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City Office Consolidation for Local Government: The Case for Reorganizing, Improving and Expanding City Ser

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Golden Gate University

City Office Consolidation for Local Government:
The Case for Reorganizing, Improving and Expanding City Services

EMPA 396 Graduate Research in Public Management

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CHAPTER 1 - OVERVIEW

The research presented explores the current problems involved with how city services are currently delivered to customers of the City of Hollister. The research also seeks to discover and recommend ways in which new efficiencies can be implemented along with an overview of

possible organizational impacts such an effort can have on the public and city staff.

Although the research project is an overview of city administrative functions, possible solutions to consolidate staff to one location, it is the complications of judging organizational behavior, which has a deeper meaning to staff that have been located in their current locations for many years and have become entrenched. Included is an inventory of the locations of current city service centers, a review of the current use of the facilities and possible alternative locations or type of facilities that could increase public accessibility and or other methods for greater public access.

THE PROBLEM

The problem identified is the efficient and convenient delivery of city services to its citizens and the complexities of managing internal systems. The City of Hollister has many of its government facilities in various locations throughout the City, which can be a barrier to efficient customer service and staff usage. The scattering of departments, in many cases requires customers and staff to make multiple trips to satellite locations to conduct city business. The purpose of the project is to develop solutions to increase public accessibility to services offered by the City of Hollister. In addition, it was noted that during the survey and interview portion of the research there appeared to be a lack of

comprehensive customer service training for staff.

The plan also includes a brief overview of a proposed staff-training program. The research paper is segmented into chapters describing the research problem, background, literature review, and methods used during the research phase of the project.

The overall focus of the project is communication with the public and providing efficient public services. The research project and resulting solutions is based upon the hypothesis that *as the City population increases, services and staffing levels need to be increased or adjusted to meet additional demands in an efficient manner to provide service that is of high quality and convenient to the public.*

The reality of this project is about learning new ways to communicate and hopefully educate those involved with the endeavor. In Great Dialogues of Plato, *The Republic, Book VII*, Plato tells a parable about education and ignorance by describing a situation where man as a society is in a cave and are only allowed one point of view. As I have found in my research, the cave story is not unlike the situation that confronts change in an organization. Plato makes the point the cave dwellers are ignorant because of singular point of view and should driven out to experience education and see a different truth. Plato says the following "For the truth is my friend, that only if you can find for your future rulers away of life better than ruling, it is possible for you to have a well managed city; since in that city alone those will rule who are truly rich, not rich in gold, but in that which is necessary for a happy man, the riches of a good and wise life."

BACKGROUND

The City of Hollister was incorporated in 1872 as a general law city operating under the Constitution of the State of California. The City's history and growth since the

1870s' has been

directly related to farming, agricultural production, and food processing businesses that have located in the Hollister area due to its relatively mild climate. The City's population has grown at a steady pace as the agricultural business and related markets expanded.

Recently, population increases have accelerated, primarily due to additional housing needs supporting manufacturing and industrial growth in the Silicon Valley along with local industrial and commercial development. Rapid growth population began during the mid-1960s starting with a population of 5,300 and continues today with a present population of 34,370. Population studies conducted by the City's Community

Development Department in 1995 estimates the population of Hollister is likely to be approximately 38,000 by the year 2010, if growth continues at its current pace.

The City's primary mission is to provide municipal services its residents. Services currently include City Administration Services; Police and Fire Protection; Sewer and Water Service; Community Development Services; Public Works Operations; Redevelopment Services and a Municipal Airport. The City employs 130 people, including the City Manager and City Attorney with an annual operating budget of 25 million dollars.

Since its founding, and in particular during the last 20 years, there have been many changes that have occurred relating to managing the City. These changes include a rapidly growing population, increasing numbers of city employees, the scope of services that are provided, a reduction in the ability to raise sufficient revenues to provide needed services to citizens and businesses, and an influx of changing cultural influences, a shortage of school facilities and crime issues.

The future vision for the City is articulated by the 1995-2010 City General Plan, which includes policies to manage the city's growth while maintaining and enhancing Hollister's small town characteristics, and ensuring adequate public services to residents, commercial users and industry.

The research project contains many aspects relating to changes within the organization, including the possible relocation of people, different approaches to public service, and the opportunity for the current organization to evolve.

One of the most important aspects of the relocation program will be communication with the community and whether the community would value such a change. The fundamental question is; does the community desire to see a change in the way local government delivers services? It will be through the survey process, staff meetings and the interview process that the researcher will be able to see whether the community and staff are ready for a change and at what behavioral and cultural impacts may occur during the process. In this particular case, it will be the paradigm shift among staff, which may occur in the effort to change how employees view one another and working with the public in a new work environment.

Michael Beer writes in *Managing People Organizations* about the process of change. "Organizational change is not instantaneous. A model of how the organization to be structured does not quickly translate into change in the behaviors of large aggregates of employees. Managers sometimes make the mistake of assuming that announcing the change is the same as making it happen." He voices the following question, "How often is a Friday memorandum expected to translate into change on Monday morning? The process of change is a sequence of events, speeches, meetings,

educational programs, personnel decisions, and other actions aimed at helping employees, including top management; learn new perspectives, skills attitudes, and behaviors. All things being equal, people will become committed to that which they help create. Effective processes of change involve those affected in planning and executing it.”

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following three research questions will be explored.

1. Is there a suitable site in the City to locate offices convenient to the public and staff?
2. What will be the organizational impacts, changes that may occur to staff, if staff is viewed in a cultural light and what paradigm shifts may take place after consolidating offices?
3. Will the public benefit from consolidation and staff reorganization?

To provide for clarity, the project can be segmented into two distinct phases. First is the search for a preferred location to consolidate staff its implications and secondly the impacts upon the organization.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review will present research findings relating to leadership and management, organizing for change, organizational culture, reinventing government and other aspects of the research project such as assessing community values, project alternatives, city planning, and public finance.

Research Findings

It is not uncommon for planners to be looked upon in the role of plan makers in any number of situations, such as planning for a new area of town or providing input on public policy. While planning is a worthwhile venture because of its societal meaning, it rarely deals with the *management* aspect of the planning process. As a matter of fact, it is only recently that greater emphasis on implementation of plans is getting more attention within the city and regional planning profession (Fulton, 1999)

Because this project involves changes in how the city functions as a service entity, it will be especially important to understand the psychology of the change process that is likely to occur during the implementation phase of moving to a new office site.

Project Leadership and Management- Marshall Sashkin and Abraham Zaleznick

The importance of visionary leadership and its impact upon an organization cannot be understated. As a matter of fact, many failures of organizational improvement initiatives are caused inadequate policies or management incompetence. (Ott, 1994) Perhaps managers can improve their competencies by reflecting upon writings of those researchers and authors who have an overview of management visionary leadership.

Marshall Sashkin explains in Jay A. Conger and Rabindra N. Kanungo's book, *Charismatic Leadership*, his theory of visionary leadership and its elements. He speaks of the two personal characteristics required if a leader is to create an effective vision. The first is a *personality orientation* focused on gaining power in order to empower others, while the second attribute involves *a set of cognitive skills* needed to develop the vision itself. Although it might seem that the first trait is opposite to the nature of visioning or developing a vision, it is truly an important factor... Without power and empowerment, the vision cannot be made real, and is, therefore, of little practical interest". He also describes the ideal four cognitive skills involved in the visioning process.

- The first skill is *expressing the vision*, not verbally but through behavior.
- The second skill is *explaining the vision to others*; making the nature of the vision clear in terms of required actions and aims.
- The third skill is *extending the vision*; applying the sequence of activities involved in carrying out the vision to a variety of situations so that the vision can be implemented in several ways and places.
- The fourth cognitive skill involves *expanding the vision*; applying it not in just one limited way and not even in a variety of essentially similar ways, but applying it in many different ways

In John J. Gabarro's book, *Managing People and Organizations*, Abraham Zaleznick poses a question in an article title, *Managers and Leaders: Are They Different?* This question is fundamental to understanding change, and then leading the change process during project development. Zaleznick postulates that managers relate to people according to the role they play in a sequence of events. While on the other hand, leaders

are concerned with ideas and convey them in a more intuitive and empathetic way. The manager's orientation to people, turn aside his or her attention away from the substance of people's concerns and toward their roles in a given process. The difference is between a manager's attention of *how* things get done and a leader's attention to *what* the events and decisions mean to stakeholders.

He concluded the following; "Leaders tend to be twice-born personalities, people who feel separate from their environment, including other people. They may work in organizations, but never belong to them. Their sense of who they are does not depend upon memberships, work roles, or other social indicators of identity. What seems to follow from this idea about separateness is some theoretical basis for explaining what certain individuals search out opportunities for change. The methods to bring about change may be technological, political or ideological, but the object is the same: to profoundly alter human, economic, and political relationships."

Organizing for Change- Nancy C. Barger and Linda K. Kirby

Making changes in an existing organizational structure will have its challenges. The main challenge is to decide to actually change, along with considering the impacts to members of the organization during the change. *The Challenge of Change in Organizations* by Nancy C. Barger and Linda K. Kirby discuss the predictable affect of the decision to change an organization by *intentional change* and *imposed change* into two categories. They theorize, "Responsible organization leaders see the requirement for change. They gather information, explore options, and carefully think through solutions they believe are for the good of the overall organization." Changes that are decided, however, need to be implemented by others who most often have not been part of the

original analysis and decision-making. This is the usual way changes come about in an organization. “Managers and employees know something is coming, but they are not involved in the process, don’t have all the information, have not explored options, have little influence, and don’t make the final decisions. For them it is imposed change. Imposed change has a very different impact on people than change that is chosen. Table 10 illustrated in the book demonstrates differences between imposed and intentional change.

Table 10, The Impacts of Intentional and Imposed Change

Intentional Change	Imposed Change
Is a conscious decision	Is a decision without choice
Is anticipated	Is unexpected
Is gradual	Is sudden
Is incremental	Is dramatic (lightning bolt)
Is paced	Is rapid (out of control)
Solves problems	Creates problems
Provides new opportunities	Disrupts routines

“Whether the changes are wise or foolish, well thought out or impulsive, reasonable or unreasonable, fair or unfair, imposed change has predictable impacts. If these are not acknowledged and dealt with, they can cause severe morale problems and form the basis of resistance to change that is so troubling to leaders and their organizations.”

Psychology of Culture – Edgar H. Schein

The psychology of culture is an important issue for managers to understand. This aspect of human behavior is particularly important because it is awareness of why people behave the way they do which gives the manager a deeper understanding of issues that may be encountered during a change effort. In Edgar H. Schein’s seminal book,

Organizational Culture and Leadership presents an in depth overview at culture in the workplace rich with examples of research findings of the work environment. One could write volumes about his work because of the breadth of the overall work. However, for the purposes of this research, I will limit it to his explanation of organizational culture and how his work is relevant to the research project.

It is important to note that the consolidation of different groups into one facility will be an imposed change. (Barger and Kirby, 1998) Because of the imposition upon city staffers, there is no doubt in my mind; there will be painful moments during this adjustment period for many in the group because of factors involving entrenchment. In essence, each department or division has it own sub-culture and the move will probably bring about great cultural change in the organization. Schein's research and understanding of culture is pivotal for understanding what will possibly happen when consolidation takes place, and its impact upon the existing cultures in the City's organization. The books theme among others is the difficulty of deciphering, changing and adapting an organization's culture. He approaches the issue through the three levels of culture. *Artifacts*, the visible organizational structure and processes which are hard to decipher because the observer can describe what he or she can see, but has difficulty in deciphering what the meaning of the artifacts mean. Second to artifacts, are *espoused values* which are defined as the strategies, goals and philosophies or justification of an organization that the leader espouses as good. In turn other members of the organization buy in to the strategies eventually becoming *basic assumptions*, the third element of Schein's levels of culture. He argues that the pattern of basic underlying assumptions function as a defense mechanism for individuals and the group, as a result culture change

is difficult, time consuming and in most situations anxiety provoking. He notes further that cultures are deep-seated, pervasive and complex and it can be exceptionally difficult to bring basic assumptions to the surface. He also uses the classic three-step approach to discuss change - unfreezing, cognitive restructuring and refreezing. (Lewin) The key issue in this case, is the notion of leadership becoming somewhat subsidiary in their own culture to a adequate degree to recognize what may be its making an allowance for assumptions to learn new ways of thinking themselves as a prelude to unfreezing and changing their organization. He wrote the following about how cultures can be resistive to change "Organizational learning, development, and planned change cannot be understood without considering culture as the primary source of resistance to change...This ability to perceive the limitations of one's own culture and to develop the culture adaptively is the essence and ultimate challenge of leadership." He also noted the culture of a group is "a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems."

Planning for Change - Peter Senge

Planning for organizational change needs to employ proactive methods and deciding upon a strategy for change. In Peter Senge's book, *The Fifth Discipline*, he outlines an approach for an organization to become a *learning organization*. He describes the disciplines of a learning organization as follows: "*Systems Thinking* are events that are distant in time and space, and yet all connected within the same pattern. Each has influence on the rest, an influence that is usually hidden from view. *Personal*

Mastery is the discipline of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing energies, of developing patience, and of seeing reality objectively. *Mental models are deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or even pictures or images* that influence how we understand the world and how we take action. *Building Shared Vision* is when there is a genuine vision (as opposed to the all too familiar *vision statement*) people excel and learn, not because they are told to, but because they want to.”

He continues, “The practice of shared vision involves the skills of unearthing a shared ‘picture of the future’ that foster genuine commitment and enrollment rather than compliance. In mastering this discipline, leaders learn the counter productivity of trying to dictate a vision, no matter how heartfelt. The discipline of team learning starts with dialogue, and the capability of members of a team to suspend assumptions and enter into genuine effort in *thinking together*. To the Greeks, *dia-logos* meant a free flowing of meaning through a group, allowing the group to discover insights not attainable individually... Team learning is vital because teams, not individuals are the fundamental learning unit in modern organizations. This is where the ‘rubber meets the road’; unless teams can learn, the organization cannot learn.”

Reinventing Government- David Osborn and Ted Gaebler

Authors David Osborn and Ted Gaebler in the book, *Reinventing Government*, put forth the theory that government should change its approach to problem solving by using methods with an emphasis upon accomplishment and focusing on customer service with a business-like approach to governance. *Reinventing Government* stresses to the following tenets; 1) Public Agencies need to be more concerned with results and less focused on methods, 2) Agencies need to operate at levels of efficiency and effectiveness

competitive with private sector firms performing the same function, 3) Operations must be customer-oriented and directed at problem prevention rather than problem resolution and, 4) Budgeting should be focused on service accomplishments rather than cost inputs and private sector resources and energies should be harnessed for public service whenever and wherever possible. It should be noted here that the purpose of government and the purpose of private enterprise are quite different. “The purpose of private enterprise is to produce a profit where government exists to serve the public in a manner that is efficient and responsive. In many respects, government’s ability to *reinvent* itself is limited to its democratic obligation to be responsive to changing voter demands and to provide services equally and equitably to all its citizens.”

Community Values – Frank J. Smith and Randolph T. Hester, Jr.

In formulating a plan, such as the idea of a master plan, the concept of community values needs to be addressed because community values could ultimately steer the outcome of the project. The first question the project manager should ask is; *what is the vision of the community and what goals need to be set to proceed with the project?* Frank J. Smith and Randolph T. Hester Jr. provide insight on goal setting in their book, *Community Goal Setting*. They state that, “True goal setting is necessarily a participatory process because the interests and values of the community are represented in all the people. There is no natural path of community development, apart from the values of persons who participate in the process. Persons denied participation in the goal-setting process will remain motivated by private goals, but they will be deprived of the benefits to themselves and their fellow citizens, of examining openly the opportunity to fulfill these goals in a manner consistent with the general community welfare.”

Project Alternatives - Roger Fetterman

Any project can have a series of project alternatives, which could range from essentially “no project” to a project that goes beyond the project manager’s original intentions. Alternatives may include new locations of city facilities, electronic media, such as the Internet or outreach programs to engage the community. In his book, *The Interactive Corporation*, Roger Fetterman writes, “Interactive media allow us to focus on the use of available digitized media in the context of the business environment in question. Our primary concern is not with the merits of media types, but with the value of interactive media in business processes. Interactive media can enable individuals and groups to share, annotate, and manipulate information at their desktops in real time, regardless of where they are located.”

As part of the project that is envisioned for the relocation of city facilities, the plan is to not only have centralized customer services, but also to also employ better use of interactive technologies, which will better serve the public. With so many choices of services today, the question for the project manager is to what extent will public access to interactive networks be granted?

City Planning - Kevin Lynch

Kevin Lynch in his book, *Good City Form*, asks the question, “What makes a good city?” In this powerful commentary on city planning, he provides a historical perspective of what planning is all about and asks reflective questions about its future.

In Chapter 16, *City Models and City Design*, he states “Design decisions are largely based on models in the head of the designer. Presumably, those models connect with more general theories, but models and theories can be surprisingly different. To

begin with, the word model is ambiguous. In common talk, it is a three dimensional physical miniature of a building machine, or landscape, or this year's car, or it is a person who exhibits new clothes. I don't mean those. Not long ago, *model* was an adjective meaning "worthy of emulation," and this is the tradition I shall follow. For our purpose, a *model* is a picture of how the environment *ought* to be made." For the project manager, the idea of visioning is an important tool by which to express the outcome of the project to peers and participants in the change process.

Financing - William Abbott, Marian E. Moe, and Marilyn Hanson

As with most projects financing will be an integral part of the plan for change. In the majority of municipal projects such as the Customer Service Plan, to accomplish an end result, monies must be made available through a number of resources that a city can tap into and utilize. Cities generally rely on the General Fund for building new public facilities and capital expenditures such as computer equipment. The book, *Public Needs and Private Dollars* by William Abbott, Marian E. Moe, and Marilyn Hanson, offers an overview of how cities finance various public improvements. "Exaction's, taxes and assessments are three of the most common sources of funding for infrastructure, maintenance, and services in California. Frequently confused, the terms contain important differences, which play a crucial role in determining which technique or combinations of approaches can be used to solve a financing problem. Sometimes subtle, these distinctions can affect the legality or illegality of the levy."

Chapter 3 Methodology

The purpose of conducting a survey is to provide information that could be used in the decision-making process more accurate. In addition to the surveys and interviews, I also conducted analysis of the current locations of city department locations and an overview of sites that have potential for city office use. The idea behind that analysis is central to the research question one; is there a suitable site in the city to locate offices convenient to the public and staff? Those results will be in the appendix or an additional chapter. I did not feel it was appropriate for this chapter.

In the text, *Business Research Methods* by William G. Zikmund defines business research as "the systematic and objective process of gathering, recording, and analyzing data to aid in making business decisions. The definition suggests first that research information is not intuitive or haphazardly gathered. Literally, research means to *search again*. It connotes patient study and scientific investigation wherein the researcher takes another, more careful look at data to discover all that can be known about the subject of study.

Second, if the information or data that are gathered, recorded, and analyzed are to be accurate, the business researcher must be objective. The need for objectivity was cleverly stated by the nineteenth-century American humorist Artemus Ward, who said, *It ain't the things we don't know that gets us into trouble. It's the things we know that ain't so*. Thus the role of the researcher is to be detached and impersonal, rather than to attempt to prove preconceived ideas. If bias enters the research process, its value is considerably reduced. The definition is not restricted to one aspect of business. An essential tool for management in its problem solving and decision-making activities,

business research provides necessary information upon which to base decisions. By reducing the uncertainty of decisions, it reduces the risk of making wrong decisions. However, research should be an *aid* to managerial judgment, not a substitute for it. There is more to management than research. Applying research remains a managerial art."

In the instant case of this research project, there are questions about the project that need to have at least a conceptual answer during the research of the project.. This raises the question; as Zikmund writes, "What is to be measured? This is not as simple a question as it may at first seem. The definition of the problem, based upon exploratory research or managerial judgment, indicates the concept to be investigated. However, a precise definition of the concept may require a description of how it is to be measured. And there is frequently more than one way to measure a particular concept." With this project, the concept of changing how work is done raises an issue of attitude. In the book *Business Research Methods* the author discusses attitude. "There are many definitions of the term attitude. An *attitude* is usually an enduring disposition to consistently respond in a given manner to various aspects of the world, including persons, events and objects... In this short description three components of attitude have been disclosed: *affective*, *cognitive*, and *behavioral*.

The *affective component* reflects an individual's general feelings or emotions toward an object. Statements such as 'I love my job,' 'I liked that book' or 'I hate cranberry juice' reflect the emotional character of an attitude.

The way one feels about a product, person or object is usually tied one's beliefs or cognitions. The *cognitive component* represents ones awareness of and knowledge about

an object. A woman might feel happy about her job because she 'believes that the pay is great' or because she 'knows that my job is the biggest challenge in Hinsdale'.

The third component of attitude is the *behavioral component*. Intentions and behavioral expectations are reflected in this component, which therefore reflects a predisposition to action." An example of a question regarding attitude about the project is the following. *How will the employees accept proposed changes that could affect where and how work is done?* This survey questions or statements and others like it will be used to test the waters regarding change, and will be an integral part of the project. Two surveys were taken, an external survey regarding the city's position in the community and an internal survey given to city staffers.

The external survey instrument used was as follows:

1. The City responds efficiently to the needs of the public and has reputation for quality customer service.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. Neighborhoods and shopping centers are the best places to site community information centers.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. A centralized information center, as opposed to information centers being placed in neighborhoods and shopping areas would benefit the citizens of Hollister.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. Information regarding City services should only be available by phone, office visits, or public gatherings.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. Knowledge of City services is generally well known to the public.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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The external survey was conducted at local grocery store and was limited to 20 persons.

It is similar to the public survey, but is for staff only. The survey was limited to only those who may be affected by the change of location and had 43 responders. The survey required that no names be entered on the survey form and that the survey was confidential.

The survey instrument is as follows:

The existing locations of city offices serve the public in a comprehensive manner.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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You are comfortable remaining in your current office location.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	---------	----------	-------------------

Moving to different office location will be fine with you.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	---------	----------	-------------------

Consolidating City Offices will increase efficiencies for all departments affected by the move.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	---------	----------	-------------------

Consolidating City Offices will provide for better coordination among staff and provide better service to the public.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	---------	----------	-------------------

Consolidation will help you to better understand the functions of other departments or divisions

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	---------	----------	-------------------

Consolidation will raise organizational issues not previously considered by you

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Staff Interviews

The research project also included interviews with 6 staff members. The interview questions focused upon the coming changes in the organization, that is, the move to consolidate staff and how might one react to a new work environment.

Because the research project has somewhat of narrow focus the interview questions were limited to three questions as follows.

- How do you feel about the move to consolidate city staff?
- How do you think it may affect you work?
- Do you have anxiety about moving to a new location?

Summary

I believe overall the surveys and staff interview process helps the research process because it garners some differing points of view regarding staff consolidation and the organizational change process. In addition, it important to note here that researcher bias played into the process because the consolidation of staff and the impact to staff culture will also involve me. Being human and somewhat entrenched myself in my current surroundings and culture of the office I work in, has lead me to think of or at least speculate how things will shake out in the future. During one interview when asking the question about anxiety, I noticed that I too have anxiety about the process of change; the relief from some of the anxiety issues comes from a better understanding of the change process brought to me by my instructors and the many readings about the issue.

Chapter 4 Research Findings

The external survey that was conducted with some success in producing results that reflected, in my opinion, attitudes that are a reflection of the community. The point of the survey was to garner an overall attitude of a sampling of citizens in the city and what their expectations of local government are. The survey was conducted at a local grocery store and was limited to twenty people. Respondents ranged from teens, parents, elderly persons, some store employees and a local gadfly. The reason that I limited the number of respondents was I felt that if the survey was to be somewhat accurate I could control possible sampling errors by reducing the number of possible contacts. As well, I tried to make contact with a cross section of respondents who would respond in different ways to the statements or questions because of different ethnic or cultural backgrounds.

External Survey Results

The survey used was a Likert Survey¹ intended to gain an understanding of a subject through the attitudes of those surveyed. Likert surveys use a statement format rather than questions asked of the respondent. The intent of using statements is testing a subject's attitude toward a particular theme or issue. In this case, I was trying to test whether my hypothesis of whether improvements are needed for City customer services were true or at least within the range of my observations of existing customer services that appears to be lacking.

The findings of the survey were as follows:

Statement 1

¹ Rensis Likert

The City responds efficiently to the needs of the public and has a reputation for quality customer service.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
R ² = 3	0	6	4	7

Analysis: 65% of the respondents strongly disagreed that City Services have a good reputation. More than half of 55% expressed overall disagreement about the City's responsiveness to citizen needs.

Statement 2

Neighborhoods and Shopping Centers are the best places to site community information centers.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
R= 12	6	0	2	0

Analysis: 90% of the respondents indicated that they felt that shopping centers and neighborhoods were a good place to find information about City services. The two who stated that were in disagreement was because they owned downtown businesses and felt that City Hall bring shoppers to the area.

Statement 3

A centralized information center, as opposed to information centers being placed in neighborhoods would benefit the citizens of Hollister.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
R= 5	5	0	6	4

² R= means the number of responses per statement or questions in the survey

Analysis: 50% agreed that a centralized information center was better than information centers placed in neighborhoods or shopping centers. Conversely, 50% percent disagreed that centralized centers were best. This result indicates there may be flexibility would be flexibility to utilize multiple solutions to improving city services.

Statement 4

Information regarding City services should only be available by phone, office visits, or public gatherings.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
R= 2	2	0	4	12

Analysis: 80 % of those surveyed indicated that services should not be limited to phone, office visits or public meetings. This indicates that there is room to consider different types of communication modes for the public and staff to use for customer service.

Statement 5

Knowledge of City Services is generally well known to the public.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
R= 2	3	0	4	11

Analysis: The 75% of respondents indicated a lack of visibility of city services. This is a powerful indicator where the public is not utilizing services, which are available.

Conclusions of the External Survey

Based upon the results of this survey, one could conclude that the City has a public image and relations problem. In addition, the survey indicated that people want a choice of where and how to obtain services. This confirms the hypothesis that the problem is efficient and convenient delivery of city services to its citizens. The City of

Hollister has many of its government facilities in various locations throughout the City, which can be a barrier to efficient customer service and staff usage. The scattering of departments, in many cases requires customers and staff to make multiple trips to satellite locations to conduct City business. The survey strongly supports the idea that City services could be improved. As previously stated, the purpose of the project is to develop a plan including alternatives, to increase public and staff accessibility to services offered by the City of Hollister.

The results of the survey are externally valid because it focuses upon city services. This is an important subject not only to the public at large but also to the policy makers and City staff.

Internal Survey

The internal staff survey was conducted over a two-day period. The number of surveys distributed was 44 with 24 responses returned during the time frame allowed. The following represents the analysis from the data acquired from the survey. The respondents were instructed that the survey was confidential and survey participants were asked not to write their names on the survey form. The intent of the internal survey was to receive input about the attitudes of staff about the impending move. This is an important issue because, there is a certain unknowingness about the outcomes of the move. In addition, permission was granted by the City Manager to conduct the internal survey.

Statement 1

The existing locations of city offices serve the public in a comprehensive manner.

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

R= 2 5 1 13 3

Analysis: The results of the survey indicated that the majority of respondents agreed that services are not currently being utilized in a comprehensive manner.

Statement 2

You are comfortable remaining in your current city office location.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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R= 3 8 3 9 1

Analysis: The survey indicates a split between staying in their current location.

Statement 3

Moving to a different office location will be fine with you.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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R= 6 8 6 2 2

Analysis: The survey indicates that the majority appears to be satisfied with moving.

Statement 4

Consolidating city offices will increase efficiencies for all departments affected by the move.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	---------	----------	-------------------

R= 7 9 6 1 1

Analysis: Approximately 66% percent of the responders think that efficiencies will be improved.

Statement 5

Consolidating city offices will provide for better coordination among staff and provide better service to the public.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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R= 11 7 6 1 1

Analysis: 17 of the responders believe that coordination among staff will improve services.

Statement 6

Consolidation will help you to better understand the functions of other departments or divisions

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
R= 11	7	5	1	0

Analysis: 70% think that they will better understand functions of other departments better.

Statement 7

Consolidation will raise awareness of organizational issues not previously considered by you

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
R= 4	12	7	1	0

Analysis: 66% agree or strongly agree that issues regarding the organization will be raised.

Conclusions of the Internal Survey

In general, the survey results seem to lean towards a somewhat positive attitude about the change to consolidate staff. However, the concern I noted was the number of neutral responses in categories relating public service, understanding other department, and issues of organizational changes. It would seem that these neutral responses reflect an avoidance or ambivalence regarding of the issue of moving, or that the responders were or are nonplussed by the idea. The conclusion of the survey indicates that the majority are willing to move, but with a note of caution which reflects non-participatory attitude the employees have with the issue.

City Staff Interviews

The research project also included interviews with 6 staff members. I originally contacted 15 city staffers to interview but some were reluctant to be interviewed. The interview questions focused upon the coming changes in the organization, that is, the move to consolidate staff and how might one react to a new work environment. Because the research project has somewhat of narrow focus the interview questions were limited to three questions as follows.

- How do you feel about the move to consolidate city staff?
- How do you think it may affect you work?
- Do you have anxiety about moving to a new location?

The questions were designed to evoke an emotional response from the interviewee. The first question had several ranges of emotion from feelings of unhappiness to the idea of moving to relief that work areas and other staffers would be more accessible. The second question caused worry among the interviewees because they indicated they had not really thought about, but were concerned about where they would be working, the physically layout of the building, where break areas were going to be and how much privacy would they have. The third question was the most emotional, I think because of the word *anxiety*. Several of the respondents indicated a mild level of anxiety while on person in particular was outright enraged with the idea of moving. When asked the question, the response was as follows. "Anxiety, Anxiety!, this whole thing sucks! I have worked here for 13 years and am not about to move to a place I don't know. Who in their right mind thought of this! Those (expletives) ought to be strung up! I'll quit before the move, you can bet on it." As the interview ended and the interviewee walked away..."Bastards!"

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis (SWOT)

In the arena of marketing, there is a concept that is used to evaluate an organization's internal strengths and weaknesses and external weaknesses and threats. This analysis technique is used as an underpinning to conduct a situation analysis. The analysis technique can be used as tool to help focus upon how some decisions are made when considering internal organizational changes and responding to customer needs. In using this analysis technique chances are good the differences in desired position and actual positions are different. As an example, the city's position relating to convenient customer service is directly related to the location of staff, which at the present time staff is in scattered locations, causing the public to drive or walk from place to place to access services. This difference in light of a proposal to consolidate staff and improve customer service is the strategic gap in the current position of the City's service offerings. The SWOT exercise can be an effective tool for brainstorming with staff and helps to focus the organization on issues that may have not been thought of before. The results of the SWOT exercise is on the next page.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Experienced Staff	Aging work force	Untapped citizen resources to participate in programs of serving on boards and commissions	Political instability
Low Turnover of employees	Lost opportunities for younger workers	Internship programs could be established	Lack accessible information leads to some wrong conclusions
Variety of service offerings, such as recreation programs and community development, redevelopment of blighted areas, housing rehab, etc.	Lack of cohesive program planning among departments	Multitude of staff collaborators cooperating on programs	Potential for privatization of city services
Relatively stable political environment at this time	Lack of proactive city outreach	Development of customer service programs	Lack of cooperation and support from collaborators such as other staff
Some departments are in scenic location	City departments in different locations	Consolidate staff into centralized location	Criticism of the cost for a new city office location
No direct competition for city services	Workers knowing they are the only show in town.	Develop customer service programs to reinforce that it is because of the customer that we have jobs.	Difficult to change prevailing attitudes

The interesting reaction to the SWOT analysis was the realization of the depth the overall problem identified and how to effectively deal with the entire staff when such a major change may be on the horizon. In some cases, the reaction of the interviewee it was discussed among the group; some employees may not have a positive reaction to the change. In addition, it was noted that by moving from one facility to another where the staff (although currently working together from different offices) has not worked together in the same office environment is anybody's guess how things will work out in the long term. As with many change situations, there will be adjustments in the beginning until people understand how their new environment works along with adjusting to personalities not previously encountered. In a sense, it is like moving to a new house as a newly wed couple. You don't really know the other person until you live with them.

John P. Kotter and Leonard A. Schlesinger in an article *Choosing Strategies for Change* note the following. "Organizational change efforts often run into some form of human resistance. Although experienced managers are generally all too aware of this fact, surprisingly few take the time before an organizational change to assess systematically who might resist the change initiative and for what reasons...Of course, all people who are affected by change experience some emotional turmoil. Even changes that appear to be positive or rational involve loss and uncertainty. Nevertheless, for various reasons, individuals or groups can react very differently to change—from passively resisting it, to aggressively trying to undermine it, to sincerely embracing it." This highly important issue of changing the existing work environment was discussed at length among the group. It will be of interest to see how the change affects the staff when

changes take place. Proposing and leading change can be a difficult proposition in an organization that has many entrenched organizational practices.

Chapter 5 City Departments and Site Alternatives Analysis

City Departments and their Functions

To provide focus for this research project, discussion is limited to City Hall, Community Development, City Engineering and the Recreation Department. Of the four subjects, two departments are located at the Park Hill Facility (Community Development and Public Works Department - Engineering Division), City Hall (City Manager, City Attorney, Human Resources and Finance) is located on Fifth Street, and Recreation operates from the Community Center located on West Street. The remaining City Departments of Police, Fire, Animal Control, and Public Works Maintenance are currently located at their own sites, and for various reasons such as functions that are particular to that department make them not feasible to consider relocating them to different sites.

Many of the services rendered to the public are mandated by the Federal Government, State of California or by local ordinances. There are, in some cases, services such as recreation that traditionally have been a local choice because recreation programs have been a logical extension of a community's desire to play.

In looking at the *business* of each department, the following descriptions are representative of the departments noted which are subject to this plan.

The **City Manager** is responsible for:

- Overall administration and control of all City and Redevelopment Agency operations and functions.
- Recommends policy and alternatives to the City Council.
- Implements policy as directed by the City Council.
- Is the primary source of information regarding the City's mission.

- The City Manager's office currently employs a City Manager and an Executive Secretary.

The City Attorney is responsible for:

- Functions as legal counsel in the legislative and legal affairs of the City.
- Responsible for reviewing all legal documents such as contracts, ordinances and resolutions that may be on the City Council's docket.
- Advises the City Manager and staff on matters that require a legal interpretation of statutes.
- Advises and keeps the City Council and City Manager informed on current legal developments, which may affect the City.
- The City Attorney's office currently employs one Attorney and a Legal Assistant.

The City Clerk's Office is responsible for:

- Overall management of the record of actions of the legislative functions and decisions of the City Council.
- Minutes of council meetings, keeping current the municipal code, maintenance of all resolutions and ordinances passed by the City Council.
- The City Clerk is an elected position; however, the office has two full time employees, the Deputy City Clerk and Support Services Assistant I.

The Human Resources Department is responsible for:

- Managing the recruitment and hiring of new personnel.
- Classification and compensation of positions for all departments.
- Negotiating with various employee bargaining units on behalf of the City.

- Arbitrating employee grievances.
- Managing employee benefits.
- Risk management.
- The department currently employs the Management Services Director who oversees the department and two Support Services Assistants and a Human Resources Technician.

The **Finance Department** is responsible for:

- Overall management of the City budgetary affairs.
- The annual budget and the collection of fees,
- Administration of contracts.
- Accounting and audits
- Tracking the City's investments
- Tracks day to day government expenditures.
- The department employs a Finance Director, five accounting technicians, and an accountant.

The **Community Development Department** consists of the Planning Division, Redevelopment and the Building Division. Each division has unique functions both in service to the overall public and to the development community.

The **Planning Division** is responsible for;

- Processing development project applications that include Site and Architectural Reviews, Subdivisions, Conditional Use Permits, Rezoning, Prezonings, General Plan Amendments, Use Determinations and General Plan Amendments.
- Review and updating the City General Plan.

- Development of other comprehensive plans such as area plans and specific plans.
- Information dissemination to the public regarding General Plan and Zoning and community plans.
- Works with the Planning Commission and City Council on community planning issues.

The **Building Division** is responsible for;

- Building inspection services for Uniform Building Code compliance for new construction of residential, industrial and commercial buildings.
- Information dissemination to the public regarding Uniform Building code.
- Processing building permit applications reviewing for Uniform Building Code compliance prior to commencement of construction.

The **Redevelopment Agency** is responsible for;

- Administration of the Redevelopment Plan to revitalize downtown and neighborhoods to alleviate blighting conditions. Blight is buildings that are unsafe; a factor prevents viable economic use of property or buildings or abnormally high business vacancies, high crime rates and lack of adequate public infrastructure.
- Provides low and moderate income housing programs to increase and improve the communities housing stock.
- Provides incentives for economic development.
- Provides information to the public regarding funding availability of housing programs.

The **Public Works Department** consists of three divisions, the Engineering, the Operations and Maintenance Division and the Airport. The following is a description of the Engineering Division functions.

Engineering Division

- Capital projects (such as new roads, sewer lines, etc.) their design and inspection.
- Infrastructure planning.
- Development project review and inspection.
- Traffic engineering.
- Civil engineering technical support for other divisions and departments.

The **Recreation Department** is responsible for leisure activities such as

- Adult Sports Programs.
- Youth Sports Programs
- Summer Programs
- Special Population programs.
- Facility Rentals

CITY OFFICES AND THEIR PHYSICAL CONDITION

As part of the review of City Services, an overview of the City's physical assets (it's buildings) is warranted to gather information regarding the age and condition of facilities. Knowing the status of a building helps the decision-maker to know in advance what possible cost implications of revamping buildings for reuse.

The location of each City Department is as follows:

- The City Manager, City Clerk, Human Resources and the Finance Department are located in City Hall on Fifth Street.
- Public Works - Operations and Maintenance Division is located at the terminus of South Street and has been in operation there since 1982.

- Public Works – Engineering Division, Community Development, which includes Planning and Building Inspection Services, is located at the Park Hill Facility.
- The Recreation Department is located in the Community Center on the southwest corner of Virginia Drive and West Street.

Prior to 1985, most of the administrative functions were located at City Hall with the exception of the Police and Fire Departments. The Engineering, Planning and Building Departments were moved to the Park Hill Facility in 1985 due to additional staff and the resulting over crowding at City Hall³. As the City continues to grow additional staff has made the size of the facilities in which employees are housed less than ideal. As an example, the Engineering staff, located on Park Hill currently utilizes two buildings but due to the additional staff hiring, office space is at a premium. Two or more staff persons are using office space normally meant for one staff member. The Engineering staff has more than doubled since 1989 from 6 to 14 persons.

Condition of Facilities

The age and condition of the City's inventory of buildings varies. Here is a snapshot of the status of City buildings and use of the facilities.

1. **Park Hill Facility.** There are five buildings located on Park Hill designated "A" through "E." The buildings appear to be old government service structures that were previously used as offices and dormitories for the California Department of Forestry and were probably built during the 1940's⁴. As originally constructed, each building had its own specific use. Building A was the office; Building B was a barracks with

³ City Manager George Lewis

⁴ Former Building Official Tom Barry

shower facilities; Building C was the kitchen and food service, and building D was a garage and maintenance building. Even with changes to the buildings adapting them for office use, the buildings are functional but show their age. The site is occupied by Community Development (Planning, Redevelopment and Building) along with Public Works' Engineering Division. The total number of employees that occupy the site is 28.

2. **The Recreation Department.** The Recreation Department operates out of the City's Community Center located at 300 West Street. The Community Center was built in 1980 with a grant from the Roberti Z-Berg Urban Open Space and Recreation Act. The center is approximately 6,000 square feet and houses the Recreation Directors office and a sign up desk for recreation activities offered to the public. The building also houses the Non Profit Jovenes De Antano (Youth of Yesteryear) Senior Programs. The Community Center is utilized for a variety of other multi uses. The facility appears to be in good shape but is fully utilized.
3. **City Hall.** City Hall is located at 375 Fifth Street and is the former site of the Carnegie Library constructed in the 1920's. The building was converted to City Hall use in 1965. In the 1970's, the building was remodeled in the rear adding the Council Chambers, City Managers Office and converting the basement into offices. At the present time the building is approximately 10,000 square feet (including the basement) and houses the City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk, Human Resources and the Finance Department. Seventeen employees are housed at City Hall and the building is used for a variety of meetings including City Council, Planning Commission, Cable Access Commission, Recreation Commission and by

many other public interest groups. Given its intense use the building is in good shape, but overcrowded.

In reviewing the functions of each department, it is important to note there are some departments whose physical location may or may not be important to the public. As an example, the Police Department functions are mostly its presence in the community via police patrols and its community-policing program. In some cases, the actual location in this department may not affect the overall functions of the department. This research omitted, the Police Department, the fire Department, the Publics Works Operations and Maintenance Division and the city Airport.

Alternative Site Locations for City Staff

Alternatives are defined as a choice between two mutually exclusive possibilities or either of these possibilities and one of a number of things that must be chosen. In this case, the legislative body may wish to consider the alternative to moving staff from one location to another, constructing a new building or moving staff to an existing building. The decision is based upon a one single objective; the city needs provide efficient ways to communicate with the public, our customers. Keeping in mind that the point of this planning effort is to increase communication with the public, below are some alternatives to providing information and increasing citizen awareness of City service offerings.

Inventory of Possible City Offices Sites

The purpose of conducting an inventory of vacant and occupied properties is to learn about the characteristics and possibilities of the site. The inventory includes the property size, location, and existing amenities of the subject property. As noted in the

chapter title, properties have been divided into two categories, *improved* meaning that they have existing structures and utilities, which can be used or modified for use or the property, or *vacant* properties which would require the City to develop the site for civic uses. Included is a projected cost to develop or redeveloped the site and whether the site was rejected.

Vacant Properties

- **Fourth and San Benito Street**

Owner: City of Hollister Redevelopment Agency

Parcel Size: 19,600 square feet

Development Potential: 39,200 square feet

Approximate cost to develop: 5.2 million dollars

Status: Rejected because of cost and loss of development potential for other uses.

Northwest corner of Seventh and San Benito Street

Owner: K and S Market Inc.

Parcel Size: 16,854 square feet

Development Potential: 33,708

Approximate cost to develop: 4.5 million dollars

Status: Rejected because of cost and parking constraints.

- **Mel Silveria Site (Southside of Fourth Street, across from Cozy Cup Cafe)**

Owner: Mel Silveria

Parcel Size: 17,220

Development Potential: 34,440

Approximate cost to Develop: 4.5 million

Status: Rejected because of cost.

- State Theater Site (Southeast corner of San Benito and Seventh Street)

Owner: Victor Arreola

Parcel Size: 6,930 square feet

Development Potential: 13,860 square feet

Approximate Cost to Develop: 1.8 million

Status: Rejected because of cost, parcel size and limited office space offering.

Occupied Sites

- Fremont School

Owner: Hollister School District

Parcel Size: 169,884 square feet

Existing Improvements: 18,960 square foot school building and three portable classrooms of 2,856 square feet.

Approximate cost to acquire and convert to public office use: 3.6 million

Status: Preferred Alternative because of the relatively low cost to convert when compared to other alternatives. See following discussion.

- Old Tiffany Motors Site

Owner: Tiffany Motors, Inc.

Parcel Size: 40,432 square feet

Existing Improvements: Car dealership buildings, including showroom, car repair facilities, and adjacent parking /display areas.

Approximate cost to acquire and convert to public office use: 5.3 million (does not include demolition or rehab of existing buildings)

Status: Rejected because of cost.

- McKinnon Lumber

Owner: Murray McKinnon

Parcel Size: 33,000

Existing improvements: Lumber Company Retail Buildings and storage areas.

Approximate Costs to acquire and convert to public office use: 4.4 million

Status: Rejected because of costs, parking availability and hardship on current owner to find alternative place of business.

- City Hall, Mid-State Mutual, Ross Building, Old City Hall, Fast Travel and Winn Insurance (City Hall Mall Concept)

Owners: Various

Parcel Sizes Combined: 39,114.88 square feet

Approximate Cost to acquire and convert to public office use: 5.2 million (does not include cost of historical preservation and demolition.

Prior to choosing a preferred location, several options regarding staffing locations were explored along with the attributes of each site as noted in this chapter. One unique alternative identified was the expansion of City Hall on Fifth Street and acquiring the buildings and land located east and adjacent to City Hall, where the facades of the existing buildings would remain and the structures behind would be converted to City Hall offices. The concept was coined the "City Hall Mall", it was however rejected due to cost and possible political ramifications of the project.

At the writing of this report, the approximate cost of constructing a building and acquiring land in the downtown area costs about 120 to 145 dollars per square foot. A

typical 6,000 square foot with a two-story 12,000 square foot office building would cost about 1.6 million dollars to completed based upon the average between 120 to 145 dollars per square foot or 132.5 per square foot.

The reason that most sites (vacant or occupied) were rejected was mainly because of cost and limited development potential. It should be noted that all of the sites identified are in the Downtown Area and consistent with the City's General Plan policy of placing government offices in the Downtown Area as a core activity. Additionally, each site is designated by the General Plan as Downtown Commercial with the exception of Fremont School, and have the potential of maximizing development on the site using the FAR (floor area ratio) of 2.0 meaning that each site has the potential to double the area of the site for building use. As an example, a site with six thousand square feet property theoretically can build a 12,000 square foot office building. In real life, however, each site has development constraints such as parking, landscaping and public improvements that usually prevent full build-out. For our purposes of analysis, full build-out is assumed for each parcel.

Other Alternatives Considered

Monthly or Bimonthly "Mobile City Hall" meetings.

The Mobile City Hall meetings would be held in various locations (such as schools) around the City. The idea is to provide an outreach program to the citizens who are otherwise unable to contact City officials during normal work hours. The Mobile City Hall concept will include scheduled evening or weekend times to bring City services to those who need questions answered such as information regarding zoning, building permits, business licenses and other City services. In addition, the Mobile City

Hall meetings could also be a forum for citizens to have one-on-one contact with elected official from their district. The cost of such a program would generally be limited to staff overtime and additional staff time devoted to setting up and implementing the program. It is recommended that a pilot program be implemented to determine whether this type of program is feasible.

Information Kiosks.

Information kiosks (public bulletin boards) are an out growth of traditional way to keep the public informed about current and upcoming events that may be of public interest. The kiosk updated as an interactive electronic medium (Internet) and can be programmed to offer a variety of services for the public. Services can range from paying a water bill to getting zoning information. Kiosks can be located in a number of places through out the city such as shopping centers, in front of City Hall, or at any public gathering place. The positive aspect of a kiosk system is convenience to the public in gathering specific information or providing services that are not complex. The drawback to the kiosk system is the lack of the human touch in dealing with citizens.

Maintain the Status Quo Alternative.

In this scenario, the City would maintain its current systems for providing public services. Currently there are not statistics regarding the effectiveness of the current service offerings.

Analysis of Alternatives and Proposed Preferred Plan

If we change the *place* we do business as a City, undoubtedly, it will have affect upon how we *organize* the way in which we provide customer services. Additionally, there are opportunities to increase communication with the public by using new methods of

communication such as the Internet and information kiosks. The combination of locating city staff in a central facility, providing information via the Internet, and locating information kiosks is worth consideration.

A preferred site alternative should be based upon the following:

- Convenient one-stop "shopping" for the public and other staff.
- Relevant Customer service Training for staff.
- Emphasis upon increased communication among staff.
- The location of an office facility should be near the heart of downtown and convenient to pedestrians and automobile traffic.
- The facility is within one easy reach of public parking facilities such as the Briggs Building Parking structure.
- The cost along with land acquisition is reasonable.
- That consolidation of staff should be a catalyst for positive organizational change for improving customer delivery systems.
- Those Internet offerings should include bill-paying opportunities and schedules for events such as the posting of meeting agendas and an E-mail suggestion box.
- A kiosk information system, which could be cost effective way to bring information to people regarding the city.

Preferred Building Site for Staff Consolidation

As noted in the list of alternatives, Fremont School was chosen as the preferred alternative. After reviewing site options available and other alternatives to the City, the preferred alternative was chosen for its economy, common sense ideas of communication, use of the Internet and placement of information kiosks around the City.

It is estimated that the cost may be 3.6 million for acquisition and necessary improvements to the site and buildings. The difference is that Fremont School has a large existing building that can be converted to offices without having to demolish or totally gutting the structure. In addition, it is on a large parcel that could provide room for the City to expand offices for staff and to accommodate other city activities. A secondary advantage of using the Fremont School site is its location and proximity to downtown and parking for staff. Included in this preferred alternative is the expansion of the use of the Internet and the use of information kiosks. The cost of kiosks in Boston, Massachusetts is offset by advertising use of the system. The kiosks were put in public places and are used to pay bill and parking tickets.

If the City did move staff to Fremont School, it raises the question as to the disposition of vacated properties such as Park Hill and City comes to mind. To the author of this report Park Hill is an open question as to its reuse. City Hall on the other hand should probably remain in use as the City Council Chambers and meeting rooms available for public use along with establishing offices for City Council members. The status of these facilities should be the subject a further refined plan.

Chapter 6 Summary and Areas for Further Research

The outcome of the research indicted two things, there is a place to consolidate staff and there are organizational issues for management to some how deal with. In addition, survey and interview results brought forth problems of the paradigm shift the staff will be facing in a few short months. This shift undoubtedly be painful for many but in the long term there will be benefits for both staff and public after the move is completed. Those benefits will include better coordination between staff members, and greater accessibility for services to the public. Beyond the positive benefits, there will also be new cultures that will emerge for the consolidation of staff. To guide this change effort several things could be done before the move to help alleviate anxiety about the move.

1. Develop a proactive program to provide information about the move through a series of workshops with the staff. The program can consist of such items as getting ready for the move, how to prepare and what organizational changes may take place once the move is completed.
2. Provide for on-site tours of the new facility prior to beginning construction, during construction and prior to completion. This will help the staff to be involved in the process and will provide for physical evidence of the change.
3. Develop a Customer Service Plan to be implemented after the move. A Customer Service Plan is the lynchpin to the entire endeavour of providing quality service. As noted in the research, the survey revealed that citizens were not fully aware of the City's service offerings. To that end it is important to approach the Customer

Service Plan with a full understanding of public needs as well as the needs of city staff. The Customer Service Plan would be based upon the following principles:

- *Encourage Public Participation:* Increase customer involvement in City policy and decision-making processes. Improve our understanding of what motivates customers and how we can best provide the services, and information they value. Use public roundtables, focus groups, and formal surveys to listen to what our customers think about the quality and value of the products and services we provide.
- *Provide Access to Information:* Make sure our customers are able to obtain the kinds of information they need. Provide our customers with reliable information to make a wider variety of decisions -- including land use, economic development.
- *Respond to Our Customers' Needs:* Make timely, appropriate changes to our products, services, and processes to respond to the comments and suggestions of our customers, without compromising environmental outcomes.

Timeframe

As many corporations throughout America have learned, reinventing an organization to improve customer service requires a long-term commitment. The City will need to begin the process of implementing a Customer Service Plan. It may be possible for the City to start the process of training for customer service by using pilot programs designed to put customer-oriented approaches into action in our day-to-day operations. The pilot program will allow development draft customer service standards

and work toward their adoption for all City Departments. After implementing the pilot programs, we then can identify “what works” for customer service processes through which we interact with our customers, and developed a tailored plan for implementing the Customer Service Plan standards. We also need to involve our customers to ensure that the draft standards address their major concerns. More customer involvement must occur in the coming year before the standards become final.

Areas for Further Research

After the move periodic internal surveys should be conducted to gauge how staff is either accepting or rejecting their newfound cultural experiences. Additionally, an external survey should also be conducted after the move to help establish a relationship with the public and to get a better handle on what issues are topical for improvement of city services.

Conclusion

This research provided me to delve into areas that had not been thought of at the local level. The research while providing focus on the process of moving staff from multiple areas and consolidating them into one central location raised issues of culture and the impacts to staff prior to the move brought insight as to the current attitude of the staff. As noted there is a fifty-fifty split involving the staff's attitude about the move. I believe this is due to anxiety about the move and the unknowingness about their future. The move to consolidate will also cost the city in hard dollars approximately 3.6 million and other costs such as lost productivity during the move, adjustments to embracing a new work environment and work culture. The vision for this move, is to benefit the

public first and then finding ways among staff to see themselves as a new culture with the change.

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