fueling the vehicle and selecting the route. Let's begin the journey by defining the "Dots"

CREATING THE "DOTS"

STEP 1: DESTINATION

The destination is the Mayor and City Council's vision for the city's future. Vision is a set of value-based principles that describe the desired future for the city. It is a combination of realism of today, current and untapped assets, and dreams for the future. Each principle is defined by descriptive statements paint a picture of tomorrow. A true vision is unique for that city, should evoke reactions and feelings, and inspire other community leaders. A city without a true vision is like taking a trip to nowhere.

STEP 2: VEHICLE

The vehicle for the trip to the destination is the city government's mission. The mission is defining the purposes of the city government – why the city should exist and its service responsibilities. Each city government has its own unique mission based upon the state legal framework, the needs of the community and the available resources. The right vehicle is needed if the trip is to be successful.

STEP 3: MAP

The map to the city's destination is a five-year plan. This plan begins by focusing the areas of importance, which become goals. Each goal consists of five-year outcome based objectives, criteria for measuring value to residents, understanding the short/long term challenges and opportunities to achieving the goal, and action ideas for 1-5 years. This plan is the guide to policy development, land use and development planning, master plans for infrastructure and facilities, budget: services and resource allocation, and decision-making. It guides the creation of the city's future.

STEP 4: FUEL

The fuel is the people – the city's managers and employees. The fuel is defined not in octane but in the performance expectations and standards for all city employees. The performance standards are based upon personal values and defined in observable behaviors and actions by managers and employees. Vehicles need the right fuel for a trip to be successful; cities need the right people if they are to be successful in carrying out the mission. The fuel makes the vehicle go, people turn direction and ideas into reality through actions.

STEP 5: ROUTE TO DESTINATION

A map has multiple routes to the destination; a city has many routes to the future. Leaders define the route for the city in the development of action agenda for the year – an annual work program. The work plans consists of a policy agenda of the top ten priorities for the Mayor and City Council, a management agenda of the top ten priorities for City management, a management in progress that need full implementation, and major projects that need to complete construction. The selection of the route provides focus for resources and work activities.

CONNECTING THE "DOTS"

The next step is to take the trip to the future. The decisions and actions by city leaders, managers and employees create the city's future. The "Dots" need to be connected through an ongoing process in order to reach the destination-to realize the vision and to achieve the goals. Let's take the journey by connecting the "Dots".

STEP 6: ITINERARY

The itinerary outlines the daily activities using the map and following the designated route. The itinerary for the city is annual action outlines for each priority and project. The action outline contains: key issues for direction and action, activities, milestones, time frame for completion, key partners and responsible person. Leaders can use the action outlines to guide and monitor work activities and products. When taking a trip, there is always something unexpected. The action outlines need to be modified when anomalies occur. This allows the city to be flexible and resilient in its pursuit of the vision and goals.

STEP 7: TOUR GUIDE

During our trip, every one has a copy of our Tour Guide. Everyone is expected to know and follow the guide. For the city, it begins with sharing and marketing the strategic plan with the community and with residents through a variety of methods – personal presentations, website, newsletters, etc. It is posting the strategic plan through the city as a daily reminder to all – in departments and in the Council Chambers. Repetition is good, people will remember and use the strategic plan to guide their actions.

STEP 8: TAKING THE TRIP

We take the trip following our map with the designated route and our itinerary. Taking the Trip for the city means using the strategic plan in daily operations, in policy development, and in decision-making.

It is developing and refining organizational processes to maximize capacity by using the strategic plan as a guide. It is managers and employees using it to improve daily work activities. City leaders receive regular performance reports on recent accomplishment, setbacks and obstacles, next steps and areas for adjustment or modification. Taking the trip is an ongoing process if the city is to be successful.

STEP 9: ACHIEVING A MILESTONE AND CELEBRATING

When we have achieved major milestones on our trip or successfully completed activities, we pause and take time to toast and celebrate our success. City leaders and managers need to make the time to recognize the contributions of others who have contributed to the success and to share with residents how the successes have added value to their lives – great convenience, enrichment of lives, protection of property values and neighborhoods. A celebration of the success is a memorable event focusing what we have achieved as a city and energizes us for the next step in our journey to the future.

STEP 10: PREPARING FOR DAY TWO

At the end of the day, we review the past day, look at our map and route, and prepare for the next day. For cities, an annual strategic planning workshop updates the strategic plan and develops a new work plans for the next year. It is time to prepare a performance report for residents and the community, to discuss individual ideas about the next five years and specifically ideas for actions during the next year, to refine the goals, to have strategic discussions about critical issues and opportunities, and to prepare the work plans for the next year. We continue to connect the "Dots".

IMPORTANCE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

The importance in institutionalizing a strategic planning process for cities can be found in the following:

1. Clear direction and performance standards for managers and employees: they know where we are going and what is expected of them.
2. Financial institutions and bond rating agencies having confidence in the city leadership and decision-making: bond rating, willingness to loan money.
3. Economic expansion and businesses having confidence in the city's future and as a reliable economic partner: willingness to invest in the city.
4. Community organizations having confidence in the city's direction: opportunities to partner with the City: contributing to the community.
5. Citizens having confidence in their city leaders and government's ability to deliver on their promises, respond to changing needs, add value in their daily lives.

KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL TRIP/JOURNEY

City leaders can take the city to the future by demonstrating the following:

- 1) **DISCIPLINE** to follow and use the strategic planning process in light of pressure to go a different direction;
- 2) **ADVOCACY** to be a cheerleader for the vision and goals, project optimism about the future, get residents excited about the city's future;
- 3) **RESPONSIBLE CHOICES** to make timely decision based upon the vision, goals, plan and the best available data;
- 4) **ACCOUNTABILITY** to take responsibility for actions and results.

City leaders who connect the " Dots" create a better future guided by their vision and goals while others will be guided by political pressure and the moment.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

VISION 2030
“Desired Destination for City”

PLAN 2020
“Map to City Destination”

EXECUTION
“Route for Next Year”

MISSION
“Responsibilities of City Government”

BELIEFS
“How City Government Should Operate”

STRATEGIC PLANNING MODEL

Value-based principles that describe the preferred future in 15 years

VISION

Destination
“You Have Arrived”

Strategic goals that focus outcome-based objectives and potential actions for 5 years

PLAN

Map
“The Right Route”

Focus for one year – a work program: policy agenda for Mayor and City Council Annual Action Plan, management agenda for staff; major projects

EXECUTION

Itinerary
“The Right Direction”

Principles that define the responsibility of City government and frame the primary services – core service businesses

MISSION

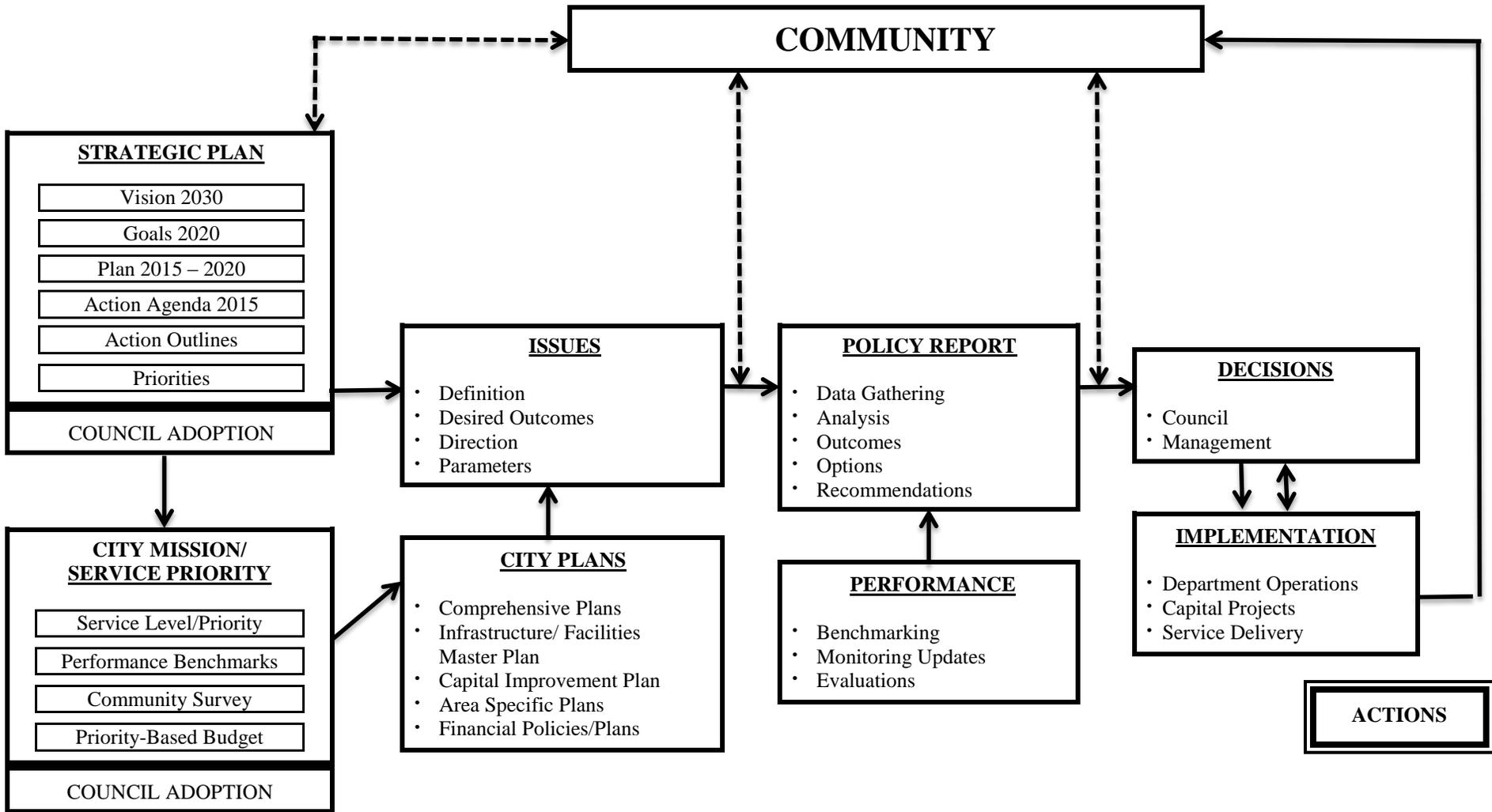
Vehicle
“The Right Bus”

Personal values that define performance standards and expectations for employees

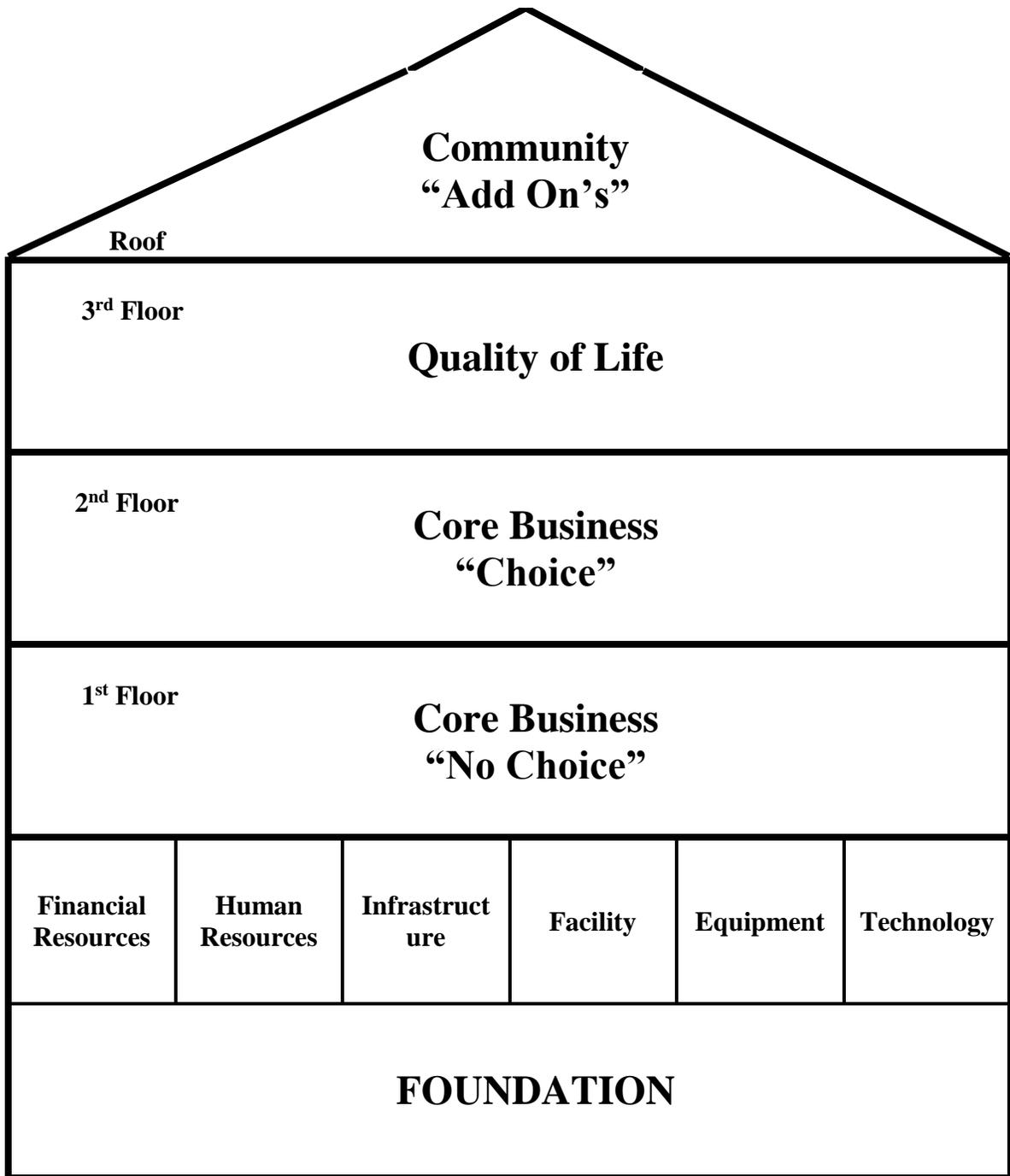
CORE BELIEFS

Fuel
“The Right People”

POLICY PROCESS



City: Service Responsibilities



City Service Hierarchy House Model

FOUNDATION

"INVISIBLE" FROM VIEW, BUT NECESSARY FOR THE DELIVERY OF CITY SERVICES

1st FLOOR - NO CHOICE

SERVICES REQUIRED BY STATE OR FEDERAL LAWS; IF NO COMPLIANCE, PEOPLE GO JAIL, FINES ARE LEVIED

2nd FLOOR - CHOICE FOR DAILY LIFE

SERVICES NECESSARY FOR LIVING IN A MODERN COMMUNITY

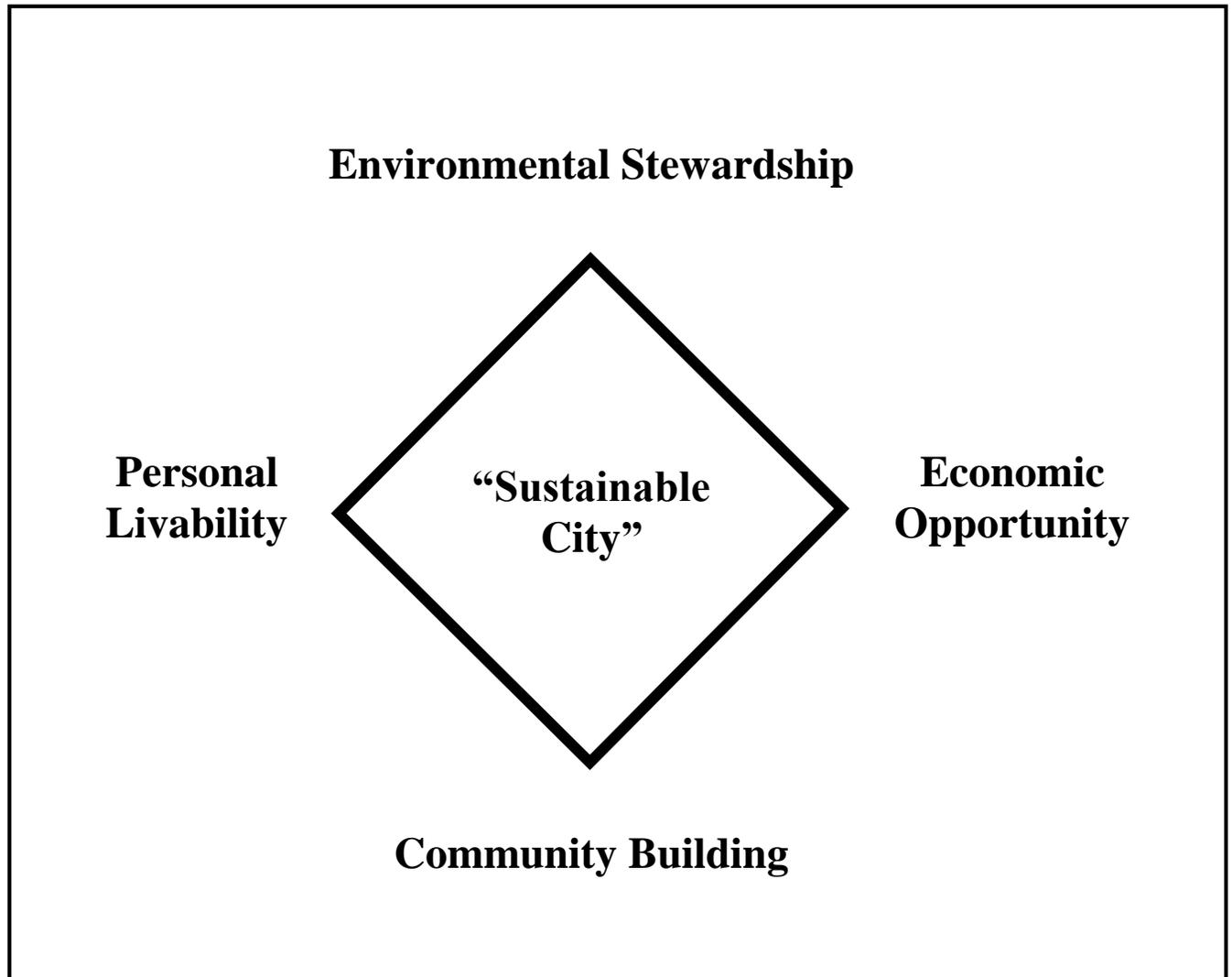
3rd FLOOR - QUALITY OF LIVING

SERVICES THAT MAKE THE COMMUNITY A DESIRABLE PLACE TO LIVE AND DISTINGUISH IT FROM OTHERS

ROOF - COMMUNITY ADD ON

SERVICES THAT ADD FURTHER VALUE TO THE RESIDENTS' LIVES

Sustainable Community



A Sustainable Community is a Balance of Four Components

Personal Livability

- Feeling safe
- Quality schools and educational programs for lifelong learning
- Quality medical services and personal wellness opportunities
- Neighborhoods with a ranges of housing opportunities
- Easy mobility within the city and to/from outside
- Reliable utility services: water, sewer, telecommunications
- Timely response to an emergency call for service

Environmental Stewardship

- Preservation of the city's natural resources
- Conservation of water
- Effective stormwater management system
- Recycling for residents and businesses
- Reducing the city's and community's carbon footprint
- Use of alternative energy sources

Economic Opportunities

- Creating a positive environment that supports private investments and entrepreneurship
- Retaining and growing current businesses
- Workforce trained for 21st century jobs
- Opportunities for higher education and job training
- Developing public-private relationships with a return on the investment
- Attracting businesses targeted for the community

Community Building

- Partnering with community based organizations
- Strong community events with active participation that bring neighbors together
- Community gathering places where residents go to enjoy
- Residents positively engaged in the city's governance processes
- Proactive communications about the city and the community
- Residents volunteering and contributing to the community
- Celebrating the community's history and heritage

Eleven Leadership Rules

by Lyle J. Sumek

- RULE 1:** Demonstrate passion and commitment for public service and the community
- RULE 2:** Define the direction: have a vision, have outcome-based goals, define your core values, and set expectations for assignments
- RULE 3:** Take time to build work relations: listen first, respect and honor others, look for a personal connection
- RULE 4:** Be clear, precise and brief in your message: directions, communications and delegated assignments
- RULE 5:** Have, know and use the game plan: work the plan, keep the focus, adjust when needed
- RULE 6:** Make timely decisions using data, input from others, your experiences, vision/goals and common sense
- RULE 7:** Monitor performance, progress, evaluate and modify plans, processes and actions
- RULE 8:** Learn from mistakes and setbacks: be resilient, avoid finding fault or blame
- RULE 9:** Take responsibility: share the credit, admit mistakes and celebrate successes
- RULE 10:** Confront reality: have candid conversations; remain calm in light of fire
- RULE 11:** Have a sense of humor: laugh at yourself and situation; never laugh at others

GREAT CITIES = G – R – E – A – T Teams

by Lyle J. Sumek

Cities are comprised of many teams – teams that govern, teams that manage and teams that provide service.

GREAT CITIES require G-R-E-A-T TEAMS.

Goals: *GREAT TEAMS* have **Goals** that define a unifying purpose which brings people together, explains "winning" – criteria for measuring success, focuses resources needed for successes and establishes a common rallying "emotional cause".

Roles: *GREAT TEAMS* establish **Roles** through a game plan, which defines individual responsibilities, outlines their individual contributions to the achievement of the goal, and establishes operating protocols to guide the interactions of team members.

Execute: *GREAT TEAMS* **Execute** by playing the game which is: preparing for the game, making decisions, taking actions, evaluating the results, modifying the game plan, making adjustments, and celebrating milestones and final success.

Attitude: *GREAT TEAMS* have an **Attitude** among team members which impacts how the game is played: personal relations based upon honesty and mutual respect, cooperation with others, willingness to sacrifice for team success and resolving differences through negotiations.

Trust: *GREAT TEAMS* have **Trust** among team members which has been earned based upon individual words and deeds, individual follow through and actions that deliver on personal commitments and promises, and individuals acting in an ethical manner.

**BOTTOM-LINE: G-R-E-A-T Teams
are necessary for Cities to be successful**

True Champions: Critical Factors and Winning Formula for City Leaders

by Lyle J. Sumek

TRUE CHAMPIONS sustain “winning” over time. *TRUE CHAMPIONS* are rare and unique.

For Cities, *TRUE CHAMPIONS* can be defined as Cities who are recognized consistently by their community and others as “world class”, “best of class”, “model of best practices”, “prize winning” and “top 10...”. These Cities are consistently sought out to share their award winning projects, programs and services. They are seldom asked to share their **CRITICAL FACTORS** that contribute to their “winning” efforts or their **WINNING FORMULA**.

The **CRITICAL FACTORS** and the **WINNING FORMULA** are the true lessons for City leaders.

The **CRITICAL FACTORS** contributing to the success for *TRUE CHAMPION* Cities are:

- 1) Leadership stability overtime
- 2) Consistency in directions
- 3) Integrated processes linking long term outcomes with daily actions
- 4) Willingness to make courageous decisions
- 5) Holistic view breaking down departmental "silos" and connecting diverse functional activities
- 6) Leverage City resources and expand community resources through partnerships
- 7) Projects, services and programs delivering value to the community: enrich lives, bring the community together, and create a climate for economic prosperity
- 8) Celebrations that recognize and share the successes with all: residents and partners

TRUE CHAMPIONS Cities have a **WINNING FORMULA** consistently demonstrated by their leaders.

The **WINNING FORMULA** for *TRUE CHAMPIONS* consists of six elements/ingredients –

The SIX P's:

PASSION.

PLAN.

PRACTICE.

PRECISION.

PROCESSES.

PRIDE.

1. **TRUE CHAMPIONS** have a **PASSION**.
 - Hope and optimism about the future
 - True believers in their cause
 - Playing with a 100+% effort
 - Turning setbacks into opportunities
 - Laser like focus on vision and goals
 - Commitment to goals and each other

2. **TRUE CHAMPIONS** implement a **PLAN**.
 - Preparing a plan for playing the game
 - Strategy to get to desired outcomes
 - Clearly defined roles and responsibilities
 - Lining actions to outcomes
 - Short term tactical plans, long term strategic plan

3. **TRUE CHAMPIONS PRACTICE**.
 - Everyone knows the game plan
 - Practicing with repetition
 - Honing “fundamental” skills
 - Always learning and getting better
 - Taking care of the details
 - Coming prepared and confident to play

4. **TRUE CHAMPIONS** perform with **PRECISION**.
 - Striving for perfection
 - Perform your defined role
 - Position for success
 - Executing the game plan
 - Adjusting when needed for success

5. **TRUE CHAMPIONS** evolve through **PROCESSES**.
 - Institutionalize operating processes
 - Improving process to operate more effectively
 - Evaluating the plan and making refinement
 - Personal willingness to adjust and change
 - Developing the next generation of leaders

6. **TRUE CHAMPIONS** take **PRIDE**.
 - Know who they are
 - Showcasing with others
 - Sharing successes with others
 - Recognized by others as “best of class”
 - Having a recognizable “brand”