



# High Performing Governance

Bridging the Gap between Political Acceptability and  
Operational Sustainability

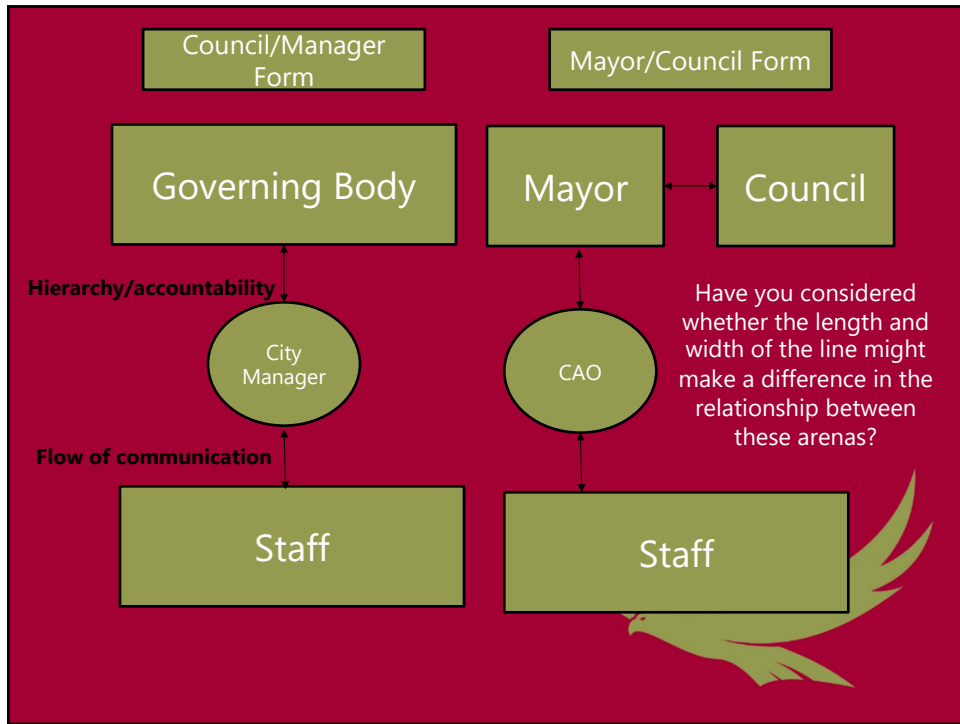
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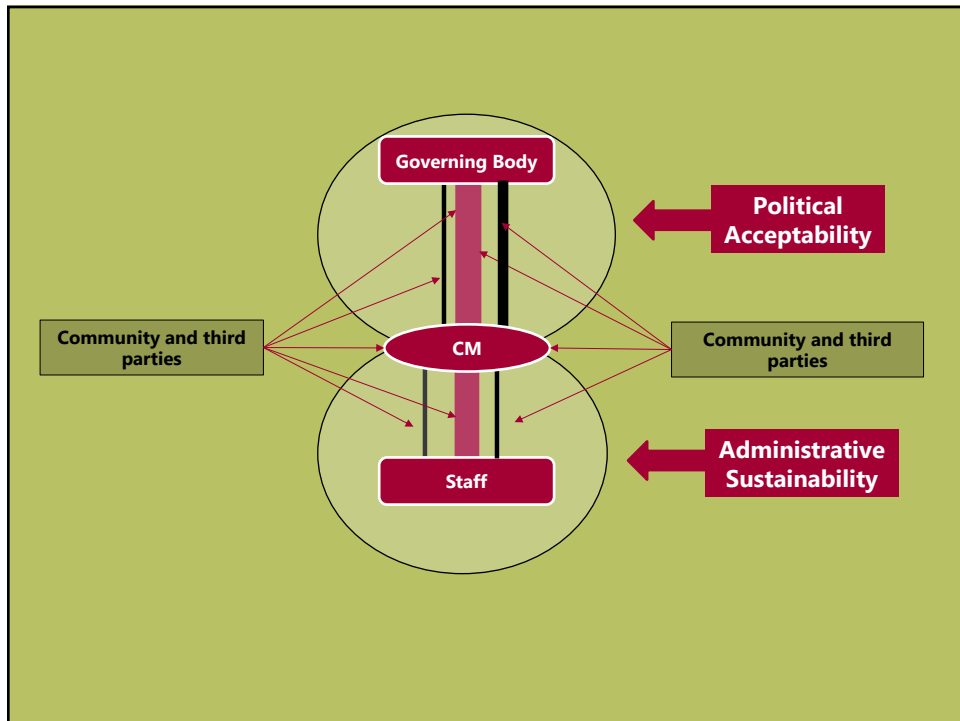
## Outline

- A gap exists and is growing between what is politically acceptable (what we want to do) and operationally sustainable (can we do it)
- Working the gap is facilitated by understanding that politics involves choices among conflicting values—no value profile is best
- And that politics and administration involve more than different behaviors; they are different ways of thinking

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**Values**


**RESPONSIVENESS =**

- **Representation/Participation +**
- **Efficiency/Professionalism +**
- **Social Equity +**
- **Individual Rights**

[Values video](#)



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good local government 

**Characteristics of Politics and Administration**

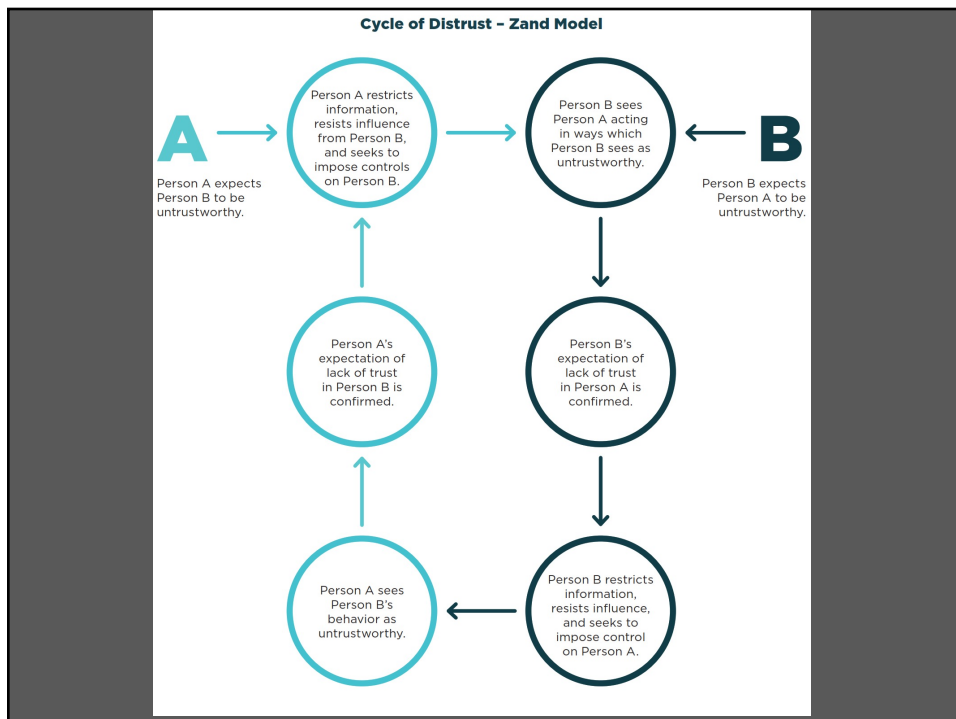
	Political Acceptability	← →	Administrative Sustainability
Characteristics	Politics		Administration
Activity	Game/allocation of values	CAO and Senior Staff in the GAP  Electeds*	Problem Solving
Players	Representatives/trustees		Experts-trustees
Conversation	"What do you hear?" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Passion</li> <li>■ Dreams</li> <li>■ Stories</li> </ul>		"What do you know?" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Data</li> <li>■ Plans</li> <li>■ Reports</li> </ul>
Pieces	<b>Intangible:</b> Interests and symbols		<b>Tangible:</b> Information; money, people, equipment
Currency	Power (stories), loyalty, trust		Knowledge (deeds)
Dynamics	Constructive conflict, compromise, change		Predictability, cooperation, continuity

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## Trust

- Where does it fit in your governance culture?
- If trust is so important, why does it seem to be a continuing issue? In other words, what is the value of not trusting?
- What are the elements of a trusting relationship?

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## Trust—A personal challenge

- Are you willing to share information?
  - Are you willing to be persuaded?
  - Do you feel a need to control the other?
- 
- Dale Zand, Administrative Science Quarterly, June 1972

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## Bi-lingual

- Understands that efficiency is one of four values if community building is the goal – cups matter
- Politics and administration are more than different roles, behaviors, and responsibilities. They are mindsets.
- Builds trust and facilitates bridging the gap between what is politically acceptable and administratively sustainable

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## Summary

- Bridging the gap is essential
- Role of translator/bridge builder is critical
- Cups matter
- Good politics is about values, not right answers – stories matter (convey values)
- Do not ignore any value over time; it will come back to haunt you
- Democratic process is “messy”
- Politics/administration = ways of thinking
- Aligning governing body/staff expectations is crucial
- Difference between “representative” and “trustee”



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*Problems become opportunities when the right people join together.*

Cary, North Carolina

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