

# Council - Manager Form of Government

Town of Durham

Charter Revision Commission

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# How does council - manager government work?

- Elected council/board serves as legislative body and establishes policy to govern overall operation of municipal organization.

- Council appoints competent, professional manager to implement policy and to oversee daily operations as CEO/CAO

# Role of the council

Council serves as community's legislative and policy-making body

- Legislative power is centralized in elected council, which approves budget, determines tax rate, adopts ordinances, and other duties

- Focuses on community goals, major projects and other long-term issues

Appoints manager

# Role of the chair/mayor

- ❑ Chair/mayor serves as key political and policy leader
- ❑ Specific duties depend on charter
  - ❑ Typically voting member of council who presides at meetings
  - ❑ Represents municipality in intergovernmental relationships
  - ❑ Sets council agenda with manager

# Role of the manager

- ☐ Hired on basis of merit to serve council and community
- ☐ Serves at pleasure of governing body
- ☐ Makes policy recommendations to council for its consideration and final decision
  - ☐ Implements council policy - bound by action council takes
  - ☐ Control in hands of elected representatives

# Duties of appointed manager

- ❑ Serves as CEO/CAO - oversees work of municipal departments
- ❑ Administration of human resources – appoints and provides direction and leadership to department heads
- ❑ Management of public funds
  - ❑ Prepares annual budget and multi-year capital improvement program
  - ❑ Ensures fiscal responsibility and modern accounting practices

# Duties of appointed manager

- ❑ Implementation of programs, policies and initiatives – works w/elected officials and community leaders to achieve common goals and objectives
- ❑ Coordination of service delivery – anticipates future needs; organizes work operations
- ❑ Performance management – sets goals and objectives; assesses performance of personnel and programs

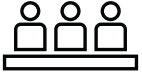
# Manager's Training & Qualifications

- ☐ Educational requirements: typically, BA & Master's in Public Administration
- ☐ Experience: 5-10 yrs. progressively responsible experience
- ☐ Professional Development
  - ☐ ICMA; other
- ☐ ICMA Credentialed Manager Annual CEU's
- ☐ Traditional career track: Analyst/Assistant to Manager → Assistant Manager → Manager
- ☐ Other career tracks - dept. heads; military retirees; former elected officials



*Working together for a better region.*





By removing responsibility for day-to-day operations, frees elected officials to focus on policy making and community issues

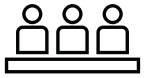


Empowers elected officials to lead and to develop vision for the community



Offers flexibility to go in new directions while providing continuity during transitions

# Benefits of council-manager government



Encourages open communication between citizens and government - political power is not concentrated in the chair, but shared by all members of the council



Diffuses power of special interests - all constituents and interests have a voice, not just those that are well-funded or well-connected



Encourages the development and retention of talented municipal employees



Eliminates partisan politics from personnel, financial and contracting decisions - merit based decision-making based on qualifications and performance



Fosters professional ethics

# Benefits of council-manager government

# What value does a professional manager contribute to a community?

- ❑ Oversee day-to-day operations, which allows elected officials to focus on policy issues
- ❑ Share and apply skills gained through education, professional experience and contacts
- ❑ Access to information about latest trends and best practices (e.g., performance analytics)
- ❑ Devote time and skills to tackle a problem or opportunity

# What value does a professional manager contribute to a community?

- ❑ Assist the elected body with development of a vision and long-range strategic planning
- ❑ Recommend cost-saving ideas and productivity improvements
- ❑ Enhance the community's responsiveness to its citizens through administrative and fiscal accountability
- ❑ Develop corps of professional staff - strong emphasis on professional ethics

# What types of communities use council-manager form?

- ❑ Most popular form for US cities and towns with populations of 2,500 or more
- ❑ 120 million people in US live in communities operating under this form
- ❑ Connecticut – 34 ICMA recognized communities

# Summary

- ❑ Council-manager government enables local officials to involve and serve the entire community, and to actively plan for the future.
- ❑ In turn, appointed professional manager applies professional skills and training to assist the council and to administer the daily operations of the community.

# For more information

- ❑ ICMA (International City Management Association)

[www.icma.org](http://www.icma.org)

- ❑ CTCMA (CT Town and City Management Association)

[Connecticut Town and City Management Association -](#)

Non-partisan organization composed primarily of city and town managers, assistant managers, and other local government management professionals.

QUESTIONS 

THANK YOU

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