Visionary Leadership: The Importance in the Public Sector from the Perspective of City Managers

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VISIONARY LEADERSHIP: THE IMPORTANCE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CITY MANAGERS

by

Nancy L. Quarles

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
School of Public Affairs and Administration

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
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The purpose of this qualitative study is to apply Sashkin’s Visionary Leadership model to City Managers, with an emphasis on how the city manager puts the vision into action in local government. There is much talk that government leaders need to have a vision so that their organization will work more efficiently and effectively. More government agencies should seek to instill visionary leadership, much as a growing number of businesses have done.

The City Manager must cope with sweeping changes in city government that have resulted from rapid growth, elected officials’ expectations, new technology, unions, citizen demands, and the need for financial viability. The need for city governments to change themselves calls into question the issue of leadership. This study investigates the relationship between the City Manager’s leadership and his or her ability to implement the city’s vision. It asks the question, “How does a City Manager put the vision of the city into action?”

This study identified the factors that have enhanced or hindered the City Managers’ use of Visionary Leadership. Qualitative methods were used to understand, as well as to give voice to their experiences. The flexibility of qualitative methods provided the researcher with the ability to engage the participants in the
study. The research design used in this study follows recommendations of Creswell (1998) and Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) on how to conduct a phenomenological study. The approach was to describe the events as the City Managers encountered them. The data were collected by holding interviews with City Managers, Council members, Municipal Association Officials, and Department Directors, and by attending city council meetings. In addition, the researcher examined newspaper articles written about the city and city manager, and reviewed city documents.

The interviewees had a great deal of experience working in local government. They shared the skills, provisions, and abilities that in their opinion were important throughout their experiences to put a vision into action. The study classified the themes that emerged from the interviewees' statements into eight categories: communications, council relations, empowerment, commitment, shared vision, leadership, planning, and teamwork. These attributes and provisions are what, in the City Managers' opinion, will lead to implementing the city vision.
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Nancy L. Quarles
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The need for efficiency is paramount in the public sector. Taxpayers demand that public administrators produce more services more effectively with fewer dollars. Bodies of government are seeking different methods to do more with less. This requirement to do more with less is changing the ways city councils, mayors, and city managers are implementing plans and goals for their city. City Managers are looking for different leadership styles to put the city’s vision into action. The public sector is grounded in political equality, with consideration for everyone’s opinion, seeking consensus, compromise, and democratic participation (Berkley & Rouse, 1994).

The public sector hinges largely on legal accountability and does not have much flexibility. The council-manager form of local government combines the strong political leadership of elected officials (in the form of a council, board, or other governing body) with the strong professional experience of an appointed local government administrator (Childs, 1965). Under the council-manager form, power is concentrated in the elected council, which hires a professional administrator to implement its policies and recommendations. This appointee serves at the pleasure of the council and has responsibility for preparing the budget, directing day-to-day operations, directing the implementation of projects, hiring and firing personnel, and serving as 1
the council's chief policy advisor.

Potential obstacles to the City Manager's day-to-day operations include bureaucracy, court decisions, legislation, human resources, citizens, and elected officials. The prevalent image of government is that of a large bureaucratic machine endlessly processing papers, making decisions, and providing services mandated by courts or legislative bodies (Ammons, 1989; Hansell, 1993). Behind this image are a large number of individual civil servants, many of them highly educated and possessing considerable professional pride, working together in agencies, departments, bureaus, and local offices and doing their best to provide important public services (Ammons, 1989). Because public servants have as great a need for leadership as do workers in other organizations, they too need a vision to guide them. The contexts and operating styles of a public agency are much different than those in the private sector. The public environment is more complex, with legislative and executive bodies at all levels constantly issuing directives, the courts endlessly interpreting and reinterpreting legal obligations and boundaries, the media and special interest groups monitoring and reacting to every initiative, and unremitting pressure from the citizenry (Ammons, 1989; Hansell, 1993).

On the political side, studies have indicated that City Managers often lack the ability to handle political conflicts between and among ethnic groups, elected officials, economic groups, and neighborhoods (Hansell, 1993; Montjoy & Watson, 1995; Morris, 2000). These writers have argued that council members selected in nonpartisan elections lack political experience and do not work well together. In addition,
some cities have tended to blame all political weaknesses on the City Manager and therefore have had high turnover rates in managers. Still, there is a need for visionary leadership in the public sector. All government administrators hope to move their departments or agencies in a socially useful direction, or at least they should aspire to do so, and to leave their mark not just as competent administrators, but as responsible visionary leaders (Burns, 1978; Nanus, 1992).

Purpose of the Study

The researcher's purpose in this phenomenological study was to explore the use and application of visionary leadership by City Managers, with an emphasis on how the City Manager puts the vision for the city into action. This dissertation explores the use of visionary leadership in local government. There is much talk about government leaders needing to have a vision so that their organization, department, or agency will work more efficiently and effectively. Demands for governmental reform and reinvention have created new pressures on public officials to help create a government that works better and costs less (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992; Vinzant & Crothers, 1996). In short, more government agencies should seek to instill visionary leadership, much as a growing number of businesses have done.

Significance of the Study

The City Managers who participated in this study revealed and explained how they were able to put their city's vision into action in the complex and perplexing
environment of local government. The intention was to understand how these public officials had been successful in working through the complexities of the public sector.

The findings from this study can contribute to the City Manager profession. Using the study findings, a training prototype can be developed to aid City Managers in devising methods and strategies for putting the city's vision into action and understanding the ingredients for successful implementation of programs and policies. Successful City Managers know that nothing drives a government like an attractive, worthwhile, achievable vision of the future (Nanus, 1992). The vision is where tomorrow begins, for it expresses what the City Manager and others who share the vision will be working hard to create. According to Nanus "most people do not take the time to think systematically about the future. Those who do – and who base their strategies and actions on their visions – have inordinate power to think systematically about the future" (p. 8). City Managers are recognizing the important role visionary leadership plays not only in the implementation phase of an organization but throughout the organization's entire life cycle.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was based on the visionary leadership theory, which was developed by Marshall Sashkin (2000) (see Figure 1). According to Sashkin, a visionary leader is one who is able to develop a long range vision of what his or her organization can and should become. These visions are usually detailed only in the short range. Still, the leader could, if pressed, fill in step-
Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Visionary Leadership Theory (VLT).
by-step details from beginning to end. Further, visionary leadership means that the leader understands the key elements of a vision—what must be included in a vision if it is to direct the organization into the future. Finally, the leader can communicate his or her vision for the organization in ways that are compelling and that make people want to buy into the leader's vision and help make it happen (Nanus, 1992; Sashkin, 2000).

For a vision to be translated into action, it must include "the expressions for success. These expressions are shared vision, empowered people, appropriate organizational changes, and strategic thinking" (Sashkin, 1986, p. 59). Without a vision, and the ability to inspire commitment to a shared vision, leaders are unable to create and sustain change and improvement. A vision is not a luxury, but a necessity (Nanus, 1992). Visionary leaders have a clear picture of what they want to accomplish. The vision provides guidance by articulating what the organization wants to accomplish (Nanus, 1992). Leaders need a clear vision of where they are headed, and the courage and persistence to bring others along, while fostering the personal visions of others so that a shared vision of the future is developed (Bennis & Nanus, 1994).

Empowering people allows the leader to develop followers into leaders. City Managers cannot create change and bring about improvement on their own. They must involve others in the process, and develop these individuals' leadership capacities. According to Sashkin (1987) "the failure to involve others in the processes is the central weakness of most change efforts" (p. 27). Visionary leaders work to bring about improvement in their organizations by empowering others. They look to
identify those who are willing to lead, and then develop their organization leadership capacities. A leader looks for opportunities for people to participate and grow. In addition, the leader will supply the coaching and training to develop people’s leadership abilities (Senge, 1990).

Organizational changes will occur when people are committed to their organization and want to see it improve. As change agents, leaders must be able to help members of their staffs recognize new possibilities by consistently challenging current practices and processes (Kouzes & Posner, 1997). Leaders must foster change and take risks. When leaders challenge existing practices and take risks, they are expressing high expectations for others and the belief that change and improvement are valued. As a City Manager uses strategic leadership and planning, the organization becomes more flexible and adaptive. This allows the organization and public officials to serve a greater variety of citizens in new and different ways (Nutt & Backoff, 1993).

Effective leaders have the mastery and competence to create visions. The executive and legislative branch (mayor and council) complete the formulation of the city’s vision. Visionary leaders must understand the key situational characteristics that must be incorporated into their visions. In the model of visionary leadership theory, city managers must work through the complex environment while portraying the attributes of visionary leadership. Finally, visionary leaders are behaviorally capable of carrying out the actions needed to turn their visions into reality. The success expressions are needed to carry the vision to completion (Berkley & Rouse, 1994;
Research Question

City Managers must cope with sweeping changes in city government, such as growth, elected officials, technology, delivery systems, human resources, unions, citizen expectations, and financial viability. The need for city governments to reinvent themselves calls into question the issue of leadership. The researcher's purpose in this study was to explore and investigate the relationship between the City Manager's leadership and his or her ability to put the vision of the city into action. This researcher asked the question, "How does a City Manager put the vision of the city into action?" Subquestions were: Is the City Manager involved in the formulation or implementation of the vision or both? Is visionary leadership important to the City Manager's profession? How would a visionary leader change city management? Does the City Manager have to believe the vision to implement it? How does a vision lead to greater efficiency in a municipality?

Limitations

This study was limited to City Managers in Oakland County, Michigan. These City Managers were an elite group. The sample size was small, not random, and restricted to Oakland County; therefore, the results may not be generalizable. Another difficulty was persuading the City Managers to be open and honest about themselves. Many were concerned about their image and credibility inside and outside of the city.
Because of this, confidentiality was ensured and was highly stressed.

The researcher's position as a State Representative presented a challenge. While it gave the researcher access to the city administration, it also caused the city officials difficulty in separating the researcher from legislative duties. The researcher spent the first minutes of the interview reviewing the purpose of the meeting. This helped in focusing the interviewee on the study as opposed to the researcher as a legislator.

Contributions to Knowledge

The results of this research will help in understanding the methods and strategies employed by successful City Managers so that others may emulate them. Understanding their approaches should provide practical assistance to City Managers in determining the most effective leadership approaches during times of great growth, development, and transition in a city government. Another benefit of this research is that it provides a sound theoretical base for the leadership development of City Managers. The result may be a competency model that could greatly influence development of current and future City Managers who will be more capable of leading in the 21st century. It is hoped that the insights gained from this research will make a valuable contribution to the City Manager profession.

Further, this research identified how effective public executives—specifically, City Managers—use visionary leadership and, more important, how they put their vision into action in a complex environment. As government continues to reinvent
itself, the leaders of public organizations must look at ways to change. The results of this study can be used to develop future leaders in the public sector. These leaders need to identify ways to provide visionary leadership and to implement that vision in the complex environment of the public sector.

The Chapters in the Dissertation

In Chapter I, the statement of the problem, purpose and significance of the study and research question were discussed. The conceptual framework, limitations, and contributions of the study were also presented. Chapter II is a review of literature relevant to the study. Topics that are considered include: (a) the council manager form of government, (b) leadership, and (c) entrepreneurial spirit. An overview of the research design is presented in Chapter III, in which the research methodology and procedures are also described. The data analysis and research findings are discussed in Chapter IV. Profiles presented in Chapter IV reveal how the participants individually and through their organizations put their visions into action. Chapter V contains a summary of the study, the conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for future research.
Leadership has been identified as a critical element in creating change that leads to improvement in an organization—it is how the leader gets things done. Leadership entails the practices and methods used to turn challenges into accomplishments (Berkley & Rouse, 1994). City Managers must use their leadership ability to accomplish their mandated purposes by putting a vision into action. The employees and the staff of the future will demand leadership, not management. They will pursue goals and will become results-oriented. When the staff encounters barriers blocking their path to success, they expect a leader who will clear the path by removing those barriers (Herman, 1999). Conversely, employees can view a manager as an obstacle using up resources, time, and energy from the team.

According to Berkley and Rouse (1994), “a manager is a person who has the authority to direct specific organizational resources in order to accomplish an objec­tive” (p. 208). Similarly, a leader is a person who has the conviction and influence to decide, direct, and put into action the objectives and functions of an organization (Berkley & Rouse, 1994). According to Goleman (1998), leadership is the ability to lead, guide and direct the efforts of others to accomplish goals and objectives. Using these abilities, managers guide and direct individuals in organizations toward a
common goal or objective, providing an image of the future, and ensuring that all concerned understand the purpose, meaning, and expected results of all efforts. The leader is an individual who (a) is responsible for directing and guiding the efforts of others through formal and informal behaviors, and (b) has the ability to create a desire in others to move in the direction desired. Kouzes and Posner (1997) defined leadership “as the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for a shared aspiration” (p. 30).

Kouzes and Posner (1997) viewed leadership as “inextricably connected with the process of innovation, of bringing new ideas, methods, or solutions into use. Innovation means change and change requires leadership” (p. 53). Leaders must be change agents and innovators. Many times the leader is viewed as a public entrepreneur. This person displays an attitude that is characterized by a posture of challenging the process, of wanting to change the business-as-usual environment (Lewis, 1980).

Literature addressing the above mentioned issues is reviewed in the following sections: (a) the council-manager form of government, (b) leadership, and (c) entrepreneurial spirit. This review will help in understanding how City Managers put their vision into action.

The Council-Manager Form of Government

The rise of cities has been attributed to numerous economic and social forces. These include the decline of agriculture as the basic national occupation, the rise of
the modern manufacturing industry, the invention of and subsequent demand for new consumer goods, an expansionary national trade policy, positive government and fiscal incentives for industrial growth, and a massive influx of immigrants (Stillman, 1974).

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, most progressive reform campaigns stressed the necessity of instituting a new system of municipal government that would make government work more efficiently. To achieve this goal, municipal reformers advocated several forms of municipal governance: the general manager plan, the commission plan, and at-large elections. (Stillman, 1974, p. 28)

The council-manager form of city government was the brainchild of Richard Spencer Childs (Childs, 1965; Saffell, 2000; Stewart, 1984). Although Childs frequently has been called the father of the council-manager plan, he preferred to think of himself as the minister who performed the marriage ceremony between the general manager plan, as first conceived in Staunton, Virginia in 1908, and the commission plan in Des Moines, Iowa (Childs, 1965). The approval of the council-manager plan by the National Municipal League in 1915, coupled with the support of eminent scholars like historian Charles A. Beard in the 1920s, gave the manager concept dramatic national appeal (Childs, 1965). By January 1, 1983, more than 3,100 municipalities were considered manager cities (Rowe, 1987; Stewart, 1984).

Council-manager government is modeled on the organization of a business firm (Childs, 1965). The city council corresponds to the board of directors of a corporation, and the City Manager is akin to the corporation’s general manager. The City Manager performs many of the city’s administrative activities. Politics is
supposed to play little or no part in managers’ administrative decisions because they
are appointed, not elected (Childs, 1965). Although the charters of many council-
manager cities provide for popular election of the mayor, Childs opposed this practice
and advocated selection of the mayor by the council. In his view, voters tend to focus
on mayoral candidates and consequently give minimal attention to other council
members when electing city officials. Childs opposed placing veto power in the
mayor’s hands because, in his judgement, this practice diminishes the council’s
policy-making powers.

According to Rowe (1987), the council-manager form of government is char­
acterized by:

1. A small (five to nine members) city council, generally elected at large on a
nonpartisan ballot, with responsibility for policy making through legislation and over­
all supervision of the administration of city government.

2. A full-time professionally trained city administrator who serves at the
behest of the council but with full responsibility for the implementation of policy
through day-to-day city operations, including the hiring/firing of department heads
and the preparation and administration of the executive budget.

3. A popularly elected or council-selected Mayor who serves as a political
leader and ceremonial officer (p. 13).

The essence of this plan is appointment by an elected council and a City
Manager. The City Manager serves at the pleasure of the council and is responsible
for the overall management of municipal affairs (Childs, 1965; Stewart, 1984).
Childs believed a key concept of the manager plan is that the manager should administer, not govern. A manager who follows this concept will stand apart from all factions; however, he will avoid the political risk of recommending policy to the council and defending that policy following its adoption by the council (Childs, 1965; Stewart, 1984).

The council-manager government form is based on two underlying principles of public administration: (1) the separation of politics and administration, and (2) the promotion of economy and efficiency in government (Childs, 1965; Saffell, 2000; Stewart, 1984). This form of governance would eliminate the corrupt influence of political-machine and boss rule. The formulation and growth of the council-manager form coincided with the time in the early 1900s known as the scientific manager period (Berkley & Rouse, 1994; Taylor, 1912). This form of local government embraced the tenets of scientific management theory, also known as Taylorism, and attracted the attention of scholars and practitioners in both business and government (Berkley & Rouse, 1994; Kammerer, Farris, Clubok, & DeGrove, 1962; Rowe, 1987; Taylor, 1912).

With scientific management theory came the introduction of new managerial and administrative practices designed to improve corporate and private sector management. The intention was to strengthen production practices to meet the needs of the thriving industrial economy of the 1900s. The framework of the scientific management theory rested on four key values: efficiency, rationality, productivity, and profit (Rowe, 1987; Taylor 1912). These methods and practices that had been
employed in the private sector were shifted to the public sector in the interest of promoting efficiency and economy. Emphasis was on efficiency as a primary goal of both private and public management.

In the public sector efficiency was to be achieved through the separation of politics from administration (Ammons, 1989; Childs, 1965; Stillman, 1974). This could be accomplished by incorporating business practices and applications through the professionalization of local government – essentially, through the City Manager (Stillman, 1974).

The council-manager form of government focuses on the division of responsibility between the council and the manager (Childs, 1965; Saffell, 2000). However, whereas this separation may be clear in theory, in practice it may be difficult to maintain (Saffell, 2000). Councils tend to interfere in administrative matters, while managers become involved in major policy decisions (Rowe, 1987). This is sometimes due to the indecisiveness of the council. When faced with controversial alternatives, council members tend to avoid votes that may prove politically controversial. When action that may engender controversy must be taken, selected policy alternatives generally are proposed by administrative officials like the city manager, who is somewhat more removed from the wrath of public scrutiny (Rowe, 1987).

Even early proponents of the council-manager form of government were aware of the need for managerial involvement in policy making. The manager was to exercise broad discretion in the administration of policies and to help formulate new policies on social welfare and municipal enterprise. Rowe (1987) explained that
although "the manager avoided a public posture of policy leadership, the manager and administrative department heads were the principal sources of policy innovation and leadership" (p. 13). The policy role of the City Manager was described as one of participating in the formulation of municipal policy (Kammerer et al., 1962; Saffell, 2000). The City Manager is a policy maker for the local government, the person who sets long and short-term goals, implements policy and programs, and determines policies—taxes, service levels, and oversight of the department (Morris, 2000). The City Manager not only supports the council in dealing with current problems, but directs the council's attention toward the future (Morris, 2000; Saffell, 2000).

The City Manager provides guidance in goal setting even while playing an active role in implementing policy (Stillman, 1974). Through the years, the line separating the council and the City Manager has become less distinct. More administrative and management are now in the council's sphere and more mission and vision formulation in the City Manager's. A hazy boundary remains—council-manager government continues to bring together political and professional leaders—but the distinct roles of these two actors increasingly overlap (Svara, 1999).

Contemporary City Managers, as described by Stillman (1974), are:

a highly homogeneous group of individuals: white, male, Protestant, native-born Americans, middle-class, middle aged, married, college educated, residing in medium-sized midwestern or southern communities, and devoted to the full-time public service occupation of municipal administration. The modern City Manager is younger, much better educated, much less likely to have been trained as an engineer, and earning a salary two or three times higher than city managers in the 1930s. (p. 83)

To summarize, in many cities the manager clearly is "the person who has the
greatest influence over what is happening at every stage of the policy-making pro-
cess" (Stillman, 1974, p. 2). The council-manager plan was a product of several ideas
and forces that shaped the nineteenth and early twentieth century America. Among
the factors that affected the development of this plan most significantly were “(a) the
growth of urbanization, (b) the popularity of business and corporate ideals, (c) the
Progressive reform movement, and (d) the scientific management and public admini-
stration movement” (Stillman, 1974, p. 6).

Under the council-manager plan, a professional administrator, called a City
Manager, supervises all municipal affairs. An elected city council hires the City Man-
ager. Most councils have from five to nine members (Childs, 1965; Rowe, 1987;
Stillman, 1974). The council-manager plan is the most common form of city govern-
ment in the United States for cities with populations of 25,000 or more (Morgan &
Watson, 1992). Morgan and Watson indicated that more than half of the cities of this
size use the council-manager system. A chief feature of the council-manager plan is
the centralization of administrative responsability. The City Manager appoints all
department heads, is responsible for managing all of the city services, and implements
all policies and programs. The Model City Charter, developed by the National Civic
League, describes the powers and duties of a City Manager as the chief administrative
officer of the city, responsible to the council for the administration of all city affairs
placed in the manager’s charge by or under this charter. The City Manager shall:

1. Appoint and, when necessary for the good of the service, suspend or
remove all city employees and appointive administrative officers provided for, by, or
under this charter, except as otherwise provided by law, this charter or personnel rules
adopted pursuant to this charter. The City Manager may authorize any administrative
officer, subject to the manager's direction and supervision, to exercise these powers
with respect to subordinates in that officer's department, office or agency;

2. Direct and supervise the administration of all departments, offices and
agencies of the city, except as otherwise provided by this charter;

3. Attend all city council meetings. The City Manager shall have the right to
law, take part in discussion, but shall not vote;

4. See that all laws, provisions of this charter and acts of the city council,
subject to enforcement by the city manager or by officers subject to the manager's
direction and supervision, are faithfully executed;

5. Prepare and submit the annual budget and capital program to the city
council;

6. Submit to the city council and make available to the public a complete
report on the finances and administrative activities of the city as of the end of each
fiscal year;

7. Make such other reports as the city council may require concerning the
operations of city departments, offices and agencies subject to the city manager's
direction and supervision;

8. Keep the city council fully advised as to the financial condition and future
need of the city;

9. Make recommendations to the city council concerning the affairs of the
10. Perform such other duties as are specified in this charter or may be required by the city council (National Civic League, 1989, p. 27).

This model has been used by many cities as a guide for the development of their city’s charter and the City Manager’s responsibilities.

In Child’s (1965) view, a democratic government is one that services and benefits the people and is free of bossism and self-interest. Childs believed that the form of local government most likely to produce such government was the council-manager plan with nonpartisan elections.

In most cities that use the council-manager plan, council members are elected on nonpartisan ballots (Stewart, 1984). Usually, the Mayor is a member of the council. He or she is elected to office by the people or selected by other council members. The mayor presides at council meetings but seldom has more power than other members. The council is the chief governing body of the city; the council determines policies and passes ordinances. The City Manager carries out the policies set by the council. The council may dismiss the City Manager if it is dissatisfied with his or her performance.

Although this study was concerned with the council-manager form of governance, there are other forms of municipal government such as the strong-mayor and city commission forms. In the strong-mayor form of governance more power is granted to the chief executive (the mayor). In this form of governance, mayors have the responsibility of directing the department heads who perform the day-to-day-
duties. Yet the control of finances rests with an elected council. The basic model of:

“strong” city self-government consisted of a centralized administrative structure headed by a mayor and his immediate staff; a set of function-oriented departments, each headed by a mayor and his immediate staff; and a set of function-oriented departments, each headed by an executive directly responsible to the Mayor. (Fox, 1977, p. 63)

The institution of a strong-mayor form of government brought about some important changes.

First, by granting the mayor veto power and greater control over administration, the plan provided ample opportunity for the emergence of strong leadership in local government. Second, and in contrast to the dominant position assumed by the council in the past, its powers were now restricted to the legislative arena alone. (Adrian 1961, p. 206)

The city commission form of governance was straightforward. It comprised a governing body that would resemble as closely as possible the board of directors of a business corporation, concentrating both power and responsibility in a small commission or board. The commission or board was comprised of at least five members (Rice, 1977). One of the commissioners was designated the mayor-president and presided over all meetings. The mayor-president’s vote weighed no more or less than that of any of his or her colleagues, nor did he or she have veto power. The mayor-president’s responsibility was to ensure that the business of the city was accomplished. The other commissioners were in charge of the various departments, and supervised service delivery, with the department heads reporting to the commissioners. According to Rice (1977), the city commission form of government served as a bridge between the mayor-council form and the council-manager form developed before World War I. In fact, the emergence of the council-manager plan was partly
responsible for the short-lived popularity of the commission form of government (Childs, 1965; Rice, 1977). The responsibilities of the chief executive officer in the different forms of governments are shown in Appendix A.

Today's City Manager responsibilities focus on six functions: (1) skills, such as finance and negotiations; (2) policy areas, such as public works and economic development; (3) responsibilities, such as obligations to the council and the profession; (4) roles, such as a policy advocate and administrative technician; (5) values, such as efficiency and equity; and (6) work habits, such as practices and idiosyncrasies (Stewart, 1984; Stillman, 1974; Wheeler, 1994). The overriding aspect of the council-manager form of government is that it will guide the city organization, departments, and agencies to work more efficiently and effectively— in short, to work more like a business (Childs, 1965). The corporate structure was used as the model for this form of governance. The leadership skills that are essential for effective modern city management are “the ability to manage, public relations skills; budgeting and finance expertise, and personnel and labor relations skills. Few see highly specialized skills such as computer skills or planning and renewal expertise as essential for the professional practitioner” (Stillman, 1974, p.73). Just as the council-manager form of government has evolved over time, so have approaches to leadership.

Leadership

The study of leadership in public organizations has evolved considerably over a number of years. Leadership as a construct is conceptual and intangible, which
makes it complicated to define. Constructs are inferred from the results of observable phenomena designed to give meaning to ideas (Cameron & Whetten, 1983; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). The history of leadership has its basis in three theories: trait theory, behavioral theory, and contingency theory.

The earliest leadership theory was concerned with traits. The great man theory was the outgrowth of the trait approach, which was the first attempt to study leadership, and received considerable attention from leadership researchers. The trait approach identified the personal qualities and characteristic of leaders. The leadership trait paradigm focused on the individual characteristics that identified success (House & Aditya, 1997). Further, a natural implication of the trait approach to leadership is the belief that leaders are born rather than made, and that nature is more important than nurturing (Bryman, 1986; Burns, 1978; Stodgill, 1974). In organizational research the trait theory essentially took two forms. First, there was a focus on those traits that distinguished leaders from nonleaders (Bryman, 1986), or those characteristics that separated great leaders from the masses. Those traits fell into three main categories: (1) physical traits, such as physique, gender, physical energy, height, and appearance; (2) ability traits, such as intelligence, need for achievement, and authoritarianism; and (3) personality traits, such as conservatism, introversion-extroversion, and need for power (Bryman, 1986; House & Aditya, 1997).

The second form of the trait theory was concerned with identifying traits that differentiated successful leaders from less successful ones—that is, those who performed better or had more satisfied subordinates or work groups (Bryman, 1986;
House & Aditya, 1997). This raises the question as to whether personal abilities and traits relevant to the effective exercise of leadership are genetically influenced. According to Bryman, "the trait approach drew attention to the kinds of people who become leaders and thus have potential for supplying organizations with information about what should be looked for when selecting individuals for present or future positions of leadership" (1986, p. 32).

After much research, Stogdill (1948) concluded that there were no specific traits that characterize successful leaders. He did, however, conclude that certain individual variables might be related to leadership success. Some of these variables were "intellectual fortitude, integrity, intelligence, scholarship, dependability in exercising responsibilities, activity, and social participation" (1948, p. 63). Later, Stogdill (1974) reviewed research conducted between 1904 and 1970 and identified certain personality characteristics or traits that were considered important. The traits included:

- a strong drive for task completion, persistence in pursuit of goals, originality in problem solving, drive to exercise initiative in social situations, self-confidence, willingness to accept the consequences of one's decisions and actions, readiness to absorb inter-personal stress, willingness to tolerate frustration and delay, ability to influence others' behaviors, and the capacity to structure social-interaction situations. (1974, p. 56)

Nevertheless, Stogdill concluded that these characteristics or traits were not practical measures or predictors of leadership effectiveness.

Neither form of the trait theory, however, was successful in revealing a set of universal traits. Those interested in organizational leadership, therefore, shifted their interest from traits to behaviors (Bryman, 1986). Their focus was on behaviors that
differentiated successful from less successful leaders in organizations. For example, do leaders who show more considerate behavior have more effective and satisfied followers than those who show less consideration (Berkley & Rouse, 1994)? In contrast, because a leader's behavior can be changed, the focus on the behavior of leaders carried with it an emphasis on training rather than selecting leaders (Berkley & Rouse, 1994).

Early results suggested that this behavioral theory was more viable than the earlier concentration on traits (Berkley & Rouse, 1994; Bryman, 1986; House & Aditya, 1997; Stogdill, 1974). This shift in emphasis was strengthened as psychologists began to recognize the important influence of the situation on behavior (Berkley & Rouse, 1994). House and Aditya (1997) claimed that, following the disenchantment with traits, there ensued a 30-year period during which leaders were studied either by observing their behavior in a laboratory setting or by asking individuals in a field setting to describe the behavior of people in positions of authority, relating these descriptions to various criteria of leadership effectiveness.

Three influential groups of investigators pursued the quest to explain leader effectiveness in terms of behavior: Bales and his associates at Harvard, members of the Ohio State leadership team, and members of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. One of the major empirical contributions of the behavioral researchers was the identification of two broad classes of leader behaviors—task oriented and person-oriented behaviors. These behaviors also were identified through factor analyses conducted by the Ohio State group, interviews by the Michigan group,
and observations of emergent leaders in laboratories by the Harvard group. The Harvard group also identified a third dimension, individual prominence, which was then ignored in subsequent literature (House & Aditya, 1997, p. 421). House and Aditya (1997) maintained that another contribution of the behavioral paradigm was a more proficient design of task- and person-oriented behaviors.

Unfortunately, no pattern of leader behavior was found to be consistently associated with subordinates’ satisfaction or criteria for supervisor or manager effectiveness (Bryman 1986; House & Aditya, 1997). After continued studies on leadership behavior, it was evident by the late 1960s that there was more to leadership effectiveness than demonstrating high amounts of task and relationship behavior (House & Aditya, 1997). This led to research that took into account the context or situation.

From this research emerged the contingency leadership theory (Bryman, 1986). The emphasis of this line of research was on leadership as a function of organizational and environmental situations. Bryman (1986) explained that several scholars developed theories along these lines, among them,

Fielder (1973) with the contingency theory of leadership, House (1965) with the path-goal theory of leader effectiveness, Vroom (1971) with the decision process theory, Conger (1989) with the charismatic leader theory, and Hershey and Blanchard (1982) with the life cycle theory. (p. 30)

The focus in the contingency studies of leadership is on how the leader’s personality and behavior interact in different situations to achieve results (Bryman, 1986; House & Aditya, 1997; Vinzant & Crothers 1996). Contingency or situational leadership is useful in describing and prescribing what leaders do as they try to achieve a particular goal and in providing standards by which the appropriateness of leader actions can be
judged (Vinzant & Crothers, 1996).

Proponents of contingency theory place situational factors toward the center of any understanding of leadership. Typically, they seek to specify the situational variables, that moderate the effectiveness of different leadership approaches (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). Fielder's contingency theory of leadership was the first to specify how situational variables interact with the leader's personality and behavior. This theory identified situational control as the degree to which a leader can control and influence the group process (House & Aditya, 1997). The contingency theory suggests that leadership effectiveness is established by deciding on the right kind of leader for a certain situation or changing the situation to fit the specific leader's style (House & Aditya, 1997; Wallis & Dollery, 1997).

House (1965) developed the path-goal theory, which suggests that the effective leader states the goal or valued rewards for followers and then helps them find the path to achieve that goal. The path-goal theory explains task- and person-oriented leader behavior and identifies a number of situational intermediaries of relationships between task- and person-oriented leadership and its effects. The situational contingency factors were identified to be subordinate to characteristics and the environment (House & Aditya, 1997). Central to this concept is the view that how individuals behave is a function of their expectations that the behavior will result in an outcome, and the satisfaction to be derived from that outcome. The leader influences how individuals behave through initiating structure or consideration behaviors. For this reason, the leader creates a path by clarifying goal attainment, reducing roadblocks, and
making possible opportunities for satisfaction. According to House and Aditya (1997), "the decision process theory is intended to help managers make decisions that are acceptable to subordinates, when acceptability of solutions is important for effective implementation" (p. 416). The original theory described seven decision-making methods, "which have different outcomes under various situations. These methods range from autocratic through democratic decision processes" (1997, p. 417).

The life cycle theory identifies four leadership styles: telling, selling, participating and delegating. Each style is appropriate for certain kinds of situations (House & Aditya, 1997). The style of leadership is determined by the types of followers (House & Aditya, 1997). Followers who need a great deal of guidance will expect the telling style of leadership, whereas more independent followers will appreciate leaders who delegate. More important, the leader must know when to alter his or her leadership style depending on the situational characteristics. The leader has to provide what is missing or needed in the situation to achieve the goals of the organization. This theory maintains that leaders who correctly base their behaviors on follower maturity will be more effective. The implicit goal of this theory is to reduce the follower’s dependence on the leader (Vinzant & Crothers, 1996).

Charismatic leader provide a vision of what lies ahead; they show determination in pursuit of goals and communicate high performance expectations (House & Aditya, 1997). In addition to having a vision, charismatic leaders have excellent motivational skills and a keen ability to plan for the present and the future. They have a powerful and compelling vision, to arouse strong motivation among subordination,
and create high levels of self-definition, self-esteem, and self-worth among their followers (Clarke, 1995; Conger & Kanungo, 1998; House & Aditya, 1997; Mariotti, 1999). Charismatic leaders are differentiated from noncharismatic leaders by their openness to environmental constraints, ability to identify shortages and underutilized opportunities in the status quo, and sense of openness to followers' abilities and needs. Such leaders are able to formulate and articulate the organizational goals. They are differentiated from their noncharismatic colleagues by their ability to formulate a vision and their management and leadership abilities. Charismatic leaders demonstrate how the organization can achieve these goals. They differ from noncharismatic leaders in their use of innovative methods to achieve their vision and the use of their personal ability to influence followers (Conger & Kanungo, 1998).

The contingency paradigm has been the dominant theory among leadership researchers since the late 1960s. This theory strengthened the development of better theories that explained, described, and predicted leadership (House & Aditya, 1997). The intent of these theories was to explain different aspects of the leadership phenomenon. However, the contingency theories still left a gap in understanding leadership effectiveness and provided only partial answers (Sashkin, 1995). Another problem is that researchers were concerned exclusively with supervisors and lower-level managers, not top executive leaders (Nanus, 1992; Sashkin, 1995). It was not until the 1970s that a new direction in leadership emerged.
The Visionary Leadership Theory

Although the contingency and situational theories of leadership are useful in describing and evaluating the decision process, neither explain how leaders formulate objectives and choose a decision process, nor do they explain how leaders formulate objectives and choose between competing values in influencing results (Sashkin, 1986). In this sense, the contingency and situational theories are value-neutral beyond the underlying assumption that leaders should act to provide what followers lack in terms of information and knowledge, to develop a model for action (Sashkin, 1995; Vinzant & Crothers, 1996).

By the early 1980s, a number of researchers identified the New Leadership approach (Bryman, 1986; House and Aditya, 1997). The term New Leadership has been used to describe and categorize a number of approaches that seemed to signal a new way of conceptualizing and researching leadership (Bryman, 1986; Vinzant & Crothers, 1996). As Bryman (1986) explained, researchers employed a variety of terms to describe the new kinds of leadership with which they were concerned:

Transformational leadership was suggested by Burns (1978) and further developed and operationalized by Bass (1985), charismatic leadership was proposed by Conger (1989), and visionary leadership was advanced by Kouzes and Posner (1997) and Bennis and Nanus (1994), operationalized by Sashkin (1988), and extended by Nanus (1992). (p. 30)

According to House and Aditya (1997),

the New Leadership theories have several common characteristics. First, they all attempt to explain how leaders are able to lead organizations to attain outstanding accomplishments such as the founding and growth of successful entrepreneurial firms, corporate turnarounds in the face of overwhelming competition, military victories in the face of superior forces, and leadership of
successful social reform for independence from colonial rule or political tyranny. Second, these theories attempt to explain how certain leaders are able to achieve extraordinary levels of follower motivation, admiration, respect, trust, commitment, dedication, loyalty, and performance. Third, the new leadership theories stress symbolic and emotionally appealing leader behaviors, such as visionary, frame alignment, empowering, role modeling, image building, exceptional risk taking, and supportive behaviors, as well as cognitively oriented behavior, such as adapting, showing versatility and environmental sensitivity, and being intellectual by stimulating. Finally, the leader effects specified in these theories include follower self-esteem, motive arousal and emotions, and identification with the leader’s vision, values, and the collective, as well as such traditional dependent variables of earlier leadership theories as follower satisfaction and performance (p. 439).

Transformational leaders direct their efforts and make their choices based on goals, values, visions, and ideals through which they develop followers’ appreciation for the organization’s needs and requirements (Vinzant & Crothers, 1996). They help followers speak about the goals, and they take action to help the organization achieve its goals.

Vision is the central element of the New Leadership approach. Invariably this approach entails the transformation of followers and often of organizations in correspondence with their vision (Sashkin, Rosenbach, Deal, & Peterson, 1992). Sashkin (1986) recognized that the vision must be communicated and made intelligible and relevant to the leader’s followers. Kouzes and Posner (1993) argued that credible leaders develop capacity in others. They turn their constituents into leaders (Senge, 1990).

Burns’ (1978) research led to the development of several new approaches to the study of what many refer to as transformational leadership. That term is used to contrast this new leadership with the older transactional leadership or management
approach. The transactional leadership approach is based on an economic relationship between a leader and followers. If the employee does the work requested, he or she will receive a certain amount of money. The transformational approach also incorporates the idea that leadership involves what Burns called noneconomic sources of authority (Burns, 1978; Sashkin, 1995). Transformational leadership entails a commitment to and with the leader; followers join in a shared vision of the future, going beyond self-interest and the pursuit of personal rewards. Transformational leaders sway followers to move beyond their own self-interests and commit themselves to team, group, or organizational goals. They enable followers to develop a mental picture of the vision and transform purpose into action (Nanus, 1992; Sashkin & Rosenbach, 1988; Sashkin, Rosenbach, & Harburg, 1996).

Vision is the central element of the Visionary Leadership Theory (VLT) (Sashkin, 1986). Sashkin (1986) believed that the behavioral approach neither addressed the executive level of leadership, nor did such research explain the outstanding leadership at the top of the corporation, which is characterized by vision. Sashkin’s theory of effective leadership, or visionary leadership, “considers not just the leader, the leader’s behavior, or the situation; it encompasses all three” (1986, p. 58). The VLT approach involves transforming followers and being able to lead an organization with a vision. Nanus (1992) recognized that the vision must be communicated and made thoughtful and relevant by the leader. Visionary leaders improve skills in others, and they turn their followers into leaders. Visionary leadership focuses on transformational leadership characteristics, which include charisma,
individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation and inspiration (Sashkin et al., 1992).

Today’s effective leaders have vision; they are totally result oriented. They adopt challenging new visions, and persuade others to become so committed to these new directions that they are eager to lend their resources and energies to make them happen. In this way, effective leaders build lasting institutions that change the world (Nanus, 1992). As described by Bezold, Mayer, and Dighe (1997), visionary leaders are “those who share a compelling vision with employees and stakeholders that attracts commitment to work toward achieving the vision. They inspire people, revitalize organizations, and mobilize the resources needed to turn the vision into reality” (p. 370). According to Marshall Sashkin, the theorist who refined the Visionary Leadership Theory (VLT),

the visionary leader is able to develop a long-range vision of what his or her organization can and should become. These visions are usually detailed only in the short range, but, if pressed, the leader could fill in the details from the beginning to end. The visionary leader also understands the key elements of a vision—what a vision must include if it is to direct the organization into the future. Finally, the leader can communicate his or her vision for the organization in ways that are compelling, and that make people want to buy into the vision and help make it happen. (1986, p. 59)

A visionary leader does more than perpetuate the status quo; he or she can articulate a goal so concretely that people create it as a reality (Meadows, 1991).

For visionary leadership to exist and be effective in an organization,

the organizational culture and leadership must show a commitment to quality and continuous learning, empowered managers and staff, willingness of leaders to take risks, belief in the use of technology for improvement of programs and services, desire by managers to create meaning in workers’ lives, an established standard of excellence, ability to bridge the present to the future,
willingness and commitment to create community partnerships, and ability to nurture a shared vision. (Bezold et al., 1997, p. 371)

Sashkin (1986) linked cognitive skills to creating a vision. He referred to cognitive skills as thinking skills. He emphasized that it is rare for an individual to plan and think over a 10- or 20-year time span. The cognitive skills are expressing, explaining, extending, and expanding. Sashkin described:

expressing the vision as the leader’s ability to move the vision forward. To express the vision successfully, the executive must write a set of policy actions that will involve the staff in the program. The leader must make the vision clear in terms of its required actions and its aims. (1986, p. 59)

But the leader who expressed the vision still may not succeed in implementing it (putting it into action) unless he or she can clearly explain the steps of the vision. If the leader is unable to do so, “it will be difficult to attract the support of the staff” (Sashkin, 1986, p.59). The visionary leader must be able to describe how the actions required for the vision link together to attain its goal. As the leader becomes able to express and explain the vision, he must be able to show how the vision applies to the organization. Sashkin (1986) referred to this step as extending, “pointing out that the leader must be able to adapt a vision to the organization and the circumstances as needed” (p. 60). Sashkin believed a visionary leader has the ability to expand the vision throughout the organization and thereby enlist the support of other divisions that may improve the operation. Nanus (1992) added that “effective leaders usually are skilled negotiators who can press their own views and reach agreements that advance the vision” (p. 138).

House and Shamir (as cited in House & Aditya, 1997) claimed that
transformational, charismatic, and visionary leadership are essentially the same, in that all of them include the affective states of followers and stress leader behavior that is symbolic, appeals to followers’ emotions, and is highly motivational. House and Shamir furthered the discussion by saying there is little evidence that:

charismatic, transformational, or visionary leadership do indeed transform individuals, groups, large divisions of organizations, or total organizations, despite claims to the contrary. It may well be that such leaders induce changes in followers’ psychological states, but that these states do not continue after the leader and follower are separated. There is no evidence that leaders have stable and long-term effects on followers’ self-esteem, motives, desires, preferences, or values. (as cited in House & Aditya, 1997, p. 455).

For a vision to have an effect on an organization, it must have three basic elements: change, goal, and people. Sashkin (1986) explained that for a vision to have an influence or an organization, change must occur. The change will be intended to improve the organization. Nanus (1992) added that the leader’s purpose is to make the investment decision and other organizational changes necessary to allow the vision to be implemented and to have an impact. He continued by saying that when “a visionary leader has an extraordinary ability to act in this role, he or she [sic.] literally creates the future and, in the process, also changes the way people think about it” (Nanus, 1992, p. 141).

Organizations as well as people resist change (Nanus, 1992; Sashkin, 1986). The new vision changes the lives and habits of people and the organization. The change may eliminate departments, staff, and responsibilities. Therefore, the leader should introduce change in a less disruptive mode and present the goals and benefits to the organization and the staff (Nanus, 1992). There should be shared goals and a
shared vision. This is what enables followers to get beyond their own interests and commit themselves to the organizational goals. The leader should foster a culture that welcomes development and innovation, so that the vision is seen as part of the organization’s progression (Nanus, 1992; Sashkin et al., 1996).

The people of the organization should feel connected to the vision. The leader must present the vision to the people in such a way that it addresses their needs and keeps them involved in the planning. Nanus explained that unless people believe they have chosen to adopt a new attitude and behavior and feel rewarded, they are likely to revert to old ways. The overriding concern is to have people want to participate and choose to do so (Nanus, 1992, 1996; Sashkin 1986). By communicating with clarity and commitment to make the vision real in follower’s eyes, the leader can accomplish this (Sashkin, 1986).

The leader must be able to express the vision clearly to anyone in the organization and be able to make a coherent and concise statement of the vision that can be converted into organization philosophy. The vision has clarity when everyone in the organization can express it. (Sashkin, 1986, p.60)

According to Sashkin (1986), for a vision to move along, policies and programs must be developed and initiated. “The organization must commit resources to achieving the vision. These resources may include people, capital, or property” (p. 60). Sashkin emphasized that although a clear vision statement and actions to support the vision are critical, they are not enough to make the vision real. “The leader must be able to communicate the vision so that stakeholders will be willing to embrace. The leader must also have a commitment of resources” (p. 61).
Summary

In this review of literature on leadership, it was seen that leadership theories have grown out of several approaches. First, the field embraced the trait model of leadership (Bryman, 1986), in which leadership was seen more as a person than a process. Next, the behavioral theory saw leadership as a far more complex process than formerly imagined. According to that theory, leadership is the result of a more complex collection of variables, including the personal attributes, traits, and behaviors of the leader, as well as the followers and their attributes, traits, and behaviors (Bryman, 1986). Then came the contingency model, which made the leadership process contingent on the interplay among three factors: the leader, the followers, and the situation. The followers, the situation, and the leader interconnect to produce leadership for it is a process, not a person (Nanus, 1992). According to the contingency model, change in any one of these factors could trigger success or failure. A leader may be great in one setting—where the followers are ready and the situation is ripe—yet that same leader might accomplish little in another setting where the people and situation are not so advantageous. Thus, contingency theory helps explain why a leader can accomplish wonderful things in one place, then move to another setting where little or nothing seems to occur (Bryman, 1986; House & Aditya, 1997).

In the 1980s, there was movement from the contingency model to the New Leadership approach (Bryman, 1986). This approach introduced the mechanics of leader–follower interactions, in which leaders and followers are transformed as they engage one another in a way that raises both to higher levels of motivation and
morality. Transformational leadership emphasizes participative decision making and is based on a form of consensual or facilitative power that is manifested through people creating and collaborating together (Bryman, 1986). Visionary leadership builds on the concept of transformational leadership. Sashkin (1986) explained that:

> visionary leadership provides the basis for organizations that are effective in terms of any criterion of performance or profit that contributes a vision to society that benefits clients as well as the larger public, and that provides high-quality work life for all employees. (p. 61)

Entrepreneurial Spirit

Conger and Kanungo (1998) asserted that leadership involves moving organizational members away from the status quo toward the following desired longer term goals: (a) the leader's search for opportunity, (b) alignment of the organization through a vision, and (c) implementation of the vision. The leader must become “a change agent to move the members from the status quo, and the entrepreneurial City Manager seems to rise to the task” (Schneider, Teske, & Mintrom, 1995, p. 161).

Citizens often are disgruntled and frustrated with all levels of government. (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). They believe these bureaucracies give no control to taxpayers and that citizens are tired of officials who raise taxes and decrease services. But nowhere is citizens’ wrath felt more than in local government. According to Nalbandian (1999), “citizens want to be involved in establishing the services that are important to their community” (p. 189). Because people value control over their community’s fate, they expect that local governance and control of the local policy processes are important to the interests and desires of community residents (Box, 1999).
Although residents may be apathetic as long as everything is going their way, residents will defend vigorously their view of what the community ought to be when that view is threatened. People come to see regulations, procedures, and processes symbolized by the manager as obstacles in the way of their desires. The key issues often are simple things, but people actively resist what they perceive as a loss of democratic control, political process, and a feeling of connection to the community (Box, 1993; Nalbandian, 1999). Box added that “professional city management may be the best solution for perceived threats to a community, best in the sense of being effective in reversing the threatening situation and fitting in with the community residents values” (1993, p. 415). This is especially likely where residents’ opinions are relatively united about the community’s goals.

The rapid changes in today’s society, technology, and economy are a threat to the public sector but at the same time have become an opportunity for that sector. Drucker (1985) believed that all levels of government, as well as public-service organizations, need to be entrepreneurial and innovative, much as any business does. In Drucker’s opinion, institutions in the public sector may need to review innovations for possible adaptation to their sector. As businesslike methods are reviewed to address societal changes, the concept of entrepreneurial City Managers arises.

The concept of entrepreneurial spirit has been defined and explained by many authors. Drucker (1985) said:

entrepreneurship is based on the premise that change is normal, healthy, and desirable. The entrepreneur also sees the major task in society, and especially in the economy, as doing something rather than doing better than what is already being done. (p. 113)

Osborne and Gaebler (1992) defined an entrepreneurial public manager “as one who discards budget systems that encourage managers to waste dollars, civil service systems developed for the nineteenth century, and bureaucracies built for the 1930s” (p. xix). Teske and Schneider (1994) stated that “the defining characteristic of the entrepreneurial City Manager is to be the agent for change” (p. 322). Nalbandian (1999) said “that the local government manager is responsible for advocating comprehensive participation and representation in governance issues. Further, essential traits of the new public manager are establishing partnerships, networking, coordinating, and connecting” (p. 187). Schneider et al. (1995) argued that the emergence of “entrepreneurs is the American system of local government is related to definable and measurable characteristics of local communities” (p. 147). Entrepreneurial City Managers are likely to address issues of efficiency, such as pay scales for government workers and taxes, particularly when local interest groups have not been able to address these issues effectively through elected politicians (Teske & Schneider, 1994). Entrepreneurial City Managers are significantly more likely to emerge in municipalities where local politicians do not provide innovative policies to meet their demands (Teske & Schneider, 1994).

Osborne and Gaebler (1992) recommended that “industrial age systems be
replaced with more decentralized, more entrepreneurial, more responsive organizations designed for the rapidly changing Information Age" (p. xix). They described 10 principles around which entrepreneurial public organizations are built: they facilitate (steer) more, empower communities, encourage competition, compel by a mission, fund outcomes, meet the needs of citizens, concentrate on earning, invest in prevention, decentralize authority, and leverage the marketplace. Box (1999) said "that new public management seeks to separate politics (in the sense of decision making by the people or their representatives) from administration allowing (or compelling) managers to manage according to cost-benefit economic rationality, largely free from day-to-day democratic oversight" (p. 21).

Schneider et al. (1995) found that entrepreneurs perform three functions: "(1) entrepreneurs discover unfulfilled needs and select appropriate prescriptions for how those needs may be met; (2) they improve the organization’s reputation; and (3) they must assemble and coordinate teams or networks of individuals and organizations” (p. 46). Unlike other actors in the policy process, entrepreneurs seek opportunities to frame issues in a manner that increases the likelihood of building support for their goals because changing existing policies or pushing for true innovation stands a high risk of failure (Schneider et al., 1995). Drucker (1985) added that the three main reasons why public service institutions and government present obstacles to innovation are that “decisions are budget based, must meet the needs if multiple constituents, and must enhance the public’s welfare” (p. 179).

Feinberg (1986) said there is a close relationship between entrepreneurship
and innovation. Top management recognizes that it must introduce change, decrease costs, improve quality, devise efficiencies in equipment, advance work methods and employee performance, strengthen the organizational structure, and ensure company security. Feinberg identified the qualities of a leader with entrepreneurial spirit as creativity, risk philosophy, self-knowledge, and openness to new experiences.

Economist Intelligence Unit and Gemini Consulting (1995) studied 50 global corporations. The leaders of these corporations identified involved and participating, creating great expectations, sharing the vision, moving forward with determination and confidence, learning the change, earning trust, communicating, and inspiring leadership as aspects that are needed to have an entrepreneurial spirit in a corporation. Teske and Schneider (1994) referred to studies by Hargrove and Glidewell and Sanger and Levin in which the researchers defined entrepreneurs as having "a strong need to achieve, a strong personal incentive or a strong belief in specific policies, wide-ranging government experience, an open-minded evaluation process, an attraction to experimentation, and a willingness to risk failure" (p. 335). The findings from these studies indicated that entrepreneurs create personal missions, take risks, have bias toward action, and purposely underestimate constraints.

Terry (as cited in Box, 1999) described entrepreneurial values as "independent, with a personal vision of the yet to come, and risk-taking, along with authority and coercion, a preference for change and a disregard for tradition" (p. 33). According to Terry, these values are at odds with the values of democratic politics and administration, such as accountability, citizen participation, an open policy-making
process, and stewardship behavior. Terry was not sure that entrepreneurship can easily be combined with public service. He was concerned that “public entrepreneurs are oblivious to other values that are highly prized in the U.S. constitutional democracy, values such as fairness, justice, representation and participation” (p. 33).

According to Osborne and Gaebler (1992), the people who are bringing the entrepreneurial spirit to government:

- tend to be those who are either young or new to the field and who have not yet shaped their paradigm. These people are not committed to previous practices and traditional rules; they are likely to see that those rules no longer define a playable game and to conceive another set of precepts that can replace them. (p. 324)

This allows them to see the anomalies from a fresh perspective. Teske and Schneider (1994) found that City Managers are “more likely to have an entrepreneurial spirit when they previously worked in another city and if they have a broad professional orientation” (p. 335).

Nalbandian (1999) and Hansell (2000b) pointed out that city managers today are educated differently from earlier City Managers. Now City Managers study such diverse subjects as public finance, resource allocation, economic development, technology, intergovernmental relations, planning, public policy, environmental management, and human resource management. Earlier City Managers tended to have engineering degrees. Study of new disciplines has helped to make modern City Managers become more entrepreneurial. However, although much has been said about City Managers becoming more entrepreneurial, Nalbandian (1999) believes that there has been a significant shift toward community involvement and ownership of programs.
and service delivery.

This new thought process regarding entrepreneurial City Managers began in the late 1980s and was an outgrowth of the effort to rethink government. Feinberg (1986) said this paradigm was a result of entering an "entrepreneurial age, which succeeded the welfare state much as bureaucracies succeeded the laissez-faire system over a hundred years ago in the reaction to the worldwide panic of 1873" (p. 105). The old paradigm was born during the Progressive era, when political reform primarily meant government efforts to regulate the mighty business trusts and break up corrupt political machines. The centralized regulatory approach became bigger and stronger through the New Deal, the Second World War, postwar welfare, entitlements, and the national-security state. Many elected officials in both parties now agree that the system is too big, costly, and cumbersome. The new paradigm argument is that doing more of the same cannot save the system, and it is not sensible simply to do less of the same. The government must do something differently, which brings us to innovation and entrepreneurship in government (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992).

The internal mechanics of a bureaucratic operation show how inefficient departments and agencies are because they are burdened with regulations. This inefficiency is especially pronounced in the budget cycle. Governmental agencies and departments work on a philosophy of spend the complete budget because the department will not maintain any savings. An important aspect of entrepreneurial thinking is looking beyond the next budget or election cycle. Such thinking recognizes that it
is cheaper and more effective to prevent problems than to solve them after they arise (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992). Osborne and Gaebler said that some individuals in government are adapting business entrepreneurs’ style, which has led them to discard rules that have kept them from providing services. They are giving decision-making power to department directors and staff closer to where the problems exist, recognizing who their real customers are and listening to their needs, and looking for ways to provide more services with fewer resources. Teske and Schneider (1994) found that City Managers are motivated by wanting to achieve policy goals by solving problems and providing public service, more than earning profits, which drives the work of business entrepreneurs.

According to Lewis (1980), for the entrepreneurial spirit to exist, the organizational climate must be conducive to it. Such a climate will exist if the top management is committed to a reward system in which innovation exists and risk taking is encouraged (Teske & Schneider, 1994). Nalbandian (1999) added that the City Managers need to lead the organization in changing and adapting to community expectations, becoming entrepreneurial, customer focused, and citizen involved. According to Box (1999), many public administrators are expected to be entrepreneurial because it appears that such techniques would make public service more efficient, with results that would please citizens.

Teske and Schneider (1994) believe that the constraints confronting entrepreneurial City Managers are mainly financial and economic. Intergovernmental mandates impose further limitations, as do local politicians who ultimately hire and fire...
the managers. City Managers often are dependent on the mayor or the city council to adopt their policies. Stillman (1974) said that “constraints facing City Managers may dampen their innovativeness and entrepreneurial spirit. These financial and economic obstructions include tax limitations and growing fiscal problems” (p. 153).

To overcome the above-mentioned constraints, City Managers need effective internal and external strategies (Stillman, 1974). The ability to motivate subordinates to a higher level of performance is the most important internal task of an entrepreneur. The approach used by most entrepreneurial City Managers is to encourage and inspire teamwork. Rather than relying on monitoring and control, entrepreneurial City Managers try to inculcate a sense of mission through teamwork (Fetzer, 2000; Stillman, 1974). The main strategy of such managers:

is to handle issues quietly, behind the scenes, working with existing power structures rather than trying to overrun them. Because they do not need to run for office, much of the work of entrepreneurial managers is not subject to rigorous public examination. By defining issues as technical, managers can often limit the scope of political debate. (Stillman, 1974, p. 167)

Box (1999) explains one objection to the entrepreneurial spirit in government is the difference in the operating norms of private and public-sector organizations. “Government for its part may not have the right tools to resolve the problem. In the private sector the main objective is to make a profit [sic.] and the main objective of government is to serve its people more efficiently” (p. 33). Contrariwise, Nalbandian (1999), viewed the primary goal of government as “creating conditions that ensure, foster, or encourage responsibility” (p. 185). This means creating responsibility in the people who work for the government.
In many political arenas, from the local to the federal level, no one opposes the concept of efficiency, but in practice many people in government are perplexed about how to administer programs. The problem is that the public demands more services and benefits than it is willing to pay for in taxes (Teske & Schneider, 1994). Entrepreneurial leaders find ways to overcome these obstacles, just as their Progressive forebears did when they imposed the rationality of bureaucracy on the political machines. Some have developed sophisticated strategies to overcome political and bureaucratic obstacles. A few of the elements “that make fundamental change possible include goals, leadership, vision, and trust” (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992, p. 327).

There are three generic categories of entrepreneurial activity.

First, innovation can be closely tied to the use of strategies. Public entrepreneurs use innovation in creating ways to inspire citizens and government workers to pursue a new product or service. The entrepreneurs believe, in fact that they can innovate by developing a new idea or policy and use these innovations to challenge existing institutional arrangements and the terms of ongoing debates. Second, leadership includes elements of rhetoric and management; rhetorical skill coupled with managerial skill an important combination for an entrepreneur. Rhetoric can be used to inspire and motivate workers and thus attack internal collective-action problems within hierarchical organizations. By instilling a sense of mission, some leaders can produce more outputs than others with the same set of input. Providing such leadership may be even more important for political entrepreneurs because constraint slack is more likely in public bureaucratic systems. Public sector entrepreneurs face constraints in improving production and performance. Some entrepreneurs successfully overcome such constraints and achieve more with less. (Schneider et al., 1995, p. 47)

Third, “arbitrage which includes the adaptation of innovation across different markets or arenas. An entrepreneur should understand how change works and put knowledge to productive use throughout the departments and agencies” (Schneider et al., 1995, p. 47). An innovation that offers the possibility of solving a persistent and
difficult problem and that promises a clear advantage over existing solutions for a critical mass of people "will have a higher degree of acceptance than one that appeals only to a select group or does not appear to address a felt need" (Kouzes & Posner, 1993, p. 263). When enough of these elements are present, "even the most politicized environment will give way to change. It is inevitable, just as the transition from machine rule to Progressive government was inevitable" (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992, p. 325). As the public "grumbles and wants change, it still takes a period of time before an innovative can shift the old paradigm. Then, local leaders begin to adjust, developing new practices and new vocabularies" (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992, p. 322). Nalbandian (1999) brought up the community paradigm, in which the manager is more open to building community ownership of issues and projects and to seeking the assistance of others in the community in doing. Local government administrators must be able to move in this direction if they want to maintain effectiveness and influence.

Teske and Schneider (1994) conveyed that City Managers’ leadership is the only bureaucratic variable crucial to successful policy implementation:

Entrepreneurial City Managers have what it takes to persuade the staff to implement their policies. Their first option is to use control and hierarchy to achieve an optimal mix of incentives and monitoring techniques to influence subordinates. Another approach for entrepreneurial City Managers is to master motivational and communication skills to inspire workers to work toward organizational goals. (p. 337)

In summary, state and local institutions are leading the way to entrepreneurial government. During the 1900s, local government evolved from holding the dubious distinction of being the most troubled component of the American system of
governance to becoming the most trusted one. This evolution was accomplished through a series of radical changes that began in the early part of the twentieth century, continued throughout that century, and is generally known as the progressive reform movement (Hansell, 2000a).

City Managers work in complex environments. Local economic and fiscal conditions are constantly changing, and the preferences and policy demands of politicians and citizens also change; this can lead to roadblocks. As Teske and Schneider (1994) pointed out, entrepreneurial City Managers face an internal world defined by the political, legal, and economic setting in which cities exist. The goals, strategies, and constraints faced by entrepreneurial managers differ across the two domains.

Building relationships, supportive networks, and new organizational structures is as important to successful entrepreneurship as is technical innovation. Many contemporary innovations designed to exploit new technologies, to produce new products and services or new business processes rely heavily on an ability to produce new organizational structures. The ability to move forward requires particular entrepreneurial abilities. Entrepreneurial City Managers are those who “champion dynamic policy change in their community. Similar to other entrepreneurs, they engage in the act of creative discovery or exploiting new opportunities to set in motion their outlook and position” (Teske & Schneider, 1994, p. 332). Entrepreneurial City Managers can also turn inward,

trying to improve the efficacy of their work by promoting teamwork and inspiring their workers to implement more efficient policies. Solving these types of problems is a task facing every government manager, but for entrepreneurial managers seeking change, the need to motivate workers to be more
productive and conform to new styles of service delivery is even greater. (Teske & Schneider, 1994, p. 339)

According to Schneider et al. (1995), the demand for entrepreneurs can be viewed as fundamentally a function of two factors:

1. the rate of change in the technologies of production and
2. the rate of change in citizens’ preferences.

More rapid change in either of these factors leads to greater demand for entrepreneurs to present new alternatives. The benefits reaped by entrepreneurs are a function of powers and resources they can hold. (p. 75)

More specifically, in local government, the tax base and budgetary slack of their local community may provide an opportunity for a successful entrepreneur to reallocate resources to achieve policy goals.

Osborne and Gaebler (1992) emphasized that more government officials need to have an entrepreneurial spirit. They added that today’s entrepreneurial leaders “know communities are effective when families, neighborhoods, schools, volunteer organizations, and businesses are healthy. Further, government’s most profound role is to steer these institutions to health” (p. 30).

Much has been written about running government like a business. There are two main arguments surrounding this issue. First, many authors believe that running government like a business is not good for public service. Box (1999) believes that market-driven new managerialism can run counter to self-governance because it is structured around the notion of happy consumers rather than involved citizens. This is a problem because government is not a business from whose product consumers can voluntarily decide to purchase. Despite the intention of new public management, market concepts are not likely to remove the practitioner from policy making because
government is so complex that citizens and elected representatives cannot act alone (Box, 1999). Nalbandian (1999) has pointed out that the governmental role does not lend itself entirely to the service model of the private sector. According to Kobrak (1996), the reinventing government argument does not, in and of itself, constitute a model of governance. The dilemma in seeking a reasonable balance between approaches in the face of demands to run government like a business is that operating with private sector entrepreneurial techniques in the public sector can undermine values of openness, fairness, and public propriety. The public administrator may take on the appearance of an independent actor separated from the public, less concerned with the public interest and more concerned with making money and maximizing individual power and freedom to act without review (Box, 1999).

Conclusion

Corporate activities have been a vital force in shaping American society, and businesspeople and corporations often have been instrumental in determining public values. The success of corporations in the private sector has had a marked influence on American political and administrative thought. Probably no political or administrative philosophy reflects business and corporate ideals more clearly than the city management movement (Stillman, 1974). Early writers on the subject frequently compared the corporation's board of directors to the city council. The City Manager was often likened to the corporate manager. The very concept of the city charter that centralized administrative authority under a single manager was closely related to the
idea of a corporate charter that gave legal authority to the business firm (Childs, 1965; Stillman, 1974). Economy and efficiency, twin values of the business community, frequently have found their way into the literature on the City Manager (Berkley & Rouse, 1994; Stillman, 1974). Stillman furthered the discussion by building on the writings of Childs. He emphasized that the council-manager plan corresponds to the general manager under a board of directors in a business corporation. Such a plan provides the stability of the combined judgement of many individuals on matters of policy, but leaves execution to a single-person controlled executive establishment (Stillman, 1974).

The City Manager plan was developed and consistently supported by the Progressives as a major reform to local government. The form and simplicity of the manager concept ideally suited the Progressive philosophy: A competent manager would partially and rationally administer public policy established by a nonpartisan council. The manager concept was the perfect compromise between the two streams of Progressive thought, where the one saw the need for centralized planning and the other advocated decentralized grass-roots participation in public policy making (Stillman, 1974).

Progressives achieved both of these seemingly contradictory ideas in the council manager plan. On one hand, many Progressive writers argued for a better planned, more rationally administered society that would resolve the pressing urban problems of the day. The manager plan would achieve this purpose by centralizing the administrative functions of community government in the office of a single trained expert.
On the other hand, the commitment to grass roots participation was not forgotten. Boss rule was eliminated and power was decentralized by the election of the council and council members at large, frequently on a nonpartisan ticket. Every citizen could be included in the policy-making process by the way of the ballot box. Two apparently irreconcilable Progressive ideas—“equality of participation and centralized administrative authority”—were thus neatly balanced in the manager plan (Stillman, 1974, p. 28).

The leadership of the City Manager has a direct effect on this form of governance. The contemporary City Manager includes visionary leadership as a part of his or her strategy to have a better run city. According to Nanus (1992), “a vision is little more than an empty dream until it is widely shared and accepted. Only then does it require the force necessary to change an organization and move it in the intended direction” (p. 23). Leaders who understand the key to connecting people in a meaningful way is to persuade them to change their perceptions about what is important to them and for the organization. Getting a commitment achieves this end. The key to gaining widespread commitment to a new vision is to present the vision in such a way that people will want to participate and will freely chose to do so (Nanus, 1992).

The literature suggested that the formula for successful visionary leadership is shared purpose, empowered people, appropriate organizational changes, and strategic thinking (Nanus, 1992; Oster, 1995; Sashkin, 1986). Sashkin revealed that for a visionary leader to put a vision into action, the leader must be able to communicate and operationalize the vision. Further, the leader must express and explain that vision
through words and actions in three ways: strategic, tactical, and personal. Effective City Managers are skilled in crossing the boundary between political and administrative actors, in seeking consensus, in building coalition, in mediating, in implementing, in managing change, and in resolution conflict. The City Manager needs visionary leadership. Rapid changes within city government and outside forces such as public policy initiatives and technological innovations will test the city’s ability to grow, change, and continue to deliver the quality of service that city officials pledged to provide (Bezold et. al, 1997). Visionary leaders view change as an opportunity to create new alternatives and take calculated risks. Viewing the city as a series of interconnected relationships will help in understanding both the overall operating environment and the city’s microenvironments. In addition, by applying entrepreneurship to the current organization, City Managers can better identify areas in which the greatest improvements can make.

For private sector entrepreneurs to attain their goals, it is vital to improve trust in relationships and support networks.

This is important to the pursuit of their goals. Their networks and relationships enhance the influence of entrepreneurs in the policy domains within their jurisdiction. These networks magnify the individual’s influence, pool resources, and create synergism. Public entrepreneurs capitalize on their connections to establish and maintain supportive networks within their particular policy communities. (Stillman, 1974, p. 59)

Entrepreneurs are defined by their vision of opportunities and their willingness to take risks to pursue that vision. The public entrepreneur brings these talents and connections to the public marketplace (Lewis, 1980).

The effective modern City Manager needs to produce much as the visionary
leadership of the Founding Fathers resulted in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. The visionary leadership of Abraham Lincoln eliminated slavery and preserved the union (Nanus, 1992; Phillips, 1997). The entrepreneurial spirit of Andrew Carnegie, J. P. Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, and others built the great industries that enabled this nation to grow and prosper. And thousands of visionary leaders – such as Theodore Roosevelt, Thomas Edison, Susan B. Anthony, and Martin Luther King provided direction at critical times in U. S. history (Phillips, 1997). This study will extend the discussion of how a City Manager puts the city’s vision into action and the role of VLT. VLT has identified attributes, and an attempt was made to determine whether these attributes are the same as those used by City Managers or whether these characteristics have been replaced by others.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe the experiences of City Managers and to identify the factors that had enhanced or hindered their use of visionary leadership. This dissertation is focused on how City Managers applied visionary leadership to local government. In doing so, they worked to develop shared purpose, empower people, bring about appropriate organizational change, and engage in strategic thinking (Oster, 1995; Sashkin, 1986). In this study, the City Managers were studied as visionary leaders, with particular interest in how the City Manager translates the vision for the city into action in the complex environment of municipal government.

This study has focused on understanding the critical dimension of visionary leadership in local government, particularly when used by the city manager. In deciding to pursue a particular topic for study, one is influenced by many experiences. When moving from the private sector to the public sector, one is faced with many unanticipated differences in leadership-skill requirements between the two sectors. The contrast between public and private sector philosophies and leadership styles was of interest to the researcher because of her experience in the two sectors, variations in the public sector from municipalities to the federal government, the need to function more efficiently and productively at every level, the fact that many administrative
positions are now filled by persons from the private sector, and the requirements for
today's public managers, which are so different from the skills needed to build the
bureaucracies of the 1930s. Coping with these challenges requires visionary leader-
ship and entrepreneurial spirit.

By analyzing similarities and differences in city managers, the researcher
hoped that an awareness of the importance of City Managers as visionary leaders
would emerge, as well as an awareness of the methods employed by City Managers to
put their visions into action. The intention of this examination is to generate a higher
order, or metalevel, of understanding of the process by which the City Manager puts
the city's vision into action. By studying the experiences of city managers, the
researcher hoped to discover how they became successful at putting their city's vision
into action. It also was important to learn the implications these findings may have
for the educational development of public managers in the future.

The experiences of City Managers as chief executive officers were examined
in relation to the issues of leadership, putting a vision into action, and entrepreneurial
spirit. The research question addressed in this dissertation was: How does a City
Manager put a vision for the city into action? The researcher's intention was to learn
how the City Managers overcame environmental challenges, how the vision for the
city was put into action, and how the City Managers garnered support for the vision.
Also of interest was how the City Managers developed strategies and structure to
implement the vision. There have been many studies of how successful executives in
the private sector use visionary leadership. However, officials in local government
face challenges and constraints not found in the private sector. Some of these challenges are regulations, legislation, elections, unions, managing public employees, and budgets.

In this chapter, the research design is explained, and selection of subjects is discussed. Data-collection procedures are described, and data-analysis techniques are explained.

Research Design

This qualitative study was undertaken to gain an understanding of how City Managers put their visions into action. A descriptive design was selected to reflect the experiences and interpretations of the participants. An attempt was made to describe how City Managers developed strategies and structures to implement their visions. There have been many studies of how successful executives in the private sector use visionary leadership. However, officials in local government face challenges and constraints not found in the private sector. Some of these challenges are regulations, legislation, elections, unions, managing public employees, and budgets.

Qualitative research is based on the discovery, exploration, insight into, and understanding of the perspectives of those being studied (Creswell, 1998). It is an umbrella concept that includes several forms of inquiry, and helps in understanding the meaning of what is studied. Qualitative researchers are interested in the meanings people have constructed, how they make sense of their world, and the experiences they have in the world (Creswell, 1998; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Creswell
explained that the main task of qualitative research is to discover the ways people in a particular setting come to account for, perform, and manage their daily actions.

In this study, a qualitative research approach was used to reflect the innovative styles of selected city managers from Oakland County, Michigan. The researcher drew on studies of exemplary leaders such as *Three Scientists and their Gods* (Wright, 1988), *Unsung Heroes* (Ricucci, 1995b), and *The Administrative Behavior of Federal Bureau Chiefs* (Kaufman, 1982).

This was a phenomenological study. Phenomenology is the act of trying to understand the total reality of the consciousness of someone who experiences his or her world in a certain place and time. This methodology is used to capture the experience in process, as lived by the interviewee (Creswell, 1998). The researcher interviewed City Managers to hear their descriptions of what their world was like for them, in an attempt to understand this world in their own terms (Creswell, 1998). These city managers, as examples of visionary leaders, were studied to determine the experiences, methodologies, and strategies they had in common when putting a vision into action.

According to Seidman (1991), the purpose of in-depth interviewing is to gain an understanding of the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience. Patton (1990) emphasized that at the heart of such interviewing is an interest in other individuals’ stories because of their worth. Rubin and Rubin (1995) said that the researcher’s task is to present the experiences of the interviewees in compelling detail and in adequate depth so that those who read the study can connect with
those experiences, learn how the experiences were established, and deepen their understanding of the issues reflected.

Patton (1990) explained that good interview questions should be open ended, neutral, singular, and clear. The questions should permit participants to respond in their own terms. In this study, the City Managers were asked to define visionary leadership and to explain how they put their city's vision into action. The interviews took place in the city managers' offices. It was important that the participants were comfortable while sharing their thoughts. The first interview with each City Manager lasted from one to two hours. Follow-up interviews were scheduled as needed.

The interview process provided an empowering experience for the city managers who participated in this study. It gave them an opportunity to give voice to their experiences. More important, the flexibility of the interviews allowed the researcher to explore the meaning of the experiences of City Managers in their leadership roles, as shaped by both internal and external forces.

Additional data were gathered by researching the city's history and documents, such as the city master plan, budget, city charter, and a vision statement. To gain additional insight about each city manager, the researcher attended two council meetings. The researcher's observations at those meetings provided an additional perspective on how the city managers operated directly with city council members. Particular attention was paid to interactions between the City Manager and the council president.

Interviews also were conducted with council presidents, department directors,
and municipal association officials who interacted with the city managers. When the researcher was unable to conduct a face-to-face interview, a telephone interview was held. These additional interviews helped the researcher guard against being misled by the biases of a single source or a single data-collection method.

Subject Selection

Selection of subjects began by identifying visionary city managers in Oakland County. Oakland County comprises 61 cities, villages, and townships. According to Oakland County's 1998/1999 Community Profiles Manual, it is the third wealthiest county in the United States. The National Association of Counties (NACO) has recognized that Oakland County is fast becoming recognized as one of the nation's most dynamic, high-tech work places and premier locations in which to live, work, and raise a family. The county's success, according to NACO, is based on its well-managed cities. Hence, the county provided an excellent sample of well-run cities led by visionary city managers.

The sampling strategy was purposive rather than random. It was purposive because the city managers were selected from dynamic city settings in Oakland County to facilitate a better understanding of how a city manager puts a vision into action. The specific purposive sampling approach was based on the snowball and convenience sampling techniques (Creswell, 1998; Patton, 1990; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). According to Creswell (1998), in snowball sampling, participants are identified by conferring with people who know the City Managers. Convenience
sampling was done according to the principle of availability and ease of data collection, hence the researcher's focus on a few cities in Oakland County.

In this study, the selection of subjects through snowball sampling involved talking with key informants in the county (directors of the Economic and Planning division and officials of the executive branch), state (managers of the Economic and Development Corporation), and the media (Oakland Press community reporters and Detroit News Oakland reporters). The researcher asked these informants to nominate city managers they had worked with or observed who, in their opinion, were visionary, innovative, enterprising, cutting edge, forward thinking, and pioneering. The researcher assured the informants that their names would remain confidential.

For several reasons, the researcher was confident that the managers these informants mentioned would be credible subjects. First, informants were observers of the community, and they had been trained to respond to public inquiries. When the informants nominated a city manager, they did not just pick someone in response to the researcher's query, nor did they avoid taking the task seriously because it was too much work. Second, the informants provided the researcher with specific information about what the City Managers they named actually did; these activities were almost always examples of dynamic change in policy and innovation in their communities. The City Managers profiled here developed and took innovative steps in their communities. The researcher validated the sample by ensuring that the City Managers selected for study appeared on at least three of the four informants' list.

The pool of city managers was further refined by identifying cities with a
vision statement and those that had received an award given by the National Civic League (NCL) or the National League of Cities (NLC). The All-American City Award given by NCL recognizes exemplary communities that, in the League's view, can teach other local governments and their officials how to face difficult situations and meet those challenges in innovative and collaborative ways. The NLC gives the Innovation Award to local governments and their chief administrators in recognition of their creative and successful programs. In summary, participants for this study were selected based upon receiving one of these national awards, service for at least five years in local government, appearance on three of the four informants' lists, and the presence of a vision statement in the city. A profile of the City Managers chosen for this study is given in Table 1.

Data Collection

A variety of methods were used to gather data for this study. This was important, as many authors have noted, because of the importance of gathering data from multiple sources. Using a variety of methods of data collection leads to triangulation of the data. Triangulation was achieved in this study through the use of interviews, document analysis, and observations. Triangulation ensures greater internal validity (Creswell, 1998). Reliability was also a concern in the collection of the data. Reliability is the extent to which the findings of a study can be replicated (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). According to Tashakkori and Teddlie, reliability increases when two or more informants are consistent in explaining the same
Table 1
Profile of City Managers

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<th>Manager 1</th>
<th>Manager 2</th>
<th>Manager 3</th>
<th>Manager 4</th>
<th>Manager 5</th>
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<td>Commission/Manager</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years as a City Manager</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>M. A.</td>
<td>J.D.</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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phenomenon in the same setting. Rubin and Rubin stated that, rather than reliability, qualitative researchers should think in terms of dependability, i.e., that the researcher's results make sense based on the data collected. Strategies that were used to ensure that the results were reliable and dependable include triangulation of data and an audit trail documenting the data collection.

Once City Managers were identified who met the study criteria, the researcher telephoned these potential participants. She described the study and asked the City Manager whether he would be willing to participate in the study. If the City Manager
agreed, an interview date was scheduled and a confirmation letter sent to the
participant.

Data were collected through face-to-face interviews with the City Managers. Interviews with council presidents, department directors, and municipal association officials who interacted with the City Managers interviews were either face-to-face or telephone interviews. All interviews included both open-ended and close-ended questions (see Appendix B). All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. Identifying data were not shared, and the participants' names and cities were not identified.

Following brief introductory remarks, the researcher began each interview by attempting to put participants at ease by outlining the research process and reminding the participants that confidentiality would be maintained. This introduction gave the participants a better feeling for who the researcher was and her expectations from the joint venture. Signatures were secured on an informed consent form (see Appendix C) before each interview.

The first few minutes of each initial interview focused on the city manager’s history as a leader and his vision for the city. The body of the interview addressed the principal research question: How do you put the city’s vision into action? The final discussion dealt with the meaning behind putting the city’s vision into action: Why is putting the city’s vision into action important? The City Managers were all asked the same series of key questions. This provided a common research frame that proved useful in comparing City Managers’ responses (Creswell, 1998; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).
Many of the interview questions were addressed to the other participants. The interview questions were geared to the participants' positions in city management or their thoughts regarding how they believed a vision should be enacted. Careful consideration was given to each interview question, keeping in mind the focus and the types of responses that asking specific questions could elicit. Even though a written script was used to guide the interviews, the goal was to remain spontaneous. Some questions were posed in response to information that emerged during the actual interviews.

Before conducting the interviews, the researcher attempted to learn about the cities and City Managers participating in the study. She did extensive library and computer research to uncover relevant newspaper articles and media releases. Municipal documents, such as the city master plan and budget, as well as the City Managers' vitas, were examined. The researcher constructed a historical view of the cities from the library and county documents. As a result, valuable interview time was not wasted seeking information that was part of the public record.

The researcher conducted a pilot interview to ensure that the questions yielded the data needed for the study. The City Manager who was interviewed in the pilot made suggestions for how to capture more data about putting a vision into action. The researcher then decided which questions to eliminate or reword. The final questionnaire used in the study included the recommendations from the City Manager pilot interview.

The interviews with non-City Managers focused on how the City Managers
used visionary leadership. The non-City Manager participants from the sample cities included various department directors, council members, and officials from municipal associations (see Tables 2 and 3). The questions posed in these interviews pertained

Table 2

Department Directors and Council Members Interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Position Held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council member 1</td>
<td>President Pro-Tem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council member 2</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council member 3</td>
<td>Commissioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council member 4</td>
<td>President Pro-Tem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council member 5</td>
<td>President Pro-Tem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director 1</td>
<td>Police Chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director 2</td>
<td>Human Resource Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director 3</td>
<td>City Planning Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director 4</td>
<td>Executive Assistant to the City Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3
Municipal Association Officials Interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Type of Association</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Association Official 1</td>
<td>National Association</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association Official 2</td>
<td>State Association</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association Official 3</td>
<td>National Association</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association Official 4</td>
<td>National Association</td>
<td>Deputy Executive Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association Official 5</td>
<td>National Association</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

to putting a vision into action and interviewees’ observation of the City Managers. The discussion with association officials included the future of the City Manager’s role.

Data Analysis

Before analyzing the data, the researcher coded the information from the interview transcripts, field notes, observations, and city documents. The coding methods for the interview transcripts were drawn from Creswell (1998) and Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998). The transcripts were subjected to phenomenological analysis using a methodology described by Creswell. Following Creswell’s suggestions, the
researcher reviewed the data with these questions in mind:

1. What connections are there among the experiences of the participants who were interviewed?

2. What do you understand now that you did not understand before you began the interviews?

3. What revelations were there?

4. What corroboration was there of previous instincts?

5. How have the interviews been consistent with the literature?

6. How have they been inconsistent?

The research data were coded in Ethnograph on a Thinkpad. The researcher sought patterns and themes from the data. Meanings were formulated by spelling out the intention of each significant statement, such as participants’ descriptions of what are visionary leadership traits, how visions are implemented, and methods that managers use to gain cooperation. Clusters of themes were organized from significant statements. As a result, themes common to all of the participants’ descriptions emerged. The emerging themes were categorized as follows:

1. The responses contained a definition of visionary leadership.

2. The responses contained evidence of strategies for putting a vision into action.

3. The responses contained evidence of overcoming challenges to putting the vision into action.

4. The responses contained evidence of a formula for successful visionary
leadership.

Other emerging themes were included as discovered.

The researcher first analyzed the interview responses from individual participants, which provided an overview of each interview and themes from the interview. Then a thematic analysis was done across each interview. Such a sequence of analytic steps conformed to Creswell's (1998) suggestions. He argued that understanding individual assessments (before they are aggregated in any way) is the best guarantor for theoretical assertions that are grounded in specific contexts and real-world patterns.

The findings were not identified according to specific participants. Each participant and each city was assigned a pseudonym. The interview responses were confidential. Because this was a phenomenological study, the researcher looked for commonalities in human experiences and bracketed the responses to search for those commonalities (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). The researcher read through the interviews, noted similarities and differences in responses, and then used pattern coding to identify common themes. Although the entire sequence of responses by City Managers and the key stakeholders was examined, the researcher distinguished between responses generated by the research questions and those given in answer to probes. For example, if the City Manager mentioned the results of an implemented vision the researcher might inquire about the implementation, but indicated in the notes that she had probed to obtain that information.

The researcher prepared the data-analysis results by briefly describing each of
the City Managers, and by using quotations from the interviews that illustrated common themes as well as typical responses. Transcripts from the interviews were used primarily to confirm the relevance of themes across the sample. Excerpts that illustrated important points of consensus or disagreement were included in the report of findings. The researcher’s observations, responses from non-City Manager interviews, and content analysis of pertinent documents were used to describe the participants more fully and to fill in descriptions of putting the vision for the city into action.

The data analysis ended when the researcher reached the position described by Creswell (1998), Rubin and Rubin (1995), and Seidman (1991). Seidman and Creswell recommended that the data analysis should be closed when all sources of information have been exhausted and when the analysis begins to extend beyond the boundaries of the issues and concerns guiding the analysis of the study. Rubin and Rubin added that the goal of data analysis is to integrate the themes and concepts into a theory that offers an accurate, detailed, yet subtle interpretation of the research arena. The analysis is complete when the researcher believes he or she can share with others what the interpretation means for policy making, for theory, and for understanding the social and political world. The results of the data analysis are reported in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine how a City Manager put their cities' vision into action. In this chapter, the interview data are used to describe the experience of five City Managers from Oakland County, Michigan. These City Managers identified environments and methods that showed how they put their visions into action, as well as the perceptions and the outlooks they had concerning the use of visionary leadership. The expressions of the visionary leadership are presented from the interview data. To augment the discussion, excerpts from the interview data with the stakeholders are included to support the findings.

Data collection took place during the summer of 2000. The views of the five City Managers and other stakeholders from their cities were elicited through the interviews. In all, 19 interviews were conducted. Presented first are descriptions of Oakland County and of each City Manager and his city. Next, the City Managers’ experiences and views will be presented, using excerpts from the interviews and shared data by stakeholders. In the discussion, each participant and city is given a pseudonym. The City Managers are referred to by manager and number (e.g., Manager 1, Manager 2) and the corresponding cities are given the same number (e.g., City 1, City 2). The council members, department directors, and association officials from each city are
referred to in the same way.

Overview of the County

Oakland County, Michigan, ranks as the third wealthiest county in the nation among those with populations of more than one million. According to the *Oakland County Book of History* (1999), Oakland County grew out of Macomb County. The first settlers in this county came from Mount Clemens in 1816. The Graham family started out from Mount Clemens in the summer of 1816 to “look land” for a new home in the interior for their family. They followed the water route up the Clinton River and penetrated the interior as far as the present city of Troy, beginning a new epoch in immigration in Michigan. Up to that time, settlements in Michigan had been made on the site of navigable waters. The first settlers’ notes described the location as being “brushy oak land.” Erecting a temporary shelter, they remained there for a time, but returned to their home for the winter.

From these humble beginnings, Oakland County, Michigan, has flourished into a wealthy county of 61 cities, villages, and townships with 1.2 million residents. According to the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments’ (SEMCOG) 1996 census data, the average house in Oakland County costs $177,997, and the median household income is $57,360. The unemployment rate is 2.8%, compared to 6.9% in 1993. This county is fast becoming recognized as one of the nation’s most vibrant and foremost locations in which to live and work.
Overview of the City Managers and Their Cities

Five City Managers in Oakland County, Michigan, were the subjects of this study. In this section, each participant is profiled, and his city is described. An overview of the five cities is given in Table 4. Characteristics of the five City Managers are synthesized in Table 5.

Table 4
Overview of the Cities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>City 1</th>
<th>City 2</th>
<th>City 3</th>
<th>City 4</th>
<th>City 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form of Government</td>
<td>Council/Manager</td>
<td>Council/Manager</td>
<td>Commission/Manager</td>
<td>Council/Manager</td>
<td>Council/Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Population Range (est. 2001)</td>
<td>75,000 - 85,000</td>
<td>75,000 - 85,000</td>
<td>55,000 - 65,000</td>
<td>25,000 - 35,000</td>
<td>75,000 - 85,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Capita Income</td>
<td>25,499</td>
<td>21,098</td>
<td>18,065</td>
<td>14,192</td>
<td>23,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Land use for Commercial/Residential</td>
<td>8%/46%</td>
<td>13%/49%</td>
<td>7%/62%</td>
<td>12%/43%</td>
<td>5%/54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>55,507</td>
<td>40,579</td>
<td>36,835</td>
<td>31,757</td>
<td>51,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5

Summary of City Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Manager 1</th>
<th>Manager 2</th>
<th>Manager 3</th>
<th>Manager 4</th>
<th>Manager 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form of Government</td>
<td>Council/ Manager</td>
<td>Council/ Manager</td>
<td>Commission /Manager</td>
<td>Council/ Manager</td>
<td>Council/ Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Sex</td>
<td>White Male</td>
<td>White Male</td>
<td>White Male</td>
<td>White Male</td>
<td>White Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
<td>J.D.</td>
<td>M.P.A.</td>
<td>M.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous Position (*)</td>
<td>Deputy City Manager*</td>
<td>Director of City Planning*</td>
<td>City Attorney*</td>
<td>City Manager (smaller city)</td>
<td>Deputy City Manager*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members on Council</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports to</td>
<td>Majority of the Council</td>
<td>President of Council</td>
<td>Mayor (President of the Commission)</td>
<td>President of Council</td>
<td>Majority of the Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor elected separately</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Manager 1 – Attract and Retain

The first settlers came to City 1 in 1822. This city was incorporated around in the 1950s. This city was a farmland until the mid 1960s. In the late 1980s, City 1
became known for serving four basic customers: residential dwellers, business owners, employees of local corporations, and visitors. City 1 has a high profile as a result of its success, which is based on the fact that the city council took proactive measures to establish strict standards for buildings, preserve green space, and institute setbacks. City 1 boasts excellent schools, a range of fine residences in all price ranges, and accessibility to all travel routes.

This city prides itself on the fact that the local government is in the forefront of directing attention to infrastructure, which makes this community attractive to families and business. The city management gives considerable attention to blending into the city. Older facilities are prepared for redevelopment, while new facilities are built. The municipality emphasis on blending has lead to stability.

This city operates under a council-manager form of government. The mayor and six members of the city council are elected to staggered 3-year terms. By a majority vote, the council appoints a City Manager, who is responsible for all administrative functions according to the city’s charter.

The economic condition of City 1 has steadily improved throughout the past decade. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) projects an increase in this city’s population and employment opportunities in the next decade. The city’s economic outlook indeed appears to be bright.

The City Manager is proud of this community and believes it has been built on the principles of attracting and retaining its business community and residential area. According to Manager 1, the accomplishments of this city include that it:
1. Created and began implementation of Brownfield Redevelopment to incorporate the development of the older section of the city.

2. Received a 98% approval rating of city government services from residents and businesses in a survey conducted by an independent research firm.

3. Completed reconstruction of major highways and streets ahead of time and under budget.

4. Received advance construction monies based on preliminary engineering in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).


6. Graduated the first class of the new Citizens Police Academy.

7. Hosted the city’s first Home and Garden Awards honoring 18 households for their beautification accomplishments.

Manager 2 – Leading Corporate Community

City 2 is located in southeastern Oakland County. This area was first settled in 1823, when the potential water power of an available river originally attracted people. From the earliest period of City 2’s history, settlers have established businesses that quickly became the lifeblood of the community. The community steadily grew and became a major player in the development of the automobile industry. In 1958, the city was incorporated, and its subsequent organization was carefully planned to
balance zoning between residential and business areas, with an emphasis on attracting business. These efforts were so successful that today, City 2 is considered one of Michigan’s leading corporate communities.

This city operates under the council-manager plan of government, with seven council members who serve 4 years terms. The mayor is elected in a separate race and also serves a 4-year term. Although the city was incorporated in the 1950s, the city charter was defeated three times.

Manager 2 touted the following achievements of the city:

1. The continued commitments of its businesses ensure that the city will thrive.

2. This city continues to impress Wall Street with its high financial rating, which places City 2 in the top 10% of Michigan locales.

3. The Community Relations Department provides information and assistance to let community members know what services are available to them.

4. This city offers a diverse range of activities and services for its residential and business populations.

Manager 3 – Residential and Governmental Stability

The first public survey done for this city was in 1815. According to the Oakland County Book of History, when the surveyor’s report was presented to the governor, it declared that this city was incapable of being cultivated. The governor decided to make a personal inspection of the territory in the mid-1800s, only to find
that there were enough marshes to sink his horse, as well as those of the traveling party. Even though the area was viewed as little more than a glorified bayou, the city was chartered in the early 1920s.

This city selected the commission-manager form of government. The commission consists of six commissioners and a mayor, and constitutes the legislative and governing body of City 3. The commissioners' terms are staggered. The three commissioners receiving the most votes serve 4-year terms, and the other commissioners serve 2-year terms. The mayor is elected for a 2-year term.

The City Manager interacts with residential, business, educational, and other groups to exchange views regarding their needs, the city's needs, and available resources to meet those needs. In short, the City Manager's office works interdepartmentally and with other municipalities and agencies to develop and administer city policies and programs.

The City Manager prepares the city's annual budget for the city commission. Further, City Manager assesses the city's financial status and confers with the community, elected officials and employees regarding such issues.

Manager 3 was proud that the city has:

1. The ability to maintain and improve a healthy downtown center as a desirable business address that integrates expanded commercial, entertainment, office, residential, retail and service uses.

2. The resources to improve both the function and visual appearance of the major commercial corridors within the city, while protecting and enhancing
neighboring residential areas.

3. The capability to recognize the economic, social, and cultural importance of its commercial corridor and pursue the improvements needed to enhance and maintain its vitality.

4. The capacity to provide a transportation system to facilitate the safe and smooth flow of motorized and nonmotorized vehicles and pedestrians.

5. The wherewithal to provide recreation land in the form of community parks, neighborhood parks, mini-parks and recreational facilities that are convenient, accessible, and meet the needs of the city's residents.

6. The foresight to provide community facilities and services that contribute to the overall improvement of the community and goals of the master plan and meet the needs of the community.

Manager 4 – A Contender

City 4 was incorporated in the 1950s. This city has matured into a full-fledged urban center, leaving behind its humble beginning as a farm area. The existing city charter provides for a council-manager form of government. The legislative and executive body of the city consists of a mayor and six council members.

City 4 experienced various growing pains during the late 1950s and 1960s. The population flourished, with a resulting need for housing, a new fire station and a civic center. Business and industry expanded, several new schools were erected, roads were paved and improved, and library and recreational facilities were expanded.
according to the *Oakland County Book of History* (1999). The city has by no means solved all of its problems, but by and large, the residents of City 4 have valid reason to take pride in their city’s growth and continued development. City 4 was recognized in a local magazine article as a contender in Oakland County for emerging high-tech firms. The author, an economic development specialist, explained that the city is a contender because of its municipal services and the ability to respond to business needs.

The City Manager was proud to share the following accomplishment that occurred under his guidance:

1. The implementation of a canine police unit.
2. The addition of a simulated fire area training system for the police officers.
3. The completion of advanced life support services for paramedics.
4. The replacement and rebuilding of local roads.
5. The availability of technology and Internet access for more efficient library service.

**Manager 5 – Quality of Life**

The primary mission of City 5 has been to look at the various city operations and services to ensure that each of the departments believes in the city’s vision. This is essential if the city is to maintain and further improve its quality of life. The city addresses essential community needs in the areas of public safety, community maintenance, public health, basic utilities, improved transportation, beautification, cultural
development, education, and justice. In essence, there is an extremely broad and overarching spectrum of issues that the municipal government must address as it looks to the future. It is with this thought in mind that city leaders began the development of a strategic plan in 1995 that would better enable them to develop a vision for the city.

Many changes have occurred since the early 1970s, when the township became City 5. This dramatic growth has occurred through the development of almost all of the city's vacant property, many physical improvements, numerous public service and community improvement initiatives, and the expansion of city services. By the 21st century, the city was 27 years old and had matured from a large township form of government to a full-service city with a population of more than 80,000 people.

Manager 5 thought that the city had come through this period of growth extraordinarily well. He believed the city had been able to maintain many of the characteristics of the community that were revered by the early city leaders and by the thousands of residents who have chosen to live in the community. Manager 5 believed the city had been able to do so because of good planning, strong commitment by leaders of past city councils, a dedicated work force of professional municipal employees, and hundreds of community residents who had volunteered to serve on many of the city's boards and commissions over the years to improve the quality of life. The City Manager thought the challenge would be to maintain this record. He also hoped to develop a planning document whose vision would then provide an instrumental and integral
resource as he and the city leaders look ahead.

The City Manager’s primary objective was to develop a vision and a strategic plan that could be widely embraced. Manager 5 believed planning was essential. He anticipated that the strategic planning process would yield a final product that would set forth what was indeed acceptable, possible, and most important, achievable. This would be the challenge of the city council and the city administration as they moved forward. Manager 5 wanted to solidify a consensus around a strategic plan that would, in fact, become the vision for his future direction. Manager 5 hoped that, thanks to the plan, the city council and city administration would understand the importance of the issues that had been identified by various department heads, the relevance of these issues to the city’s future, and hence the need to deal with these issues. This would entail some critical decisions, which will be one of the most difficult, yet important, endeavors of all.

Manager 5 identified several trends relative to urban public management that were worthy of consideration as City 5 planned for the future.

1. There is a trend toward more neighborhood-based initiatives and a consequent move away from a more pluralistically based focus on issues.

2. There is a strong resurgence in community activism, due in part to broader availability of information and media exposure of government at all levels.

3. There is a renewed focus on government treating citizens as customers and providing quality service—running government like a business—with more broadly expected responsiveness.
4. There is a perceived need for less government at all levels and a desire for tax reduction. At the same time, public safety remains an area where downsizing is not occurring, as public safety remains the paramount local concern of the citizenry in general.

5. The trend toward regionalism and cooperation in the provision of services has proven to be ever more valuable when joint problem solving has led to reduced costs.

6. Advances in technology, such as the information superhighway, are in their infancy, but have much potential as the city moves into the future.

7. There is a prevailing view that citizens will not care much about any proposal that a unit of government might make unless such changes render a higher quality of services as measured by a demonstrable standard.

Results and Discussion

In this section, the ideas that emerged in the interviews in response to the question “How does a City Manager put the vision of the city into action?” are presented and analyzed. The City Managers’ means of putting the vision into action are examined and compared as they relate to successful implementation. The focus of this section is on common patterns and themes that emerged in this investigation and on similarities and differences in the managers’ approaches.

In analyzing the data, the researcher used a coding scheme through which the responses were grouped into three categories: visionary leadership, putting a vision
into action, and the importance of visionary leadership to a City Manager. In the ensuing pages, the results are discussed according to these categories.

**Visionary Leadership**

Sashkin (1986) said that visionary leaders “have the cognitive ability to create visions, understand the key situational characteristics that must be incorporated into their visions, and are behaviorally capable of carrying out the actions needed to turn visions into reality” (p. 58). Morden (1997) added that: “visionary leaders are able to generate a vision that others can believe in and assume as their own” (p. 66). Further, “transformational leaders can facilitate the creation of an organizational vision of an idealized leader,” stated Ackoff (1999, p. 21). This vision promises a better state than the existing one and may necessitate a major change of direction. They also encourage the quest for a long-term vision even though certain sacrifices need to be made in pursuit of it. Such leaders use vision to build a bridge from the present to the future of the organization.

The City Managers in this study explained visionary leadership as guiding principles for setting the priorities established by the council—the city's governing body. In addition, Manager 1 believed that purpose and professionalism are the driving forces of visionary leadership: “you have to have an objective to strive to achieve, especially in a professional organization—like our city.” Manager 2 explained the employment of visionary leadership as follows: “they use the vision in terms of the guiding principles for decisions. The vision statement provides for the longer term
direction of the community.” Managers 3 and 4 saw visionary leadership as the guiding principles and plan for the city. “You have to have an idea of where you want to go,” explained Manager 3. “You have to decide on the goals,” Manager 4 said. Manager 5 summed up the vision as being for the betterment of the city and residents:

In my mind the vision for the city is to have it be a viable community that is sustainable, provides an excellent quality of life; all the options someone is looking for in terms of educating their children, recreational offerings, safety, security, and a community that know what it is after. So I guess a well-rounded community that provides for its residents is all the things that they want.

Many different approaches were taken to the development of the city’s vision. The process began by developing an understanding of the current status of the city so that the outcome of the visioning process would position the city for its future direction. External forces such as economic conditions, legislative beliefs, and technology determine the shape and the future of the city. Each city developed a method that would expedite the visioning process and yield positive results. The commonality was that every city and City Manager recognized the importance of having a vision, while differences among cities were with what process was used to develop the vision. The method the cities used to develop their vision are shown in Table 6.

The City Manager and his staff working with council approval to develop a vision was mentioned most often. Building the vision is a team effort. In the course of building a vision, the team acquires the ability to think as a group about issues. It develops not only a vision, but also strategies.

Department Directors viewed their role in the development of a vision as contributing to the vision and a plan for the city. Director 2 described the process as
Table 6
Development of the City Vision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development of the City Vision</th>
<th>Times Repeated by the Five City Managers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop with staff and City Manager and given to Commission/Council for approval</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Established the vision from directions and priorities developed by the Commission/Council</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used an outside facilitator to work with City Manager, staff, mayor, and council</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed with the citizens’ committees, City Manager, and staff with the approval of council</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed with staff, mayor, City Manager, and council</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

follows: "The development of the actual statement consists of the department heads getting together. I think the process of being included in the development was real important. It is the components that help us to carry out the goal." Director 1 noted: "It took us almost three months to develop the vision statements. It is not just something where you sit down at a meeting and say, ‘Do you believe in this?’" Director 1 realized the advantages of having a vision statement, and he later developed a vision statement for his department.

It was formulated from a plan I obtained from the National Fire Academy, where you define vision statement and mission statement to the entire department [and] then you ask a series of questions of the entire department. You as a department head get a good idea of the direction in which your department should be going.... Then you write it, rewrite it and compare the two when you see what direction the mayor and the council want to go in.
Similarly, Manager 1 developed a mission statement and a vision for each department: "Each department has a vision and mission statement that we evaluate every year and a service statement as well."

The association officials also mentioned the need for a vision statement. In developing such a vision, the key stakeholders should be the City Manager and staff because their daily activities give them the best perspective on the city’s direction.

Association Official 2 explained:

You listen to your staff and give them the feeling that their input has been not only sought, but valued. I think the staff should be clearly involved at the discussion level when the visioning process takes place so that they sort of hear and understand what the various points of view are that the city council is going to be struggling with. Fundamentally, it just goes back to being a motivator—a person who can then effectively communicate with the staff and get the staff to buy-in to the fact that these are decisions that are right for us, these are decisions that are in our best interest as far as a community is concerned.

This respondent added that another stakeholder in the success of building a vision is the community.

Association Official 4 pointed out that developing a vision statement:

was done through initial discussions with the manager’s key staff and the department directors. Then we moved into a discussion with the city council members and the various boards and commissions. We [also] spent some time bringing various interest groups together to talk about it.

He added:

I think the role of the City Manager in creating a vision for the city is more to be an initiator, a catalyst, and a broker. In an effort to bring community groups, neighborhood groups, business groups, educational groups, and the various interest groups together to create that vision, I do not think the City Manager should impose it. I think the person can stimulate and provide the environment in which that vision can be created because if it is just the manager’s vision, we’ll know. A large role to play is providing the stimulus to cause the vision to come about. I think all those should be employed. Now
the ultimate responsibility for finalizing the vision rests with the government body, which in this case is the city council, and that typically, in a well-managed city, is done in consultation with the City Manager.

He continued:

Obviously, you have your key management staff in the organization and representatives of the various employee groups. You have your city council and their various boards and commissions that they appoint to do some of the work for the city in specialized areas like the park commission, planning commission and so forth. Then you have various identifiable interest groups, the business community, public school districts, religious community, and associations. Every group that has a representative body should be involved in these discussion. And then you also have the opportunity to use a survey instrument to get a grasp of where the public need is with the key objectives for the city.

Association Official 1 explained:

The manager has the capacity to help the council and through the community develop a long-term vision. I think that is imperative so that the strength of the manager is not so much that he or she has their own vision for the community, but rather that an effective manager has the capacity to assist and support the political leadership of a community to create that vision.

Association Official 5 said that through the development process, the vision has to give direction to the city:

You are trying to say what is the evolving picture of this vision. You have to be devoting time, while you are making those crisis judgment decisions, to the development of where you want to go, then the development of that and the sharing of the vision, and they sort of bind into that vision. But once there is that sort of sense of where the community is going, it is the manager’s job to implement that vision.

Association Official 5 sums up the vision development process:

The citizens are the owners of the community; they have to participate with the formulation of the vision. The development of the vision is to show where the community is going. The vision needs to be developed in a style that is all-inclusive, and then it has to be accepted by community and all the stakeholders.

All the stakeholders believed visionary leadership is important to city
government, particularly the City Managers. The City Managers understand that 
visionary leadership is the guide and the driving force to the future. The city’s vision 
has to be realistic so that it can make things happen. Equally important, it must be 
widely understood and embraced throughout the organization and by the stakeholders, 
if it is to produce results. That is why the City Managers emphasized when setting 
out to create a vision, it is of great significance to include all the stakeholders in the 
city’s organization—that will be touched by the vision in the development of the vision 
early on.

Putting a Vision Into Action

The five City Managers shared their provisions for and approach to putting a 
vision into action. These participants were forthcoming in their responses about how 
to make the vision a reality. The City Managers have invested a great deal of effort in 
developing a vision for their city with the hope of securing its future.

This exploratory study began by drawing on existing criteria and determinants 
identified in the literature. These were shared purpose, empowered people, appropri­
ate organizational changes, strategic thinking, communication and operationalization 
of the vision (Nanus, 1992; Oster, 1995; Sashkin, 1986). Nanus (1992) added that a 
good vision must be appropriate for the organization; set standards of excellence, clar­
ify purpose and direction, encourage enthusiasm and commitment, reflect the unique­
ness of the organization, and expand the organization’s horizon. Table 7 shows the 
how the City Managers transition a vision into action.
Table 7
The Methods Used to Succeed in Putting a Vision Into Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Statements</th>
<th>Times Repeated by the City Managers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Develop a plan of action</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Plan for multiple years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Give clear directions for what you want to achieve</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Meet with the staff early to develop plan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Have timely meetings with staff</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Encourage staff to get involved</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Include staff ideas in the development</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Commit resources (time and money)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Keep council informed of the goals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Connect with the community</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Share information</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Keep the community informed of the directions of the city</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Set priorities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Plan for two or three fiscal years out</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Provide the opportunity for employees to take ownership of the issues</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Delegate authority and responsibility to employees</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Lead by example</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significant Statements</th>
<th>Times Repeated by the City Managers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18. Demonstrate your work ethic by example</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Have good communication with staff</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Have staff become part of the decision-making process</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Show appreciation to the staff</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Keep lines of communication open with staff</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Get commitment from council</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Establish communication between council and staff</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Build trust</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Work as a team (City Manager, Council and Staff)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Have the council trust that the City Manager is capable</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Treat employees with respect</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Manage the different factions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Common Themes**

The interviewees had a great deal of experience in working with local government. They shared the skills, provisions, and abilities they thought were important in putting a vision into action. As shown in Table 8, the researcher classified the themes
that emerged from the interviewees’ statements into eight categories: communication, council relations, empowerment, commitment, shared vision, leadership, teamwork, and planning. The City Managers believed these attributes and provisions would lead the staff and city council members or commission members to buy-in to the city vision.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Statements</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>3, 19, 22, 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Relation</td>
<td>9, 23, 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>7, 15, 16, 28, 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>4, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Vision</td>
<td>6, 10, 11, 12, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>17, 18, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>5, 20, 26, 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>1, 2, 14</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Communication. The importance of communication was mentioned in every interview with City Managers, department directors, council members and association officials. Communication was emphasized because of the need to keep staff, council members, and the community informed. The better people are informed, the easier it is to implement the vision. Another form of communication that the interviewees often mentioned was that between the council and the City Manager, which allows for clear and direct transmission of the council's message. This can happen only when the council members and the City Manager are comfortable with each other.

Manager 3 emphasized the importance of communicating with the commission:

We have a very good dialogue with our commissioners, individually as well as collectively. I think our city is a bit unique as to other communities. We have a tremendous number of committees that meet on a regular basis which involve citizens, and so there's always that dialogue between citizens and the elected officials, citizens and staff.

Manager 4 explained that without communication, the manager will not know the council's expectations, "I would say in whatever you do, make sure you have dialogue with the council and make sure they understand what is behind the vision."

Manager 2 said that giving the city council frequent updates will keep them abreast of progress: "We update the council through a number of means, mostly through study meetings with the council in which we provide them with regular updated progress reports."

The City Managers pointed out that the community cannot be excluded from
decisions. The community, the residents, and businesses hold strong opinions that need to be included and are integral to the direction of the city. Manager 2 commented:

If you get the communication going with the residents and the business people, they may say they would like to have more commercial, less office, less whatever and then that helps formulate the vision in a little more detail as time goes on. So a lot of the communication is with constituents.

Manager 1 said about staff: “I think communication and keeping the lines of communication open between everyone involved is important.” The City Managers believed that communication among council members was imperative. Manager 4 stated, “The communications have been pretty good among the council members.” Manager 3 remarked:

I think one of the benefits that we have had is the fact that we, on an on-going basis, discussed potential projects with the commissioners, and we have a good overview of what the city commissioner is doing at the moment.

Manager 5 pointed out the importance of having clear and concise communications from the council:

For me it happens at council meetings, when they enact ordinances, motions, and resolutions that take us in a direction. I need them to give clear direction so they can thoroughly communicate it to me and I know where they want the staff to go; then it is easy to implement.

If there is disagreement about the vision Manager 5 added, “their vision was not the direction in which we should go, we [staff] give them the reason why not. So communication is a big part.”

The association officials concurred with the City Managers that communication is vital to putting a vision into action. Their remarks emphasized the need for
communication throughout the city. Association Official 5 stated: "The key element is, [if] I was saying it in one word, I would say communicate, communicate, communicate." Association Official 1 explained "that what the manager communicates to department heads and how the manager recognizes department heads is important; it is the way of reinforcing." Association Official 2 highlights the City Manager communication abilities, "I think a motivator is a person who can effectively communicate with the staff." This respondent emphasized the need for communication by pointing out that the City Manager needs to be able to communicate with the mayor and the council. He brought out the importance of City Managers using all forms of communication:

I'm also a great believer in technology, and I would encourage City Managers to communicate as much as possible using e-mail, hoping that council members in today's world are hooked up with e-mail. So you can instantly send out some communication, get some feedback and get some instant response from them without having to wait for two weeks [until] the next meeting.

The Association Officials further explained that communication is a crucial skill that City Managers need. Association Official 5 added that communication takes many forms "the City Manager requires pretty significant interpersonal communication skills, written communication skills, and probably far beyond those that would be anticipated by the sort of traditional local government manager's education." Many of the municipal associations viewed the importance of communication as such a vital element of the community's vitality that they conducted and offered opportunities to assist the City Managers and local government with communications. As Association Official 3 said, "we do a lot of work with City Managers and local government who
have a desire to communicate a citywide conversation about the community's future.”

The directors also shared their views of the importance of communication.

Director 1 began:

You've got to be able to communicate, [and] you've got to be firm. That means you have to be careful in what you do in that position because your subordinates—the people that are under you in the organization structure—will pick up your habits and behaviors.

Director 1 cautioned: “Be extremely careful of what you say. Be extremely careful as councilpersons in how you talk to each other on TV. Your department heads pick it up. Then it will run through the whole department.” The City Manager needs to hold staff meetings so that communications can flow. As Director 3 described it, “The City Manager needs at least one staff meeting every week, where everyone gets a chance to share information about whatever is on the agenda.”

The council members believe communication with the community is important. Council 5 asserted, “We need to have constant communication with the residents and resident groups. We have a very active homeowners association so we get feedback from them on a current basis as well.”

Council members also stressed the importance of communication on the part of the City Manager. Council 4 stated, “He has to have a clear understanding of the communication between the council and himself so he understands what we are really getting at, and then he has to have a very practical understanding so that he can turn that into work to make that happen.” Council members did not see their job as extending communication to staff. As Council 5 expressed it, “The City Manager needs that skill to deal with staff.” Council 4 explained, “He has to understand the
spirit that we are creating the vision in and be able to impart that same spirit. At the same time, he has to keep communicating to us.” Council 2 said: “I think he’s got to keep all department heads on board as to what the council is thinking.... I think that is number one. It starts with communication. I think number two is a real understanding of the city and the constituents.”

Council members also indicated the importance of communicating to residents. As Council 2 pointed out, “He [the manager] has to have the ability to have lines of communication with all of those groups. That is a tough task, but I think it is an important vital task.”

Discussion of Communications. Each City Manager recognized the importance of keeping citizens informed through the use of newspaper articles, community newsletters, state of the city addresses, and a city web page. Yes, despite using all of these mechanisms, the managers were frustrated with the number of citizens whom these communications missed. Manager 4 served as the communication buffer between council and staff. Managers 1 and 5 thought community surveys were a vital communication tool and a means of getting feedback from citizens. Manager 5 explained:

We have a newsletter we put out quarterly, using that as an opportunity to let people know the issues that are on the table and the vision. People will let you know what is going on. That is an important part of keeping the vision current and still having the overall vision.

Although the City Managers, directors, and association officials believed communication is important, they emphasized multiple directions those communications
can take. The council look at their communication from the top down to the City Managers, who in turn look to their staff. Councils emphasize communication with the community. Elected officials are concerned with the politics of the community and their next election.

**Council Relations.** Throughout the interviews, the City Managers stressed the importance of keeping council members informed on the vision/implementation progress. In three of the cities, the City Manager and staff developed the vision statement, and it had to be confirmed by the council. In the other two cities, the council members were involved in developing the vision statement. These two cities developed the city’s vision statement at council retreats or sessions led by an outside facilitator. The development sessions included council members, the City Manager and department directors.

From the perspective of all of the City Managers, the most important point was keeping the city council informed. Managers did this by having a good working relationship with the council. The City Managers also believed the council needed to work together. The model city charter, developed by the National Civic League, describes the powers and duties of a City Manager as being the chief administrative officer of the city responsible for day-to-day operations. This responsibility includes keeping the governing body informed. Manager 1 explained how he kept his council informed: “Around the first of October, I let the council know about the status of what we have sent everyone out to do from January 1.” He added that the City Manager needs to keep the council focused:
If you do not have specific goals and objectives, I think what will happen is you will move forward on one project, and something else comes up and you are told to move forward on that one. So there is no synergy of cohesiveness in what you are doing; it becomes more of a political process in a negative sense as opposed to a professional process. You become more reactive instead of proactive.

Manager 5 noted: “It helps me have an understanding of their role and them understand and appreciate my role.” Manager 4 advised, “Spend time from the start making sure they understand what those goals are. Then take those goals and create something like [a work plan] and share that with the council so they know what to concentrate on.” This focus is critical when new council members are elected. As Manager 1 put it:

...the beauty of having a mission statement with goals and objectives. Because once you develop this slate of goals and objectives and you go through it, every October someone new comes along and says: “I want to do this instead.” I will say, “well, that is fine, what don’t you want us to do at this point? By the way, you have to get three of your colleagues to say they do not want to do something so they can do what you want to do now or you can wait until October and we can talk about it then and try and get it in as part of the process for next year.”

Manager 5 said that when a new council member was elected, the current council members would not change their objectives:

The council sometimes may have to police themselves a little bit in that regard to new council members. You sometimes see where that can go on, where the mayor or a more senior councilperson might say to a new person, ‘this is how we do it’.

Manager 2 concurred:

You can rely on those who have been around a little bit longer on the council to reinforce the previous vision and try to work with the new council people to provide them with that sort of background information. Sometimes they are successful, sometimes they are not. The important thing with that is any change with the policy or direction requires a majority of the council members.
to make that change. So it is valuable to have some strong leadership on the council to help during that transition period.

The City Managers also called attention to council members' interactions with each other. Council interaction plays a part in getting the vision implemented. Manager 5 explained:

The council is working hard and working together. That is really important as a whole. I think you can tell when it is not going that way. It is fairly evident when you look at it. You can see how the council interact. There are always disagreements on things. There are a number of different ways to accomplish any goal, but if there is instability with people and personal attacks, people sitting back with their arms folded, and people talking or sort of disengaging versus listening with respect and trying to gain an appreciation of what is important to different factions, you can tell.

Manager 5 believed he was very fortunate:

I'm blessed here with a good staff and good people and I think part of that is because we have a good council and a fairly educated populace, which understands what's going on and they know they have a good city council and a good city administration.

Manager 4 pointed out that council intra-relationship strengthens the council:

It forces the council to come together and agree and set priorities and make compromises on their parts, so as a whole they have a list of issues. It gives the manager and staff an opportunity to take the lead by proposing things that we should be working on so we are in proactive position versus a reactive one.

For the City Manager to work in a proactive environment, the relationship between the City Manager and council must be built on trust. This is the key element. Council members need to trust the City Manager.

Manager 5 believed his relationship with the council members was built on trust. "I know where I am with the council," he said. Manager 5 contended, "you continue to build trust, and when the next project comes around or the next motion or
the next vision, you have a place where the trust is established and a relationship then
to achieve that. Try to establish trust first because once trust is lost it is very difficult
to get that back. It takes a long time; sometimes you never get it back to the level you
might have had.”

The separation of responsibilities may be well defined in theory, but in day-to-
day operations the line gets blurred (Saffell, 2000). Manager 2 confirmed that council
members wanted to cross the boundaries: “There have been instances where some
people have tried to get involved, but we have been able to convince them that they
are to tell us what they need to get done, and we will get it done.”

The City Managers thought the relationship between the staff and the council
was important. They talked about the need to sustain an environment conducive to
retaining staff. As Manager 2 summed it up:

it is important for me and the council to say we have retained qualified people
that know the business. It is their responsibility to report back to council.
Council makes the ultimate decision, but it is up to them to come back with a
sound rational decision.

The association officials took a strong stand on the importance of the City
Manager’s role in dealing with the council. Association Official 2 declared:

It is clearly the City Manager who has an important role with the council.
While I think it is an important role, I also want to make it clear that the
elected officials also have a responsibility to be aware of those same kinds of
dynamics that are going on in the community and bring recommendations to
the city council.

The Association Officials recognized there are many factors that affect the relation­
ship between the City Manager and the council. Association Official 2 identified the
factors that affect the City Manager’s ability to put the vision into action:
I think that the problems of implementing the vision for the city gets down to such basics as dollars. You can have all those wonderful visions about what you would like to do. Then reality hits, and you sit at the table at budget time and you start turning the pages and seeing where the revenue is and what the tax-dollar stream looks like compared to all types of expenses. You may not have the dollars for the vision.

He continued:

It is a lot easier for a manager to implement the decisions of a city council when the decisions are fairly clear and there is consensus. If you are implementing a decision that is on a split basis, then it is a complicated problem for a manager at any time. You can have a swing vote. On one issue the manager might say, “Well here is my recommendation,” and you know on the other issue a vote or two might switch all of a sudden. You know they want the manager to go in another direction. Part of the profession is dealing with elected officials who clearly have a right to change their minds and go in another direction if they would like to.

The City Manager’s position is quite consuming. This is why the directors believed the City Manager might not show leadership with the council. Director 3 explained:

City Managers are not there just to do what the council tells them to do, but [they] also lead the city council in some ways. They need to be able to lead in a very difficult world. That is why City Managers do not last that long—because they try to please a lot of people. It is a combination of doing what the city council has asked them to do, but also being able to provide leadership of their own. This leads to a short stay as a City Manager.

The council members believed a key element in vision implementation is the relationship between the City Manager and the council. Council 5 pointed out:

The City Manager is a professional who does this exclusively for a living and is trained in city management as such. He is in an advantageous position to help cities decide where they need to allocate their resources most efficiently.

According to Council 2, “The manager is put in the position to help you think out of the box, to bring you the data. But what makes that role difficult is when there is conflict.” Council 5 asserted, “Visioning is an important, constant appraisal, but also
maintaining a good working relationship between council and staff is very important because different people bring different perspectives to the table.” Council 4 explained:

The City Manager should come to the council with plans that meet the vision statement you have established. You ought to say “Hey, wait a minute, we can not go that fast.” I want to see a City Manager who has the entrepreneurial spirit and the vision to see what can take place, and we need to kind of slow him down rather than have to say, “let us go a little faster.”

Council I said that the City Manager, “...has to be a good smoozer. He’s got to have a rapport or relationship with the city council members.” The foundation of the City Manager’s relationship with the council is trust. As Council 5 pointed out: “We have to trust that the City Manager is behind the council on this, and I have not seen a situation in our town where the City Manager has been on a different side than the majority of council. Our council works very strongly by consensus. And part of that is facilitated by the personality of the City Manager.” He went on, “A good City Manager will back up his council.” Council 2 said, “The City Manager brings to us two things: data in terms of where we are, and to be used as a sounding board to set the stage for what we should be thinking about in terms of the future.”

Summary of Council Relations. The council’s relationship with the City Manager will dictate the success of the city. The model City Charter developed by the National Civic League describes the City Manager as the chief administrative officer of the city. The City Manager acquires his power and responsibility from the council (Stillman, 1974). The council is the chief governing body of the city. The City Manager carries out the policies set by the council and must keep the council
informed. The council cannot function without trusting the City Manager; trust is the foundation of their relationship. The council may dismiss the City Manager if they are dissatisfied with his performance.

**Empowerment.** Kouzes and Posner (1997) wrote that credible leaders accept and act on the paradox of power: people become most powerful when they give away some of our own power. The City Managers reiterated this paradox. They observed that one of the keys to putting a vision into action was having the staff believe their role was important and that they had influence on implementation. According to Kouzes and Posner, when people feel powerful, it gives them a sense of being in control of their experiences, which leads to their feeling able and willing to complete the task.

Manager 1 explained, “You should be focused to empower people and have a plan.” Manager 3 said, “I think one thing I have got to do is encourage staff to get involved and to participate as we go along.” Manager 1 advised treating people with respect and delegating authority and responsibility. “When a manager delegates responsibility, he or she also delegates accountability, so by having staff take ownership they also take accountability for issues and challenges as well.”

Only one council member identified the need to empower staff. Council 2 said:

I think the number one thing for the City Manager is empowering his staff, not just dealing with his seven or eight bosses. I think he has to keep the balance of what is best for the 800 personnel that are his soldiers, that carry out the tasks the council requires to be implemented. I think it is the toughest battle and toughest dilemma for the manager, day in and day out.
The Association Officials concurred that the staff needs to be empowered.

Association Official 2 stated:

Often times, a department head might not agree with a particular direction that the City Manager wants to take, but as long as that department head has the feeling that he or she has been given the opportunity for input, then when the final decision is made it is their responsibility to carry it out.

Association Official 5 said, “The traditional management roles of planning, organizing, delegating, and budgeting are being done more by the people who report to the manager. The City Manager empowers people to do these jobs, and that’s going to continue.” Association Official 4 thought that, “First of all, the City Manager’s interpersonal style has to be very open, fully open to have staff participate in the processes and empower staff.”

A person may be given an assignment, but if that person does not have the authority to do the job, the task will not be performed successfully. Director 1 explained:

You’ve a director that has no power. He has responsibility for a department but not authority. You’ve got a man running the department that does not have the power do the job. You have to give people the authority to perform the function so they will see some benefit from their action.

Summary of Empowerment. Empowerment has many meanings. Today’s managers are empowering staff to think for themselves and assume more responsibility. Technology empowers people to become explorers on the information frontier. Public servants are empowering each other as professionals by using the services of other public servants.

The word “empower” is not new; in the mid-17th century the meaning was to
invest with authority or delegate. Directors, association officials, and council mem-
bers in this study did not speak of empowerment as such. They did, however, speak
in a more general way of the need to enable or permit others to do certain things. As a
council member in City 3 stated, “managers need to be good delegators.”

Commitment. The vision that will be put into action must be able to arouse
City Managers and stakeholders enthusiasm. The City Manager must be convinced
that the vision is the appropriate direction for the city to take. More to the point, the
City Manager must be able to demonstrate personal commitment before he or she can
expect to gain commitment from staff.

According to Nanus (1992), the stronger the leader’s commitment is to the
vision, the more the followers will radiate optimism and enthusiasm. Manager 5
asserted:

If we tell someone we want to have an 80 acre sports park, here this is what
we need to do to get there. It is going to take time, money; it is going to take
commitment to do it if we are all on the same page working in the same
direction.

He continued:

People have got to see that you believe in that vision and that you intend on
having it carried out. You have to lead by example, and you have to be
engaged in it and not just talking it but walking it too. That is very important
because people, I know, people are watching me all the time, elected or not.

The City Managers agreed that they needed commitment from the council.
Without the council’s commitment, it would be impossible to move the vision for-
ward. The managers recognized that the surest way to gain council commitment was
to get the public involved. Manager 4 described it thus: “The more the process has
the involvement of the public, the more the council was willing to embrace and endorse.” Manager 3 said that resources needed to be committed: “When a project comes to light, the advisory committee should step up to the plate and address it and commit dollars that are needed.”

City Managers invest their time in generating trust and consensus for the vision among their staff. The outcome the leaders want is to have their staffs committed and dedicated to implementing the vision. Manager 1 advised:

make sure you have positive people there who are your volunteers because when they are positive, that person has more of a sense of commitment to the community as a whole and is more concerned about the community, as opposed to just themselves.

Manager 5 concurred:

When you have good department heads, it makes my job and council’s job a lot easier because they are taking care of business. Beginning now, you should not have to work overly hard at getting them invested in where you are going when it make sense and it is logical and it is what the community wants to see and you know that. It is fairly easy to get them invested in the right thing.

The City Managers viewed themselves as professionals; therefore they could implement a vision that they did not believe in. Manager 1 pointed out that he could implement a vision that he did not believe if it was the best option for the city and it did not conflict with moral standards. Only one manager in the sample had implemented a vision that violated his standards. In contrast, Manager 2 was the only one who resisted implementing a vision that he did not believe in because “it needs a cheerleader, a guide, a person at the top who strongly supports and is willing to go to the line or go to the mat. Otherwise it is sort of a phony attempt.” Manager 1 also
discussed this issue:

I have had slated projects and I was asked to have a different priority and that became my priority and my staff's priority. It was just a matter of value judgments in terms of what you go through. If I thought it was a health, safety, or welfare issue I would not. But if it's not a health, safety, or welfare issue or just a matter of you wanting to build this street first instead of that street, that is fine with me. If I wanted to build the golf course and they said no, then we would not build a golf course. I would not have a problem with that as long as it met my standards. I would not want to speak negatively. There may be some managers who may have an organization that is really tight financially, and there may be a series of cutbacks. It may be hard for that manager to go beyond what he or she feels is reasonable to maintain the cultural professionalism that is important to keep the people. So aside from the moral threshold, there's also the professional threshold. You have to operate within that range without being compromised.

Manager 3 concurred with Manager 1, saying that as long as the council was changing his priorities, he would be able to implement the vision:

I don't recall specifically any problem such as that. I have always felt that I have been able to give my input and at least it's been considered, so I do not think we have ever had any major project that I was totally against. I might have prioritized things a little bit differently, maybe, nothing of any type of magnitude that would result in any friction.

Manager 4 expressed his view:

I think it is a responsibility of what the council wants. As long as it is within the scope of the charter, it's only a matter of preference or priority. If we feel the council is committed to it, we may just try to make it the best we can and do it.

The council members noted that the City Manager is required to implement the desires of the council. As Council 1 said, "He is the guy that has to pull everything together to make it all work." Council 4 believed that the City Manager's duty is to take the vision and move it forward. He stated, "He has to understand the spirit that we are creating the vision in and be able to impart that same spirit throughout himself
and into his staff and the department heads.”

The association officials agreed that, as professionals, City Managers must implement the council’s decisions even if these are not the options the Managers would have chosen. Association Official 1 stated: “The City Manager works for and is appointed by the city council. It is imperative that this relationship is understood. Any interaction or long-term commitment has to be done in the context of the community.”

Association Official 4 asked:

the city council for their connections to the vision because if they are not committed to it and you think they are, you are already off to a bad start. So you really need to make sure your body is connected. You need to do your own research.

Association Official 5 suggested that the City Manager needs to verify the commitment of the local governing body:

Do as much talking to as many people in different categories as you can about that vision. Understand it thoroughly yourself, have a good idea of it, and then really confirm that vision. Have some sessions with your council where you do not talk about today’s crisis, land use, or what have you. You talk about that vision, did we all buy into this vision?

It is a necessary to commit resources to a vision. As Association Official 5 said, “If there is no commitment of resources, whether financial or human, the staff will not buy in to a vision.” Director 1 summed up the general view of the directors of the department: “If you do not believe in it or have a part in it, you will not adhere to it.”

Discussion of Commitment. Nanus (1992) emphasized that the key to gaining
widespread commitment to a vision is to present the vision in such a way that people will want to participate and will freely choose to do so. This certainly cannot be done through coercion or manipulation, for people must freely and enthusiastically accept the vision or they will not have the energy or excitement to work for its fulfillment. The City Managers in this study realized they must show commitment in order for the staff to commit. However, they also looked for commitment from the council. Commitment is the workhorse that is needed to implement a vision and convert it into reality. Manager 5 summed it up by saying:

Actions, words, deeds, all of the way I act at council meetings they sense, and in my case I hope they know that I am engaged in this thing. I am here for the long haul. I live here. I have invested in it and I am not just invested in the city aspect of it, but all the other aspects of it—social and cultural. I try to be out and about doing things because that’s how I want to be, not just here to do the job. I was brought up to be invested in where you live, and it makes a big difference.

However, the City Managers expressed concern about working with a vision they did not believe in. They said their professional pride would ensure that they would implement the vision as directed. In this regard, the association officials emphasized the City Managers’ professional pledge to carry out the vision and the council’s decisions. Association Official 2:

I think good City Managers who are worth their salt, are required by their professional background and training to recognize their job is to implement the decision of the majority of the council. Whenever they get themselves into a situation where they do not feel they can do that, they simply have to move on to another venue.

Shared Vision. Shared vision is about common concerns and common caring (Kouzes & Posner, 1997). For a vision to be effective, it must be well understood
and widely shared in the organization. City Managers often are amazed to learn that, although they are sure of their sense of direction, the message has not reached lower levels in the organization. The managers in this study emphasized that the vision has to be shared with the staff and council. If the staff does not share the vision, they are less likely to commit to it. The sharing should begin as early as developing of the vision with the staff. As Manager 5 explained, "I think you have to share information. You have to be part of the process and not just tell them, here is the vision; go do it, but have their input in it as well." He continued:

The overall vision, I share that with the community and the city council. That has not changed in the 10 or 11 years I have been here. I see where the community wants to take itself and where it wants to be.

Manager 3 encouraged staff members to take their ideas to the commissioners so that the staff would know their input was important:

We get information on things that are on the horizon before they actually come to the council. Because of this I think many people have an opportunity to say, "Well, if we are going to do that, we might want to look at this." I will send them to the commissioner and say, "You know, we had a meeting and we talked about something you might want to consider."

Manager 3 summed up the importance of sharing the vision: "I think part of it is on an ongoing basis. People feel that they know what is going on and they are at least part of the decision-making process."

One council member thought the council's role was to impart information to the City Manager, who must share it with the staff. As Council 1 explained, "The City Manager has to be able to listen well and take in all the information. I think it is very important to listen to the council and the people around you." Council 5 thought staff
should be included at the initial goal setting session, "At the goal-setting session, the council works together with staff, not just the City Manager, and comes up with concepts they really think we need to address."

The vision should be widespread through the organization to ensure that people understanding the direction the city has chosen. This can be done through department meetings, according to Council 3, which provide an opportunity to make certain there is a shared sense of direction. He stated:

Having a vision and having a plan for the future allows the department heads to share in a good deal and to communicate at one staff meeting every week, where everyone gets a chance to share information about whatever is on the agenda and sort of be friends, like a big family.

Association officials agreed that sharing the vision makes the staff feel included and develops teamwork. This fosters buy-in, even when the directors may not think the direction taken was their first choice. As Association Official 2 pointed out:

Often times a department head might not agree with a particular direction that the City Manager wants to take, but as long as that department head has the feeling that he or she has been given the opportunity for input, they know that when the final decision is made it is their responsibility to carry it out.

Association Official 5 concurred: "It has to be a shared vision. Once the vision is shared, it sort of binds them to that vision." He explained, "The vision needs not to be developed by somebody sitting, dreaming, or driving around by themselves. The manager has to have skills in collaboration and in networking so the vision is shared in the development stage." Association Official 1 adds:

The manager has the capacity to help the council and the community develop a long-term vision. I think that is imperative so that the strength of the manager is not so much that they have their own vision for the community, but rather an effective manager has the capacity to assist and support the political
leadership of a community to create that vision.

The vision must become a part of the staff and the department. It must be what the organization can live with. As Director I explained, “You look at what they believe in as a person because you want that vision to be lived by each individual.”

Discussion of Shared Vision. Sashkin (1986) said that “if the vision remains an idea of leader—the leader’s property, not owned by the organization’s members—it cannot succeed. For a vision to succeed, it must by shared within the organization” (p. 60). Like any visionary leader, the City Manager must have the council and staff join in a shared vision of the future. The City Manager must persuade staff members that the vision is beneficial to the organization, as well as to them as individuals. The City Manager does this by identifying shared values and beliefs that will coordinate with the vision’s direction. A key function of the City Manager is to ensure that stakeholders buy into the vision.

Leadership. Leaders take charge, make things happen, dream dreams, and then translate those dreams into reality. Leaders attract the adherence of followers, energize them, and transform organizations into new entities with greater potential for survival, growth, and excellence (Nanus, 1992). Effective leadership authorizes an organization to maximize its contribution to the well being of its members and the larger society of which it is a part. If managers are known for their skill in solving problems, then leaders are known for being masters in designing and building institutions; they are the architects of the organization’s future (Berkley & Rouse, 1994).
Performance starts at the top. The leader should coach, motivate, counsel, and lead by example (Bennis & Nanus, 1994). The City Managers in this study confirmed these responsibilities of a leader. Manager 1 spoke of this:

By providing leadership that enables growth of our employees, that allows them to take ownership of the issues, and use their input. You need to lead by example and demonstrate your work ethic by example, too, so that people see what kind of organization you have and want to work there. I think providing leadership enables growth of our employees, allows them to take ownership of issues.

Manager 3 also spoke of his role as a leader:

I tell my people that as the City Manager, I can only do so much. I have to rely on every employee here to do their job. I call them to let them know when the people call in happy because the parks look so nice. It is because we have people out there, men and women, every day doing their job. I try to meet periodically with groups of employees and tell them what is going on, so that they understand, number one, that I appreciate what they are doing, I understand what they are doing, and I see what they are doing.

The City Managers pointed out that because cities are not homogeneous, they need different types of leaders. Manager 5 expressed it this way:

There are a lot of people who are not successful because they do not have that proper degree of balance, or they are in the wrong community, or maybe are not the best fit for the community. Communities need different things from their managers. Some need managers that are real taskmasters, discipline oriented, who drive people hard to achieve things; others need a softer approach and TLC involved. That is why fit is important. I think we as management professionals have gotten better because fit is a big part of it. Just because a manager wants to work in Community A, does not mean that is the right community. Headhunters that are involved in this field see that fit is a big part of it; not every manager fits in every community.

The City Managers believed that the manager needs to provide leadership to the council members. Manager 2 believed the council needed strong leadership to combat the many changes that face the city, such as elections, citizens' concern and
legislation: “Any change in the policy or direction requires a majority of the council members to make that change. So it is valuable to have some strong leadership on the council to help during that transition period.”

The council members in this study expressed a need to trust and depend on the City Manager, and the City Manager must earn that trust. Without the council’s trust, the City Manager will not be able to carry out day-to-day operations. Council 1 elaborated:

When issues come up, he kind of gives the direction. I know some cities give more of the direction to department heads, but in our case the City Manager has a tight hold on everything. He is the guy that gets hired by the city council, and he is the guy that has to answer for it from the city council. So he’s got to make sure he’s got the right department heads, the department heads that are going to do what he wants and how he wants things done.

Council 2 looked upon the City Managers as authorities along with their leadership ability, “I depend on that person to bring to us insight as a little bit of trying to get us to think out the box to where we might be.”

The City Manager can derive his authority by longevity, as Council 1 mentioned:

Really, the mayor should set the agenda and tell the City Manager what to do. In our case, the City Manager [in office] 22 years. He became the mainstay, the guy who kind of ran the show and got the approval or disapproval of the council.

Council 4 believed that the City Manager had “strong management skills” but was not a leader.

He did not take a strong, active part in the vision development, but was instrumental in helping us see some of the things that are already taking place. The statement was really something that the council put together along with a facilitator since the council is the managing board, if you will. This is the way we
want to see the city go, and then the end result of our statement was to give that vision to the administrator. The administrator's responsibility is to manage the city on a day-to-day basis to make this all happen. He was involved in helping us stay on track. These are the kind of things that are really done. He did not have veto rights over the vision that we saw.

Council 5's perception was completely different than that of Council 4:

A good City Manager may actually stand up at a city meeting and say, "we need to do this." The City Attorney may also back him up to allow the council to act in a way that is very responsible for the community without feeling the backlash of the residents.

The Association Officials described the leadership of the City Manager as inclusive. As Association Official 2 said:

Today's City Manager needs to have leadership skills, good interpersonal skills, a general notion as to how to motivate employees, and how to relate to the community that you work with. A good City Manager does not have to be the engineer you hired in the past.

According to Association Official 4, the City Manager has to have:

a participative style, as opposed to a dictatorial style. You have to be a tactful person, a good facilitator with a high level of energy and a capacity for innovation and creativity. You have to have high integrity with the various groups and be open to the use of technology. I think those are the kinds of skills a City Manager needs.

Association Official 2 described the City Manager's leadership this way:

One of the things about leadership that I learned when I was an Army Officer is that leadership often requires you to take the situation and lead people to an objective that they might not agree with. But they will ultimately do it and like it. A City Manager has to be in the same type of situation, where they take a situation they might not personally agree with, but it is their responsibility to get past that and articulate that vision to the community. I think the role of leadership comes in to play when you listen to your staff and give them the feeling that their input has been not only sought, but valued.

Association Official 3 pointed out, "I think he should be a catalytic or collaborative leader, a good facilitator, and a good listener—all those things." "The local
community needs to perceive the City Manager's leadership as the driving force,” stated Association Official 1. The manager needs “to be able to galvanize a community into what its vision will be.” Association Official 5 concurred:

People have asked me what contributions a professional manager brings to a community. This is the person who will pay attention to the long-term interests of the community. Next, this is someone who helps all the players, citizens and elected officials, understand that there is a relationship among various policies, there is a relationship among land settlement policies and land use policies and economic development and human interaction and social interaction building all over our suburbs.

As the directors described it, the leadership of the City Manager took on many forms. The City Manager had to lead both council and staff, and this required different approaches. Director 3 put it plainly:

I think a City Manager has to be a combination, nuts-and-bolts type of person. Successful City Managers somehow are able to lead the city council and not act like bullies, while doing what the city council wants them to do but not act like wimps. So it's a hard thing to do.

Director 1 explained, “You have to discipline yourself because the people that are under you in that structure will learn from you, whether you teach them or not. They will pick up your habits.” Director 3 described the Mayor and City Manager as follows:

The mayor will show up with the City Manager. The mayor will talk for 20 minutes, and the City Manager will never get a chance to talk at all. That’s totally not what I expect. I expect the City Manager to lead the city. I am more comfortable with the City Manager leading the city, and I think it works best. The City Manager is not a political person. I think the City Manager is an actual manager, more of an administrator that runs the city. It is like running a corporation except you got the public trust, public tax dollars, and a whole bunch of other rules that go along with that position.

Discussion of Leadership. Leadership provides the opportunity for a leader to
create an environment in which employees can accept and execute their responsibili-
ties with confidence and finesse (Ackoff, 1999). The City Manager is the driving
force to move the staff forward, provide suggestions and guidance to council, and pro-
mote the community’s interest. Director 4 summed up the City Manager’s leadership:

He has to be the type of person who is able to accept the policies of the city
council and implement those policies. The City Manager has a hard road to
walk because, on one hand, he cannot be the type of City Manager that can go
with the wind or whoever is elected. The City Manager has to stand firm on
some things that are right, without getting involved in politics. So, in essence,
the City Manager is trying to find that middle ground of managing and encour-
aging the elected body not to micro-manage.

Many of the council member who were interviewed described the City Mana-
ger as a manager and not as a leader. Berkley and Rouse (1994) defined a leader as a
person who has the authority to decide, direct, and represent the objectives and func-
tions of an organization, whereas they described a manager as a person who has the
authority to direct specific organizational resources in order to accomplish objectives.
The council members saw themselves as giving the City Manager the goals and objec-
tives they wanted to accomplish.

The new leader is no longer the biggest, strongest, loudest, or bravest. He or
she is the one who sees the goals clearly, repeatedly and forcefully shares the vision,
provides the tools, trains and enables co-workers to manage and improve their pro-
cesses, remains persistent in the face of adversity, and inspires others to take an
ownership position in the carrying out of the mission (Nagle, 1995). The new leader
no longer thrives on the glory of being first up the hill. In fact, she or he finds glory
in the whole team reaching the summit together, and then returning to the victory

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According to Phillips (1997), a successful leader is one who nurtures champions and is a hero finder. Phillips further said that leaders persuade. They change people's beliefs about what is possible and about what is considered necessary. They communicate a sense of urgency and purpose.

**Teamwork.** The City Managers in this study frequently talked about the necessity of enlisting others to buy-in to the vision. The city government should work as a team. The team concept is easier to attain when buy-in is achieved, because with buy-in the staff begins to work as a team. It is the City Manager's duty to find out what the staff's common aspirations are while sensing the purpose in others.

Cities today are looking ahead and plotting strategies for the future. The statement that today's goals are tomorrow's standards gives way to the notion that today's assets are tomorrow's liabilities (Hansell, 1993). Cities are looking forward to vision implementation, team interaction, and customer-driven delivery. The need for teamwork and buy-in is real. Cities need solid teamwork and buy-in to find creative solutions to put their visions into action. Manager 4 explained:

The best way for the City Manager to have influence in terms of the city vision is to get others to buy into the vision, particularly the council. To do that, we have found it beneficial to do consensus building.

The staff will buy into a vision as long as they believe they had input into developing that vision. Manager 3 explained it this way:

The first thing I do is meet with the individual department, like when we did the soccer improvement. It involved the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Engineering Department, so we literally set up a committee of various
representatives from the departments. I think people appreciated that because it involved a natural planning. I think that helped somewhat because everyone realized that they had input into the process. Often times that allowed me to say, “Gee, I didn’t even think of that,” and that is something you should think about before you even do the project. I think it lets people feel that they know what is going on.

The ability to work as a team occurs when the staff recognizes and believes that the city’s objectives and their individual objectives are similar. The staff can then believe in the process. According to Manager 5, “You’ve got to be in it together. I want the staff to know the city’s objectives and adopt them as their own.” As Manager 4 stated:

People do have their own individual interests, and you need to include them. We have found when individual interests are integrated with the city’s objectives, there is a good degree of buy-in from the staff. Staff appreciates council supporting different outlooks on things, but in the end staff knows it needs to come around to what the community wants to see, and how we translate that into action is the ultimate test.

Manager 2 explained that the City Manager needs to appoint directors who will have confidence in the city’s vision:

Department heads are typically appointed by the City Manager. That is an important part of the recruitment process, the appointment or selection process. Those people need to know what the vision is, and if they have a different philosophy or attitude they are not the right person [for the job]. An example is, you have a strong person who is in a pro-development community and you are dealing with anti-sprawl. You do not put that person in the position. That is probably one of the biggest examples I could come up with. You do not want to put someone in a leadership position that has an entirely different philosophy of the organization.

When people are invested and feel a part of the team, things work more smoothly and the staff wants to be a part of the operations. Manager 5 explained:

You should not have to work overly hard at getting staff to invest in where you are going, when it makes sense and it is what the community wants to see.
It is fairly easy to get staff invested in the right thing—it’s either they buy-in to
the vision or people coming in with a different vision or the agenda must go.

Council members explained that team building and establishing buy-in are
essential processes City Managers must undertake with their staffs. As Council 2
pointed out, “It starts with communication and a real understanding of the city and the
constituents.” Council 1 explained that the best way a City Manager can get buy-in
from the council is by involving the council early:

[With] the civic center plan, the City Manager [first] presented it to the coun­
cil. Next council requested to sit down with the developers, the designers,
[and] the futurist guy to have an in-depth study session. The City Manager
would get the meeting together with all the elements, people, presentation, and
showed the city council what we had in mind. The City Manager encouraged
the council to buy into it.

This council member continued by explaining the process the City Manager
engaged in with staff:

He sits down with the staff and the department heads about once every two
weeks and reviews their implementation plans and what they are doing in the
department. The City Manager is there if issues come up, and he gives the
direction.

The council members emphasized the importance of the City Manager ex­
plaining the vision to staff and department directors, which would result in teamwork
and buy-in. Council 4 stated, “He has to be able to interpret the vision in a way that
the strategy and the tactics are understood by staff. He has to handle the staff in order
to make this vision a reality.” Council 5 concurred:

A very knowledgeable City Manager can explain things from different per­
spectives to get everybody to buy into the same thing. The most important
part of the staff in dealing with someone like that is generally trying to get the
finance staff on board because it is finance’s job to say, “How are we going to
pay for that?” And that is a legitimate question.
Staff and department directors need information and a sense of belonging. This sense of assimilation needs to occur early as Association Official 2 explained:

The City Manager has to get the staff to buy in to the fact that these are decisions that are right for us. These are decisions that are in our best interest as far as the community is concerned. You have to give staff the opportunity to buy in early so they will view it as a combined effort and not the we or they syndrome.

Association Official 3 asserted:

To ensure that there is a sense of teamwork, the people must think that their voice is heard. They are part of the decision-making process. It is important for managers with a good team of people to back them up.

Association Official 4 advised City Managers to, “Make sure you surround yourself with the staff and start talking about how we are going to get this going and do the same kind of thing with city council.” The association officials stressed the importance of council buy-in. Association Official 4 said, “The main thing is the buy-in from your city council or city commission. They have to buy in to the process so they know they will be decision makers of the vision.”

The community needs to be a part of the team. As Association Official 5 explained, “The City Manager has to work with the citizens on development and buying into the vision. Let the citizens know it is not any single individual or no single appointed official, no single elected official.”

The directors emphasized the need to get early buy-in by inclusion. Director 2 pointed out, “I think the process of being included in the development was the real important thing.” Director 1 said:

We have got a nice guy as City Manager. That is not what you need as City Manager. You need someone that can do what? Motivate, nurture, guide,
direct, be fair, be firm and cause people to what? Come together as a team.

Director 3 reiterated that the City Manager has to earn the respect of the department heads in order for the department to buy in: "If he or she has the respect of the department heads, then they will fall in line. But the manager also has to look to his or her department heads to add to the vision of the city."

Discussion of Teamwork. Berkley and Rouse (1994) said that the new leader no longer thrives on the glory of being first up the hill. The leader finds glory in the whole team reaching the goal together, and then returning to plan the victory celebration together. Buy-in and teamwork help bring into focus effective cooperation, to embrace the vision. Once the stakeholders buy into the vision, they become a vital ingredient to transform the vision into action. The City Manager can build a team and build support through the practice of sharing the city's vision. Sharing the vision and information brings the staff closer because this fosters mutual respect and trust. Much of the discussion of teamwork has focused on the staff. If the staff do not buy into putting the vision into action, implementation will be a challenge because the staff are such an integral link. Further, by working as a team, the staff will have a shared commitment to and enthusiasm for the vision, in which all of the stakeholders can claim pride of ownership.

Once stakeholders move beyond their feeling of unattachment to the vision, they will bind themselves into a team. According to Kouzes and Posner (1997), the team will respond by pulling together to implement the vision. There are several good reasons for involving other people in the search for a new vision, rather than
attempting to undertake the search alone. A group approach ensures that the resulting vision incorporates a broad range of viewpoints and expertise (Nanus, 1996). The combined knowledge, judgment, and imagination of a group reduces the likelihood that significant factors or trends will be overlooked in the search for a new vision.

A participatory process allows the ideas of individuals to be tested, argued, amplified, and refined by the arguments of others. Comments by one individual in the group will often stimulate added insights in others, bringing many perspectives to bear on the problem. Thus, the quality of the resulting vision is likely to be much improved, as these different perspectives can illuminate important aspects of vision alternatives that might escape the attention of a single observer (Nanus, 1996).

Planning. According to Morden (1997), the leader uses vision to build a bridge from the present to the future. Planning can be used to determine mission, vision, values, goals, objectives, roles and responsibilities, and timelines. Planning is a management tool. As with any management tool, it is used for one purpose only, to help an organization do a better job—to focus its energy, to ensure that members of the organization are working toward the same vision, and to assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment (Berkley & Rouse, 1994). In short, planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it, with a focus on the future.

Long-range planning is generally considered to mean the development of a plan for accomplishing a goal or a set of goals over several years, with the assumption
that current knowledge about future conditions is sufficiently reliable to ensure the plan's reliability over the duration of its implementation. City Managers in this study who used planning successfully said that it helped move the organization from short-term to long-term thinking and helps integrate the vision and the mission. Manager 1 explained:

We use October to get a sense of what they want to see accomplished in the next fiscal year or two or three. That helps us to go back and frame a budget document, which is the vehicle to accomplish your mission and values if there is any price tag attached to it. I cannot think of one that is free—so that is where the budget is important.

Manager 5 asserted, “We try to plan 3 to 5 years out, thinking about that far down the road. That would be short term; long term would probably be 5 to 10 years. We operate more in the 3 to 5 range just because we need to be there financially, and otherwise it is more realistic a lot of times.” Manager 4 emphasized the importance of developing a document to work from day to day:

I would say spend time from the start making sure you understand what those goals are. Then take those goals and create something like a work plan and share that with the council so they know what is the plan.

Manager 4 continued, “What I’ll do is update this and add steps along the way. Goals never change, but as you go through the year the plan that you put together does.”

The major challenge is transitioning the staff to plan, particularly for the long term. Manager 5 stated:

I do not want to portray it as easy because we work hard keeping in touch with what is going on out there, but if there is a challenge it is getting people to think 5 and 10 years down the road when people are so busy with what is going on today and tomorrow. It is hard to make everyone look long-term down the road versus dealing with the citizens and concerns they just got off the phone. That is important and we certainly have to deal with the present, but
staff needs to look to the future.

Manager 2 concurred:

The employees are more short-term oriented than they are long-term, for the most part. Some of the departments have more long-term orientation, like planning and engineering, where they have to be construction oriented, looking long term. Other departments are more involved in day to day, whether it is the building department or code enforcement. They are what is happening today. But we try and instill among our department heads the long term vision, so that when they are done developing their work plans for the year it ties into the long term plan and vision. For the most part, we are pretty successful in doing that, but the department heads need to understand that long term is important.

Long-term planning is undertaken to achieve the long-term goals of the city through regularly scheduled day-to-day business operations and activities. Long-term activities are ongoing, and they encompass all aspects of the city. Short term planning assumes that the city must be responsive to a dynamic, changing environment, not the more stable environment that is assumed for long-range planning (Cannella & Monroe, 1997). A common assumption has emerged in the nonprofit sector that the environment is indeed changeable, often in unpredictable ways. Planning stresses the importance of making decisions that will ensure the city’s ability to respond successfully to changes in the environment. The vision needs to be flexible in obtaining the city’s objectives. Manager 2 said:

Long-range planning, setting goals, is important to the City Manager's profession. It is extremely important that there is a vision, but more important on the short term, to make sure that our short range objectives meet our long range goals. When we start in one direction, we don't want to start changing thing in the process, so we must be able to have short term and long range goals that coincide with each other.

Manager 2 continued by identifying the beginning of his city long range planning:
Probably in the mid 1960's it started with the development of the land use plan, and that established the framework for the direction in which the city was going to develop from a physical standpoint, the councils over the years having used that land use plan as a guide for zoning and those types of things.

The master land use plan was the initiative that began the city's planning process.

Over the years planning had become more of an integral process in the city.

Council members viewed short-term planning as the process of setting specific goals and developing specific action plans as well as actions to meet these goals. Specific short-term strategies and tactics are often developed by existing cities in direct response to something unexpected or new in the community. Council 2 explained:

Here we are today, but where do we want to be in the next 5 years? What is our city likely to look like in the next five years? I think it is the role of our City Manager to bring that to us. The previous City Manager did that rather well; frankly, that was one of that City Manager's strong points.

Council 5 emphasized the importance of long term planning: "I am blessed to be in a city that does have a vision, that does have a mission, that does 5- and 20-year capital improvements planning, that was very forward thinking." Similarly, Council 3 said, "the City Manager has to have the skills to look at the big picture and the future of the city."

Council members pointed out the need for planning in a global society. As Council 4 explained it:

We are in a very competitive world. If we do not have some kind of a vision, some kind of an action plan to keep the city alive, the businesses will move out, leaving the residents to bear the burden of the cost of running the city. That means the taxes will have to go up. It is a downward spiral. So it's just vitally important that you have a plan as the city gets older, that the initiative is there to rebuild and keep new things coming to keep the city alive.

The importance of planning stands out as a key element in vision, but the
association officials believed this was difficult and stressful for City Managers.

Association Official 4 explained:

I do not think you can do more than 5 years. Anything more than 3 to 5 years is real stress because of the dynamics. I think there is various strategic planning. You can adopt some formal, some informal. The main thing is you have to get the right groups together to talk about it.

Association Official 5 stated:

That is very difficult work for local government; it's constant, it's demanding. There is a crisis every day and you have to try to get people beyond that crisis to look not to tomorrow, but 10 years from now, and that is a very difficult thing.

This official explained that well-managed cities do planning:

The better managed cities, Phoenix, Dallas and San Diego, are constantly spending time saying: "What do we want to be when we grow up? What do we want to be like ten years from now? What is the vision that is out there?"

Although planning is time consuming and demanding for City Managers, Association Officials believe it needs to be done. As Association Official 3 said, "Most communities have gone through some type of visioning or planning process in the last 10 years, and most people have something like that they use as a sort of template to refer to." Association Official 5 commented,

I think planning is a little more complicated than "is there a plan?" Is there a clear idea of what we are trying to become in the future? Certainly that can lead to confusion and constant conflict about the allocation of resources.

Association Official 5 described one of the contributions a professional manager brings to a community which is planning: "In the last 10 years we have suddenly begun to capture phrases like visioning, long range planning, [and] strategic planning." As Association Official 3 expressed it:
I think all the good ones [City Managers] plan for long range. I think they have figured out, whether they are going to be there for a long period of time or a brief period of time, that they have a responsibility to their community to think in the long term. And I think most managers today do.

Even though the Association Officials believed it is difficult to plan all agreed it is needed.

The directors believed planning is important, but they expressed some skepticism about it. Director 1 conveyed that sentiment:

I think [planning] is critical. When you are talking about long-term goals for a City Manager, you are not talking about 5 or 6 years, but about 25 to 30 years. Long range planning is not 5 to 10 years. It is 15, 20, 25, 30, 45 years because you are planning a city and developing a city for a century that is not even born yet. Your customer base is not born. There will be some people that are going to be born next week or next year that are going to live here for 25 years and more. You are expecting to live with something you created. So what are you creating? Your long-range plan must be flexible because your customer base will be flexible.

Director 2 asserted:

Long term, there needs to be some planning done to get there in hopes that you will have enough money given the current environment. You need to recognize what the environment is and be able to look out in the future and see the resources you are going to need to pay for today and tomorrow.

Director 3 stated, “You have to be able to look ahead and at least plan for that stuff, so that you know how to deal with your resources before thing change over night.”

Director 4 pointed out, “Everything within the city you’ve got to think about long range. Is it going to be beneficial to build a residential area? You can not just look at today; you have to look at the impact of what is going to happen tomorrow.”

Discussion of Planning. The way in which a vision is planned determines the likelihood of its successful implementation (Frisch, 1998). Knowing where the
organization should be headed is one thing; developing a plan for getting there is quite another. Early planning leads to the success of a vision. The City Manager’s job is to see that goals and objectives are established. Short-term plans incorporate the goals of the long-term plan and these plans should not be in conflict. Planning is the process that enables cities to take initiatives. The plans should permeate the city from top to bottom and actually guide decision-making.

As important as planning is to the city, City Managers must ensure that the day-to-day activities are not overlooked. They should also make sure that planning is not sacrificed for present activities.

Summary of the Common Themes. All the participants expressed the importance of having a vision because it clearly defines the city and its future. They referred to use of the vision as a guide for stakeholders and for the city. From the subjects’ perspective, putting a vision into action can be done only by having a plan, positive relations with the council, open communications, working as a team, empowered staff, commitment from all stakeholders, a shared vision, and participative leadership which equates to buy-in from the stakeholders. Once buy-in, is gained, putting the vision into action is achievable.

The participants in the study made it obvious that no single element can put a vision into action. Communication alone will not do it, no matter how eloquent and persuasive the leader is. Planning alone will not do it no matter how appropriate the process may be or how great an impact planning has on the city. Teamwork alone will not do it, no matter how competent or well supported. Empowering others will
not do it, no matter how the City Manager delegates power to his followers. Commit­
ment from the City Manager or other stakeholders will not do it, no matter how much
assurance and loyalty they receive. Leadership will not do it, no matter how well the
City Manager lends guidance and direction. Even if the City Manager has an open
relationship with the Council or Commissioners, that is not enough to put the vision
into action. Only when all of these aspects are present will it lead to putting the vision
into action. **Manager 5 summed up all of the themes as follows:**

> There is a big trust thing and a relationship thing and likeability is a big part of
> it. You have to establish a cordial relationship about business. There has to
> be a personal connection. I think I have that with each of the council people,
> and that builds trust. I deliver and I get the people in this organization to do
> what the council wants. That is my job, and doing that lets them know things
> get done and get done the right way.

This is putting the vision into action.

**The Importance of Visionary Leadership to a City Manager**

Scoolis (1998) referred to a vision as having a form of power. Through
visionary leadership one can easily reach beyond the ordinary to the extraordinary.
Visionary leadership can help organize people’s actions, focus values, and clearly see
what is relevant. The City Managers emphasized that making the city better in the
long run is a key element in getting extraordinary things done. The overwhelming
consensus was that, without vision, little could happen.

The City Managers used visionary leadership to steer the city into the future.
According to Bennis (1989), the importance of having a vision is that it can be used as
a roadmap, particularly if the vision is clear and attainable. **Manager 4 thus stated:**
“We keep that [our vision] on top of the list so we don’t lose our focus.”

Manager 5 explained that visioning can be looked upon as a way to connect the council and the City Manager. He stated, “The only way you are going to advance a community and make it a better place is if the manager and the council are connected.”

The Association Officials emphasized that having a vision is the way City Managers organize their plans for the city. The vision is the driving force that points the city down the right path. The City Manager is the person who holds a sense of responsibility beyond his or her own life and strives to create a better city for others. The manager believes in the capabilities, potential, and basic goodness of others.

Visionary leaders’ importance stems from their ability to espouse different approaches, different thinking, different ideas, and different solutions. Association Official 5 said:

This idea of vision is greatly forward in thinking of how you manage, how you lead a city, and how you build a community, a region, a state or a nation.... A vision is sort of looking out into the community that you are serving and then seeing what the community could look like, given the current realities and optimal circumstances. Next you manage and reflect backwards from that vision and the future that you project into the present.

Association Official 1 explained that visionary leadership is important because it allows the City Manager to stimulate the community to reach its long-term objectives. He stated:

The manager has the capacity to help the council and through the community develop a long-term vision. I think it is imperative that the strength of the manager is not so much that he or she has his or her own vision for the community, but rather that an effective manager has the capacity to assist and
support the political leadership of a community to create that vision.

This respondent pointed out one of the negative things that can happen to a plan:

One of the things that can happen with a vision is the plan can lose its power—simply because time moves on and there are a lot of things in people’s lives. The role of a manager is to help affirm [the plan], keep it alive, excite and help others stay connected with the vision.

Even with the best developed vision there are times it has to be revised as expressed by Association Official 2:

I also think that when you get into the issue of vision you have to be flexible enough to realize that sometimes that vision shifts with time and circumstances. You do not just create a vision at this point in time and expect that you are going to live with that for a long period. I think that shorter statements of what we ultimately want to achieve are really more effective in this day and age.

The department Directors confirmed that visionary leadership is important. From their prospective, it means growth. Director 2 believed that without a vision, the city will not survive: “It would perish. It would die. Other cities will be there to eat your lunch, breakfast, and dinner. People [citizens] can move, and they will; businesses can locate other places, and they will.”

Council 2 explained the importance of visionary leadership:

I think vision is important. A term I like to use lately that I used earlier was thinking out of the box. I think that means to look to alternatives that might not necessarily be written up in textbooks as ways to get us to an end. That is a difficult one, but I think it is an important skill.

Council 4 affirmed that, without visionary leadership, the city will lose:

It is going to wither on a vine and die. We are in a very competitive world, and if we do not have some kind of a vision, some kind of an action plan to keep the city alive, the businesses will move out, leave the residents to bear the burden of the total cost of running the city. That means the taxes will have to go up.
Council 4 continued by saying that, without the visionary leadership, the city will not grow and the City’s leadership will repeat past errors:

I think you would see a repeat of old problems, things that may make the city stay in the 80s. If you do not have a vision, then I think you repeat history and continue to promote the same problems. I am looking at an economic standpoint. I think you have a city that does not meet the needs of its people, because you are not able to adapt to an ever-changing community and change in the city. We have to balance new people moving in, greater diversity, and yet a strong senior base that will be here for a long while. If you do not have that visioning, you cannot meet those needs.

Visionary leadership is important to City Managers. It is not just prominent researchers on leadership who have claimed that vision is the key to leadership. The City Managers, too, spoke out about the importance of vision in city government. They must know where the city is going and how it can get there; that is where visionary leadership is indispensable. The right vision for the future of a city starts as an idea. The idea moves people to action, and because of their action, the city evolves and progresses. The role of vision in driving the organization forward is crucial. The vision’s power lies in its ability to grab the attention of people both inside and outside the city and to focus that attention on a common dream and sense of direction that makes sense and provides guidance. In contrast, Association Official 3 described a city without visionary leadership:

I think that people fight more when they do not have a vision. What a vision allows you to do is sort of have a touchstone. If you have a vision, you can sort of look at the specific issues that you may face in your community, hold them up against the vision, and decide whether or not that project or issue will help you move toward your vision or further away from your vision.

Much of the guidance a City Manager provides is in addressing change. A visionary leader is recognized as a change agent. Change is constant in local
government, with the many diverse elements that affect its operations. According to Nanus (1992), the leader’s purpose as a change agent is to make the decisions necessary to realize the vision. When a visionary leader has an extraordinary ability to act in this role, he or she literally creates the future and, in the process, also changes the way the organization goes about it.

Throughout this study many of the stakeholders mentioned that a City Manager is the person who drives change. Although this was not the primary focus for this study, the researcher will briefly present the findings concerning how the City Manager must embrace change and adjust to putting the vision into action. The City Managers and the stakeholders in this study recognized that, with the shifting requirements of public service, there is a demand for a new way of conducting business. Cities’ strategies need to reflect the dynamic changes that are happening on an increasingly shorter change horizon (Nalbandian, 1989; Terry, 1998). According to Nalbandian, today’s managers are very different from their engineering forbearers because the political arena in today’s cities has changed. Such things as revenue shortfalls, special interest politics, inter-governmental relations, mass media coverage, and demographic shifts have altered the dynamics of today’s local government. In this study, the entrepreneurial spirit was more important to the Association Officials than the City Managers.

The visionary leader often meets with resistance to change. Unfavorable responses to change might be motivated by the best of intentions, such as: the staff being comfortable with status quo or elected officials not wanting to upset anything
before an election. The visionary City Manager will choose to treat these unfavorable responses, not as obstacles but as opportunities to be more inclusive. This will allow the City Manager to explain why the vision is important. Challenges that City Managers said they had encountered are listed in Table 9.

Visioning and Visionary Leadership initiatives will provoke many changes. Change initiatives usually cross department boundaries. For City Managers’ change initiatives to be successful, managers must become aware of the boundaries crossed by such a project. Without the support of key stakeholders throughout the organization, success is merely a dream (Kouzes & Posner, 1993; Nanus, 1992). To obtain and maintain this elusive support, coalition building is a critical skill that leaders must develop.

Visionary leaders cannot determine a realistic vision for their organizations without reflecting on what might happen that is out of their control (Nanus, 1992). These City Managers have developed skills that allow them to anticipate, foresee, and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges Faced</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make sure the staff and council are doing what the community wants</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining a level of service and controlling costs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The timing of elections and newly elected council members</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges Faced</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working with people who are not committed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerns that come from the community, that council cannot agree</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal constraints</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a council that cannot work together</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have to do staff cutbacks</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not having a good budget document</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing infrastructure to deteriorate to save money</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having departments compete with each other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many of the city goals are capital</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People who do not put the community first</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in setting council expectations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting department heads to think long range</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict between citizen rights and planning for the city’s future</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside influences, such as federal, state, and county governments</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager does not fit with the community</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is not synergy or cohesiveness if you do not have goals</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
evaluate the implications. They recognize that they do not have to predict unforeseen surprises, they only need to anticipate possible outcomes. These managers plan for possible outcomes to ensure that the vision can address, this reduces the likelihood of not attaining the city's vision. Manager 3 demonstrated this ability when the city was maturing and decaying. This Manager along with the staff anticipated if the residents and business community did not get involved, the city would not be able to experience a successful renaissance. This city has experienced a major renaissance within the last few years. This renaissance has built on an atmosphere of social interaction between the residents, business community, and the City Manager's office. Only with this City Manager's keen sense of the unexpected and his ability to include the stakeholders, has this city been able to experience the renaissance. Table 10 shows how the City Managers said they resolved the challenges.

In summary, the importance of visionary leadership to the City Manager is it

Table 10
How the City Managers Resolved the Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Managers Resolved Challenges</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Met with staff and departments frequently</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used the budget to reward departments that were doing well</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hired a market measurement Research Firm</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Led by example</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
allows the Managers to guide and direct the city through the constant change it will experience and a future he has projected. Not only will the City Manager guide the city through these events, but the City Manager has the role of setting the course for the present and the future, and face the challenges that will occur. Many of these challenges fall in the areas of political and city management. This role represents the demands of today's communities; it differs from the city management as a profession that was described by Childs (1965). That role was rooted in a separation of politics and administration, which is not true today.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, findings from the interviews and field notes were presented. In exploring how the City Manager put a vision into action, the researcher analyzed responses of City Managers, council members, municipal association officials, and department directors. Excerpts from the interviews with stakeholders were included to support and confirm the findings.

The interviewees had a great deal of experience in working in local government. They shared the skills, provisions, and abilities they believed were important to put a vision into action. The researcher classified the themes that emerged from these responses into eight categories: communication, council relations, empowerment, commitment, shared vision, leadership, teamwork, and planning. These attributes and provisions are what, in the City Managers' view, will lead to putting the vision into action. In addition, responses concerning why visionary leadership is important,
overcoming challenges to putting the vision into action, and City Manager's role as change agent were discussed.

Chapter V will summarize the results and findings. The researcher will offer suggestions for further research and recommendations.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Marshall Sashkin (2000), the theorist who conceptualized the visionary leadership theory, said that:

leaders are able to develop long-range visions of what their organizations can and should become. Further, these leaders understand the key elements of their vision—what it must include if it is to direct the organization into the future. Finally, visionary leaders can communicate their vision for the organization in ways that are compelling and that make people want to espouse the leader’s vision and help achieve it. (personal communication, April 6, 2000)

For a vision to be translated into action, it must include the expressions of success: shared purpose, empowered people, communication, and operationalization of the vision (Sashkin, 1986), as well as appropriate organizational change and strategic thinking (Oster, 1995).

Problem and Purpose

It is widely believed that local governments need to have a vision so that their organization, departments, and agencies will work more efficiently and effectively. More to the point, visionary leadership should be used in government agencies, much as it has occurred in the private sector. Visionary leadership needs to be championed by a leader who is committed to moving the organization toward the future. In a
Council-Manager form of government, a City Manager is appointed by the Council and serves as the City’s Chief Executive. The City Manager is the city’s driving force toward the future.

City Managers work in a complex and changing environment. Local economic and fiscal conditions are constantly changing, and the preferences and policy demands of elected officials and citizens also change (Teske & Schneider, 1994). In local government, the need for efficiency is paramount. Both the executive and legislative branches are seeking different methods to accomplish more with less, and this effort is changing the ways city councils, mayors, and City Managers are implementing plans and goals for their cities.

City Managers are looking for different leadership styles to guide the city. They are aware that a vision for the future of the City is needed, which requires the City Managers to develop provisions to put the city’s vision into action. The researcher’s purpose in this study was to explore the use and application of visionary leadership by City Managers in local government. Of particular interest was how City Managers put a vision into action. The research question guiding the study was, how does a City Manager put a vision of the City into action?

Research Methodology

The study setting was Oakland County, Michigan. Oakland County, Michigan, was chosen as the setting for the study. Oakland County comprises 61 cities, villages, and townships. It is the third wealthiest county in the United States
and is fast becoming recognized as one of the nation's most dynamic, high-tech work
places and premier locations in which to live, work, and raise a family according to
the National Association of Counties (NACO). The county's success is based on its
well-managed cities, according to NACO. Because of the county's ambiance and
national recognition, it included an excellent group of City Managers to study.

The sampling strategy was purposive. The researcher talked with key inform­
ants in Oakland County (directors of the Economic and Planning division and Offi­
cials of the executive branch), the State (Managers of the Economic and Development
Corporation), and the Media (community reporters from the Oakland Press and the
Detroit News) and asked them to recommend City Managers they had worked with or
observed who were innovative, effective, enterprising, and progressive. These infor­
mants gave the researcher names of City Managers they believed had brought about
dynamic change in policy and innovation in their communities. The City Managers
chosen for the study were those mentioned by at least three informants.

Identifying cities with a vision statement and those that had received a national
award from the National Civil League (NCL) or the National League of Cities (NLC)
further refined the pool of City Managers. The NCL All-American City award recog­
nizes exemplary communities from which officials of other local governments can
learn how to meet difficult challenges in innovative and collaborative ways. The
NLC's Innovation Award recognizes local governments and their chief administrators
for their creative and successful programs. Further, to be selected for study, a City
Manager had to have served in local government for at least 5 years. Five City
Managers who met the above-mentioned criteria were selected for inclusion in the study. All of the participants had experience with putting a city vision into action and were able to discuss the effects of putting a vision into action.

The study design is qualitative. Qualitative research involves discovering, exploring, and understanding the perspectives of those being studied (Creswell, 1998), in this case, the City Managers. Qualitative researchers are interested in the experiences people have, the meanings they have constructed from those experiences, and how they make sense of their world (Creswell, 1998; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Creswell explained that the main task of qualitative researchers is to discover the ways people in a particular setting come to account for, take action on, and manage their daily actions.

The researcher sought to discover the innovative leadership styles of putting a vision into action used by these City Managers. This study was phenomenological in that it was undertaken to describe a particular experience (Creswell, 1998). Phenomenology is an attempt to understand the total reality of the consciousness of someone who experiences his or her world at a certain place and time. In interviewing City Managers, the researcher listened to their descriptions of what their world was like for them and attempted to understand this in their own terms.

To collect data with which to answer the research questions, the researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with five City Managers, in which they were asked to explain the importance of visionary leadership and describe how they put the city’s vision into action. The initial interviews, which lasted one to two hours, took place in
the City Managers’ offices. Follow-up interviews were scheduled as needed. The main part of each interview was focused on how the City Manager put the city’s vision into action. The remaining discussion concerned the meaning behind putting the city’s vision into action, and why that is important. All interviewees were asked the same series of key questions, which provided a common research frame that proved useful in comparing their responses (Creswell, 1998; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

To supplement the interview data, the researcher gathered information by studying each city’s history and reviewing the relevant documents (the city master plan, budget, city charter, and vision statement). To gain further insight into each City Manager, the researcher attended at least two council meetings to observe how the City Managers interacted with the council members, particularly the Council President. Interviews also were conducted with council members, department directors, and municipal association officials who interacted with the City Managers. These interviews focused on how the City Managers used visionary leadership. The confidentiality of all participants, as well as that of their communities, was ensured. Multiple sources of information were used in order to cross-check and validate the findings (Creswell, 1998).

The researcher reviewed the interview responses to determine whether there were commonalities among the experiences of the interviewees. Further, the researcher noted patterns and themes that emerged from the data analysis. Meanings were formulated by considering the intention of each significant statement, such as
participants' descriptions of visionary leadership traits, how visions were implemented, and what methods were used to gain cooperation. Clusters of themes were developed and organized from significant statements. The responses were categorized into the themes. The goal of the data analysis was to construct the themes and concepts into a theory that applies in the public sector as well as in the private sector.

Common Themes for Putting a Vision for the City Into Action

The purpose of this section is to discuss the common patterns and themes that emerged in this investigation, which focused on how City Managers put the vision of the city into action. The researcher began this exploratory study by drawing on existing criteria and determinants of visionary leadership that were identified in the literature; these include shared purpose, empowered people, appropriate organizational changes, strategic thinking, communication, and operationalization of a vision (Nanus, 1992; Oster, 1995; Sashkin, 1986). A good vision is one that is appropriate for the city, sets standards of excellence, clarifies purpose and direction, encourages enthusiasm and commitment, reflects the uniqueness of the organization, and expands the organization's horizon (Nanus, 1992).

The five City Managers shared their provisions for and approaches to putting a vision for the city into action. These participants readily described how to make the vision a reality. Each had made a concerted effort to develop a vision for his city with the hope of securing the city's future.

The most frequently mentioned approaches to putting a vision into action were
developing a plan of action, giving clear directions for what one wants to achieve, and planning for multiple years (each cited by four of the five City Managers). Along the same lines, three of the five interviewees cited including staff ideas in the development of a plan of action, meeting with the staff early to develop a plan, encouraging staff to get involved, and having timely meetings with staff.

The interviewees had a great deal of experience working in local government. They shared the skills they believed were important in putting a vision into action. The themes that emerged from the interviewees' statements were related to communication, relations between the council and the City Manager, empowerment, commitment, shared vision, leadership, teamwork, and planning. These attributes were what the City Managers believed would lead staff members and the city council or commission to support the vision for the city.

Communication

The importance of communication was mentioned in every interview of City Managers, department directors, council members, and association officials, who emphasized the need to keep staff, the council, and the community informed. The better people are informed, the easier it is to implement the vision. Communication between the council and the City Manager is especially important. The City Managers, department directors, and association officials emphasized the importance of multi-directional communication. Council members endorsed a top-down style of communication; they communicated with the City Manager, who in turn
communicated with staff. Council members also emphasized the importance of communication with members of the community. Elected officials were concerned with the politics of the community and their next election.

Each manager recognized the importance of keeping citizens informed through the use of newspaper articles, community newsletters, State-of-the-City addresses, and a city web page. Yet, despite using all of these mechanisms, the Managers were frustrated about the number of citizens who were missed and thus did not initially become interested in issues. Managers 1 and 5 saw community surveys as a vital tool in communicating with and getting feedback from citizens. Communication leads to giving directions on how to move the vision forward, particularly with staff, since it is staff that will take the vision to completion. Better communication will allow City Managers to keep council members informed, which will lead to more rapid council buy-in of the vision, and set policy that will incorporate the vision.

Council Relations

The City Managers pointed out the importance of keeping council members informed of the progress of implementing the vision. In three of the five cities, the City Manager and staff developed the vision statement, which the council then confirmed. In the other two cities, the council members were involved in developing the vision statement. This was done at council retreats or sessions led by an outside facilitator. Council members, the City Manager, and department directors participated in these sessions.
The Council’s relations with the City Manager are crucial to a city’s success, particularly in putting a vision into action. Although the model city charter developed by the NCL describes the City Manager as the chief administrative officer of the city, the City Manager is granted power and responsibility by the council (Stillman, 1974), which is the city’s chief governing body. The City Manager carries out the policies set by the council and must keep the council informed. Mutual trust is the foundation of the relationship between the City Manager and the council.

Empowerment

Kouzes and Posner (1997) said that credible leaders accept and act on the paradox of power—that people become the most powerful when they give their own power away. The City Managers alluded to this belief by saying that one of the keys to putting a vision into action is having staff believe their role is important and that they have an influence on implementation. Feeling powerful gives people a sense of being in control of their experience, which makes them want to complete the task and believe they can do so. Empowerment has many meanings. Today, managers are empowering staff to think for themselves and take responsibility. Likewise, public servants are empowering each other as professionals by using the services of other public servants. In this study, directors, association officials, and council members did not use the term “empowerment” per se. Rather, they referred to the concept in a more general way, meaning to enable, engage, or permit. One council member said that managers need to be good delegators.
Commitment

The vision that is to be put into action must be able to arouse City Managers’ and stakeholders’ enthusiasm. City Managers must be convinced that the vision is the appropriate direction for the city. More to the point, they must be able to demonstrate personal commitment before they can expect commitment from staff. According to Nanus (1992), the stronger the leader’s commitment is to the vision, the more he or she will radiate optimism and enthusiasm.

The managers who participated in this study reiterated that they must show commitment in order for their staffs to commit. However, the City Managers also looked for commitment from council members. Commitment is the workhorse that is needed to implement the city’s vision and convert it into reality (Nanus, 1992; Sashkin, 1987). The City Managers commitment to the vision was summed up by two of the association officials. Regardless of whether the vision was first developed by others and merely adopted and embraced by the City Manager, they argued, his success as a visionary leader will be assessed by his ability to move the city forward.

Although the City Managers in this study expressed concern about working with a vision they did not believe was good for the city, their professional pride ensured that they would implement the vision as directed. Association officials spoke strongly about the City Managers’ professional pledge to carry out the vision.

Shared Vision

Sashkin (1986) stated that, for a vision to succeed, it must be widely
understood and shared by members within the organization. Shared vision is about common concerns and mutual caring (Kouzes & Posner, 1997). City Managers must persuade the staff that the vision is beneficial to the organization, as well as to them as individuals. City Managers often are amazed to learn that, although they are sure of their sense of direction, lower levels in the city’s departments did not receive the message. The City Managers in this study emphasized that the vision has to be shared by the staff and the city council. If staff members do not share the vision, they are less likely to commit to it. The sharing with staff should begin as early as the development of the vision.

The City Manager, like any visionary leader, must have the council and staff join in a shared vision of the city’s future. A key function of the City Manager is to ensure that stakeholders buy into the vision. The association officials asserted the importance of the community’s acceptance of the vision.

Leadership

Leaders attract the adherence of followers, energize them, and transform organizations into new entities with greater potential for survival, growth, and excellence (Nanus, 1992). Effective leadership enables an organization to maximize its contribution to the well being of its members and the larger society of which it is a part. The leader should coach, motivate, counsel, and lead by example (Bennis & Nanus, 1994). The City Managers confirmed these responsibilities of a leader.

Participants in this study viewed the City Manager as a driving force to move
the staff forward, provide suggestions and guidance to the council, and promote com-
munity interests. Director 4 said that, as a leader, the City Manager should be “able to
accept the policies of the city council and implement those policies. The City Mana-
ger should . . . stand firm for some things that are right, without getting involved in
politics.”

Many of the city council interviewees described a City Manager as a manager
and not a leader. Berkley and Rouse (1994) defined a leader as a person who has the
authority to decide, direct, and represent the objectives and functions of an organiza-
tion, whereas they described a manager as a person who has the authority to direct
specific organizational resources in order to accomplish objectives. Some of the
council members saw themselves as giving the City Manager the goals and objectives
they wanted to have accomplished whereas the City Managers described themselves
as the catalyst who engineers the goals and objectives and presents them to the coun-
cil for approval.

Teamwork

The City Managers frequently talked about the necessity of gaining support
for the vision and enlisting others in fulfilling the vision. The city government should
work as a team, and the team concept is easier to attain when buy-in is achieved. The
City Manager is responsible for ensuring that the vision addresses the needs of the
city, while at the same time including the goals of the staff. This is done by having
staff share in the common vision.
Planning

Planning is a management tool that is used to help an organization do a better job—to focus its energy, to ensure that members of the organization are working toward the same vision, and to assess and adjust the organization’s direction in response to a changing environment (Berkley & Rouse, 1994). City Managers who used planning successfully said it helped move the organization from short-term to long-term thinking and helped integrate the vision and the mission.

The City Managers emphasized the value of planning. The subject stirred up memories for the City Managers of how the planning of a vision determined the likelihood of its successful implementation. Knowing where the organization should be headed is one thing; developing a plan for getting there is quite another. Early planning leads to the success of a vision. The City Manager’s job is to see that the goals and objectives are established, and to verify their consistency with the vision.

Summary of the Common Themes

All of the participants stressed the importance of having a vision because it clearly defined the city’s future. They referred to the vision as a guide for the City Manager, stakeholders, and the city. From the City Managers’ perspective, a vision can be put into action only by having a plan, positive relations with the council, open communication, teamwork, empowered staff, a commitment from all stakeholders, a shared vision, and participative leadership, which equates to buy-in from the stakeholders. Once one achieves buy-in, the vision can be put into action.
The City Managers in this study shared the skills, provisions, and abilities they believed were important in their practice of putting a vision for the city into action. The researcher classified the themes that emerged from the City Managers' statements into eight categories: communication, council relations, empowerment, commitment, shared vision, leadership, teamwork, and planning. These attributes and qualities were what the City Managers believed would lead to putting the vision into action. Some of these eight determinants were different from those cited in the literature. Appropriate organizational changes, strategic thinking, and operationalization of the vision, which were mentioned in the literature, did not appear on the City Managers' list of determinants for visionary leadership. The City Managers agreed with the determinants of shared vision, empowerment, and communication as cited in the literature, but they added to these determinants council relations, commitment, leadership, teamwork, and planning.

The concept model was updated with the findings. Figure 2 depicts the modifications to the Conceptual Model. The additional determinants and changes to the model were inserted in italics. These modifications expands the model.

The study findings have implications for City Managers' putting the vision for the city into action. Whereas eight determinants of visionary leadership were mentioned in the literature, the City Managers did not believe they would be successful if they focused exclusively on those determinants. Despite the differences in their cities, the City Managers demonstrated successful practices within each of the eight determinants they identified as important in putting a vision into action. These City
Figure 2. Expanded Conceptual Model of the Visionary Leadership Theory (VLT).
Managers effectively implemented their cities' visions with their identified determinants. The participants in this study expressed the view that there is no single element that can put a vision into action. The findings from this study indicated practices used by five City Managers that effectively created a culture of change. However, the key attribute of each of these leaders was a driving passion for and professionalism in creating the conditions that will ensure successful implementation of the vision. This passion and professionalism are elements of leadership that all City Managers must discover within themselves if they are to create and sustain visionary leadership.

The Importance of Visionary Leadership to a City Manager

The City Managers and stakeholders concurred that a city needs a vision. They also agreed that visionary leadership is important to the City Manager's role. Scoolis (1998) said that through visionary leadership people can reach beyond the ordinary to the extraordinary. Visionary leadership can help people organize their actions, focus their values, and recognize what is relevant. The City Managers reiterated this perspective—that making the city better in the long run is a key element in getting extraordinary things done. The overwhelming consensus was that, without vision, little could happen.

City Managers used visionary leadership to move their cities into the future. The importance of having a vision is that it can be used as a road map, particularly a clear and attainable vision as cited by the City Managers. A visionary leader is recognized as a change agent, and much of the guidance a City Manager provides is in
addressing change. Change is constant in local government, with the many erratic elements that affect its operations. In this study, many of the stakeholders mentioned that a City Manager is the person who drives change.

The City Managers and stakeholders who participated in this study recognized that, with the shifting requirements of public service, there is a demand for a new way of conducting business. According to Nalbandian (1989), today's managers are different from their engineering predecessors because the political climate in today's cities--revenue shortfalls, special-interest politics, intergovernmental relations, mass media coverage, and demographic shifts -- has altered the dynamics of local government. Cities must boost responsibility and satisfaction, and this will require changes in the organization's culture and structure, as well as in its operation. The City Managers and directors pointed out that the cities are competing with each other for drawing and maintaining their residents and business community.

Visionary leaders view change as an opportunity to create new alternatives and engage in calculated risk taking. The association officials described the City Managers as having an entrepreneurial spirit, as well as being change agents. In fact, those officials mentioned City Managers' entrepreneurial spirit more frequently than did the City Managers themselves.

Visionary leaders often encounter resistance to change. Unfavorable responses to change that City Managers encountered were motivated by the complex environment, such as legislative and executive bodies at all levels, constantly issuing directives; courts endlessly interpreting and reinterpreting legal obligations and
boundaries; media and special interest groups monitoring and reacting to every initiative; and unremitting pressure from taxpayers. Visionary City Managers choose to treat these unfavorable responses not as obstacles but as opportunities to be more inclusive. This allows them to explain why the vision for the city is important. Additional challenges mentioned by three of the five City Managers were making sure the staff and council were doing what the community wanted, maintaining a certain level of service and controlling costs, the timing of elections, and dealing with newly elected council members. The City Managers resolved these challenges by frequently meeting with staff and department members, hiring a market research firm, using the budget to reward departments that were doing well, and leading by example.

Visioning and visionary leadership will prompt many change initiatives, which usually cross departmental boundaries. For City Managers' change initiatives to be successful, they must become aware of the boundaries the project needs to cross. Without the support of key stakeholders throughout the organization, success is merely a wish. To obtain and maintain this delicate support, coalition building is a critical skill that change leaders must develop.

City Manager cannot develop a realistic vision for their city without identifying the troubled areas of the city. Visionary leaders need to anticipate, study, and evaluate the possible outcomes. Visionary leadership allows the City Manager to guide and maneuver the City through the constant change the city will experience. Not only will the City Manager guide the city through this experience, but he or she will have set the course for meeting the challenges that will occur.
The Visionary City Manager will provoke change in his or her city by inspiring those they represent — the community, staff and other stakeholders. Knowledge of what these individuals want will help the City Manager in his or her crusade, ultimately determining the outcome of their goal. When City Managers are aware of what people need, they can strategically map out plans to fulfill the city’s vision.

By releasing ownership of the goal, the City Manager will allow people to assume responsibility for the vision, thus making them a part of the goal. Then, the City Manager is not only the coach of the game, but a key player who motivates a strong team. Leaders anticipate obstacles and develop resolutions to possible issues before they surface. By keeping the council, community and staff informed about every aspect of the plan, the manager will encounter fewer issues, and those comparatively minor issues will be easier for a seasoned leader to mend.

Visionary City Managers are aware that in today’s society, the media—be it radio, television, print or the Internet—is a key communications piece to promote change. The City Manager who utilizes the media as an implementing mechanism will create widespread involvement of his or her efforts. Everyone from the community to government leaders rely on this means of communication for up to the minute reports. Staying committed to the goal and being open and honest about his or her intentions are other traits that allows the City Manager to put the vision into action.
Recommendations for Further Research

Further research should be conducted on the experiences of City Managers. These experiences should be compared with those of public executives in other fields. Commonalities and differences should be addressed. This subject is important because City Managers' changing experience frequently is overlooked in research, and they have a story that must be told. More important, they want to tell their story.

Additional research should be carried out on the relationship between council members and the City Manager. In this study, several council members referred to City Managers as staff, whereas the City Managers viewed themselves as Chief Executive Officers of the city. These opposing viewpoints could stem from council members seeing themselves as elected officials and City Managers as having more longevity in the city. Hence, the City Managers are more knowledgeable about the city and have a better understanding of how the city works, as do staff members. These opposing opinions merit further research.

Another area for future research is the apparent lack of diversity in the position of City Manager. The City Managers in this study were all white males, and there seem to be few women and African Americans in this profession nationwide. Perhaps there is a need for more internships and scholarships to increase the pool of qualified women and African Americans for administrative positions by promoting their enrollment in public administration programs. Universities can help alleviate this lack of representation by encouraging women and African Americans to enroll in city administration internship programs. In addition, more programs are needed to
meet the growing need for women and African Americans in city management roles as cities are becoming more diverse, according to the 2000 Census. These programs can acquaint a number of women and African Americans with career possibilities in city management.

This study has provided insight into the expected emergence and behavior of the City Manager as a social entrepreneur. This researcher believes the City Manager is a social entrepreneur more than a public entrepreneur. Future researchers should investigate the entrepreneurial behavior among City Managers and other high-level public executives.

Finally, several Association Officials discussed certification of City Managers. The officials explained the City Manager should complete competency training. The Associations will determine the areas that should be included in the competencies for certified City Managers. The certification may develop into a licensing process of City Managers. The certification process warrants further investigation to determine if it adds value to the profession.
Appendix A

The Responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer in the Different Forms of Governments
The Responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer in the Different Forms of Governments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Council-Manager Chief Executive Officer</th>
<th>City Manager</th>
<th>Council-Mayor Chief Executive Officer</th>
<th>Mayor</th>
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<td>Elected position</td>
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<td>Yes, if City Charter specifies an elected Mayor from popular vote or City Council elects from among its members</td>
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<td>Accountable to citizens</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Support base</td>
<td>Professional Norms</td>
<td>Political Base</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Appoint administrative officers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct and supervise day-to-day operations</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Attend city council meetings</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enforce all laws and provisions of the charter</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepare and submit the annual Budget and capital program</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make available to the public and council a financial report</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep the council advised of the Financial condition and needs of the city</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide staff support to the elected officials</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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Appendix B

Interview Questions
<p>| Research Question: How does a City Manager put the vision for the city into action? |</p>
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<th>Questionnaire Questions</th>
<th>Probing Questions</th>
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<tr>
<td>How would you describe a visionary leader?</td>
<td>How was the vision for the city developed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you turn a vision into action?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the major challenges to implementing the city's vision?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you overcome resistance to change and adapt the organizational climate to the new agenda?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Subquestion: Is visionary leadership important in your city manager's profession? |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| Is visionary leadership important in your city management? | Are you involved in the formulation of the vision? or only the implementation of the vision? Or both? |
| How do you know when people (city employees) have accepted the vision? | |

| Subquestion: How would a visionary leader change city management? |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| What critical issues must be addressed in the vision? | What are the current major dilemmas confronting the city management profession? |
| How does your city look further ahead (5 to 10 years) to plan for the further growth and infrastructure changes, etc.? | |

| Subquestion: Does the city manager have to believe the vision to implement it? |
### Questionnaire Questions vs. Probing Questions

<table>
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<th>Subquestion: How does a vision lead to greater efficiency in a municipality?</th>
<th>What must the vision accomplish?</th>
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<td>How will you know it is successful?</td>
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<td>How do you decide when to revise a vision?</td>
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<th>Subquestion: Demographics of the city managers.</th>
<th>How long have you worked in the public sector?</th>
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<td>How many years have you been a city manager?</td>
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<td>How long have you been in your current city manager position?</td>
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<td>What is your education background?</td>
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### Pre-interview Questions

*Completed by the Researcher*

Does the city have a vision?
If so, what is the vision?
Does this city have a master plan? If so, was it built on a vision?
Appendix C

Informed Consent Form
I have been invited to participate in a research project entitled “Visionary Leadership: Putting a vision into action from the perspective of City Managers.” This research is intended to explore the use of Visionary Leadership in local government. This project is Nancy Quarles’ dissertation project.

I will be asked to attend a one-hour private session with Nancy Quarles and allow Nancy to observe me with the council members. I will be asked to meet Nancy for this session at my office or a location I have agreed. The session will involve an hour interview during which I will be asked questions regarding implementing the city’s vision and working with the city’s plans. This session will be audio taped. I will also provide general information about myself, such as my level of education and employment history. If the results of the interviews indicate information I feel should not be included, the research will respect my request, by not including it in the study. The second meeting, Nancy will observe me at a council meeting of the whole.

As in all research, there may be unforeseen risks to the participant. If an accidental injury occurs, appropriate emergency measures will be taken; however, no compensation or treatment will be made available to me except as otherwise specified in this consent form. One potential risk of my participation is that scheduling; however, Nancy is prepared to work with agreeable times for me.

One way in which I may benefit from this activity is having the chance to assess the ways leaders put their vision into action to build an effective organization that will renew or preserve itself and understand the philosophy of how effective leaders translate vision into action in the complex environment of the local government. Nancy will use the information I provide for her doctoral dissertation. The data and information I share with Nancy is confidential, which means neither my name nor the city name will be used in the study. The forms will all be coded, and Nancy will keep a separate master list with the names of participants and the corresponding code numbers. Once the data are collected and analyzed, the master list will be destroyed. All other forms will be retained for three years in a locked file in the principal investigator’s office.

I may refuse to participate or quit at any time during the study without prejudice or penalty. If I have any questions or concerns about this study, I may contact Nancy Quarles at 248/569-4130 or Dr. Ralph Chandler 616/387-8293. I may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Institutional Review Board at 616/387-8293 or the vice president office research at 616/387-8298 with any concerns that I have.
This consent document has been approved for use for one year by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board as indicated by the stamped date and signature of the board chair in the upper right corner. Subjects should not sign this document if the corner does not have a stamped date and signature.

My signature below indicates that I have read and/or had explained to me the purpose and requirements of the study and that I agree to participate.

Signature _______________________________ Date ___________

Consent obtained by: ____________________________________________

Initials of researcher __________________________ Date ___________
Appendix D

Ethnograph Study Code Book
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Most important attribute to put a vision into action

City Manager Administrator

Attribute of VLT

City Manager believe in vision

Fiscal Impact

How do you know when employees have accepted the vision

City and societal change

Description of the Council-Manager Government

The duties of the Mayor in a Council/Manager form of government

Councilmembers, Stakeholders, Assoc, and Staff view of the City Manager position
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The involvement of politics and politicians

Putting into action VLT

Resolve challenges to Visionary Leadership

When do you revise a vision

Visionary leader's role

Successful formula VL

Most important skill of a City Manager

Communications with Department Directors

Successful formula VL

Directions

The need and the role of trust
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- Turn vision into action
- When did your city begin to use VLT
- Development of the City vision
- Vision lead to greater efficiency in a municipality
- The vision accomplish
- VL success formula
- The plan to implement the vision
- Successful formula VL
Appendix E

Human Subjects Institutional Review
Board Approval Letter
Date: 13 July 2000

To: Peter Kobrak, Principal Investigator  
Nancy Quarles, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Sylvia Culp, Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 00-04-24

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "Visionary Leadership: Putting a vision into action from the perspective of City Managers" has been approved under the exempt category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note that you may only conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: 10 May 2001
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Ehrenhalt, A. (1990, September). The new city manager is: (1) invisible (2) anonymous (3) non-political (4) none of the above. Governing, 3, 40-46.


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Stewart, A. W. (1985, July). Reaching out for better service; in efforts to fight the battle of the budget axe, cities and counties are learning to cooperate and consolidate services. American City & County, 100, 48-52.


