

# Professional Management of Alabama Cities

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# Forms of Government

- Almost all U.S. cities operate under either mayor-council or council-manager forms of government.
- Since state legislatures create forms of government, there are some variations by state.
- Mayor-council based on concept of separation of powers with an executive mayor and legislative city council.

# Forms of Government

- Council-manager based on corporate model with the mayor serving as chair of the council, and the council as legislative body.
- City manager is hired by the council and serves at the pleasure of the council.
- C-M government is used in 63% of cities over 25,000 and 48% of all cities.
- Many older Frostbelt cities have historic roots in mayor-council form while Sunbelt high-growth cities tend toward council-manager.

# Forms of Government Cities in Southeast

**Table 1. Form of Government in Southeastern Cities of 10,000 or Greater\***

	C-M	M-C	CO	Total
Alabama	7** (13.4%)	40 (77%)	5 (9.6%)	52
Florida	131 (88.5)	15 (10.1)	2 (1.4)	148
Georgia	42 (58.3)	30 (41.7)	0	72
Kentucky	11 (33.3)	21 (63.7)	1 (3.0)	33
Mississippi	6 (17.6)	25 (73.5)	3 (8.8)	34
North Carolina	61 (98.4)	1 (1.6)	0	62
South Carolina	23 (69.7)	10 (30.3)	0	33
Tennessee	24 (50.0)	20 (41.7)	4 (8.3)	48
Virginia	35 (97.2)	1 (2.8)	0	36
West Virginia	7 (50.0)	7 (50.0)	0	14
Total	347 (65.2)	170 (32.0)	15 (2.8)	532

C-M= council-manager; M-C= mayor-council; CO= commission

\*Based on 2000 Census in ICMA, *Municipal Year Book 2010*

\*\*Anniston, Auburn, Dothan, Mountain Brook, Phenix City, Talladega, Tuskegee; not including Decatur, Pell City, and Vestavia Hills

# Adoption of Council-Manager Government in Alabama

**Table 2. Adoption of Council-Manager Government in Alabama Cities over 10,000\***

<u>City</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Basis</u>
Mountain Brook	1942	Active	11-43-20
Sylacauga	1942	Abandoned	
Fairhope	1945	Abandoned**	
Brewton	1947	Abandoned	
Bessemer	1947	Abandoned	
Auburn	1947, 1958, 1983	Active	11-43A
Jasper	1950	Abandoned**	
Jackson	1953	Abandoned	
Prattville	1954	Abandoned	
Clanton	1955	Abandoned	
Dothan	1958	Active	11-44E-90
Anniston	1970	Active	45-8A-23
Phenix City	1977	Active	Act No. 71 (1977)
Daphne	1988	Abandoned	
Talladega	2004	Active	Const. Amend. 738 (11-43A)
Tuskegee	2004	Active	11-43A
Vestavia Hills	2010	Active***	11-43A
Decatur	2010	Pending****	11-43A
Pell City	2011	Pending*****	11-43-20

\*See Frye and Dyer 1961, 7.

\*\*Now using adapted form. See Table 3.

\*\*\*Hired city manager with 2012 implementation

\*\*\*\*Awaiting Justice Department approval

\*\*\*\*\*Recruiting city manager

# Changing Forms of Government

- There are about 10 challenges to C-M cities nationally each year and 20 challenges to M-C.
- Most are to council-manager, such as El Paso and Topeka.
- Some large cities have changed to mayor-council, such as San Diego, Hartford, and St. Petersburg.
- Other large cities, such as Dallas, Kansas City, and Cincinnati, rejected efforts to change to M-C.
- Most new cities in Sunbelt have adopted C-M.

# Changing Forms of Government

- M-C and C-M forms based on different paradigms:
  - M-C calls for political executive with a tendency toward particularism and patronage with political intrusion in management.
  - C-M calls for professional CEO chosen based on experience, education, and professional capacity to manage.
    - Based on universalism and neutral competence.
    - Mayor is a facilitative leader (Svara 2009).

# Mayor as Facilitative Leader

- C-M mayors do not have formal administrative powers.
- The effective mayor is a facilitative leader.
  - Leads by empowering others.
  - Mayor contributes by coordinating efforts of Council and CM.
  - Mayor provides guidance in policy matters.



# Mayor as Facilitative Leader

- Facilitative mayors are involved with agenda setting, network building, and task accomplishing.
- Mayor is in strategic location because of special relationships with council, city manager, and the public.
- Again, two key roles:
  - Coordination
  - Policy Guidance

# The Adapted City

- Frederickson, *et al.* in *The Adapted City*, argued that M-C and C-M cities are becoming more alike.
- They created a typology of five cities:
  - 1. Political city is the classic M-C city with a strong mayor and no chief administrative officer (CAO). Council elected from districts.
  - 2. Adapted political city is like classic M-C city except that it has a CAO.

# The Adapted City

- Typology of five cities (continued):
  - 3. Conciliated city has a CAO, mayor elected either at-large or by council, mayor serves as council chair, and council members elected either by districts or at-large.
  - 4. Administrative city is classic C-M city with a small city council elected at-large on non-partisan basis.
    - Council hires a city manager. Manager has full administrative responsibility.
    - Mayor is chosen by other council members.

# The Adapted City

- Typology of five cities (continued):
  - 5. Adapted administrative city has a CM/CAO, the mayor is directly elected, majority of council elected at-large, and the mayor serves as chair of council.
    - Statutory basis of adapted administrative city is council-manager law.
    - Mayor often has a larger role in policy and serves as the *de facto* spokesman for the city.

# The Adapted City

- **Reasons for blending of forms:**
  - States (and GFOA) have mandated accounting and auditing standards, budgeting and finance rules, purchasing procedures, and bidding requirements.
  - Earlier, HR practices heavily affected by civil service reform and more recently by court cases.
  - Complexity of cities led political leaders to realize need for professional management.
    - In many M-C cities, CAOs have been appointed to manage day-to-day affairs while mayor tends to policy and leadership roles.

# The Adapted City

- **C-M governments have adapted as well:**
  - At-large elections have been abandoned in favor of district elections because of one person, one vote court decisions.
  - In a majority of C-M governments, mayors are now elected at-large and often serve full-time.
  - Svara, in his books on local leadership, argued:
    - “... there is an increasing recognition of the importance of mayoral leadership.... In a number of large council-manager cities, the role of the mayor has been expanded, and, in some cities, the office has been formally ‘empowered....”

# Adapted Political Cities in Alabama

- Since 1984, at least 7 Alabama M-C cities have become adapted political cities: Alabaster, Fairhope, Foley, Hoover, Jasper, Northport, and Opelika.
- CAOs report to their mayors who are CEOs, but responsibilities are akin to those of CMs.
  - Department heads report to CAOs.
  - Supervise work of department heads.
  - Develop budget and CIP.

# CAOs in Adapted Political Cities

**Table 5. Responsibilities of City Administrators in Alabama's Adapted Political Cities**

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Alabaster</b>	<b>Hoover</b>	<b>Opelika</b>	<b>Fairhope</b>	<b>Foley</b>	<b>Northport</b>	<b>Jasper</b>
Supervise the daily work of department heads	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Develop and implement the annual budget	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Present the annual budget to the city council	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advise the mayor on matters of policy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Advise the city council directly on policy matters	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Develop the capital improvement program	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Handle relations with the media on city actions	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Sometimes
Others	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No



Questions?