

## II. The First One Hundred Steps For a New City Manager

*By Davis Brinson*

This chapter is intended to serve as an aid to City Managers whenever they assume the role of City Manager in a new City. This is not presented as an all-inclusive list, as the Manager will discover that there are many other issues not mentioned herein with which he/she will be confronted soon after assuming the new position. Some of the issues mentioned might not be applicable to all Cities, and there may be important issues in some Cities that are not even mentioned here. My experience has been with Cities within the 5,000 to 65,000 population bracket; therefore this chapter is primarily focused on Cities within that size. The reader will also note that the list is not prioritized, as priorities will sometimes significantly differ from City to City. Some issues will be very important at a given time, but will diminish in importance over time as issues are resolved, and as other matters gain in importance.

In an attempt to quickly get up to date on ongoing City issues when I have affiliated with new Cities in the past, I have usually created great volumes of unorganized notes, which sometimes became so cluttered that they are of questionable value. I then soon discover that I have either overlooked proper inquiry into some aspect of the City's operation, or that I have gotten mired down in other ongoing issues and details that have precluded *me from* becoming sufficiently indoctrinated in certain basic matters.

It is hoped that by initially following this guide, the Manager can soon become equipped with at least a rudimentary umbrella of knowledge about major City activities. Of course, as time goes on, the Manager will increasingly gain a more in-depth knowledge as the everyday activities of his/her office lead into a myriad of issues on a daily basis.

This chapter also serves to clearly illustrate the vast array of responsibilities that is required today of City Managers. No doubt, there are some individuals in the community who have little or no understanding of the complexities of this profession.

Some City Managers may wish to create a manual from the responses to the operational areas mentioned, thereby providing a clear outline of all the City's major functions. **However, it should be carefully noted that all aspects of this inquiry that deal with pending or contemplated litigation, personnel matters, potential land/property acquisition and any other matters that are not appropriate for public disclosure, should not be included in the report.**

New Councilmembers would also gain a far greater understanding of City functions/issues/problems, etc. by being privy to the aforesaid report. A copy placed in the various City offices could serve as a training tool to acquaint new City employees with overall City operations. The placement of a copy in the local library would also serve to inform interested citizens.

# The One Hundred Issues

ISSUE	SUBJECT	PAGE
1)	Meeting with Council Members.....	20
2)	Meeting with Secretary .....	20
3)	Securing Initial Information .....	20
4)	Securing Additional Information.....	21
5)	Securing Codes, Reports, etc.....	21
6)	Comprehensive Development Plan .....	21
7)	Group Meeting with Department Heads.....	21
8)	Individual Meetings with Dept. Heads.....	22
9)	Meeting with City Employees .....	22
10)	Meeting with Media .....	22
11)	Tour of City Offices .....	22
12)	Tour of City Facilities .....	22
13)	Meeting with City Attorney .....	22
14)	Meeting with City Secretary.....	23
15)	Citizen Requests/Complaints .....	23
16)	Council Requests/Complaints .....	23
17)	Meeting with Independent Auditor .....	23
18)	Budget Process Examination.....	23
19)	Review of Budget/Financial Reports.....	23
20)	Examine Purchasing Procedures .....	23
21)	Review Personnel Policies .....	24
22)	Risk Management Program .....	24
23)	Safety Program.....	24
24)	Employee Bonds & Licenses .....	25
25)	Group Insurance Program for Employees .....	25
26)	City Boards and Commissions .....	25
27)	Meeting with City's Fiscal Advisor.....	25
28)	Long-Range Financial Plan.....	25
29)	Delinquent Tax Collection Policy .....	25
30)	Central Appraisal District.....	25
31)	Investment of Funds .....	25
32)	Fiscal Controls/Gratuitous Payments .....	25
33)	Expense Accounts .....	25
34)	Rolling Stock.....	25
35)	Industrial Agreements .....	25
36)	Enforcement Orders .....	25
37)	Annexation/ETJ.....	26
38)	Contractors .....	26
39)	Code Enforcement.....	26
40)	Substandard Structures.....	26
41)	Security of City Hall and other Buildings .....	26
42)	ADA Act Compliance .....	26
43)	Grants .....	26
44)	Linkage with other Govt. Entities .....	26
45)	Economic Development Program.....	26
46)	Municipal Utility Districts.....	26
47)	Police Services .....	26
48)	Fire Services.....	27
49)	Street Program.....	27
50)	Landfill Operations .....	27
51)	Water Meter Reading System.....	27

52)	Fire Hydrants.....	27
53)	Library Services .....	27
54)	Municipal Court .....	27
55)	Environmental Concerns .....	27
56)	Traffic Signs/Signals .....	27
57)	Animal Control.....	28
58)	Citizen Evacuation Plan .....	28
59)	Protection of Major City Assets .....	28
60)	Council Action Implementation .....	28
61)	Informing the City Council .....	28
62)	Processing of City Bills.....	28
63)	City Employee Interaction with Citizens.....	28
64)	Computer Utilization.....	28
65)	Modern Technology Utilization .....	28
66)	Sharing of Functions with Other Entities .....	28
67)	News Releases.....	28
68)	Public Information Requests .....	28
69)	Raw Water Source.....	28
70)	Water/Wastewater Facilities.....	28
71)	Water & Sewer Rate Structure .....	28
72)	Water/Sewer Line Extension Policy.....	29
73)	Septic Systems/Water Wells .....	29
74)	City Infrastructure Construction/Maintenance .....	29
75)	City Beautification Program.....	29
76)	Telephone System .....	29
77)	Street Light Installation Policy.....	29
78)	City Departmental Relationships.....	29
79)	City Inventory Control .....	29
80)	Car Allowances/Vehicle Utilization/Decals.....	29
81)	Franchise Agreements .....	29
82)	Utilization of Cell Phones/Pagers.....	29
83)	Emergency Medical Services .....	29
84)	Wrecker Services.....	29
85)	Maintenance of City Structures .....	29
86)	Records Management Program .....	29
87)	Driveway Cuts/Culvert Installation.....	30
88)	Parks & Playgrounds .....	30
89)	Office Space Sufficiency .....	30
90)	Situation of City Offices.....	30
91)	Equipping of City Offices .....	30
92)	Citizen Information System.....	30
93)	Smoking Policies.....	30
94)	Public Transit System.....	30
95)	Airport.....	30
96)	Electrical Generating System .....	30
97)	Civic Center/Community Center .....	30
98)	Geographic Information System.....	30
99)	Transportation Plan .....	30
100)	Insurance Coverage--City Assets & Liability .....	30

**I. Meeting with Council Members**

As soon as possible after assuming the position, arrange a meeting with each individual member of the City Council. This initial meeting should serve several purposes, including an effort to begin a bonding with each Council member. Also, this meeting will serve to clarify and reinforce your values and philosophy, and can enable you to better define what you expect from the Council--and what they expect from you.

Further, desired communication techniques between the Manager and Council Members, etc., can be identified.

The Council members should be asked a series of questions, and copious notes should be made of their responses. Questions should include the following:

- a. What are the issues that you view as priorities for this City?
- b. What are your views about the current service levels of this City? Do you feel that any expansions/reductions/modifications should be considered in any area?
- c. Is there any specific program/project that you feel is needed, or that should be eliminated?
- d. Is there any particular department, or function, in the City that should be targeted for particular attention? If yes, please elaborate.
- e. Do you have any concerns about the staffing/personnel in the City?
- f. Is the City's current pay structure and benefit package for City employees at the proper level in your view?
- g. Do you feel that City department heads, and other City employees, are properly trained and functioning at optimum efficiency?
- h. What are your views about the City's infrastructure?
- i. Is the City's agenda process satisfactory to you?
- j. Do you have any specific budgetary concerns? If yes, please explain.
- k. Is the City's current tax rate and overall fee structure appropriate in your view?
- l. Are any of the City's current policies/procedures/regulations, etc., in need of revision?
- m. Do you have any concerns about the City's buildings/equipment, etc.?
- n. Are there any particular geographic areas of the City that you feel needs special attention by the City?
- o. Do you have any long-range goals for the City that you would like to discuss with me?
- p. Do you have any short-range goals for the City that you would like to discuss with me?
- q. Can you tell me the extent, and method by which, you would like to be kept informed about City issues on an ongoing basis?

The main focus of the aforestated exercise is to accurately equip the Manager to establish a program of work that will be consistent with the wishes and expectations of the Council as a body.

## **2. Meeting with Secretary**

The City Manager's Secretary is generally one of the most important people in City Hall. The new Manager should immediately establish a professional and trusting relationship with this individual. The Manager should closely communicate with the Secretary to let her know what he expects from her job performance, and work out with her how his calls/visitors/calendar will be handled, and how correspondence and other information will be generated/processed/filed, etc.

The Secretary is generally considered to be a *right arm* and general assistant to the City Manager. The City Manager's Secretary is usually aware of the *pulse* of the City Hall, and can in many cases give good advice to the City Manager that will enable him to resolve developing problems before they become serious.

## **3. Securing Initial Information**

The City Manager should ask the Secretary to assist him in securing the following information immediately upon assuming office:

- a. A list containing the names, addresses, home and work telephone numbers of all members of the City Council. This list should also include the pager and mobil phone numbers of those Councilmembers that have them. The usual work hours of the Councilmembers should be included, and in the event that a Councilmember is a shift worker, the shift schedule should be included.
- b. An abbreviated list showing the name, address and home telephone number of each city department head. Included should be pager and mobil numbers.
- c. An organizational chart displaying each functional unit of the City, including all job titles in each department (and unit thereof) and the number of employees in each job classification. The total number of City employees in each department, and in the entire City workforce is also to be indicated on the chart.

- d. An employee roster indicating the names, job titles and telephone numbers of all City employees.
- e. A list of all standby personnel; showing the function(s) for which each standby employee is responsible, the standby hours, the home number of the employee and the duty number at which the employee can be reached.
- f. A list of the telephone numbers in each office in the entire City organization.
- g. A list of the telephone numbers and addresses of the City Managers in other area cities.
- h. A list of the telephone numbers and addresses of officials in other area governmental jurisdictions, such as state offices (TXDOT, etc.), schools, county, districts, etc.
- i. A list of the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the top management personnel in area industry/business, including the Chamber of Commerce, Regional Planning Commission, and Convention and Visitor's Bureau (if such exists).
- j. A list of the names, addresses and telephone numbers (home and business) of all City boards and committees.
- k. A list of the name, title, address and telephone number of each Emergency Management Official in the area.

To facilitate communications during emergencies, it is recommended that three (3) copies of each of the aforementioned documents be secured, with one copy being kept in the Manager's office, one copy in the Manager's home, and one copy in the Manager's car.

#### **4. Securing Additional Information**

Other documents as listed below should be obtained from the appropriate departments:

- a. An area map indicating the City's current boundaries and extra-territorial jurisdiction. The date(s) and area involved pertaining to any previous boundary or ETJ adjustments should be reflected thereon.
- b. A map revealing all of the City's streets by name, together with major easements and rights-of-way. Proposed new streets or modifications to existing streets should also be shown.
- c. A map showing all of the City's major water and wastewater lines, and all plant facilities, lift stations, etc. Proposed future changes should be included.
- d. An area storm drainage map, indicating all related facilities and future changes.
- e. An area topographical map.
- f. A chart (or other clear display) of the City's total fee structure, including the tax rate (with notations of all exemptions relating thereto), water and sewer rates (including brackets and connect/disconnect/late charges), solid waste charge schedule, permit fees, etc.
- g. A schedule reflecting the dates/cycles that all basic city services are performed, such as meter readings, trash/garbage pick-ups, etc.

#### **5. Securing Codes, Reports, etc.**

A copy of the City Charter, Code of Ordinances, City Budget, Audit Report, all City Policies and Procedures, the Texas Local Government Code, a catalog of all basic City forms currently in use, and any applicable Labor Agreements, are among those important documents that should be readily available in the City Manager's office.

#### **6. Comprehensive Development Plan**

Does the City have a Comprehensive Development Plan? If so, who designed the plan? When was it approved? What is the current status of the plan? A copy of this document (if such exists) should also be at hand.

#### **7. Group Meeting with Department Heads**

The new Manager should meet with all department heads on the first day in office to establish a dialogue with

them, explain his background, and share his philosophy on how a City government, and its key employees, should function. This should be a friendly meeting, and the Manager should assure the department heads

that he is there to facilitate them in being successful in their important functions. The department heads should be encouraged to participate in this meeting, and should be given the opportunity to ask questions.

#### **8. Individual Meetings with Dept. Heads**

A meeting with each individual department head should be held wherein the specific functions/issues of each department should be discussed. Each department head should be informed as to what is expected of him/her, and as to how he/she will be evaluated. The kind of communication linkages that will be required should be identified and agreed upon, and how departmental functions will be designed and evaluated should be established. The department head should be advised that the Manager has an *open door* policy, but that ongoing daily decisions should be made by the department head. Any particular problems or concerns in each department should be identified, and it should be ascertained whether a plan is in place to deal with each of these.

A time and date for a regular (weekly) staff meeting between the Manager and the department head should be set, and periodic staff meetings for department heads as a group should also be scheduled. Processing techniques for information emanating from the various departments that requires placement on the agenda should be determined during these meetings.

#### **9. Meeting with City Employees**

A schedule should be created for meetings with all City employees shortly after the new Manager assumes office. All available City Hall staff members should be assembled in City Hall and the Manager should meet with them there. The same information and assurances that were extended to the department heads should be expressed at this meeting.

Similar meetings should be scheduled with all other employees who work outside City Hall. The new Manager should go to the outlying employee assemble points, such as Police and Fire Stations, and Public Works Field Offices, to meet with these employees.

#### **10. Meeting with Media**

Meetings should be requested with all area media personnel who report on City activities. The media representatives should be advised that the City Manager is eager to assist them with all information that can lawfully be released, because he is keenly interested in the media being equipped to provide the citizenry with an objective and balanced reporting of all City activities. **Establishing a good professional relationship with the media is very important**

#### **11. Tour of City Offices**

Informally tour each City office with the department head; chat briefly with the employees, and look at the equipment, fixtures, office space, etc. This will tend to assure the employees that the Manager is interested in them and their well being. The Manager will also gain a better understanding of the functions and problems, which will be of value in resolving issues that will subsequently flow from the various departments.

#### **12. Tour of City Facilities**

Tour all City facilities, and the entire City, with each department head involved with outside functions or City infrastructure, to become acquainted with all boundaries, condition of streets/drainage/sewer facilities, etc. In particular, make notes of all things that are observed that appear to be in need of attention or further study.

#### **13. Meeting with City Attorney**

Meet with the City Attorney for a review of all current and potential litigation. Ensure that an appropriate strategy is in place, or is being developed, to deal with each of these issues. Determine how the two offices have traditionally communicated, and how the agenda process and ordinance/resolution creation is coordinated between the City Manager's Office and the City Attorney's Office, and determine the communication linkages between the Attorney and the Mayor and Council. See if there is need for clarification and/or improvement in this area. Identify any outside legal counsel that has been retained to assist the City with litigation.

#### **14. Meeting with City Secretary**

Confer with the City Secretary to gain a good understanding of how that office functions and how it has traditionally related to the City Manager's office. Also explore the agenda process as it relates to this office, and learn how the City's records are processed, filed and secured.

#### **15. Citizen Requests/Complaints**

Determine how citizen complaints are being received, processed, and resolved, and how the effectiveness of this process is being measured.

#### **16. Council Requests/Complaints**

Determine how complaints/requests from members of the City Council are being handled, and how the effectiveness is being measured.

#### **17. Meeting with Independent Auditor**

Review the latest report from the City's independent auditor, and carefully note any problems/concerns with the Management Letter. Schedule a meeting with the Auditor for a review of his/her report to gain a full understanding of its contents, and to determine whether any additional measures should be taken by the City to gain better accountability in its overall financial system.

#### **18. Budget Process Examination**

The City's budget process should be examined, and a schedule showing the various dates by which each phase of the budget is to be completed should be created. The principals in each phase of the process should be identified, and the manner in which budgetary priorities have traditionally been established should be displayed. The date specified in the City Charter for completion/presentation of the budget, setting of the tax rate, and the dates for the public hearing(s) and public notice(s) in the local newspaper should be calendared. It is important to carefully note the manner in which the Manager and staff have worked together, and how the Manager and staff work with the Mayor and Council, in this important effort. In this endeavor it is very important that a good understanding is achieved among the Council, Manager and staff at the initial stage of budget preparation as to the priorities and major areas of concern that should be intertwined into the budget creation.

#### **19. Review of Budget/Financial Reports**

Review the current budget and all financial statements, and ensure that a clear, accurate and timely system of reporting is in place. Make sure that a program is in place to see that spending is maintained within budgetary limits.

- a. Review a schedule of the City's debt load, and become aware of the City's bond ratings. Ensure that the proceeds of all bond sales are being spent consistent with the Bond Agreements.
- b. Study the City's overall revenue structure and review trends and projections.
- c. How has the City's tax rate changed in the last five (5) years, and what are the particulars of the City's sales tax (if applicable)?
- d. Has a 4A or a 4B Corporation been utilized, or contemplated, from a portion of the sales tax?
- e. Does the City utilize a Capital Improvement Budget?
- f. Does the City utilize an Equipment Replacement Fund?
- g. Is the Utility Fund self sustaining? What interfund transfers are made between the Utility Fund and other funds--particularly the General Fund, if any? What is the formula, if transfers are made?
- h. Are any special assessments in place for streets or utility lines?
- i. What is the amount of the City's reserve funds that would be readily available for an emergency, such as a hurricane, tornado, flood, industrial accident, explosion, etc.?

#### **20. Examine Purchasing Procedures**

Examine purchasing procedures. Determine that these are in full conformance with applicable laws and are clearly

defined in an appropriate City policy.

- a. What is the procedure for the issuance of Purchase Orders? Who is authorized to make purchases? What are the limits? ),Who approves? What are the controls?
- b. Are the specifications that are used for the City's equipment and supply needs consistent with the quality that the City actually needs? How is this measured? Who designs the specifications?
- c. Is a Co-operative Purchasing Agreement in place with other governmental entities for the bulk purchase of certain materials, supplies and vehicles?

## **21. Review Personnel Policies**

Review all personnel policies, and ensure that such policies are properly drafted, consistently applied, that they are complete, in full conformance with all applicable laws, and are fully understood by the City employees. Some of the major personnel concerns are as follows:

- a. Does the City have a clear and objective employment plan that ensures that new employees are hired only on merit factors?
- b. Examine the City's pay and benefit plans to see if they are compatible with the appropriate market, and to see if they are properly defined and administered. What does the City consider to be market? Is there internal as well as external equity in the wage plan? Is a merit plan in place?
- c. Are employees properly classified, and are their job descriptions an accurate reflection of their actual job duties? How long has it been since the job descriptions were designed, and who designed them? Is a program currently in place to adjust them as job duties change?
- d. Determine whether the City has a program to properly train employees.
- e. Determine if there is a valid employee evaluation system in place.
- f. Is there a valid promotion system in place? How has validity been measured, and by whom?
- g. Is a proper Sexual Harassment Policy in place? Are employees, particularly supervisory personnel, fully trained in this area?
- h. Does a fair and clear Grievance Procedure exist?
- i. Ensure that the City is in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws, such as the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Texas Workers Compensation Act, the Family Leave Act of 1993, and others.
- j. If the City has Collective Bargaining with the Fire or Police Departments (or both), determine that the Labor Agreements are professionally designed, and are fair to the taxpayers as well as to the bargaining unit personnel, and that the wages and benefits afforded in the Agreements has the proper relationship to those provided to other nonbargaining unit City employees. If Collective Bargaining is in effect, determine who is on the Bargaining Team, and who is the Chief Negotiator.
- k. What are the basic elements, and funding requirements, of the Employee Retirement Plan (s)?
- l. Is there an Employee Savings Plan in place? If yes, how does it work?
- m. Is a Deferred Compensation Plan in place?
- n. Does the City have an Employee Substance Abuse Program? If yes, what does it consist of?
- o. Is an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) in place? If yes, what does it consist of?
- p. Are the City's attrition rates within acceptable limits? If no, what are such rates attributable to?
- q. Are there any outstanding EEOC claims, or any legal action pending or anticipated by any employee(s) against the City? If yes, what are the circumstances and intended City action regarding each?
- r. What investigatory methods are in place, and who are the principals, to deal with employee allegations of wrongful treatment by the City?

## **22. Risk Management Program**

Determine whether the City has a proper Risk Management Program in place.

**23. Safety Program**

Determine whether the City has a Safety Program for City employees, and determine the statistics relating to the City's safety record.

**24. Employee Bonds & Licenses**

Are City employees properly bonded and licensed, and are accurate records on hand to confirm this?

**25. Group Insurance Program for Employees**

Is the City's Group Employee Life and Medical Insurance Program adequate for employee needs, and is it within the City's and the employee's ability to pay? What are the premiums for both the employees and the City? What are the basic benefit levels of this plan? Have alternatives (such as HMO's/PPO's, etc.) been explored for cost containment and coverage preservation? Who is responsible for this area?

**26. City Boards and Commissions**

Determine the identity of the heads of the various City Boards and Commissions, and meet with them to gain an understanding of the issues with which they are concerned, and to establish a good working relationship with each.

**27. Meeting with City's Fiscal Advisor**

Meet with the City's fiscal advisor, and gain an in-depth understanding of the City's past, current and projected financial condition. In particular, items such as the City's debt load and bond ratings should be carefully noted.

**28. Long-Range Financial Plan**

Determine whether a long-range financial plan is in place.

**29. Delinquent Tax Collection Policy**

What is the City's policy regarding the collection of delinquent taxes, mines, etc.? What is the current status of the delinquencies?

**30. Central Appraisal District**

Is the City utilizing a Central Appraisal District (CAD)?

**31. Investment of Funds**

What is the City's policy regarding the investment of temporarily idle funds?

**32. Fiscal Controls/Gratuitous Payments**

Are proper controls in place to safeguard against theft, fraud or collusion in all areas of the City where a possibility for such activity exists? A list of all areas should be obtained, and a security policy for each should be reviewed. Also ensure that the City does not have a practice of making gratuitous payments, such as donations, etc.

**33. Expense Accounts**

Is there a policy relating to expense accounts that requires clear presentation and documentation, thorough verification and proper approval?

**34. Rolling Stock**

The City's fleet of rolling stock, as well as stationary and heavy equipment, should be examined, and the City's maintenance/replacement policies should be reviewed.

**35. Industrial Agreements**

If Industrial Agreements exist, a thorough understanding of such Agreements should be gained, and all dates pertaining to renegotiation and expiration should be calendared.

**36. Enforcement Orders**

It should be determined whether the City is currently under any type of mandate, Enforcement Order, Consent Decree, or other agreement, with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC). If so, it should be determined that measures are in place to ensure that a plan of timely compliance and reporting is in place.

**37. Annexation/ETJ**

If the City has annexed additional territory, or extended its ETJ, is the City in compliance with the statutory requirements for the provision of services to the involved area(s)?

**38. Contractors**

A list should be made of all contractors, such as for construction/maintenance projects, building maintenance, refuse collection, etc., who are working for the City. The terms and function of each should be noted, and the expiration dates of their contracts should be calendared.

**39. Code Enforcement**

The City's Code Enforcement Program should be scrutinized to ensure that the codes are up to date, that enforcement personnel are properly trained, and that the codes are fairly and consistently applied.

**40. Substandard Structures**

Is a program in place for the abatement of substandard structures?

**41. Security of City Hall and other Buildings**

The person(s) responsible for the maintenance and security of City Hall and all other City structures should be identified, and the attendant procedures reviewed.

**42. ADA Act Compliance**

The Manager should determine whether the City is in full compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), and identify the party(ies) in the City organization who are charged with compliance responsibility.

**43. Grants**

All grants (federal, state) that the City is currently involved in, or has applied for, should be determined, and the party(ies) who are the principals in such grant applications should be identified. Compliance with the terms of each grant should also be determined.

**44. Linkage with other Govt. Entities**

Communication should be established with counterpart personnel in other area governmental entities (Cities, Schools, County, Districts, Regional Planning Commission, etc.) to achieve a close professional relationship to assist in resolving problems of mutual interest. Any Agreements with any of these entities, or with the state relating to highway projects, ROW issues, etc., should be identified.

**45. Economic Development Program**

It should be determined whether an Economic Development Program is in place within the City, or within the community. The principals in the program should be identified, as well as the extent of the City's role in this area.

**46. Municipal Utility Districts**

If Municipal Utility Districts (MUDS) exist within the City or its ETJ, the Agreements with such districts should be evaluated.

**47. Police Services**

Police Services is one of the most important areas of City operations, and is one of the most visible governmental functions in the community, and consumes a substantial portion of the General Fund Budget. In many Cities, especially in those with high crime rates, the City Manager finds himself/herself closely involved with this Department on an ongoing basis.

A lengthy discussion could easily follow with regard to the many issues with which the new City Manager will subsequently gain knowledge applicable to this Department. However, since this guide is for the purpose of initial orientation/inquiry, it is suggested that the preliminary area of inquiry should include the crime statistics, how the Police Officers (as well as civilian personnel in the department) are deployed, what is the response time, and determining how effective they are in dealing with the various unlawful activities in the City. Find out how the community perceives the Department, and how involved the Department is in the community with proactive efforts. For example, is the Department involved with the schools in various programs - such as DARE, etc.?

What is the morale level of the Officers, and how has it been measured? If it is found to be unusually low or high, determine the causative factors. Are the Officers properly compensated, trained, and equipped? Is the fleet in good condition? What is the overall rank structure, and is the number of those in ranking positions in proper balance to the non-ranking personnel? What type/frequency of reports are generated relating to departmental activities? Are Reserves utilized? Does the City have jail or holding facilities? If not, where are prisoners taken? Is a fully functional 911 System in place? Is there a SWAT Team? Is there a Canine Unit? Obtain a map showing how the various districts are arranged.

#### **48. Fire Services**

Fire Services is another major Department in the City. As in the case of the Police Department, a full discussion of this area of operations is not appropriate for this document. Basic questions should include a report on the relevant statistics, personnel allocations, morale, salary adequacy, ranking and training, and a report on all of the prevention activities that are in place in the community. Adequacy of the trucks and apparatus should be determined.

Is there a sufficient number of fire stations, and are the stations strategically located? Are inter-local fire protection Agreements in effect with area jurisdictions and industries? Are volunteers utilized? If yes, is the relationship between the paid personnel and the volunteers an effective one?

#### **49. Street Program**

Is a street maintenance/upgrade/expansion program in place? If not, how is this work prioritized?

#### **50. Landfill Operations**

Does the City have any obligations relating to current or past landfill operations? If yes, what is the timetable and funding requirements?

#### **51. Water Meter Reading System**

What type of water meter reading system is in place? What is the lag time between reading and billing? What is the billing frequency? Does the City have a meter replacement program? What type meters are used? Does the City monitor water loss? What is the disconnect policy?

#### **52. Fire Hydrants**

Are the City's fire hydrants up to standard? Are the pressures acceptable? Are there areas of the City not properly protected?

#### **53. Library Services**

Does the City operate a Library? If yes, what is the circulation, the hours of operation, and the staffing. Are funds received from other jurisdictions, such as the County, to subsidize this operation?

#### **54. Municipal Court**

What are the particulars of the Municipal Court, such as staffing, revenues, court hours, to whom do the clerks/judges report, etc.? What is the relationship of the Court to the Police Department?

#### **55. Environmental Concerns**

Are there any environmental concerns within the City, such as toxic waste sites, underground tanks, pipelines, etc.?

**56. Traffic Signs/Signals**

Who in the City is responsible for the maintenance and installation of traffic signs and signals? Is this program up to standard?

**57. Animal Control**

How is animal control handled, and who is responsible? Does a relationship exist with a local Humane Society?

**58. Citizen Evacuation Plan**

Is a current Citizen evacuation plan in place? Who are the principals?

**59. Protection of Major City Assets**

Is a plan in place to protect the City's major assets in the event of an emergency?

**60. Council Action Implementation**

What plan of action is in place to ensure that actions taken by the Council are implemented in a timely and accurate fashion?

**61. Informing the City Council**

How did the previous Manager keep the Council informed about City activities and issues?

**62. Processing of City Bills**

What is the process by which the various bills owed by the City are processed to the City Council for action?

**63. City Employee Interaction with Citizens**

Are City employees conducting themselves in a "customer friendly" fashion as they interact with citizens throughout the community? How has this been measured?

**64. Computer Utilization**

To what extent is the City utilizing computers? What individual(s) are assigned responsibility for maintenance/software applications, etc.? Is "pirated" or unauthorized software being used in any area of the City?

**65. Modern Technology Utilization**

Is modern technology being employed where practical throughout the City organization?

**66. Sharing of Functions with Other Entities**

Does the City share any functions, such as central dispatching, etc., With other area jurisdictions? If so, how is the cost allocated, and who is considered as the employer of the involved personnel?

**67. News Releases**

How are news releases handled? Who is responsible for this?

**68. Public Information Requests**

How are requests for the release of public information handled, and who are the parties responsible for this? Are safeguards in place to ensure that information that is protected under the Open Records Act is not unlawfully released?

**69. Raw Water Source**

What is the City's raw water source(s)? What is the reliability and fee schedule?

**70. Water/Wastewater Facilities**

Does the City have its own water and/or wastewater treatment facility(ies)? If so, what is their condition and capacities, and are future expansions, replacements or other modifications needed/planned?

**71. Water & Sewer Rate Structure**

Is the City's current water and sewer rate structure based on a recent rate study? When was the last study done, and who did the study?

**72. Water/Sewer Line Extension Policy**

What is the City's policy regarding the extension of utility lines?

**73. Septic Systems/Water Wells**

Are there areas of the City with septic systems or private water wells?

**74. City Infrastructure Construction/Maintenance**

What is the amount of construction/maintenance on City infrastructure that is done by outside contractors vs. the amount done by City forces?

**75. City Beautification Program**

Is a City Beautification Program in place? If yes, who are the principals, and what is the funding source(s)?

**76. Telephone System**

Is the City's telephone system up to date? Are controls in place to prevent unauthorized charges from being incurred?

**77. Street Light Installation Policy**

What is the City's policy regarding the installation of street lights?

**78. City Departmental Relationships**

How do the various City Departments relate to each other? Are they sharing all resources to achieve maximum efficiency and utilization of such resources?

**79. City Inventory Control**

How effective are the controls over the City's inventories? Who is responsible?

**80. Car Allowances/Vehicle Utilization/Decals**

Is a proper policy in place regarding the provision of car allowances for employees, and for the utilization of City vehicles and other equipment, including take-home vehicles? It should also be determined whether identifying decals are properly affixed to City vehicles in conformance with state law.

**81. Franchise Agreements**

Ensure that the expiration dates of all franchise agreements, such as for solid waste collection, cablevision, electrical, telephone, gas, etc., are calendared. Sufficient lead time prior to expiration should also be noted to enable study/re-negotiation and possible adjustments to each agreement.

**82. Utilization of Cell Phones/Pagers**

To what extent is the City utilizing pagers and cellular telephones for City employees?

**83. Emergency Medical Services**

Does the City provide EMS (Emergency Medical Services)? If yes, where does this fit in the City organization, and what is the revenue vs. operating cost status?

**84. Wrecker Services**

Does the City have an ordinance regulating wrecker services? If yes, what department does this fall under?

**85. Maintenance of City Structures**

Is City Hall and other major City structures appropriately maintained, and do such facilities present a clean and professional appearance?

**86. Records Management Program**

Who is responsible for the City's Records Management Program? Is there a policy regarding this? Are City records properly preserved, readily accessible and purged periodically as allowed by law?

**87. Driveway Cuts/Culvert Installation**

What is the City's policy relating to driveway cuts and culvert installation, and what are the related fees?

**88. Parks & Playgrounds**

Are the City's parks and playgrounds properly maintained, and, is the equipment regularly checked for safety purposes?

**89. Office Space Sufficiency**

Is there sufficient office space to enable the work functions in the various City offices to be carried out in a reasonably comfortable manner?

**90. Situation of City Offices**

Are the City offices physically situated so as to provide maximum ease to citizens who need to conduct business with the City?

**91. Equipping of City Offices**

Are the City offices equipped with adequate equipment and furnishings to enable the staff to comfortably and efficiently perform their jobs?

**92. Citizen Information System**

What methods are in place to inform the Citizens about major City projects and issues? Who is responsible for this function?

**93. Smoking Policies**

Is a No-Smoking Policy in place for City buildings and vehicles? Is there an ordinance in place applicable to businesses, such as restaurants?

**94. Public Transit System**

Does the City operate, or participate in the operation of, a public transportation system? If yes, are grant monies involved, and what is the revenue vs. expense relationship?

**95. Airport**

Does the City operate, or participate in the operation of, an airport? If yes, what is the revenue vs. expense relationship?

**96. Electrical Generating System**

Does the City operate, or participate in the operation of, an electrical generating system? If yes, what is the revenue vs. expense relationship?

**97. Civic Center/Community Center**

Does the City operate, or participate in the operation of, a Civic Center or a Community Center? If yes, what is the revenue vs. fee relationship?

**98. Geographic Information System**

Does the City utilize a Geographic Information System (GIS)? If yes, where does this function fit in the City organization, and what is the extent of utilization?

**99. Transportation Plan**

Is a long-range Transportation Plan in place for the City and/or the area?

**100. Insurance Coverage--City Assets & Liability**

Are City assets adequately insured, and is the City's liability coverage at the proper levels?

