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City Management as a Project
by Owen Podger
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City Management as a Project

Owen Podger

Abstract

This paper is prepared as part of a process of writing a book on ways of understanding city management. Cities are not projects as their work is never done. But an elected mayor can certainly see her period in office as a project, perceiving that she has a unique venture in which she has set goals to achieve by the end of her tenure. The proposed book is intended to help her organise her learning for her job. And this paper is prepared in the hope of initiating some dialogue with project managers around the world on how we could adapt and sell project management skills to the political leaders of our cities. After an introduction, a summary of PMBOK is provided (as few mayors know about project management), then the author suggests an Urban Management Body of Knowledge, based on PMBOK with some variations due the nature of cities and political office. The most significant change is of order rather than substance. Stakeholder Engagement Management is placed first. The author also suggests some knowledge areas of older versions of PMBOK would be of value to her. The paper concludes with an invitation for readers to respond to get the proposed dialogue going.

Introduction

While management theory applies mostly to ongoing businesses, the younger discipline of project management applies to situations of constant change towards an end. It may be defined like this:

> *Project management is the art of leading a unique venture, from a beginning when specific goals are set, to an end when those goals have been achieved.[i]*

Clearly the city is not a project as its work is never done. But an elected leader can certainly see her period in office as a project, perceiving that she has a unique venture in which she has set goals to achieve by the end of her tenure. The mayor and her senior officers do not manage things; they leave mere management to lower echelons. Their job is to make the city better, by leading the improvement of services the city provides to the public. This is done through portfolio management of investments and reforms.

A characteristic of projects is as follows:

> *A project is led by someone who has responsibility that exceeds her authority to lead it. Whether or not the people or techniques or materials needed for a project are under her command at the start, she must build her authority to achieve the project goals.*

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This indeed applies also to the mayor. We can say:

> *A mayor has greater responsibility for leading her city than her authority to lead it. Whether or not the people or techniques or materials she needs are under her command when she is elected, she must build her authority to achieve the goals to which she is politically committed.*

Another characteristic of projects is that they have limited repetitive work, and conditions are constantly changing. Even where actions are repeated, they are mostly repeated in a new location in a different way. Almost every day on a project there is a variation in the way of doing things, in organisational structure, in job descriptions, and procedures.

The good mayor leaves the standardised work to her administration. She focusses on managing the change.

The Project Management Institute describes the processes of project management in their Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK). Let us look at how these processes might help a mayor to lead the city for her term of office.

PMBOK phases and process groups in projects

From initiation to completion, projects progress through phases. This progress is often called the "Project Cycle", even though it is not a cycle as projects come to a stop. Earlier versions of defined phases of projects: initiation, planning, implementing and commissioning. This implied that projects are executed in distinct steps, whereas in reality initiation blurs into planning, planning goes on all the time, everything is implemented. Each of those so-called phases ebbs and flows as work progresses. The latest edition of PMBOK replaces "phases" with "Process Groups" for the equivalent things.

The first process group in PMBOK is the *Initiating Process Group* in which the initial scope of a proposed project is defined, initial financial resources are committed, and someone is put in charge.

The second process group in PMBOK is the *Planning Process Group*. Once a manager is put in charge, she will normally plan strategies for achieving the project's goals, plan potential environmental impacts and means of dealing with them, cost estimates and potential sources of funding, often accompanied by plans for marketing concepts, and finally a detailed definition of the scope of work to be done and plan of action to do it. The initial strategic planning is followed by more detailed planning. Project design is usually commissioned to experts, who usually prepare the design in two steps: conceptual design first, defining a product that will achieve the goal of the project, specifying quality and establishing a budget and timetable. After approvals, the second step is the detailed design and contract documents prepared for suppliers and implementers.

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The third process group in PMBOK is *implementing*. It typically consists of tendering, contracting, supplying and assembling, and monitoring to completion, though there is a wide variety of alternative means of implementing project work.

The fourth process group in PMBOK is *commissioning,* process of testing the product created by the project and handing it over to its users, and the process of their learning to use it. It may also require market initiation, advertising campaigns, training of sales staff and support, and of course, repairing any defects.

PMBOK defines a fifth process group for *monitoring and controlling*. Throughout the process of initiating, planning, implementing and commissioning a project, its manager will monitor and control, providing feedback to assure goals are achieved and adverse impacts are restrained.

PMKOK Knowledge areas

After defining process areas, PMBOK defines a set of *knowledge areas*. These are summarised in the following paragraphs.

The first knowledge area is *Project Integration Management*. The project manager must have skills and knowledge about processes of initiating, planning, implementing, commissioning and controlling whatever is needed to assure that everything is integrated and each part contributes to achievement of the project goals.

The second knowledge area is *Project Scope Management*. Project managers must be competent to assure all effort required to achieve the goals taken, while avoiding unnecessary work. As the project progresses so does the definition of the scope, breaking down the work into parts in a Work Breakdown Structure. Scope management assures that the design and implementation satisfies the requirements, and assuring that nothing is forgotten.

Project Time Management: The project manager must know how to manage time, so that resources are ready on time, and stakeholders perform on time. This also requires knowing how activities are dependent on each other, particularly which activities are prerequisite for other activity, understanding the flexibility in timing needed to allow for events beyond her control, and the need for milestones against which to measure progress.

Project Cost Management is more than just assuring financial resources, timely payments and proper accounting. The project manager must know how to provide clients with best value and how to use financial reporting as the basis for her accountability.

Project Quality Management: The project manager must know how to assure that appropriate quality is selected, specified, achieved and controlled.

Project Human Resource Management for most projects is very different to that in business or government, as the people working on projects and their relationships are

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all constantly changing. The project manager uses special tools and skills for this constant change, to assure that people perform well, their skills are used appropriately, they are treated rightly and are able to improve their capabilities by working in the project team.

Project Communications Management: Communication is the basis for collaboration needed to run a meeting or to carry a sheet of glass. The more uncertain anyone is about what is the situation and what is needed, the more important is effective communication and willingness to collaborate. The project manager must be skilled in managing verbal, written and graphic communications, assuring that all stakeholders have common understanding of requirements and conditions., and that they provide information and respond to requests.

Project Risk Management: Many things can go wrong in projects. Their managers are always looking for signs of problems, always checking contingencies of alternative action. They are impatient to finish actions before any trouble can arise, part of their plan to avoid problems. And when a problem arises they focus on safety, limiting spread of damage, and fixing damage. And they examine the cause of damage, to make necessary changes to prevent it happening again.

Project Procurement Management: Much of the work of projects may be contracted to other parties. The project manager is responsible for procurement strategies and plans, identifying potential providers, preparing contract packages selecting the one that provides best overall value, negotiating if necessary. The work of contractors is then monitored and facilitated till completion.

The final knowledge area in PMBOK is *Project Stakeholder Management*. Stakeholders are the people, groups, or organizations that could impact or be impacted by any aspect of the project. Project managers need to know their interests, involvement, interdependencies, influence, and potential impact on project success, in order to plan, implement and control their engagement.

Earlier versions of PMBOK defined other knowledge areas that we may consider relevant to city management:

Knowledge management is the creation of information, its storage, circulation, reactions to knowledge and feedback. Good knowledge management limits wasted effort, expedites progress, increases capabilities, and assures sustainability. Project managers have systems for collecting information, verifying it, storing it, making it available, communicating it, analysing it, and using it.

Resource and technology Management referred to the management of materials, equipment and facilities, and the technology of the processes that are applied to resources in order to achieve the project's goals. In construction, it referred to the fabrication, handling and placement of building materials and components. Technology management requires continual innovation. Tradesmen innovate to work competently in every new situation. Innovation enables us to build larger buildings faster, and safer.

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Project managers consult and negotiate with experts to assure successful technological innovation. They can experiment, run tests, and call in better experts.

Site Management and Logistics: An aspect of material and technology management is site management and logistics, that is, the planning, mapping and scheduling of the movement and placement of resources, from where they are when resourced, to where they are delivered then storage and handling until they are put in their final place in the project works, or taken away.

Environmental Management: Projects, whatever they are, have a dynamic and ongoing impact on existing environments. Construction projects leave mud on roads, create traffic jams adjacent to building sites, and the machinery creates noise. Structures can change flooding patterns, wind patterns, and shadow patterns. Environmental management does not eliminate impacts, for the purpose of all projects is to have an impact. Environmental management controls the impact, sets limits for unwanted impacts, and adjusts the processes of the project in accordance with needs and standards.

Legal Management: Projects are constrained by laws, regulations and standards. And project managers generate their own regulatory framework through contracts. Legal management determines what laws, regulations, standards and conditions of contract apply, how they are interpreted and how they are to be complied with. A good project manager will sense contradictions in contracts and clarify them before potential conflicts arise. When project control detects contraventions, the project manager uses process of legal management to define responses and settle disputes.

The city is not a project

While the accountability of a mayor has much in common with the accountability of a project manager, there are important differences between city management and project management. Projects start and finish, whereas the city goes on after the end of each term of office of the mayor.

The population working on a project is selected, and forever changing, and workers come to the project each day, and go back home after a day's work. They are committed to serve the project manager until their work on the project is finished when they will go and work on another project. But the population of a city is everyone; if there is a selection process, it is lovers who elect to have children and migrants who elect to come to the city. They work in the city, play in the city and each day go home in the city. They are committed to the city, but not necessarily committed to the mayor. The way in which all the citizens of a city find their niche in the city is a factor that makes great demands on the city's mayor.

Project managing the city

While the city is not a project, we can demonstrate how the city's mayor has much in common with a project manager. This is because she will implement the changes she promises her citizens through investment projects and reform projects over a definitive

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period of time. By default, she is committed also to maintain programs and services that existed before she was elected, unless she has promised not to maintain them. Thus some of the mayor's efforts can be compared to project management, and others to overseeing ongoing programs.

So now we can suggest for her reforms and new investments an Urban Management Body of Knowledge which I will call here UMBOK, considering the similarities and differences between leading a city and managing a project as set out in PMBOK.[ii]

Process groups

I apply the PMBOK process groups to UMBOK. When the term of office of the mayor of a city is seen as a project, *initiation* starts long before she enters office. It starts when political parties decide to contest an election, appoint someone as their candidate and determine key campaign promises. It continues through campaigning and transition until the winning candidate is sworn in. And initiation may need to be repeated if the mayor is charged with corruption (or perhaps with blasphemy).

Planning starts along with initiation with the design of election promises. By the time the new mayor takes office she is well advanced in her strategic planning, but it is only when she takes office she starts the formal planning with her senior executives, and then with the local parliament. She must determine how to maximise achievements during her period of office, preparing new policies and developing them into detailed programs to be implemented. And towards the end of her term of office she may plan to campaign for another term, but most certainly she will plan to assure that her successes are institutionalised so that whoever does succeed her will continue her legacy for the citizens.

Implementation will be managed by her bureaucracy. Because there are always uncertainties, the mayor's plans for reform and new investments, and ongoing programs that she has inherited from the previous administration are never quite appropriate for the evolving circumstances. Floods can strike, people can strike, and conflicts can demand urgent attention. In order to *control*, conditions must be constantly monitored, and the plan continuously adjusted to accommodate these uncertainties.

Thus planning and controlling need to be closely interlinked, especially in times of turmoil, disaster and rapid urban growth. Closeness to the people is essential for gaining input in monitoring of policy impacts. To control, the mayor and her key advisers must be close to the people and to their various representatives, sensitive to and comprehending needs, in order to propose adaptations to plans when needed. For the duration of her term in office, the mayor will be most concerned with the process groups of planning, controlling, and replanning as needed to assure success.

Knowledge areas

The order of the knowledge areas in PMBOK reflects the priorities of project managers. The priorities of mayors are not the same, thus the clearest difference between PMBOK and my hypothesised UMBOK is the order of knowledge areas, that I have rearranged as follows. I create two groups, the first being areas relating to the way in which the

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mayor leads her city and her city government, and the second those areas relating to the way in which she manages the efforts in introducing her policies of change.

My *city leadership processes* cover stakeholder management, scope and integration management, knowledge management, communications management and risk management. I cover each of these under separate subheadings below. My c*ity change management processes* cover some areas that have been dropped from the latest PMBOK, and some that are in it. I quickly cover these under the penultimate subheading before a concluding comment.

City leadership processes: stakeholder engagement

PMBOK places stakeholder engagement management last. UMBOK should put it first, above all else, as the most important area of city management. In the city everyone is a stakeholder. The elected mayor is of the people and has been elected by the people, for the people. As a political leader she strives to promote the welfare of the people, minimising negative impacts and resolving conflicts.

Like the project manager, she has taken on responsibility beyond her authority as head of the city government. She is dependent on negotiating support of parliament and people. Stakeholder management provides her with the means of knowing what to do for people and of getting things done by people that she has no authority over.

In my proposed UMBOK, stakeholder management has four processes as follows:

Identify Stakeholders

Everyone in the city is a stakeholder, most of us in more than one aspect of the mayor's program for the city. Let us propose a classification system for all stakeholders who may belong to one or more of six categories of stakeholders, as set out in the following paragraphs.

Public interest stakeholders. These are the beneficiaries of public goods and services, and citizens impacted by them. Thus all citizens are stakeholders in each area of public interest that the mayor includes in her program of reforms, if they depend on it or are impacted by it.

Public interest stakeholders are not only the ones who are motivated to complain, though the modern mayor will make it easy for all those who are dissatisfied to complain, and those who have ideas to suggest improvements.

I provide two examples. The children in school are the beneficiaries of school education. Parents, employers of graduates, neighbours of the school ground, and passers-by as pupils leave after school are all impacted by the school. They all may be impacted by the mayor's program to improve pupil welfare. She can engage with samples of stakeholders and various stakeholder representatives to get input to the design of her program and for monitoring its implementation.

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The drivers going through a green light are beneficiaries of traffic signals, and those stopping at the red light are impacted by them. So are those who drive through the red light. All drivers at that intersection will be stakeholders in the mayor's plan to build an overpass. It is harder for the mayor to communicate with the public interest stakeholders, but experts can help her address the traffic management issues.

Public interest representatives. In practice, there are just too many stakeholders for the mayor and her policy team to listen to all of them, and they will deal with representatives rather than the people themselves. Public interest representatives are people who represent groups of stakeholders on points of common public interests. Union bosses represent workers, anti-corruption organisations represent public concern for clean government, community leaders represent groups on social issues, business associations represent various business groups. Some groups will agree on who will represent them, others the mayor will have to find.

The benefit of consulting with representatives is that it greatly reduces the number of voices that need to be listened to. But there are risks associated with working with representatives. The most common risk comes from filtering, as always some potentially important input is filtered out along with trivial and repetitious inputs.

Some filtering failures can be caused by the structure of processes. Many representatives do not have the resources to gather the opinion of their communities on the policy issues being deliberated. And members of local parliaments, elected to represent the people of their electorate, represent their parties first.

The cause of filtering failure can be incompetence. People are appointed as representatives because of their competence in one area, but the policy issue being deliberated may necessitate competence outside that area.

But far the most dangerous risks of failure in representation are diversion and capture. A representative may divert from the interests of those she represents, for her own interests or the interests of another group. A representative also may be able to capture the deliberation process for the interests of her group rather than collaborating in the interests of the whole community.

Partners in policy-making. Certain parties have a legitimate role in policy-making whether they are public interest stakeholders or not. I call them here policy-making partners. Higher level governments (national and provincial or state government) are such partners as they create the regulatory framework of the city, provide funds, conduct oversight, and on many issues are required to provide inputs or approvals. The city parliament or council is a partner in formulating legislation and approving budgets. The mayor's political party, patron and coalition partners provide support. And the mayor's own administration proposes and drafts policies for her.

The mayor will pay particular attention to assuring that inputs from policy-making partners are heeded, and at the same assuring that other stakeholders are heard and their inputs considered. She will be aware that policy-making partners are too easily able to dominate the stakeholder process. The rational for stakeholder engagement is

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to assure that these insider stakeholders do not capture the policy-making agenda but listen to and work for the cause of all.

Other governing bodies. Most citizens accept the role of non-government organisations in regulating their lives. Self-governing organisations include religions, business groups, neighbourhood security organisations, village progress associations, parent-teacher organisations, scouts, and search and rescue volunteers.

The principle of subsidiarity states that matters ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least centralized competent authority. This includes the concept that city government should not do what self-governing bodies in the community are able to do. The role of self-governing bodies in stakeholder engagement is not merely to participate in policy deliberation, but also to govern their constituencies in the place of government whenever possible.

The city mayor will strive to support the role of self-governing bodies, with regulations that will also protect the rights of citizens.

Experts and opinion-makers are the people who interpret information about issues. They may include academics, survey pollsters, and news media. They may provide independent and neutral analysis, or may take sides on issues. The mayor will be concerned with verifying their expertise of analysing and interpreting public opinion, and will listen to a variety of opinions.

The news media plays a critical part, rarely participating directly in stakeholder consultations, but presenting to the public both news on stakeholder engagement and articles on opinions. Social media also can carry the weight of opinion-making, without any determinable relation to expertise.

Public service providers are the people who work with city government to provide services. Private schools, school building contractors, school bus contractors and book suppliers are examples of stakeholders who share in providing basic education. Public service providers have a critical role in advising city government on improving the quality of public services, but have vested interests in maintaining the status quo. The mayor will be concerned that her policy team maintain a positive link with them in order that they contribute to change.

Controlling Stakeholder Engagement

As different policy decisions will impact different citizens in different ways, the mayor will delegate most of her stakeholder management to her various policy and urban services management teams. She will only be directly involved in stakeholder management when she considers it to be highly important to her position as mayor or the success of her policies. And she will keep a watchful eye over the rest. Thus the mayor starts her involvement in stakeholder management with control. She will monitor stakeholder relationships, and adjust the strategic guidance she gives to her teams on their engagement with stakeholders.

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She will know that stakeholder engagement is expensive and risky. She will frequently enquire about progress in stakeholder engagement on key policy issues and within stakeholder groups that she is most concerned about. She will be concerned that the process of engagement brings wisdom to her planning and resonance with her ideas. Her control mechanisms will:

▫ Provide information to help her to formulate wiser policies and help the administration to be more considerate of her city's citizens and their needs

▫ Inform her on progress being made in building common understanding on issues and agreements on how to proceed.

She will also be concerned to avoid engagement going out of control. Her control mechanisms will help her:

▫ to identify problems in stakeholder relations and see potentials for resolution

▫ especially to avoid capture by parties who wish to divert opinion or who fail to represent their interest groups.

Plan Stakeholder Management

Planning stakeholder management is the preparation for engaging stakeholders in planning city government services, preparation for engagement in providing of such services and preparing for their engagement in oversight. Planning stakeholder engagement is an ongoing activity, as strategies are improved, and implementation plans cascade from the strategy down to preparing for each engagement (setting desired outcomes, making meeting agenda, sending invitations) and planning follow-up from it (minutes of meetings, press releases, responses).

Those attending consultations are likely to prepare their own plans for their contributions and expectations as well. A most important tool for managing stakeholder engagement is negotiating agreement with stakeholders on the planning the intended outcomes and expected contributions.

Manage Stakeholder Engagement

Managing stakeholder engagement is the communicating and working with stakeholders, obtaining their contribution, and defining what is needed to meet their needs and expectations, which of course may change throughout the term of office of the mayor. While most stakeholder engagement management will be left to the mayor's executives, she will constantly be involved in engagement on priority issues and with priority stakeholders.

City leadership processes: scope and integration management

The first process area of PMBOK is integration management and the second is scope management. They are closely interrelated. Integration management gets the project team working together and scope management keeps them on track.

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In my hypothesised UMBOK I combine the two and place them immediately after stakeholder engagement management. Scope and integration management together become the mayor's instrument to assure all parties to city management work together on her agreed agenda. The combination assures citizens that her government is keeping her promises.

Her initial scope will be defined by her election promises for reform and investment programs. She will manage this scope at the same time she manages the integration of the efforts of all parties working on her priorities. She will adjust the scope by adding new investments and adjusting reforms in accordance with political developments and fiscal capacity, and adjust how she integrates them into the whole effort by realigning relationships, amending programs, redefining tasks and roles of her work partners to maintain the capacity of her government to deliver on the whole agenda. I define nine processes elaborating on those for the two process areas in PMBOK.

Develop a Political Charter

This is the process of developing and updating a formal document that defines the mayor's political agenda. It may actually be a set of formal statements. It will be based on the needs assessments determined with stakeholders, started in her preparations for her campaign. She will elaborate it and get formal recognition of it after her election, and then update it throughout her term of office if necessary. The endorsement of her political charter provides her with the authority to proceed with the allocation of resources for implementing her agenda.

Plan Scope Management.

Scope management planning is the process of creating and maintaining a plan that will specify the documents the mayor will need to have prepared as the basis for implementing her political charter during her term of office. This is planning of the planning. It will include strategies for amending her agenda if necessary, and strategies for each of the processes of scope and integration management outlined below.

The mayor starts her scope management before starting her political campaign, in parallel with preparing her political charter, and continues managing scope throughout her term of office. And as she plans everything, planning her scope management continues throughout as well.

Many scope-defining documents are required by regulation and prepared in routine practice of city government and politics: such as political platforms, five year plans, pre-budget papers, rolling budgets, detailed budget documents. Plans for preparing these plans will be included in scope management. Within the constraints of these regulations and practices, our mayor will have her own style of managing scope and her own style of presenting the benefits she plans to provide to her citizens through her planned investments and reforms.

The city government budget is the most critical and definitive of the scope-defining documents. It will cover all the programs of government, not just the mayor's

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investments and reforms. The mayor's planning for scope management will clearly indicate how the mayor's program of investments and reforms will be identified within the budget.

Prepare Scope-Defining Documents

This is the process of developing the detailed description of the mayor's program of reforms and investments within the city government planning documents. All scope defining documents will be prepared with various degrees of stakeholder engagement. Some will be endorsed as official and legally binding documents, others will be politically binding, and others will be in the form of instructions to the bureaucracy.

Create Work Breakdown Structure

The term Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) comes from project management and is not commonly used in city management. But it conveys an important concept for good city management. WBS is the process of dividing the work of city government into a hierarchy of manageable components: portfolios, programs, projects and activities.

The WBS for all city government activity provides the basis for planning the city budget according to accounting entities, programs, subprograms and activities. The WBS for the initiatives of the mayor should be clearly identified within the WBS for the whole of the city government, interlinking her reforms and investments with the ongoing work of government.

Develop City Management Plans

Developing city management plans is the process of defining, preparing, and coordinating all subsidiary plans for the city government and all its entities and agents, and integrating them into a comprehensible overall management plan, at least in the mind and to the satisfaction of the mayor.

City management plans are subsidiary to the budget. The first level of city management plans are the budget implementation plans prepared before the start of each new financial year. The managerial plan for activities needed to prepare the budget for the following year will be included.

Management plans generally cascade from the budget to budget implementation plans, to organisation plans and staffing plans, and to plans for control. They cascade from plans of the head of each reporting entity to program managers, activity managers, down to the plans for each worker. They cascade from annual plans to quarterly plans and plans for each activity and event.

City management plans cover all the work of the city government. Our mayor's reforms and investments should be clearly identified within them so facilitate reporting of progress to her.

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Direct and Manage Work

The mayor and her senior executives lead and direct those who work for the government, and manage work defined in the plans. Most management literature focusses on directing people and managing work, so I do not add more on it here.

Monitor and Control

Most monitoring and control of government activity is delegated to the mayor's administration. The mayor herself will focus her attention on obtaining relevant information on progress of her agenda, in order for her to exert effective control.

She will therefore establish and use processes of monitoring and controlling the scope of her agenda and the integration of the work done by many parties. She will assign members of her team to track, review, and report to her on progress against the performance objectives defined in political charter and city management plans so that she can respond as she considers appropriate.

Control Change

PMBOK contains a process named "Perform Integrated Change Control", a mouthful meaning the process of reviewing all requests for change to deliverables, organizational process assets, project documents, and the project management plan; approving changes and managing implementation of changes; and then communicating the outcome. This indicates the high priority in project management to controlling change.

We have already identified that the characteristic that differentiates the mayor and her policy team from the rest of the city administration is that the mayor and her policy team exist to introduce change. Our UMBOK also will place special emphasis on the control of all aspects of change, those our mayor wishes to introduce, and those that happen anyway:

- Identifying needs for change

- Reviewing recommendations for changes in policy and plans

- Checking progress in the formulation and drafting of new policy and plans

- Approving policy changes

- Assuring policy changes are introduced into subsidiary regulation, plans and action

- Assuring all stakeholders are aware of the changes and the implication of the changes

- Comparing impacts with intended outcomes, and making adjustments as appropriate

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And assure control on all types of change to city policy and practice:

- New legislation and regulation

- Investments and public assets

- Service delivery and public administration reforms

- Organisation, staffing and partnership changes

Validate and transfer accountability

This is the process of formalizing acceptance of the completed reforms and investments, and "signing off". After the mayor's controlling verifies that reforms and investments and other changes are complete and effective, she will validate each in an appropriate manner as part of her accountability to the public. Then she will assure that responsibility and accountability for implementing reforms and utilising investments are in the appropriate hands and properly recorded.

City leadership processes: knowledge and communications

In addition to stakeholder engagement management and scope-integration management discussed above, the mayor needs processes for communicating instructions, requests and knowledge, in order to be an effective leader.

Wikipedia defines knowledge management as the process of creating, sharing, using and managing knowledge and information in an organization. Alan Frost[iii] reduces it to "getting the right knowledge to the right person at the right time." This would make a very substantial overlap between knowledge management and communications management. All city management activity creates, uses, and communicates information. Effective knowledge and communications management saves time, expedites progress, increases capabilities, and assures sustainability.

For the mayor, knowledge is power and communicating is exercise of power. Managing them is critical to her leadership. Her authority is not only what she was given by being elected, her authority comes from being *the authority*, the most knowledgeable person, on matters of her city government. She leads by how she collects, researches, analyses, questions, understands, shares, uses and manages knowledge, and therefore also how she plans and controls knowledge management.

As with other areas, the key processes of knowledge and communications management are planning, managing and controlling.

City leadership processes: risk management

Many things can go wrong with introducing change in city management. Mayors are always looking for signs of problems, planning to avoid risks and limit any damage that may arise. They are always preparing and checking contingencies for alternative action. And they are impatient to finish actions before trouble can arise. We best learn about

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risk management in the city from Enterprise Risk Management rather than project risk management. [iv]

City change management processes

In the following paragraphs I summarise the processes of c*ity change management* that I would put into an UMBOK.

Legal Management determines what laws, regulations, standards and contracts apply, how they are interpreted and how to comply. It senses contradictions and ambiguities, and strives to clarify them before conflicts arise. It also defines responsibilities and settles disputes. Our Mayor needs capacity to enforce regulations and contracts. She needs experts skilled in law and writing regulations and contracts.

Quality management is needed to promote continual improvement and reliability of services, and responsible use of public funds.

Cost management is needed to assure accountability in the use of resources. In a well organised city government, there is a Chief Financial Officer who balances the Chief Operating Officers of each public service entity. The concept of Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) is designed to drive efficiency in service programs to open a wider window for introducing reforms and further investments. Thus MTEF provides a clear basis for differentiating between the ongoing work of the administration and the programs of our mayor to introduce change.

Time management is needed so that public services, and improvements to services, are provided according to an agreed schedule, accessible and responsive to the community and business.

Environmental management is a key function of urban management. It is needed to keep the city clean and free from floods and risk of fire. It keeps the air and water clean. It takes corrective action against polluters. Our mayor sees her role as improving the urban environment for the benefit of her citizens, making the city resilient against all environmental threats, and creating a sustainable environment for continual betterment.

Concern for climate change is radically changing our understanding the environment, and need for fundamental changes in the way cities grow. Urban managers now plan to reduce global warming, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, protect against rising sea-levels and more extreme weather patterns. Thus urban environmental management now includes the need to make cities both denser and greener, providing better public transport.

Spatial and transportation planning, land administration and traffic management are the urban management equivalent of Site Management and Logistics in projects. Our mayor will want to assure space for activities and means for movement are provided for everyone's needs. She will be concerned for equity, with particular care to help the poor and disadvantaged.

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City Management as a Project
by Owen Podger
Featured Paper

In project management _resource and technology management_ refers to the management of materials, equipment and facilities, and the technology used to make, move and place resources, and treat them. Our mayor will be concerned with the management of technology used in government affairs. In this age she will place high emphasis on e-government, in such matters as tax collection, licencing, public transport, engineering works, and community health. Society also expects urban managers to be concerned with technologies used in the city, particularly providing information, controlling hazardous activities, assuring health and safety in workplaces. For the modern city to compete globally it must continually innovate to improve productivity and develop new markets.

Concluding remarks

In this paper I have conjured up an UMBOK, and presented it to PMWJ readers. My hope is this will initiate a discussion on the potential of adapting PMBOK for training those who would aspire to the office of mayor of cities anywhere in the world. As I cannot claim to be expert in either project management or city management, I cannot claim that I have it right or that I have the expertise to develop my UMBOK further than I have here. So I do hope that some readers will be interested to exchange thoughts, or take this matter forward. I believe our cities could be managed better with more people learned in how cities work and more mayors tackling greater change in urban management for their citizens in increasingly challenging times, with their reforms related to a framework of knowledge like PMBOK.
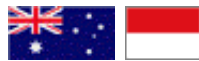
Endnotes

i.   I have taken this and the following definition from the notes I took in classes by Allan Stretton, my lecturer in construction management at UNSW in 1968-9, and used in my own teaching of project management thereafter.

ii. PMBOK is one of the oldest Bodies of Knowledge, and now there are many. A google search introduces us to CMBOK for contract management, HCMBOK for Human Change Management, and many more. The idea of variations on PMBOK for urban issues is not new, with proposals for an Urban Design BOK and an Architecture BOK. But I could not find any previous efforts to elaborate on PMBOK for either an urban management or city management BOK.

iii. See http://www.knowledge-management-tools.net/

iv. Readers can learn about Enterprise Risk Management from websites such as https://www.aferm.org/.

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Owen Podger began his career as an architect at Taronga Zoo in Sydney, studied urban design at UCLA and construction management at UNSW. After a career on multi-year contracts in urban development in Australia and Indonesia, and in academia in Singapore and Papua New Guinea, the downfall of Soeharto in 1998 opened up a new career of gigs advising the Indonesian government on reforms, *inter alia* helping introduce "big-bang" decentralisation, advising the Aceh and Nias Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency (BRR), supporting the Aceh Government in establishing its special autonomy, advising the Indonesian Senate on drafting laws on local government, leading a governance assistance team in the office of the Vice President, and advising the national planning agency on urban development policy and programs. He authored a paper for PMWJ in 2013 entitled "Adapting Professional Practices for Post-Disaster Reconstruction".

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