

Antioch University

AURA - Antioch University Repository and Archive

Antioch University Full-Text Dissertations &
Theses

Antioch University Dissertations and Theses

2019

Mayors and Chief Administrative Officers Relationships: Aspects of Functional Relationships

Robert Arni Long

Antioch University - PhD Program in Leadership and Change

Follow this and additional works at: <https://aura.antioch.edu/etds>



Part of the [Leadership Studies Commons](#), [Political Science Commons](#), [Public Administration Commons](#), and the [Social Psychology and Interaction Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Long, R. A. (2019). Mayors and Chief Administrative Officers Relationships: Aspects of Functional Relationships. <https://aura.antioch.edu/etds/519>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Antioch University Dissertations and Theses at AURA - Antioch University Repository and Archive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Antioch University Full-Text Dissertations & Theses by an authorized administrator of AURA - Antioch University Repository and Archive. For more information, please contact hhale@antioch.edu.

Mayors and Chief Administrative Officers Relationships:

Aspects of Functional Relationships

Robert A. Long

ORCID Scholar ID# 0000-0002-7534-5180

A Dissertation

Submitted to the PhD in Leadership and Change Program of Antioch University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

June 2019

This dissertation is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of PhD in Leadership and Change, Graduate School of Leadership and Change, Antioch University.

Dissertation Committee

- Elizabeth Holloway, PhD, Chair
- Laurien Alexandre, PhD, Committee Member
- Patrick Smith, PhD, Committee Member

Copyright 2019 Robert A. Long

All Rights Reserved

Acknowledgements

I would first like to acknowledge the PhD program at Antioch University. It possesses a fantastic academic and support staff and program design. Completing a terminal degree at my age (67) could have two meanings. However, the program's designer (and my dissertation committee member Dr. Laurien Alexandre) designed this PhD program that progressively builds the student's academic capacities—it is nothing short of brilliant. The program's progressive learning achievements helped me progress as a student, critical thinker and a human being, at times recognizing my own flawed meaning making of a long-term practitioner. The program's readings, perspectives and subtle directional leanings helped me build the capacity to explain the deeper meanings of human social phenomena (the subject of this dissertation); for this I am thankful.

To my supervisor, Dr. Elizabeth Holloway, you were more than helpful, directional, inspirational and collaborative. Clearly, this dissertation would not be complete were it not for your steady, enthusiastic and highly knowledgeable assistance and collaboration. For this I am deeply appreciative and thankful.

To my dissertation committee member Dr. Laurien Alexandre, who stepped up after being my program supervisor in the first two years of the program; thank you.

And to Dr. Paddy Smith, SFU political science professor, as my external committee member, I also thank him for his support, and encouragement for the political science disciplinary aspects of the dissertation and his fascination with all things “BC political”.

To my friend, Dr. Michael Shoop, Antioch alumnus, and co-conspirator in all things local government, for spending hours reading and suggesting alternative understandings and ongoing

encouragement, I am extremely grateful. To Dr. Norman Dale, another Antioch alumni, and the magician that made me a much better writer through his wonderful editing, thank you!

To the City staff, particularly Brianne Bunko, my assistant, Mayor and Council of the City of Prince Rupert who encouraged and laughed with me along the way and now refer to me as “Dr. Bob”—thank you!

To all the interviewees who were willing to be vulnerable and shared their stories with me in hopes of an improved relationship landscape for Mayors and CAOs; thank you.

And most important of all, to my wife Sherry, who was diagnosed with stage four breast cancer shortly before I started the program, and who selflessly encouraged me to complete my lifelong quest to complete this degree including, happily attending my graduation—words cannot describe my gratitude and love for you. I promise there will be much less reading and writing to interfere with our time together going forward!

To my son for giving me the world’s cutest grandson as a distraction from the work and to my daughter for leading the family at times I could not.

To all of you and others not mentioned, I am grateful for this opportunity to attempt to improve the Mayors and CAOs relationships throughout the local government world.

Abstract

This study attempts to understand how the functionality of the mayor-chief administrator officer (CAO) relationship impacts the ongoing operation of these two local government positions. Looking at the structural and interpersonal aspects of the lived experience of this relationship enlightens us as to the manner in which the relationship functions. A review is made of literature on local government, generally, and on the separate roles of mayors and CAOs as well as the limited research on how their relationships operate. General relationship and leadership scholarship is used to better understand this specific relationship and its nuanced social processes. Qualitative research and, specifically, grounded theory, it is argued, is the best way to probe and better understand social processes. Thus, I used a grounded theory approach to discover a constructivist theory of how the mayor-CAO dyad operates and how certain aspects of the relationship lead to functionality. The research uncovered the primary relationship dimensions of: negotiating, strategizing, boundary setting, power sharing and harmonizing. The core relationship dimension that also contributes to the relationship's functionality was "shapeshifting". A heuristic model of the relationship was developed that also includes the temporal context of the relationship. Three theoretical propositions are made regarding the mayor-CAO relationship, these are: the interpersonal relationship is nested within its structural and temporal context, intersectionality and reconciliation of structural and interpersonal aspects of the relationship lead to functionality and the relationship's collective shapeshifting capacity also contributes to functionality. The interpersonal dimensional nuances (not investigated in any earlier academic research with regards to this specific relationship) contributed to a much better understanding of how the mayor-CAO relationship functions. This dissertation is available in

open access at AURA: Antioch University Repository and Archive, <http://aura.antioch.edu/> and
OhioLINK ETD Center, <https://etd.ohiolink.edu/>

Keywords: Mayor, Chief Administrative Officer, Grounded Theory, Relationship
Functionality, Relational Leadership, Municipality, Local Government, British Columbia

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	i
Abstract.....	iii
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures.....	ix
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
Historical Context	2
The Mayor-CAO Relationship	6
Researcher Positionality	8
Utility of Research for Practitioners.....	11
Chapter II: Literature Review	12
Doing Literature Reviews in Grounded Theory Research: A Contested Endeavour.....	12
Purpose and Background of Study	14
General and Historical Context of Local Governments	16
Why Investigate the Mayor-CAO Relationship?	25
Structural Understanding of the Mayor-CAO Relationship.....	25
The Complexity of the Structural Mayor-CAO Relationship	31
Conclusions Regarding the Structural Aspects of the Mayor-CAO Relationship	38
Leadership Theory and the Mayor-CAO Relationship	38
Bringing Leaders Together: Mayor-CAO Leadership.	45
Relational Leadership.....	47
Chapter II Conclusion	52
Chapter III: Methodology	54
Quantitative and Qualitative Research Compared	54
Research Rigor	56

Research Purpose	57
Choosing Grounded Theory	58
Plan for the Study	62
Limitations of the Methodology.....	67
Ethical Considerations.....	68
Chapter III Conclusion	68
Chapter IV: Findings.....	70
The Dimensional Analysis	71
Primary Dimensions	75
Stages of Temporal Relationship Development.....	91
Chapter IV Conclusion.....	95
Chapter V: Discussion and Implications.....	96
Review of the Research Questions.....	98
Model of the Mayor-CAO Relationship.....	99
Structural and Interpersonal Conditions.....	100
Structural Conditions.....	101
Interpersonal Conditions	103
Structural Relationship: Social Processes	109
Interpersonal Relationship: Social Processes.....	111
Temporal and Interpersonal Context.....	113
Core Dimension: Shapeshifting	116
Outcomes from the Relationship Model	120
Theoretical Propositions.....	124
Implications for Leadership and Change	142
Conclusion.....	149

References..... 150
Appendix A: Ethics Application to the Institutional Review Board..... 160
Appendix B: Letter and Consent Form for Dissertation Interviews 162

List of Tables

Table 4.1 Explanatory Matrix for the Primary Dimension: Negotiating	75
Table 4.2 Explanatory Matrix for the Primary Dimension: Strategizing.....	78
Table 4.3 Explanatory Matrix for the Primary Dimension: Boundary Setting.....	80
Table 4.4 Explanatory Matrix for the Primary Dimension: Power Sharing	82
Table 4.5 Explanatory Matrix for the Primary Dimension: Harmonizing.....	84
Table 4.6 Explanatory Matrix for the Core Dimension: Shapeshifting	86

List of Figures

Figure 5.1 Graphic Model of the Operation of the Mayor-CAO Relationship.....	100
--	-----

Chapter I: Introduction

Mayors and councils across North America have been terminating their chief administrative officers (CAOs)—also called city managers—at alarming rates (Ashton, Kushner, & Siegel, 2007). The fundamentals of local democracies are at risk as municipalities are losing their administrative ability to deliver municipal services, such as sanitary sewer, roadways, and potable water. Systematic investigations of how the mayor-CAO relationship functionality influences this phenomenon has not been undertaken. This study uncovered how the specific relationship between the mayor and the CAO of a municipality, influences how and why these mayor-CAO relationships succeed or break down.

In a democracy there is a natural tension between policy making and administrative delivery of that policy. The mayor and CAO represent those two structural roles, the mayor the policy role, and the CAO, the operational role of implementing and administering those policies. The political and academic debate regarding this tension has continued for over a hundred years and has come to be called the ‘dichotomy’ between policy and administration. Much research has taken place on whether there is a separation of roles or a different behavioral model is prevalent in practice. Numerous scholars have discovered in practice, a more complementary (Nalbandian, 2006; Mouritzen & Svara, 2002) model of working together between these two positions (mayor-CAO) to accomplish common goals, however little research focuses on the actual relationship functionality of the two individuals in these positions. The research question I answer is: What aspects of the mayor-CAO relationship results in a functional relationship?

Historical Context

In the years between 1880 and 1920 North American society struggled with high levels of political corruption in the delivery of local services. For example, New York's Tammany Hall machine politics involved party politics controlled by political bosses that used illegal payments to gain votes and supporters for their party (Hays, 1964).

To combat this democratic deficit the "Reformers" of the "Progressive Era" (Goodnow & Bates, 1919; Hays, 1964; Wilson, 1887) advocated, among other things, for a politically neutral and a merit-based bureaucracy that would not deliver services based on partisan interests. Hays (1964) states:

The reform movement . . . involved a conflict between public impulses for "good government" against a corrupt alliance of "machine politicians" and "special interest". During the rapid urbanization of the late 19th century, the latter had been free to aggrandize themselves especially through franchise grants at the expense of the public. Their power lay primarily in their ability to manipulate the political process, by bribery and corruption, for their own ends. Against such arrangements there gradually arose a public protest, a demand by the public for honest government, for officials who would act for the public rather than for themselves. (p. 157)

To expose and combat this corruption, Woodrow Wilson (1887) wrote a paper titled the "The Study of Administration". The paper is widely credited for the concept of separating policy making from policy implementation. Goodnow and Bates (1919) wrote extensively on this new proposal of separating policy making from policy implementation and the historical reasons for a dichotomy between these two aspects of governance. The dichotomy was solved, at least notionally, by having a professional administration arise to implement policy without partisan interference from the politicians who established the policy legislatively. Wilson's (1887) and

Goodnow and Bates's (1919) writings, likely helped instigate the political movement "reform or manager movement"¹ that subsequently resulted in the council-manager model of governance.

From the beginning of city government through to the 1930s, the mayor-council model of local governance was the norm. North American local governments adopted the council-manager model of governance starting in 1908 through to the 1940s, an approach that prominently featured the separation of policy making from policy implementation. In the United States, the city manager system dates back to 1908 with the first city manager appointed in Staunton, Virginia (McVoy, 1940). At that time, there was a clear movement called the "manager movement" including a model city charter outlining the roles and responsibilities of the manager.

In Canada, although this system of governance is ubiquitous, the process of adoption was much more incremental and without the deliberativeness of the United States (Siegel, 2015a).

Brittain (1951), an early Canadian political scientist, states:

As early as 1839 . . . Lord Durham urged [the British Parliament] that the establishment of sound municipal institutions in the Province [Ontario] was of vital importance. . . . United States influence was even more widespread in the nineteenth century development of Canadian local governments. The proximity of the two countries, their common business interests, and the similarity of physical environments and traditions as well as the identity of the language, made the influence of the earlier-developed country natural and indeed inescapable . . . It appears that the example of the United States was a direct influence [on local governments] . . . in the last half of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, those interested in municipal reform turned frequently towards the United States experience than elsewhere. (p. 13)

Although the influence of the United States was substantial, the issues that pushed the reformers south of the border (party machine politics, large councils, and partisan corruption) were not as prevalent in Canada. Canada also had the British influence that supported the mayor-

¹ Wilson was a prominent member of the "reform movement" and advocated for a separation between policy and administration due to political corruption at the time. This movement grew into the "Progressive Era" where the council-manager form of governance for local government developed.

council form of governance and, therefore, as the council-manager model grew in the United States—there 814 council-manager local governments in 1946—Canada had comparatively fewer (40) council-manager local governments (Brittain, 1951). In 1951, when Brittain wrote *Local Government in Canada*, he believed that “the council-manager system approaches in local administration [came] more nearly to the ideal of responsible local government than any which heretofore had been devised” (p. 18).

A majority of Canadian local governments did adopt, either by provincial legislation or practice, the council-manager form of local governance. The city manager (often referred to as council-manager) system of local government organization is now the most common structure for local governments in the USA and Canada. The major tenet of this system is that the city manager is to deliver services without fear or favor and have little influence on policy making. The elected officials are not to interfere for partisan purposes with the delivery of services or the hiring of bureaucrats.

Where politicians do engage in partisan politics, the literature often refers to this practice as clientelism (Kettering, 1988; Roniger, 2004) or particularism (Seddon, Gaviria, Panizza, & Stein, 2001) other than corruption. Earlier characterizations of political corruption have many different meanings; I use the act of obtaining a private or sub-group benefit, fiduciary or other at the expense of the public interest as a working definition. For example, under the separation of policy and administration’s dichotomist orthodox² (Wilson, 1887), the mayor and council could not instruct the city manager to plow the snow first in neighborhoods that politically supported the council. This partisan use of the snow removal equipment could be seen as particularism or

² The dichotomy being the separation between making policy (democratic legislative responsibility) and implementing or administering that same policy (administration responsibility) has come to be called an “orthodoxy” when these separations of roles are seen as absolute.

corruption. Under the orthodoxy of separation between policy and administration council would leave the plowing of snow to the CAO who would plow based on managerial priorities, such as access to the hospital route first (interpreted by the CAO as in the greater public interest).

As stated above, CAO terminations are growing at alarming rates. Under the dichotomy's orthodoxy, the hiring of a CAO was to be nonpartisan and based on merit; therefore, any CAO termination without cause (suggesting the termination was not based on a lack of merit) may be connected to political corruption or particularism and/or the need to control the administration in a more partisan manner. The termination may also be just an expedient method of changing the CAO leadership for other legitimate—or illegitimate—causes such as personality conflicts or other forms of conflict. The difficulty in understanding the reasons for termination or the tension between CAOs and their councils is that most local governments deal with these matters in camera and the details are seldom made public (Siegel, 2015a, 2015b).

The mayor-council model (Urbaniak, 2014) is the earlier local governance model that places the mayor as the policy instigator and the administrator of that policy. This system regularly results in the partisan hiring of chief administrative officers who report to the mayor and manages the municipality for the mayor's political benefit. The council-manager model (Urbaniak, 2014) came later as a reaction to the political abuses of machine politics and partisan corruption of the mayor-council model. The council-manager model powers the collective council to make policy decisions and focuses the manager on the delivery of efficient apolitical municipal services and little involvement in the democratic policy realm. These two models are discussed further in Chapter II.

The Mayor-CAO Relationship

The complexity and societal expectations for local government performance is high with the re-election of mayors and the ongoing employment of the CAO at stake. A functional relationship between these two fundamentally different roles is paramount to the success of both positions and, subsequently, the local governments for whom they work.

Scholars have investigated the relationship between these two structural functions or roles (Nalbandian, 2006; Svara, 1994). Research does not confirm strict adherence to the dichotomy between roles (Demir & Reddick, 2012; Dunn & Legge, 2001; Montjoy & Watson, 1995; Mouritzen & Svara, 2002; Nalbandian, 1994, 1999, 2006; Overeem, 2005; Siegel, 2010, 2015a, 2015b; Svara, 1998, 1999a, 1999b, 2001, 2006, 2008; Stocker & Thompson-Fawcett, 2014; Waldo, 1948; Zhang, 2014; Zhang & Feiock, 2009). All of this research approaches investigations from a positivist worldview. Seen through this positivist lens, the research attempts to link organizational performance, governance, policy influence, administrative influence, and efficacy, in the delivery of local government public goods and other measures with this orthodox dichotomy. However, little research has been done to delve deeply into this relationship, in a constructivist manner, to understand the lived experience of the mayor-CAO's relationship and its functionality.

Other political relationship studies reflect on the dynamics of asymmetrical power relationships, and how those relationships function, particularly in the international arena (Arreguin-Toft, 2001; Geyskens, Steenkamp, Scheer, & Kumar, 1996). Much of this research considers conflict and the use of power between nations, including war, as a way of understanding the relationships between nations. This body of research cannot be used for comparative relationship given that these relationships are collective in nature. Substantial

research has been done on trust, generally, and trust in leadership in organizations was found to be an important dimension of the mayor-CAO relationship (McAllister, 1995). McAllister (1995) posited two demonstrated constructs for trust include cognitive trust and affective trust which were found to fit the structural and interpersonal dimensions of the mayor-CAO relationships. Trust in a relationship empirically points to improved organizational outputs on a number of dimensions of organizational life. Although initial indications suggest a reciprocal relationship of mayor and CAO based on different roles and given that the mayor is typically the CAO's day-to-day supervisor but is not expected to display any management leadership (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) leader-follower research did not have any direct applicability. Other relationship research in the area of social psychology including attachment theory (Bowlby, May, & Solomon, 1989), relational cultural theory (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007), and relational theory (Lazarus, 1991), did shed light on the mayor-CAO relationship.

The mayor-CAO relationship is a dyad; therefore, we can be more discrete in our understanding of the cause and effects of these two individuals' behavior within the framework of their defined roles and responsibilities. The mayor-CAO relationship includes at least two roles or identities, one structural—who does what and why?—and the other, interpersonal—why each person treats and behaves in a particular way with the other. Social scientists have studied the structural ways these two roles function within the local government context. However, there have not been studies about what is transpiring within the relationship regarding identity construction, meaning-making, and other internal processes within the interstitial space between two local government actors, and how that may relate to the dimensions of functionality of that relationship. I am interested in how the interpersonal and interstitial space in a relationship relates to the relationship's trajectory for functionality.

In Chapter II, I organize the research on the many dimensions of the mayor-CAO relationship. In this study, I used a constructivist lens to view the relationship using a grounded theory methodology. A grounded theory approach is a methodology for qualitative research questions interested in inducting new theories or constructs while investigating a constructivist understanding of the internal meaning-making and identity construction of human endeavors. It matches the need for a deep understanding of the relational nature and utility of CAOs' and mayors' everyday acts in governing local municipalities.

Researcher Positionality

Positionality is important in this dissertation because a grounded theory approach involves the interpretation of participants' narrative by the researcher. My engagement in this meaning-making was influenced by my past experiences relevant to the mayor-CAO relationship.

As a practitioner-scholar and a CAO myself, a better understanding of the dynamic of the mayor-CAO relationship could be very helpful in reducing the number and severity of the publicly-displayed relationship breakdowns that I have witnessed. At conferences and gatherings of CAOs, mayors and other municipal staff, a frequently debated issue is the termination of the latest CAO, or the public display of dysfunctionality of elected officials towards each other and/or to their CAO. In the political realm one does not need to go too far to witness dysfunctional behavior towards other elected officials and staff members by certain elected officials. This behavior takes place at the highest levels of political life and is mimicked by local government elected officials on a daily basis (Stueck, 2017).

I have worked as a city manager or CAO since I was 27 years old. In the intervening 34 years as a practitioner, my relationships with my mayors (13 of them) were both the highlights

and disasters of my career as a CAO. The nature of these somewhat tumultuous relationships with mayors has captured my interest in understanding more about this relationship. Some of these mayors had 10 or more years of municipal experience and had worked with other CAOs. Others have been newly-elected and relied on my experience to help them come up to speed on their position's obligations. Regardless of the circumstances, the relationship was a daily operational imperative. All large organizational decisions, either operational or political, were always discussed by me and my mayor. Making decisions independently, by either one of us, even if it was our role, meant the decision would likely only reflect one perspective. We would then be independently vulnerable for the outcomes that would lack one set of perspectives.

My personal relationships with my mayors were largely functional; we could work through our conflicting structural interests and implement solutions. Sometime the solutions favored one point of view or the other. However, on balance, respect for the structural obligations of each party and a larger vision for the community would prevail over any ongoing conflict.

I did, however, experience one very dysfunctional relationship with a mayor. The turmoil of this relationship resulted from the mayor's behavior, her disrespect of my organizational role, of me personally, and of the organization itself. These behavioral conflicts resulted in my termination without cause. To my chagrin and disappointment, the one other time I was terminated, occurred three days after an election without me even meeting the newly elected council, again, without cause. These terminations had significant ramifications for the organizations in which I worked. I believed that I was treated unfairly and as such I still hold emotional pain resulting from this treatment. I have spent many hours reflecting on my feelings

that are anchored in these events and have made significant progress in reframing them as a deep learning of relational disruption and its consequence.

I tell this story because of the frequency of CAO practitioners finding themselves being terminated when a new political leadership is elected. The distinction between terminations without cause from those when cause is significant: without cause, the employer is not required to have a reason for termination. In contrast, with terminations for cause—such as for theft or lying—termination is straightforward and understood. However, the vast number of CAO terminations are without cause (N. Taylor, personal communication, February 22, 2017). In many cases of which I have personal knowledge, the reasons for termination were not in accordance with the law. For example, many CAOs were terminated for political reasons, or for whistle-blowing on corruption of the elected officials or even just stating their professional opinion.³ Amongst CAO practitioners, these terminations are called “political terminations”. Practitioners acknowledge that politicians terminate CAOs for various political reasons, many of which reflect their need to scapegoat the bureaucracy after an election that represents a populist need for change in a local government.

I believe being a city manager or CAO is an honorable profession that allows my active contribution to my community and results in me making a positive difference in the lives of the citizens. My father was a city manager before me and I see this employment as a large part of my working identity. My passion for more deeply understanding the relationship of the CAO to mayor is inspired by many rewarding, challenging, and disappointing experiences in the role of CAO. I aspire to have my research be more than a structural understanding of these two

³ A striking example was the 2012 firing of Gary Webster from his position as general manager of the Toronto Transit Commission. His advice conflicted with the view held by the mayor and, therefore, he was terminated. (Siegel, 2015)

positions which dominate the empiricism to date. While this understanding is important, interesting and helpful in describing the external form of these two positions, based on my own lived experience it does not uncover the nuances of interpersonal engagement in this governing relationship.

Utility of Research for Practitioners

Numerous groups and individuals may be interested in this investigation. Local government practitioners (CAOs), elected officials (mayors and councilors), media, political scientists, individuals that follow democratic discourse and even other asymmetrical power relationships between leaders of strategic governance groups and instigators of governance policy (chairs of boards and CEOs; NGO elected boards and their CEO's; and First Nations and their band managers to name a few) may see value and transferability in these investigations.

The local taxpayers are the recipients of the mayor-CAO relationship's failure with severance packages and service disruptions on the one hand or the efficient and effective use of their leadership resources if the relationship flourishes. It may also be of interest to anyone that has a hierarchical relationship at work by presenting the possible ways of understanding the relationship dimensions at play within their relationship.

It is understanding the phenomena of the individual's lived experience of the relationship between the mayor and the CAO, particularly the relationship dimensions that support functionality of the relationship; that is the central purpose of this investigation. By interviewing numerous mayors and CAOs in Canada a grounded theory yielding constructs emerged from the interview data. The central phenomena is defined as understanding the dimensions of the mayor-CAO relationship both structural and interpersonal in medium sized (5,000 to 100,000 persons) local governments in British Columbia.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Doing Literature Reviews in Grounded Theory Research: A Contested Endeavour

In any research it is important that the work be situated in relation to earlier relevant scholarship, however, within a grounded theory approach as a methodology, there is a scholarly debate regarding the appropriateness of starting a research project by conducting a comprehensive literature review. From the inception of grounded theory, there was an intent to build theories inductively being as little as possible influenced by other research about the phenomenon of interest. Some have called this the “myth of a blank slate” (Urquhart & Fernandez, 2013, p. 224).

Glaser (1998) suggested that in grounded theory, investigation of the literature prior to obtaining the empirical evidence from the actual research could prejudice, or as he puts it, “contaminate” the researcher’s ability to follow evidence’s own path to the theory that is being uncovered. This, I think, would be the expected view if the world is seen through a positivist or modernist epistemology. I assume Glaser’s contamination is by way of an implied bias based on absorbing the literature. Taken to the extreme, avoiding other literature on one’s subject will ready the researchers for the fresh imprint of new research that will write its own truth on the researcher’s blank slate mind.

I would argue that no researcher has been living in a vacuum up until the time they do the research for their dissertation. In today’s VUCA⁴ (Stiehm & Townsend, 2002) world, attitudes, beliefs, and even our sensory perceptions—given virtual reality—can arise from hidden prior assumptions, beliefs and thoughts that will invariably impact the way we make meaning in our process of research.

⁴ Stands for: Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous an acronym first used as an “acronymized mantra” (Stiehm & Townsend, 2002, p. 6) by the U.S. Army War College to describe today’s world.

If Glaser's (1998) dictum were followed, how would researchers know what scholarship is missing in their area of interest or what research has already been completed? How would they understand the interconnectedness of diverse research and the interdisciplinary similarities that create new ways of seeing the same circumstances, without some familiarity with other scholarship about their topic of interest?

Certainly, to be a scholarly researcher one needs to put aside favorite theories. I have theorized about my local government experiences after 34 years of "on-the-job" meaning-making. But I am deeply curious about my research interviewees' own experiential meaning-making, particularly if the meaning is different from my own. To suggest that we somehow put on hold our meaning-making apparatus by forgoing a literature review is counterproductive.

I do acknowledge that due to grounded theory's open interviewing technique, "leading the witness" in interview research could generate bias. However, recognizing this possibility and trusting that the interviewees themselves insist on telling their own story, I am convinced that this implied bias was managed if not eliminated. Therefore, I reviewed numerous areas of literature for gaps in the scholarship and found that scant research has been conducted on the mayor-CAO relationship from an interpersonal perspective. Scholarship on the structural meaning of the roles of the mayor and CAO, the structural complexity of these roles, both structural and interpersonal conflict within these roles, and the interpersonal relationship scholarship, were all present in the literature.

In this review, I have relied on my extensive local government experience to test and better understand this scholarship. However, these reviews are used to help to understand what others have researched in these fields not to develop or test any theories against my empirical

data. My research data came from articulate capable interviewees who spoke for themselves and imprinted a number of new constructs on my less than virginal theoretical mind.

To be clear, I do see the world through a constructivist lens, and, therefore, see a grounded theory approach as the research process that best investigates and explains socially constructed phenomena. I see a fine line between constructing and meaning-making before the empirical data have spoken, and the process of applying one's judgments regarding the evidence until all the research data are in. I present a further rationale for using grounded theory in Chapter III.

Purpose and Background of Study

I was interested in studying the relationship between the mayors and chief administrative officers of medium-sized local governments in British Columbia. I used reference material and the legal structural governance model used in British Columbia. These circumstances have a fundamental commonality with other local governments in Canada and United States with some contextual differences. When these differences are significant, they will be named.

Since my research subjects were only Canadian mayors and CAOs I have focused my work on council-manager forms of local governments in Canada. While this investigation may be interesting as well to U.S. practitioners and academics, it is from Canadian consciences and local governments.

Local government includes city government, municipal government, county government, and regional government. Local governments depend for their authority on delegated powers from provincial or state authority to govern within a set boundary of jurisdiction. Since the mayor-CAO or council-manager form of governance is used in both countries the comparative value of the structural similarities may be interesting.

Like many things in life, the relationship between the mayor and CAO is complex; it has dimensions of formal structural expectations, interpersonal interactions, and representations of thoughts and ideologies embedded in a relationship that results from elections where the parties (mayor-CAO) may have never met before. Alternatively, the CAO may come to work for a local government through the recruitment process where the mayor was only one member of the hiring committee. The CAO may know little about the mayor's personality, leadership style or other working idiosyncrasies. Given the complexity of this relationship, I am attempting to answer the following research question: What conditions and aspects of the relationship between the mayor and the CAO are necessary to create and maintain a functional relationship?

Given the potential challenges to mayor-CAO relationships it is surprising that these relationships function at all. In fact, many mayor-CAO relationships are failing (McCabe, Feiock, Clingmayer, & Stream, 2008) and generally, terminations are also on the increase (Local Government Management Association of British Columbia, 2015; McIntosh, 2009; Siegel, 2015a). Local government professional associations such as the ICMA (International City Managers Association) are also concerned regarding this primary relationship failure. These associations believe the CAO side of the relationship is not well understood or respected by both the public and elected officials (Siegel, 2015a).

One major problem facing local governments across North America is that the relationship between mayor and CAO is multifaceted, unique and suffering from relationship failures (Siegel, 2015a). My research explored how we may better understand why this failure is taking place.

This chapter is organized into four broad themes: the historical and general description of local governments; the relationship between the mayor and CAO including complementary

relationships, structural understanding of relationship, and governance challenges; the complexity of the political/administrative structure of mayor-CAO relationships; the discussion of interpersonal aspects within the mayor-CAO relationship; and the relevance of leadership theories to understand the mayor and CAO role and relationships. I note again that my experience as a CAO has contributed to my critique of the literature and I will intersperse this chapter with personal experiences and influences.

General and Historical Context of Local Governments

The mayor is the most common name for the elected leader of local governments throughout the democratic world. Each local government also employs another leader called (in numerous and varied wording), the chief administrative officer (CAO), city manager, and by several other titles.⁵ This person leads administration or management of these local governments and of the services they supply. In North America, particularly in Canada and the United States, these two positions are intended to work together to accomplish political and service outcomes for the people that live within the boundaries of these local governments (Svara, 1999b).

Scholars have investigated the operations of local governments for many years. Much of this investigation focuses on the structural manner in which local governments are organized (Brittain, 1951; Georgiou, 2014; Mouritzen & Svara, 2002; Svara, 1994; Tindal, Tindal, Stewart, & Smith, 2016). In the United States, much of the research compares council-manager versus mayor-council forms of governance (Svara, 2006; Urbaniak, 2014). As Urbaniak (2014) stated:

The mayor-council form is a miniature American presidency. The mayor is elected at large and is endowed with formal executive authority, including the appointment and

⁵ The position of chief administrative officer is synonymous with city manager, city administrator, clerk-administrator or other similar titles. I prefer city manager because it connotes a reference to the “manager movement” of the early 20th century, discussed in Chapter I. However, most legislation in Canada references the chief administrative officer as council’s lead appointed officer for the municipal corporation. Therefore, I have consistently used its abbreviation, to denote the position responsible for the overall management of the municipality.

dismissal of senior staff persons . . . Mayors in council-manager systems, on the other hand, are not chief executives. Although they may be elected directly, their formal duties are often limited to presiding at meetings (including coordinating the agenda) and carrying out various ceremonial functions. (p. 207)

At its periphery, the discussion includes the role of the CAO, in the mayor-council or council-manager model. Over the years in the United States, both governance models' significant attributes have tended to be adopted by each other's model. For example, the mayor-council model has adopted a chief manager position and the council-manager model has afforded, in practice, a more significant leadership role to the mayor (Cheong, Kim, Rhee, & Zhang, 2009).

In British Columbia, my primary geographic area of investigation, the only model of governance used is the council-manager model through the legislation of the Community Charter, the provincial statutory framework for local government (Buholzer, 2005).

To help separate the concepts "I have subdivided the following discussion of the general and historical context, into these five subsections:

- policy versus administration,
- particularism and clientelism, structural conflict,
- structural conflict in interpersonal relationships, and
- complementary relationship.

Policy versus administration. How policy making is separated from policy implementation is not a simple question to answer. This separation has come to be known as the *dichotomy* between policy and administration and has been the subject of many academic articles, and numerous books (e.g., Demir & Reddick, 2012; Dunn & Legge, 2001; Georgiou, 2014; Goodnow & Bates, 1919; Overeem, 2005; Rahman & Seldon, 2016; Rosenbloom, 2008; Svava, 1985, 1999, 2001, 2006, 2008; Wilson, 1887; Zhang, 2014). Georgiou (2014) has developed an atlas of the politics-administration dichotomy spanning 123 years of literature up to

2010. This primarily American research overview presents the relationships between 165 published papers and 497 citations in a network bibliography. Besides academic attention, practitioners have also been interested in the appropriate role for both the mayor and CAO (Hassett & Watson, 2002) to allow the full manifestation of democratic representation and the efficient and effective delivery of local government services.

Regardless of the model of local governance, the relationship in Canada between the mayor and CAO is the primary one affecting local governments' operations. Some governance models will grant more or less power to each of these positions (Urbaniak, 2014, p. 207) but all models have these two designated roles with notionally similar responsibilities.

The mayor is the premier elected official and is, therefore, responsible to the electorate to lead the council and the city. The CAO is the top appointed official, tasked to operate city services (sewer, water, roads etc.) and administer the policies established through the elected council's legislative authority. For example, the council may establish a parking bylaw, and then, the CAO manages the implementation and ongoing operation of that bylaw, theoretically without interference by the political arm of the municipality.

Particularism and clientelism. As noted above there is a substantial literature about the dichotomy between the democratic development of policy and administration of that same policy. Rosenbloom (2008) concluded that "it was then [1927 to 1936] that the dichotomy was broadened to include politics over public policy" (p. 60). I interpret his idea of the broadening of politics within the dichotomy over time to include particularism. "Particularism refers to the idea that different moral standards apply to different people. This view is inherently discriminatory" (Spicker, 1994, p. 2). Clientelism, as used by Hicken (2011) and Roniger (2004), is a similar concept to particularism. Particularism or clientelism in the local government context refers to

the legislative pandering to specific interests (usually commercial) at the expense of the public interest. At times, this has been characterized as political corruption, however these two terms (particularism and clientelism) have come into the academic literature as the new and softer characterization of corruption. In his or her job description, the CAO is tasked with minimizing these dysfunctional practices so as to assure the council that the delivery of services and administration of regulatory authorities is done without fear or favor (Montjoy & Watson, 1995).

Structural conflict. McGuigan and Popp (2016) stated:

In complex society's different systems . . . economic, governmental . . . must maintain specific relationships in order to sustain the society. These specific patterns of relationships form the *structure* of the society. . . Structural conflict is the result of *patterns* of social relationships that fails to satisfy the needs of at least one of the parties in the relationship. (pp. 218–219)

Structural conflict in the local government context refers to circumstances where structural roles serve opposite functions or at least appear to contradict each other even though the overall objectives may be in alignment. In McGuigan and Popp's (2016) definition, one party may not meet the other party's needs. For example, both the municipal auditor and the chief financial officer (CFO) have common overall goals concerning honest expenditure of public funds. However, the auditor, must review and at times disagree with the CFO and therefore be in structural conflict. I refer to this apparent tension between roles as *structural conflict*. If the apparent conflict is between levels of government legislative authority, I refer to that as *structural governance conflict* (Long, 2017). I would add that structural governance conflict is dynamic and is exacerbated from a structure that marginalizes certain groups. Many local governments believe structural governance conflict results from senior governments not updating their legislative frameworks, thereby hampering local governments' ability to deal with a more and more complex world.

Circumstances can arise where structural conflict pits the mayor, who may wish to particularize (and meet his or her political needs), against the neutral administration of council policy. The CAO is tasked by role definition and best practice to resist the mayor's attempts to particularize and thereby stay in alignment with the policy that council has enacted in its legitimate legislative process.

Structural conflict is also embedded within the establishment of public policy. The process of establishing public policy is complex and the environment in which it takes place includes the media, private citizens, political ideologies and their supporters, policy entrepreneurs, local government staff experts, and the rest of the decision makers on council, to name but a few. Structural conflict is embedded in the system of governance, organization of power, the sharing of resources, and distribution of influence, all manifest within the mayor-CAO relationship (McGuigan & Popp, 2016). It must be resolved as best the dyad can under their collective understanding of possible solutions. Sometimes solutions are obvious, but usually they are very complex involving different levels of government, no clear community support, ideological directions, and intended and unintended consequences. Therefore, the structural understanding of local government and the manner in which the mayor and the CAO are placed in this system represents the structural relationship and how it functions.

Structural conflict in interpersonal relationship. As presented earlier, a structural understanding is how local governments are commonly understood. Scholarly research focuses on the “what” and “how” of the system of local government (Brittain, 1951; Georgiou, 2014; Mouritzen & Svara, 2002; Svara, 1994; Tindal et al., 2016). In fact, much of the dichotomy research focuses on the structural aspects of local governments; what role each actor is

designated to play, how does the budget get passed, what policies direct the staff to complete these budget expenditures and all the issues that connect to this chain of events.

Given that the relationship of mayor and CAO is based primarily on structural responsibilities that lead to conflict—conflict that puts representatives of different identities, political and administrative, together in structured roles that requires finding solutions—a functional ability to reach positive conflict resolution is very important (Whitaker & De Hoog, 1991). This *prima facie* structural conflict is a product of the legislative structure of the roles of both the mayor and the CAO and is one of the major challenges within the mayor-CAO dyad to maintain a functional relationship.

Conflict means different things in different contexts. However, I rely on Burton's definition of conflict as resulting from,

a blockage of, or a frustration to the satisfiers of basic needs, due to social barriers and avoidable obstacles. It is a most insidious blocker of needs satisfiers because it is so often invisible, indiscernible, yet significant and unrelenting in its scope. (as cited in McGuigan & Popp, 2016, p. 226)

The following is an example of a structural conflict seen in local government. The annual budget is the responsibility of the CAO once it has been authorized by the mayor and council. During the year, a non-budgeted expenditure may be raised by the mayor as an action item for the council. The CAO has the authority to exchange one expenditure for another provided no new money is spent; however, the mayor is only one member of council, with only one vote on the budget. In my experience, these types of structural conflicts happen every day in local government. It is the relationship between the mayor and CAO that will likely determine the outcome of the budget reallocation and many principles, ideologies, identities, worldviews, legalities, advisability, do-ability, other long-term objectives, relationship climate and

expectations, and many other thoughts and actions past, present and future will have a bearing on the outcome.

The structure of local governments, the dichotomy between mayor and CAO, and regular managerial principles will be used to determine the appropriate outcomes for a local government's mayor-CAO dyad and as the organization as a whole. This is only a partial view of how the mayor-CAO relationship operates representing only that which can be seen and collectively explained. There remains the manner in which leadership approaches of both leaders: the mayor and CAO play a part in the interpersonal and structural aspects of the mayor-CAO relationship.

Complementary relationship. Scholarship, particularly regarding the development of the policy/administrative dichotomy, has witnessed a trajectory over time from a strict notion of orthodoxy to what Svara (1999b) called a “complementary relationship” (p. 694) between political and administrative roles. Svara stated:

In the final analysis, complementarity is a larger concept than dichotomy because it can encompass the separate and distinct roles that a complementary relationship entails and the neutrality and insulation that administrators require for accountability. Dichotomy cannot encompass the reciprocity, sharing, interchange, leadership, independence, and professional responsibility that are clearly present in complementarity. (p. 697)

Extensive research has generally accepted that some form of the complementary model is in practical use, with the dichotomy being seen as a background objective or an intellectual aid for understanding (Montjoy & Watson, 1995; Mouritzen & Svara, 2002; Nalbandian, 1991, 1999, 2005, 2006; Overeem, 2005; Siegel, 2010, 2015a; Stocker & Thompson-Fawcett, 2014; Svara, 1985, 1998, 2001, 2006a, 2006b, 2008; Waldo, 1948; Zhang, 2014; Zhang & Feiock, 2009).

Stocker and Thompson-Fawcett (2014) stated:

The Complementarity Model is based on the premise that elected representatives and bureaucrats join together in mutual pursuit of good governance, resulting in a high level of interaction and reciprocal influence. While the model recognizes distinct roles,

backgrounds and perspectives, it highlights the integration resulting from interdependence, reciprocal influence and overlapping functions of the groups. The interdependence comes from the need of politicians to have expertise within their institution and the need of bureaucrats to have their work legitimized and publicly supported. (p. 793)

Svara (1999b) generally defined this complementary relationship as the two groups (political and administrative) working together to maximize the public good. This concept manifests itself in the two roles of the mayor (policy and political) and of the CAO (administrative and management). Mayors will lead the whole organization through their strategic direction and manage council and the agenda for policy and political gain.

The Motivations of the Mayor and the CAO Compared

Within the complementary relationship, all politicians focus, at some point in their elected tenure, on the next election and what policies and politics will win that election. Politics is the act of determining winners and losers for a finite set of government resources or benefits. In the local government context, policy is the regulation of processes that manage the distribution of those resources or benefits without particularizing these policy outcomes (Rahman & Seldon, 2016). For example, a parking bylaw (legislative act) will be enacted on a particular street (allocation of benefit). The administration of that bylaw will be enforced fairly on everyone that breaches the bylaw without fear or favor. The bylaw defines the public interest through a democratic legislative act and this interest will need to be administered fairly for the legitimacy of the local government to be maintained.

The CAO, within this complementary relationship, will manage the delivery of the municipal services and help council and the mayor in policy development but remain out of the active process of politics. At times, the mayor and council will be in alignment in their politics; other times they may not be. When a political dis-alignment is present, the CAO will be

vulnerable to the mayor trying to use the CAO's administrative authority to particularize the delivery of services, for political advantage.

Continuing with the parking example, the council may have enacted a parking prohibition in an area where the mayor has supporters who do not want this prohibition. The mayor may attempt to influence the CAO to not enforce the parking prohibition. The CAO's motivation will be a careful balance between reducing the mayor's particularism and applying his or her professionalism in implementing the desires of council, who enacted the prohibition in the first place. If the conversation regarding what is "best for the local government" takes place between the mayor and CAO and a determination between both parties is arrived at, Svava (1999b) would consider the outcome part of a complementary relationship. Svava's research indicated that this complementary relationship appears to operate in the practical world. This complementary relationship between the political group (mayor and council) and the CAO, representing the administration, is the area of my research interest.

Dunn and Legge (2001) looked at three models of relationships between public administrators and elected officials: "orthodox politics-administration dichotomy, modified dichotomy and a partnership model" (p.401). They suggested that the orthodox politics-administration dichotomy provides "insulation . . . justified and increased administrator's strength by providing justification for their operating without political interference in policy implementation" (p. 405). The modified dichotomy, they further argued, indicates that the "dichotomy holds for politics and administration but not for policy and administration". (p. 405). And the third partnership model suggests a complementary relationship as argued by Svava (1999a, 1999b) and Nalbandian (1999). Jerome and Legge's survey of 858 local government managers found operationally that a mix of relationship models being supported.

One notable and relevant finding was “that the partnership model requires a high level of trust and a set of expectations on the part of the governing board members that encourage advocacy and discretion” (Jerome & Legge, 2002, p. 416).

Why Investigate the Mayor-CAO Relationship?

I narrowed my research interest to focus on the mayor as the leader of the elected group. He or she will naturally have a direct relationship with the CAO. It is this specific relationship that I have investigated. It would have been interesting to investigate other relationships involving elected councilors and the CAO, but that is not, in my view, where critical examination of the operations of local governments should focus. Further, the variables and differences in investigating mayor and council (usually at least seven individuals) makes the task of such investigation too overwhelming. The importance of understanding conflict within local government, is tantamount to uncovering the complementarity of the mayor-CAO relationship. Local government organizational interactions, many of which fall to the mayor, the CAO, and their relationship, are surrounded by conflict, particularly political conflict (allocation of scarce public resources). But these interactions also involve structural conflict, structural governance conflict, ideological conflict, and other types of clashes (McGuigan & Popp, 2016).

Structural Understanding of the Mayor-CAO Relationship

The detailed explanation of the external context in which the mayor-CAO relationship operates will help in understanding the structural relationship. I start with the legal structure, followed by the organization’s structural understanding of the two positions, and, finally, explain how each position is seen from outside of municipal governance.

History of legal structure and authority. Local governments operate much like all governments; they have a legislative group usually elected either by ward or at large, that pass

bylaws or ordinances that direct the societies that live within their boundaries. In Canada, the laws enacted by local governments must be within the authority delegated by provincial governments. Some western states in United States allow “home rule”⁶ but most local governments’ legislative authority is bounded by state legislatures. The significance of this legal structure is that it sets firm boundaries of jurisdiction with little opportunity to develop new solutions for new problems as they arise.

Most of the local government legislative frameworks were designed for and delegated to local governments, almost as an afterthought in the early 19th century. As both the United States and Canada built their nations from a colonial monarchy, little attention was paid to the establishment of legal authority for local governments. Colonization of the so-called New World was generally an extension of the British philosophy that resources should flow to the benefit of those in power, in their case the British crown. Therefore, the early Court of Quarter Sessions which had the power of granting authority of the Crown to collect monies for public works (tolls for river crossings, roadways etc.) were granted to local individuals. This form of patronizing by the Crown solved the early process of providing public goods that in other democratic contexts would be supplied by local governments. Early on, some communities were granted royal charters to make the system of governance more efficient, but the nation building period in both countries resulted in the federal and provincial or state constitutional drafters amassing all the powers of governing and usurping any independent authority for cities and towns that had previously organized themselves for collective benefit. After the American Revolution, local governments who had played a significant role in the colonies, were left out of state and federal constitution building (Herget, 1976).

⁶ Using the residual authority of unused federal or state authority.

To some who work in the system of local governance, the present disrespect shown by provincial governments towards local objectives and aspirations—which has a long history (Tindal et al., 2016)—generates structural governance conflict within local governments (Long, 2017). This causes troubling unintended consequences, and the thoughtless downloading of senior government responsibilities to the local level, without that jurisdiction getting the resources or tax revenues. The amassing of revenues and downloading of costs primarily benefits the provincial government and often pauperizes the municipalities.

Local government purposes. One of the principle purposes associated with local governments is legislative—establishing ordinances and bylaws that reflect the needs of the community and establishing the legal foundation for all activity undertaken by the particular local government. This legislative function is, however, only one part of the purpose of local governments.

The second purpose is the delivery of municipal services such as potable water, local roadways, collection and treatment of sewage, fire protection, police protection, plowing of snow and many other services. These services are usually called the *services to land* to differentiate them from *services to people* which are usually delivered by provincial and federal governments (Tindal et al., 2016).

A third purpose of a local government is to represent the community to the outside world. Sometimes this involves battling outside forces, like big businesses that want to develop mega projects in the municipality; other times it is attracting businesses to the location for the added jobs and economic activity. With local governments being governments with less structural power than other provincial and federal governments this representative role can be very important in the debate for societal equity and fairness (Tindal et al., 2016).

The mayor's governing responsibilities. The locally elected officials, usually called a council collectively, include a leader referred to as a mayor. The mayor is the chair of the council and, depending on the governance system, has no executive power.⁷ The mayor must lead the legislative body through challenged leadership and he or she only has one vote amongst councilors on all matters that need a corporate vote of the governing body. This is why the mayor's leadership is seen as challenged. The mayor also makes meaning for the community by symbolically presenting a vision or plans for the community that may be challenged by other councilors, the local media, and other groups and individuals.

The annual budget is the most important yearly policy document and is prepared and presented by staff to council for their approval. Once the budget has been reviewed, possibly amended, and approved by council, the implementation of expenditures are delegated, by bylaw,⁸ to the CAO to expend. There may be additional requirements for expenditures over a certain limit or that the municipal corporation is only to be bound by contract by an enactment of the legislative body. In British Columbia, two primary pieces of provincial legislation limit the operations of local governments. They are the Community Charter and Local Government Act. Both have hundreds of sections and, since adoption, have led to case law that clarifies and creates more specific interpretations of various sections. Staff is up to date on this case law and the principles behind the approximate interpretation of sections of these acts. It is this and other staff expertise that the mayor and council must rely upon for good governance.

The mayor, however, does assume some day-to-day responsibilities to lead the local government organization on matters of a political or policy nature. Once the council has passed laws the mayor is the traditional position that monitors the implementation of these laws to make

⁷ The power to hire and fire the CAO without reference to council, who usually is the CAO's employer.

⁸ This delegation is usually enabled itself by a "roles and responsibilities by-law naming the CAO.

sure they are in alignment with the collective wishes of the council. The responsibility for implementing these laws and policy matters is the CAO's, once council has enacted the policy or bylaw. These role responsibilities create the potential for a structural conflict as the CAO may understand and proceed to implement the bylaws in a manner inconsistent with the council's expectations.

The mayor's leadership also includes his or her symbolic activity that links to the meaning-making, strategic direction for the community and perceived⁹ oversight of the administration. Ceremonies such as traditional ribbon-cutting on new municipal works, receiving dignitaries, and communicating with the media to explain the actions of the municipality, make up most of the mayor's day. There are times during upheaval or emergency where the mayor is called on to make meaning for the community in a symbolic manner (Bolman & Deal, 2009).

CAO management responsibilities. The CAO is appointed by council to act as the chief manager of the municipal corporation. He or she is responsible for the budget expenditures, managing the legislative process of council, and supporting the mayor in his duties. This official will attend most council meetings and is technically referred to as the council's only employee. This statement is meant to highlight that councilors should not engage in managing any of the staff employed by the municipality, because they are likely attempting to unduly influence day-to-day activities. Under good governance the elected officials are not to engage the staff that report to the CAO because to do so would confuse their accountability. For example, if the mayor asks the director of Public Works to improve a particular roadway while the CAO has prioritized works on a different roadway, following a budget bylaw, the accountability of that

⁹ Technically, council itself oversees the CAO's performance, but the common perception of the public is that the mayor is the CAO's boss. In some cases, the mayor is the CAO's supervisor, signing off on their travel claims and vacation, and the like. However, council collectively is the CAO's employer's representative. In some "strong mayor" systems of governance the mayor does hire and fire the CAO.

director to the CAO has been violated; the director will be left conflicted as to which roadway is to be improved (Cuff, 2002).

Governance problems. The separation between roles of administrative staff and the politicians is an ongoing problem in many municipalities. It is perhaps more evident or problematic in small and medium size municipalities, where councilors and/or the mayor believe they were elected to operate the municipality as opposed to simply making policy. There are reasons why elected officials tend to not support the dichotomy between policy and administration. The dichotomy is seen as a restriction to particularization that serves their political interests. The popular understanding of “government” tends to rely on the private sector value of maximizing private (shareholder) benefits. There are many cultural differences between the two methods that society uses to deliver goods and services. Generally, so-called public goods are delivered to society through government organizations while private goods and services are delivered by the private sector. The clarity and purpose of these two delivery methodologies is not clear to the population at large (Mintzberg, 2015).

The traditional private sector service maxim that “the customer is always right” (Grandey, Dickter, & Sin, 2004) has been translated into particularism on the part of citizens demanding private benefits from their elected officials. Particularism enacted by elected officials, which is in fact partisan corruption, has led to many politicians instructing municipal staff to do something that is ill-advised. For example, an elected official I worked for instructed public works crews to drop public gravel on a friend’s driveway, and requested I cancel a parking ticket for an acquaintance of the mayor. These are common occurrences in my experience. Using the earlier example of roadway improvements, the CAO’s request to the director of Public Works is legally constituted because the expenditure is within the budget

bylaw; the mayor's request is illegitimate since the expenditure does not have a legal authority in the budget.

Or, to follow on another example used above, if the council enacted a parking restriction in the downtown area to keep traffic moving, the CAO would instruct the bylaw enforcement officer to implement the new regulation. The mayor could become involved when a merchant's customer receives a ticket and the merchant appeals to the mayor to cancel the ticket because implementation was too harsh or too effective. This particularistic behavior is commonplace and can put the mayor and CAO in conflict. Citizen complaints over parking tickets may lead to councilors directing bylaw enforcement staff to not issue tickets in a particular area or to council directing public works staff to take care of a particular nuisance in one neighborhood at the expense of ignoring another citizen's complaints.

The Complexity of the Structural Mayor-CAO Relationship

In recent times, the relationship between mayor and CAO has become both more complex and increasingly important to the smooth functioning of every local government. An example of this growing complexity is the challenge of dealing with chemical soil contaminants, including the difficulty in approving development of brownfield¹⁰ industrial sites, which have become much more complex (Contaminated Sites Regulations, 2016). Local governments manage these regulatory approvals through other governments, private consultants, and proponents concurrently, adding tremendous complexity to the process. Since industrial

¹⁰ A brownfield site is one that has been used for industrial use before being reused for another purpose. This is opposed to a greenfield site where the site is in its natural state before being developed. Canada's National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy defined brownfields as "abandoned, vacant, derelict or underutilized commercial and industrial properties where past actions have resulted in actual or perceived contamination and where there is an active potential for redevelopment" (as cited in BC Ministry of Environment, 2007, p. 1).

development can be important for the economic well-being of the community, these complexities must be managed by the mayor-CAO relationship with the mayor relying on the CAO's expertise. Complexity has been growing within the local government context putting increased stress on the mayor and the council, who will be expected by the public to understand these technical complexities.

As the issues of public policy and operational efficiency come together in this mayor-CAO relationship, the relationship also becomes the focus of local government structural complexity. The mayor-CAO relationship is the structural location where problems generated by this complexity are solved or managed. This structural complexity does not include the internal relationship dyadic meaning-making between the mayor and CAO, which is also highly complex and triggered by the issues that arise within this structural complexity.

The complexities facing the mayor-CAO relationship. Given the complexity of this topic, I will attempt to illustrate the nature of the variables that can arise in the mayor-CAO relationship. To clarify the terminology, I first define the mayor-CAO relationship's functionality and dysfunctionality, and then move through a real example that I have lived through numerous times.

Functionality within a relationship suggests that any item, issue, suggestion and/or statement made may lead to conflict. In turn, this can resolve in an agreement for action, with one side acquiescing to an outcome or action, or an agreement to disagree impairing effective response on the next issue or conflict faced. Consequently, dysfunctionality arises and grows; there is not a resetting of the emotional make-up of the relationship after the conflict, and negative emotions generated by the dispute have impact on the next conflict between mayor and

CAO. Over time, more and more residual negative emotions accumulate, and the relationship will cease to be at all functional.

Consider a common and realistic example: the mayor suggests to the CAO that a good friend of his or hers would be great for a job the municipality has advertised. The mayor recognizes that this suggestion is in violation of the orthodoxy of the relationship's formal dichotomy of policy and implementation but believes the greater good is accomplished because the municipality will have a new "stellar employee"—at least from the mayor's point of view. If the relationship between the mayor and CAO is based on the structural understanding of best practices (Cuff, 2002) then the CAO will reject this suggestion as nepotism (or the appearance of nepotism) and, therefore, the possible partisan corruption that could flow from this suggestion. If the level of mental complexity of both dyad members is instrumental (Kegan & Lahey, 2009), the fact that the CAO is the one with the delegated authority to hire employees based on merit should prevail: the matter can be settled based strictly on the dichotomy's rules.

Whether this action—which I refer to as structural conflict because the mayor's higher authority to enact good governance for the municipality is in conflict with the CAO's delegated authority to hire staff—will result in functionality or dysfunctionality depends on a number of factors. Using my definition of dysfunctionality, it will depend on the residual emotions held by either the CAO or the mayor depending on the decision and how it was arrived at.

Political/administrative relationship and complexity research. Many local government studies attempt to understand what actually transpires within the mayor/council and CAO/administration structural relationship. Much of this research presents the dichotomy and the complementary relationship as functioning automatically and in accordance with these structural imperatives (e.g., Demir & Reddick, 2012; Dunn & Legge, 2001; Montjoy & Watson,

1995; Mouritzen & Svara, 2002; Nalbandian, 1994, 1999, 2005, 2006; Overeem, 2005; Siegel, 1999, 2010, 2015; Stocker & Thompson-Fawcett, 2014; Svara, 1998, 1999a, 1999b, 2001, 2006a,b,c, 2008; Waldo, 1948; Zhang, 2014; Zhang & Feiock, 2009). However, I know experientially, based on many years working as a CAO, that this seamless positive functioning of council/mayor and CAO/administration relationship is often not what happens in practice but a recitation or espousal of the perception of “best practice” of council-CAO relationships (BC Local Government Association Governance Paper, 2015).

It could be that there are relationships within the municipal world that operate according to ideals that as Svara (1999a) and others suggest, however, this view is a structural or institutional view (Bolman & Deal, 2009), based on how things are reported. Because much of the research on which such generalizations are based involves questionnaires, self-reporting of behavior and extrapolating generalizable models from this, may hide many issues and circumstances where either member of these dyads is not behaving so ideally. Any mayor or CAO who understands what is expected institutionally and legally will likely answer questionnaires in alignment with that prescriptive, idealized view.

In addition, Svara’s (1999b) “complementarity model” leaves out the primary purpose of the dichotomy; limiting political corruption, which from my practitioner’s view, is still rampant in the system. Using Svara’s idealized model also assumes a functional relationship of CAO, mayor and council, high levels of competency in the CAO and mayor, and ongoing success with numerous other opportunities for relationship conflict that must be successfully managed.

Although these and other weaknesses are acknowledged within the complementarity model, Golembiewski and Gabris (1995) contend that there is still room in that model “for a better conceptualization of relationships” (p. 8). This opens the discussion to more than the

structural part of the relationship and suggests research on the relationship itself—the focus of my study—may have considerable value. Boynton and Wright (1971) reasoned that “the relationship between mayors and managers could be explained as “collaborative or team leadership” (p. 28) based on their study of 45 large cities. Other research on cooperative relationships between mayors and city managers (e.g., Cheong et al., 2009) concluded that when there is a positive relationship between the mayors and city managers, both parties achieve increased influence in policy making.

Some researchers have looked particularly at the CAO’s expected behavior in the mayor-CAO relationship. Overreen (2005) stated that CAOs should be guided by “the concept of political neutrality . . . what administrators should *not* be guided by [is] personal or party or other obligations and loyalties” (p. 315). This implies that the complementary relationship is more structural in nature and that the power within the relationship limits the actions of the CAO but not the mayor. Since conversations between the mayor and CAO are imbued with the political interests of the mayor, or possibly the CAO, “political neutrality” will be negotiated in the context of the working relationship.

Bolman and Deal (2009) explained an organization through four different leadership frames: structural, human resources, symbolic, and political. While their study is not specifically focused on local government it can provide useful insights. The structural frame explains the operational and governance structure—who does what, how they do it and how does it all link together—like a machine. The human resources frame sees the organization mainly in terms of the feelings and cognitive capabilities of the organization’s human capacity. The symbolic frame understands the organization through its symbols, ceremonies, drama, and rhetoric, and the information to help make meaning of the organization’s place in the world. Lastly, the political

frame explains organizations in terms of distribution of power and its benefits. This lens concerns itself with the conversation about who gets what benefits and who doesn't.

Bolman and Deal (2009) suggested, "Many views of leadership fail to recognize its relational and contextual nature and its distinction from power and position. We need to reframe leadership to move beyond the impasse created by oversimplified models" (p. 365). In the mayor-CAO relationship context, the two leaders bring together different structural, political, symbolic and human resources frames, to be understood in the collective outputs of their positions. Can this relationship, which is bounded by structural roles, be seen from the lens of human resources? Can the relationship (mayor-CAO) be seen as a leadership vehicle for both participants?

Although much research has focused on the dichotomy between policy making and policy implementation, the relationship between the mayor and CAO has been discussed much less and only as a symbolic representation of the two most important roles within local governments. The internal thought process of these two positions in making meaning for each member of the dyad (McGuigan & Popp, 2016), the organization's symbolic or meaning-making frame (Bolman & Deal, 2009), and the community, is effectively missing from the scholarship.

Interpersonal aspects within the mayor-CAO relationship. The mayor and CAO are the leaders of the process of finding solutions for dichotomy issues. Many times, the mayor acts for the policy group (the council) as the representative for the policy portion of the dichotomy. The CAO represents the administration portion of the dichotomy and will work with the mayor to find collaborative solutions to these structural governance conflicts implied by the dichotomy (Svara, 1998, 1999a, 1999b, 2001, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2008.) As Svara (1990) stated in his book, *Official Leadership in the City*,

It would be a mistake to analyze the council-manager relationship simply in power terms. The structural characteristics permit a cooperative relationship between the council and the manager in which responsive and compliant behavior of the manager is not compelled but rather a normal expression of the interpersonal dynamics of the form. (p. 159)

This acknowledgement of interpersonal dynamics suggests the importance of the internal workings of the relationship dyad, and the need for meaning-making and identity building in addition to the internal and external cultural reality, structural, institutional, symbolic and collective aspects to the relationship. There is much more than just the structural understanding of how things work based on structural research. The dichotomy, developed to combat political corruption, is not enough to explain how mayors and CAOs operate on a day-to day-basis.

Siegel's (2015a) case studies come closer than most other literature, to describing the real operational relationship between mayor and CAO. However, that work also lacks a broader analysis that can explain in a more holistic way the nature and performance of the mayor-CAO dyad. For example, consider a case study interview of one's CAO's behavior which concluded:

Every time she [the CAO] made a connection in a relationship, the people that she was connecting to always felt a positive aspect of it so that . . . even if they were on opposite sides of an issue, there was respect and . . . a furtherance of not only her objectives but of their objectives. (Siegel, 2015a, p. 132)

This information is not structural, but it does enlighten how this CAO maintains relationships and how this part of her identity helps construct her reality. Siegel's (2015a) case study was attempting to delineate the CAO leadership attributes necessary for success, because the subject was a successful CAO by all accounts. A qualitative case study can uncover a different understanding of the same circumstances understood through a different perspective. For example, if a mayor makes meaning in their world using a particular viewpoint, he or she may not see particularism as a partisan act or in any way corrupt, but the CAO may see the same acts as such and as detrimental to the public interest. This potential conflict of perspectives within the relationship needs to be understood and managed through an interpersonal

understanding of the many aspects of the mayor-CAO relationship dyad. Case studies, grounded theory approaches and other qualitative methodologies can be effective at uncovering these interpersonal aspects of any relationship.

Conclusions Regarding the Structural Aspects of the Mayor-CAO Relationship

I have presented an historical and contextual understanding of the local government world and explained some of the present and past challenges of particularism and structural conflict embedded in the mayor-CAO relationship. I have also presented scholarship on the dichotomy theory (e.g., Montjoy & Watson, 1995) and the subsequent complementarity relationship model (Svara, 2001). I then focused specifically on the structural understanding of the mayor-CAO relationship and the relationship's complexity. It is evident from the research on the political/administrative relationship complexity that a deep understanding of the interpersonal aspects of the mayor-CAO's relationship is absent. I turn now to the broader field of leadership studies and theory for more perspective on those deeper aspects.

Leadership Theory and the Mayor-CAO Relationship

Although there is much research and disagreement on what leadership is and how it is understood, there is general agreement that it is important within our society and our organizations (Northouse, 2005). Within the context of local government and the relationship of mayor-CAO, leadership is a construct and social phenomenon that will help in understanding of this dyad.

The mayor's leadership. Svara (1994) wrote *Facilitative Leadership in Local Government* describing how mayors of local governments achieve successful leadership. Until then, Svara, suggested, mayoral leadership was seen as the accumulation and exercise of power.

The “innovator” or “entrepreneur” were the prototypes within this power model of leadership. “This model emphasizes power as the essential means of achieving effective leadership” (p. 2).

The commonly used academic distinction is between “strong mayor” based on the mayor-council model and “weak mayor,” usually from the council-manager model. This terminology is not a judgment of any mayor’s personal attributes but reflects the editorial views of the academics who coined the terms in political science descriptions of different systems. At that time in history (1960–1980s) descriptions of mayors reflected the traits-based explanation of leadership theory (Stogdill, 1948). Traits or characteristics of leadership at that time, in turn, reflected the longstanding “great man” approach to leading and understanding leadership (Borgatta, Bales, & Couch, 1954). Pressman (1972) and Sparrow (1984) suggested that mayors saw power as their vehicle to become a “great man” (Northouse, 2016).

Separate case studies of mayors in two large cities—Oakland (Pressman, 1972) and San Diego (Sparrow, 1984)—suggested there needed to be a change in the council-manager form of governance to help these mayors become more powerful in terms of politics, policy making and administration. Pressman (1972) concluded that the manager may manipulate the council, pursue a personal or professional agenda, and take cues from influential outsiders, but not provide leadership responsive to elected officials or supportive of their exercise of democratic control.

This was in contrast to Boynton and Wright (1971) and Svara’s (1990) research that indicated the need for collaborative or team relationships between mayors and their managers. The difficulty in comparing this research to Canadian local governments is that the two cases of different American systems of governance (mayor-council and council-manager) are invariably used as a basis for comparative political science as opposed to research on the actual practice and improvement of leadership. These and other contextual issues may render the U.S. experience of

mayoral leadership difficult to apply to Canadian mayors. British Columbian mayors all operate under the council-manager model and therefore their leadership will tend towards the complementary operational relationship with the CAO, at least in principle.

In Canada, mayors such as Hazel McCallion in Mississauga, Jean Drapeau in Montreal, and Mel Lastman in Toronto, were all seen as strong mayors in terms of their personality and public fame—or notoriety—not in the language of structural models of governance (Urbaniak, 2009). The public perception of these mayors was that they displayed leadership that was trait-based, involved strong personalities or notable personas (Urbaniak, 2014). This is relevant to the mayor-CAO relationship because the power leadership model assumes a zero-sum conception of power—that is, if the mayor gains power through whatever means, the CAO will necessarily lose power. When this concept of interaction takes place between the mayor and CAO, conflict is likely. However, “when a cooperative relationship is present among officials, the mayor does not need to be an autonomous power wielder who activates and checks other officials” (Svara, 2002, pp. 4–5). There is a suggestion that the council-manager model of governance is more likely to result in a cooperative relationship between the mayor and CAO than is the mayor-council model (Svara, 1990, p. 211).

In a study of political leadership that includes the relevance of the larger context outside the local government organization, Morrell and Hartley (2006) stated: “Political leadership is a relatively understudied, though discrete and substantive area of interest . . . political leadership involves relationships of interdependence between leaders, the organization(s) and the context, separately defining ‘leader’ and ‘context’ can be limiting” (p. 494).

From a systems theory perspective (Shaw, 2002), the mayor’s political leadership is interconnected and causally connected to all that goes on in the local government. The mayor has

four generic roles: executive, scrutiny, regulatory, and advocacy (Stewart, 2003). These roles vary depending on context but are fundamentally the responsibility of the mayor and council. Leach and Wilson (2002) see it a bit differently; for them, the mayor's roles are primarily maintaining cohesion, developing strategic policy direction, external representation and task accomplishments. I would note that two of these roles—policy direction and task accomplishment—cannot be achieved without the CAO. Again, this points to the need for a workable relationship between the mayor-CAO to exercise these role responsibilities.

The mayor's indirect or notional leadership without direct power or authority (council-manager model) requires that he or she builds allegiances within council and within the appointed staff to actually further his or her political agendas. In spite of these efforts on building the mayor's leadership, it is often constantly under challenge by other elected officials, the media, and outside community members.

The symbolic frame—one of the four frames discussed earlier from Bolman and Deal (2009)—is the important frame for this indirect or notional leadership of the mayor. The mayor's political role involves being the chief meaning maker for the community, that is, explaining to the community why and how things happen. For example, during an emergency such as an earthquake, community members will look to their leaders to explain what these events mean for their lives. The effective mayor will communicate in simple but powerful symbols to help the citizens understand their circumstances. The mayor who fulfills this symbolic role will often be seen at the site of the disaster explaining that the emergency workers are helping those injured to assure the citizens that chaos has not overwhelmed the city's resources (Jong, 2017; Jong, Dückers, & Velden, 2016).

I believe the mayor's leadership is partly driven by external input from the constituents, council inputs, internal structural role responsibilities (including task and policy development responsibilities) and external representational communication. All of these roles and leadership is manifest through the mayor's relationships with each group. For example, the mayor's relationship with the council allows her or him to display and exercise leadership; the CAO's relationship delivers tasks, structural roles, and policy responsibilities; relationships with the community constituents make up the follower groups for the mayor's leadership; and external communications delivers leadership within these outside organizational relationships.

Thus, much research, both Canadian and from the United States, on mayoralty leadership indicates a structural grounding, focusing on leadership traits and behaviors. The nature of the mayor's relationships is linked to the relationship between the mayor and the groups and individuals that help him or her deliver their political agenda. Yet, research is missing on the specific leadership of the mayor and CAO relationship even though these two positions hold structural leadership positions in local governments. It should also be noted that most research is based in individual case studies of a few mayors. It is hard to draw strong conclusions or any generalizations regarding mayoral leadership given the small amount and specificity of the research data.

The CAO's leadership. From Bolman and Deal's (2009) structural frame, the CAO's role can be understood through his or her structural organizational role responsibilities (Broussine, 2000; Nalbandian, 1994, 1999). The contingency theory (Donaldson, 2001; Siegel, 2015b) and situational leadership (Graeff, 1983; McIntosh, 2009; Siegel, 2015b) can be used to explain CAO leadership. CAO leadership research has relied on the existing general leadership literature to describe CAO leadership. Siegel (2015a) and McIntosh (2009), for example, have

used situational leadership (Hersey, Blanchard, & Natemeyer, 1979) and contingency theory (Donaldson, 2001). A CAO is a manager and resembles any other manager in any organization. Therefore, the general leadership literature may explain a portion of CAO's leadership. However, Siegel (2015a), and McIntosh (2009) writing specifically about leadership of CAOs, converge on using contingency theory (Donaldson, 2001) and situational leadership (Hersey et al., 1969) to describe their leadership.

A situational approach to leadership attempts to match a particular leadership style to a specific external circumstances or internal strategic contingencies (Hersey & Blanchard, 1996). McIntosh (2009) attempted to do this for Canadian CAOs and found that CAOs use different leadership styles to match internal and external strategic circumstances.

In the contingency theory of organizations, leaders change their leadership approach to be in alignment with the organization's dominant paradigm. This alignment or fit is important for high performance (Donaldson, 2001). Therefore, it follows, according to McIntosh (2009), that CAOs will act as "shapeshifters" (Reed, 2014, p. 109) to align their personal leadership approach to the internal and external context they find themselves. For example, Siegel (2015a) suggests that a CAO must lead in three different directions; up to their councils and elected officials, down to their staff, and out to their community. I believe another dimension may be added to Siegel's framework. This dimension involves leading laterally with police departments and other agencies funded by municipal council but for which the CAO has no formal management authority. Practically, these areas of leadership require quite a different leadership style; therefore, the concept of contingency leadership is used by Siegel (2015a) and McIntosh (2009). Siegel (2015a) further suggests that:

The contingency theory of leadership holds that there is no "one best way" to lead; rather, leadership is situational. It is possible that a leader can be highly effective in one situation

but completely dysfunctional in another. The municipal CAO's situation puts a new wrinkle in the contingency theory of leadership. The usual prescription of contingency theory is that an organization must find the type of leader that fits its current needs, but the theory does not address the municipal CAO's need to take three different orientations at the same time. (p. 49)

McIntosh (2009) divides his situational leadership paradigm of CAO activity into strategy/policy and systems/services and discusses the subsequent leadership skills or competences that best fit each. Broussine (2000) has suggested that CAOs require five capacities to demonstrate leadership in the local government context. These capacities are needed for the ambiguities and paradoxes that are present in the local government environment. These leadership capacities, according to Broussine, include:

1. The capacity to work with the political dimension,
2. the capacity to lead, change, and develop the organization,
3. the capacity for maintaining personal perspective and self-knowledge;
4. the capacity to develop effective external relationships; and
5. the capacity for maintaining focus on strategic and long-term issues. (p. 502)

CAOs will adapt their leadership approach depending on the circumstances they are faced with (Siegel, 2015a). This may resemble playing chess in three dimensions with a four-frame board. Recognizing that in a CAO's contingency world, CAOs will represent many different leadership styles and strategies based on situations they find themselves in. Some will take an authentic approach (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) and deliver this through relational practice; others will lead through their capacities to deal with the political dimensions, organizational development, self-knowledge, external relationship development and maintaining a longer-term focus. This contextual approach implies contingencies and cultural issues will determine the CAO's leadership approaches. Jackson and Parry (2011) have suggested that leadership researchers who highlight organizational context have identified seven influential components:

The goals/purpose of the organization (e.g. its strategy and mission); the composition of its people (e.g. its demographics and its capabilities); the organization's core processes

(e.g., its technologies, policies and governance model); the state/condition of the organization (e.g. how successful it is); length of time (e.g., what stage is it at in its organizational lifecycle); its structure (e.g., size, hierarchy, degree of centralization and spatial distance); and finally, its culture/climate (e.g., its norms, values and ethics). (p. 69)

Authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005) and relational leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006) have been demonstrated by one experienced CAO in Siegel's (2015a) case study looking at CAO leadership. Leadership can be realized through relational practice where the CAO's authentic, relational, situational or contingency leadership is being demonstrated.

The development of a complete understanding of CAO leadership will likely require further research, but from existing limited scholarship the following trend is emerging: Contingency (Donaldson, 2001) and situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993) require CAO shape-shifting, in response to the inconstant context, with Broussine's (2000) five capacities of particular use.

The strategic contingencies and organizational contextual inputs (Jackson & Parry, 2011) will generate an ongoing maze of leadership opportunities for the CAO. More work is necessary to capture all of the different ways CAO's lead, however, this presents a start.

Bolman and Deal (2009) would see the CAO's leadership in the structural, human resources and internal symbolic and internal political frames, the mayor presents his or her leadership in the political frame, symbolic frame and less so in the structural frame. "Each of the frames highlight significant possibilities for leadership, but each is incomplete in capturing a holistic picture" (p. 365).

Bringing Leaders Together: Mayor-CAO Leadership

Given the thousands of books and articles on leadership, it is surprising that little has been written on the leadership that results when two leaders are brought together to accomplish, governance, operational outputs and community representation—as is the case in local

government. There is research on shared roles (Demir & Reddick, 2012) but not in a leadership context. There is literature on relational leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006) and other forms of relationship research; however, there is nothing that I have found specifically focused on the relationship itself between mayor and CAO. Concepts of co-leadership (Steinert, Goebel, & Rieger, 2006) and shared leadership (Lambert, 2002) have had a recent following in nursing and education, but nothing has been seen that applies these ideas to local government. There is much literature on the structural relationship of the roles of these two positions, but not with a leadership focus. As stated earlier, a small amount of literature exists on the mayor's leadership and even less on the CAO's leadership. But, to repeat, there is a lack of research on the mayor-CAO's collective leadership or how their relationship produces local government outputs.

There is an argument that outputs from the dichotomy (policy outputs or administration outputs) can be separated and attributed to each role (mayor and CAO) independently. Thereby, the corruption prevalent during the progressive era (Rosenbloom, 2008) could be stemmed. However, few academics believe this separateness within the orthodox dichotomy and its outputs happen in reality (Svara, 2001). At certain points in the history of local governments this may have been true. However today, in a council-manager model of governance, it is apparent from the research (Demir & Reddick, 2012; Dunn & Legge, 2001; Montjoy & Watson, 1995; Mouritzen & Svara, 2002; Nalbandian, 1994, 1999, 2005, 2006; Overeem, 2005; Siegel, 2010, 2015; Stocker & Thompson-Fawcett, 2014; Svara, 1998, 1999a,b, 2001, 2006, 2008; Waldo, 1948; Zhang, 2014; Zhang & Feiock, 2009) that the complementary relationship model (Svara, 2001) between the mayor-CAO actually produces the leadership outputs for local governments. Given that there seems to be no specific literature on mayor-CAO relational leadership, I now

investigate the relational leadership literature in a broader multi-disciplinary manner, largely relating to other settings than local government.

Relational Leadership

Rost (1993) argued that by focusing on the periphery and content aspects of leadership (i.e., scientific traits, contingencies, techniques and knowledge about organizations, human behavior, etc.) we still do not understand the nature of relational leadership. Cunliffe and Eriksen (2011), working on relational leadership argued for “conceptualizing leadership as embedded in the everyday relationally-responsive dialogical practices of leaders” (p. 1425).

Leader-Member-Exchange (LMX) theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) and leader-follower research had some direct applicability to investigating the mayor-CAO relationship. Other relationship research in the area of social psychology including attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969), relational cultural theory (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007), and relational theory (Lazarus, 1991), all shed light on the interpersonal motivations of the mayor-CAO relationship.

I discovered that a transactional relationship or leadership, as used in the LMX nomenclature (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), or a transformative or partnership relationship, can be two different ends of a scale of relationship leader styles. According to Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), definition of these two relationship dyads or leadership styles, transactional involves the hierarchical, economic based exchanges, whereas the transformative relationship involves a relationship that involves reciprocal growth and mutual development. McLean (2014) suggested that within this concept of relational leadership, the relationship dyad produces a separate entity “the relationship” that co-creates this collective leadership.

Within this leadership literature, others have studied the attributes or behaviors that support relational leadership. Substantial research has been done on trust and, specifically, on the

trust in leadership in organizations (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002), concluding that it is an important dimension or aspect of the mayor-CAO relationship. McAllister (1995) discussed two demonstrated constructs for trust: cognitive trust and affective trust. Both fit the structural and interpersonal dimensions of the mayor-CAO relationship. Trust within a relationship empirically points to improved organizational outputs on a number of dimensions of organizational life (McAllister, 1995).

These dimensions can be understood in terms of the earlier example I gave of the mayor wanting the CAO to hire a friend, I further analyze this example in leadership terms. In a transactional leadership relationship, as discussed by LMX scholars (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) the relationship resembles the interaction between a sex trade worker and his or her client; there is an exchange of activity for cash. There are no emotions invested by either party and both are satisfied with their part in the bargain. However, in the example of the mayor wanting a friend to be hired, if the transactional relationship is based on the structural dichotomy, the mayor-CAO outcome resulted in relationship leadership functionality. For purposes of discussion imagine that the job candidate the mayor requested is not hired by the CAO and, therefore, the mayor has negative emotions towards the CAO. Can we explore why the mayor may hold on to negative emotions?

Seeing this circumstance of dysfunctionality, we could question how this decision deals with the mayor's identity needs, worldview or meaning-making. I suggest that of the five identity needs described by Redekop (2002)—recognition, security, connectedness, action, and meaning-making—recognition, and meaning-making will be most significant. Recognition will be important because the mayor has brought forward what he believes is an excellent suggestion for the greater good of the municipality, but the CAO has not recognized this suggestion or

acknowledged the mayor's place of leadership within the municipality. Meaning-making is significant because the mayor may be testing the boundaries of his or her authority, the power within his or her leadership, and what "being the mayor really means".

If the ending, instead, had been that the CAO did hire the mayor's friend, the CAO would have to deal with his or her own identity needs, particularly the need for security, if he or she felt this individual had more influence over the mayor on administrative matters. Recognition would be important as an identity need because the CAO's role of hiring based on merit could be questioned; understanding what the mayor's ultimate intentions were, could lead to the CAO probing the meaning of this interference.

Exploring the manner in which the mayor-CAO relationship should function based on best practice and dichotomy's conventions, or the complementary relationship model, is probably why these orthodoxies do not have consistent outcomes and certainly do not explain the growing numbers of CAO terminations and dysfunctional mayor-CAO relationships. Investigating the internal processes of the mayor-CAO relationship may help to explain both the mayor and CAO's behavior as a part of their reaction to their identity needs and meaning-making because the intervention of an issue, action, suggestion or statement within the relationship dyad will cause or trigger identity construction and or meaning-making (Kegan, 1995; Redekop, 2002).

In light of these circumstances in the context of the mayor-CAO relationship, the transformative relational leadership platform (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) appears to be a useful platform to explain how it is that numerous mayor-CAO dyads actually stay functional. As noted earlier, this transactional/transformative dimension provides another way to understand the structural relationship differences between functional and dysfunctional leader relationships.

In contrast, if the relationship between the mayor and CAO is seen mainly as transactional, there is little opportunity to understand the many internal matters of meaning-making and identity needs. However, the transformational relationship (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) is designed for growth and mutual learning as is the relational cultural theory (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007). Both suggest learning and healing our emotions within a relationship, or as a result of a relationship, will allow the honest, intimate conversation that may explain the manner in which each member of the dyad constructs their meaning and their identity. A transformative relationship allows for the exploration of each person's worldviews and their individual nuances. This is a case where understanding each other's level of mental complexity—or even being aware of the notion that there are variable capacities for dealing with complexity (Kegan, 1995; Kegan & Lahey, 2009)—is possible and even encouraged so as to add to a mutual understanding of how each person constructs their meaning and identity, and, therefore, their leadership.

Within this social construct of a transformative leadership relationship, a conversation about what is in the best interest of the municipality can take place, regardless of structural realities. For example, the mayor could explain, within the relationship, the internal reasons why he or she wanted to have a close friend hired. They could further explain that they understood and cared what identity needs were uppermost for the CAO. If the mayor had built trust¹¹ within the dyad, and made commitments to the CAO that satisfied his or her worst case scenarios of

¹¹ Trust has been defined differentially depending on discipline. I have hesitated to use the word because it has so many different meanings. Generally, in a dyadic context trust relates to the absence of malfeasance towards the other party, but the question remains if this attribute is mutual and if so how is that measured? In the mayor-CAO dyadic context there can be a transactional relationship that does not assume trust, but it is implied if the relationship is to become transformative. Likewise, trust is assumed in a transformational relationship since this type of relationship is a safe place to be vulnerable. Given the variability and lack of agreement on meaning I have used the word sparingly.

political corruption and chain of command issues, and the mayor acknowledged that the friend would be treated the same as everyone else in both the merit hiring and after the hiring, then the CAO might more seriously and willingly consider the mayor's friend as a municipal employee. In this way, the dyad could remain functional even if the issue represented serious structural conflict. This is, in fact, a positive conflict outcome that would maintain a functional leadership relationship.

I believe that the relationship between mayor and CAO is dynamic and starts with a set of defined roles and responsibilities for each member of the dyad. These structural roles are defined externally but they are also interpreted internally by each, based on their past experiences, education, ideology, worldviews, role models within the local government fraternity and culture (Ashton et al., 2007). These structural responsibilities are then interpreted individually to make meaning and develop a new identity by each person in the dyad. Subsequently, a dyad develops a process for exchanging information and supplies a place for the testing of thoughts, ideas, preferences, worldviews, ideologies, feelings, and identities. From there the leadership of the dyad emerges.

A large part of the mayor-CAO dyad's work is embedded in structural conflict or emerges within a conflict inducing context. Therefore, how the mayor and CAO dyad engage in conflict, is considered one of the important variables of the relationship. Additionally, the level of mental complexity (Kegan & Lahey, 2009) and other evolutionary identity construction, meaning-making and reality forming factors will help or hinder the functionality of the relationship.

Many of these issues may significantly impact the functionality of the relationship. But this has not been tested in academic research. My study of the influences on relationship

functionality within the mayor-CAO dyad, uncovered approaches that ultimately improve the functionality.

Given that many mayor-CAO relationships are failing throughout North America, a better understanding of the reasons for this failure or an understanding of the reasons or attributes of a functional relationship is very important. Democracy at the local level is at stake given that the efficient and effective delivery of collective local services is a pillar to the operation of communities throughout North America, if not the world. Understanding what causes these relationships to fail or prosper will help tremendously to right the ship of local state.

Chapter Conclusion

I have presented the existing scholarship that focuses almost entirely on a positivist view of the nature of the mayor-CAO relationship. The literature of the dichotomy, structural investigations of local governments, and their actors' behavior, all focus on what these actors do, not *why* they behave in a particular way. This positivist literature involved the dichotomy between policy and administration, structural conflict and the context and history of local governments. Recognizing that the research gap in the literature was mainly missing consideration of interpersonal dynamics, I considered the leadership literature, including mayor leadership literature, CAO leadership literature, and numerous relational leadership theories, to explore what is known and could be of help in researching the interpersonal aspects of a relationship.

This is not to suggest that my research has been primarily aimed at testing others' theories for validity; they are only investigated to determine what the research world can generally transfer to our local government context of structural and interpersonal aspects of the

relationship between the mayor and CAO. My empirical research has examined “what all is going on here” within the mayor-CAO dyad.

Given that I have chosen a grounded theory approach for my research methodology this literature review may be frowned on in certain grounded theory circles because of the possible generation of bias, a criticism I addressed at the beginning of this chapter. However, given that present scholarship focuses almost entirely on the mechanistic structural understanding of the mayor-CAO relationship, this grounded theory study went deeper, and looked at the everyday realities of the CAO’s working relationships with mayors, what might be called the “inner life” of the dyad.

In the next chapter I explain the rationale and nature of the academic methodology that best discovers the answers to the research questions.

Chapter III: Methodology

This chapter presents the methodological approach for the research agenda, problem and question. In it, I explain why I chose the qualitative approach of grounded theory as the methodology for probing the relationship between mayors and CAOs. Subsequently, this chapter provides an overview of how I used this approach.

My research focused on relationships between mayors and CAOs in local governments in North America, particularly Canada. The mayor is the primary elected official with a democratic mandate and the CAO is the chief appointed officer, who operates local governments. To narrow this research agenda, I first look at the structural relationships—including the statutory roles of each actor in the mayor-CAO dyad—and then examine the relevance of leadership theory to the interpersonal dimensions of the relationship.

Quantitative and Qualitative Research Compared

Embedded within the epistemology of scientific learning, the study of methods allows a somewhat standardized way of understanding research. For example, quantitative research methods use standards of inferential statistics to convey research understandings of a phenomenon. This positivist approach uses and tests hypotheses for correlation, analyzing relationships among variables to understand data collected that answer research questions and obtain the supposed truth regarding a phenomenon.

Qualitative research on the other hand focuses the researcher on understanding, at a detailed level, what is going on within the subject under inquiry. Much of the research involving human subjects and their behavior uses qualitative methods to understand the internal (the unseen internal construction of reality and meaning) and external (that which can be observed) meaning of a subject.

From new studies on the human brain (Sylwester, 1995) it became apparent that how we see the world and interpret our visual data sets is different for each person based on their experiences since birth. Sylwester stated: “Learning becomes a delicate but powerful dialogue between genetics and the environment: the experience of our species from eons past interacts with the experiences we have during our lifetime” (p. 21). Given that we all have different experiences since birth we may then interpret what we see differently. In this way of thinking, we construct our own reality through what we see and subsequently interpret (Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006). This would also be true of all sensory data. For example, at one time or another, we all have had to interpret sounds at night without the aid of visual cues, likely making mistakes in interpretation particularly when we are young.

Sensory data will also take on a different meaning based on the context in which we are situated. For example, on the ocean I have visualized watercraft at quite some distance only to find, when I was closer, this “data” was just floating logs, mistaken because of my poor context reference. My brain tries very hard to interpret this visual data and fails to construct the actual truth because of a lack of the appropriate context references. The realization that our realities are constructed by our experiences and our contexts has led to a new understanding of scientific epistemology and subsequently a new set of methodological approaches generally referred to as qualitative research. Generally, Creswell (2009) argued, “Qualitative procedures demonstrate a different approach to scholarly inquiry than methods of quantitative research. Qualitative inquiry employs different philosophical assumptions; strategies of inquiry; and methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation (p. 173).

As a later construct in academic research, qualitative research is searching for the understanding of the human experience as opposed to predicting outcomes or the relationship

between variables. Sometimes in qualitative research, theories are tested against new studies to determine the explanatory abilities of these theories. Whereas quantitative methods usually collect data from multiple circumstances and investigate the relationships between these circumstances and variables, qualitative research focuses on in-depth understanding of the perceptions of individuals embedded in the social phenomenon of interest.

Qualitative research is designed to better understand a phenomenon with no particular interest in generalizing the data to predict behavior in a larger population as in quantitative research. The value of qualitative research is its transferability to other cases and similar circumstances where information from one study is transferable to another. If truth is socially constructed then differing contexts will influence what is considered the truth and it may not be the same in different cases (Wergin, 2018, p. 6.).

The methodology for this study uses a number of research assumptions, questions and tensions that interact to help explain the focus of the research agenda and subsequently the research question. Recognizing that qualitative research approach is better suited to my research agenda, I have chosen a grounded theory approach as a qualitative methodology, this choice will be discussed in much greater detail later in this chapter.

Research Rigor

Wergin (2018) suggested three criteria for meaningful dissertation research. The research should be rigorous, credible, and useful. Rigorous means the absence (as much as possible) of abling or disabling bias. Gadamer (1975/1989) described *abling bias* as bias researchers bring to the research when they base observations on their prior experience and meaning-making regarding the research. *Disabling bias* is the bias brought to the research as “the unwanted influence of personal or professional interests in the outcome” (Wergin, 2018, p. 5). These biases

are controlled by steps that check the trustworthiness of statements used to confirm interview data collected. Credibility can be confirmed by sharing the collected interview data with other colleagues or with experts in the field to confirm the believability of the data on its face value.

I hope the conclusions and insights of this scholarship will resonate within other contexts. As Wergin (2018) suggested, the utility criterion of research should be its transferability to other similar contexts. For example, learning from some mayor-CAO relationships that one studies, should transfer to other broadly similar mayor-CAO relationships. The transferability may also be to any relationship with structural roles that are ambiguous and sometimes difficult to understand. This scholarship should also be transferable to other political/administrative relationships.

As a practitioner becoming a scholar, I have focused on the “scholarship of practice” (Wergin, 2018, p. 6), using existing theories, concepts, and scholarship to better understand the relationship between the mayor and CAO. I started with the research question: what aspects of the relationship between the mayor and the CAO are necessary to create and maintain a functional relationship? In other words, what factors lead to a functional relationship between the mayor and CAO, resulting in positive local government outcomes? These questions do not lend themselves to quantitative methodology because the nature of any relationship involves the amalgam of thousands of experiences of each person within the dyad and their separate meaning-making and their fluid and evolutionary identity construction.

Research Purpose

The analysis of the mayor-CAO relationship is not intended to be generalizable, but to be transferable to other relationships. I understand that each relationship is individual in its complexity, context, evolution, and performance. It can be transactional or transformative, for

example, using Burns' (1978) well-known distinction. In a constructionist worldview, truth is socially constructed and therefore not intended to be used to predict the future, or suggest a knowable set of behaviors (Wergin, 2018). The research in this dissertation was used to understand the mayor-CAO dyad and developed a number of theoretical propositions on how this relationship operates, uncovering the key concepts that help this relationship function. This study was not intended to prove anything definitive in the positivist sense. It does, however, aim to be systematic, demonstrate research rigor, and contribute to understanding of the mayor-CAO relationship.

Given all the realities of the mayor-CAO relationship, my research area lends itself to the qualitative aspects of academic research. I did this work to gain understanding of what is happening within a relationship with structural and interpersonal dimensions. As a CAO, I also believe the functionality of the mayor-CAO relationship can and does have a tremendous influence on the operations of local governments and subsequently local democracy. Therefore, I determined the appropriate qualitative methodology to capture the phenomena of the mayor-CAO relationship functionality is the qualitative methodology known as a grounded theory approach.

Choosing Grounded Theory

I considered using auto-ethnography (e.g., Chang, 2016) to present my personal story, but such studies are not inductive, only narrative. As interesting as my story might be in my opinion, one case example will not attract the credibility necessary for my fellow CAOs to take the research seriously. My colleagues have all heard many stories of both functional and dysfunctional mayor-CAO relationships. Grounded theory methodology adds multiple

perspectives and detailed analysis of social processes that are experienced by those engaged in the relationship.

I also considered using qualitative case studies (Yin, 2013) as a methodology. This approach has a substantial academic following and has been used in local government research to consider a number of issues, including CAO leadership. Case studies have been reported in the literature (Siegel, 2015a) and provide a foundation of understanding the interpersonal functionality in the relationship. However, the direct purposeful collection of interview data across a number of individuals in the mayor or CAO role, has the advantage of assessing different perspectives within different local contexts. This expansion of view allows for a more comprehensive analysis that ultimately resulted in numerous theoretical propositions that can be further tested through a generalizable methodological approach.

After rejecting auto-ethnography and case studies I concluded that using grounded theory would be the “methodological fit” (Edmondson & McManus, 2007, p. 1115) for extending and deepening the empirical literature on this topic.

The nature of grounded theory. Grounded theory generates testable concepts from data that is original and observable. Key attributes of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1978) are as follows:

- Fit and relevance—how well the data conceptualize to the areas of theory development;
- Workability—the integration of discovered areas of interest or concepts feeding into the developing theory;

- Modifiability—refers to ensuring all the concepts discovered are integrated into the theory by a constant comparison process. A developing theory can be modified when new data are discovered.

There are two major approaches to grounded theory; one is Glaser and Strauss's original objectivist or classic method (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) that uses a post-positivist perspective as the researcher attempts to be separate and detached from the research process and the interpretation of the data. Holloway and Schwartz (2018) explained the next iteration; "The second generation of grounded theory methodologists has evolved the method from a post positivist stance (Glaser, 1978) to a constructivist (Charmaz, 2006) and post-modern (Clarke, 2005) approach to meaning-making" (p. 499).

According to Charmaz (2006), as a later less structured process, recent grounded theory research needs to use a constructivist perspective; she suggested that all interviews are co-constructed between the interviewer and the interviewee. The research data are seen as socially constructed and influenced by both the researcher and the subjects of the research. Holloway and Schwartz (2017) presented the further evolution of the method, describing Clarke (2005) as having taken a post-modern approach to grounded theory.

She moves beyond the understanding of co-construction of data and reflexivity to recognizing the importance of macro and meso political, social, and cultural forces that impact the micro-social processes of the human experience. She provides us with a series of maps that draw attention to those human and nonhuman factors in phenomena that may be salient to explaining and interpreting the events. (p. 499)

Grounded theory suggests that the researcher proceed to investigate a phenomenon by asking the question, "what all is going on here?" The researcher's curiosity with respect to

phenomena that are not understood fuel the passion to understand a particular set of events, leading to a foreshadowing question.¹²

Positionality. Grounded theory as a constructionist approach requires the researcher to be aware of their worldview and particular biases that may influence the collection and interpretation of the research data. For example, I have puzzled about my own ability to maintain some relationships with mayors where others have failed. My terminations that resulted from these failed relationships were hurtful for me and my family; therefore, this leads to both cognitive and affective questioning. My use of grounded theory as a method, recognizes this possible bias in the research and uses a transparent presentation of my motivations, history and meaning-making to alert the reader to these possible biased outcomes. My extensive experience in the local government arena suggests an affective interpretation of CAO marginalization at the hands of elected officials. Throughout Chapters I and II, I have made every effort to share my views on the mayor-CAO relationship and to be transparent about my own experiences in the role of CAO. Nonetheless, I must be vigilant in striving for objectivity, making sure that the work reflects as accurately as possible the participants'—not my—meaning. Ultimately, the reader will judge whether I have successfully used the tools of grounded theory to protect the meaning of participants and suspended my own partiality.

According to some grounded theorists (Glaser, 1978) even a research question can be seen as premature. Here, I have done the literature review and crafted a foreshadowed research question, therefore, I present a number of theoretical proposals “grounded in the experiences of

¹² A foreshadowing question is one that comes to mind at the beginning of casual conversations with colleagues, cohort members and researchers regarding the matters that the researcher is passionate about (Holloway & Schwartz, 2017).

both CAOs and mayors” that emerged and lent itself to a better understanding of the social processes embedded within the relationship.

Plan for the Study

In this section I present my study in more detail including the choice of a purposeful sample, how interviewing was undertaken, analysis, including coding, the constant comparative method, coding team, coding software and other methodological issues.

For a pragmatic practitioner, grounded theory is a methodology that allows the interviewing of mayors and CAOs within an area that is both known to me and geographically close. As a practicing CAO, I have access to mayors and CAOs for the in-depth interviewing necessary to collect enough data that determined numerous constructs and theoretical propositions of how and why the relationship dyad between mayor and CAO functions.

The choice of interviewees can have an inherent bias; however, interviewing both mayors and CAOs separately balanced the two perspectives (political and administrative) and resulted in a broader view of the mayor-CAO dyad. This interview data resulted in meaningful constructs and theoretical propositions.

Purposeful sample. The data collection interviews were of mayors and, separately, CAOs. I interviewed some of these officers of British Columbia’s medium-sized municipalities with populations of approximately 5,000 to 100,000 persons with a few interviewees from both larger and smaller communities. The interviewees were chosen by requesting their participation, starting in the communities most accessible to me. There are very few municipalities in British Columbia that are over 100,000 in population; therefore, this size is a pragmatic sample. This purposeful sample reflects my interest in local municipalities in British Columbia, the province in which I live and work. Thus, I had reasonable accessibility to participants and have a more

homogeneous population from which to draw conclusions. There is no reason to believe that this purposeful sample is not generally representative of most working mayors and CAOs in British Columbia. I chose this range of population because it excluded the small villages where relationships may be long term before either the mayor or the CAO were in their roles. I am looking for relationships that were built on the platform of local government roles as opposed to a relationship from settings such as a past sport team affiliation or a high school commonality.

I did not use pairs of mayors and CAOs who are presently working together, because these relationship pairs will continue working together after the interview. An honest interview with both parties present could cause embarrassment or worse—long term relationship damage. Although there may be some loss of understanding around the comparison of perceptions of an ongoing relationship, I believe that the risk of damaging or impacting an existing relationship is of greater significance. Furthermore, because many of the mayors and CAOs had a number of past working relationships on which to draw their experiences, I gained from the richness of comparison across individuals' experiences. For example, I have worked directly with 13 mayors and most mayors I know have had numerous CAOs work with them.

Ten mayors were interviewed. My research assistant transcribed the interviews using INVivo transcription after we used actual transcribers on the first three interviews. Eleven CAOs were interviewed, two had technical problems and failed to record, and one was redone and one interviewee requested to be removed from the interview process, which I did. That left 9 CAO interviews transcribed. The demographics are as follows (no one was asked their age):

Mayors: 8 males 2 females, total collective period of being an elected official 113 years (average 11.3 years), total collective period of acting as Mayor 58 years (average 5.8

years), total collective number of CAOs in a working relationship, 36 (average 3.6 relationships).

CAOs: eight males, one female, total collective period working in local government 270 years (average 30 years), total collective years as a CAO 135 years (average 15.0 years), total collective Mayoralty relationships 41 (average 4.5 relationships).

In addition, I have 34 years working in local governments, 25 years as CAO, and have worked with 13 mayors.

Coding. The interviews were coded by the researcher and confirmed by a coding team that has experience in grounded theory coding. This team of two independently coded the first three to five transcripts, followed by a coding discussion. Then, along with another coder (a research consultant), I coded the remaining transcripts independently until the axial coding was completed. I then had one other member of the coding team check my assumptions and interpretations as the final steps of developing primary dimensions and explanatory matrices.

Using INVivo software, the interview data was categorized, first under issues, and on common themes embedded in the issues, with the underlying social phenomena based on these themes and concepts. This is an iterative process referred to as *constant comparison* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I used the interview data in a continuous feedback loop where the data are tested using fit and relevance, workability and modifiability as criteria in an attempt to discern themes, constructs and theories. After 12 each of mayors and CAOs, the interviews started to mainly repeat the same issues and themes, reaching what grounded theorists call *saturation*.¹³

Axial coding, dimensions, and explanatory matrix. As the coding and interviewing proceeds, themes in the data emerge through *axial coding*, which means “coding the dimensions

¹³ For a discussion of the use (and misuse) of the concept of saturation, see Bowen (2008).

of a category” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 19). Common experiences, attitudes or expressions were placed under a single heading so that ultimately, as more data are accumulated, these themes can be placed in a framework of social behavior; in my work, for example, lines of, “dichotomy between policy and administration,” suggesting relationship realities, meanings, or stories when speaking about that theory. These frameworks started to codify the relationship among the more dominant aspects of the data. The data was then arranged into dimensions for further analysis and understanding. Schatzman (1991) suggested,

Dimensionality thus calls for an inquiry into its parts, attributes, interconnections, context, processes, and implications . . . Dimensionality was conceived as a property and variety of human thinking that turn language towards interrogative and analytic processes in the face of cognitive problems with phenomena, that is, when recognition and recall fail to provide situationally sufficient understanding. (p. 310)

Holloway and Schwartz (2018) explained that the “explanatory matrix [is where the] dimensions are organized to explain the relationship and action of context, conditions, social processes, and impact” (p. 515). Schatzman (1991) described,

[the] matrix as providing a structure of terms that totally frame and give direction or methodological perspective to analysis, particularly in the context of explanation. . . . one needs at least one perspective to select items for the story, create their relative silence, and sequence them. Thus “from” perspective, “in” context, “under” conditions, specified actions, “with” consequences, frame the story in terms of the explanatory logic embedded in the [matrix]. (p. 308)

The data was constantly rethought from different perspectives using these tools for analysis and as more data from more interviews were completed.

Theoretical sampling. Often, once the issues, themes, and underlying social phenomena have been suggested and, if a subset of the purposeful sample indicates a separate phenomenon is worthy of investigating, a second group of invited interviewees called “the theoretical sample” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45) are interviewed. However, in my research there was no indication of the need for a theoretical sample.

Holloway and Schwartz (2018) suggested, “Theoretical sampling is a distinct process in GTM [grounded theory method] and promotes rich detailing and saturation of conceptual understanding” (p. 518). Charmaz (2006) suggested that theoretical sampling means “the researcher seeks people, events, or information to eliminate and define the boundaries and relevance of the categories” (p. 189). In my research interviews issues and new perspectives on the dichotomy theory, and other issues reached saturation.

Memoing. Grounded theory methodology requires the researcher to write memos to themselves to capture their thoughts and observations as the interview data are being collected or at other times when ideas or prejudices come to mind. This process serves a number of purposes. Contemporaneous note-taking is more accurate and helps the mind remember, in that moment, something that can be blurred later by the multi-tasking necessary when doing interviews. The researcher can be conscious of their privileged interpretation of the interview data and note that privilege in the memos. Memoing, which I used sparingly, also allowed me to iterate between the memo and original data as a mnemonic to help remember. In this way, I added to the research data and was mindful of my privileged perspective resulting from the act of being the researcher and my natural positionality. My natural writing style included memoing within the body of the dissertation rather than it being separate. I reread the interviews many times to make sure the correct interpretation was captured within the body of the writing. As an older student, I used my memory of the interview data rather than relying on the computer program.

Building a theory. From the explanatory matrix, the concepts that emerged began the foundation for the development of a theory. As Schatzman (1991) explained, “attributes, interconnections, contexts, processes, and implications” (p. 309) make up the process of theory development. I developed a heuristic of the mayor-CAO relationship model of the social

processes that described the interconnectedness, processes, nuances and implications that came together in a whole understanding of the mayor-CAO relationship phenomena.

Visual modelling. I developed a visual heuristic model to help explain the findings. This use of a visual aid is very helpful in understanding and portraying complex processes and allows another way to present the research data and conclusions. Many of us are visual learners and therefore this helped the dissertation to be more accessible.

Reporting out. I reported out to the participants and colleagues along with other thought leaders in the local government arena. I hope to present my research findings to the International City Manager's Association, the Canadian Association of Municipal Administration, the Local Government Managers Association of British Columbia and other similar associations. I have discovered in this study that such presentations add knowledge about some ways of improving the present state of mayor's and CAO's relationships. I have presented my research findings to small groups of municipal employees and students to aid in confirming the findings or finding any gaps in the research. Some minor gaps were suggested, and I closed them with further research and included them in the dissertation if applicable.

Limitations of the Methodology

There are limitations to this methodology. The data are difficult and time-consuming to gather. The data involved perceptions and opinions of the interviewees. Additionally, the test by which a researcher believes he or she has obtained all the data available is the limiting concept of saturation (Bowen, 2008). A theory or set of constructs emerged and was developed and tested against existing data and tested with the next set of interviews in an iterative process until saturation was reached and no new concepts or explanations were offered. There are obvious

limitations to using saturation to determine whether you have captured all the necessary data to develop a theory.

Also, some interviewees may have misrepresented issues to skew the data to follow a certain ideological approach. Or, the interviewees with the most unusual perspectives may be reluctant to share their perceptions for a number of reasons. Since the interviewees are self-selected¹⁴ they may self-select to not be included and therefore the researcher may miss data that may be important in making sense of the findings.

Ethical Considerations

Interviewing mayors and CAOs has inherent risks. Within the research, possible disclosure of feelings and observations may not be well received by the other member of the mayor-CAO dyad. This may cause relationship difficulty. Many mayor-CAO relations are ongoing and represent the livelihood for the CAO and harmonious relations for the mayor. For this reason, I chose not to interview matched pairs of mayors and CAOs. I interviewed a mayor or CAO from a particular local government, but not both. As an example of why these matched pairs have ethical considerations, a CAO may wish to comment on the benefits of using the orthodox dichotomy, whereas the mayor may see that conversation in a negative light and perceive such support as restricting the mayor's ability to satisfy his or her political desires. Therefore, I chose to forgo matched pair investigation.

Chapter III Conclusion

Having considered other methods of qualitative research investigation such as auto-ethnography and case studies, I concluded that grounded theory was best for this research.

¹⁴ Self-selected means the interviewees will choose to be part of this research, once the researcher requests by email interviewees to come forward. The interviewee criteria will include a number of relationships with mayor, if a CAO, and a number of CAOs, if a mayor. The rigor of grounded theory as a methodology will minimize the bias inherent in this method and self-selecting interviewees.

The method lends itself to the investigation of relationships between mayors and CAOs, especially in terms of the breadth of perspective from a number of mayors and CAOs. Although other methods have been used to investigate the structural relationship between these two local government actors, little research has investigated the experience of the relationship between these two actors, which includes both structural and interpersonal components.

Grounded theory allowed the gathering of data from the direct sources of local government activity. The local government actors interviewed were ones with first-hand experiences in their roles as mayors and CAOs therefore are well qualified and shared rich and detailed experiences of the operational and interpersonal aspects of this relationship. I believe this research is relevant, useful and transferable to other similar circumstances to help improve the relationship landscape of mayors and CAOs.

Chapter IV: Findings

All of us have had relationships with others, it is the social nature of our species. These relationships are varied and serve different purposes. For example, purposes such as child rearing, gathering food, being part of a team etc. all adding to our experience as members of a community. Some relationships have clear purposes, expected behaviors and rewards.

In this research, I have chosen a very complex relationship that has ambiguous outputs, many purposes that are subject to personal interpretation, and goals that are holistic and at times difficult to understand. Because the Mayor-CAO relationship has been failing regularly with substantial human and financial costs to many local government communities (McIntosh, 2009), I was particularly interested in those elements that may contribute to a productive and functional relationship. This research was designed to uncover aspects of the relationship of a mayor-CAO dyad within local governments throughout British Columbia, who encourages a functional relationship. The stories of each participant represented many mayor-CAO relationships because all participants had numerous relationships with either CAOs (if Mayors) or mayors (if CAOs). The 10 mayor's interviews represented relationships with 36 CAOs and the nine CAOs represented 41 mayoralty relationships. I have my own stories from 13 relationships with mayors. This chapter analyzes 19 interviews of approximately one hour in duration, divided almost equally between mayors and CAOs (10 mayors and 9 CAOs), the coded data have been analyzed to understand "What is happening here" (Glaser, 1978, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

The interviews were randomly selected based on the population criteria (municipalities having a population of 5,000 to 100,000). Interviewees were self-selected on a first come first interviewed basis. I was careful not to interview all the mayors then all the CAOs, interviewees were interviewed based on their random availability, who ended up being interviewed were a

few in each category at a time. This helped me conceptualize the perspectives of the two different types of interviewees, mayors or CAOs, because I didn't jump back and forth as often. To better understand the complexity of the mayor-CAO relationship I have deconstructed the relationship into its discernible constituent parts by looking at the primary and core dimensions of the relationship in accordance with constructivist Grounded Theory Methodology.

This chapter is organized to present the primary and core dimensions of the grounded theory dimensional analysis (Schatzman, 1991). The dimensions represent the social processes that the mayors and CAOs perceived as a part of their ongoing relationship with each other. These processes are also conceptualized within the context of explanatory matrix and thus the context, conditions, processes and impacts or consequences and their particular relationship to the social processes is conceptualized. (Bowers & Schatzman, 2009; Kools, McCarthy, Durham, & Robrecht 1996; Schatzman, 1991). Context for this research is common for all the explanatory matrix's primary and core dimensions. The reason for this common context is that the mayor-CAO relationship dyad is bounded by its own context and operates internally to establish its own dyadic outputs. Context is therefore common to all dimensions within the relationship. Excerpts from the lived stories of mayors/CAO are used to illustrate the meaning of dimensions and to describe the complex and nuanced behavioral patterns that emerge in these relationships. The temporality or growth of the relationship is also presented as four stages of the mayor-CAO relationship found within the data.

The Dimensional Analysis

As Schatzman (1991) stated:

Dimensionality thus calls for an inquiry into its parts, attributes, interconnections, context, processes and implications . . . However, context is not a "wastebasket" category or structure for all observation. Rather it is a repository of analytical useful dimensions, initially retained as "background" and later selectively assigned as conditions, processes

and consequences. In short, through providing boundaries or parameters, context (along with perspective) controls inclusiveness and relevance. Finally, the concept of context is further complicated . . . by its generally having abstract, conceptual and physical properties". (p. 312)

By using dimensionality within the data I construct the explanatory scenarios (Schatzman, 1991) from these dimensions and ultimately find within these many stories the complex social phenomenon (Kools et al.,1996) embedded within these dyadic relationships. Context encompasses the mayor-CAO relationship and will have a tremendous impact on the relationship because the outputs of this specific relationship is representative (in a democratic manner –since the mayor is elected) of the context that the relationship is surrounded by. Therefore, I begin by presenting the context in which the mayor-CAO relationship is bounded.

Context: the pool in which all Mayors and CAOs swim. Local governments are where mayors and CAOs practice their roles. They are bounded by both a physical location (municipal boundary) and a conceptual community (statutory authority) from which both positions operate. The dichotomy between the role of policy development (mayor's role) and the role of administration of these policies (CAO's role) is found repeatedly within the data. To be clear, the mayor-CAO dyadic relationship is hierarchal, the CAO reports notionally to the mayor (as the council's representative). The Council is the CAO's employer of record, however, by practice the CAO reports on a day-to-day basis to the mayor. This is the central conversation when participants are asked to tell the stories of their relationships with each other. For example, one mayor stated:

I guess my role, or how I view my role, is if it's political in nature then I want to be apprised and updated and things like that. But if it's internal in terms of internal workplans or hiring's and firings or whatever else, the day-to-day operations, that's not something I play a role in. Now again, because we have a good relationship, the city manager may ask me, hey I'm thinking of doing x, what do you think? But at the end of the day that's his decision to make, as long as, again, it's helping council achieve that vision. But if it's politically based, you know, it's something where a decision of council is required, then yeah, he does a very good job of keeping me updated in terms of hey

here's where things are in the process, here's what the outcome is looking like. Just wanted to let you know. (participant M3)¹⁵

Another mayor's perspective was:

I think people need to understand in a government organization that there are two parts. There is the policy where the elected board or council makes policy. And there is the operational side of things. And when you understand governance properly, while there may be friction between the two sides, the reality is that the council has that authority to either change the policy or find a new CAO. (participant M5)

Yet another mayor stated:

It's where very well intended people, and some not so well intended, who may have strong business backgrounds or strong personalities, see that things may not be operating in a manner that maybe appear to be the most efficient. So want to get involved and want to get in and want to fix it and don't understand the difference of the role of being in governance versus management or operational. (participant M1)

The conversation that takes place between mayors and CAOs regularly involves who is in control of the municipal corporations. The mayor's perspective obviously leans towards the political interests of the community, where the CAO's will lean towards administrative efficiency and a lack of political interference in the operations of municipal services to minimize political corruption. The mayor-CAO dyad manages the resolution of these issues of control and what control means.

The world outside local governments, where the rules for mayor-CAO dyads and many resources are controlled, is important to the mayor-CAO dyad. The dyad will spend many hours managing these outside forces. The elected council, the group that the mayor and CAO answer to, is also an important parameter to understand. For example, from the data, in regard to influence for Council: "In our legislative structure, our only boss is council and council is the only determinant of the public interest. I don't believe that for a minute. But that's what the legislation says" (participant C1).

¹⁵ Mayors are signified by participant M1 to M10; CAOs are signified by C1 to C10

The global world of democracies, nation states, and other civic governments can also cast a distinct influence on the context and culture of local governments. A CAO recounted this situation to exemplify global influence:

It's funny I saw, the guy who is the Chief of Staff for Trump right now, I saw the interview with him, Marine Four Star General and he's saying they were pushing him at his congressional reviews about people before him. Well he comes from a different culture where he says you know I trust the people that were there before me as marine officers would do the right thing. I don't know their context, I don't know their information, I have a presumption that they did their best with what they were faced with. (participant C1)

Numerous comments within the data suggest that many mayors confuse leadership with the process of governance. The lack of leadership in championing the public interest and capitulating to populism is also understood as a broader contextual issue. Statements by two CAOs illustrate this.

And the Mayor does have a . . . I mean in British Columbia legislation the Mayor can have a very powerful and a very influential position but it's not by virtue of their position as Mayor as much as it's by virtue of their leadership capabilities and what they do as Mayor. The title alone has virtually no power. (participant C1)

[the Mayor] was an ardent populist, so it was really hard to pick out what her actual principles were, because they seemed to be whatever somebody needed that day. Umm, so I just started the relationship by trying to build trust, and she very quickly caught on that in many ways—the only way she was going to get anything done was through me, because the rest of the council trusted me. (participant C3)

The context within all dimensions are the same. Interviews focused on the relationships between the mayors and CAOs and, therefore, the context presented here did not come up during the interviews. However, assumed issues about “who does what and how” did come up repeatedly, usually through the discussion of the policy and administration's dichotomy—or who is in control.

Primary Dimensions

The primary dimensions identified in the study are negotiating, strategizing, boundary setting, power sharing and harmonizing. The core dimension is shapeshifting. I will first present the five primary dimensions and their supporting data, and finish with discussing the core dimension and its supporting data.

I identified five primary dimensions from the data. These concepts represent the issues that embody the actions within the mayor-CAO dyad that help me understand what is going on within the relationship. Primary dimensions of: negotiating, strategizing, boundary setting, power sharing and harmonizing are all used on the day-to-day basis within the mayor-CAO dyad.

Explanatory matrices frame the structure of the dimensions. Primary dimensions are presented within explanatory matrices that show the dimensional data within tables outlining the context in which these activities take place; the conditions under which the activity takes place; the processes under which they take place and finally the impacts and consequences resulting from these activities.

Primary dimension: Negotiating. The primary dimension (negotiating) is presented in Table 4.1. Note that the context is an overarching situational setting and is the same for the all of the primary and core dimensions.

Table 4.1

Explanatory Matrix for the Primary Dimension: Negotiating

Context	Conditions	Processes	Impacts & Consequences
Statutory rules	Personalities	Open dialogue	Collective outcome
Traditional dichotomy	Common beliefs	Trade-offs	Trust
Changing perspectives	Compromising	Compromising	Respect
Understanding roles	Self-awareness	Respect	Different roles

Conditions. For the dyad to negotiate (in its broadest meaning), the members must recognize the personalities each dyad member possesses. This makes up one of the conditions the dyad must operate within. One CAO described personality in this way:

They [the Mayor] have a personality type to want to have control. . . . I tried different techniques, demonstrating you have a job that you want to get done, I'll get it done. And so let me earn the license to do my job and your trust and respect that I will get it done without you going behind my back, blindsiding me, spying on me, micro auditing. (participant C2)

I think that personality exists on a continuum. So I don't mean that one is either this type or that type I think there's degrees. So it's situational. How open is this person going to be or how fixed are they in their ways? Are they trainable? Can you affect the behaviour through discussion and through gaining trust? And if they're not then you're kind of SOL. In my opinion it's best to go on somewhere else and let somebody else deal with it and over time things will either sort out or they won't. But you don't have to deal with that. You can look after your own mental health, and physical health. (participant C2)

Some negotiations were difficult with the dyad member's negotiating style being quite binary. One mayor presented the matter of their personality this way:

And I feel, you know, a bit betrayed or burned because here I have opened myself up or shared things about me when maybe I, looking back now, shouldn't have. But that's just my nature. I go into a relationship fully trusting somebody because I believe in the good in people and I'm not going to let one or two bad experiences change how I interact with people generally. (participant M3)

This mayor suggested the ability to negotiate came from their common beliefs:

I think part of it has to do with the fact that we maybe are aligned in terms of how we see the world I guess, I mean not perfectly of course but we share a lot of the same values, same ideals, same goals for our community. So, I think that automatically puts you in a good position when you are working alongside someone who wants the same things that you do. (participant, M3)

This mayor believed insubordination was the way of negotiating:

You would have staff preparing reports that were not consistent with the direction that council is given and kept going down the path that they wanted to go down versus the path that had been determined by motion and adoption of council. (participant M5)

Still, another mayor discussed negotiating in this way:

And if there is differences of opinion as to what that is or how you want to get there then you need to sit down and understand each other's perspective and rationale and at times you give in at times you compromise and other times your perspective prevails.
(participant M1)

That last quote from participant M1 also presents other conditions for understanding the other CAO dyad member's; self-awareness, ability to compromise, and open dialogue. It also acknowledges the required need for a collective outcome resulting from the dyad.

Processes. The processes taking place within the mayor-CAO dyad will support the dimension of negotiating. Using the same M1 example:

And if there are differences of opinion as to what that is or how you want to get there then you need to sit down and understand each other's perspective and rationale and at times you give in at times you compromise. (participant M1)

This quote presents the process of having an open dialogue, compromising, trading off or “giving in” obviously within the objective of finding alternatives that are acceptable to both parties—this is presented within the broader concept of managing conflict as a true negotiation between respected dyad members.

Impacts and consequences. The forgoing quotes are about the need for trust and respect within the dyad. See participant C2 first quote in this section where they suggest a need for such attributes to have a workable relationship. Acknowledgement of the need for successful collective outcomes and the recognition by participants M3 and M1 of the different roles each member of the dyad plays in delivering these outcomes.

Primary Dimension: Strategizing. The primary dimension of (strategizing) is presented within the explanatory matrix in Table 4.2

Table 4.2

Explanatory Matrix for the Primary Dimension: Strategizing

Context	Conditions	Processes	Impacts & Consequences
Statutory rules	Long & medium challenges	Open dialogue	Building respect
Traditional dichotomy	Changing environment	Balanced perspective	Trust
Changing perspectives	Roles debate	Alignment with vision	Being valued
Understanding roles	Option discussions	Bending rules	Moving forward

Throughout the day-to-day operations of a municipality many issues and outcomes must be thought about at the strategic level. Like many dimensions within the Mayor-CAO relationship the act of strategizing is not referred to in that manner and must be implied from the data. An example is seen in setting up the budget in such a way that they had a significant rainy day fund.

And if the department heads wanted access to it, well, first of all the department heads didn't even know what their budgets were until it was presented to council and then if they needed any more money for any of the projects, they had to go to him. So another control aspect. (participant M5)

This excerpt explains how a CAO was being strategic without the mayor's involvement. This one-sided strategic act didn't go well for the CAO but it does point out the desire on the part of the other (mayor) dyad member's interest in the strategic realm of the mayor-CAO dyad.

One way or the other we have to move forward and we can either have six meetings to move forward on one. Like, how am I going to know that I trust you? I think over the years the city manager and I have done, and we know each other well enough that we can put something in front of the other person that it's not going to be taken personally. And we can share our thoughts and feelings and it's like I said it's not take it personally. We see it from a professional perspective. If we disagree with the person, you know what, you disagree. And it's OK. It's a healthy relationship. (participant M5).

In this excerpt, the mayor-CAO relationship itself is being spoken about in a strategic manner.

Conditions. The conditions that encourage strategizing are those that speak to long and medium challenges for the municipality and the dyad. Again, the condition from the quote above “One way or another we have to move forward” acknowledges that municipality must move and change and that that condition must be satisfied by the mayor-CAO dyad. The dyad has an ongoing conversation about the roles each member plays within collective outcomes. For example:

[There are] times where the mayor has to back down, and there are times where the CAO will accommodate, and recognize that for what it is and that sometimes you got to maybe back off on some things because the CAO has done the same some other times and there's a balance. (participant M1)

Processes. The process of this dimension will also include strategic discussions regarding how outcomes balance perspectives, roles discussion, and bending the dichotomies rules.

Impacts and Consequences. The consequence of this strategic dimension involves the building of respect, trust, open communications, the increased feeling of being valued and moving the collective forward.

These attributes are illustrated in these quotes:

I think it's incredibly important [Mayor-CAO relationship] because again it goes back to other things we've spoken about in terms of values and ideals and vision and the more you get to know somebody the more you understand perhaps why they make the decisions they do. You know, their background, you know, all of those things so I think it is an important part of the dynamic in understanding. By getting to know me, he [CAO] understands why I make the decisions I do and vice versa, I understand. You know. Yeah. I just think it's beneficial. (participant M3)

Interviewer: I'm hearing in here is that it's a fairly wide-open field for creativity for both of you in kind of choosing your own path and being able, as long as the test is that you're moving the collective forward, is that fair?

Correct, absolutely. Yes. And being mindful that yes, at the end of the day, while this is all well and good, the organization comes first. (participant M3)

Everybody's different but you've got to find a way to communicate in an effective manner. And that's what builds a trust for the CAO to come in here and feel like, I got his, I'm going to support him at Council, on the street in our community, because I want, our best day is when he's successful because that means our community is going to be successful. (participant M4)

The strategic dimension inter-weaves within the mayor-CAO relationship with regularity as the relationship sets agendas, strategies and accomplishes outcomes. This dimension helps give meaning and direction to the complex problems the dyad sets out to accomplish.

Primary dimension: Boundary setting. The primary dimension of (boundary setting) is presented within the explanatory matrix in the Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Explanatory Matrix for the Primary Dimension: Boundary Setting

Context	Conditions	Processes	Impacts & Consequences
Statutory rules	Personalities	Preferred behavior	Building respect
Traditional dichotomy	Ambiguous roles	Dichotomy's debate	Building trust
Changing perspectives	Roles debate	Boundary exchanges	Member capacity
Understanding roles	Complex outcomes		Focus on certain role

Relationships have boundaries. For example, try and give your dog new dog food without first starving them. Now you know what boundary setting is. The establishment of a pattern of behavior that represents the area in which there is meaningful engagement and an area where there is not. In this context, the data shows the boundary of a “personal” and “professional” relationship within the Mayor-CAO relationship. For example:

You know, I'm taking my mayor to [a football game] in December. He's never been. So I'm taking him. He deserves to go. And yes, I've been over to his [house] for dinner. . . . but when you have a good mayor, relish it and it's a small town. In small towns, it's impossible not to be involved. It's impossible. (participant C7)

Conditions. Conditions involve personalities, ambiguous roles, political culture, complex outcomes and traditional rules-based roles. Statements from two CAOs and a mayor illustrate this.

When there's a time when there's a major change over in senior staff [political culture], a lot of people leave because it's, it's uncertain and it's toxic, and it's unsettling and so people leave. (participant C7)

I probably was thrust (at that time) into a situation that a city manager really doesn't want to y'know [ambiguous roles]. Moving far into the political realm, to be the deal maker, to be the let's get—y'know—let's keep council working, right. (participant C3)

I go into a relationship fully trusting somebody because I believe in the good in people and I'm not going to let one or two bad experiences change how I interact with people generally. (participant M3)

Processes. Boundary setting processes involve the dyad member's conversations about behaviors they prefer and don't prefer. Most of these conversations involve the dichotomy's division of labor. For example,

I guess my role, or how I view my role, is if it's political in nature then I want to be apprised and updated and things like that. But if it's internal in terms of internal work plans or hiring's and firings or whatever else, the day-to-day operations, that's not something I play a role in. Now again, because we have a good relationship, the city manager may ask me, "hey I'm thinking of doing x, what do you think?" But at the end of the day that's his decision to make, as long as, again, it's helping council achieve that vision. But if it's politically based, you know, it's something where a decision of council is required, then yeah, he does a very good job of keeping me updated in terms of hey here's where things are in the process, here's what the outcome is looking like. Just wanted to let you know. (participant M3)

Here, the mayor (M3) suggested that the CAO would ask the question that illustrates the process of boundary setting, as the CAO sets a boundary saying, "I am thinking of doing x; what do you think?"

Impacts and consequences. The impacts and consequences of boundary setting involve a better understanding of dyad member's capacities, focusing on certain roles, and building trust within the dyad. For example,

We seldom have to touch base anymore [with the CAO] but it's really just, this is what we're doing, do you think that fits, is that what council's intentions were and I say yes that was or no, I don't think so, we should bring that back. (participant M5)

No council members don't hire their daughter and send them off to North Korea. Those kinds of issues where you need to be really firm because council members come from a business environment, they come from different cultures, they don't necessarily fully understand public sector values. So one of our jobs is to keep them out of trouble. (participant C1)

On the relationship, one of the Mayors who I had a long term relationship with, did tell me in some candour that he was kind of embarrassed about how he had started [as Mayor] and learned lots of things. (participant C1)

When I say "trust" it could be I trust that when you say you're going to do something you're going to do it. That when we have made a commitment to the public we are going to follow through on that, that you've made a commitment to other council members to communicate with them. Those are all kind of relationship issues but there's a negative side to trust too. Negative in the, I expect them to understand that if they are going to do something that might be unethical or improper or illegal, they can trust me to be absolutely like no. And vice versa. (participant C1)

Primary Dimension: Power Sharing. The primary dimension of (power sharing) is presented in this explanatory matrix in Table 4.4

Table 4.4

Explanatory Matrix for the Primary Dimension: Power Sharing

Context	Conditions	Processes	Impacts & Consequences
Statutory rules	Personalities	Appropriate roles	Respect
Traditional dichotomy	Respectful relationship	Regular communication	Trust
Changing perspectives	Need for effective	Maintaining respect	Team feeling
Understanding roles	Collective outcomes		Less rules/role

Conditions. Conditions include collective outcomes, personalities of dyad members, need for effective seamless outcomes, respectful relationship. The following quote speaks to what

happens if the collective outcomes are not a condition and the personality of the mayor does not allow the honest exchange of role responsibilities such that the outcomes are seamless.

(The) Mayor would have hands in all of those [department head matters] operations and not infrequently without telling the CAO and in some cases with the CAO not ever finding out or even being purposely left out of the discussion. (participant C2)

The quote explains what takes place when power is not shared. This suggests conflict as the outcome of the working relationship with this mayor. Yet the same CAO also stated:

There's also respect for the person as a person, as a professional, treating people respectfully and competence in human beings is also important. It comes down to a good respectful relationship to the person as well as to the roles. (participant C2)

Processes. Processes include regular communications, maintaining a respectful relationship and a clear confirmation of the appropriate roles of each dyad member. Several comments illustrate aspects of the processes for both mayor and CAO.

And it really comes down to one thing that our current mantra is no surprises. And no surprises is no surprises from staff to council and no surprises from council to staff. (participant M1)

There's also respect for the person as a person, as a professional, treating people respectfully and competence in human beings is also important. It comes down to a good respectful relationship to the person as well as to the roles. (participant C2)

I have certain duties as the CAO, the Mayor has certain duties and roles and functions as a governor as a chair person. And our legislation is a little bit messed up, it's a lot messed up, it's not very clear and it can allow for misunderstandings in terms of what the roles are in terms of duties, authorities. (participant C2)

What I found made the relationships work in both instances is complete open line of communication. Our offices are side by side, so we just have easy and regular access to each other. (participant M2)

Impacts and consequence. Impacts and consequences include respect for each other within the dyad, team feeling within the dyad, and less rule-/roles-based outcomes. Several comments made in interviews pertinent to impacts and consequences include:

I thought that I could gain trust and license to be the CAO in the role by getting the job done. And for a couple years it was very successful. (participant C2)

There's also respect for the person as a person, as a professional, treating people respectfully and competence in human beings is also important. It comes down to a good respectful relationship to the person as well as to the roles. (participant C2)

It's on how to be the best professional you can be like that's in the work context but in another way it's how to be a better human. Because I mean this stuff [executive coaching] doesn't only affect you and work. It also affects you and your other relationships. (participant C5)

Primary dimension: Harmonizing. The primary dimension of harmonizing is presented within the explanatory matrix in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

Explanatory Matrix for the Primary Dimension: Harmonizing

Context	Conditions	Processes	Impacts & Consequences
Statutory rules	Not all top priorities	Human understanding	Relational knowledge
Traditional dichotomy	Day-to-day decisions	Collective outputs	Increasing trust
Changing perspectives	Common beliefs	Informal opportunities	Working together
Understanding roles			Successful outcomes

Conditions. The conditions for harmonizing include the following: recognizing not all issues are top priority, that day-to-day decisions must be made, and that outcomes can come from within common beliefs. Several of the comments in interviews were illustrative of issues about conditions.

The Mayor-CAO relationship is] very strong, and I think part of it has to do with the fact that we maybe are aligned in terms of how we see the world I guess, I mean not perfectly of course but we share a lot of the same values, same ideals, same goals for our community. So, I think that automatically puts you in a good position when you are working alongside someone who wants the same things that you do. (participant C2)

The day-to-day operations, that's not something I play a role in. Now again, because we have a good relationship, the city manager may ask me, hey I'm thinking of doing x, what do you think? But at the end of the day that's his decision to make, as long as, again, it's helping council achieve that vision. (participant C2)

Processes. The processes include conversations regarding human understanding within the dyad, acknowledgement of the collective outcomes from the dyad, looking for opportunities for informal interpersonal interaction.

There's also respect [within the dyad] for the person as a person, as a professional, treating people respectfully and competence in human beings is also important. It comes down to a good respectful relationship to the person as well as to the roles. (participant C2)

You know, I'm taking my mayor to [to a football game] in December. He's never been. So, I'm taking him. He deserves to go. And yes, I've been over to his [house] for dinner. (participant C7)

So let's [Mayor and CAO] find a way to maneuver so that you get what you want I'm able to get what I want and together we're able to achieve the objectives of the organization. (participant M1)

Yeah maybe a couple of instances where we're just like Oh my God this day is crazy where we're just kind of relating as two humans. (participant M2)

Impacts and consequences. Impacts and consequences include increased non-work interpersonal knowledge, a feeling of working together, increased trust, acknowledging successful outcomes. Relevant comments from the interviews include:

There can be some flexibility over roles that there is a commensurate amount or increasing respect. It's a two-way thing, it's a relationship. (participant C2)

So, in the central leadership Mayor relationship with myself, I might provide them information or they might provide me information and we would have a good working relationship in terms of a correct understanding of roles and responsibilities. (participant C1)

Yeah, I think mutually supportive is a key part of the relationship. (participant M2)

Core Dimension: Shapeshifting. The final core dimension is shapeshifting and is presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Explanatory Matrix for the Core Dimension: Shapeshifting

Context	Conditions	Processes	Impacts & Consequences
Statutory rules	Self-awareness	Regular contact	Relational
Traditional dichotomy	Ability to see larger perspectives	Understanding conflict	
Changing perspectives	Common beliefs	Seeing flexibility as positive	Working together
Understanding roles			Successful outcomes

This core dimension is the one most commonly recognized in the interviews whereby the mayor-CAO relationship can best be understood. I borrow a word from the metaphysical realm—shapeshifting. It describes a social process and ability to adapt to a new context, attitudes or perspectives. Shapeshifting suggests the capacity to change or modify one’s attitude, perception, or point of view to better align with another person’s. This term has been used by McIntosh (2009) to describe a reordering of structural realities, for example as after the election of a new mayor requiring a change in the CAO’s behavior to adapt to the new reality. My use of the term, shapeshifting, is somewhat different. I use it to describe, how members of a dyad adapt and change to maintain relationship functionality.

In this usage, the mayor-CAO dyads’ attitude, perspective, or point of view is changed or modified without holding any residual affective resistance to an earlier perspective. Another way of explaining shapeshifting is to recognize a lack of emotional festering as a result of changing one’s perspective. For example, a CAO described shapeshifts without an affective residual:

Now she was the mayor, and she was the mayor with the minority, it was really just her, and so it was an interesting. So I approached her and said—‘cause I knew I needed to build trust with the mayor and that that was really important—‘Here I’ll rip it up [his CAO contract] If I can’t be the city manager with confidence, I can’t do the job.’
(participant C3)

One of the common social processes that is used within this hierarchical relationship data are shapeshifting. The data shows numerous circumstances that requires such a capacity. Primary relationship dimensions such as strategizing, or boundary setting can be the prelude to shapeshifting or shapeshifting may require the primary dimension of harmonizing before the shapeshifting capacity is engaged. A highly flexible process, shapeshifting, is used to allow what neuroscientists refer to as homeostatic state of emotional wellbeing (Cozolino, 2014). Mezirow's (1997) work on transformative learning and disorienting dilemmas, where adults learn by changing their perspective resulting from a disorienting dilemma, is another way of understanding shapeshifting.

Either member of the mayor-CAO dyad can use this core dimension to change the dialogue, collective outcome or collective point of view of the dyad. For example, within the interviews the word "shapeshifting" was not used; but the actual social process of shapeshifting is familiar and used, though not by that name, by both CAOs and mayors. For example, the shapeshifting as I use the term here is just about changing attitude within new relationships to deal a changed future, such as after an election (a common moment for CAOs to shapeshift within their new relationships). One CAO stated:

But the Mayor was an ardent populist, so it was really hard to pick out what her actual principles were, because they seemed to be whatever somebody needed that day. So I just started the relationship by trying to build trust, and she very quickly caught on that in many ways –the only way she was going to get anything done was through me, because the rest of the council trusted me, so the Mayor was kind of . . . the Mayor needed me in some sense. And I was always fair with her, always extremely respectful. And every day, just trying to build that trust. It was very difficult, I probably was thrust (at that time) into a situation that a city manager *really* doesn't want to be in, you know. Moving far into the political realm, to be the deal maker, to be the let's keep council working, right. If it breaks down into petty fights, we're not going to get *anything* done. (participant C3)

There is a substantial amount of information in this statement. The CAO is attempting to build trust with their new mayor. The CAO is also changing their perspective on the Mayor as a

populist given that the new mayor will be there for at least four years. The CAO shapeshifts towards finding a way of seeing the new mayor as worthy of respect.

In this narrative, the CAO is moving into uncharted territory and acknowledges that he is crossing the line into the policy realm with some trepidation. He has shapeshifted towards being more politically active. He does acknowledge, however, that it is for the greater good of the corporation and ultimately in the best interest of the new mayor. In this way, he is rationalizing his earlier perspective of not being involved in active politics and thereby reducing the angst of his earlier perspective. A clear example of shapeshifting. Another is seen in this comment by a CAO.

I found it [the relationship with the Mayor] incredibly frustrating, but persevered, persevered, I just found ways to make it work, and worked really hard to shield that council from staff, I mean I was ruthless about them not talking to my staff because often I needed the time to go back, with my favorite line was “That’s a really interesting idea your worship but maybe you could help me by trying to explain the problem you’re trying to solve; that [the mayor’s idea] may be the solution, but there might be other ones as well”—and that would buy me some time to try to figure out why I can’t do that, like we can’t do that. So anyways, tough relationship, but still good friends—not friends but she respected me, and I think we had shared a lot of laughs. I would say I tried very hard never to say no and be a bureaucrat, I always tried to find ways so that she saw things were moving or didn’t move but sort of understands. I did a lot of work explaining and taking a step back and trying to buy some time and that kind of thing. (participant C2)

Shapeshifting is not a binary process as can be seen above, but a process of changing our attitudes, perspectives and points of view in a way that lets go of our earlier perceptions and opens our worlds to other ways of seeing the same circumstances.

There are issues that do not require shapeshifting because they are not important enough to generate an affective concern with the other member of the dyad. For example, which hotel the mayor and CAO would be staying in when travelling for business is not likely important enough to require shapeshifting.

Other issues that speak to the manner in which a person defines themselves would not likely be available for shapeshifting. For example, someone's ethics or values would not likely be open to shapeshifting. Shapeshifting ability, notwithstanding the personal levels of self-awareness, may be easier the more the individual goes through life's experiences or accumulates disorienting dilemmas. For example, a CAO draws the line in this circumstance:

We [mayor and CAO] couldn't agree on [inaudible] actually a discussion but we quickly agreed to disagree, and I went on [resigned the CAO position] to other positions. I had a strong sense that that was going to happen when I had the discussion, but it wasn't viable to me. (participant C1)

The hierarchy of the dyad's relationship may also influence either party's ability to shapeshift. The data suggests that CAOs, as subordinates to the mayor, may be required or choose to shapeshift more often than mayors. However, there are clear examples of mayors shapeshifting within their dyads. The interviews showed shapeshifting as taking place to maintain functionality within the dyad relationship in both directions. The data points to this core dimension as somewhat necessary for functionality within the mayor-CAO dyad. As one mayor said, "[A successful Mayor-CAO relationship] depends on the personality of the person [CAO], and I think that's one of the biggest challenges for CAOs around the province is adjusting their styles to accommodate to the [mayors'] personalities and agendas" (participant M1).

Adjustment and accommodation are the hierarchical perceptions of shapeshifting. If a CAO is required to shapeshift as a result of a democratic election, can they do it without some residual emotional response? Or do they choose to shapeshift within the new dyad and build the functional relationship between mayor and CAO?

In this case we see personalities as a condition of shapeshifting. This mayor implies that the CAOs must shapeshift to adapt to the new mayor, however, for these dyads to become fully functional there is a reciprocal need for the mayors to also shapeshift. I describe the ability to

shapeshift as a capacity. A capacity is like a container or bowl that allows the individual to choose any number of skills and abilities they hold within the bowl.

Choosing the correct approach to a given circumstance or information is what the capacity of shapeshifting allows. Given the variability of context, the possibility of different dimensions of the relationship being engaged at the same time using shapeshifting as a capacity is as strategically important as the act itself. For example, the CAO, quoted below, is presented with a circumstance where they have been surprised with a newly elected mayor because the last Council had just appointed the speaker as the city manager prior to the election. The CAO must reach into their capacities and shapeshift to keep the position.

So I approached [the newly elected mayor] and said—cause I knew I needed to build trust with the mayor and that that was really important and I knew in the back of the [mayor's] mind (at least) [they] saw me as [the last mayor's] guy, right. So it was a very dangerous situation to be in as a city manager, not one where I wanted to start. So I actually went back to the [new mayor] and handed—in November, cause I wasn't really going to be appointed till June—I handed her my letter of offer and I said “Here, I'll rip it up. If I can't be the city manager with confidence, I can't do the job” (participant C3)

Self-awareness, both internal (how you see yourself) and external (how others see you) can be important in exercising the capacity of shapeshifting. Eurich (2017) suggested that society operates on a substantial deficit in self-awareness. Recognizing why the mayor-CAO dyad demonstrates high levels of self-awareness and the capacity for shapeshifting may be an interesting research objective for further studies.

These primary and core dimensions in addition to the creation of the explanatory matrices, helped me understand the mayor-CAO dyad. Dimensions and matrices allow some explanation of the reasons functionality within the dyad is so important. The structural aspects of the mayor-CAO relationship require some process to solve or manage the structural conflict embedded within the mayor-CAO dyad. The data suggests the roles of mayors and CAOs and

how they are performed, are an important part of this puzzle. Temporality is also a variable within the relationship that is seen as an important aspect of functionality

Stages of Temporal Relationship Development

Over time, most relationships change. Within the local government context, the mayor-CAO relationship will also change. These changes are not directly lineal but there is a trend for the relationship to grow in stages. These stages were discovered in the narrative data here, from the CAOs and the mayors I interviewed. These interviewees tended to recount the experiences from the beginning of their careers to the present.

Within the data, some dimensions were not as actively used in some of the mayor-CAO stories and this caused me to become curious as to why. Although this aspect of temporality is not used in the standard grounded theory methodology, I felt temporal explanation revealed more of the actual dynamic in the stories presented by the interviewees. After carefully reading the transcripts it was apparent that some behaviors were not evident in certain stages of the relationship. Since all mayors and CAOs had multiple relationships with their counterparts, this “staging” was subtly presented. For example, when a new mayor was elected the dialogue would not reflect the more complex relationship dimensions, such as power sharing or shapeshifting, but would include negotiating. Within the data, I could follow the progression of each relationship as the data focused on different dimensions. For example:

So I just started the relationship [with the newly elected mayor] by trying to build trust, and she very quickly caught on that in many ways—the only way she was going to get anything done was through me, because the rest of the council trusted me, so the Mayor was kind of . . . the Mayor needed me in some sense. (participant C3)

This process of growth and change or staging was also experienced with CAOs when they were first hired into the position. This is important understanding of the relationship because from a practical perspective it will be good to understand how a relationship grows and

changes for both mayors and CAOs. In this way CAOs who had reached a relational growth stage in the relationship with a mayor in their last position, would recognize that the new relationship would need time and understanding before it could may reach such a stage again.

Four stages of temporal relationship development were uncovered in the data: The Orientating-Learning stage; the Test Driving stage; the Task Performing stage; and the Interpersonal Growth stage. These stages each bring out different dimensions of the relationship although each stage will show some degree of all the dimensions. For example, the Orientation/Learning stage will reflect the newness of either the mayor or CAO. The mayor may be newly elected, or the CAO newly hired to the position. These new actors will also have to understand their respective roles, the culture of their organization, the culture of the community, and many other pieces of information embodied within the relationship. Within each dyad the progression of the temporal stages of development may be rapid or slow. The following discussion looks at each stage in this developing dyad.

Orientating-Learning stage. Within these developmental stages the context of the situation will focus the dimensions of the relationship on some aspect or another. For example, orientation/learning stage may require the establishment of interpersonal boundaries. In one interview, a CAO questioned: should a newly hired CAO attend the mayor's annual barbeque at his house? During this stage of the relationship both parties will establish interpersonal boundaries within the relationship to sort out what they believe is personal or professional. However, even in the later interpersonal growth stage the mayor or CAO may request a personal favor that tests the boundaries of the relationship. Interestingly, a number of mayors and CAOs believed that their interpersonal relationship boundaries did not include what they characterized as a personal friendship.

For example, both mayors and CAOs stated that having drinks at a municipal convention was within their professional relationship boundaries but having dinners including the spouses of both in a social setting, was out of bounds. A smaller number of those interviewed believed the personal relationship was part of the mayor-CAO dyad and that a “friendship” was necessary to allow higher levels of intimacy within the relationship. This may correspond with later stages of the relationship or reflect the lack of anonymity afforded either position in smaller communities.

One CAO said,

You know, I'm taking my mayor to {name of other larger community} in December. He's never been. So I'm taking him. He deserves to go. And yes, I've been over to his [home] for dinner . . . but when you have a good mayor, relish it and it's a small town. In small towns, it's impossible not to be involved. It's impossible. (participant C7)

The data on the orienting-learning stage was minimal because most interviewees focused on the stages of the relationship that they felt was the most relevant to them. Given that all interviewees had been through this early stage a number of times it was not the focus of the interviews.

Test Driving stage. The test driving developmental stage will be engaged for a period when the dyad is discovering how collective dyad outputs are more effective than acting within the individual structural roles of either the mayor or CAO. For example, one CAO stated: “So I’d say by this time [the mayor] now fully trusted me and realized that she needed a good city manager who could make things happen” (participant C3). This period of test driving would also be a period where the two individuals within the mayor and CAO roles would work together on joint outcomes. There are times when the mayor will focus on political matters and not see the dyad as a constant operational necessity.

This period of vigilance and cognitive trust building will culminate in reaching the task performing stage. This stage will also reflect on functionality as trust is being built.

Task Performing stage. As the dyad develops, different dimensions of the relationship come into focus, based on the context at that time. For example, during the task performing stage, success from collective dyad functionality establishes a feedback loop of positivity thus reinforcing the dyads behavior. In the data, a mayor commented:

I recognize that there are times where the mayor has to back down, and there are times where the CAO will accommodate, and recognize that for what it is and that sometimes you got to maybe back off on some things because the CAO has done the same thing other times and there's a balance. And that's just respecting the individual's position and not sort of challenging or putting them in a corner saying well you did it last time so now you've got to do it again and then you've completely undermined the CAOs authority. (participant M1)

These stages may also reflect non functionality in the relationship or a resistance to moving forward after the Orientating-Learning or the Test Driving stage. This was reflected in one data set where the mayor and CAO did not speak to each other and functioned structurally through the Council thereby effectively suspending the mayor-CAO's relationship. As the CAO said, at the end of these two years of conflict,

[I had] come to the end of my rope, you know, and that was basically, I don't want to do this for another two years. This isn't fun for me; it can't possibly be fun for her [the Mayor]. And sooner or later she's got to discover that she's wrong. But I stopped at saying that I'm right. (participant C5)

All temporal stages were somewhat fluid; for example, circumstances may cause the relationship to move back to the Test Driving stage after a particularly conflictual issue between the dyad members. The data describes a circumstance where a particularly positive interaction within the dyad allowed the relationship to move rapidly to the Task Performing stage and subsequently to the interpersonal growth stage.

Interpersonal Growth stage. The Interpersonal Growth stage is a time when the dyad has operated collectively and successfully and found the functionality embedded within the dyad. The relationship grows in intimacy and reciprocation in all aspects of the dyad functions. As the

dyad produces better outcomes with less emotional energy both parties are capable of working through conflict within the dyad and outside the dyad. One mayor described it this way:

I think over the years the city manager and I have done, and we know each other well enough that we can put something in front of the other person that it's not going to be taken personally. And we can share our thoughts and feelings and it's like I said let's not take it personally. We see it from a professional perspective. If we disagree with the person, you know what, you disagree. And it's OK. It's a healthy relationship. (participant M5)

The Interpersonal Developmental stage of the relationship is the culmination of a functional dyad. These developed relationships are referred to in the data as “healthy relationship[s]” that result in high quality municipal outcomes.

To further understand the relationship, I looked at the temporality of the relationship, specifically, how the stages of development of the relationship may affect its functionality. The general staging of temporality within all four stages did hold true for most relationships with the speed of movement between stages being compressed or elongated.

Chapter IV Conclusion

Analysis of the interview data has identified five primary and one core dimension as depicted in the explanatory matrixes. The data further presents a temporality to the mayor-CAO relationship providing a better understanding of what is going on within the relationship. The next chapter will discuss the research question, integrate the above information into a model of the mayor-CAO relationship and explain the important issue of relationship functionality and its possible causality.

Chapter V: Discussion and Implications

Chapter V presents my understanding and meaning of the data's findings, combined with the applicable academic literature on the dissertation's subject. First, I present my personal story that initiated the quest of this dissertation. After reviewing my research questions, presenting a behavioral model and explaining it, I propose three theoretical propositions and link them to the existing literature. The research has limitations that I discuss concluding with the implications of this research for practice and leadership.

But first a short digression as I reflect on my role as CAO and the genesis of this research: I started this journey because of my personal experience as a CAO. This experience, over 35 years, included both positive and negative mayor-CAO relationships. The negative ones were painful and as a result I felt I needed a better understanding of how these relationships function. I hope this research will help others in the local government world to better navigate the mayor-CAO relationship.

As a student of local government, I, like many others, focused my attention on the dichotomy between policy and administration, the conventional wisdom on the nature of the mayor-CAO relationship. For years, I advocated for a clean separation between what I did as the CAO and what mayors did in their role. Yet, over those years, I recognized that the attempt to keep a separation between policy and administration was futile. Mayors were more and more insistent on day-to-day involvement in administrative matters regardless of my protest. At times, I sympathized with the mayors, but held fast to my belief that separation was correct set of behaviors.

In 2009, I received my master's degree in Political Science and began acquainting myself with the academic research on local governments. During that period, I was introduced to the

complementarity model of Svava (1999b). Although that model seemed intuitively correct it still required the mayor and CAO to behave within a set of boundaries I was not experiencing in the field. Why then did mayors and I not follow the model presented by Svava? This question stayed with me until I entered this PhD program.

As a pragmatist, I worked with mayors on an intuitive basis using whatever talent I could muster to survive the local government world. Over the years, I had learned quite a bit about how to build a team or how to run a municipality, but the most difficult part was always the mayor and council. Why, even though they had marginal management skills, and questionable understanding of the public interest, were they constantly attempting to wrestle control from me and our staff team? Because they were the bosses, I complied with their wishes rationalizing that democracy cannot be wrong. I moved from issue to issue always attempting to satisfy what seemed like a mayor's insatiable appetite to interfere with administration for what looked like political purposes. No amount of coaching, cajoling, lecturing or training made any difference. For example, one excellent presentation by an expert in governance in the city where I worked was immediately followed by a councilor's request to issue a parking ticket to someone in that councilor's neighborhood.

Eventually, I started to rethink how the system of local government works with specific reference to the mayor-CAO relationship. My thinking was augmented by rereading the existing literature on mayor-CAO, council/CAO, politicians, and staff. Although this material was interesting and applicable, nothing explained my on-the-ground experience. Certainly, the models and suggestions, rules and roles, and empirical data supported the concept of separation of policy from administration, although a notional concept for behavior, was not being followed.

As the complementarity model suggests, the mayor and CAO work together for good governance, theoretically integrating the two positions to develop interdependence, reciprocal influence and overlapping functions. Given that the dichotomy was developed to combat political corruption at the turn of the 19th century, what has changed? Or what did we not see before that was driving behavior that could better explain the mayor-CAO interactions today?

Certainly, corruption has not skyrocketed, although populism has; municipal services are being delivered and, on the whole, the system of local government has operated relatively well over the years compared to the times in the 1890s where political partisan corruption was rampant. However, the trend towards CAO terminations both voluntary and involuntary, are on the rise. Why is that happening? Does it have something to do with the rules or roles or the individual mayor's and CAO's dyadic behavior?

Anecdotally, since my experiences with the old rules of separation of policy from administration or mayors changing their roles to integrate the two functions for good governance isn't happening, then why? My thinking was: what else is happening within the mayor-CAO relationship that may cause it to function or not? Was there more going on within these relationships that may better explain the observed behavior of mayors and CAOs? Is the interpersonal relationship a larger part of this puzzle?

This digression now leads me to the present moment as I have completed my study of CAOs' and mayors' relationships as experienced by those individuals who have graciously been willing to tell me their story.

Review of the Research Questions

The overarching question of this qualitative study was, what aspects of the mayor-CAO relationship results in a functional relationship as perceived by those individuals who have

experience in these roles? As discovered in Chapter IV the answers to this question lie in the interaction of a number of relationship dimensions both primary (negotiating, strategizing, harmonizing, boundary setting, power sharing—and the core dimension of shapeshifting)—within the mayor-CAO dyadic relationship. These dimensions or social processes emerged under specific conditions with particular types of consequences on the relationship. The explanatory matrices of Chapter IV (Tables 4.1 to 4.6) describe the details of these findings. Further, the relationship was described as unfolding across time and this perception led me to embed the dimensions in the context of temporality, a context that was dynamic and fluid in relation to the conditions and social processes that ensued in these relationships. The addition of the temporal context provided an opportunity to understand this highly complex relationship from the perspective of relationship growth and repair across time. In this specific local government context, perceived relationship functionality between the mayor and CAO was a consequence of the social processes discovered within the data.

Model of the Mayor-CAO Relationship

Figure 5.1 is the visual representation of the relationship among the various elements derived from my grounded theory analyses. It depicts the many moving parts within the mayor-CAO didactic relationship. The reader will note the presence of the context, social processes, conditions and impacts, discussed in the explanatory matrices of Chapter IV. The model takes the analyses further by considering all the findings as a whole. The purpose of the visualization of the grounded theory findings is to gain a level of understanding of this relationship that has meaning and relevance to the working experience of CAOs and mayors as well as providing guidance in creating functional relationships that serve the community.

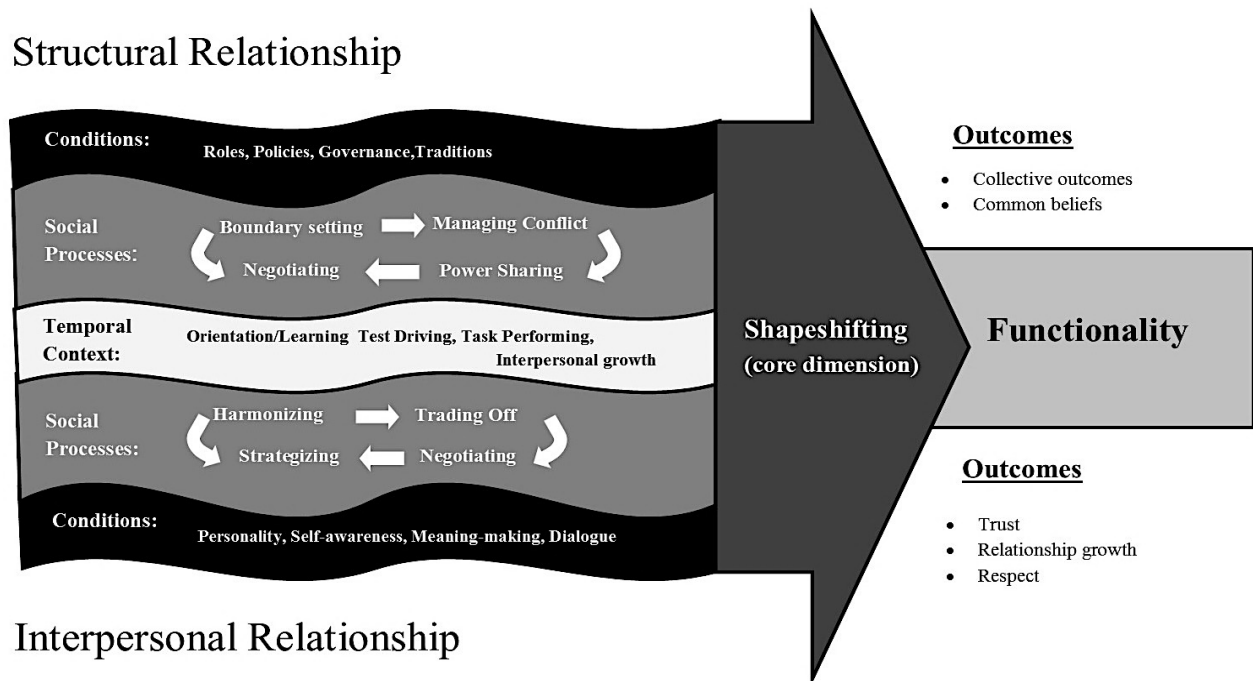


Figure 5.1. Graphic model of the operation of the mayor-CAO relationship.

Structural and Interpersonal Conditions

Fundamentally, from this study, the mayor-CAO relationship is conceived as living within two role related frameworks, structural and interpersonal. Note that the upper part of the Figure 5.1 shows the primary structural elements while the lower part comprises interpersonal elements. These frameworks are not mutually exclusive but rather, are intertwined on the daily basis as the players interact with each other to produce collective municipal outcomes. For example, at times the interview data suggests structural roles are the key to understanding what the dyad must produce as an outcome. A mayor stated:

I guess my role, or how I view my role, is if it's political in nature then I want to be appraised and updated and things like that. But if it's internal in terms of internal work plans or hiring's and firings or whatever else, the day-to-day operations, that's not something I play a role in. (participant M3)

Other times the interpersonal aspects are important although less clear. For example:

[The mayor] took every bullet for you; the mayor, always stepped in front of the bullet. . . staff wouldn't take bullets that we should've, but he wouldn't let that happen, so, [he was a] wonderful leader. (participant C1).

Within the environmental and temporal context, social processes take place under certain conditions. These structural conditions such as: roles, traditions, governance and policies set the conditional boundaries of the structural relationship (the uppermost ribbon of Figure 5.1).

Whereas the interpersonal conditions such as: personalities, self-awareness, meaning-making and dialogue set the conditional boundaries for the interpersonal conditions (the bottom ribbon of Figure 5.1).

Structural Conditions

As depicted in Figure 5.1, three sets of structural conditions were identified in this analysis: roles, traditions, and governance and policies.

Roles. Within this structural relationship's framework, the data presented the statutory roles and responsibilities of the mayor and CAO as the conditions for the relationship. How they execute these responsibilities and where each role starts and stops for each position was a common theme of the data. For example, one mayor explained,

I don't want to be somebody that's involved in the day-to-day operations of managing the organization and/or the senior management team I did that for a long time. I want to be in the role of strategic. I want to be in the role of governance of policy and I don't want to be involved in the day-to-day operations of the organization. (participant M4)

Similarly, another mayor surmised,

I guess my role, or how I view my role, is, if it's political in nature then I want to be apprised and updated and things like that. But if it's internal, in terms of internal work plans or hirings and firings, or whatever else, the day-to-day operations, that's not something I play a role in. Now again, because we have a good relationship, the city manager may ask me, hey I'm thinking of doing x, what do you think? But at the end of the day that's his decision to make, as long as, again, it's helping council achieve that vision. But if it's politically based, you know, it's something where a decision of council is required, then yeah, he does a very good job of keeping me updated in terms of "hey

here's where things are in the process, here's what the outcome is looking like. Just wanted to let you know. (participant M3)

The data focused on this issue of roles and responsibilities because the meaning of these statutory roles and responsibilities are not clear on the face of them. I discovered that embedded within the data, was an ongoing dialogue about “who is in charge and of what?”—and this is one of the roles conditions of the relationship. Therefore, this condition limits the social processes within the mayor-CAO relationship.

Traditions. The second structural condition is traditions. Each municipal organization will have within its culture some specific traditions. These traditions will set boundaries on what and how the mayor-CAO dyad will take action. For example, one mayor stated:

So [about] that the committee system: I wanted to get back to [the committee system] because previous councils were being accused of nothing being debated at the public table and it was all made behind closed doors . . . in the basement that nobody ever showed up. (participant M9)

Traditions set the way municipal activities take place or in this case, how they took place in the past and represent the structural conditions that allow the processes to emerge, for example, the process of “boundary setting” (the process on the second ribbon from the top - under social processes in Figure 5.1) and results in consequences such as collective outcomes or common beliefs (under “outcomes” in Figure 5.1).

In the example above, the collective outcome is the establishment of an older tradition of using a committee structure rather than a committee of the whole (the entire council); this committee structure was successful for this mayor in the past. This condition can be understood as a process of setting a structural boundary or boundary setting (on the second ribbon from the top under social processes in Figure 5.1) for the municipality’s committee structure. The mayor-CAO dyad will use this committee structure regularly to obtain corporate decisions and will be the subject of discussions between the mayor and CAO.

Governance and policies. Governance and policies are two other conditions (see uppermost ribbon in Figure 5.1) within the structural framework. These conditions set structural boundaries for the dyad to operate within. Governance is the broader term which includes policies. These policies will include statutory legal obligations and limits set by other governments (provincial, state and federal) and internal policies established by the local governments themselves. Policies may include, for example, purchasing policies, budget bylaws, or bylaws limiting the CAO's powers and responsibilities. Governance is a more abstract term that means the system as a whole that local governments operate within that delivers both democratic representation and municipal services. All these conditions limit or contain the structural aspects of the mayor-CAO relationship. One CAO put it this way:

From a technical point of view. . . They [council] appreciate the fact that I understand that they have a governance role. They don't quite understand what that means but I have taken every opportunity to explain that. (participant C4)

Interpersonal Conditions

The interpersonal conditions require further explanation because some are more complex. Conditions include personality, self-awareness, meaning-making and dialogue (see lowest ribbon in Figure 5.1)

Personality. Personality is to a significant extent, an interpersonal condition implying a set of behavioral boundaries or a set of expected behaviors. Academic research suggests the "Big Five Personality Dimensions" (extraversion, emotional stability, agreeableness, conscientiousness and open to experience) as described by Barrick and Mount (1991, p. 1) will predict a number of behavioral outcomes. For example, an extravert will be expected to be gregarious.

Personality was expressed within the data suggesting certain "givens" or fixed parts of a person's behavior. Although there is other evidence in the data to show growth and change by

both CAOs and mayors, the term “personality” was often used to explain the behavior of the individuals within the dyad. For example, CAO participant C4 when asked if it was common among his mayors to not like to follow rules, replied: “It depends . . . I think it’s always an individual’s personality”. For another example: a highly populist Mayor was described as having no particular core political or ideological beliefs, but to have a populist personality. Other mayors were described as having a “strong” personality because they focused on the long term vision for the community and left the administration to do the managing of the community. One mayor, participant M5, suggested: “You need to be adaptable to the different personalities that are involved, whether it's the CAO or the mayor”.

The use of the word personality in this context suggests that both members of the dyad must be adaptable to these different personalities. Personality was used in the interviews to describe certain behaviors in a somewhat prejudicial manner, likely attempting to make meaning of certain behaviors or wanting to be able to predict expected behavior.

Sometimes the data appeared to reflect Barrick and Mount’s (1991) Big Five but other times the data had its own definitions. In interviews, personality seemed to be used to describe a different but consistent set of behaviors expected by each of the dyad’s participants. For example, when one mayor (participant M7) described them-self as “easy to get along well with others” the CAO could expect agreeableness in their day-to-day interactions.

Other academic research has used the Big Five personality dimensions for predicting job performance. Agreeableness was a predictor of successful job performance for management and sales (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Based on this research, an agreeable Mayor could be predicted to have a successful dyad performance with CAOs. Although personality was talked about quite often in interviews, it is likely a mask for many other interpersonal aspects of the relationship.

Aston et al. (2007) in their paper, “Personality Traits of Municipal Politicians and Staff,” stated:

Maintaining the proper relationship between elected officials and public servants is one of the most important and at times one of the most difficult tasks in democratic political systems. . . .because the roles of the two groups are not defined precisely and because some members of the two groups work together closely that personalities and personal relationships play a major role in how well the system functions. If the relationship works well, they have a positive impact on governing process, if not, the governing process suffers accordingly. (p. 274)

Looking at Canadian local government politicians and staff Aston et al. (2007) further stated:

We found significant differences between the groups [politicians and staff] in broad personality characteristics of *extraversion* and *openness to experience*, and in the more specific personality trait of “sociable”. Other personality differences between the groups, although in the predicted direction, were small and did not reach statistical significance. Overall, the pattern of results indicate that politicians and public servant do differ appreciably in some major personality characteristics. (p. 286)

In this vein, Aberbach, Putnam, and Rockman (1981) also argued that politicians differ from public servants in that their dominant trait is energy, while the dominant trait of public servants is equilibrium”.

The term personality was also used to describe what definitely seemed like a personality problem. One CAO recounted,

One Mayor thought that the mayor’s role was the Chief Building Inspector, Chief Planner, Chief Engineer, Chief Law Enforcement Officer, Chief Parks person and would get their hands . . . that Mayor would have hands in all of those operations and not infrequently without telling the CAO and in some cases with the CAO not ever finding out or even being purposely left out of the discussion. Micro-managing by personality type. . . they (the Mayor) have a personality type to want to have control. (participant C2)

In the above story, after many discussions whereby the CAO tried to curtail the Mayor’s behavior, they agreed to disagree on the role of the mayor-CAO within a municipal organization. This description of personality comes much closer to personality problems than personality

dimensions. It is acknowledged among CAOs there are personality disorders (narcissism, Machiavellianism, or psychopathy) within the elected officials that can be experienced from time to time. The converse of CAOs having personality disorders is possible, however, less likely to be a long term issue because the mayors and councils have the power to terminate the CAO, this was not discussed in the data.

Academic research suggests there are differences between elected officials and staff members that may cause a difference in perspective that may lead to tension between the groups. Some dysfunctionality was referenced to in terms of personality, but these definitions were not from the Big Five personality dimensions (Barrick & Mount, 1991) and therefore could not be used for comparative evaluation. Some research suggests Mayors are more likely to be open to new experiences than are CAOs (Ashton et al., 2007).

Generally expected behaviors referred to as personalities, are interesting in that they are a condition of the interpersonal relationship framework that will limit the emergence of social processes (second ribbon from the bottom of Figure 5.1)

Self-awareness. Self-awareness as the second interpersonal condition (bottom ribbon of Figure 5.1) has been defined as “the ability to see ourselves clearly—to understand who we are, how others see us and how we fit into the world” (Eurich, 2018, p. 3). The levels of self-awareness within the members of the dyad are important because they are fundamental and limit the capacity of the dyad to produce collective outcomes. For example, one CAO (participant C5) recognized their own contribution to a particularly difficult conflict with their mayor after many months of reflection and pain. It was this self-recognition (self-awareness) of the CAO’s own contribution to the relational dysfunctionality that, in turn, caused a

corresponding reflection by the mayor to on their own conflictual behavior; subsequently, the relationship moved to becoming functional.

Another mayor pointed to the importance of this attribute, saying, “because the only way to do some self-growth is to look at yourself and how it is you're managing things” (participant M5). A further example of the significance of self-awareness was seen in one mayor (M7) suggesting that they regularly requested honest feedback from their CAO after a public engagement. This allowed for monitoring his performance and making changes for the next event if as a dyad, they believed it would improve the outcomes. This mayor described his relationship with his CAO as excellent. “I recognize that I’m a blue-collar worker that gets along well with people and he (CAO) knows everything there is to know about operating a municipality- together we make a great team” (participant M7).

This level of self-awareness was a prelude to reciprocal influence and trust in each member of the dyad. This further demonstrated that the common belief regarding the municipality’s best interest (mutual pursuit of good governance) had become the dyad’s test for positive performance.

Self-awareness is an interesting concept and can represent a deep understanding of our behavioral motivations or a more superficial and sometimes erroneous understanding of our behavior. Eurich (2018) suggested: “Self-awareness is a remarkably rare quality . . . for most people, it’s easier to choose self-delusion—the antithesis to self-awareness—over the cold, hard truth” (p. 5).

Self-awareness, at least the internal awareness, was present in some of the interview data. Mayors and CAOs often appeared to leverage this internal self-awareness to at least help facilitate social processes taking place within the relationship. In one specific case -relayed by

participant C5)—conflict management was the social process and catalyst that resulted in increases in self-awareness (second ribbon from the top in Figure 5.1). As mentioned above, social processes are intertwined with both structural and interpersonal frameworks and conditions. Each condition works in its own way to either limit outcomes or, in this case, cause an increase in an interpersonal limit of self-awareness. As another condition of the dyad’s relationship is that it helps in understanding of how the interpersonal conditions may impact relationship functionality.

Meaning-making. Meaning-making (bottom ribbon in Figure 5.1) is an interpersonal framework condition within the mayor-CAO relationship for understanding highly complex activities and the social processes that are taking place. Kegan and Lahey (2009) suggested that a person’s level of mental complexity¹⁶ affects capacity for meaning-making. The dyad member’s level of mental complexity will in turn determine the capacity for the dyad to deal with complex, ambiguous and paradoxical problems, all of which are common within the local government environment.

Dialogue. Dialogue is the simplest condition to understand of all the interpersonal framework conditions presented. The amount and quality of dialogue within the dyad will affect the amount of output that can be expected to be produced. More and better dialogue will encourage social processes to function more often and therefore produce more positive relationship outcomes. For example, one mayor who was asked about the level of interaction between CAO and mayor, stated: “High levels of interaction, communication and engagement between the CAO and the mayor . . . that’s information and discussions that he [CAO] and I would have on a daily basis” (participant M4).

¹⁶ Kegan and Lahey’s (2009) hierarchy of the higher levels of mental complexity are: Level 3, the *socialized mind*; Level 4, the *self-authoring mind*, and Level 5, the *self-transforming mind*.

Structural Relationship: Social Processes

Understanding relationships' social processes is one of the more important concepts within the grounded theory methodology and helps link the conditions and context to the relationship outcomes or consequences. In the relationship's behavioral model (see second from the top ribbon in Figure 5.1) the social processes are presented. It is again important to remember that these social processes are intertwined within the structural and interpersonal social processes and can be used by the dyad to solve their day-to-day challenges. For example, negotiating is present in both frameworks because it takes place in both structural and interpersonal dimensions of the relationship as the dyad moves towards solutions to their challenges. A specific example came from a mayor who stated:

The role [mayor to CAO] was exactly same [with] as high level of engagement, high level of communication, high level of interaction, both from him [CAO] to me and me to him in terms of issues, impacts that we're dealing with as it related to the overall operation of the city and execution on the intended results. (participant M4)

Boundary setting. Boundary setting is a social process of the dyad's ongoing processes of determining what each member of the dyad does within their role of either mayor or CAO. As stated above, because the roles of both mayor and CAO are ambiguous it will take a period of time to determine where the boundaries are between each dyad member. This social process of boundary setting arose in the interviews as the determination of how each dyad member sets work or role boundaries. For example, a mayor stated: "So, I'm taking a real hands-on approach with the new CAO much different than with (former CAO) because some of the core competencies and behaviors are still being developed in a new CAO" (participant M4).

Managing conflict. Managing conflict is a common social process within the mayor-CAO dyad. In this setting, it is mostly structural conflict: determination of who is doing what within the dyad is not clear. Dyad members will, over time, manage their roles within the dyad

and execute these with minimum conflict (assuming they agree or negotiate the outcomes). However, the fundamental reconciliation of these conflicting roles will take place within the social process of the structural responsibilities each dyad member performs. One extreme example of conflict was when a mayor campaigned directly to terminate a CAO's employment (not an uncommon local government occurrence). The CAO, who had been receiving executive coaching, reflected:

It takes two to tango . . . the coach asked the right question . . . what are you bringing to the table? But, after coaching, I also convinced the mayor, and it wasn't terribly easy, but I convinced them to also get coaching

Conflict within the mayor-CAO dyad can be managed in a functional relationship, through the social process of "managing conflict".

Power sharing. Power sharing is a social process that allows the two members of the mayor-CAO dyad to share the powers each member holds, given the structure of their roles. The mayor will usually take a leadership role in public communications and this role can also benefit something the CAO is tasked to do. For example, one mayor stated:

The CAO team went ahead and started going forward with this referendum and everything that was involved in informing the public. I had my hand in it because I was also involved representing council in distributing information. (participant M6)
In this case, the mayor and CAO were sharing their powers to result in a successful

outcome. This is a social process that allowed the structural relationship to benefit the dyad collectively.

Negotiating. Negotiating—seen in the second ribbon from the top and bottom of Figure 5.1—is a social process found in both structural and interpersonal frameworks because the dyad negotiated outcomes in both frameworks. Negotiating involves a process of exchanging information within the dyad where the member's perspective or attitude is not in alignment and needs to be worked through to arrive at a common perspective or position. This process implies

that at least one member of the dyad will change an earlier position for another more beneficial and agreeable position; often, this may mean dealing with another matter and arranging trade-offs. The dyad operates with many issues and over long periods; therefore, negotiations can use these multiple realities to solve conflicting perspectives. In the structural framework, one mayor recounted this circumstance.

He [the CAO] was in a bad situation because there had been a strike and then he was hired to review all the staff. . . so the staff hated him. He couldn't get anywhere with them. . . he just couldn't connect with them. . . Then he picked a few favorite staff members and that made it worse. . . I tried to support him. . . we tried to work with the staff to them back on board, which was difficult. . . [the mayor led] an in-camera session and [asked the CAO] . . . you need to tell us what we need to do to get this to work. So he gave us a whole list of things, and we said OK-- what's the timeframe? He said July we'll get it done by July, we said you can't get all this done by July, but he said he could. (participant M9)

Of the interpersonal framework a CAO participant explained,

So I wanted that cut off at the beginning [developers coming to the mayor to lobby him], and then the next one [developer] is about process. So I'm finding . . . why isn't [the mayor's developer friend] coming to see the staff? . . . we could avoid the mayor always being in my office on the defense . . . that way we can get the developer to come in here and have it percolating up through the staff . . . he [the developer] is coming in because he doesn't like following the rules. (participant C4)

The social process of negotiating positions and perspectives takes place in both the interpersonal and structural frameworks of the mayor-CAO dyad. The differences are nuanced but they reflect the context of either the structural responsibilities (the example above from M9) or the emotional impact of the C4 example where the behavior of one dyad member (the mayor) was not structural but was causing great frustration within the CAO's interpersonal relationship with that mayor.

Interpersonal Relationship: Social Processes

The social processes of negotiating, harmonizing, strategizing and trading off (on the second ribbon from the bottom of Figure 5.1) are found within the interpersonal framework of

the mayor-CAO dyad. As was seen with the social process of negotiating, sometimes these processes take place in both frames, an intertwining of the activities of the dyad's processes. The nuanced differences between the social processes of the interpersonal framework and the structural relationship framework is seen in the interpersonal framework not relying on the specific structural roles within the dyad. For example, behavior of one dyad member that is not bounded or defined by their structural roles, can be seen as emerging from an interpersonal frame.

Harmonizing. Harmonizing is an interpersonal social process that takes place between dyad members to align the collective dyad outputs. If the outputs of the dyad are not aligned, they will not produce the coordinated outputs that are the most effective in the municipal environment. Each dyad member has their own independent authority to act on certain matters; however, since the interdependence between roles is great, these independent actions are less than optimal. The social process of harmonization emerges to maximize the collective output of the dyad. As participant one mayor stated:

So, we [mayor and CAO] basically wrote her [the CAO's] job description together . . . like a provincial mandate letter . . . so I'm saying generally that I think you know that, in an effective relationship, my job as mayor is to support the CAO to do their job to the best of their ability and if I think they need some feedback to do their job better, then my job is to give them feedback that they need. (participant M2).

Strategizing. Strategizing within the interpersonal relationship framework emerges collectively and interdependently between the two dyad members. The social process requires substantial dialogue to understand the circumstances that the municipal organization is either heading towards, or already finds itself within. The dyad will be required to choose a path forward for the organization that maximizes collective benefits. For example, one CAO said,

You've got to find a way to work with people right . . . I'd kind of lay it out there and let him [the mayor] kind of chew on it a bit and I knew if I pushed him that he'd get his back up . . . lots of times he'd come back and say OK . . . here is what you wanted to do . . . I'll

bring it to Council and recommend it, maybe I'll run it by some councilors, and they would tweak it a bit and it would go well. (participant C6)

In this circumstance, strategizing was a longer process of allowing the mayor the time he needed to think through something. The CAO would then “run it by some councilors” and then get back to the mayor. The CAO was relying on their interpersonal relationship with both the mayor and the councilors to strategize an issue for the mayor-CAO dyad’s collective output.

Trading off. Within the interpersonal relationship framework (second ribbon from the bottom ribbon in Figure 5.1), the social process of trading off is taking place within the mayor-CAO dyad. Many times, in the complex world that the mayor and CAO operate in, there are issues or perspectives not in alignment with the wishes of one or the other member of the dyad. At times, the dyad members need to trade off these issues or perspectives against other issues or perspectives. Each dyad member will have their own perspectives on how the dyad should solve their day-to-day challenges and these perspectives will be discussed regularly within the dyad. Trading-off one issue for another reflects the understanding of dyad members that the relationship’s operational time frame is quite long and will give whichever member accepts the other’s position, substantial leverage when the next issue is dealt with.

Temporal and Interpersonal Context

As discussed earlier in this study, the environmental context is established primarily by the structural or statutory framework for both mayor and CAO, and influences and sets boundaries for the manner in which the relationship functions. There is also an interpersonal context which includes the general nature of the relationships within the local governments’ group of mayor-CAO relationships. This relationship landscape was not discussed (maybe implied or assumed) explicitly during the interviews. The interpersonal context includes the nature of the interpersonal capacity of each member of the dyad. For example, each dyad

member's psychodynamic paradigm for understanding how people behave “draws attention. . . to the inner world of individuals, including their emotions—and relationships between individuals” (Neumann & Hirschhorn, 1999), their levels of mental complexity (Kegan & Lahey, 2009), as well as personality and other internal characteristics of the individuals involved. Personality was presented as a condition of the model of the relationship (bottom ribbons in Figure 5.1). Further data for this specific interpersonal context was missing and has to be inferred from the data; therefore, it was not included in the model.

Certainly, mayors and CAOs cannot ignore the higher profile conflicts that are reported in the media which may color their understanding of the mayor-CAO relationship they are involved in. For example, the CAO of the City of Nanaimo in British Columbia, was ejected from the City Hall and arrested due to allegedly threatening the mayor with bodily harm (Stueck, 2017).

Temporal context. The temporal context of the mayor-CAO relationship (central ribbon in Figure 5.1) establishes a trajectory of developmental stages for the relationship. The relationship starts in the orientation/learning stage (middle ribbon in Figure 5.1); becoming a test driving stage (where the dyad attempts to make collective decisions); evolving to a task performing stage (where collective decisions and outcomes become common practice); and lastly transforming into the interpersonal growth stage for both members of the dyad (where the relationship can be seen as transformational.)

The relationship does not necessarily evolve through all developmental stages and may arrest at any one of these stages. The interviews indicated that a number of mayor-CAO relationships did proceed to the personal growth stage. For example, participant M7 said, “Yes, I

trust him [CAO] immensely”. An indicator that this mayor-CAO relationship had reached the personal growth stage.

Based on the data, most of the mayor-CAO relationships do change over time. The relationship matures probably because of experiences (or the exercising of the dimensions within the relationship outlined in Chapter IV). Within other dyad relationships these changing developmental stages of a relationship are well documented using a metaphor of romance: relationships start in the honeymoon stage and mature over time resulting from the relationship’s experiences. As Fox and Anderegg (2014) stated:

Many theories suggest that romantic relationships develop in stages. Typically, these models suggest a progression wherein individuals meet, become acquainted, establish romantic interest, date, and then enter into an exclusive relationship that escalates in commitment over time. (p. 686)

The mayor-CAO relationship often exhibits a similar developmental trajectory—just not (usually) in an actual romantic context. The temporality of the mayor-CAO relationship also allows for the repair of the relationship; this is tied to the maturity of the relationship. The fluidity of the mayor-CAO working relationship is also tied to the maturity of the relationship and its ability to exercise the relationship dimensions particularly the social processes identified in the explanatory matrix. For example, a mayor is more likely to accept proposals from the CAO if the relationship has developed affective trust in the two more mature developmental stages of task performing or personal growth. For example, one mayor said, “I see that challenging each other [mayor and CAO] as well, in a good way challenging each other . . . and making sure we are always holding our own feet to the fire but the entire corporation” (participant M5).

This temporal context means the relationship will focus on certain aspects at one stage of the relationship, shifting later to other aspects. For example, A CAO suggested,

In fact, you, as an individual, aren't going to do anything, quite frankly; your job is to get along with everybody else, so, to me, loyalty and building up that [mayor-CAO] relationship is [about] a lot of empathy, like really putting myself in their shoes, stepping out of my shoes, and trying to see the world from their [the mayor's] perspective, and then slowly bringing them [the mayor] into my [CAO] world. And, all the while respecting that they can have the dumbest idea in the world, [but] never saying "That's the dumbest idea in the world," never working to thwart them either, . . . which I think sometimes city managers might get caught in the crossfire . . . So to me, building trust is—I really see is to get the collective priorities done, and maybe massaged, maybe changed, maybe you have to change it a bit to get it done, but always putting their – the needs of council first. (participant C1)

The temporal context is therefore important in understanding the mayor-CAO relationship as the stages of development will point to the manner in which the relationship is functioning, focusing on certain aspects of the relationship dimensions and producing certain collective dyadic outcomes. As the relationship matures the dyadic outcomes will become more fluid and effective, and capable of using the core dimension of the relationship: shapeshifting.

Core Dimension: Shapeshifting

Shapeshifting emerged as the core dimension from the data to explain the manner in which dyads may stay functional in the face of complexity, ambiguity, conflict and paradox. For actors within these mayor-CAO dyads, there must be a way to move the municipality forward even in the face of conflicting beliefs, ambiguous ideologies and ethics, confusing public messaging and other paradoxical realities.

To understand this core social process, I designated the process as "shapeshifting," borrowing the name from the mythical genre. In Campbell's (1949/2008) classic, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, shapeshifting is part of the mythic representation of beings that change to reflect a different image, attitude or approach within the hero's path. It is one of eight archetypes Campbell suggested are to be encountered in heroic quests. The finding and usage here is somewhat consistent with of Campbell's use of the term. Although shapeshifting has been occasionally in management studies such as Reed's (2014) application to research on public

relations consultants. Reed defined shapeshifters as “someone who shifts between different identities in order to build relationships with relevant audiences” (p. 111). This kind of ephemeral transformation is not close to my usage in this dissertation. In my definition I define and apply the term shapeshifting as the act of changing an attitude, perspective or point of view relatively quickly for strategic advantage so as to maintain or result in a functioning relationship without generating ongoing emotional angst. Shapeshifting can happen within our primary relationships and also where a concern one holds towards an attitude, perspective, or approach can be changed to maintain a good friendship or a marriage. This “right” way of understanding or making meaning of our circumstances must change in the shapeshift. Changing our attitudes, perspectives or approaches requires a particular reflection on the circumstances and a “letting go” of our earlier perspectives and attitudes adopting a newer and likely broader perspective (Siegel, 1999).

In the municipal context, dyads shapeshift to maintain the working relationship within the dyad. In a cognitive way this process is measuring the value of two different outcomes: being correct in this moment and risking the deterioration of the mayor-CAO relationship or: changing your perspective in this matter to align with the dyad partner and to benefit from maintaining the equilibrium in the long term¹⁷ relationship.

The affective response to this act of changing one’s perspective can be negative. There can be emotions of angst or anger from changing one’s perspective to make someone else content or happy. By my definition, shapeshifting requires the shapeshifter to change their attitude, perspective, or point of view without residual emotional festering (never wanting to say “I told you so” when your earlier perspective is proven correct). The shapeshifter does this by

¹⁷ Note that mayor-CAO relationships are usually, at a minimum, for a 3- or 4-year electoral term.

finding a new perspective that fits within their wider set of perspectives that they believe they can live with. Certainly, some perspectives are fundamental to how a person defines themselves, these perspectives will not likely be open to shifting.

The data reflects this shifting of perspectives by both mayors and CAOs on a regular basis. Shapeshifting may also be a part of what Cozolino (2014) termed “affordance”. Cozolino expanded on this as follows:

When we encounter something or someone in our environment our brains activate pre-existing implicit memories, which provide us with options for engagement. These systems create *affordance*, our ability to engage meaningfully . . . with the people around us. An affordance is neither subjective nor objective but emerges from the interface of the two. . . We now know that perception involves constructing experience within our brains. . . affordance strategies are unconscious, multimodal memories that are automatically activated by situations we encounter in our day-to-day lives. (p. 221)

This dynamic can be seen, for example, in one CAO’s statement,

And so, I told my coach; no she's [the Mayor won't take coaching] not going to, whenever she says I'll think about it, she won't. And my coach said, “well yeah you never know”. So then the next week when the Mayor didn't bring it up I said to her, so what do you think? I laid it all out there and said you know, even people like me who have been in the business for over 30 years even I need coaching on how to be a better CAO and how to grow in my profession. So I said, it's not a bad thing, it can be a really good thing. To my surprise [the Mayor] said yes to her getting coaching too. (participant C5)

In this example, probably both the CAO and the mayor shifted their perspective on coaching and afforded each other. This was a reciprocal exchange of information but in all likelihood and more importantly, the reciprocal exchange of emotions allowed both parties to shapeshift within their dyad. In another example the same CAO stated:

I think that personality [Mayor as micro-auditor] exists on a continuum. So I don't mean that one is either this type or that type I think there's degrees. So it's situational. How open is this person going to be or how fixed are they in their ways. Are they trainable? Can you affect the behavior through discussion and through gaining trust? And if they're not then you're kind of SOL. In my opinion it's best to go on somewhere else and let somebody else deal with it and over time things will either sort out or they won't. But you don't have to deal with that. You can look after your own mental health [inaudible] health, physical health. (participant C5)

In this case the CAO presented the options available for him to shapeshift but chose to protect his mental health rather than shapeshift.

Shapeshifting is not a binary process but a process of changing our attitudes, perspectives and points of view in a way that lets go of our earlier perceptions and opens our worlds to other ways of seeing the same circumstances. Therefore, what Kegan (1995) considered one's level of mental complexity may limit who within the dyad is capable of shapeshifting, thereby possibly reducing this activity until after a mayor-CAO relationship is at least into a task producing relationship stage.

The hierarchy of the mayor-CAO dyad's relationship may also influence either party's ability to shapeshift. The data suggests that CAOs as subordinates to the mayor, may be required or choose to shapeshift more often than mayors. However, there are clear examples of mayors shapeshifting within their dyads. The data presents shapeshifting as taking place to maintain functionality within the dyad relationship in both directions.

Shapeshifting is the core dimension of all aspects of the mayor-CAO dyad. The interview data points to this core dimension and social process as somewhat necessary for functionality within the mayor-CAO dyad, at least in the task performing and personal growth stages of the relationship. As dyads move through the relationship model (Figure 5.1) these relationships use the dimensions, context and social processes within the relationship to solve the conflict, ambiguity, paradox and uncertainty that is inherent within the positions of mayor and CAO. The temporality and the ability to shapeshift results in the positive collective outcomes necessary for the dyad to operate functionally within their municipal organizations.

As one mayor suggested that a successful mayor-CAO relationship “depends on the personality of the [CAO], and I think that's one of the biggest challenges for CAOs around the

province is adjusting their styles to accommodate to the [mayor's] personalities and agendas” (participant M1). This mayor implied that the CAOs must shapeshift towards the new mayor; however, for these dyads to remain functional there is a reciprocal need for the mayors to also shapeshift.

It is clear from this research that the co-constructed understanding of the mayor-CAO dyad relationship includes more than the heretofore structural understanding of the relationship, complete with roles and rules developed by outside (Provincial) and inside (Council) authorities.

Even acknowledging the use of relationship dimensions, there is much more to understand about the functionality than just “what is going on”. Siegel (2015a) noted within the structural context,

It is essential that a municipality have a professional CAO, and it is essential that the CAO have the tools and the ability to carry out the duties of the position. An important part of the ability to carry out those duties is a positive relationship with council. This positive relationship will only develop when both parties in the relationship understand their respective roles and are able to carry out those roles in a competent manner. (p. 424)

The interpersonal matters presented in the relationship model (Figure 5.1) are important in understanding why, how, and if a mayor-CAO relationship is or stays functional. The structural lens of the relationship cannot effectively reveal the meaning-making and subjective aspects of the mayor-CAO's relationship to effectively understand the salient aspects of relationship functionality.

Outcomes from the Relationship Model

The relationship model (Figure 5.1) presents all the outcomes or results from the context, conditions, primary social processes, and core process of shapeshifting of the mayor-CAO relationship. The social processes that emerge within the mayor-CAO relationship use a number of concepts and abstract phenomena that are highly complex, ambiguous, and context, specific to

the relationship. Factors such as the capacity of each dyad member for self-awareness, their capacity to shapeshift, and their somewhat fixed personality, the stage which the relationship is in, as well as the environmental and temporal context, all play a substantial role in affecting relationship functionality. The mayor-CAO relationship model (Figure 5.1) also presents the outcomes of the dimensions, conditions, social processes, and temporality of the dyad. Many of these outcomes are straightforward, however trust, common beliefs, and functionality need further explanation.

Trust. Within the data, “trust” is the word most often used to describe a functional relationship.

Trust . . . tends to be somewhat like a combination of the weather and motherhood; it is widely talked about, and it is widely assumed to be good for organizations. When it comes to specifying just what it means in an organizational context, however, vagueness creeps in. (Porter, Lawler, & Hackman, 1975, p. 497)

The difficulty with trust is that it means many things in different contexts. Psychological research suggests two distinct types of interpersonal trust: cognition-based—which means trust, grounded in individual beliefs about peer reliability and dependability—and affect-based trust, grounded in reciprocated interpersonal care and concern (McAllister, 1995).

Interestingly, some level of cognitive trust is required before affective trust can be engaged but after the affective level is obtained there is less questioning of reliability implied in cognitive trust even in the face of evidence to the contrary (McAllister, 1995). This is likely why spouses whose partners are having extramarital affairs are the last to believe this is taking place. It seems love and affective trust make us somewhat blind to other realities.

The affective trust demonstrated in the data also suggests transformational aspects besides reciprocal interpersonal care and concern. For example, one CAO (participant M3) who disliked a mayor because of their populist approach, intentionally overlooked this and worked

hard to see the positive attributes this mayor brought to the City. When this mayor was defeated electorally, the mayor was hurt when the CAO suggested that he (the CAO) would now work just as hard for the new mayor as he had for the defeated one. The defeated mayor saw the relationship with the CAO as a relationship which ought to include enduring political loyalty and affective trust. The CAO had both shapeshifted with the defeated mayor early in their tenure and transformed the relationship after the election.

In another example of building trust and demonstrating the ability to shapeshift, one CAO (participant C5) was able to alter a non-functioning relationship with her mayor by working to better understand her own motivations within the dyad. She posed the key question: “What did I bring to the table to enable this ongoing conflict?” This insight in self-awareness was a first step on the road to building trust.

Using her shapeshifting ability, heightening her self-awareness, and understanding her own personality better, she was able to first develop cognitive trust and, subsequently, affective trust, thereby transforming her way of being, as she suggested by “being vulnerable and letting go of the need to be right”.

Trust is therefore an important outcome of the social processes outlined in the behavioral model presented (Figure 5.1). Building cognitive trust points to the first step that reflects the “reliability” of each partner within the mayor-CAO dyad. Affective trust follows as the relationship reflects the interpersonal aspects of the relationship (McAllister, 1995). Trust, as an outcome of the many social processes within the mayor-CAO relationship, is a companion to the functionality resulting from the same collective social processes.

Common beliefs. Common beliefs within the dyad are less complex and prevalent within functional relationships. For example, one mayor stated the following regarding his CAO:

[We are] aligned in how we see the world . . . we share a lot of the same values, same ideals, and same goals for the community . . . [this] puts you [the Mayor] in a good position when you are working alongside someone who wants the same things as I do. (participant M3)

Other common beliefs within the dyad may not be directly related to the work but will make the conflict within each issue more easily managed. For example, a CAO said,

First and foremost, [the Mayor] understood his role. He understood his role as chairman of the board, and not as the guy who runs the city. Uh so he, *totally* respected the fact that the city is run by a competent city manager and that we set priorities, we set budgets and we provide oversight, those are our jobs. [The Mayor], um, very entrepreneurial, so as staff we had the freedom to explore, and try new things with his backing and being an entrepreneurial, if [the staff] failed it was ok, he had a lot of businesses that failed over the years and dumb things he did and so we never had this “what you get in the civil service is fear that everything admin does is wrong. (participant C3)

Thus, these common beliefs of the roles within the dyad are very helpful in managing or avoiding conflict. This would be a sign of functionality within this particular type of dyad and is a part of the social processes present within the relationship model (Figure 5.1).

Functionality. Functionality is the most important aspect of the mayor-CAO relationship research, and therefore, is important to define and explain. The dyad’s functionality can be defined as the ability of producing positive dyadic outcomes for the municipal government the mayor-CAO work for. The nature of the aspects of the relationship that point to a functional relationship has been the primary question for this research.

Effective mayor-CAO dyads seamlessly use both structural and interpersonal strategies to develop functionality on a daily basis. This functionality is reflected in the relationship model (Figure 5.1) along with trust, respect, relationship growth, collective outcomes and common beliefs. I will say more on functionality below in discussing the theoretical propositions.

The themes that the relationship focuses on interpersonally sometimes define the functionality within the relationship. Sometimes one aspect is the crucial focus of the relationship. For example, if one member of the dyad has low levels of self-awareness and

cannot understand the importance of understanding themselves emotionally within a conflictual circumstance, the dyad may focus on the disagreements at the expense of other dimensions and possibly functionality. On this, one CAO stated:

So, if you want to survive with a bad mayor, don't start picking sides with council because that's suicide. You just need to throttle back and become more of a bureaucrat and just take orders. And do not offer any opinion and just play it safe. Just neutral. (participant C7)

A number of aspects are at play in this. The CAO's advice to other CAOs in the circumstance of a "bad mayor" will be to change their leadership approach from active to passive. There is an implication in this quote that, within the dyad, the structural aspects of the positions of both mayor and CAO should be adhered to. The relationship is then operating without the reciprocal influence suggested by scholars such as Svava (2001, 2006), Mouritzen and Svava (2002), and Stocker and Thompson-Fawcett (2014).

I suggest this was a survival mode for CAO operations. The functionality of the mayor-CAO dyad in this case is not operating as in other more satisfying relationships reported in the data. In an attempt to better understand the dyad's functionality, I investigated more deeply into the social processes displayed (Figure 5.1) within the data using the perspective of interpersonal understanding. Using an analogy to the onion, I needed to peel deeper into the motivations, meaning-making, and the behaviors that cause functionality within this particular relationship's dyad.

Theoretical Propositions

Interpersonal understandings are more suggestive of the dyad's interstitial spaces—the "hows or whys" of the dyad, rather than the "what" that is taking place. For example, how does the dyad negotiate a structural outcome? In answering this through the data, I created the model (Figure 5.1) that explains relationship functionality; from that, I posit three

theoretical propositions that warrant further exploration. In brief, the theoretical propositions are about the following topics:

1. Relationship understanding: Interpersonal aspects nested within structural and temporal context.
2. Relationship functionality: Intersectionality and reconciliation of structural and interpersonal aspects
3. Shapeshifting capacity: Core relationship dimension that builds and supports functionality

I now consider each in this sequence.

Theoretical proposition one: Relationship understanding. The mayor-CAO relationship dyad is best understood as an interpersonal relationship encompassed within a structural and temporal context. The structural context is supplied through statute, internal policy, and traditional understandings of the roles and responsibilities of both the mayor and CAO (Jerome & Legge, 2002; Nalbandian, 2006; Svara, 1999b). The temporal context is supplied through the growth stages of the relationship and the interpersonal context through a number of interpersonal conditions such as personality, self-awareness and meaning-making (Lazarus, 1991).

This proposition is designed to restructure the way we understand the mayor-CAO relationship, to place the interpersonal aspects of the relationship at the center of the conceptual understanding of this particular relationship. In past research, the interpersonal aspects of the mayor-CAO relationship have at best, been an afterthought, rather than a central focus. To better understand this proposition, I present the academic literature's historical context of our understanding of this theoretical proposition.

The dichotomy. Many scholars have investigated the structural aspects of the mayor-CAO relationship: the dichotomy of and differences between policy and administration. Most of this research focusses on the structural rules, as first presented by Woodrow Wilson in 1887. As Svvara's (1999b) and other later research has discovered: the relationship of separation between policy and administration embodied within the mayor and CAO's structural responsibilities, is not as straightforward as Wilson had hoped. However, many academic articles have been written to either prove or disprove this notional separation between policy and administration.

In this dissertation research, all interviewees were well versed in the theory of the separation between the mayor's role of policy and the CAO's role of administration. Everyone spoke eloquently about how they followed the so-called "separation rule" and the "one employee model"—meaning the mayor and Council only interact with the CAO and no other employees thereby not interfering politically with administration) and did not interfere in administration (if a mayor) or have personal policy attitudes (particularly regarding populism) if a CAO.

As each interview proceeded, it was apparent that adherence to the hard rules of separation on the mayor's part, were influenced by their political interests. For example, when talking about something that had reputational risk (understood as the mayor's political or leadership reputation) to the municipal corporation, many mayors asserted that they should be involved in management decisions. One mayor stated that,

There is no rule that works for everything. If it's political in nature, there's a communication strategy that I need to be involved potentially on various issues. We operate on the one employee model so I should only be technically, again speaking to the City Manager (CAO) and no one else . . . in theory. But we know that it doesn't always or nor is it practical for that to always be the case. I have the flexibility, for example to speak to our director of communication directly. (participant M3)

Another mayor said it as follows:

There are sometimes where I kind of crossover. And it's only because of how we've established the relationship where I will give my observations of how things are going in

certain areas and certain departments. And that's because of my years of administrative background. But I don't have any expectations. I'm only sharing thoughts. And very clear that's it. And the relationship is at a level where it's understood that that's all I'm doing and I'm not implying that this should be done or not. (participant M1)

Many times in my career I have heard a mayor say “you (the CAO) do things that I must be accountable for [meaning at election time]. Therefore, in fairness, I must at least be part of the decision”. The data hinted that most mayors had this view, although most made only oblique references, likely because they knew that such involvement was against the rules.

Additionally, CAOs were very professional in their understanding of the rule of staying out of policy debates, the purview of democratically elected officials. However, several CAOs made comments on populism and the need for staff to inject their longer, and, by implication, better perspectives on council policy.

As stated above, the structural frame of the mayor-CAO relationship is the frame most talked about in the academic literature. There is extensive research and commentary on the dichotomy of policy and administration (Ashton et al., 2007; Demir & Reddick, 2012; Dunn & Legge, 2001; Montjoy & Watson, 1995; Mouritzen & Svava, 2002; Nalbandian, 1994, 1999, 2005, 2006; Overeem, 2005; Siegel, 2010, 2015; Stocker & Thompson-Fawcett, 2014; Svava, 1998, 1999a, 1999b, 2001, 2006, 2008; Waldo, 1948; Wilson, 1887; Zhang, 2014; Zhang & Feiock, 2009). This literature presents a generally accepted model (referred to as the “Complementarity Model”) that suggests the separation between policy and administration is notional and meant to stem the use of partisanship and to combat local government political corruption.

As Stocker and Thompson-Fawcett (2014) summarize:

The Complementarity Model is based on the premise that elected representatives and bureaucrats join together in mutual pursuit of good governance, resulting in a high level of interaction and reciprocal influence. While the model recognizes distinct roles, backgrounds and perspectives, it highlights the integration resulting from

interdependence, reciprocal influence and overlapping functions of the groups. The interdependence comes from the need of politicians to have expertise within their institution and the need of bureaucrats to have their work legitimized and publicly supported. (p. 793)

Both members of the mayor-CAO dyad must first understand their roles or operational rules of the position through the structural frame. The structure of the roles is taught in most academic and training courses and is understood by the general public as the norm of behavior for both mayor and CAO.

My data suggests that many mayors wrongly believe the mayoralty position holds at least symbolic power that translates into directing the municipality in terms of both policy and administration. Some data suggested members of the public also believe the mayor has the absolute power to direct the municipal corporation. My data suggested these public misperceptions of the structural roles of democratically-delivered power, demands clear deference on the part of the CAO. There may be times where this misperception of structural power is used by mayors to override a CAO's professional responsibilities; this causes structural dysfunctionality within the mayor-CAO relationship. One mayor commented during interview: "If there is any little thing, [I say] 'hey CAO I really think we should be looking at this instead [of what the CAO was doing]. Can we do that please?'" And [the CAO will} do that" (participant M7).

This statement shows that there are competing perceptions of the structural rules for each member of the mayor-CAO relationship dyad. However, my data confirms the work of Mouritzen and Svara (2002), Stocker and Thompson-Fawcett (2014), and Svara (2001, 2006), in suggesting that a "complementarity relationship" between these mayor and CAO in the operation of a municipal organization will take place for better or worse. If the dyad of mayor-CAO is focused on good governance, they will use the relationship to reconcile these differences in

perception of the rules and deliver positive outcomes. On the other hand, the different perceptions and the structural conflict embedded in these positions may cause interpersonal conflict that will likely result in negative outcomes.

Therefore, structural rules sometimes cause conflict that can only be resolved through the relationship's interpersonal functionality. For example, the complementarity model (Svara, 1999b) suggests that interdependence and reciprocal influence may be the mechanisms to solve these structural misconceptions. In this way, reciprocal influence and interdependence may then reduce the apparent conflict since each member of the dyad will be able to call upon the other to reconcile the conflicting rule. This may then reduce the tension within their ambiguous roles (Svara, 1999b).

Within the structural roles of both mayor and CAO the interviews identified a number of social processes (second ribbon from the top in Figure 5.1) that were used to establish the operational aspects of the mayor-CAO relationship. If the actors in the mayor-CAO dyad do not follow the structural roles as formally defined by most statutes, how can they get the public's work done? This question leads to considering the interpersonal frame to find the relationship dimensions that may answer this question.

Data here suggested that the strongest relationships between mayors and CAOs operate at high levels of both the structural and interpersonal frames of the relationship. High levels of trust are repeatedly cited as resulting from a functional relationship within the dyad. Understanding the social processes embedded within this specific mayor-CAO relationship must include the structural and interpersonal aspects of the relationship (McAllister, 1995; Siegel, 2015).

I do not discount the structural aspects of the relationship; however, much research has been completed in this positivist endeavor and points to the need to better understand the

structural conclusions of Mouritzen and Svara (2002), Stocker and Thompson-Fawcett (2014), and Svara (2001, 2006), and others. What does the integration of interdependence, reciprocal influence, and overlapping functions of the Complementarity Model mean in the practical world? Some have concluded that the dichotomy between policy and administration, although useful, does not help explain the shared responsibility of governing. (Aston et al., 2007). How then do we understand the link between this relationship's integration and functionality within the mayor-CAO relationships?

The complementarity model's integration of functions can be understood in both a positivist and constructionist manner. I am proposing in my theoretical proposition one, that the intersectionality of these perspectives will allow a more complete understanding of the mayor-CAO relationship and may elucidate the functionality of the relationship more clearly.

Leadership within this new conceptual understanding of my theoretical proposition one will need to focus on the leadership of the both the structural understanding of the mayor and CAO positions and a relationship understanding of leadership (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007; Lazarus, 1991).

Bolman and Deal's (2009) research on leadership frames, where combining different perspectives better explains leadership, could be used to bring both the structural and interpersonal frames to the combined mayor-CAO leadership. Golembiewski and Gabris (1995) contended that there is still room in the complementary model "for a better conceptualization of relationships" (p. 8). Other structural interpretations of leadership for the individual positions of mayor and CAO have been studied.

The contingency theory (Donaldson, 2001; Siegel, 2015b) and situational leadership (Graeff, 1983; McIntosh, 2009; Siegel, 2015b) can be used to explain CAO leadership. CAO

leadership research has primarily relied on the existing general leadership literature. Siegel (2015a) and McIntosh (2009) for example, have used situational leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969) and contingency theory (Donaldson, 2001). However, relational leadership involving CAOs in relationship with mayors is not available.

Mayoral leadership is seen in the accumulation and exercise of power (Svara, 1994). In 1960s to 1980s, descriptions of mayors reflected the traits-based explanation of leadership theory (Stogdill, 1948). Traits or characteristics of leadership at that time, in turn, reflected the longstanding “great man” approach to leading (Borgatta et al., 1954). Pressman (1972) and Sparrow (1984) suggested that mayors they studied saw power as their vehicle to become a great man.

Academic research on mayoralty leadership has mostly emulated from U.S. literature and therefore it confuses or disregards the two different models of local government governance, council-manager and mayor-council. This confusion makes the use of the bulk of the research difficult at best for leadership study because what is colloquially referred to as “strong mayor system” (mayor-council model) immediately confuses its leadership qualities. My research was within the council-manager system of governance and therefore cannot be compared too much to the U.S. research.

More research to broaden the applicability of this twin perspective of structural and interpersonal frames for the mayor-CAO relationship could be done quantitatively to hopefully reach a generalizable theory. Questionnaires investigating the relative importance of these two frames, sent to mayor-CAO dyads, would be helpful in understanding the foundational aspects of structural and interpersonal frames to the relationship’s functionality.

Theoretical proposition two: Relationship functionality. Ongoing mayor-CAO relationship functionality is based on the dyad's capacity to reconcile the ambiguous roles, responsibilities, expectations, and complex contexts within the structural and interpersonal capacities in which the mayor-CAO dyad operates. To more clearly focus on functionality of the mayor-CAO relationship, I propose the theoretical proposition that combines the intersectionality and reconciliation of these two parallel perspectives (structural and interpersonal) into a single understanding of functionality. Within this proposition, research on the two separate perspectives can then be weighted to understand when and how each perspective takes precedence. For example, are there contexts, roles and or interpersonal challenges that cause functionality or dysfunctionality within the mayor-CAO relationship? How does the intersectionality of structural and interpersonal perspectives come together to deliver outcomes for the dyad?

The data of this study presented the social phenomena that allows what seems like a seamless integration of disparate and conflictual challenges within the mayor-CAO relationship that results in effective outcomes. The numerous factors (trust, personality, personal boundaries, self-awareness, common beliefs, shapeshifting ability, context, negotiating, strategizing, harmonizing, power sharing) allow an immediate dyadic response to the municipal problems of the day. According to Cozolino (2014), the human brain is designed for such complicated computations in responding to external stimuli to effect survival and develop homeostats for emotional stability and effective relationships. Certainly, the mayor-CAO relationship is complicated, complex, ambiguous, and context driven, but not too much for our brains to handle. To better understand functionality within proposition two I present a detailed understanding.

Functionality. I designed and undertook this research to answer the questions: how does functionality within the mayor-CAO relationship operate? What aspects of a relationship result

in functionality within the dyad? Can this research provide guidance to the mayor and CAO to develop and sustain a functional relationship in service of the community? From the data it is apparent these are not a simple to answer. In fact, the data suggested there may be numerous different answers to these questions. The complexity of the mayor-CAO relationship is likely because of the many variables that are at play in any given moment.

In the past, most literature has looked at the mayor-CAO relationship as a structural set of roles and responsibilities to solve (Nalbandian, 2006; Svara, 1999b). If the right rules were followed and everyone within the dyad believed in the same reasons for these rules, then the outcomes of the relationship would be predictable and good. This is a world view that reflects the mechanical process of building a vehicle or an aircraft. If we follow the plan and the rules of physics we can fly our aircraft at some point in the future (Bolman & Deal, 2009; Siegel, 2015; Svara, 2001).

The data of many narrative experiences of mayor-CAO dyads do not support this explanation of how the relationship dyad functions. Although there are many important and necessary structural aspects to the roles and responsibilities it seems to be the mixing of the relationship dimensions, temporal stages, and affective environment within the dyad that allows the functionality of the relationship over time.

The definition of a mayor-CAO functional relationship is that the dyad relationship continues to produce successful municipal outcomes. For example, the mayor makes symbolic speeches, gets re-elected, and the CAO manages the municipality; within the dyad, they solve the daily conflicts common to every municipality.

In contrast, dysfunctional relationships do not produce successful outcomes, but result in CAO terminations or internal battles between the mayor and councilors supporting the CAO, or

helping the mayor terminate the CAO. Dysfunctionality can take time to manifest within the municipality. During these times, the mayor-CAO relationship will not advance through its developmental stages and likely be suspended at a very early stages of development.

Although not discussed nor the subject of this research, third party intervention may help the functionality of the mayor-CAO relationship. In one example from the interviews, “coaching” took place individually (mayor and CAO separately) and resulted in moving the relationship through a number of stages of development. Intervention in the mayor-CAO relationship may have some promise for future research.

Understanding functionality requires several factors: an understanding of structural realities of the dyad roles and responsibilities (Nalbandian, 2006; Svava, 1999b); understanding and optimizing the many different social processes going on within the dyad (Figure 5.1); dyad members to develop the emotional homeostatic environment (Schoore & Schoore, 2008; Siegel, 2015a); and self-awareness and the ability to shapeshift, necessary to deal with many challenges and changes within the municipal environment.

Internal capacities or skills of each dyad member will play a part in success, as will attitudes towards the relationship, the work and the outcomes of the municipality. For example, one mayor said of the relationship: “that just kind of sets the tone as to being open, being respectful and understanding the role that each other has to play” (participant M1).

Some interviewees suggest functionality “really comes down to one thing that our current mantra is ‘no surprises.’ And no surprises mean no surprises from staff to council and no surprises from council to staff” (participant M5). This was a common comment by mayors and speaks to a number of aspects surrounding functionality. On the face of it “no surprises” suggests that maintaining constant communications is an expected norm; however, it also speaks to the

emotionality of being surprised, not knowing, the locus of control being somewhere else, or other emotional reactions. In this context being surprised has a negative meaning and would likely cause an autonomic response of “fight or flight”.

Cozolino (2014) stated: “When surprise is evaluated to be negative the right amygdala activation dominates and responds in a fearful way. The amygdala is also the location in the brain that is the core of our fear circuitry” (Cozolino, 2014, pp.193–194). By inference, the opposite of a surprise emotionally is a homeostatic state of emotional wellbeing. Does this expression “no surprises”, which was commonly used by most mayors, a code for a dyad that operates without fear? Maybe.

The data also speaks to the results of many of the relationship’s dimensions. For example, according McAllister (1995), trust is developed over time first starting with cognitive trust and later, after reliability has been confirmed, may become affective trust where interpersonal care and concern is the definition of trust. Trust was mentioned numerous times in the interviews to describe a functional relationship. One mayor stated:

I would say the two that came to mind first are, trust, honesty, and by trust, I mean all the things we've already talked about with respect to trust and honesty. Same thing. All of the things I don't know if I can think of a third if you don't have those two things the trust and the ability to kind of ruthlessly honest. I think those are the two building blocks.
(participant M2)

Relatedly, from neurobiology research, Cozolino (2014) asserted that “we develop trust based on attunement and reciprocal interactions and are untrusting of those who appear unresponsive or mis-attuned to our state of mind” (Cozolino, 2014, p. 86). This suggests that attunement within the dyad’s common beliefs and self-awareness, will enhance the level of trust within the dyad.

Another mayor described trust without using the word as follows:

That's the give and take and that's the balance and that's how a healthy relationship can be sustained because you have to have it where both parties are feeling that they are being able to fulfill their own personal agendas to a certain degree, and within reason. And the goals that they had set out to accomplish for both the CAO and the mayor. And so, the best way to do that is to have a healthy open dialogue. And when you don't agree, say so. Don't try to circumnavigate through a back channel or back door. (participant M1)

According to this mayor, honest and transparent communications within the dyad seems necessary for a functional relationship. The advice “don’t agree, say so” also speaks to the possibility that either party in the dyad could shapeshift; shapeshifting is implied by speaking your own truth or changing your perspective to maintain homeostatic emotional balance. This also implies a low level of fear and therefore low amygdala activation (Schore & Schore, 2008; Siegel, 1999, 2007).

Functionality can be seen as a continuum from fully dysfunctional to fully functional. Like all relationships there will be an ebb and flow to the reality of interacting day-to-day. Some days our emotional selves are wrestling with completely external concerns which blind us to things happening in the here and now. Some days, due to the context of the issue, we are more focused on the present situation (Siegel, 1999).

The data suggests that mayor-CAO relationships ebb and flow; this may logically correspond with the relationship functionality’s variability. How then do we isolate the necessary ingredients for a functional relationship? The role of the mayor and the role of the CAO combine to provide organizational leadership to the council, the organization, and the community (McIntosh, 2009; Siegel, 2015a, 2015b). This collective leadership is communicated individually and collectively in the mutual pursuit of good governance through interdependence, functional overlap and reciprocal influence (Svara, 1999b). From the structural perspective, good intentions in reciprocal influence, functional overlap, and interdependence, should result in positive

outcomes which in turn should create a fully functioning relationship (Svara, 2001). However, this is not my understanding from the interview data nor the fullest explanation of a functional relationship.

Relationship functionality is multifaceted and requires an understanding of both the structural perspective and the interpersonal reality without privileging either perspective. For example, numerous mayors interviewed here, had been involved in terminating CAOs but few would discuss these events.

Clearly, there are legal issues in discussing terminations that may have inhibited discussion in the interviews; but more importantly I believe, there were emotional reactions to my asking for an explanation of what happened. One mayor flatly refused to discuss a well-publicized CAO termination. Others brushed off the issue of termination during the interview. However, one mayor did speak about a termination stating:

They [the CAO] control not only the operations of the city but they also control how the council is making decisions, and when council realized what was going on it was a bit of a cold water splash in the face. But there was nothing you could do because if you changed your decision, you're in the middle of a lawsuit. It was very controlling. We didn't realize that it was actually impacting the morale of staff in a significant way. (participant M5)

This circumstance speaks to the structural issue of who is really in charge—the council and mayor or the CAO? These types of discussions are difficult because the perception of who is in charge is significantly in the eye of the beholder. However, the most important statement in the quote above, in my view, is the comment about staff morale. Structurally, the staff's morale is a matter for the CAO to deal with, but from an overall organizational point of view, the council and mayor are calling on their empathy for the staff as a reason for the subsequent termination of the CAO.

From the interviews in this study, emotions had a large part to play in this relationship's dysfunctionality. If the CAO is seen by the mayor as a controlling person, and, as a result, the other staff's morale is low then it follows that the mayor-CAO dyad is dysfunctional. I conclude this without making a judgement about any party. It just points out the importance of the emotional aspects of maintaining a functional relationship dyad (Fletcher & Ragins 2007). Using my earlier data, this could be considered a personality issue related to the CAO's need for control as was the explanation of the mayor who wanted to be all the department heads rolled into the mayor's position. Again, this comes back to the central theme of who runs or is in control of the municipal government (Siegel, 2015)

It has become apparent that functionality and its relationship aspects are not easily described or understood. It is easier to understand what dysfunctionality is and what it results in. However, this research has attempted to focus on the positive outcomes of a functional relationship and what aspects lead to such outcomes. The data suggest that a functional relationship between a mayor and CAO should include an understanding of and willingness to operate within each member of the dyad's structural roles and responsibilities; trustworthiness within the dyad, honest open communication; some common beliefs; the ability to shapeshift; and the importance of trust that implies "no reciprocal surprises". The data also suggest that this functionality evolves over time and subject to its internal experiences, following generally four distinct stages where certain dimensions of the relationship focuses on one aspect of the relationship over another (center ribbon of Figure 5.1).

Theoretical proposition three: Shapeshifting capacity. The capacity to shapeshift is used to build and maintain functionality within the mayor-CAO relationship dyad. One of the aspects that appears to affect functionality within the mayor-CAO relationship is dyad member's

individual capacity to shapeshift. Shapeshifting as the core dimension of the relationship, is the ability to change one's perspective, attitude or point of view without a negative residual affective result.

Shapeshifting capacity was identified as the core dimension of the mayor-CAO relationship. Both mayors and CAOs used this capacity to resolve and reconcile conflicting perspectives, attitudes and points of view on the many issues that are raised day-to-day within the local government context. This capacity was repeatedly observed within the interviews of both mayors and CAOs. An explanation of the motivation for this process is the underlying theory of Redekop's (2002) identity needs theory where the dyad actors behave to satisfy their identity needs. A similar framework is seen in Kegan's (1995) levels of mental complexity, where different levels of complexity may be necessary for shapeshifting.

Sometimes this capacity is used in combination with primary dimensions, either before or after the intended outcome. For example, I could contemplate that before a policy is harmonized within the dyad, a discussion regarding each dyad member's perspectives on the issue at hand may cause a shapeshift in one or both dyad members. Likewise, the shapeshifting may take place after one member of the dyad uses their independent role to make a decision.

Shapeshifting allows for relationship functionality and has been discovered operating within plain sight using only a small amount of cognitive recognition. Cozolino's (2014) suggestion that much of our relationship capability is connected to our unconscious attachment schema, does support the idea that shapeshifting is taking place somewhat unconsciously within each individual's overall relationship strategy (Schoore & Schoore, 2008; Siegel 1999). Some mayors and CAOs may arrive in their position with high levels of shapeshifting capacity while others will not.

Self-awareness may also play a part in bringing one's shapeshifting capacity more into the cognitive operations of our brains. In this way, rather than reacting to a vague or unconscious feeling, we may be able to cognitively direct this capacity towards our existing conflicts (Siegel 1999). Being generally more self-aware in regard to our emotions may also help with shapeshifting.

Affective trust may also play part in shapeshifting by reducing the risk of psychological harm and therefore reducing the "costs" associated with shapeshifting. Trust, both cognitive and affective, will allow for shapeshifting or even encourage it (McAllister, 1995). Given that the data repeatedly connected trust with the mayor-CAO relationship functionality, it could be that interviewees may be inadvertently referring to trust but actually meaning shapeshifting because they lack that terminology.

Shapeshifting is therefore a powerful tool for relationship functionality within the mayor-CAO relationship. It acts in many contexts as a methodology for solving conflict and building interpersonal capacity within a mayor-CAO relationship. Additional research would help better define the social process of shapeshifting and determine how important it is in mayor-CAO functionality.

Research Limitations

There are limitations to grounded theory methodology. The data are difficult and time-consuming to gather. The data will always involve perceptions and opinions of the interviewees. Additionally, the test by which a researcher believes he or she has obtained all the data available is the limiting concept of saturation. As it emerges, a theoretical proposition is then developed and tested against existing data and no new concepts or explanations are offered. There are obvious limitations in using saturation to determine whether you have captured all the

necessary data to confirm a theoretical proposition. The limited sampling (i.e., drawing interviewees only from British Columbia local governments of five to 100 thousand population), the many variations of structure of local governments in other locations (strong and weak mayor systems), and the possibility of a special culture of local government mayors and CAOs in British Columbia, exemplify characteristics that could limit the use of saturation as a boundary for further interviewing.

Also, some interviewees may misrepresent issues, skewing the data to follow a certain ideological approach. Or, the interviewees with the most unusual perspectives may be reluctant to share their perceptions not wishing to seem eccentric or outlandish to the interviewer (recalling that because of my long career as CAO, many of those interviewed will know that I am in their field and professional association). Because the interviewees are self-selected,¹⁸ some potential interviewees may have self-selected not be included and therefore the researcher may miss data that may be important in making sense of the findings.

A final note on my personal positionality: in constructivist methodology, the data and its meaning are co-constructed between the researcher and interviewees. As I am an active and practicing CAO, this co-construction will have my positionality deeply embedded within. On many occasions during the interviews, I actively engaged the interviewees to probe for better understand terms and ideas than initially presented. I even went so far as interpreting some of the interviewees' statements, which I rephrased or reframed and then asked them for confirmation. All of this activity suggests the possibility that, from some perspectives, I may have more than co-constructed the data to the point of contaminating the data with my own prejudices. However,

¹⁸ Self-selected means the interviewees choose to be part of the research, once the researcher requests by email interviewees to come forward. The interviewee criteria include a number of relationships with mayor, if a CAO, and a number of CAOs, if a mayor. The rigor of grounded theory as a methodology, will minimize the bias inherent in this method and self-selecting interviewees.

all of the participants have been interviewed by the mainstream media many times and are well aware of how interviewers can lead the interviewee. Because they had no motivation to manipulate either me or the data, I believe this process co-created valid rather than contaminated data. Most interviewees were enthusiastic about the data and the need for this research.

The last issue of potential bias within the data are my natural positionality as the researcher. As a CAO I do come to this research from the normative position of valuing efficiency and protecting against political corruption; however, I have attempted to hold my positionality at bay. I confirm this action because I did find data that was both new and interesting and helped me “shapeshift” towards a broader perspective on a number of issues.

Implications for Leadership and Change

Throughout North America, there are hundreds, possibly thousands, of mayor-CAO relationships failing or that have become significantly dysfunctional. There are obviously many reasons for this unfortunate circumstance. However, I have presented numerous possible reasons for this failure. Clearly, focusing on the longstanding idea of a readily distinguishable dichotomy between policy and administration, has a limited benefit, according to the data presented here.

The cost to local governments, human suffering, and just plain confusion resulting from the lack of a full understanding of the reasons for positive functionality, or not, within these mayor-CAO relationships is unfortunate. Recognizing the possible reasons for functionality should be helpful for practicing mayors and CAOs. The data from this study is not automatically generalizable, but this new, broader understanding of the relationship and some of the possible remedies, may help mayors and CAOs with existing relationship challenges. At the minimum, my findings open lines of discussion that might previously have been overlooked.

The associational organizations such as the International City Managers Association, the Canadian equivalents—the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities—may take interest in the findings of this research, given the cost of such mayor-CAO relationship breakdowns.

The issue of functionality within any hierarchical relationship may also be informed by these outcomes. The chairs of boards of directors and their CEOs of educational, medical, business and other institutions, may also find that there are parallels to the relationship issues they face. Given how common hierarchical relationships are within our working world, a better understanding of the social phenomena within these types of relationships may be quite helpful in the future.

Rost (1993) argued that by focusing on the periphery and content aspects of leadership (e.g., scientific traits, contingencies, techniques and knowledge about organizations, human behavior, etc.) we still do not understand the nature of relational leadership. Cunliffe and Eriksen (2011), studying relational leadership, argued for “conceptualizing leadership as embedded in the everyday relationally-responsive dialogical practices of leaders” (p. 1425). This type of leadership was present within the data where day-to-day interactions between the mayor and CAO resulted in collective leadership outputs. Given that the very concept of leadership is ambiguous in this case, the use of the term, leadership, with other modifiers maybe difficult at best.

In summing up, I will use what research there is within Canadian leadership literature that most closely addresses the roles and positions of mayor-CAO dyad. This research is mayoralty leadership, and CAO leadership. I will concentrate on Canadian research since this dissertation’s data are collected within a Canadian context.

In regard to mayoral leadership, Urbaniak (2014) concluded,

There is no inherent reason why a theory of mayoralty leadership has to be specific to the national context. Institutional structures may be different, attitudes about government may vary, but mayoral leadership in both countries is about establishing a narrative, influencing senior levels of government, crisis management, and usually about proposing rather than unilaterally promulgating. . . . [In research] determining the relative weight of such variables as personality, political culture, interests and institutions is a complicated objective and remains considerable confusion over research methods and appropriate questions, to say nothing of the difficulty of sorting out facts from groundless popular assumptions. (p. 222)

The mayor's leadership must therefore be seen as a future academic endeavor.

The general leadership literature could be adapted for the mayor but that is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Some other applicable research is discussed in Chapter II.

Specific CAO leadership research in Canada has fared better, with research being completed by both McIntosh (2009) in his dissertation *Defining Situational Leadership for the Local Government Chief Administrative Officer* and by Siegel (2015a) in *Leaders in the Shadows: The Leadership Qualities of Municipal Chief Administrative Officers*. Both scholars have dealt with different aspects of CAO leadership.

McIntosh (2009) concluded that CAOs may operate within a situational leadership paradigm, influenced by the strategic contexts they find themselves within. Siegel (2015a) determined that CAOs lead in three directions: up to Council, out to the community, and down to the operational organization. Both of these works focus on the positivist view of CAO leadership and explicitly discuss the mayor-CAO relationship only collaterally, focusing more on relationships between council and CAO.

Siegel (2015a) does write about Judy Rodgers, the highly accomplished, ex-city manager of Vancouver, BC, emphasizing her relational abilities to execute her brand of leadership. This may have some applicability in the mayor-CAO relationship since Rodgers recounted, within

Siegel's text, her experiences with three mayoralty relationships over her tenure at the City of Vancouver. For example, another interviewee states this about Rodgers:

[She] somehow turned [a mayor who opposed a project Rodgers was advocating] into the biggest supporter of the four pillars drug strategy that Canada knew! . . . After that, [the mayor] was leading the way, he understood the issues, he got what was happening—that was Judy!

From this quote, it is apparent that the CAO had negotiated/influenced the mayor on a major policy issue using her interpersonal leadership capacity of relationship orientation (Siegel, 2015a) to encourage the mayor's shapeshifting to this new perspective.

Leader-Member-Exchange (LMX) theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) and leader/follower research could have had some direct applicability in investigating the mayor-CAO relationship however, the clear hierarchical¹⁹ aspects needed to have a leader/follower dyad were missing in the data.

Other relationship research from social psychology, including attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969; Bretherton, 1992), relational cultural theory (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007), and relational theory (Lazarus, 1991), can further illuminate the interpersonal motivations of the mayor-CAO relationship. These theories do help explain the functionality of the mayor-CAO relationship by articulating the interpersonal aspects of the dyad. For example, attachment theory partially explains the reasons why some dyads do not function well, whereas others do.

Using the term transactional relationship or transactional leadership, as in the LMX nomenclature (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), or a transformative or partnership relationship, can be two different ends of a scale of relationship leader styles. According to Graen and Uhl-Bien's

¹⁹ The mayor has a notional hierarchical relationship with the CAO because the CAO's employer is all of the council, who will collectively approve the CAO's contract and perform a performance evaluation. However, the mayor will have substantial influence with the council on CAO performance if the relationship between mayor and council is functional, which many times it is not.

(1995) definitions of these two relationship dyads or leadership styles, *transactional* involves the hierarchical, economic based exchanges, whereas the *transformative* relationship involves a relationship that involves reciprocal growth and mutual development. McLean (2014) suggested that within this concept of relational leadership, the relationship dyad produces a separate entity the relationship that co-creates this collective leadership. All of these attributes of transactional and transformative relationship can be seen within the data in my study. If the mayor-CAO relationship dyad's outputs are seen as from their joint leadership then the interpersonal understanding of the relationship can use these leadership styles as one way of describing the data collected.

Within leadership literature, others have studied the attributes or behaviors that support relational leadership. Substantial research has been done on trust and, specifically, on the trust in leadership in organizations (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). The data of my study confirm that trust is an important dimension or aspect of the mayor-CAO relationship. Trust fits within the interpersonal understanding of the mayor-CAO relationship. Trust was mentioned many times in the interviews to describe attributes of a functional relationship. Trust within a relationship empirically points to improved organizational outputs on a number of dimensions of organizational life (McAllister, 1995). This was confirmed by numerous interviews in this study that used trust to describe a high output relationship between the mayor and CAO.

My data needs substantial interpretation to relate to Redekop's (2002) identity needs since interviewees did not speak specifically about their needs during their interviews. I suggest that the five identity needs described by Redekop (2002)—recognition, security, connectedness, action, and meaning-making—will be significant for the internal workings of the dyad; but understanding the mayor-CAO dyad's leadership in this context was not apparent from the data.

Assessment of the interpersonal relationship could be used in subsequent research to investigate the latter two stages of the mayor-CAO relationship, their task performing and relational growth, since needs will not be as prevalent until the relationship has a pattern of positive dyad outcomes to measure needs against.

Exploring the manner in which the mayor-CAO relationship should function based on best practice and the classic dichotomy's conventions, or the complementary relationship model (Nalbandian, 2006; Svara, 1999b) is probably why these orthodoxies do not explain the growing numbers of CAO terminations and dysfunctional mayor-CAO relationships.

Within the data of the mayor-CAO relationship, the transformative relational leadership platform (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) appears to be a useful way to explain how it is that numerous mayor-CAO dyads actually stay functional in the relational growth stage of the relationship since transformational leadership was not noted in the data until the final stages of the mayor-CAO relationship. As noted earlier, this transactional/transformational scale provides another way to understand the structural relationship and leadership of the mayor-CAO's relationship.

In contrast, if the relationship between the mayor and CAO is seen mainly as transactional, there was little data to support internal matters of meaning-making and identity needs. However, the transformational relationship (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) is designed for growth and mutual learning as is the relational cultural theory (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007). Both suggest learning and healing our emotions within a relationship, or as a result of a relationship, will allow the honest, intimate conversation that may explain the manner in which each member of the dyad constructs their meaning and their identity. A transformative relationship allows for the exploration of each person's worldviews and their individual nuances. This is a place where understanding each other's level of mental complexity—or even being aware of the notion that

there are variable capacities for dealing with complexity (Kegan, 1995; Kegan & Lahey, 2009)—is possible and even encouraged so as to add to a mutual understanding of how each person constructs their meaning and identity, and, therefore, their leadership.

It was difficult to use these theories within the data since most interviewees did not speak in a manner that would allow a clear connection to be made between the data and existing theories. Rather than interpreting the data, I make the assumption that these leadership possibilities could be seen within the relational growth stage of the relationship with the data presenting two examples of a transformational relationship between a mayor and CAO. Within this social construct of a transformative leadership relationship, a conversation about what is in the best interest of the municipality can take place, regardless of structural realities.

The data presents four stages of the relationship's trajectory. The relationship between mayor and CAO is dynamic and likely starts with a set of defined roles and responsibilities for each member of the dyad. I call this the Learning and Orientation stage (middle white ribbon in Figure 5.1). These structural roles are defined externally but they are also interpreted internally by each, based on their past experiences, education, ideology, worldviews, role models within the local government fraternity and culture (Aston et al., 2007).

In the next stage of development—what I have called the Test Driving stage—these structural responsibilities are then interpreted individually to make meaning and develop a new identity by each person in the dyad. Subsequently, a dyad develops a process for exchanging information and supplies a place for the testing of thoughts, ideas, preferences, worldviews, ideologies, feelings, and identities.

The third stage of the relationship—Task Performing—allows the leadership of the dyad to emerge. Conflict, and specifically how the mayor and CAO dyad engage in conflict, is

considered one of the important variables that must be managed within each stage of the relationship.

The fourth stage of the relationship, the Interpersonal Growth stage, reflects a meaningful relationship between the mayor and CAO that allows the transformative aspects of the final stage of the relationship. My research suggests that shapeshifting, negotiating, strategizing, power sharing, boundary setting and harmonizing (Figure 5.1) all play an important part in managing conflict regardless of which stage of the mayor-CAO relationship the dyad is within.

Conclusion

My four-year doctoral journey of discovery has been long and, at times, difficult. Although I have no absolute answers to my research questions, I do have new perspectives on how the functionality of the mayor-CAO relationship dyad may operate. Suggestions of new ways of valuing different processes and phenomena have been made so as to reach the most effective way of understanding the mayor-CAO relationship. Because every relationship has its own context, history and dynamics there will not be any “correct” ways of making the relationship functional, however the research has presented a different way of understanding the mayor-CAO relationship’s dyad. I hope that through this learning, the dysfunctionality of these mayor-CAO relationships—which I have experienced personally—can be reduced. It may lead to less conflict and pain and a more stable functionality for those mayors and CAOs who are trying to serve their communities for the public good.

References

- Aberbach, J. D., Putnam, R. D., & Rockman, B. A. (1981). *Bureaucrats and politicians in western democracies*. Harvard University Press.
- Arreguin-Toft, I. (2001). How the weak win wars: A theory of asymmetric conflict. *International Security*, 26(1), 93–128. <https://doi.org/10.1162/016228801753212868>
- Ashton, M., Kushner, J., & Siegel, D. (2007). Personality traits of municipal politicians and staff. *Canadian Public Administration*, 50(2), 273–289. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-7121.2007.tb02013.x>
- Avolio, B. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2005). Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16(3), 315–338. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.001>
- Barrick, M. R., & Mount, M. K. (1991). The big five personality dimensions and job performance: a meta-analysis. *Personnel psychology*, 44(1), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1991.tb00688.x>
- Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2009). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass
- Borgatta, E. F., Bales, R. F., & Couch, A. S. (1954). Some findings relevant to the great man theory of leadership. *American Sociological Review*, 19(6), 755–759. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2087923>
- Bowen, G. A. (2008). Naturalistic inquiry and the saturation concept: a research note. *Qualitative Research*, 8(1), 137–152. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794107085301>
- Bowers, B. J., & Schatzman, L. (2009). Dimensional analysis, as an approach to grounded theory”. In, J. M. Morse, P. N. Stern, J. Corbin, B. J. Bowers, K. Charmaz, & A. E. Clarke (Eds.), *Developing grounded theory: The second generation* (pp. 107–126). Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Pres
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss, Vol. I: Attachment*. New York, NY: Basic Books
- Bowlby, J., May, D. S., & Solomon, M. (1989). *Attachment theory*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Boynton, R. P., & Wright, D. S. (1971). Mayor-manager relationships in large council-manager cities: A reinterpretation. *Public Administration Review*, 31(1), 28–36. <https://doi.org/10.2307/974954>
- Bretherton, I. (1992). The origins of attachment theory: John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth. *Developmental Psychology*, 28(5), 759–775. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.28.5.759>
- Brittain, H. L. (1951). *Local government in Canada*. Toronto, Canada: Ryerson Press.

- Broussine, M. (2000) The capacities needed by local authority chief executives. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 13(6), 498–507.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/09513550010356520>
- Buholzer, W. A. (2005). *The community charter: B.C. local government in transition.*, Vancouver, Canada: Continuing Legal Education.
- Burns, J. (1978). *Leadership*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Campbell, J. (2008). *The hero with a thousand faces* (3rd ed.). Novato, CA: New World Library. (Original work published 1949)
- Chang, H. (2016). *Autoethnography as method* (2nd ed.). London, UK: Routledge.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Cheong, J. O., Kim, C., Rhee, D. Y., & Zhang, Y. (2009). The policy role of city managers: An empirical analysis of cooperative relationship in policy process between city managers and elected officials. *International Review of Public Administration*, 14(2), 25–36.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/12294659.2009.10805153>
- Clarke, A. (2005). *Situational analysis: Grounded theory after the postmodern turn*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Contaminated Sites Regulations. (2016). Retrieved from <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/site-remediation/contaminated-sites>.
- Cozolino, L. (2014). *The neuroscience of human relationships: Attachment and the developing social brain*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton
- Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Cuff, G. B. (2002). *Making a difference: Cuff's guide for municipal leaders*. St. Thomas, Canada: Municipal World.
- Cunliffe, A. L., & Eriksen, M. (2011). Relational leadership. *Human Relations*, 64(11), 1425–1449. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726711418388>
- Demir, T., & Reddick, C. G. (2012). Understanding shared roles in policy and administration: An empirical study of council-manager relations. *Public Administration Review*, 72(4), 526–535. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2011.02551.x>
- Dirks, K. T., & Ferrin, D. L. (2002). Trust in leadership: meta-analytic findings and implications for research and practice. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(4), 611–628.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.4.611>
- Donaldson, L. (2001). *The contingency theory of organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

- Dunn, D. D., & Legge, J. S., Jr. (2001). U.S. local government managers and the complexity of responsibility and accountability in democratic governance. *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory*, 11(1), 73–88.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.jpart.a003495>
- Edmondson, A. C., & McManus, S. E. (2007). Methodological fit in management field research. *Academy of Management Review*, 32(4), 1246–1264.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2007.26586086>
- Eurich, T. (2017). *Insight: Why we're not as self-aware as we think and how seeing ourselves clearly helps us succeed at work and in life*. New York, NY: Crown Business.
- Eurich, T. (2018, January 4). What self-awareness really is (and how to cultivate it). *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2018/01/what-self-awareness-really-is-and-how-to-cultivate-it>.
- Fletcher, J. K., & Ragins, B. R. (2007). Stone center relational cultural theory. In B. R. Ragins & K. E. Kram (Eds.), *The handbook of mentoring at work: Theory, research, and practice* (pp. 373–399). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.
- Fox, J., & Anderegg, C. (2014). Romantic relationship stages and social networking sites: Uncertainty reduction strategies and perceived relational norms on Facebook. *Cyber Psychology, Behavior, & Social Networking*, 17(11), 685–691.
<https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2014.0232>
- Gadamer, H. G. (1989). *Truth and method* (J. Weinsheimer & D. G. Marshall, Trans.). New York, NY: Continuum. (Original work published 1975)
- Georgiou, I. (2014). Seeing the forest for the trees: An atlas of the politics–administration dichotomy. *Public Administration Review*, 74(2), 156–175.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.12163>
- Geyskens, I., Steenkamp, J. B. E., Scheer, L. K., & Kumar, N. (1996). The effects of trust and interdependence on relationship commitment: A trans-Atlantic study. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 13(4), 303–317.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0167-8116\(96\)00006-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0167-8116(96)00006-7)
- Glaser, B. G. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity: Advances in the methodology of grounded theory*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G. (1998). *Doing grounded theory: Issues and discussions*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine.

- Golembiewski, R. T., & Gabris, G. (1995). Tomorrow's city management: Guides for avoiding success-becoming-failure. *Public Administration Review*, 240–246. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3110242>
- Goodnow, F. J., & Bates, F. G. (1919). *Municipal government*. New York, NY: Century.
- Graeff, C. L. (1983). The situational leadership theory: A critical view. *Academy of Management Review*, 8(2), 285–291. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.1983.4284738>
- Graen, G. B., & Uhl-Bien, M. (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 6(2), 219–247. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843\(95\)90036-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843(95)90036-5)
- Grandey, A. A., Dickter, D. N., & Sin, H. P. (2004). The customer is not always right: Customer aggression and emotion regulation of service employees. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25(3), 397–418. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.252>
- Hays, S. P. (1964). The politics of reform in municipal government in the progressive era. *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 55(4), 157–169.
- Herget, J. E. (1976). The missing power of local governments: A divergence between text and practice in our early state constitutions. *Virginia Law Review*, 62(5), 999–1015. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1072400>
- Hicken, A. (2011). Clientelism. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 14, 289–310. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.031908.220508>
- Holloway, E., & Schwartz, H. (2018). Drawing from the margins: Grounded Theory research design and EDI Studies. In R. Bendl, L. A. E. Booyesen, & J. Pringle (Eds.), *Handbook of research methods on diversity management, equality and inclusion at work* (pp. 497–528). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Jerome, D. D. D., & Legge, S., Jr. (2002). Politics and administration in US local governments. *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory*, 12(3), 401–422. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.jpart.a003540>
- Jackson, B., & Parry, K. (2011). *A very short fairly interesting and reasonably cheap book about studying leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Jong, W. (2017). Meaning making by public leaders in times of crisis: An assessment. *Public Relations Review*, 43(5), 1025–1035. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2017.09.003>
- Jong, W., Dückers, M. L., & Velden, P. G. (2016). Leadership of mayors and governors during crises: A systematic review on tasks and effectiveness. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 24(1), 46–58.

- Kegan, R. (1995). *In over our heads: The mental demands of modern life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Kegan, R., & Lahey, L. L. (2009). *Immunity to change: How to overcome it and unlock potential in yourself and your organization*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.
- Kettering, S. (1988). The historical development of political clientelism. *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 18(3), 419–447.
- Kools, S., McCarthy, M., Durham, R., & Robrecht, L. (1996). Dimensional analysis: Broadening the conception of grounded theory. *Qualitative Health Research*, 6(3), 312–330. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104973239600600302>
- Lambert, L. (2002). A framework for shared leadership. *Educational Leadership*, 59(8), 37–40.
- Lazarus, R. S. (1991). Progress on a cognitive-motivational-relational theory of emotion. *American Psychologist*, 46(8), 819–834. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.46.8.819>
- Leach, S., & Wilson, D. (2002). Rethinking local political leadership. *Public Administration*, 80(4), 665–689.
- Local Government Management Association of British Columbia (2015). *LGMA preparing and supporting local government CAOs and senior managers into the next decade*. Retrieved from <http://www.lgma.ca/assets/Resources~and~Publications/Documents/LGMA%20Supporting%20Mgrs%20into%20Next%20Decade.pdf>
- Long, R. (2017) *Structural conflict: An explanation of homelessness in the international context*. Unpublished paper, Antioch University. Yellow Springs.
- McAllister, D. J. (1995). Affect- and cognition-based trust as foundations for interpersonal cooperation in organizations. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38(1), 24–59. <https://doi.org/10.5465/256727>
- McCabe, B. C., Feiock, R. C., Clinger, J. C., & Stream, C. (2008). Turnover among city managers: The role of political and economic change. *Public Administration Review*, 68(2), 380–386. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2007.00869.x>
- McGuigan, R. J., & Popp, N. (2016). *Integral conflict: The new science of conflict*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- McIntosh, G. A. (2009). *Defining situational leadership for the local government chief administrative officer* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <https://dspace.library.uvic.ca/handle/1828/2011>

- McLean, D. M. I. (2014). *Understanding relational agility: Exploring constructs of relational leadership through story*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <https://aura.antioch.edu/etds/100/>
- McVoy, E. C. (1940). Patterns of diffusion in the United States. *American Sociological Review*, 5(2), 219–227. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2083637>
- Mezirow, J. (1997). Transformative learning: Theory to practice. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 1997(74), 5–12. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.7401>
- Mills, J., Bonner, A., & Francis, K. (2006) The development of constructivist grounded theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), 25–35. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500103>
- Mintzberg, H. (2015). *Rebalancing society: Radical renewal beyond left, right, and center*. Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
- Montjoy, R. S., & Watson, D. J. (1995). A case for reinterpreted dichotomy of politics and administration as a professional standard in council-manager government. *Public Administration Review*, 55(3), 231–239. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3110241>
- Morrell, K., & Hartley, J. (2006). A model of political leadership. *Human Relations*, 59(4), 483–504. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726706065371>
- Mouritzen, P. E., & Svara, J. H. (2002). *Leadership at the apex: Politicians and administrators in Western local governments*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Nalbandian, J. (1991). *Professionalism in local government*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Nalbandian, J. (1994). Reflections of a “pracademic” on the logic of politics and administration. *Public Administrative Review*, 54(6), 531–536. <https://doi.org/10.2307/976672>
- Nalbandian, J. (1999). Facilitating community, enabling democracy: New roles for local government managers. *Public Administration Review*, 59(3), 187–197. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3109948>
- Nalbandian, J. (2005). Professionals and the conflicting forces of administrative modernization and civic engagement. *American Review of Public Administration*, 35(4) 311–326. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074005279897>
- Nalbandian, J. (2006). Politics and administration in local government. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 29(12), 1049–1063. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01900690600854688>
- Neumann, J. E., & Hirschhorn, L. (1999). The challenge of integrating psychodynamic and organizational theory. *Human Relations*, 52(6), 683–695. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872679905200601>

- Northouse, P. G. (2005). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Overeem, P. (2005). The value of the dichotomy: Politics, administration, and the political neutrality of administrators. *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, 27(2), 311–329. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10841806.2005.11029490>
- Porter, L. W., Lawler, E. E., & Hackman, J. R. (1975). *Behavior in organizations*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Pressman, J. L. (1972). Preconditions of mayoral leadership. *American Political Science Review*, 66(2), 511–524. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1957795>
- Rahman, H., & Seldon, Z. (2016). Spheres of decision-making in small and isolated municipalities: The Thompson-Nicola Regional District. *Canadian Public Administration*, 59(1), 153–174. <https://doi.org/10.1111/capa.12163>
- Reed, C. (2014). Constructing professional identities in ambiguity: The “shapeshifter.” *Academy of Management Proceedings*, 2014(1), 109–114. <https://doi.org/10.5465/ambpp.2014.95>
- Redekop, V. N. (2002). *From violence to blessing: How an understanding of deep-rooted conflict can open paths to reconciliation*. Ottawa, Canada: Novalis.
- Roniger, L. (2004). Review: Political clientelism, democracy and market economy. *Comparative Politics*, 36(3), 353–375. <https://doi.org/10.2307/4150135>
- Rosenbloom, D. (2008). The politics–administration dichotomy in US historical context. *Public Administration Review*, 68(1), 57–60. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2007.00836.x>
- Rost, J. C. (1993). *Leadership for the twenty-first century*. Westport, CN: Praeger
- Schatzman, L. (1991). Dimensional analysis: Notes on an alternative approach to the grounding of theory in qualitative research. In D. R. Maines (Ed.), *Social organization and social process: Essays in honor of Anselm Strauss* (pp. 303–314). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Schore, J. R., & Schore, A. N. (2008). Modern attachment theory: The central role of affect regulation in development and treatment. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 36(1), 9–20. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10615-007-0111-7>
- Seddon, J., Gaviria, A., Panizza, U., & Stein, E. (2001). *Political particularism around the world*. Stanford, CA: Inter-American Development Bank & Stanford University.
- Shaw, P. (2002). *Changing conversations in organisations: A complexity approach to change*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Siegel, D. (1999). *The developing mind*. New York, NY: Guilford.

- Siegel, D. (2010). The leadership role of the municipal chief administrative officer. *Canadian Public Administration*, 53(2) 139–161. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-7121.2010.00122.x>
- Siegel, D. (2015a). *Leaders in the shadows: The leadership qualities of municipal chief administrative officers*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- Siegel, D. (2015b). The “public service bargain” in local government: A new way of looking at relations between municipal councils and CAOs. *Canadian Public Administration*, 58(3) 406–425. <https://doi.org/10.1111/capa.12120>
- Sparrow, G. (1984). The emerging chief executive: The San Diego experience. *Urban Resources*, 2(1), 3–8.
- Spicker, P. (1994). Understanding particularism. *Critical Social Policy*, 13(39), 5–20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/026101839401303901>
- Steinert, T., Goebel, R., & Rieger, W. (2006). A nurse–physician co-leadership model in psychiatric hospitals: Results of a survey among leading staff members in three sites. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 15(4), 251–257. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1447-0349.2006.00431.x>
- Stewart, J. (2003). *Modernising British local government*. London, UK: Palgrave.
- Stiehm, J. H., & Townsend, N. W. (2002). *U.S. Army War College: Military education in a democracy*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Stocker, N., & Thompson-Fawcett, M. (2014). “It’s not like never-the-twain-shall-meet”: Politician–staff relationship structures in local government. *Local Government Studies*, 40(5), 791–808. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03003930.2014.887563>
- Stogdill, R. M. (1948). Personal factors associated with leadership: A survey of the literature. *The Journal of Psychology*, 25(1), 35–71. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.1948.9917362>
- Strauss, A. L. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research techniques*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Stueck, W. (2017, August 2). Nanaimo council needs lessons in manners, says report. *The Globe and Mail*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/nanaimo-city-council-needs-lessons-in-manners-report-says/article35870639/>
- Svara, J. (1985). Dichotomy and duality: Reconceptualizing the relationship between policy and administration in council-manager cities, *Public Administration Review*, 45(1) 221–232. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3110151>

- Svara, J. H. (1990). *Official leadership in the city: Patterns of conflict and cooperation*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Svara, J. (1994). *Facilitative leadership in local government: Lessons from successful mayors and chairpersons*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Svara, J. (1998). The Politics-Administration Dichotomy Model as aberration. *Public Administration Review*, 58(1), 51–58. <https://doi.org/10.2307/976889>
- Svara, J. (1999a). The shifting boundaries between elected officials and city managers in large council-manager cities. *Public Administration Review*, 59(6), 44–53. <https://doi.org/10.2307/977478>
- Svara, J. (1999b). Complementarity of politics and administration as a legitimate alternative to the dichotomy model. *Administration & Society*, 30(6), 676–705. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00953999922019049>
- Svara, J. (2001). The myth of the dichotomy: Complementarity of politics and administration in the past and future of public administration. *Public Administration Review*, 61(2), 176–183. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0033-3352.00020>
- Svara, J. (2006). The search for meaning in political-administrative relations in local government. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 29(12) 1065–1090. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01900690600854704>
- Svara, J. (2008). Beyond dichotomy: Dwight Waldo and the intertwined politics-administration relationship. *Public Administration Review*, 63(1) 46–52. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2007.00834.x>
- Sylwester, R. (1995). *A celebration of neurons: An educator's guide to the human brain*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Tindal, C. R., Tindal, S. N., Stewart, K., & Smith, P. (2016). *Local government in Canada*. Scarborough, Canada: Nelson Thomson Learning.
- Uhl-Bien, M. (2006). Relational leadership theory: Exploring the social processes of leadership and organizing. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 17(6), 654–676. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-9014-0_7
- Urbaniak, T. (2009). *Her Worship: Hazel McCallion and the development of Mississauga*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- Urbaniak, T. (2014). Studying mayoral leadership in Canada and the United States. *International Journal of Canadian Studies*, 49(2), 205–227. <https://doi.org/10.3138/ijcs.49.205>
- Urquhart, C., & Fernandez, W. (2013). Using grounded theory method in information systems: the researcher as blank slate and other myths. *Journal of Information Technology*, 28(3), 224–236. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-29266-3_7

- Waldo, D. (1948). *The administrative state: A study of the political theory of public administration*. New York, NY: Ronald.
- Wergin, J. F. (2018). Finding the right design for EDI research. In L. A. E. Booyesen, R. Benl, & J. K. Pringle (Eds.), *Handbook of research methods in diversity management, equality and inclusion at work* (pp. 36–59). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Whitaker, G. P., & De Hoog, R. H. (1991). City managers under fire: How conflict leads to turnover. *Public Administration Review*, *51*(2), 156–165. <https://doi.org/10.2307/977109>
- Wilson, W. (1887). The study of administration. *Political Science Quarterly*, *2*(2), 197–222. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2139277>
- Yin, R. K. (2013). *Case study research: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Zhang, Y. (2014). The city manager's role in policy-making: A perspective beyond substitution and collaboration models. *American Review of Public Administration*, *44*(3), 358–372. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074012467494>
- Zhang, Y., & Feiock, R. C. (2009). City managers' policy leadership in council-manager cities. *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory*, *20*(2), 461–476. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jopart/mup015>

Appendix A:
Ethics Application to the Institutional Review Board

ETHICS APPLICATION FOR THE DISSERTATION OF ROBERT A. LONG, PHD CANDIDATE, ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY.

Purpose: To investigate the relationship between the Mayor and Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) within Local governments looking to understand how this relationship is functional.

Recruitment: Mayors and CAOs will be recruited in British Columbia, Canada to be interviewed semi-structurally on their relationships' with either the Mayors (if a CAO) or CAOs (if a Mayor). These interviewees will be telephoned by the researcher and asked to participate. There will be no inducement or compensation to participate. No Mayor or CAO will be specifically excluded or included in the process of recruitment. The criteria will be the willingness to participate.

Method: The participants will be interviewed by the researcher. The interviews will be transcribed electronically after being recorded with a handheld digital sound recorder. The researcher will be in control of these recordings and transcripts in a locked cabinet during the research and for 7 years after the research is complete.

Risk: The participants are adults commonly adept at being interviewed by the media and speaking to the public on all aspects of local government operation. Therefore, there is little risk to the participant's reputation, or any aspect of their affective wellbeing. The interview material will be coded by a coding team without attribution to the individual participant. The value of this research allows the researcher to better understand the structural and interpersonal aspects the Mayor-CAO relationship. It is hoped that this research will help us better understand this relationship with a view to improving its functioning.

The rights of the participants: will be respected by aggregating the interview data and making sure no one person can be singled out from the interview material. A digital sound recorder will be used during the interviews.

Storage of Material: All interview transcripts, consent forms, or digital data will be kept under the direct control of the researcher and in a locked cabinet for the duration of the research and for 7 years after the research is complete. Digital data will be kept on a separate hard drive and kept in the same locked cabinet.

Appendix B:
Letters and Consent Form for Dissertation Interviews

I used Civic Info website to accumulate the municipalities that meet the population criteria of 5,000 -100,000 persons living within the municipalities.

My research assistant then sent a blanket email to the approximate municipalities. This email is attached:

“Hello [name],

Please allow me to introduce myself as a Research Assistant in service of the City of Prince Rupert. I’m contacting you on behalf of our City Manager Bob Long in order to request an interview with you.

Mr. Long is doing research for his PhD regarding what makes a functional relationship between Mayors and CAOs. The methodology involves interviewing Mayors or CAOs regarding their experience of working with the other. The interviews are confidential and regarding past Mayor-CAO relationships (not about current working relationships).

After the interviews, Mr. Long will be anonymizing and compiling data to track themes that emerge.

Thank you in advance for your time. I would be happy to connect with your assistant to look at availabilities, as well as answer any questions you have.

Best regards,

“Research Assistant”

My research assistant then organized interviews based on availability of the interviewees and my schedule.

Interviewees were then sent and signed the attached consent.

Robert A. Long a PhD candidate at Antioch University. Mr. Long’s dissertation is investigating aspects of a functional Mayor-CAO relationship.

Dear Mayors and CAO’s,

This is a consent form for an interview about investigating aspects within the Mayor-CAO relationship that develops and maintains a functional relationship. This survey will give you an opportunity to help uncover what facilitates a functional relationship, which may in turn help your cohort to improve these relationships.

Your interview responses will allow the researcher to investigate the many complex aspects of the Mayor-CAO relationship with the hope that an academic theory of this social phenomena (the Mayor-CAO relationship) will be forthcoming from the interview responses. This theory will then lead to a better understanding of the relationship dyad of these two positions.

There are minimal, if any, risks from participating. Your identity will be anonymous and confidential. You will not be asked for your name and all demographic data being collected will be reported as aggregated information. No personally identifiable information will be associated with your responses to any reports of these data. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes to complete.

These interviews are part of my dissertation research at Antioch University in the PhD in Leadership and Change Program. The study results may be included in future presentations and publications.

Your participation is voluntary, and you may elect to discontinue your participation at any time. This project has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at Antioch University. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact:

Dr. Lisa Kreeger
 Chair, Institutional Review Board
 PhD in Leadership and Change, Antioch University
 Email: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact me at:

Email: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxor 250-XXX-XXXX.

PLEASE SIGN if you consent to be part of the study as described:

I have read and understood the above information. By signing below, I am indicating that I have read and understood this consent form and agree to participate in this research study.

 (Signature)

 (Please Print Name)

Date

Please print a copy of this page for your records and return original to _____.

Thank you for your participation!