

THE POTENTIAL ROLE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT IN CATEGORY B MUNICIPALITIES

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Introduction

The South African Government's Demarcation process that has taken place during 1998 to 2000, has ensured that the entire Country now has "City to City" municipal areas. This process has been put in place to ensure that basic services can now be provided to all the people of the Country.

With the demarcation process the South African Government also introduced Integrated Development Planning (IDP). The IDP is a process through which municipalities prepare a strategic development plan, for a five-year period. The IDP is a product of the Integrated Development Planning process and a principle strategic planning instrument, which guides and describes all planning, budgeting, management and decision making in a municipality.

According to the Municipal Systems Act 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998), every new council that comes into office after the Local Government elections has to prepare its own IDP, which will guide them for the five years that they are in office. The IDP is therefore linked to the term of office of Municipal Councillors. This process is aimed to provide basic services to the community, by means of making the community part of the entire process.

The following was discussed and formed part of the corpus of the research:

- The Integrated Development Plan and its benefits in terms of service delivery to the community.
- The important role Project Management plays in terms of projects as reflected in the Integrated Development Plan. (See Figure 1 Summary of IDP Planning Process)
- The Project Manager must be on board during all the phases of the project life cycle, to ensure that the projects are implemented according to the following constraints: -
 - On time;
 - Within budget;
 - Utilising limited resources and
 - Achieving the desired deliverables.
- The Project Manager must have leadership qualities to be successful in a municipal environment.
- The Project Manager must be appointed on a performance contract to safeguard the interest of the community and the municipality.
- The inclusion of the community must always be a motivational force behind development, and therefore one of the most important role-players during the project management process.
- The Project Management plays a vital role in service delivery and community participation, especially when implementing the Integrated Development Plan.

The research was focussed on the following two headings: -

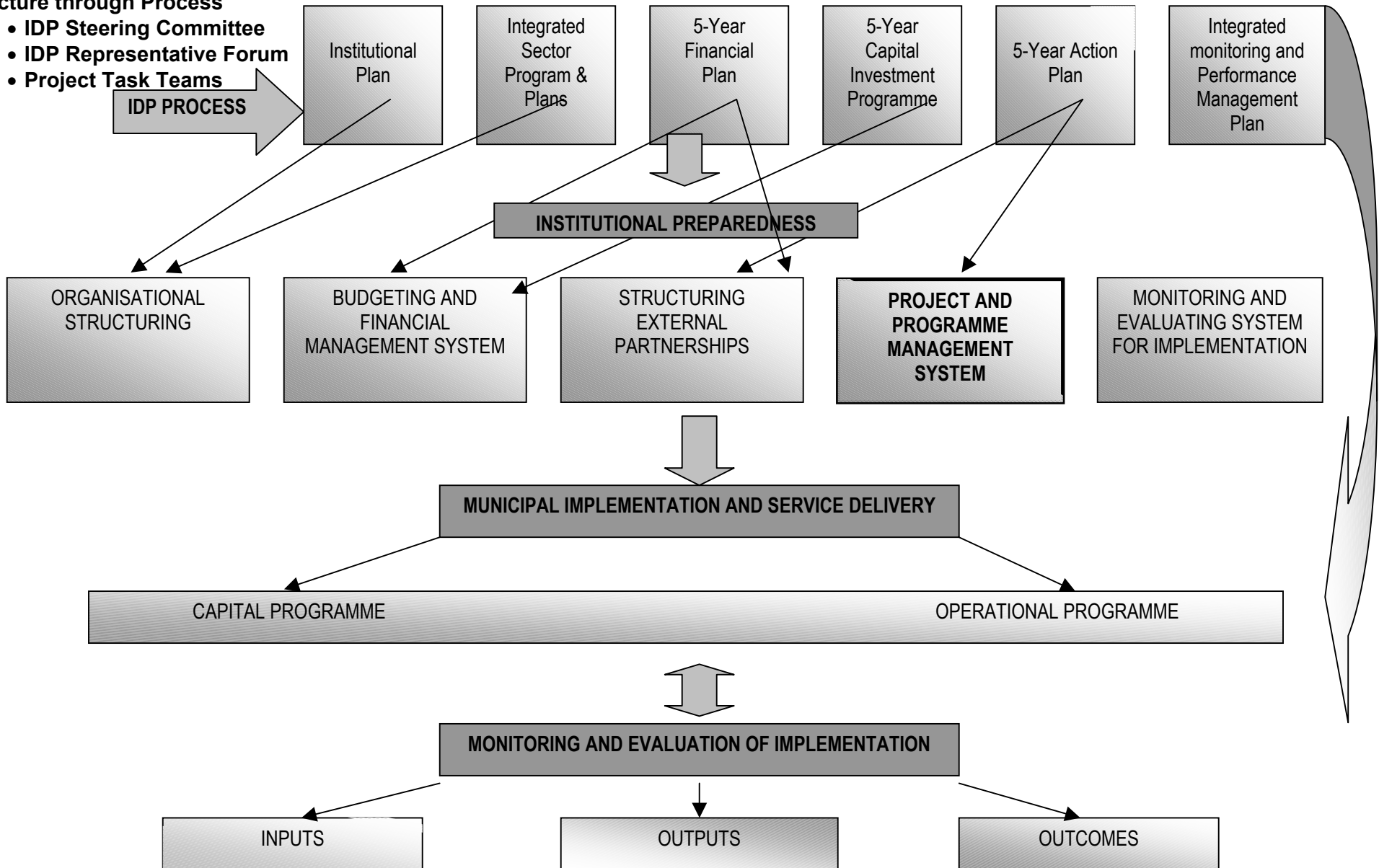
- (a) The need for Project Management when implementing projects as reflected in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of Category B Municipalities.
- (b) The application of Project Management and Community Participation development projects in Category B Municipalities

Figure 1 Summary of IDP Planning Process

(As per the IDP - Practical Guide to Municipalities SALGA)

Structure through Process

- IDP Steering Committee
- IDP Representative Forum
- Project Task Teams



The need for Project Management when implementing projects as reflected in the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of Category B Municipalities

Local Municipalities have been dramatically reduced in numbers, due to the South African Government's Demarcation process. This process has integrated existing municipality boundary areas that previously were not part of any municipality.

The majority of these newly incorporated areas are what is formally known as rural areas. These areas have minimal services, as the majority of the existing municipalities have spent monIES received from service delivery and rates in their own areas. The incorporation of these rural areas into existing municipalities will be putting great strain on the municipal budget in terms of service delivery.

The Integrated Development Plan has been implemented to address these backlogs of services in the new municipalities. Project Management will play a major role in the entire process, as the Project Manager must be involved during the various phases i.e. community liaison, public meetings, prioritisation of projects, drafting of the IDP document, the review process, etc.

The role of Project Management in Category B Municipalities when implementing projects in terms of the Integrated Development Plan will be researched to give clarity on the following: -

(a) The different types of Category B Municipalities.

Section 155 (1) of the Constitution provides that a Category B Municipality is one, which shares Municipal executive authority in its area with a Category C Municipality within the area in which it falls. Therefore a Category B Municipality is commonly referred to as a "Local Municipality".

According to the Acts/Provincial and Local Government/LOCAL GOVERNMENT: MUNICIPAL STRUCTURES ACT NO. 117 OF 1998/1, a Local Municipality is defined as follows: -

"Local Municipality" means a municipality that shares municipal executive and legislative authority in its area with a district municipality within whose area it

falls and which is described in section 155 (1) of the Constitution as a Category B Municipality.

The existing Category B Municipality or alternatively known as Amalgamated Urban - Rural Municipalities, are Municipalities with a full range of municipal powers and functions. These Municipal boundaries are extended to incorporate smaller neighbouring towns and rural hinterlands.

The amalgamation of this Urban - Rural Municipalities have: -

- Increased the rates base of the existing municipality.
- To a great extent reduced the cost of governance by eliminating duplication of municipal structures, increasing efficiency and effectiveness of resources.
- Facilitated access to public services by rural communities.
- Ensured that rural residents who contribute to the urban rates base share benefits of service delivery.
- Promoted urban and rural development.
- Improved Local Governance as a whole by combining existing municipal capacities.
- Enhanced Local Governance in terms of financial and technical support, due to the reduction of competition for resources.

(b) The organisational structures of Category B Municipalities.

In South Africa the majority of the existing Category B Municipalities can be divided into two forms of organisational structures i.e. a long, flat organisation with various departments, or the more line or functional type with fewer departments.

The majority of the existing Category B Municipalities is of a line type. This type of organisation compresses specialization into a smaller number of units, and can be interpreted to ease the pressure of the municipal manager in respect of span of control. The concept of span of control influences the organisational structure as it relates to the number of subordinates a manager will deal with. The norm for the majority of the existing Category B

Municipalities is a fairly narrow span, where managers and senior officials only have a maximum of two to four subordinates reporting to them.

(c) The functions of the various departments of Category B Municipalities.

- **Director: Corporate Services**

Competencies: Managerial and sound corporate service skills, excellent communication at all levels, public relations, team builder and player and knowledge of local government legislation.

Responsibilities: Includes administration, human resource management, estates, legal services, public relations and committee administration.

- **Director: Technical Services**

Competencies: Managerial and sound technical skills, excellent communication at all levels, public relations, team builder and player and an excellent corporate planner.

Responsibilities: Includes water, sewerage, waste management, roads, storm water, electricity and asset management.

- **Director: Community Services**

Competencies: Managerial and sound community skills, excellent communication at all levels, public relations, team builder and player and an excellent corporate planner.

Responsibilities: Includes primary health care, environmental care, and law enforcement including traffic

services, housing administration, pounds, parks and recreation and fire services.

- **Director: Development and Planning Services**

Competencies: Managerial and excellent communication skills at all levels, public relations, team builder and player and an excellent corporate planner.

Responsibilities: Includes, all the processes of the IDP (Integrated Development Plan), town planning, local economic development, tourism, development co-ordination and building control.

- **Director: Financial Officer**

Competencies: Managerial and sound financial management skills at an executive level, excellent communication at all levels, public relations, team builder and player and an excellent corporate planner.

Responsibilities: Includes estimates and budgeting, income control, expenditure control, credit control, insurance, grants, loans and indigent relief administration services.

- **Director: Project Management**

Competencies: Managerial and excellent communication skills at all levels, public relations, team builder and player and an excellent corporate planner. The project manager must be able to achieve project objectives through the matrix organisational structure.

Responsibilities: To implement projects in terms of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP)

(d) How existing organisational structures can be modified to integrate Project Management.

According to Gerrit van der Waldt and André Knipe (2001:60-63), in public institutions i.e. Local Municipalities, authorities (mandate or authority) play a mayor role. For instance, a Local Municipal Department may not make random internal changes if it does not have council approval.

Project Management requires a change in Local Municipality hierarchies, lines of authority and traditional utilization of resources. Project Management can be beneficial if implemented in Local Municipalities. Some of the benefits are as follows:-

- the Project Manager will have complete control of the project;
- completion times can be reduced;
- better control of expenditure and
- quality control will result in;
- improved transparency, as the whole Local Municipality, the community leaders and the community will be on board from inception to completion.

(e) A clear overview and the benefits of the Integrated Development Plan process.

See Figure 1 Summary of IDP Planning Process (As per the IDP - Practical Guide to Municipalities SALGA)

The Local Government Municipal Systems Act (2000:36-46) defines Integrated Development Planning as follows: -

“Municipal planning, as a function of municipalities in terms of the Constitution, must be development orientated. This orientation is necessary to ensure that municipalities can: -

- pursue the objects of local government contained in the Constitution

- give effect to the development duties of municipalities and
- ‘assist’ national and provincial organs of state in the progressive realisation of the fundamental rights in the Constitution.”

An Integrated Development Plan is the principal planning instrument for the municipality to which it applies and guides all planning and development and all decisions with regard to planning and development in that municipality. It binds all persons, except if there is an inconsistency between the plan and National or Provincial legislation, in which case the legislation prevails.

According to the IDP - Practical Guide to Municipalities SALGA (2001:9-11) the following are benefits of Integrated Development Planning: -

- Focused and Proactive Management
- Institutional Analysis
- Matching Resources to Needs
- Project Management
- Performance Management
- Realistic Planning
- Unification and Consensus Building
- Empowerment of Stakeholders
- Focused Budgeting
- Change Agent

(f) Project Management and the Integrated Development Plan.

The Local Government Municipal Systems Act (2000:36-46) defines Project Management and Integrated Development Planning as follows: -

“The Integrated Development Plan of a Local Municipality transforms developmental goals into strategies and strategies into projects.

The Integrated Development contributes to good Project Management in the following ways: -

- Identifying essential projects.
- Define their developmental needs.

- Define key elements in each project.
- Integrate these into a draft project proposal.
- Define a draft project proposal.
- Then prioritising these for implementation. “

See Figure 2 Programme and Project Management System (As per the IDP – Practical Guide to Municipalities SALGA)

(g) Where to position the Project Manager in the organisational structure of a Category B Municipality.

Extracts from Mark E. Mullaly's, PMP (2002: 1-2) article on "The Project Manager as Organisational Leader" states:

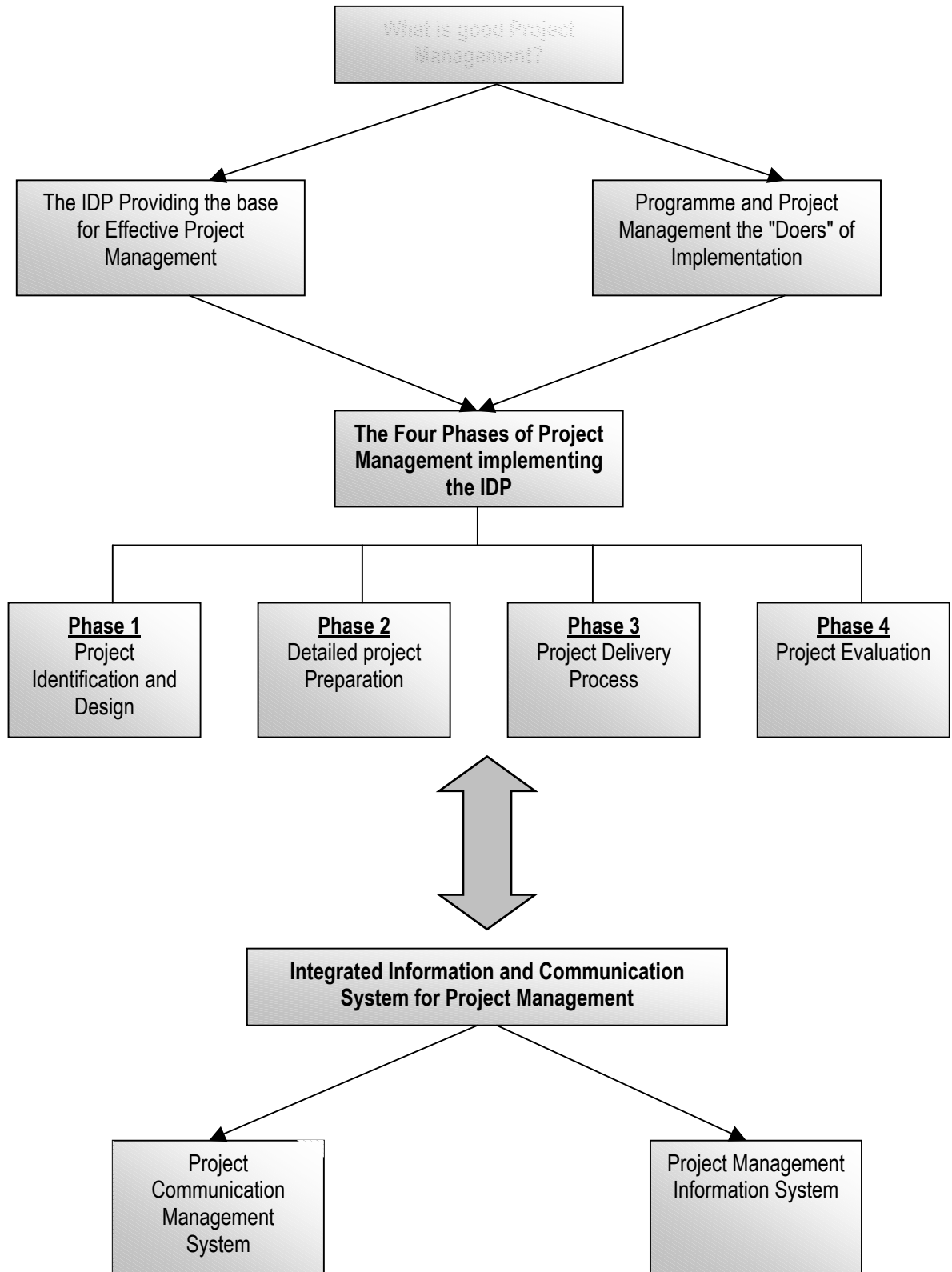
“One of the biggest questions that we need to ask ourselves is this: ‘ Is the role of project management also one of organisational leadership?’

The role of project manager, then, is not managing, but more importantly managing the boundaries themselves. It is this shift in thinking that defines the project manager as an organisational leader. Even on the smallest projects, the potential impact of a project manager is significant. Managed well, and the positive impact on the organisation can be exceptional, while the impact of a failed project can be devastating. Managed indifferently, the results will be commensurate. We get out of life what we put into it; projects are no exception.

If we define the leadership role as managing the boundaries of the scope, and not the scope itself, the responsibility is two-fold. The project manager first provides leadership in contributing to what the boundaries should be. No less important, the project manager must act as counsel to the organisation in identifying changes to the boundaries that are appropriate and desirable, as well as those that are undesirable and to be avoided. While on the surface this seems relatively straightforward, the corresponding obligations are multifaceted. To be effective, the project manager must be able to draw upon a range of disciplines that support a strategic understanding of the business, while maintaining a solid appreciation of the technical challenges of delivering the project and the abilities of their teams to deliver on the results.”

Figure 2 Programme and Project Management System

(As per the IDP - Practical Guide to Municipalities SALGA)



(h) Performance Management and the Project Manager

The Director of Project Management will have to be appointed on a Performance Management Contract in terms of the Local Government Municipal Systems Act (2000:58-60).

Municipalities in South Africa have become an important instrument in reaching the objectives of the newly devised Integrated Development Plan.

The application of Project Management and Community Participation development projects in Category B Municipalities

Municipalities have always been viewed as governance by the community for the community.

Community participation, therefore, plays a vital role and must be clearly understood by municipal managers, project leaders and community members.

South Africa does not have a good history of community participation and community accountability during the various project phases.

There is, currently, an increasing awareness of the need to develop communities and service delivery. These developments have, however, often not progressed past the needs determination phase and, just as often, the completed project has also not been able to reach the desired deliverables.

The application of project management processes can alleviate these shortcomings by making the community aware of the various project management processes.

This was outlined in the following topics so as to provide a better understanding of project management and community participation: -

(a) Project development management

After the previous elections and the completion of the demarcation process there has been an increasing awareness of the need for

community development. The IDP, in terms of the Local Government Structures Act 2000, presently directs development.

The Integrated Development Plan currently forms the framework within which all development should take place.

(b) Development management defined

There are various approaches and views to development management. If these are borne in mind, and define development, one can conclude a definition of development management, namely that:

Development Management is equal to Integrated Development Planning.

(c) Role of municipalities in development management.

According to Gerrit van der Waldt and Andre Knipe (2001:134), the role of government, and specifically top management of Local Government (Local Municipalities), can be described as follows: -

- “Overseeing the preparation of the project brief or description;
 - authorising the preparation of the project brief, and in particular ensuring the relationship with the community is satisfactory;
 - approving or rejecting the project in the light of the project brief.
- Setting up the project;
 - recruiting the project manager, and possibly other key staff;
 - securing the necessary finances;
 - ensuring that the management processes described in the project brief are in place.
- Overseeing the active project;
 - regular monitoring of project progress;
 - approving or rejecting changes to the project brief.
- Reconciling conflicts;
 - reconciling conflicts between stakeholders when defining the project's objectives;

- reconciling conflicts as the project proceeds.
- External relations;
 - acting as an ambassador or representative for the project;
 - ensuring that the public interest of the project is adequately represented in the project brief.

(d) Community participation defined

Paul (1987:2) defines community participation as, “an active process in which the clients, or those who will benefit, influence the direction and implementation of a development project aimed at improving the welfare of people in terms of income, personal growth, independence and other values regarded as valuable.”

(e) Empowerment of communities

Gerrit van der Waldt and Andre Knipe (2001:143-144) identify two views of community empowerment.

- “The first view is that empowerment is the development of skills and abilities, which enables people to interact with a developmental system and process.”
- “That empowerment is a process, which is aimed at equipping people to make decisions and implement these decisions regarding development.”

(f) Community participation during the project life cycle

The community must be made part of all the processes of the Project Life-Cycle to ensure its success.

- Initiating Process
- Planning Process
- Executing Process
- Controlling Process
- Closing Process

(g) Role of the project manager in community participation.

The following topics were discussed: -

- The Role of Project Managers in the Promotion of Community Participation
- Public Project Management in Transformation
- The need for new Management Principles and Management Skills
- Professionalism and the challenges to Management of Local Municipalities
- The possible Dilemmas of Project Managers in Category B Municipalities

Conclusion

The Project Management function can be integrated into existing Category B Municipalities by restructuring its existing organisational structure to a matrix organisational structure. The Project Management function can be successfully integrated into newly established category B Municipalities to ensure the delivery of projects as reflected in the Integrated Development Plan of the particular municipality. The utilisation of Project Management, when implementing the Integrated Development Plan, will be advantageous to Category B Municipalities, as the Project Manager will play a vital role in ensuring the compilation and the annual review of the Integrated Development planning processes.

The Municipal Manager can successfully fulfil the role of a Project Manager in smaller municipalities, but it is recommended that a professional Project Manager rather fulfil the Project Managers function.

Service delivery in Category B Municipalities must include community participation when implementing projects in terms of the Integrated Development Plan. The Project Manager plays a vital role in this process, as he/she must ensure that all the role-players are onboard during the entire project life cycle to ensure the success of implementing projects as reflected in the IDP.

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