The Position of the City Manager in Decision Making in Kalamazoo, Michigan City Government

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THE POSITION OF THE CITY MANAGER IN DECISION MAKING IN KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN CITY GOVERNMENT

by

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What merit lies in this paper is directly attributable to the patient instruction of all my teachers at Western Michigan University and the helpful forbearance of my wife.

All errors of fact, style and judgement are mine.

John Adrian Straayer
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PURPOSE AND METHOD

The Purpose

This paper is a descriptive analysis of two aspects of decision making in one council-manager government. First, it is an examination of the relationship between the city council and the city manager, noting the influence of the city manager on policy. Secondly, it is an exploration of the limitations which existing elite group(s) may place on policy decision making by the legal city government.

The legal city government of Kalamazoo, Michigan is the focus of this study. Much has been written recently about municipal government and there is recent interest in future research on the council-manager form. Kalamazoo has a council-manager government. Also, original data was readily available for this study.

The two principle instruments in the council-manager government are the council and the manager. These two parties play the most important official roles in city decision making. City charter theory indicates that council's responsibilities are to make policy or legislate, and the manager's responsibilities are to administer. Some political science literature indicates however, that legislative and administrative

1 As a linguistic holdover from the days when Kalamazoo had the commission form of government, Kalamazoo's Council today is called the City "Commission". The terms "commission" and "council" will be used interchangeably in this paper in reference to Kalamazoo.
functions are closely interdependent and that city managers often play important legislative roles. Managers, as functional experts, often help determine policy.¹

Recent political science writings have suggested that elite groups exist in many cities. The literature further suggests that elite groups may affect legal policy decision making by restricting or limiting the area of operation of legal government. That is, the areas in which issues may arise are restricted. Since the two most important instruments of government in the council-manager government are the council and the manager, our exploration in Kalamazoo of the existence and effect of any elite on decision making will focus on the Commission and the Manager.

Let me repeat in capsule form the concern of this paper. Political science literature suggests that,

1. City managers as functional experts are really policy leaders as well as administrators.

2. Many cities have a "second face of power"² or an elite, whose values, either real or imagined, place a "web of values" over and through legal city government decision making, and restrict areas in which issues may arise.

This thesis will attempt to show that in Kalamazoo, Michigan,

1. City Manager Clarence H. Elliott is a prime example of a functional expert, who, as the literature suggests he might, greatly influences city policy formation.

2. There is an elite, whose real or imagined power helps define the areas in which legal city government makes decisions. More precisely, this elite restricts the decision making actions of the Commission and the Manager, and "flavors" the actions they do make.

¹Non-elected specialized administrators.
²The term "second face of power" will be explained in the following chapter.
Method of Investigation

Data for this study were obtained from four sources:

1. From existing political science and public administration literature. This was used to acquaint the writer with the field of concern and to furnish background information for the study.

2. From official government documents. Information on past behavior of city officials, and election results in Kalamazoo was drawn from Commission meeting records and voting records. Legal information about Kalamazoo's government structure was obtained from the city charter and city codes and ordinances.

3. From newspaper reporting. Information on the behavior of city officials was obtained from the reporting of the city daily paper, the Kalamazoo Gazette.

4. From interviews. Perhaps the most valuable data for this paper was obtained from interviews with city officials and other Kalamazoo personalities whom the author considered knowledgeable on the topic of concern.

Organization of Paper

Following this introductory chapter will be a review of some existing literature on city decision making. Specifically there will be discussion of the structure and characteristics of city manager government in general, and discussion of the treatment in the literature of limits on the decision making power of city governments.

Chapter three will deal with the subject city, Kalamazoo, and our two aspects of decision making in Kalamazoo. The salient features and legal structure of the subject city will be reviewed. Then the relationship of the Manager to the Commission will be observed from several points of view.
Finally, elite-imposed limits on decision making will be explored.

Chapter four will compare the findings in Kalamazoo to the discussion of the literature. Chapter three findings will be viewed in relation to the generalizations and theory of chapter two. We will note where the literature does, or does not, describe the Kalamazoo situation. Chapter four, the conclusions, will consider these two questions:

1. What do the findings of this study mean for decision making in Kalamazoo generally?

2. What do the findings of this study mean for city government decision making in general?
The Manager System

The council-manager form of city government is a product of the early twentieth century reform era. The exposes of the reform era muckrakers created popular distrust of government as it existed then. People desired better government and the remedy they found was one of legal structural change. Structural changes were made in an effort to structure good government in and bad government (politics) out. These changes resulted in today's council-manager government.¹

The legal structure of the council-manager government resembles the board of directors-president relationship of today's typical large corporation. The council-manager plan,

...is characterized by a governmental structure that places legislative power in a small, preferably lay, council and administrative authority under a professional 'manager' who is appointed by and responsible to the council.²

Theoretically the council is a type of city "board of directors" and the manager is the head administrator. He is supposed to be a politically neutral, and technically competent administrator. The council is generally composed

¹See, for example, Gladys Kammerer, et al., City Managers In Politics, (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962) p.6.

of from five to nine members who are elected in at-large non-partisan elections. In non-partisan elections, council candidates run for office without attachment to formal political party organizations. They may, of course, and often do, represent some special group or interest. So in that second sense, the non-partisan elections are in fact partisan. In at-large elections, council candidates seek election by, and if successful represent, the entire city. No wards or districts exist to subdivide the city into representative districts. The district in which all candidates run for office is the only existing district, the whole city. Councilmen generally serve two or four year terms. The mayor is usually selected by the council from among it's own membership and his duties and powers are usually only ceremonial in nature.

In this governmental form, lines of administration are simplified. Council created policy is theoretically the guideline which the manager follows. From there the manager is in complete (theoretical) control over the city administration. He is to ensure that policy is carried out. Councilmanic relations with the administration must be via the manager.

Important duties of the city manager in carrying out policy involve budget preparation and personnel administration. The manager prepares the annual city budget for scrutiny and approval by the council. All city administration personnel are under the direction of the manager.

The council-manager plan of government has experienced great growth in the first half of this century.

The first council-manager charter was adopted by popular vote 50 years ago. Now 49 percent of all cities in the United States over 25,000 population have council-manager government and 39 percent of all cities between 10,000 and 25,000 have this form of government.

As mentioned, this reform era creature was designed to cleanse city government. The council is elected in supposedly non-political non-partisan, at-large elections. This is an effort to rid the cities of the seeds of dirty government, politics. And the little politics remaining in the city was to be confined to the council. The hired professional administrator, the city manager, is supposed to be absolutely non-political. Early theory indicated that,

...the voters should hold only the councilmen politically responsible and should give the city manager a status of permanence and neutrality in political controversy.

From the manager's point of view this neutrality was to be the rule for action. The 1924 version of the city manager's code of ethics stated that "No city manager should take an active part in politics."

The city manager system then, was born as an attempt to

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remove politics from government by turning governmental duties over to a politically neutral and technically competent manager. In this reform era attempt to cleanse government of politics, the creators of the city manager system,

...were looking for a form of government that would run itself without leadership, a sort of political perpetual motion machine.¹

In general, the council-manager charters attempt to make a sharp division between these two major activities, assigning the duty of determining city policy to the council or commission, and the duty of carrying out the policy and attending to the routine of city business to the manager.²

There has been, and still is, some thought that this separation of policy formation from administration is possible and is real. A recent editorial in the St. Petersburg Times stated,

The business of city government is to run a municipality efficiently and to serve the people to the best of the establishment's ability. There is no 'issue' in this. There is nothing political about drainage, sewers, street lights, police and fire protection and so on. On the contrary, if they are injected into the field of politics, we are bound to lose efficiency and economy down the drain which runs through the pork barrel.³

Implication that the policy-administration dichotomy exists is also found in the wording of many city charters. Kalamazoo has one such charter. In law, the structure of city government in Kalamazoo resembles the structure

¹H.A. Stone, City Manager Government..., p.250.
³Kammerer, City Managers In Politics, p.5.
of a large corporation. The city charter creates a dichotomy between the duties of policy formation and the duties of policy administration. The City Commission is set up in the form of a board of directors to make policy which a hired chief administrator, the City Manager, is supposed to carry out. This City Manager is hired by the Commission to do their bidding, and can be discharged by the Commission at any time. The following statement which was issued by the original Charter Commission of the City of Kalamazoo in 1917 illustrates well the seeming intent of this City Manager type of charter.

The City Commission selects a competent, experienced and trained person on account of his particular fitness and ability to manage the affairs of the city. His duties, like those of a managing officer of a large company or corporation, are to supervise and control the conduct of the officers and employees of the city and manage the city affairs in an efficient and economical manner. Administrative responsibility is definitely placed and cannot be shifted.¹

Recent studies have shown that the city manager system is not characterized by a real policy formation–policy administration dichotomy. These studies have shown that the city manager is not a "neutrally competent" administrator. While a manager may be competent, he is not if he is a good administrator, neutral. If he is a successful administrator, he is also a successful and active politician.

By structuring elected commissioners and mayors out of administration, and somewhat out of politics, manager city

¹Kalamazoo, City of, Charter of The City of Kalamazoo, as amended, Nov., 1959, (Kalamazoo: City of Kalamazoo, 1959) p.4. (preface)
charters have created a political vacuum. Without providing an elected political leader, they have lessened the degree to which former politicians, commissioners and mayors, can politic. Law can not create political perpetual motion machines. Any government will have some type of leader, or at least someone who leads more than anyone else. But by eliminating a full time elected all-city leader, and by creating non-partisan elections, manager charters create this power vacuum.

The non-partisan election of the council seemed to us to explain the vacuum in leadership and political responsibility in so many council-manager cities. With elected officials often drawn out of active political leadership, city managers are often drawn in to fill these vacancies. In her study of manager governments in Florida, Gladys Kammerer states,

We found no managers in our case study cities who were not involved in the making, shaping, or vetoing of policy proposals. Therefore, they were right in the heart of politics in the broadest sense of that term. Karl Bosworth states,

City managers, whichever role they wish to follow, must seek to be among the best politicians in town, for their work deals with the satisfaction of the wants of people...

1Kammerer, City Managers In Politics, p.86. 
2Ibid., p.83.
And where managers are used, let us think of them as officers of general administrative direction and political leadership, for that is what they are.¹

Our literature suggests then, that there is no real politics-administration dichotomy. City managers fill leadership vacuums and are in reality, both administrators and politicians.

The partial abdication of policy leadership by elected officials is not the only reason for the high degree of manager policy leadership. The functions performed by government today are of an increasingly complex nature. Councilmen in council-manager governments generally serve on a part time basis. The manager is the top ranking full time city official. Thus the manager is in a strong position regarding the formation and administration of policy. For example, no government can operate without funds. Government personnel must be paid and equipment and supplies are necessary to provide the services demanded by the public today. Today, city governments, as well as state and federal governments, are spending more money than ever before. Thus, budgets are of extreme importance.

Council-manager government budgets today are generally the type known as the executive budget.

The budget process has undergone a major change in the twentieth century with the adoption of the executive budget.... The executive budget gives the chief executive...extensive control over fiscal affairs.²

¹Bosworth, "The Manager Is A Politician," p.222.
In council-manager cities the executive who directs budget procedures is the city manager. In the council-manager governments,

...the city council appoints a professional administrator, a manager, to act as the chief executive.¹

Direction of the budget procedures gives the executive great control over most of the city operations. And the complexity of budgets today usually demands that city councils accept budgets essentially as managers propose them.

The budget process begins with the lengthy and detailed process of preparing estimates...²

The budgetary process is central to administration because control of the purse is perhaps the most effective tool of coordination...³

Thus in the strategic and complex area of finance, city managers control operations and are able to extend their influence through the entire city government.

The development of executive control of spending coincided with, and greatly strengthened, the broader movement to concentrate administrative authority in Presidents, governors, mayors, and managers.⁴

¹Ibid., p.345.
²Ibid., p.224.
City managers also wield influence in city government via their control over city personnel. Councils appoint managers,

...with authority to hire and fire subordinates.... The council must refrain from by-passing the manager by interfering with his subordinates or in the details of administration...

One final, and really all inclusive area in which expert city managers exert great influence on policy is in their roles as providers of policy alternatives. Policies are selected from among alternatives. Even the lack of alternatives is a type of alternative. Information must be available both in the formation of alternatives and in the selection of them. With his expert skill and knowledge, and great control over all the administration, the city manager is truly a policy leader. At the city level as well as at the state and federal level, legislative bodies have,

...come to depend greatly upon the administrative expert, mainly because public policy often involves matters of technical complexity, requiring special knowledge and sustained attention.

To summarize, the complexity of all areas of city government, budgeting and creating policy alternatives and personnel management included, plus the legal structure of the council-manager system, has placed expert city managers in very influential positions regarding policy formation.

2Pfiffner and Presthus, Public Administration, p.48.
Councils depend on manager knowledge and skill. By and large, policy alternatives are what the manager says they are. Councilmanic knowledge on city affairs is in large part what the manager provides. Managers control personnel administration, and city budgets are generally very much under manager influence.

Limits On Decision Making

One existing model for community study and analysis has concentrated on identifying a "power elite" within the community. The implication is that the discovery of a community elite is also discovery of the personalities who "run things" in town. Floyd Hunter's Community Power Structure, 1 the study of Atlanta, Georgia, is perhaps the prime example of this type of community study. This approach of locating a community elite and following with assumptions about the actions of this elite has been criticized by professors Bachrach and Baratz, among others, in their recent article, "Two Faces of Power." 2

Against the elitist approach to power several criticisms may be, and have been leveled. One has to do with its basic premise that in every human institution there is an ordered system of power, a 'power structure' which is an integral part and the mirror image of the organization's stratafication.


This type of research that seeks to locate the powerful community leaders, tends to assume that these reputedly powerful leaders actually have power and actively exercise it. This assumption has been further criticized.

If a man's major life work is banking, the pluralist presumes he will spend his time at the bank, and not in manipulating community decisions. This presumption holds until the banker's activities and participations indicate otherwise...

Two major criticisms then, are leveled against the elitist approach to analysis of community power. First of all, reputed power is not necessarily actual power. Secondly, even location of actual potential power is not the same as identification and location of actual power in use. There is a difference between potential and active power.

Most of the criticism of the elitist type of community analysis is leveled by persons offering the substitute pluralist model. This pluralist model suggests that decision making power must be located for each separate issue area, as the "web of power" for each different issue area may be different. With the exception of Mayor Lee, Robert A. Dahl found no individuals in New Haven who possess and use power in several different issue areas.

This pluralist approach to the study of the community

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has also been attacked. Bachrach and Baratz contend that the pluralist answer to the shortcomings of the elitist model has some flaws of its own.¹ The pluralist approach concentrates on an examination of selected community issues. The criticism is that there may be some elite type community power which helps determine what does and what does not become an issue. Bachrach and Baratz comment,

To measure relative influence solely in terms of the ability to initiate and veto proposals is to ignore the possible exercise of influence and power in limiting the scope of initiation.²

The pluralist approach can, to be sure, locate actual power which is being actively used to influence community decisions. Dahl and others have ably shown us that the location of this power in a community may vary from one issue to another. But what the pluralist approach ignores, according to Bachrach and Baratz, is that there may be a "Hunter type" elite in the community, whose existence, either real or imagined, may act to limit the areas in which issues arise. This second type of elitist power would be passed over by the pluralist approach.

While criticizing both the elitist and the pluralist approaches for being incomplete in themselves, Bachrach and Baratz suggest adoption of a new analytical method which

¹Bachrach and Baratz, "Two Faces of Power," p.947.
²Ibid., p.952.
would combine the two. Examination would be made to determine community elitism, mythical or real, and community values "...which tend to limit the scope of actual decision making to 'safe' issues."\(^1\) Then additional inquiry can be made to "...analyze participation in decision making of concrete issues."\(^2\) In their own words, Bachrach and Baratz argue "...that there are two faces of power, neither of which the sociologists see and only one of which the political scientists see."\(^3\)

We noted that the expertise of such officials as city managers affect the relative roles managers and councils play in policy formation. The influence of a manager will probably vary from city to city. Now, the "Second Face of Power" pointed to by Bachrach and Baratz, (if one is in operation in a given city) will likely limit the operating area of all legal government. This second face of power is assumed to delimit the area of governmental operation in some cities. It may limit the areas in which issues arise. So, in a council-manager city where there is an effective elite face, both the council and the manager will be affected, and their acts and decisions limited as to direction and degree.

\(^1\)Ibid., p.952.  
\(^2\)Ibid.  
\(^3\)Ibid.
DECISION MAKING IN KALAMAZOO

The Subject City

Salient features.

In 1960, Kalamazoo, Michigan had a population of 82,098. Located in a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area, Kalamazoo County, the city holds approximately one half of the SMSA or County population. Kalamazoo is the 135th largest city in the United States. Kalamazoo is one of 12 Michigan cities falling somewhere in the 50,000 to 99,999 population bracket. Only five Michigan cities have a population larger than 99,999. Located between two of the great lakes, only 50 miles east of Lake Michigan, the city’s climate is fairly mild. Kalamazoo is located near the center of a triangle which could be drawn from Detroit to Chicago to Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The city is well serviced by transportation facilities. Sitting astride two four-lane super highways, U.S. 131 and Interstate 94, Kalamazoo has ready access to auto and truck transportation. Kalamazoo has rail service from the Pennsylvania, New York Central, and Grand Trunk Western railway systems. Kalamazoo has its own municipal airport with commercial and passenger service available. The Kalamazoo

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River runs through the city on its way to Lake Michigan from the center of the state. While the river is not used for transportation, it is of great commercial and industrial value to the local papermaking mills which use the river as a waste disposal vehicle.

Kalamazoo has a stable economy. She is the home of the Upjohn pharmaceutical house, a number of large paper manufacturing firms, other light and heavy industry, and three colleges. The economy is diversified. Much of it is locally owned. The three colleges, one a large state university, help provide good educational facilities. Also, with much industry home owned and home managed, the city government is supplied with resident managerial talent that has more than a purely economic, profit making interest in Kalamazoo.

Kalamazoo has been relatively fortunate regarding city-suburb relations. The core city does, to be sure, have suburb problems. But a high class residential area, the type of area that so often is the home of top leadership talent in urban areas, is in the Kalamazoo case, located within, rather than outside of, the city limits. There is a small section of the city, located near the south and west city limits which perpetually supplies top city leadership.1 While this area lies adjacent to the south and west city limits, it

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1See, Oliver P. Williams, "A Typology For Comparative Local Government," Midwest Journal of Political Science, 2, (May, 1961) p.150. Kalamazoo is referred to as city "Alpha".
is for the most part, within the city. And for the most part, this area dominates city politics.

General Motors recently indicated its favorable impression of Kalamazoo in a decision to establish a new plant in the area. The following excerpts from a recent article in the daily Kalamazoo Gazette indicates the nature of the business climate in the city.

Fisher Body Division officials of the General Motors Corp. told local civic leaders Friday night that GM thinks of Kalamazoo residents as 'progressive'.

Ten GM executives were guests of Kalamazoo's three banks at a get-acquainted dinner in the Park Club.

"One of the major reasons for the selection of a site in the Kalamazoo area was the progressive business climate here," Robert H. Gathman said.

"We took a good look at your community and its people and we liked what we saw."

Gathman, general manager of the Fisher Body Division called attention to the area's new business district and civic buildings, along with your colleges, hospitals, high schools and churches.

Kalamazoo then, is in many respects, unique. With fewer than the average number of suburb problems, a diverse economy, home owned industry, good educational facilities, a good location and ample leadership talent, the city is, to be sure, "blessed among cities."

Legal structure.

Kalamazoo is one of 79 Michigan cities of over 5,000

1Kalamazoo Gazette, April 25, 1964, p.1.
population having a manager type of government. Since the adoption of the present city charter in 1918, Kalamazoo's Commission has been a seven man body. Before that, the Commission was made up of ten members. The Commissioners are elected in city wide at-large, non-partisan elections in November of all odd numbered years.

The elections do not coincide with any state or national elections. At the polls, the city voter may vote for up to seven men. The seven candidates receiving the largest number of votes are elected to serve on the Commission. The Commissioner receiving the highest number of popular votes is elected mayor.

Candidates for the office of Commissioner in Kalamazoo must have been Kalamazoo city residents for a minimum of two years at the time of appointment or election. Elections are held at city expense. Nominations are by petition only. Members of the City Commission in Kalamazoo are part time public servants. For their part time service, Commissioners receive an annual $1,000.00, and the Mayor receives an annual $1,500.00.

This part time law making body is instructed by the charter to appoint a full time administrator to manage the city affairs.

The City Commission shall appoint a City Manager who shall be the administrative head of the municipal

government under the direction and supervision of the City Commission, and who shall hold office at the pleasure of the City Commission.

The charter also commands the establishment of the administrative departments of Law, Finance, Public Works, Health and Welfare, Public Utilities, Public Safety, and Parks and Cemeteries.  

In addition to the City Manager, the City Commission is to appoint a "...City Clerk, City Attorney, and City Assessor, all of whom...shall hold office at the pleasure of the City Commission." Ultimately, the City Commission is the highest city office or body in the city government. The charter states that,

There is hereby created a City Commission which shall have full power and authority, except as herein otherwise provided, to exercise all the powers conferred upon the city and is authorized to pass all laws and ordinances relating to its municipal concerns.  

There are, of course, numerous other boards and commissions and departments that are a part of the legal city government. These are all under the appointive or administrative authority (or both) of either the City Commission or the City Manager. The chart on the following page provides

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1 Kalamazoo City Charter, Sect. 42.
2 Ibid., Sect., 44.
3 Ibid., Sect., 11.
4 Ibid., Sect., 4.
a graphic description of the total city government.

Administrative authority over personnel is in the hands of the City Manager. The city charter states that,

Excepting the Director of the Department of Law, who shall be appointed by and be immediately responsible to the City Commission, the Director of each Department shall be immediately responsible to the City Manager for the administration of his department.

Except for the purpose of inquiry, the Commission and its members shall deal with the administrative service solely through the City Manager, and neither the Commission nor any members thereof shall give orders to any of the subordinates of the City Manager.

Reinforcing the authority of the City Manager, the Kalamazoo Administrative Code states that,

Heads of all departments of the City Government, regardless of the source of their appointment shall be subject to the direction and supervision of the City Manager in the discharge of their administrative functions.

The importance of budgeting to the functioning of city government was noted earlier. In Kalamazoo,

Not later than December 1 of each year, the City Manager shall submit to the City Commission an estimate of the contemplated expenditures for the ensuing year, together with the estimated revenues for that year, and such other information as the Commission may require.

1 Ibid., Sect. 45b.

2 Ibid., Sect. 11b.


4 Kalamazoo City Charter, Sect., 67.
Two points stand out in this legal structure. First, the City Manager is clearly the power at the top of the administrative pyramid. He has powers of general administration, personnel administration and budgeting. Secondly, while the Manager's administrative hand is protected from the Commission, the Manager, and all the city personnel ultimately, serve at the pleasure of the Commission. The Commission is the top legal body in the city government.

Commission-Manager Relationship

As stated, the area of concern is decision making in the legal arena of Kalamazoo's civil government. Decisions made may or may not be of great significance for the Kalamazoo citizen. But whatever decisions are made, they are legal and binding.

What type of decisions are made in this arena? Some decisions, of course, are related to formation of broad city policy. A few broad resolutions or a host of small actions may have the effect of establishing broad policy lines for the city. A Commission may create a policy of friendliness or cooperation regarding its suburban areas, as for instance to help supply water and sewer service to outlying areas. Conversely, a Commission's actions may create a policy to hold taxes down at all costs. A broad policy such as this will condition the manner in which the Commission itself, and the city administration view possibilities of city service expansion or improvement. New and improved
or extended sewer and water service, or street repaving is unlikely to become reality under a broad policy of low taxes. On the other hand, if a Commission shows a policy of desire to expand and improve services, this is likely to preclude any low tax policy. So the actions within our legal arena legally create broad city policy either by making forthright statements indicating a position, or by series of actions establishing a trend - a policy.

The main activity of most city governments, and of Kalamazoo's city government is to provide services to residents. These services include sewer and water service, fire and police protection, street and road construction and maintenance, and other such services usually connected with establishment and maintenance of homeownering and manufacturing and retailing of products.

To illustrate more specifically the types of decisions that are made, I have attempted to count and categorize decisions made by one City Commission. Decisions made by roll call vote during the term of the 1961 to 1963 Commission were used. It is very difficult to segregate decisions made by a city government as to type. Most acts are by their nature several types at once. They involve the time, effort and pursuance of duty by several people or departments. Action for example, to install sanitary facilities and pave streets in some new area of the city would involve the activities of the City Manager, the City
Clerk, the City Assessor, the City Commission, the Planning Department and Planning Commission, the Departments of Public Works, Public Utilities, Police, Law, Purchasing and other city departments or personalities. In short, few acts of city decision making can clearly be categorized as one type of action, or implicating just one part of city government. In full realization of this, but in a desire to illustrate the nature of city business, an attempt was made to categorize the 1961 to 1963 decisions. Following is a breakdown of the 715 decisions which were made by roll call vote from November 1961 to November 1963.

1. Public Works, 524. (includes decisions relating to sewer, water, streets, sidewalks, airport, golf course, parking, traffic, parks, building permits, etc.)

2. Zoning, 32.

3. Legal Claims, 16. (includes decisions relating to claims against the city etc.)

4. Liquor Licenses, 51. (relating to issuance, renewal, or denial thereof, of liquor licenses.)

5. Funds Transfer, 80. (transfer of funds from one category in the line item budget to another.)

6. Miscellaneous, 12. (issuance, for example, of sympathy or congratulatory resolutions to someone.)

There are two main steps in this decision making. First, issues arise and are studied and considered by the city government. Information relative to the problem is gathered by department(s) in the city administration and presented

1Calculated from official Minutes of City Commission Meetings, City of Kalamazoo, 1961 to 1963.
along with, or as a proposal by, the City Manager. The second step in making a decision is the final and legal step; that of voting on the issue and making the decision "legal". In both of these two steps the two main officials or governmental bodies are the Commission and the City Manager. The total decision making process, of course, is not as simple as just noted. But basically, the process is a two stage process as noted.

The following inquiry into "The relationship between the City Commission and the City Manager and the influence on policy by the City Manager" will proceed as follows: Relying most heavily upon interview data, the relationship and relative influence on policy of the Manager and the Commission will be examined from the point of view of three parties.

1. Former or present City Commission members.

2. Knowledgeable non-Commission members, such as city administration employees and Chamber of Commerce persons.

3. The City Manager.

After viewing the Manager influence on policy and relationship to the Commission from these three points of view, a summary observation of the process will be made, referring back to the aforementioned respondents, and also referring to legal document data and newspaper reporting.

1 This was stated on page 1. as one of the two aspects of decision making to be examined.
Former or present City Commission members.

1. Thompson Bennett. Mr. Bennett is a 51 year old practicing attorney. He has worked formerly as an FBI agent, and has served as a local Associate Municipal Judge. Mr. Bennett has served on the local Chamber of Commerce board of directors since February, 1964. Mr. Bennett served one term on the Kalamazoo City Commission, from 1961 to 1963.

Mr. Bennett stated that between the Commission and the Manager, the Manager has the greater share of power over policy formation. He stated that there is not time enough for the Commissioners to be very active in policy making. The Manager has a full time position. He stated that, "The Manager has tremendous influence over policy. He has all the information." Also the Manager stays after the elections and the Commissioners do not always do so. "There is great Manager control just in the long continuity of office," he stated. After the elections, Mr. Bennett indicated, "The Manager has the problem of re-educating the new Commissioners each time."

Mr. Bennett said that the Manager has some control over decision making in his function of agenda preparation. He added that all the Commission can do to Manager proposals is slightly alter or veto them, and it can not really veto very much. Mr. Bennett feels that the greatest function performed by the Commission is in criticizing and slightly redirecting Manager policy.

All information from interview with Mr. Bennett, April 7, 1964.
Mr. Bennet noted a feeling among some Commissioners that the Manager has too much control. Mr. Bennett feels that the lion's share of control over decision making in Kalamazoo's legal government is in the hands of the City Manager, Clarence H. Elliott. In noting that the Manager makes policy while the Commission just reviews it, Mr. Bennett stated, "The Commission doesn't really make any policy, although sometimes they may think they do."

2. Raymond Hightower. Dr. Hightower is presently the Mayor of Kalamazoo. A Ph.D. in sociology, Dr. Hightower is the Dean of The Faculty at Kalamazoo College. Dr. Hightower was first elected to the City Commission in 1957. He was re-elected in 1959, 1961 and again in 1963 as Mayor.

The Mayor stated that if the Manager knows more about what is currently going on in city government, if he is better informed than anyone on the Commission, he can direct policy. The Manager has, he stated, control of the agenda. In the absence of Commission initiative and action in the policy area, the Manager will be the decided policy leader. But, Mayor Hightower added, the Commission holds ultimate legal power. Ultimately the Manager must do as instructed by the Commission. Also, the Commission may alter the agenda as it desires.

Dr. Hightower indicated respect for the ability of the Manager. He indicated that Mr. Elliott is a master politician, using "politician" in the sense of a "group strategist."

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1 All information from interview with Dr. Hightower, March 24, 1964.
It appears that the Mayor would divide the decision making power differently in different circumstances. He seems to be of the opinion that at present, Manager Elliott's decision making control is about equal to that of the Commission, although the Commission has the legal power to change that division at any time.

It is interesting to note that the Mayor, a trained sociologist, describes Manager Elliott with the language, "group strategist."

3. Paul E. Morrison. Mr. Morrison is a 61 year old successful downtown jeweler in Kalamazoo. He was elected Vice Mayor of the city in 1957 and 1959, and was elected Mayor in 1961. Mr. Morrison did not run for re-election in 1963.

Mr. Morrison stated that Manager Elliott provided nearly all information on city affairs which the Commission used in decision making. He indicated that the City Commission is dependent on the information provided by Manager Elliott. Mr. Morrison stated that most press releases are put out by Mr. Elliott, but are approved by the Commission first. Mr. Morrison indicated that the Commission's policy alternatives are put forth by the Manager.

While noting Manager control over the city administration and over information, and while noting Commission reliance on Mr. Elliott, Mr. Morrison stated that in city government, the Commission, not the Manager, is the boss. He stated that the real top person in Kalamazoo government is the Mayor. He

1All information from interview with Mr. Morrison, March 23, 1964.
indicated that Manager Elliott is in no way a politician. Mr. Morrison equates all politics with partisan party activity. Mr. Morrison likened the City Manager position to the position of the president of a large corporation. He mentioned KVP-Sutherland as an example. Mr. Morrison called the City Commission a "board of directors" just like the large corporations have.

The former Mayor feels that all decision making power lies in the hands of the City Commission. He also stated that the Commission acts on information and alternatives given it by the Manager. While analysis of Mr. Morrison's response indicates great policy control on the Manager's part, in Mr. Morrison's eyes, the Commission has all the power.

4. C.H. Mullen. Mr. Mullen is an attorney and is a Vice President of the First National Bank and Trust Company of Kalamazoo. Mr. Mullen served as Kalamazoo Vice Mayor from 1961 to 1963. He is 46 years of age.

Mr. Mullen stated that the Commission is limited in what it can do to what the Manager recommends. While much of the city business is routine, like purchase and maintenance of fire fighting equipment, still 90% plus, of the Manager's recommendations are accepted by the Commission in the making of legal decisions. Not only do the Manager's recommendations carry, but within the lines of policy once set into law.

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1All information from interview with Mr. Mullen, March 23, 1964.
the Manager, Mr. Mullen stated, has "a heck of a lot of latitude."

Mr. Mullen stated that Mr. Elliott is both a good administrator and a good politician. He said that the Manager is smart, is a good politician, he is not naive.

In relation to every day operation of the city government, Mr. Mullen stated that the Manager has the greatest influence over decision making. But one reason, he feels, is that the Manager is aware of the final legal power of the Commission. The Commission has power too, even if it does not always use it in an active manner.

5. Paul J. Schrier. Mr. Schrier is a local plumbing contractor. He is 56 years of age. In 1963, Mr. Schrier was elected to his sixth term as City Commissioner.

Mr. Schrier indicated that Manager Elliott has in fact, great control over decisions made by the Commission. Mr. Schrier does not like this. He stated that "the present City Manager tries to be the biggest politician in town." Mr. Schrier said that the Manager has no right to run the city. He called Mr. Elliott's actions a "case of the tail trying to wag the dog."

Mr. Schrier indicated that Elliott does in fact have power to influence legal actions and decisions. He stated that often the Commission finds out what it will do at the

1All information from interview with Mr. Schrier, April 4, 1964.
Monday evening meetings in Sunday's Gazette. "He (Mr. Elliott) keeps a hot line between his office and the Gazette." Mr. Schrier indicated that Mr. Elton Ham, Director of the city Research Bureau, and employee of the Downtown Kalamazoo Association, has a lobby in city hall via his closeness to Mr. Elliott. This implies that Mr. Schrier sees effectiveness in Mr. Elliott's influence on policy. Relating to the sale of the city light power plant, consummated some years ago, Mr. Schrier contended that Mr. Elliott forced the sale by wrecking the plant through intended neglect.

Mr. Schrier then, sees Mr. Elliott as possessing great influence on policy. It appears that Mr. Schrier sees decision making power in legal Kalamazoo divided between Manager Elliott and the group he calls the "do-gooders" on the City Commission. Mr. Schrier is neither a fan of the Manager, nor a member of the do-gooders.

6. Arthur Washington. A 41 year old social case worker in Kalamazoo, Mr. Washington was elected to his third term as City Commissioner in 1963.

Regarding Manager Elliott's influence on decision making, Mr. Washington feels that it has changed recently. Mr. Elliott's influence has been less since November 1963 than before. He stated that the Manager always sets the agenda. Mr. Elliott goes far in controlling the flow of news about

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1All information from interview with Mr. Washington, April 8, 1964.
city operations to the public. Mr. Washington stated that the Manager is a good politician. He has tried to sell his ideas to the Commission and has met great success. For a long time, proposals and plans were just placed before the Commission for approval. Often the business at hand was set before the Commission shortly before a meeting. When ordinance amendments were proposed, they were often given to the Commission alone, without an accompanying copy of the ordinance. The Commission was simply handed material to act upon. Mr. Washington did not refer to this great Manager influence as good or bad. He simply pointed to it as fact, and added that conditions are different with the new Commission that took office in November, 1963.

Today, more questions are asked, and more information is demanded from the Manager. The new Commission acts slower, is more deliberative and more inquisitive. The interests of the members of the new Commission are wider. Mr. Washington feels that a wider range of citizen interests are now represented.

Commissioner Washington feels that, as a good politician, Manager Elliott will quickly adjust to the new situation. In summary, Mr. Washington feels that in the past, Manager influence on decision making was strong, and it still is. But Manager influence today is less than it was before.

7. Otto Yntema. ¹ Mr. Yntema is the director of the

¹All information from interview with Mr. Yntema, March 26, 1964.
Western Michigan University Field Services. He is 57 years of age. Mr. Yntema began serving his first term as a City Commissioner in Kalamazoo in November, 1963, when he was elected Vice Mayor. He noted quickly in our interview that he did not presume to have a great deal of intimate and detailed knowledge about the workings of Kalamazoo's government.

Mr. Yntema's early impressions correlate with the opinions of others. He noted that there is great influence on decision making in the Manager's hands. He noted that some feeling exists that this influence is too great. Commissioner Yntema hastened to add that he prefers a Manager who provides too much strong direction to one who does too little leading. It appears that Mr. Yntema was desirous of having the Manager keep the Commission better informed than had apparently been the case prior to November, 1963.

Summing up, Mr. Yntema recognized great influence on decision making by the Manager. It is not possible now, given Mr. Yntema's short tenure on the Commission, to more specifically describe his own observations.

Knowledgeable non-Commissioners.

1. F. Joseph Buckley.¹ Since June of 1959, Mr. Buckley has been the executive secretary, the salaried chief of staff, of the Kalamazoo County Chamber of Commerce. He

¹All information from interview with Mr. Buckley, April 14, 1964.
Mr. Buckley stated that "Elliott is surely the boss in city hall." He stated that nothing goes on in city hall that Mr. Elliott does not know about. Mr. Buckley said that the Manager keeps all his department heads under his firm control. When he deals with the city government, Mr. Buckley usually deals with Manager Elliott.

Mr. Buckley sees the Manager as a salesman of ideas and programs to his board of directors, the Commission. He stated that, while he (Buckley) has a 21 man board of directors to sell, Mr. Elliott has only seven men to sell. Mr. Buckley stated that he feels that the new (1963) Commission is weaker than the previous one.

Mr. Buckley appears to see Manager Elliott as having the greatest overt control over city decision making. There is however, great indirect Commission power, in that Mr. Elliott's actions, Mr. Buckley feels, are conditioned to appeal to the Commission.

It is interesting to note that Mr. Washington sees the new Commission as representative of more diverse segments in the community than its predecessor, while Mr. Buckley sees it as a weaker Commission.

2. Marie Filarski. Mrs. Marie Filarski has been the clerk of the City of Kalamazoo since 1945, nearly twenty years.

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1 All information from interview with Mrs. Filarski, April 6, 1964.
Mrs. Filarski stated that in forming recommendations, the City Manager consults not only the Commission, but various departments in his administration. She said that the Commission nearly always acts in accordance with Manager recommendations. She added that the Manager provides the Commission with "a lot of leadership." "The Commission has come to depend on it." "Indirectly, I guess," she stated, "the Manager is the policy leader." Mrs. Filarski also said that the Manager gives out press releases. He handles city public relations.

The Clerk went on to deny emphatically that the Manager is in any way political. She seemed to equate politics only with partisan or election activity. While observing the final legal authority of the Commission in policy matters, Mrs. Filarski pointed up a strong leadership position occupied by Manager Elliott.

3. David Morris. Mr. Morris has been the City Attorney of Kalamazoo since 1954. He has also served as an Associate Justice for the Municipal Court. Mr. Morris is 50 years old.

Mr. Morris stated that "to a very high degree" the City Manager leads policy in Kalamazoo. Mr. Morris said that as Mr. Elliott prepares the yearly budget, he must anticipate coming needs. He must plan a program. In the formulation

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1All information from interview with Mr. Morris, April 6, 1964.
of recommendations, Mr. Elliott is in constant consultation with his administration, the Commission and others. Mr. Morris stated that the Kalamazoo City Commission "needs prodding." To do his job, the Manager must be a good politician, Mr. Morris stated. He added that the Manager must know what the people and the Commission want when he formulates his program.

Mr. Morris stated that sometimes Commissioners resent Manager leadership. They desire the opportunity "to think of his ideas and present them themselves." Mr. Morris seems to feel that on the surface, the Manager has the bulk of the decision making power in Kalamazoo's legal arena. The surface control however, he sees as tempered by Mr. Elliott's awareness of the powers-that-be, and his taking of this into account in this strong leadership role.

4. William Ripatte. Mr. Ripatte, 46, is the Director of the Kalamazoo City Planning Department. He began as Director here in January, 1959.

The interview with Mr. Ripatte centered mainly around the relation of the Manager and the Commission and their relation to city planning functions. Mr. Ripatte noted that the Planning Commission and the City Commission are really the legal organs for passing on planning and zoning proposals. But, Mr. Ripatte noted, there is Manager influence

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1 All information from interview with Mr. Ripatte, April 14, 1964.
here. He noted that Manager Elliott is probably the most influential member of the Planning Commission. Also, all recommendations, from all departments or arms of city government must eventually funnel through the Manager's office. Few items of city business will involve just one department. As cooperation in all departments is needed in city hall, the Manager is in on everything.

Mr. Ripatte indicated that the Commission, and other influential elements in the city act to set broad policy lines, such as being for or against expansion of services. Within these broad guidelines, the Manager works. And in working within these guidelines, Mr. Ripatte noted the political working skill of Manager Elliott.

Like several other respondents, Mr. Ripatte noted the influence of Mr. Elliott on policy. His recommendations are followed. He sets specific policy. But still, Mr. Elliott's great power lies within outer boundaries which are set by the City Commission.

5. Dodd Southern.¹ In February of 1962, Mr. Southern was appointed Assistant to Kalamazoo City Manager Elliott. In March of 1964, Mr. Southern accepted a position as Assistant City Manager of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. He is 28 years old.

¹All information from interview with Mr. Southern, March 4, 1964.
Mr. Southern viewed Mr. Elliott's operation as the central point of Kalamazoo city government. Mr. Southern stated that the Manager made considerations and narrowed down possible policy alternatives. These, he presented to the Commission.

Mr. Southern stated that Manager Elliott was reputedly a strong Manager. He is principally a behind the scenes operator. Mr. Elliott hears and handles the bulk of public complaints and concerns. The Manager sits on top of the administrative pyramid. He delegates his work to a high degree. Mr. Southern stated that city hall is the target for citizen complaints, the Commission is not. He stated that public relations is one of the more important aspects of good administration.

Mr. Southern stated that in his strong policy leadership role, Mr. Elliott is in close contact with the Commission. Mr. Elliott reviews reports and makes decisions. He is in close contact with the press. Mr. Southern said that the Manager is a "total" manager, not simply an administrator.

Mr. Southern views the Manager as the hub of city government. He sees him playing the central and controlling role in both policy and administration. As Mr. Elliott's skill lies partly in his maintenance of good contact and relations with the Commission, Mr. Southern is also granting a decision making role to the Commission by virtue of the Manager's recognition of the Commission's legal position.
Mr. Clarence H. Elliott has been the City Manager of Kalamazoo since August, 1951 - over thirteen years at this writing. The 62 year old Manager (in 1964) has had thirty-five years of experience in managing municipalities. From 1929 to 1930 Mr. Elliott served as Manager of Oak Park, Michigan. He was civil works director of Washtenaw County from 1933 to 1936, City Manager of Plymouth, Michigan from 1936 to 1946, and City Manager of Jackson, Michigan from 1946 to 1951 before coming to Kalamazoo.

Mr. Elliott received the A.B. degree from Albion College and his M.A. degree from the University of Michigan. Mr. Elliott is a Rotarian, a Mason and a member of the Methodist Church. He has served as President of The Southwestern Michigan Chapter of The American Society for Public Administration. From 1952 to 1953, Mr. Elliott was the President of The International City Managers Association. Mr. Elliott is nationally known and respected in manager circles.1

Measured in terms of tenure and service, salary and reputation, Manager Elliott has been very successful in Kalamazoo. With a new Commission elected every two years, Manager Elliott has served Kalamazoo through seven elections and has seen a complete turnover of personnel on the Commission. Most past and present Commissioners consider

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1The information on Mr. Elliott's background came from Kalamazoo Gazette reporting; the paper of August 1, 1961 especially.
Mr. Elliott very competent. By and large, Mr. Elliott operates in the background. He is quite careful to stay out of extreme public controversy and expresses few opinions which could foster public or official criticism. For his efforts, Mr. Elliott receives an annual salary of $21,000.00 (in 1964).

City Manager Clarence Elliott feels that the City Commission is highly dependent on the information and alternatives for policy which he places before it. Much city business is of a technical nature, and the Commission must rely on him for information. The Manager says that the Commission nearly always accepts his recommendations—probably 85 to 90 percent of the time. He stated that the Commission does not like to buck Manager recommendations.

Mr. Elliott states that his control over policy and information is extensive. Building codes, for example, are technical in nature. They are composed by the Building Department, along with Mr. Elliott, and are run through the Manager's office, coming out to the Commission as Manager recommendations. Regarding budgeting, Mr. Elliott noted the high complexity of the process. He said that it would be fantastic to expect any Commissioner in his first term to understand much about the budget. Each budget contains provisions for some capital improvements. Mr. Elliott said that this is the item in which he likes to show the Commission what would be done. Relating to personnel management
Manager Elliott made it clear that he considers himself the chief of all personnel. Mr. Elliott feels that his central position between the City Commission and the administration, and his holding the top full time city job, place him in control of information and policy alternatives. Manager Elliott noted that a large city like Kalamazoo can not stop in its tracks at election time and in a transition period from one Commission to another. As a steady guide, he (Elliott) keeps things going.

Clarence Elliott sees himself playing a chief role between the public and the Commission. He said he is willing to listen to anyone's suggestions, the citizen and the Commission alike. He said that government is a series of compromises. There is little that is black or white. There is much gray in government. Elliott says that he is willing to consider this gray area.

Holding information as he does, and being a contact with the citizens, Mr. Elliott sees himself as a salesman. While the Commission is dependent on his advice and data, still they must be "sold". Manager Elliott referred to the informal meetings before the Monday p.m. meetings of the Commission as his "last shot" at the Commission. In efforts to get the 1963 to 1965 City Commission to operate on a basis more cooperative toward out-city areas than did the 1961 to 1963 Commission, Mr. Elliott said, "I've almost got them sold."

Mr. Elliott said that the Commission is generally a little afraid of the people and sometimes he must push them. In dealing with the Commission, he stated, "You must be subtle in your leadership." Mr. Elliott stated that he considers himself a behind the scenes operator. Some city managers become publicly involved in hot issues. But, Mr. Elliott prefers to his "fighting on the inside." I indicated that some City Commissioners feel that they are the real leaders in areas where Elliott claimed leadership. "Let them think like that," he responded.

On the aforementioned matter of gaining Commission support for personnel appointments, Mr. Elliott called this intentional, for good Commission relation purposes. He mentioned a need on his part to be careful in what he recommends from August first to November first of each election year. At this time, he indicated, the Commission is touchy. Timing on recommendations is important he added.

To summarize, Mr. Elliott considers himself the key city leader in, (1) policy formation, (2) policy implementation, (3) possession of information, and (4) dealing between the public and the Commission. He feels that he is greatly depended upon by the Commission. Mr. Elliott judges himself an able politician. He notes that he "has the facts." He refers to the Commission as "my Commission," and as "my boys." Mr. Elliott sees each new Commission as a group he
must sell his programs to.

Through all this, Manager Elliott considers himself a master politician and administrator. He noted his own broad reputation in manager circles. But Clarence Elliott also sees himself as a good politician who is totally devoted to the good of the city. Mr. Elliott clearly approaches his job with all his "politicalness" looking for the best interest of the city — he said. In his own words, "You (as Manager) must play your men to the best advantage, and consider your advantage to be the advantage of the city." (Although we will not answer them here, two points or questions immediately come to mind: (1) what does Mr. Elliott consider the best interest of the city to be? and (2) we only know that Mr. Elliott said he works for the city's best interest as he sees it, although we can presume he really does.)

Summary observations.

City government expenditures are at an unprecedented peak. Services provided today are more numerous and more complex than ever. Kalamazoo city government provides many services for its citizens, and the 1964 Kalamazoo city budget calls for the expenditure of over seven million dollars. The report of the 1964 budget is 34 pages long. The working budget itself is longer and more complex, and the preparation

1Kalamazoo, City of, The 1964 City Budget. (Kalamazoo: City of Kalamazoo, 1964.)
thereof, complicated and time consuming. Manager Elliott, with the aid of, and in consultation with, his assistant, department heads and the City Commission, prepares that budget. Budget preparation demands detailed knowledge of money needs. Such knowledge is resident with the Manager, his department heads and other administration officials. The City Commission members are consulted during the budget preparation process. But each Commission member has a full time job apart from Commission obligations. Few Commission members are well versed in the budget process. With jobs outside the realm of city government, and serving the city on a part time basis, Commissioner knowledge is less detailed and more limited than Manager, and other "expert" knowledge. By and large, budgets prepared under the Manager's direction are passed. As head of the city administration and as administration voice to the Commission, the Manager is the person of prime influence on the budget as it is approved.

The Kalamazoo Gazette has described the complex budget process, and has pointed to Manager influence in the process as follows:

Department heads submit their requests to the City Manager. He, in turn, evaluates these against one another and the total amount of money that is expected to be available. Then, after consultations with the department heads, he prepares the tentative budget for consideration of the Commission, which has the final responsibility for deciding how much money the city will spend during the year.¹

¹Kalamazoo Gazette Editorial, October 14, 1958.
This evening, the City Commission will hear the report on these figures (value of Kalamazoo personal property) from city management, and then determine the tax rate. City Manager Elliott will recommend the $12.95 millage.

Elliott will not include storm sewers in his recommendations tomorrow evening. These were slated to be around $868,000.00. 'We can't make any decisions on these until we have the Light Plant money,' Elliott declared.

The City Commission plays an important budgetary role. Theirs is the option of accepting or rejecting a budget or any item in it. Perhaps the best way to illustrate Commissioner-Manager relations in the budgetary process is to refer to the Manager's 1964 budget message.

I am pleased to present the 1964 Budget for your formal consideration. The proposed Budget is based upon the recommendations of the Administration and the decisions made by the City Commission during the series of informal budget sessions.

The Budget I have proposed represents a realistic basis for operating and financing our City Government for the next year.

While policy is formed in the decision making process which culminates in law, policy is also formed via the process of implementation. City Commission decisions are meaningless until transformed into action. In the prime job

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1 Kalamazoo Gazette, News Report, April 9, 1956.
3 Kalamazoo City Budget, 1964.
of providing services, the city administration does the work. Eventual outcomes of decisions are partly dependent on how the administration carries policy out. In Kalamazoo, Manager Elliott directs the efforts of the city administration. Here he is in a position to greatly influence final policy outcome. Obviously, the Commission is also in such a position. They made legal decisions and they can retract them or add to them.

Four points stand out in Commission-Manager relations in decision making.

1. As chief of city personnel, the City Manager can control policy implementation.

2. As chief of city personnel, the City Manager can control information available to the Commission.

3. As director of the budget preparation, the City Manager can influence the final budget, and thus influence the operation of any part of the city government.

4. As the final legal decision maker, the City Commission shares decision making power with the City Manager.

While the following summary statistic may be a reflection of many factors, it is also a reflection of Manager influence on policy formation. The 1961 to 1963 City Commission had 715 roll call votes. A breakdown as to the subject at hand on these votes was given earlier in the paper. Of these 715, 686 were unanimous. The City Manager made recommendations on 636 of the 715 votes. His recommendations were unanimously approved 610 times. The other 26 recommendations were also approved.¹

¹Calculated from the Minutes of Kalamazoo City Commission meetings.
It would be all but impossible to measure the relative influence on policy outcome exerted by the Commission and the Manager. There are, of course, other persons and departments which share to a lesser degree this power in the city government. But we can, I believe, note that both the Commission and the Manager greatly influence policy outcome and that the Commission is highly dependent on the expertise of the Manager and his administration.

Limits On Decision Making Power

There is in Kalamazoo, as in many cities, the ever present notion or rumor that the "downtown crowd" is running the city. People in Kalamazoo often refer to the "powers that be" who belong to, and meet at the Park Club and devise plans for running the city. The downtown crowd, and the Park Club gang is often given credit for "pulling the strings." Two large families in Kalamazoo, the Gilmores and the Upjohns, are referred to as the real governing group in the city. This is understandable, as one of the largest manufacturing firms in Kalamazoo is the Upjohn Pharmaceutical Company and a great deal of downtown area property is owned by the Gilmore family. The city's largest department store is Gilmore Brothers. There is no Upjohn-Gilmore empire per se, as various family branches are wealthy by virtue of independently held properties. But over all, these two families are loosely tied together and their worth in terms
of dollars runs into many millions. Thus it is understandable that Kalamazoo opinion regards the Gilmore-Upjohn clique as the power behind the throne in Kalamazoo. Such an explanation of decision making in one city is too simple. Without denying influence or potential for such, it is safe to say that it would be an error to pass off the community as being piloted by just one family clique.

**Limits on the City Commission.**

A brief examination of the above mentioned notions reveals that there is a clique in Kalamazoo. While there is no tightly knit Upjohn-Gilmore clique, there is a fairly small "downtown" or Park Club and Country Club group that does in fact limit the range of city decision making.

Interviews with former Kalamazoo City Commissioner, Henry Upjohn, City Attorney David Morris and Kalamazoo County Chamber of Commerce Executive Secretary F. Joseph Buckley revealed the following: There is in Kalamazoo, a large group of businessmen and successful professional persons who take an active interest in city politics. By and large, this group, probably 100 to 200 persons in size, is the group in Kalamazoo that belongs to the Country Club and the Park Club. Within this larger group in Kalamazoo there may be but a handful of men who are recognized to be particularly important. Prior to each Commission election or important special issue election, a committee will be formed from among this group membership. The committee will then solicit
funds from the larger group membership to build up a kind of campaign slush fund. Men well thought of by the group will be approached and asked to run for a City Commission seat. Their campaign expenses are paid. Once elected, the new Commissioners are left on their own. No direct pressure is applied.1

Messrs. Upjohn, Morris and Buckley (and others) indicated that this by no means is an attempt by a highly organized group to manipulate governmental decision making. Rather, the 100 to 200 member group is simply a group of highly successful and educated city citizens who want successful and educated leaders in government. They are willing to recruit such leadership and pay the expenses to secure the election of their slate. Mr. Buckley indicated that weak and manipulable candidates are not desired. Rather, strong willed persons who can "think for themselves" are sought. (The likely criteria for an independently thinking person is one who thinks like his campaign supporters.)

Often men from this group themselves run for office and many have served on the Commission themselves. Banks in Kalamazoo are often asked to release a portion of the time and energy of some one of their executives for service in city government.

In reporting the results of a study of four cities, one of which was Kalamazoo (referred to as city "Alpha"), Dr. Charles Adrian of Michigan State University says the

1Data from interviews previously referred to, and listed in the bibliography.
Of the four cities, Alpha's politics showed the greatest degree of organization and structure. The most effective political group was a self selected, self perpetuating organization of prominent businessmen which recruited, endorsed and financed the campaigns for a slate of candidates. It will be referred to here as the Citizens Committee. The candidates of the committee were leading business and professional men. Some were officers in the city's largest firms. Most, but not all, of them were Republican in national politics. All of the candidates endorsed during the period studied lived in four precincts. These were the most prestigious areas of the city. Financial support given by the Committee to it's endorsees was substantial, amounting to as much as $15,000.00 in a single campaign.1

We referred earlier to an area on the fringe of Kalamazoo, but which is still within the city limits, where the greater share of the Kalamazoo managerial talent live. This area, which in many urbanized localities is outside core city limits is the four precinct area mentioned by Professor Adrian. Leaders in this area, as Adrian indicates, dominate city elections. Overt domination of city politics stops here. No one interviewed indicated that the candidates whose election was aided by this elite money, were ever put under any pressure.

We have noted the community myth in Kalamazoo that simply holds that the "Park Club" group runs the city.

Further we have seen that there is in fact a group which exerts influence on city politics out of proportion to its numerical size. Except for recruiting leadership for the City Commission, this group commits few, if any, overt acts to affect community decision making. But as Bachrach and Baratz suggest,

To measure relative influence solely in terms of the ability to initiate and veto proposals is to ignore the possible exercise of influence or power in limiting the scope of initiation.¹

Adrian stated that the members of this elite live mostly in a four precinct area within the city limits. He suggested that ability of this group to finance candidate campaigns was a major factor in securing elite slate election. This area to which Adrian referred is the area City Commissioner Paul J. Schrier calls "nob hill."

In the November, 1963 City Commission election, the elite slate included Otto Yntema, Raymond Hightower, William Bayliss, Bert Cooper, Authur Washington, Lee Stryker, Jacob Hoogendoorn, and some, but not complete financial support was given to Mr. Ed Walters. Of these eight, six were elected - all but Hoogendoorn and Walters. In other words, six of the seven City Commission seats were secured by elite

¹Bachrach and Baratz, "Two Faces of Power," p.952.
supported candidates. The seventh seat went to Paul J. Schrier. Mr. Schrier is well known for his vocal opposition to this elite. Mr. Schrier calls them the "downtown do-gooders." He calls the elite residential area referred to by Adrian nob hill as we have seen. It appears then, that it might be fruitful to examine the extent to which nob hill voting affects elections.

For comparison purposes, we can compare the support received by top runners on the slate - Hightower, Yntema and Cooper, to anti-elite candidate, Schrier.

We must keep in mind that when the Kalamazoo voter goes to the polls, he can vote for up to seven men from the list of candidates. In the November, 1963 election, 15,121 voters went to the polls. The following chart shows:

1. The number of people who gave the winning candidates one of their votes.

2. The percent of total voters who gave each candidate a vote.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANDIDATE</th>
<th>VOTES RECEIVED</th>
<th>% TOTAL VOTERS GIVING CANDIDATE 1 VOTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raymond Hightower...</td>
<td>9057</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otto Yntema...........</td>
<td>8966</td>
<td>59.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bert Cooper..........</td>
<td>8891</td>
<td>58.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee Stryker...........</td>
<td>8659</td>
<td>57.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul J. Schrier......</td>
<td>8541</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Washington...</td>
<td>8050</td>
<td>53.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Bayliss......</td>
<td>7517</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number of Kalamazooans who voted - 15,121.

---

1 Information obtained from City of Kalamazoo Board of Canvassers Report, filed in Kalamazoo City Clerk's office, for November, 1963 City Commission election.
There are 41 precincts in Kalamazoo. The following chart shows how many precincts were won by the candidates.¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANDIDATE</th>
<th>PRECINCTS WON</th>
<th>PERCENT PRECINCTS WON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Raymond Hightower</td>
<td>4 (1 tie)</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otto Yntema</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bert Cooper</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee Stryker</td>
<td>1 (1 tie)</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul J. Schrier</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Washington</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Bayliss</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chief opponent of the slate, Mr. Schrier, won in nearly one half of the city precincts. Yet he came in fifth with four slate candidates ahead of him. The three front runners, Hightower, Yntema and Cooper won in 41.6% of the precincts (fewer than Schrier's precinct victories) and still finished a strong first, second and third. One might guess then, that some particular area of the city, a minority area in terms of space and number of voters, votes very strong in favor of the slate and against slate opponent Schrier. This strong vote off-sets the lead accumulated by Schrier in the nearly one half of the city, which had to a point, given him first place.

Both Adrian and Schrier himself, point up the elite area (nob hill) which lends strong support, either money or votes or both, to the slate. I choose to examine voting patterns here as compared to the rest of the city. Nine precincts were selected as representing the elite or nob

¹City of Kalamazoo Board of Canvasser's Report, 1963.
hill area. 1

A 1964 survey indicates that there are 28,000 registered voters in Kalamazoo. 2 Using this figure, the turn-out at the November 1963 City Commission election was 53.2% for the entire city. In the nine selected precincts the turn-out was 62.8% as opposed to 50.3% for the rest of the city. 3 In relation to the rest of the city then, the nob hill area exerts a disproportionate degree of influence on elections simply by virtue of it's making high use of the voting franchise.

A further look reveals the fact that one of the three slate front runners came in first in each of these nine nob hill precincts. These precincts generally include the areas around Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo College, the Oakland Drive, Bronson Blvd., and Woods Lake areas. Generally this is the area bordering on the south and west city limits. Following are listed the nine precincts, noting 1963 election figures for total votes, support given the elite frontrunner, and support given (or not given) to slate opponent Schrier. 4

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1 The only criterion used in selecting the nine precinct area was that this is the higher price residential area in Kalamazoo, and also the area tabbed "nob hill" by Mr. Schrier. It is also the residential area of most present and past "community leaders" of "elite" reputation.

2 From the records of the Kalamazoo City Clerk's office.

3 Computed from City of Kalamazoo Board of Canvasser's Report.

4 Data on chart computed from City of Kalamazoo Board of Canvasser's Report.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRECINCT</th>
<th>WINNER</th>
<th>WINNER VOTES</th>
<th>SCHRIER VOTES</th>
<th>TOTAL PRECINCT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Yntema</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Yntema</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Yntema</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Yntema</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Hightower</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Yntema</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Cooper</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Yntema</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Yntema</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3084</strong></td>
<td><strong>1800</strong></td>
<td><strong>4210</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, any margin of victory compiled by a slate opponent in the rest of the city is at the least, threatened to be wiped out by the nine precinct area vote. This is not to imply a conscious drive by residents in this area to support a slate for the sake of supporting a slate. The causes of the slate support may be many or few. But the fact remains that Mr. Schrier won in 46.4% of the city precincts, but came in fifth in the total city vote. He was hurt in the nine precinct area.

The values and goals which are embodied in Kalamazoo Commissioners, to a large degree are the values of a business community. These are also the values and ideas to which the Kalamazoo citizens are exposed during election campaigns. In Kalamazoo's at-large elections, the voters generally show a high degree of support for these values.

What are the values which are held by the business elite, expressed in government through the City Commission and supported to a high degree by the voting Kalamazooan? Generally the kind of government sought is "progressive"
government. Oliver Williams has said the following about Kalamazoo,

The council showed great willingness to take on rather ambitious projects (often related to community growth) especially when compared to the other cities.¹

Kalamazoo is a prime example used by Adrian, of the "booster" type of city. In this booster type of city, Professor Adrian says,

The merchant, banker, newspaper editor, chamber of commerce manager, and city bureaucrat all stand to gain from growth, and they are all likely to see the city government's highest duty as that of furthering it.²

Kalamazoo's good government is considered active government - government which provides amenities and which promotes downtown and general business development and improvement. This business type sees the city's good as synonymous with what is good for business.

As relates to Kalamazoo's policy making Commission, it is composed of members who value what the business elite values. These values then condition what city policy is. There is no need for manipulation by the Park Club. They have secured the expression of their values in city policy, in law. Often the boosters sit on the Commission themselves

²Adrian, Governing Urban America, p.88.
They, and their values then, are the Commission, and in effect, the law.

Limits on the City Manager.

Kalamazoo City Manager Clarence H. Elliott is hired by, and serves at the pleasure of, the City Commission. His $21,000.00 annual salary (in 1964) can legally be cut off by this Commission. Mr. Elliott refrains from advising his Commission in a manner contrary to their natural, if not articulated, values and desires. He will run his city affairs, and make proposals in such a way so as to find favor with his Commission. We have already noted that the Commission represents the values of the downtown or business elite. Clearly then, to get along with his "board of directors," Mr. Elliott will evidence agreement with Commission, and thus elite values. He may, to be sure, really share these values. But regardless of his own value structure, the Manager's recommendations and actions are conditioned to coincide with the Commission and elite values. This agreement with prevailing elite values may or may not be conscious with Mr. Elliott, but the fact remains; they like downtown development - he likes it.

While indicating that Manager Elliott plays a leading role in forming policy, Mr. Thompson Bennett said that there are boundaries within which the Manager operates. The Commission has final legal power.

Dr. Raymond Hightower, the Mayor, called Manager Elliott
a group strategist. The Mayor indicated that in his policy and administration roles, the Manager is able to maintain political support. Dr. Hightower indicated that Manager Elliott is adept at group interaction. Clearly, there is a need for skill at group interaction. The values of the powers in the city are read, and properly reacted to via the gaining of political support.

Former Mayor, Paul E. Morrison likened Manager Elliott to a machine that simply carries out Commission policy. However, he also indicated that Manager Elliott helps create that policy. Mr. Morrison was quick to note that in the final analysis the Commission holds legal power, and that Manager Elliott, knowing this, acts accordingly. He said that as the Mayor, he had on one occasion, "set Clarence straight" when Mr. Elliott "seemed to forget who the boss was."

Former Vice Mayor C.H. Mullen said that the reason Mr. Elliott can lead policy, and has lasted 13 years as Manager, is that "he is a good politician." "He knows how far go go with the Commission."

Present Kalamazoo City Commissioner Paul J. Schrier indicated that he felt that Manager actions and recommendations are conditioned by the Manager's desire to encounter as little elite and Commission opposition as possible. Schrier said,

Elliott has lasted 13 years as City Manager only because he is a master politician. He is with the
"in" group. He stays with the majority. Elliott never recommends against what he knows the Commission wants.

Mr. F. Joseph Buckley indicated that in leading policy and educating the City Commission, Mr. Elliott is limited. Mr. Buckley said that Mr. Elliott goes along with prevailing desires on the Commission and among the elite. He said that the Manager would shift gears to get along with his Commission.

City Attorney David Morris said that in doing his job, the City Manager must "play it by ear." He said that Mr. Elliott did this well. Mr. Elliott, he stated, is a good politician. In his dealing with the Commission, Mr. Morris said, the Manager must know what the Commission wants.

City Planning Department Director Bill Ripatte stated that in planning, it is necessary to gain political support for programs. He indicated that Manager Elliott was a central figure in all city administration activities. Mr. Ripatte indicated that there are boundaries outside of which city planning activities could not go. Both planning and city administration must be within the realm of the acceptable to city powers.

All the above-mentioned respondents, as earlier noted, said that the Manager played a strong role in policy formation. They also indicate that the Manager operates within some bounds. Commission bias and values, as noted, are coincidental with those of an elite. Mr. Elliott serves
at the pleasure of the Commission. Clearly, Mr. Elliott, in serving as Manager for 13 years, has recognized these values and acted accordingly. He has shared, or at least appeared to have shared these values. These are the limits within which he operates.

Mr. Elliott himself said that a Manager must adjust and conform to his community and Commission. He stated that a Manager's professional goals, while real, are distant and abstract. A Manager must, he stated, always work for them. But government necessitates compromise and adjustment and goals are never fully reached.

Manager Elliott did not disagree with the proposition that he would change his actions and proposals to meet changing values on a City Commission. He agreed that the instinct to get along and keep one's job is strong motivation to go with the prevailing values. Mr. Elliott noted, for example, that the Commission that was elected in November of 1963 is different from the previous one. Members of this new Commission, two university professors in particular, do more thinking for themselves than some previous Commissioners did. They are less prone to see only the downtown interests. In such a changing situation, a Manager is well advised to change as his Commission changes.

The operations of the Community Relations Board are further suggestion of the effect of prevailing elite values. The first purpose of this official body is to facilitate
better community relations - race relations especially, and
to seek to promote presently lacking opportunities for minori-
ty groups. Presently serving on the Board are: two Western
Michigan University professors, four negroes (the wife of a
local physician, an attorney, a minister and one laborer),
a Catholic priest, the wife of a Protestant clergyman, a
former woman City Commissioner and present member of the
State Board of Education, a realtor, an advertising executive,
a shoe store owner, an attorney, a doctor, and a building
cleaner contractor. A rather distinguished group to be sure.

City Manager Elliott has influence on the operation of this
Board, both administratively and via his budget activities.
There has been some minority group dissatisfaction with the
Community Relations Board both with regard to its composition
and its control by the City Manager. Feeling exists that the
Board membership does not represent the community. There
is too much brass on the board; they are professional do-gooders.

Also, the City Manager is identified with the conservative,
status-quo forces confronting the board.¹

To conclude, Manager Elliott plays a prominent role
in policy formation, but as he serves at the Commission's
pleasure, he appears to find, rather than initiate policy.
He seems adept at identifying the values in power, and
adopting them - if he does not share them.

This is a direct tie to elite values. By and large

¹See Charles Ocvirek, Kalamazoo Community Relations
unpublished 710 Individual Research Paper, 1964.)
Commission values are elite values. And where they are not, the Manager avoids head on conflict with downtown interests. In light of elite influence in elections, no Manager could last 13 years, and no Commission could last much over two years should its actions directly oppose elite values.

Perhaps we can best summarize the limits placed on the City Manager, by paraphrasing Commissioner Washington.

The Manager operates between the fringes and downtown. He has worked mostly with the downtown boys, and worked in their territory, been exposed to their views, and their money controlled the official decision making machine. If this becomes less true, the Manager is a good enough politician to shift gears and he will do so. He may have championed their views, but that was not necessarily because he shared their values. It may, and possibly was, that was the most successful road he could travel.

What this all means then, is that community myths, community bias, a "Hunter" or Lynd "X" crowd, etc., do by their real or imagined presence and grip on power, have some very real effect on decision making within the city legal arena.

Bachrach and Baratz contend that a valid community study must recognize this. They contend that reputational power can not be ignored, as this too affects decision making. Adrian and Williams have pointed out the reality of this phenomena in Kalamazoo. Discussions with men like Messrs. Upjohn, Morris, Elliott, Buckley and Schrier

¹Washington interview.
have further confirmed the existence of an elite in Kalama zoo, plus the fact that this elite affects local politics.
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

It has been suggested that legislative bodies depend to a great extent, on the expertise of administrators both in formation and administration of policy. In council-manager city governments the chief expert is the city manager. In Kalamazoo, Clarence H. Elliott is the number one expert. As City Manager, he is the number one full time city employee. He and his subordinate administration have a monopoly on expert talent relating to such city functions as personnel, budgeting and providing the myriad of city services. Mr. Elliott has control of information regarding provision and maintenance of city facilities. Often the Manager deals with the press in the name of the city. Further, Mr. Elliott's recommendations to the Commission, and they are many, are nearly always accepted. Respondents, as we noted, state that "Elliott has all the information," and "he really forms the policy, although the Commission may think it does."

To a high degree this Kalamazoo situation appears to conform to what the literature suggests. Gladys Kammerer stated that managers "are involved in the making and shaping of policy." Mr. Elliott seems to be. To the point that the literature points to the very prominent role of the Manager in policy formation and administration, the literature can be said to describe Kalamazoo.
The literature also suggests that communities may have influential elites. Bachrach and Baratz indicate that elite values may limit the area of decision making by legal government. Elites, by their real or imagined existence, and real or imagined action, and real or imagined potential for existence and action, can and do delimit the area in which legal government operates.

Such an elite exists in Kalamazoo, it has potential for action and it acts. However it could not be said that Kalamazoo's elite is conscious and ever plotting in its efforts to run the town. Rather, as noted, it is a large, quite unorganized segment of the citizenry. The elite has money and is willing to use it, along with the voting franchise to exert a strong influence on city government. In fact this elite sometimes is the legal city government. Today six of the seven City Commissioners were supported by the elite in the last election. In the past, members of the wealthy elite group occupied Commission seats. The City Manager serves "at the pleasure of the City Commission." The Commission represents elite values, so the Manager is subject to control by the elite via the Commission.

Two seemingly contradictory points have been raised concerning the activities of the City Manager in Kalamazoo. On the one hand, Mr. Elliott is shown to be a policy and administration leader. The Manager controls the administrative service. The City Commission is dependent on his expertise, and nearly always accepts his recommendations. On the other
hand we have pointed to a community elite who either sit on the City Commission themselves, or control Commission elections. We further indicated that the values of this elite tend to dominate city government. These values are booster in nature. How can Manager Elliott both control city policy formation, and also be subject to control by elite values and goals?

The answer is that there are two levels of policy. There are two levels at which policy is formed. The first level of policy or decision making is the technical, administrative level. Decisions here relate to implementation of broad policy. They involve, for example, decisions on which streets to pave first, when and to whom to let city bids, and other similarly administrative decisions. Such decisions are not, of course, without their impact on total city policy. The second level of policy is a broader level. Decisions here, whether made by sweeping policy statements, or by series of smaller decisions, provide guidelines within which administrative actions and decisions are carried out. Such broader, or second level decisions, may include decisions to extend service facilities to outlying areas, to annex some land or to build a downtown mall, create a Community Relations Board, etc.

While the information used in making the case for Commission reliance on expertise makes it appear that the elite and the Commission are really only pawns of the expert Manager, this paper must conclude the reverse.
Conclusions

On the first (administrative) level of decision making, Manager Elliott is the most influential person. But the second (broader) level of decision making includes and controls the first level. And on the second level, Mr. Elliott is not in control. Mr. Elliott may appear to be active on this level also, but in reality he is just articulating or finding already existing policy. As Louis Brownlow said of his experience as a city manager, "It was true, of course, that I formulated policy, but I did not determine it."¹

Mr. Elliott has not, for example, provided expert information on how to keep taxes and city expenditures at the lowest possible level. He has provided expert information on how to develop a downtown area, and how to go about planning for a larger Community Improvement Program.

One need not speculate to arrive at the above conclusion. Dr. Hightower called Mr. Elliott a group strategist. Mr. Buckley said that Mr. Elliott would switch horses to get along with the Commission. Mr. Mullen attributed Mr. Elliott's success to his "knowing how far to go." Mr. Schrier dislikes Mr. Elliott's being with the "in-group," and "staying with the majority," and "never recommending against what he knows that the Commission wants." Manager Elliott himself clearly indicated to me that a manager's goals must conform

to community reality. Unless a manager can politic well, and recognize the situation in which he is operating, he will soon be out of that job.

Gladys Kammerer's study of the Florida city manager cities indicated clearly that long manager tenure depends on the manager's ability to create a political base of support for himself with the ruling clique.¹ Karl Bosworth stated that "City Managers, whichever role they wish to follow, must seek to be among the best politicians in town...."²

Managers are often referred to as officials of general administrative leadership, as policy innovators, and simply as politicians. A popular, and not untrue conception of a politician is one who seeks simply to read and react properly to dominant values and desires, having as his first purpose to stay in office. To a great extent, Manager Elliott is such a politician. He does, to be sure, have administrative standards and values of his own. But his 13 years of success can be attributed, at least in part, to his ability to "stay with the majority."

In the seemingly powerful position of chief city expert who advises the Commission, we must conclude that Manager Elliott "finds" and "articulates" policy. He does not create it. He could not propose a low tax at all costs policy. But he can and does advocate extensive (and expensive) downtown development.

¹See Kammerer, City Managers In Politics, pages 81, 82.
Possibly the most significant point about this study is the notation of Mr. Elliott's attitude toward his own role. We can assume that a Kalamazoo Manager who recommended against elite and booster values would be released soon, but we do not know for sure. What we do know for sure is that Manager Elliott believes that this is the case. He sees himself as reading the dominant values and then conditioning his actions to meet favorably with these values. Others agree with him when they say he knows how far to go. If a politician is one who, rather than being on a reform campaign, simply reads, or finds existing goals and desires, whatever they may be, and locates and mobilizes political support, then Manager Elliott is clearly Kalamazoo's number one politician.

We might now ask what all this means for local government in general. Sweeping generalizations based on a limited review of existing literature, supplemented by just one case study are dangerous. Still, we can make a few general comments.

First, the role of the expert in government today is very important. Policy making legislative bodies greatly depend on the information and knowhow of the expert. This reliance necessarily affords the expert some voice in final policy formation. Since the purpose of an expert is to be expert about something, and to administer, his values tend to be expansionist and booster in nature. The expert, whatever he is expert in, is likely to call for "more" and "better".
Thus experts will, to a degree, inject some expansionist flavor into policy.

Second, expertise information, advice, and proposals flavor policy - they do not control it. Until a city manager can command solid political support at the polls, and can control the composition of the commission whose pleasure he serves at, he operates within defined bounds. These bounds may vary city to city and may even be quite opposite in some cities as compared to others. But whatever the bounds or values of a community as reflected in its commission, the manager will be bound by them.

In his study of New Haven, Connecticut, Robert A. Dahl found Richard Lee to be a particularly strong political leader in all issue areas studied. Explicit in Dahl's findings was the fact that Mayor Lee possessed a strong personal base of political support. Mayor Lee was an elected, well paid, full time executive policy leader and administrator. Mayor Lee was a "strong Mayor."1 The city manager system on the other hand, places the job of city administration and (some) political leadership in the hands of an appointed city manager. The Manager's path to maintenance of this job is to get along with his commission. He may engage in subtle leadership. But in the long run, he has no personal political base of power apart from that which he may create

1See Robert A. Dahl, Who Governs?
on the commission. The legal structure of the city manager system appears to add to this situation. The role which the manager system seems to assign to managers is one of finding, not forming, policy. In short, the legal structure of the manager system, as opposed for example, to the strong mayor system, seems to account for some of the behavioral differences between such political actors as Clarence Elliott and Richard Lee.

Third, it is clear that not all citizens exert an equal influence on official decision making bodies. In cities where elites are operative, they will exert a disproportional amount of influence on policy via their money and votes. Following this through, the values and desires of the elite will disproportionately affect the way in which an expert is expert. The bounds within which the expert works are the bounds desired by the influential segment of the citizenry.

The at-large election, such as Kalamazoo has, makes it possible for 50% plus one voter to elect 100% of the Commission representation. Elections in cities are generally of such a nature that any single minority bloc voting solidly can swing an election. In Kalamazoo, Mr. Schrier's nob hill votes solidly, and carries the elections. This nob hill is in a position to totally shut off other minority group, or majority group, access to legal decision making.

Kalamazoo evidences many patterns or models pointed
to by existing scholarly literature. But no one pattern offers a satisfactory fit. Kalamazoo's Manager affects policy, but he does not dictate it. Kalamazoo has an elite but it is passive, not active, except at election time. Both Hunter's elite model and Dahl and Polsby's (and others) pluralist model help describe Kalamazoo, but neither offers an exclusive fit. Also, the research limitations of this study block deeper analysis. Confronted with the inability of any previously existing model to satisfactorily describe Kalamazoo, the question is sure to be asked - What is the significance of all this for the citizen of Kalamazoo? In general terms we have noted the Kalamazoo elections, the composition of the City Commission, the existence of the elite, and the interrelated actions of this elite, the Commission and the Manager, as this is all related to the general direction of Kalamazoo policy formation. But so what?

Gladys Kammerer followed her conclusions in the Florida city manager study with a set of recommendations. She was disturbed by the lack of competition and political dynamism typical of the non-partisan election. She felt that the non-partisan elections lessened party strength which cut across social and economic lines, and they created either one or several slates whose representation tended to be based on socio-economic factors. The lack of a full time mayor, elected at-large, and the lack of policy alternatives bothered her. She recommended partisan elections and a
stronger mayor elected at-large - one with a stronger political base. This would result in greater all-population representation, would create political dynamism and would allow the expert manager to be an administrative expert. He would be relieved of the necessity of filling existing political vacuums.

In Kalamazoo the combination of the at-large, nonpartisan elections, the manager system, the existence of a single elite, the lack of political dynamism, the strong booster flavor of policy, would all bother Mrs. Kammerer. Does this mean bad government for Kalamazoo?

The answer obviously depends on one's point of view. True, the Manager must struggle to walk the political line of survival. Given the moneyed Kalamazoo elite, policy (both Commission and Manager policy) is pointed in one direction. In general Kalamazoo has "good" government - progressive government. A large segment of the citizenry is penalized with lack of representation because they (1) are not politically active, (2) are not highly educated, (3) do not have the financial resources to compete with the elite, (4) lack the know-how to compete with the elite. From this point of view the Kalamazoo situation is not good, and structural changes might help the situation.

But there is another point of view. The powers that be do not demand much, and what they do demand is largely what
most of us would call good government. Government in Kalamazoo is by and large, clean and honest and progressive, even if it is not ideally representative. And the City Manager? Mr. Elliott has been here for 13 years. This factor alone points to him as an able administrator and politician. While he does operate in such a way as to encounter little elite opposition, he has never encountered serious opposition from the electorate at large, as evidenced by the Commission election returns. The Kalamazoo voters have registered their approval of the policy desires of Kalamazoo's elite and the able direction and administration of Manager Clarence Elliott.
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Buckley, F. Joseph, Executive Secretary, Kalamazoo County Chamber of Commerce, April 14, 1964, 9:00a.m., Mr. Buckley's office, Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce Building, 438 W. South St., Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Elliott, Clarence H., Kalamazoo City Manager, March 4, March 20, April 9 and May 29, all 1964, all in Mr. Elliott's City Hall Office, W. South St., Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Filarski, Mrs. Marie, Kalamazoo City Clerk, April 6, 1964, 3:00p.m., in Mrs. Filarski's City Hall Office, W. South St., Kalamazoo, Michigan.
Hightower, Dr. Raymond, Mayor of The City of Kalamazoo, and Dean of the Faculty of Kalamazoo College, March 24, 1964, 3:00p.m., Room 304, Bowen Hall, Kalamazoo, College, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Morris, David, City Attorney of Kalamazoo, April 6, 1964, 11:00a.m., Room 403 Kalamazoo Building, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Morrison, Paul E., Jeweler and former Kalamazoo Mayor, March 23, 1964, 10:00a.m., Morrison Jewlery Store, On the Mall, Downtown, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Mullen, C.H., Vice President, First National Bank and Trust Company, and former Kalamazoo City Vice Mayor, March 23, 1964, 2:00p.m., Mr. Mullen's office, First Nat. Bank and Trust Co., Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Ripatte, William, Director, Kalamazoo City Planning Department, April 14, 1964, 3:00p.m., in Mr. Ripatte's office, City Hall, W. South St., Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Schrier, Paul J., Plumbing Contractor and Kalamazoo City Commissioner, April 4, 1964, 2:00p.m., in Mr. Schrier's home, Burr Oak St., Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Southern, Dodd, former Assistant to Kalamazoo City Manager, Elliott, March 14, 1964, 11:00a.m., in Mr. Southern's City Hall office, W. South Street, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Upjohn, Henry, retired businessman, and former Kalamazoo Vice Mayor and City Commissioner, April ___ , 1964, at Mr. Uphohn's home, Knollwood St., Kalamazoo, Michigan.


Yntema, Otto, Director, Western Michigan University Field Service, and Kalamazoo City Vice Mayor, March 26, 1964 2:30p.m., in Mr. Yntema's WMU, Administration building office.

Secondary Materials

Books.


Kammerer, Gladys et.al., City Managers In Politics, (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962)

Leuchtenburg, William E., The Perils of Prosperity, (The University Press, 1958)


Press, Charles, Main Street Politics, (East Lansing: Institute for Community Development, Michigan State University, 1962)


Periodical literature.


The Municipal Year Book, (Chicago: The International City Manager's Association, 1962)


