



Governing for *Design Excellence*

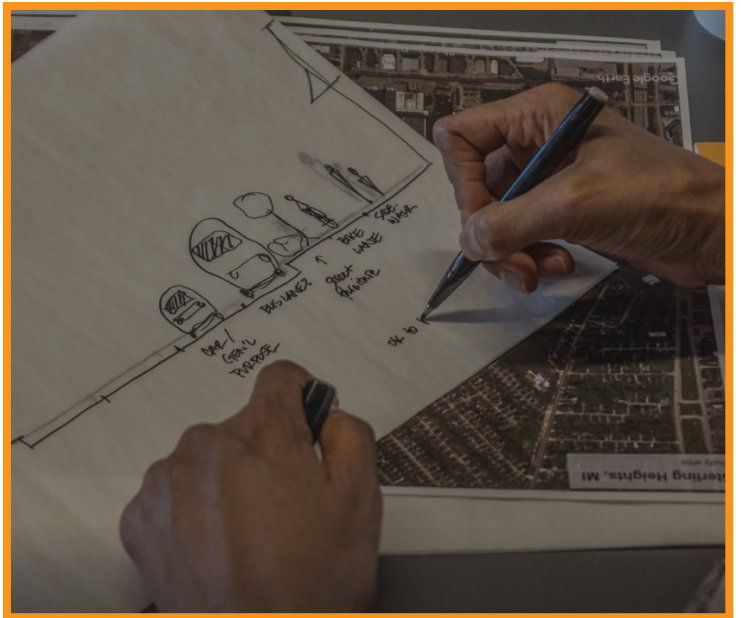


Mayors' Institute on City Design



THE UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

About this Guide



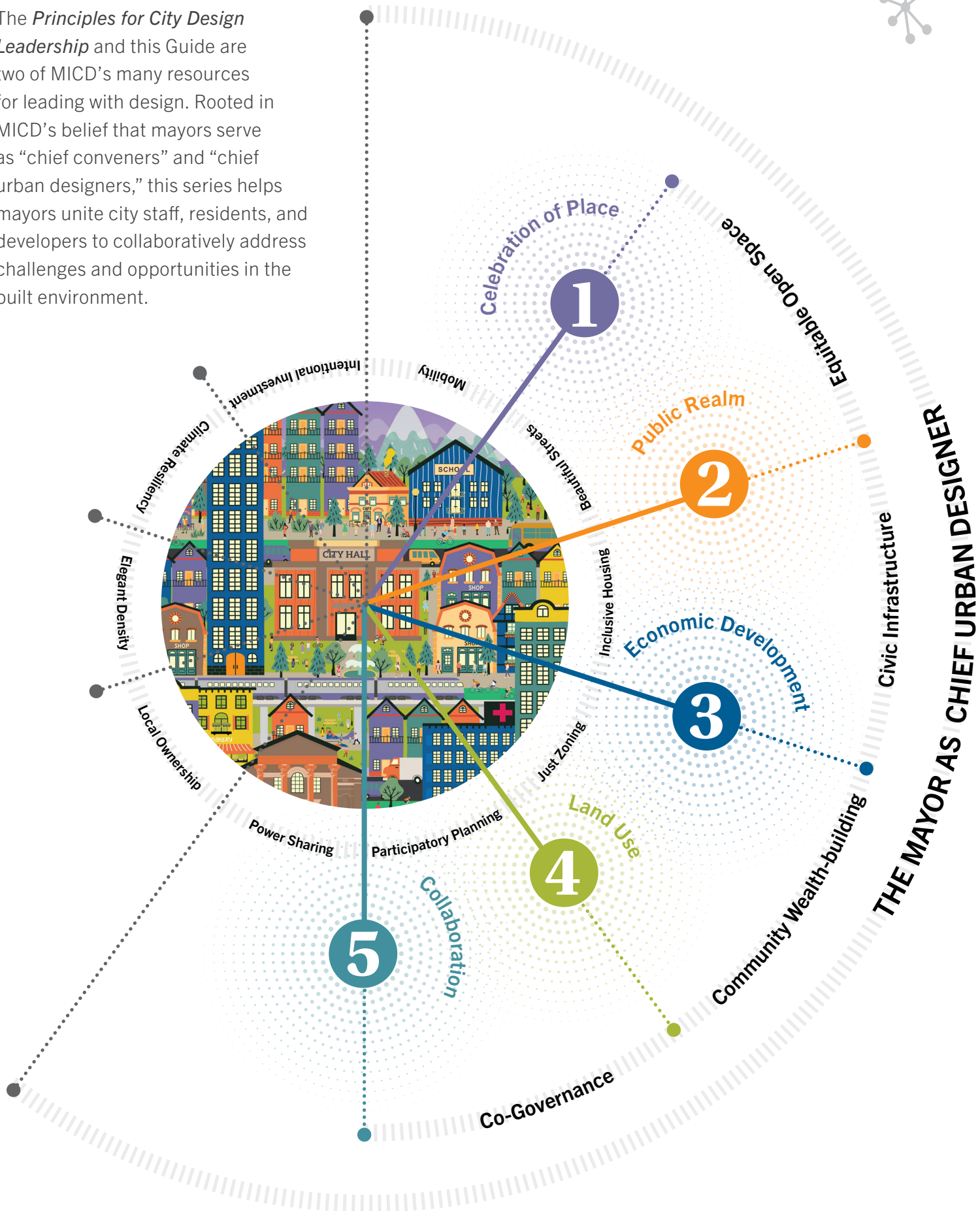
As leaders of cities, mayors' chief responsibility is the well-being of their residents. The Mayors' Institute on City Design (MICD) understands that this demanding responsibility — coupled with environments where departments are often siloed, budgets are tight, stakeholders are skeptical, and there can be a lack of in-house knowledge of best practices and precedents — often yield projects that lack coordination and don't maximize potential benefits for their communities. MICD believes in the power of mayors as “chief convener” and “chief urban designer” to bring city employees, residents, and the development community together to break those barriers and solve problems.

MICD also believes in the transformative power of a beautiful built environment. We work in partnership with mayors to move essential civic projects from functional to vibrant, where design is elevated from an afterthought to a core advisory function. Often, mayors express a desire to replicate this advisory within their administrations.

It is possible, and we have done the work of compiling various models from across the country that have worked for specific mayors during their time in office. The advisory function must fit the needs and identity of a mayor and their city, and the models presented in this Guide are snapshots in time that can be adopted in whole or in part to suit the needs of any administration.

Governing for Design Excellence

The *Principles for City Design Leadership* and this Guide are two of MICD’s many resources for leading with design. Rooted in MICD’s belief that mayors serve as “chief conveners” and “chief urban designers,” this series helps mayors unite city staff, residents, and developers to collaboratively address challenges and opportunities in the built environment.



Principles for City Design Leadership

- 1** *Lead with design*
Design
for meaningful change
across your city
- 2** *Lead to improve people's lives*
Design
to connect communities
- 3** *Lead for economic opportunity*
Design
to create and capture value
- 4** *Lead to foster health and resiliency*
Design
to create a beautiful city
- 5** *Lead collaboratively*
Design
with all

The Mayors' Institute on City Design (MICD) believes design is fundamental to shaping resilient, equitable, and thriving cities. Through a variety of programs, tools, and resources we equip mayors to be the chief urban designers of their cities. Mayors leave our programs engrained with a key understanding that design is a problem-solving tool. It's a galvanizer of people. It can illustrate a vision and establish the roadmap to activating it.

The Principles for City Design Leadership are here to help mayors center design, the built environment, and the well-being of their residents in everyday decision-making and processes. By leading with design, mayors gain a clear, values-driven lens for navigating complex choices that helps align policy, investment, and implementation around long-term public benefit rather than short-term pressures. These principles support mayors in shaping cities that foster health and dignity, expand economic opportunity, strengthen physical and social connectivity, and build resilient systems that endure.

Ultimately, the principles are intended to serve as a practical decision-making aid that mayors can return to again and again. They help mayors articulate priorities, evaluate tradeoffs, and steward the built environment in ways that produce beauty, equity, and shared prosperity for all residents, now and for generations to come.

The Diagram:

This diagram is a logic model that represents the complex relationships between the different components of urban design, *the Principles for City Design Leadership*, and the power of the mayor as chief urban designer. While this depiction is static, these relationships are dynamic in practice and these relationships can come together in many different ways. When these relationships are thoughtfully composed, the outcome is good urban design for your city. Read more about the Principles at: micd.org/designleadership

Design Excellence Models

In practice, the difference between one successful project and a pattern of successful outcomes is often not intent, but how an administration is structured to deliver. Mayors do not need to be involved in every project, but they do shape the systems, culture, and decision-making that determine what gets built and how well it serves their communities.

Through our work with cities across the country, we have identified three primary ways mayors can strengthen their administration's ability to lead with design. These models focus on building internal capacity, extending that capacity through partnerships, and improving the processes that shape how decisions are made. Together, they provide practical pathways for translating the Principles into consistent, high-quality outcomes.

THE MAYOR AS CHIEF URBAN DESIGNER

Governing
for Design Excellence



Innovative
Processes



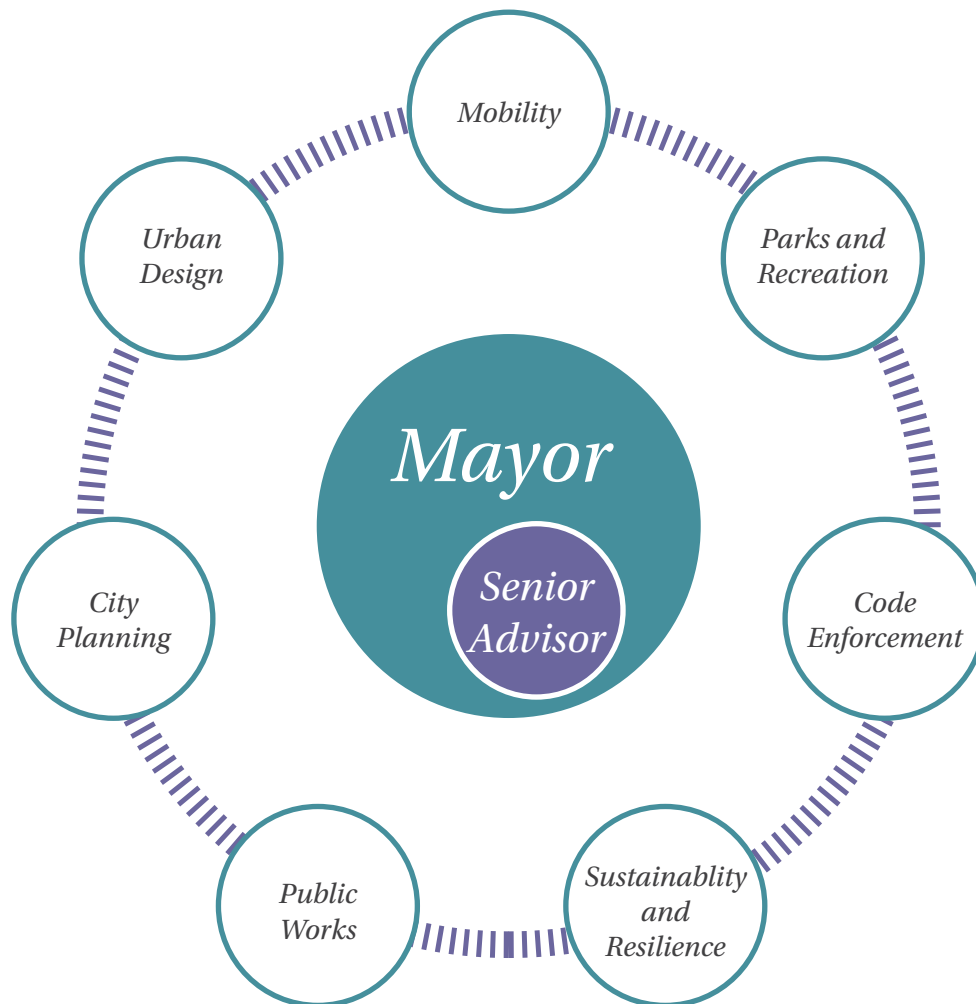
Embedded
Organizationally



Civic
Partnerships



Innovative Processes

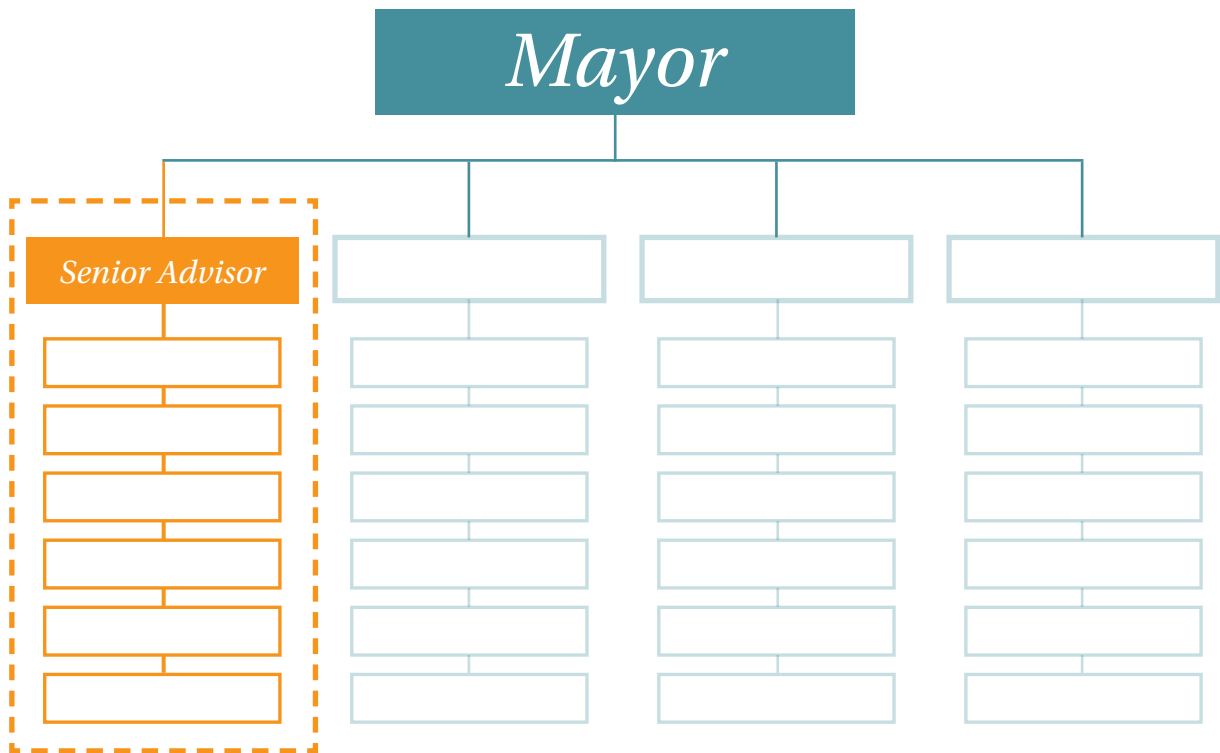


Government functions tend to be process-oriented, but innovation does not require reinventing the process itself. Instead, it requires more intentional coordination of people, expertise, and decision-making. Work to bring the right voices — community stakeholders, technical experts, operations staff, and design professionals — into a project at the right time. This can reduce inefficiencies, anticipate challenges early, and strengthen collaboration across agencies.

When policy goals, operational needs, and design ambitions are aligned from the outset, public projects can move more effectively from vision to implementation. In this way, process becomes not a barrier to innovation, but a framework for delivering more thoughtful, resilient, and impactful civic outcomes.



Embedded Organizationally

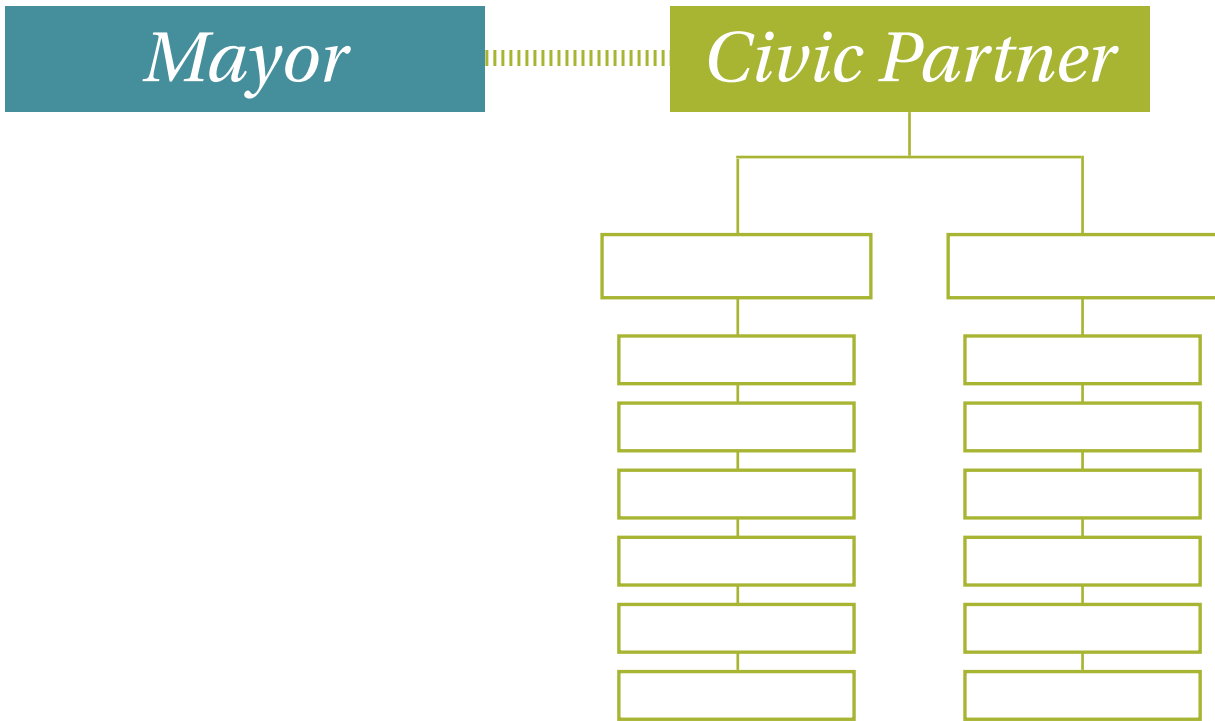


Embedding design within an administration means ensuring that the right people, expertise, and structures are in place to support high-quality civic outcomes. This may include elevating design leadership, integrating design expertise into planning and capital functions, and aligning departments so design is considered early and consistently. When embedded organizationally, design becomes part of everyday decision-making rather than an afterthought.

Some mayors benefit from a dedicated design advocate who can translate between broader civic values and technical requirements, while others may rely on structured design advisory processes that provide clarity and predictability for the development community. In both cases, sustained design capacity strengthens implementation, investment, and long-term stewardship of the built environment.



Civic Partnerships



Civic partnerships allow mayors to expand their capacity by working with organizations, design professionals, institutions, and community groups that shape the built environment. These collaborations bring additional expertise, generate ideas, build public trust, and strengthen implementation beyond the limits of city government. Local design professionals can provide advisory support and peer review that ensure projects are both technically sound and culturally relevant.

Community-based organizations, including Community Development Corporations, offer actionable insights grounded in neighborhood experience and institutional memory. Together, these partnerships create a broader civic network that supports design excellence, strengthens public engagement, and advances more thoughtful and enduring urban outcomes.

Design Excellence Models

Self Assessment

There is no single way to govern for design leadership. Every city operates within a different set of conditions. Understanding your starting point will help you identify where you have leverage and what kinds of moves are most likely to succeed.

The questions on the following page are designed to help you quickly assess your current conditions. This is not a formal evaluation: it is a short exercise to help you reflect on how your administration operates today. Answer based on your current reality, not where you would like to be. In most cases, your first instinct will be the right one.

Operationalizing Design

What This Means for Your Approach

Most cities will not fall neatly into single categories. You may see yourself across multiple answers. The goal is not to define your city precisely, but to clarify where you have the most leverage and where you may need to take a different approach.



Design Excellence Models



Innovative Processes

How much authority do you have to direct change?



Embedded Organizationally

How strong is your internal capacity?



Civic Partnerships

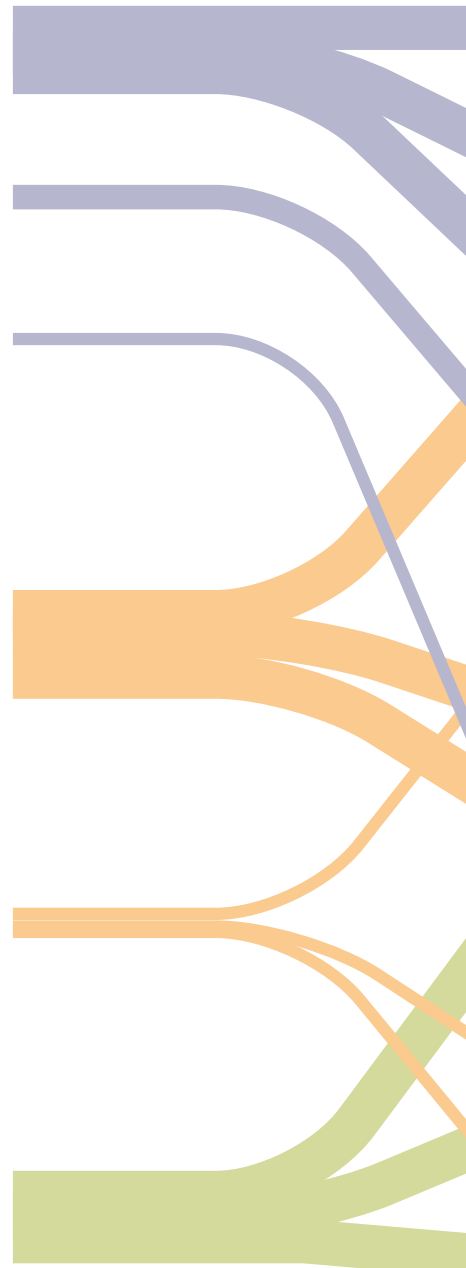
What kind of external support exists in your city?

Self Assessment

Authority	High You can restructure departments, set priorities, and direct how work gets done
	Medium You can influence decisions, but authority is shared across leadership, council, or boards
	Low You rely primarily on persuasion, partnerships, and alignment to move work forward

Internal Capacity	High Your administration has staff, expertise, and bandwidth to take on new initiatives
	Medium You have some strengths, but there are gaps in skills, coordination, or staffing
	Low Capacity is limited, and teams are already stretched

External Partnerships	High There is a strong network of civic organizations, design professionals, institutions, or advocates
	Medium There are some potential partners, but they are not yet fully aligned or activated
	Low External capacity is limited or still emerging



Operationalizing Design

If you have strong authority and strong internal capacity

You are well-positioned to make lasting, system-level changes. This may include restructuring teams, embedding design expertise within your administration, and formalizing new ways of working that improve outcomes across projects.

If you have strong authority but limited internal capacity

You can set direction, but may need to build the team and support systems to carry it out. Prioritizing key hires, bringing in outside expertise, or starting with targeted efforts can help build momentum while capacity grows.

If you have strong authority and a strong network of external partners

You have an opportunity to align internal leadership with external expertise. Strategic partnerships can accelerate your goals and expand what your administration is able to deliver.

If you are working within shared authority but have strong internal capacity

Your team can lead through expertise and coordination. Even without full control, strong internal alignment can improve outcomes by shaping how decisions are made and implemented.

If internal capacity strong and external support is strong

Internal teams and external partners, including civic organizations, design professionals, and community members, align institutional leadership with civic expertise, moving ambitious ideas from vision to execution with greater continuity, credibility, and impact.

If internal capacity is limited but external support is strong

Partnerships can help fill gaps in expertise and bandwidth. Working with civic organizations and the design community can allow you to advance projects and ideas that would otherwise be difficult to deliver alone.

If both authority and capacity are constrained

Start small and build momentum. Focus on one project, one process, or one decision point where better design can be demonstrated. Early successes can build credibility, strengthen relationships, and create opportunities for larger changes over time.



For *mayors* who...

The conditions you identified in the previous section will shape what kinds of moves are most effective and where you can have the greatest impact. Mayors often enter this work with a specific goal in mind. The pathways below reflect common ways to translate those goals into action. They offer practical entry points for strengthening your administration's ability to deliver better design outcomes over time.

...want stronger expertise at the table

If internal or external capacity is limited or uneven, you can:

- Hire or designate a design lead within your administration
- Establish a design advisory group or bring in outside experts for key discussions
- Partner with local designers, institutions, or organizations to support ongoing work

...want to build momentum quickly

If you face limited capacity, unclear alignment, or early-stage efforts, you can:

- Select one project, corridor, or site and set clear design expectations from the start
- Use an RFP, design brief, or public process to show what quality looks like
- Share the work publicly to build internal alignment and external confidence

...want this work to last beyond one project

If you have strong authority and/or growing internal capacity, you can:

- Create or elevate a role or team responsible for design across departments
- Update design standards, guidelines, or internal expectations for projects
- Establish a consistent review or coordination process that applies across projects

...don't control all the levers

If you are operating within shared authority or distributed decision-making, you can:

- Convene developers, designers, and community leaders around a shared set of expectations
- Partner with a civic design organization, university, or nonprofit to advance key projects
- Use public visibility, messaging, and priorities to signal what quality looks like

...are running into internal barriers

If silos, timing, or coordination are limiting outcomes, you can:

- Create a regular cross-department meeting for major projects early in the process
- Align planning, public works, and economic development departments around shared project goals
- Identify where projects lose quality and adjust the process at that point

...want better results from the systems already in place

If authority and capacity exist, but outcomes are inconsistent, you can:

- Strengthen how procurement is used by clearly defining design goals in RFPs
- Align review, permitting, and capital delivery around shared expectations for quality
- Ensure design intent is carried through from selection to implementation

...want to prove that a different path is possible

If structural barriers limit your options, you can:

- Build partnerships beyond City Hall with institutions, advocates, businesses, and community leaders
- Celebrate great urbanism through storytelling, recognition, and awards.
- Launch quick-build pilots letting residents experience tangible change before permanent implementation

Case Studies



Boston Planning Advisory Council

Boston, MA



EMPOWERED
EXPERTISE CUTS
THROUGH RED TAPE FOR
QUICK, CONSISTENT,
ACCOUNTABLE CITY
DESIGN

Roxbury Branch of the Boston Public Library Renovation (Utile)

Population: **675,647 (2020 Census)**
Government system: **Mayor-Council**
Type of mayor: **Mayor Chief Executive**
Government size: **~18,000 employees**
Planning department:
Boston Planning Department

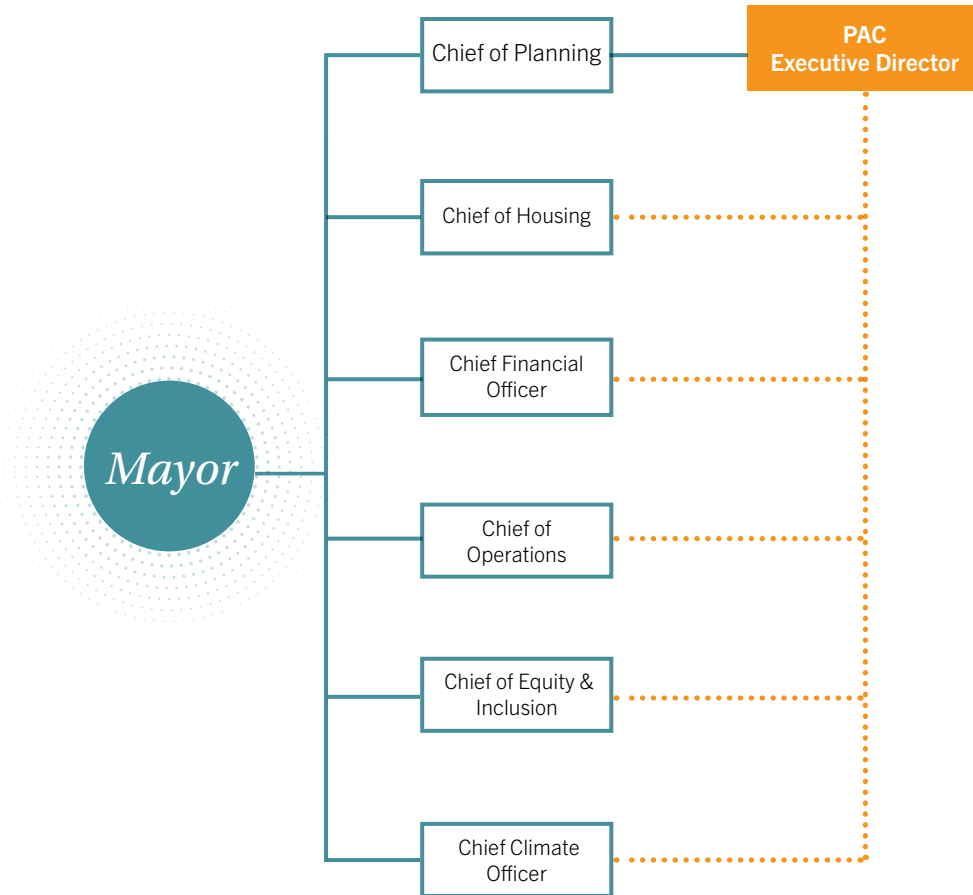
Assessment

In Boston, Mayor Michelle Wu (2021-present) sought to improve coordination across departments involved in planning and the built environment. While the city had strong internal capacity, decision-making was often fragmented, with multiple departments working in parallel without consistent alignment, leading to delays and missed opportunities to improve outcomes.

Operationalizing Design

The city established a Planning Advisory Council that brings together leaders from across departments involved in planning, development, and the built environment. This council creates a regular forum for coordination, allowing departments to align on priorities, identify challenges early, and work through complex issues together. By structuring these conversations, the city can move projects forward more efficiently and with greater consistency. While the Executive Director of the PAC formally exists under the chief of planning, the position has the authority to convene department heads to facilitate and coordinate project, planning, and implementation.

Strong Authority, Strong Internal Capacity



Source: City of Boston

What Changed

Boston improved coordination across departments to create a more consistent and integrated process for complex planning and development decisions. By strengthening collaboration among agencies, the city reduced fragmentation, surfaced issues earlier, and advanced projects with greater clarity, alignment, and efficiency.

Design Excellence Models

Under Mayor Wu, Boston emphasized **innovative processes** that improved how departments worked together on planning and development. The approach focused on aligning agencies around shared goals, timelines, and decision-making practices to support more cohesive outcomes.

Why This Matters for You

This model is especially useful for mayors facing internal barriers that slow progress or create inconsistent outcomes. It works best in cities where staff capacity already exists, but silos, timing challenges, or misaligned priorities limit effective implementation.



Claiborne Corridor Cultural Innovation District

New Orleans, LA

A TRUSTED ADVISOR
CLOSES THE GAP
BETWEEN GRAND
VISION AND DAILY CITY
DECISIONS



Backatown Plaza

Population: **383,997 (2020 Census)**
Government system: **Mayor-Council**
Type of mayor: **Mayor Chief Executive**
Government size: **~4,000 employees**
Planning department:
New Orleans City Planning Commission

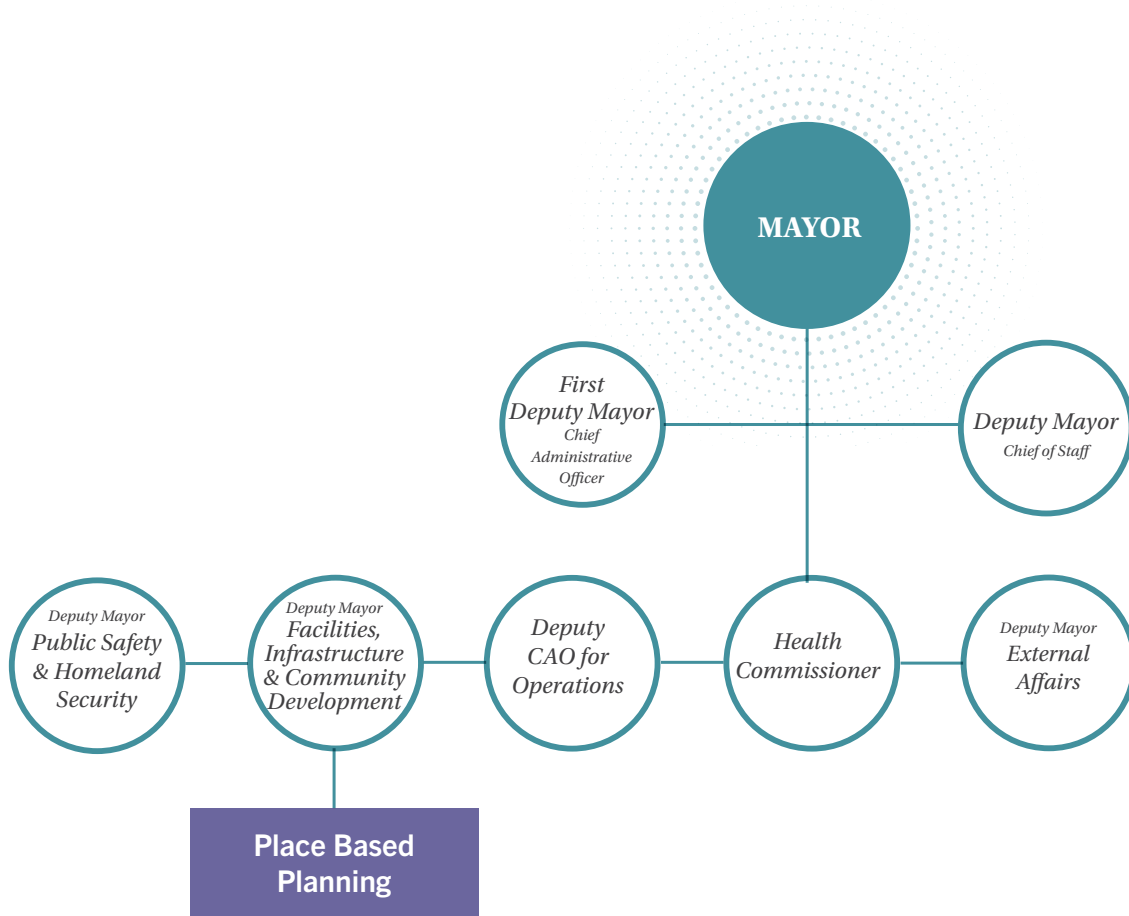
Assessment

In New Orleans, former Mayor Mitch Landrieu (2010-2018) needed a more consistent and trusted way to guide decisions related to the built environment across city departments. While authority existed, the challenge was ensuring that design priorities were reflected in day-to-day decisions and that concerns could be addressed quickly and effectively.

Operationalizing Design

The mayor hired a senior advisor responsible for the built environment. This role served as a trusted source of guidance on design-related decisions and provided a clear point of accountability within the administration. The Director of Place Based Planning was also empowered to work across departments on the mayor's behalf, helping to address issues in real time and ensure that priorities were carried through in implementation.

Strong Authority, Limited Internal Capacity



Source: City of New Orleans

What Changed

This approach strengthened coordination between mayoral priorities and daily decision-making, reducing gaps between vision and implementation while improving responsiveness across the built environment.

Design Excellence Models

In this case, the city focused on strengthening internal capacity by creating a direct line of design leadership within the administration. This approach primarily leveraged the **embedded organizationally** model with an emphasis on improving coordination and responsiveness across departments.

Why This Matters for You

This approach is most relevant for mayors who want stronger expertise at the table and a more direct connection between their priorities and how decisions are made. It is particularly effective in cities where authority exists, but coordination or follow-through is inconsistent.



Tulsa Department of City Experience

Tulsa, OK

DESIGN-DRIVEN GOVERNMENT: ALIGNING CITY STRUCTURES TO DELIVER BETTER RESIDENT EXPERIENCES



Population: ~415,154 (2020 Census)
Government system: **Mayor-Council**
Type of mayor: **Mayor Chief Executive**
Government size: ~3,978 employees
Planning department: **Planning office**

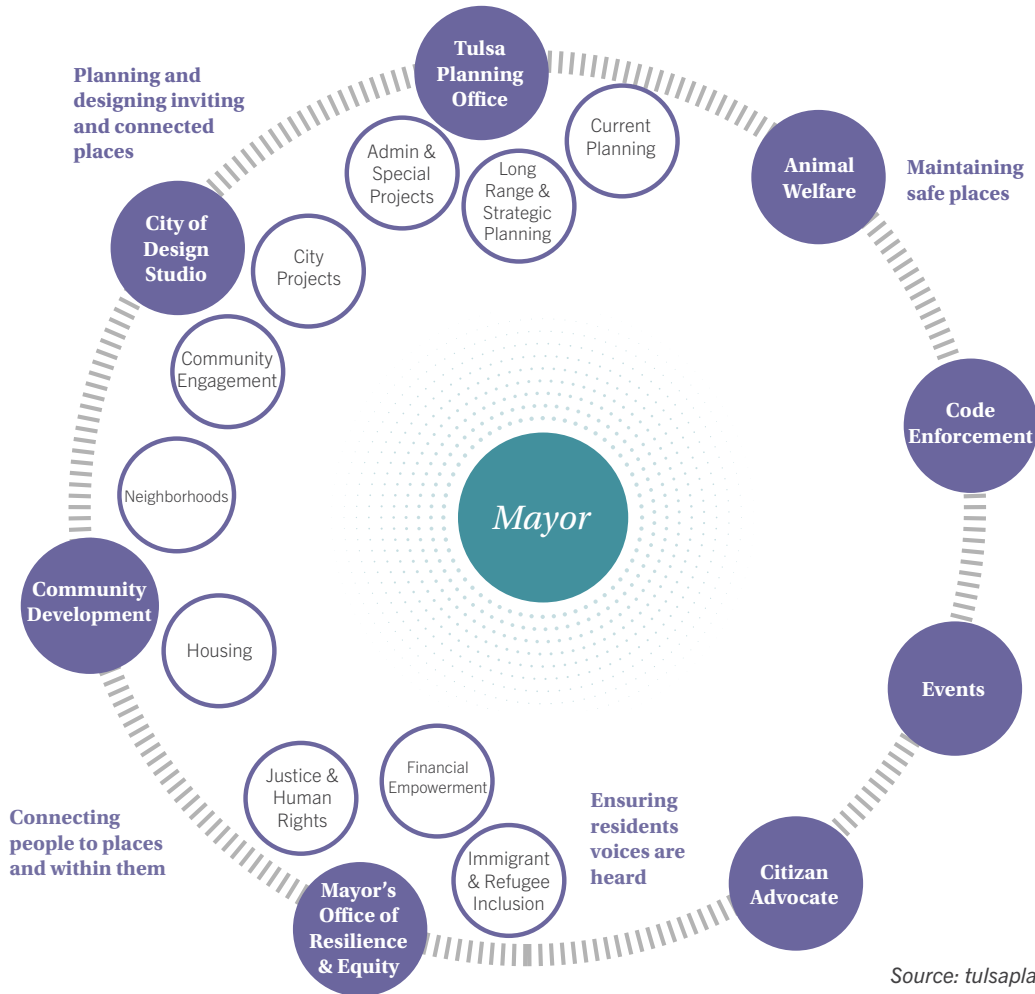
Assessment

Tulsa faced fragmented service delivery and a lack of coordination across departments responsible for the built environment. The city had authority to reorganize but needed a clearer structure to align work around resident outcomes.

Operationalizing Design

In 2023, the city created the Department of City Experience, bringing together planning, design, community engagement, and related functions under a single structure aligned around resident experience. This model was implemented under former Mayor G.T. Bynum (2016-2024) and reflected his approach to organizing city services. Subsequent leadership restructured departments to align with new goals. While this department no longer exists, the approach offers important lessons about how organizational design can improve coordination and strengthen design outcomes.

Strong Authority, Limited Internal Capacity



What Changed

This reorganization led to earlier, more aligned decision-making, reduced handoffs between departments, and a more holistic approach to projects, resulting in more consistent and community-centered outcomes.

Design Excellence Models

Tulsa focused on embedding design and coordination within its organizational structure, while also improving how departments worked together. Focused on leveraging **innovative process** and **organizationally embedding** design leadership, Tulsa was able to re-imagine the delivery of city services around the built environment.

Why This Matters for You

This approach is most relevant for mayors who have the authority to restructure their administration and are looking to make design leadership part of how their government operates over time.



Charleston Civic Design Center

Charleston, SC

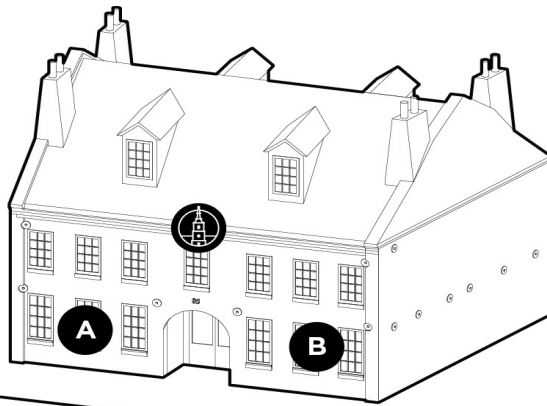
SUSTAINING DESIGN EXCELLENCE: FORMAL STRUCTURE CONNECTS VISION TO COMMUNITY, PROJECTS, AND FUTURE



CDC Workshop Room



Design Division work space



85 Calhoun Street

Second Floor:

 Design Division

Ground Floor:

 Workshop room

 Presentation Room

Population: ~150,227

Government system: Mayor-Council

Type of mayor: Mayor Chief Executive

Government size: ~1,965 employees

Planning department:

Department of Planning, Preservation & Sustainability

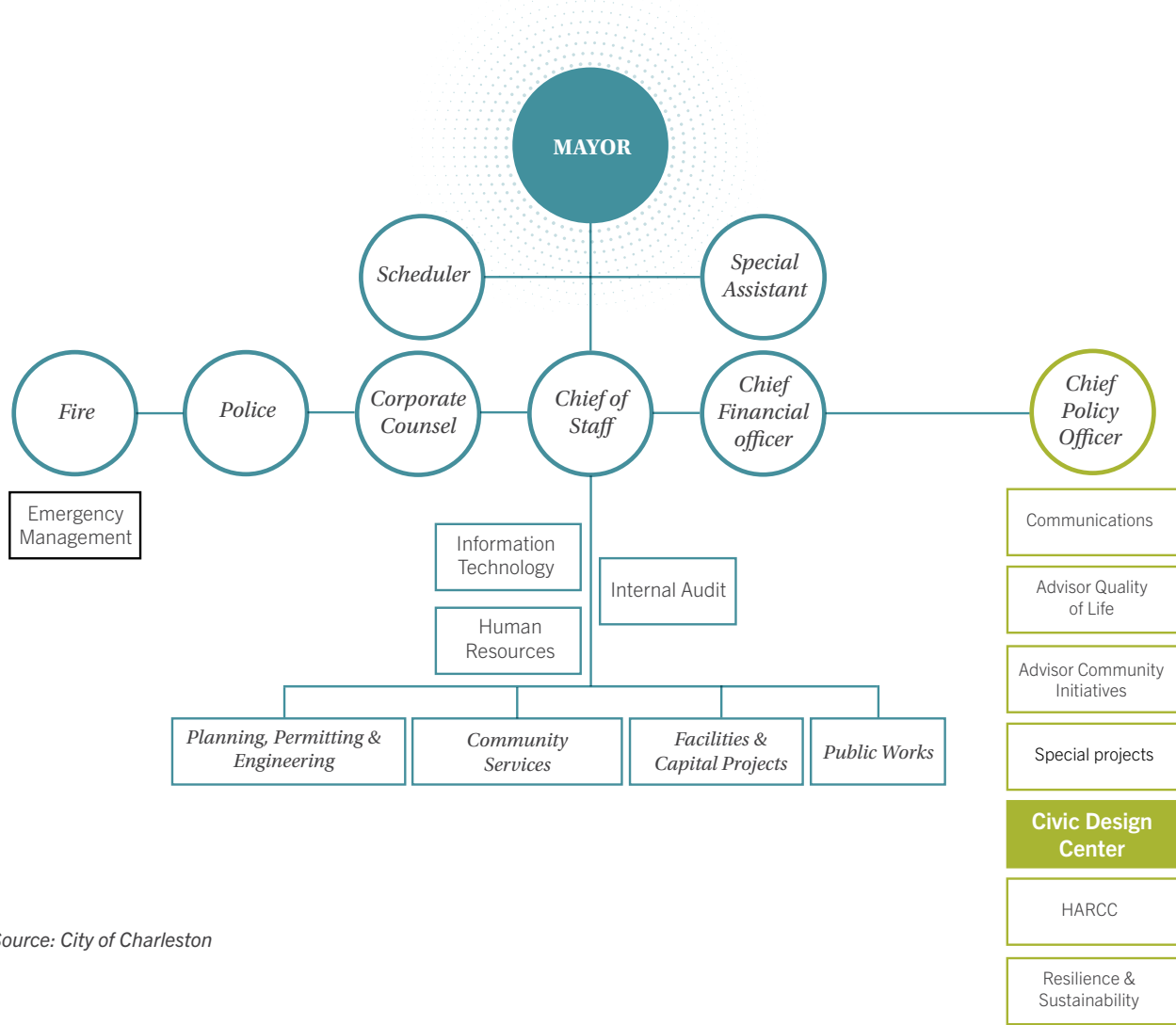
Assessment

In Charleston, former Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr. (1975-2016) sought to ensure that design quality and civic engagement were consistently integrated into decisions shaping the built environment. While the city had strong leadership around design, there was a need for a more formal and sustained way to connect that vision to projects, stakeholders, and long-term outcomes.

Operationalizing Design

The city established a civic design center that over time transitioned from a civic partner to a unit of government that serves as a hub for design leadership, public engagement. This division works across departments while also engaging residents, designers, and stakeholders through programs, workshops, and initiatives. Its outward-facing structure allows the city to build relationships, elevate design expectations, and support projects over time.

Strong Authority, Strong Network of External Partners



Source: City of Charleston

What Changed

This approach created a sustained platform for advancing design quality and civic engagement across projects. It strengthened connections between city government and the community, reinforced expectations for the built environment, and provided continuity for design leadership over time.

Design Excellence Models

Under Mayor Riley, the city focused on building a lasting structure that could both support internal decision-making and engage the public and design community. This approach leveraged both the **embedded organizationally** and **civic partnerships** levers, creating a model that connects city government with external expertise and community input.

Why This Matters for You

This approach helps mayors expand capacity through partnerships while embedding long-term, community-focused design leadership that remains consistent across administrations, projects, and civic initiatives.



NYC Public Design Commission

New York City, NY

SAFEGUARDING
CITY AESTHETICS:
CONSISTENT,
MANDATORY REVIEW FOR
DESIGN EXCELLENCE



Hunter's Point South (Weiss/Manfredi)

Population: **8,804,190** (2020 Census)
Government system: **Mayor-Council**
Type of mayor: **Mayor Chief Executive**
Government size: **~330,000 employees**
Planning department:
Department of City Planning

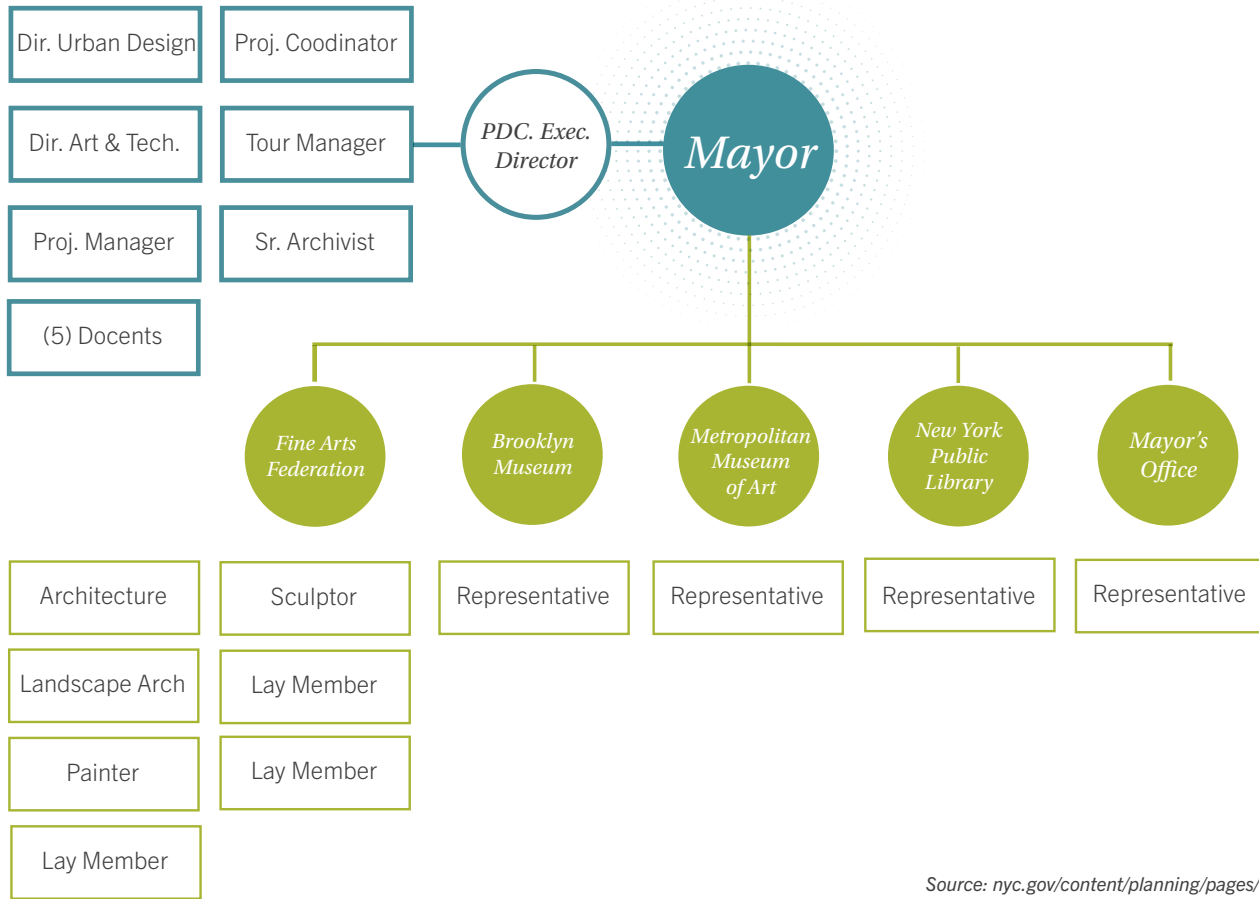
Assessment

The New York City Public Design Commission was established in 1898 to ensure civic projects reflected high standards of design excellence. Created during rapid urban growth, the Commission emerged as an independent oversight body safeguarding the long-term civic and visual quality of public buildings, infrastructure, and streetscapes.

Operationalizing Design

The Commission advances design excellence through mandatory review and approval of city-funded projects involving architecture, landscape architecture, public art, streetscapes, infrastructure, and urban design. Interdisciplinary commissioners evaluate projects for design quality, public benefit, accessibility, sustainability, and civic identity, creating consistent standards across agencies and administrations.

Strong Internal Capacity, Strong Network of External Partners



Source: nyc.gov/content/planning/pages/

What Changed

The Commission evolved from an art-focused advisory body into a design governance institution shaping the city's public realm. It elevated expectations for civic architecture and infrastructure while institutionalizing design quality within capital project delivery.

Design Excellence Models

New York City represents a formalized civic design review model, integrating **civic partnerships**, where mayoral appointees provide oversight of public-facing capital projects. The model combines professional design expertise, public accountability, and regulatory authority within city government.

Why This Matters for You

The NYC model demonstrates how formal design oversight can **embed design excellence** into government operations, improve interagency coordination, and ensure that public investments contribute lasting civic value beyond political priorities. for design quality, public benefit, accessibility, sustainability, and civic identity, creating consistent standards across agencies and administrations.

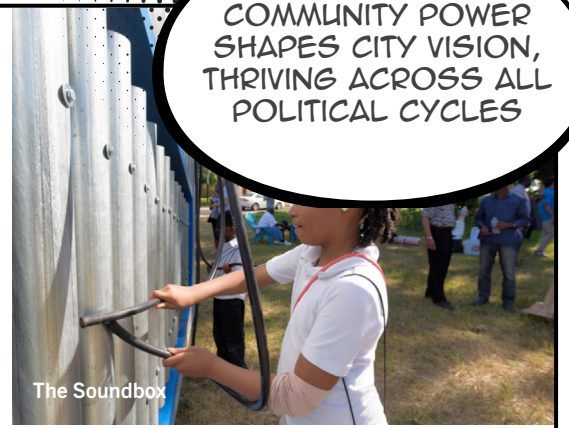


Nashville Civic Design Center

Nashville, TN



Jefferson Street Revitalization Workshop



The Soundbox

COMMUNITY POWER
SHAPES CITY VISION,
THRIVING ACROSS ALL
POLITICAL CYCLES

Population: ~511, 546 (2020 Census)
Government system: **Consolidated City-County**
Type of mayor: **Mayor Chief Executive**
Government size: ~9,000 city/metro employees
Planning department:
Land-use, Zoning, Historic Preservation

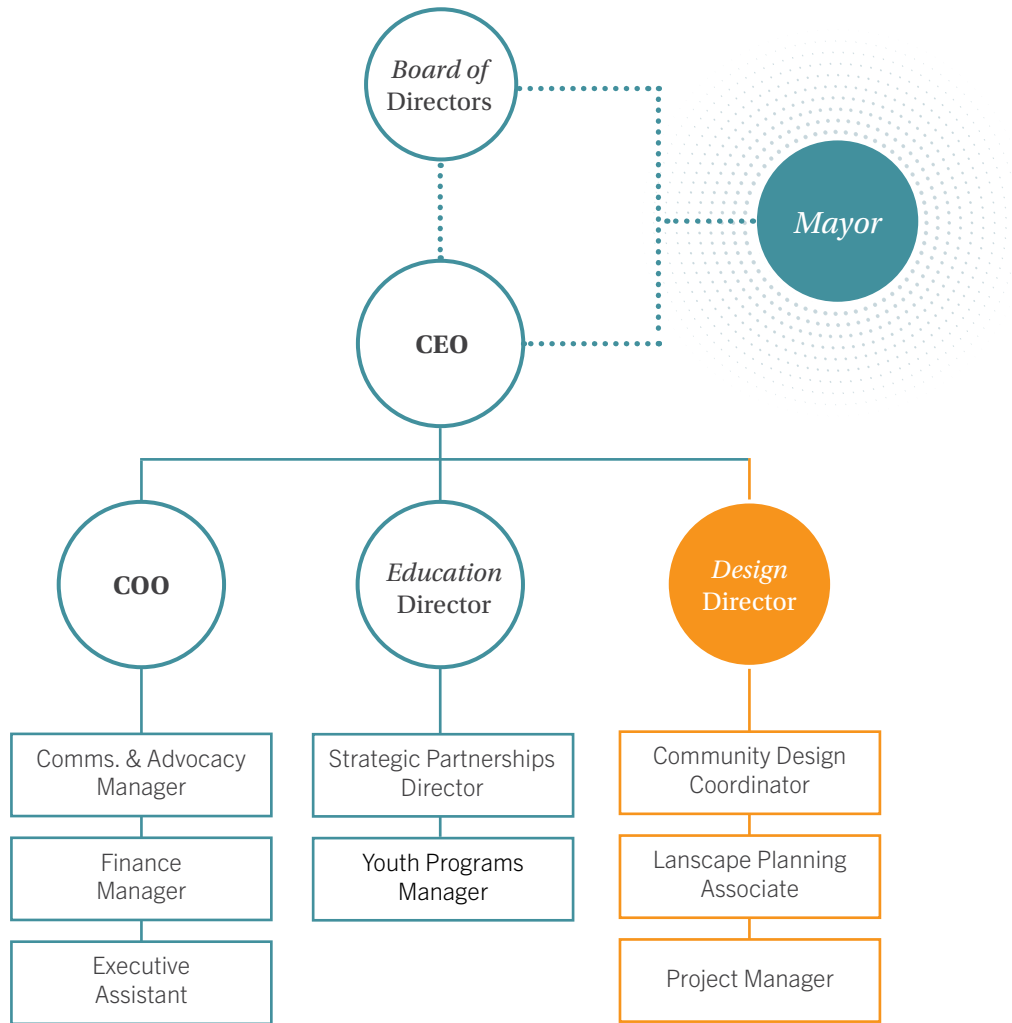
Assessment

The Nashville Civic Design Center emerged from 1990s concerns that Nashville lacked a strong civic vision for urban growth and public space. Urban design forums beginning in 1995 demonstrated the need for an independent organization focused on urban design, public engagement, and long-term planning leadership.

Operationalizing Design

The model advances design excellence through collaborative planning initiatives, research-driven urban design studies, public engagement, and partnerships with academic institutions. Efforts such as the Plan of Nashville established shared civic goals while elevating design as a core component of public decision-making.

Limited Internal Capacity, Strong Network of External Partners



nashville.gov/departments/planning

What Changed

With support from then-Mayor Bill Purcell (1999-2007), the organization aligned independent nonprofit governance with public-sector collaboration, strengthening long-term continuity in Nashville’s urban design leadership and civic planning initiatives.

Design Excellence Models

Nashville represents a **civic partnership** model, where an autonomous nonprofit collaborates with government, universities, and the design community to shape the city’s built environment. The model combines independent governance with public-sector alignment, allowing for continuity across political administrations and flexibility to explore ambitious urban ideas.

Why This Matters for You

The Nashville model shows that cities can expand design capacity through independent civic partners that sustain long-range visioning, build public trust, and advance design excellence beyond electoral cycles.



Simon and Helen Director Park

Portland, OR

TRANSFORM
UNDERUSED
DOWNTOWN SPACES
INTO VIBRANT CIVIC
DESTINATIONS THROUGH
PARTNERSHIP AND
DESIGN



Simon and Helen Director Park (Olin)

Population: **635,700 (2020 Census)**
Government system: **Commission**
Type of mayor:
Mayor Chief Executive (Mayor/Council until 2025)
Government size: **7,000 employees**
Planning department:
Department of Planning & Urban Development

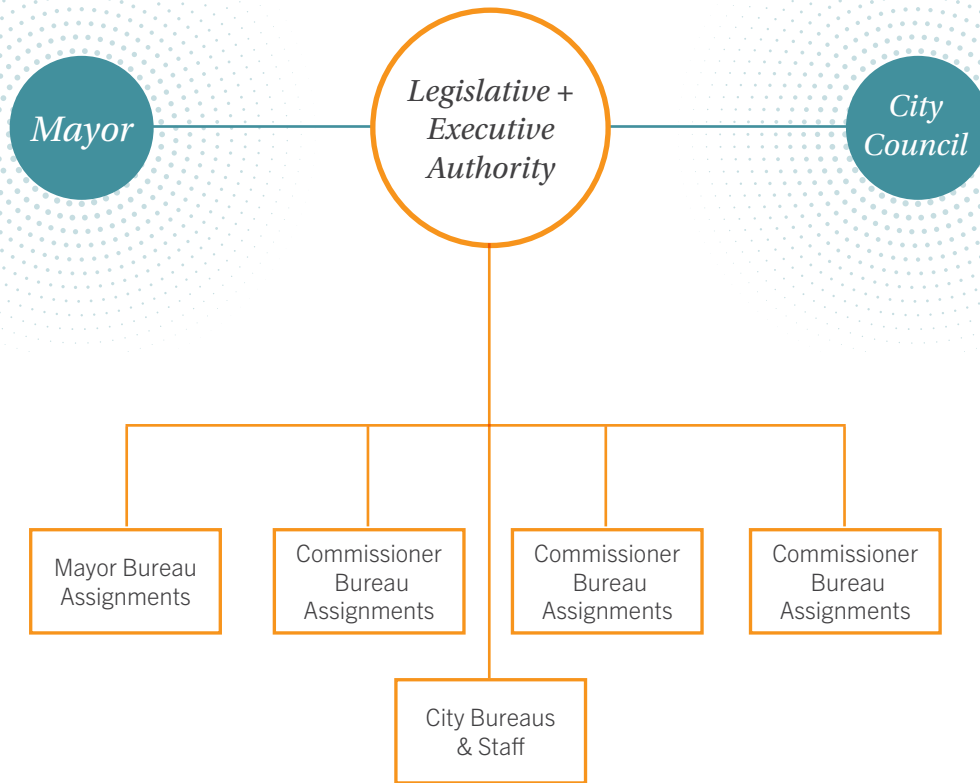
Assessment

In Portland, downtown leaders and city officials sought a stronger civic presence and high-quality public gathering space within the retail core. Despite investments in transit and walkability, key downtown blocks remained underutilized and lacked the programming, amenities, and design quality to support daily pedestrian activity and long-term vitality.

Operationalizing Design

In 1998, the city partnered with the Portland Parks Foundation, downtown business organizations, and design professionals to redevelop the an underused downtown site into Director Park. Public agencies coordinated permitting, infrastructure, and operations while partners supported fundraising, programming, and ongoing activation. The project emphasized high-quality landscape design, flexible gathering areas, food service, and year-round programming to ensure the space functioned as both a civic amenity and an economic catalyst for downtown Portland.

Shared Authority, Strong Internal Capacity



Source: City of Portland

What Changed

Portland transformed an underused downtown site into an active public space that supports daily activity, cultural programming, and local economic development. The project improved coordination among the city, downtown stakeholders, and civic partners while showing how targeted public realm investments can advance broader downtown revitalization goals.

Design Excellence Models

The project relied on a **civic partnership** model built around shared power between city government, private stakeholders, and nonprofit organizations. Instead of depending on a single agency or mayoral initiative, Portland used coordinated governance and long-term stewardship to create a pedestrian-oriented civic space.

Why This Matters for You

This approach is especially relevant for mayors seeking to implement impactful projects when the responsibility for planning, funding, and implementation is shared.



Milwaukee Mayor's Design Awards

Milwaukee, WI



Trestle Park Riverwalk Extension (HGA)

Population: **577,222 (2020 Census)**
Government system: **Mayor–Council**
Type of mayor: **Mayor Chief Executive**
Government size: **~7,300 employees**
Planning department:
Department of City Development

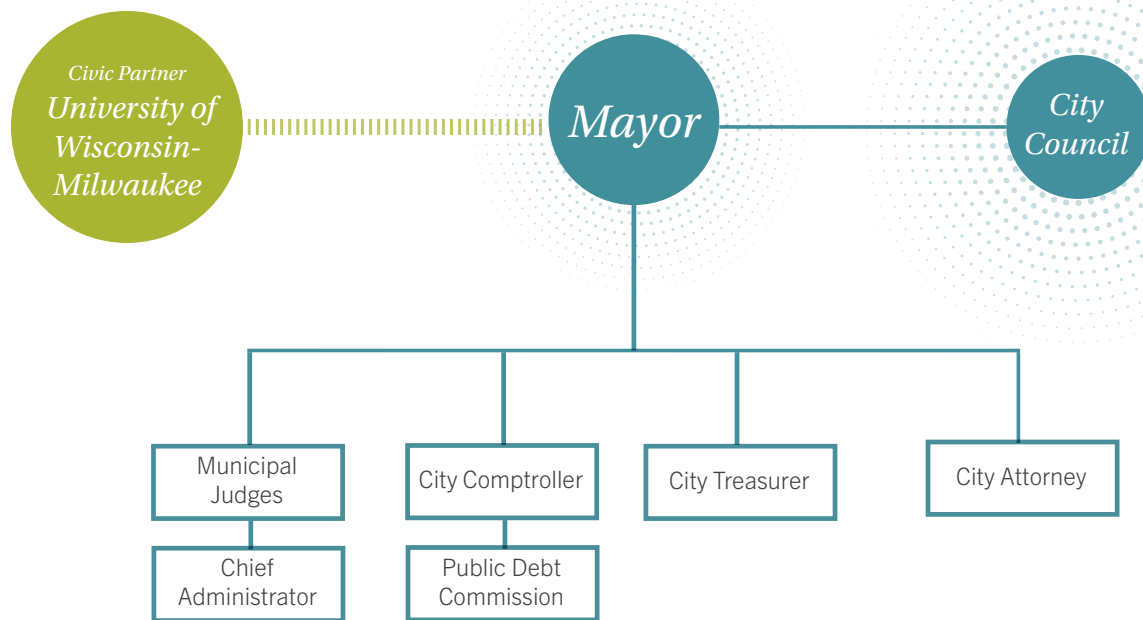
Assessment

In Milwaukee, city leaders and civic partners sought to elevate the role of design in neighborhood revitalization while recognizing projects that strengthened the public realm. Although Milwaukee had a strong legacy of architecture and planning, many impactful projects lacked broader visibility and there was no consistent platform to celebrate design excellence that improved daily urban life and reinforced civic identity.

Operationalizing Design

The City of Milwaukee partnered with architects, planners, community organizations, development leaders, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to administer the Mayor's Design Awards program over multiple decades. Relying on civic partnerships and public recognition rather than major funding commitments, the program advanced projects that strengthened streetscapes, adaptive reuse, housing, public spaces, and community-serving infrastructure while supporting equitable growth, neighborhood vitality, and civic pride across administrations.

Limited Authority, Limited Internal Capacity



Source: City of Milwaukee

What Changed

Established under former Mayor John O. Nordquist (1988-2004), Milwaukee’s Mayor’s Design Awards is a durable, low-cost program that promotes design excellence, community development, and cross-sector collaboration. Across administrations, the awards recognize projects of varying scales that advance innovation, sustainability, neighborhood impact, and the public realm.

Design Excellence Models

The program uses a mayor-led **civic partnership** model built on collaboration among local government, design professionals, and community stakeholders. Rather than relying on major redevelopment initiatives, Milwaukee uses public recognition to reinforce design priorities and encourage long-term stewardship across the city.

Why This Matters for You

This approach helps mayors influence design quality, strengthen partnerships, and encourage higher standards without requiring major zoning changes, large public investments, or centralized authority.



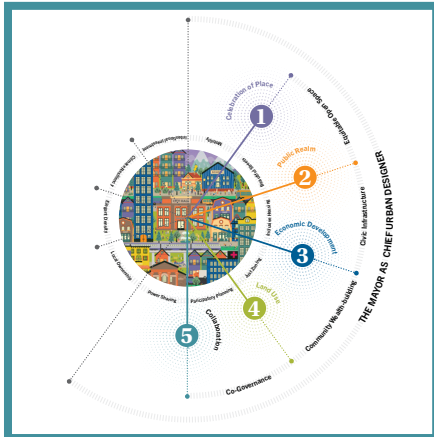
If you are *ready*
to *take action*, the
Mayors' Institute on
City Design can help.



Explore more MICD programs

Discover how our programs can help your administration implement the *Principles for City Design Leadership* at micd.org.

Learn more at micd.org/designleadership



How do I apply these principles?

Explore how the *Principles for City Design Leadership* can impact your city's policies and programs to unlock layered benefits that reflect community priorities.



Guide to Innovative RFPs

Craft better RFPs to ensure the design and equity outcomes that are important to your administration.

Hub 32 (Brooks + Scarpa and Studio Dwell Architects)



Coming soon

Guide to City Hall as Public Commons

Learn more about how cities have re-invented their city halls and public buildings to better serve their cities and foster civic engagement.

Bolling Municipal Building (Anton Grass/ESTO, Courtesy of Sasaki)



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With a belief in the power of city design to transform communities, the Mayors’ Institute on City Design (MICD) educates mayors to be the chief urban designers of their cities.

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