

SUPPORTING HIGH PERFORMANCE GOVERNMENT

Leading Large Scale Change

December 6th, 2005

Second Terms: Leveraging Victory

Panelists:

Stanley Brezenoff CEO and President Continuum Health Partners Inc., First Deputy Mayor in the Koch Administration, former President of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, and former Administrator of the New York City Human Resources Administration

Michele Cahill Senior Counselor to the Chancellor for Education Policy, New York City Department of Education

Shaun Donovan Commissioner, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development

Moderator:

Linda Gibbs Commissioner, New York City Department of Homeless Services

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Accenture and the Research Center for Leadership in Action of the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, New York University are co-hosting an Executive Briefing series for public sector managers to discuss the multiple managerial and leadership challenges of implementing large scale change. The series seeks to:

- Encourage the exchange of ideas between senior managers of complex change programs and those emerging leaders charged with undertaking similar efforts.
- Support a cadre of new leaders interested in undertaking such challenges, providing them with the insights, learning and the collegial support that will help sustain their work over time, and
- Promote further learning about how successful complex change initiatives are designed and managed, and capture this information in written reports.

Each session is organized around a central strategic and managerial question of particular relevance to large-scale change. The forum held on December 6th focused on the particular opportunities and challenges faced by leaders in city government at the commencement of a second mayoral term. For such leaders in city government, a second term presents a renewed mandate with institutional knowledge already secured. Steep learning curves—a challenge during any first term especially for those new to city government—are no longer a barrier. Moreover, leaders are well poised to solidify projects given their established relationships with both internal contacts and external stakeholders. And with acquired and earned credibility, an administration has the leeway to move on to even more challenging and ambitious initiatives.

However, many challenges accompany such a victory: What should be the balance between launching new efforts and institutionalizing those already in place? What criteria should guide these decisions? What strategies might be considered to help ensure that initiatives with longer-term horizons will be sustained past the end of a final term? Are there useful strategies for retaining management talent? What approaches might be considered to embed initiatives given the certainty of a transition?

Contributing to this discussion on the significance of second terms for leaders in city government were three panelists, who together represent a range of sectors as well as a range of tenure in city government:

- Stanley Brezenoff, CEO and President Continuum Health Partners Inc., First Deputy Mayor in the Koch Administration, former President of the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, and former Administrator of the New York City Human Resources Administration
- Michele Cahill, Senior Counselor to the Chancellor for Education Policy, New York City Department of Education
- Shaun Donovan, Commissioner, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development

Moderating the discussion was another highly successful leader in city government for whom the second term presented a unique and critical moment, Commissioner Linda Gibbs of the New York City Department of Homeless Services.¹

THE SECOND MAYORAL TERM: DEFINING THE MOMENT AND THE MANDATE

Broad consensus among the panelists and audience alike holds that the 2005 mayoral election resulted in an overwhelming victory for incumbent Mayor Bloomberg. Not only did the Mayor win the election by a solid majority, but also secured his victory by achieving nearly uncontested public approval in the three critical and historically challenging areas for past Mayors of New York City: education, public safety, and housing. Interestingly, two of the three “stool legs” of the Mayor’s victory—education and affordable housing—were represented by the panel. Stanley Brezenoff, a long-time leader within many former city administrations affirmed that “this administration had a tremendous first four years with the big challenges it took on and the big successes it achieved.” Such a victory and solid record of success provides the Mayor and key leaders within his administration with what Linda Gibbs refers to as a “tremendous mandate” to continue and replicate “the strong record” of success during the first four years. For leaders within the Bloomberg administration, this mandate translates into a reserve of political capital from which it can draw to continue their work and pursuit of their goals.

Yet, as Mr. Brezenoff explains, accompanying this tremendous mandate are both a new set of tremendous challenges and the residual challenges of the first term. First, leaders face the challenge of success itself. In Mr. Brezenoff’s words, “[t]his administration is a tough act to follow.” The widely held notion that the Mayor’s first term was highly successful sets a standard by which the actions and pursuits of the second term will be measured and judged. Second, mayoral and city council term limits, which were both instituted somewhat recently in New York City, place new pressures, both temporal and political, for leaders in city government. Third, the success of any administration, and the strength of any mandate, hinges heavily upon the strength of the economy and other forces external to Mayoral and Commissioner control: “There have been many administrations in strong positions that due to the economy, very quickly led to sharply reducing revenues.” And for leaders in city government, such declining revenues results in declining reserves of political capital. And finally, city leaders during a second term must still face the usual challenges associated with the pursuit of public initiatives. In other words, a political mandate does not mean that those inherent challenges suddenly disappear: “Some of those challenges, which were successfully grappled with, carry with them continuing challenges.” Michele Cahill seconded this notion by simply stating that “the challenge [of continuing the successes of the first term] is the challenge that was there when the Mayor took control: creating a sense of urgency, and building momentum for change.” Department of Buildings Commissioner Patricia Lancaster notes, “It’s an immensely political job being Buildings Commissioner. I don’t think it will be that different [in the second term]. I think there will always be politics.” In a sense, second terms simply add a new set of challenges to those that are ever-present in the work of city government leaders.

Perhaps first and foremost among the new challenges faced by leaders in city government at the start of the second term is the question of how best to use the mandate and political capital afforded by the victory. As Linda Gibbs poses the question, “How do we pay for and maximize the greatest mandate

¹ Several weeks following the briefing, Linda Gibbs was appointed to a position as the City’s Deputy Mayor for Human Services. However, as this briefing predates the appointment, we refer to Ms. Gibbs as the Commissioner of the Department of Homeless Services throughout this Executive Summary.

that we could have?” The panel discussion offers three distinct (though not mutually exclusive) possibilities:

- Should leaders in city government use the political capital afforded by the victory to focus on continuing the success of the first term, to solidify the initiatives that have already been set in motion?
- Should leaders “cash-in” on their political capital to pursue new areas and agenda items that were previously infeasible or too risky to pursue?
- Or should leaders at the second term, faced with uncertain future due to term limits, use their political capital to create an enduring legacy

Responses from the panelists indicate that leaders in city government can and should attempt to do all three: continue their current work, pursue new areas of interest, and consider how to leave an enduring legacy on city government. Meanwhile, term limits and a new set of political considerations factor in the choices that leaders make and the balance that must be struck between these two poles.

LEVERAGING VICTORY TO CONTINUE AND SOLIDIFY INITIATIVES

In many ways, the most immediately apparent implication of the mayor’s re-election is the mandate to solidify the initiatives begun in the first term, particularly for those areas that were so vital to the Mayor’s re-election: housing, public safety, and education. Shaun Donovan, who joined the Bloomberg Administration 18 months before the second term election, explains this best in describing his approach to advancing the Mayor’s affordable housing agenda: “I had a short-term opportunity to make an imprint in an area [affordable housing] where if it was perceived that the City had an affordability problem, this would be a problem for the Mayor’s re-election. For me, the way I tend to think about this is dichotomous: The first eighteen months were about decisional change, policy and programmatic changes that built credibility inside and outside the agency. I was faced with an unusual challenge, where the lack of crisis becomes an obstacle. In our case, we were the victims of our own successes. We [City government] had rebuilt the South Bronx, and the Koch administration had already built lots of housing. Now, [affordable housing] is not about rebuilding neighborhoods, it’s about other things, primarily affordability. So, the first term was about decisional change. The second term is about behavioral change - operational change.” The Mayor’s first term involved setting agenda items, approaches and priorities, and his re-election affirmed the public’s approval of these items, approaches and priorities. Subsequently, the second term naturally involves continuing and institutionalizing the work begun in the first term.

Key Challenge: Recognizing the importance of “hardwiring” change

The work of institutionalization contrasts sharply with the first term’s work of agenda setting. Whereas the first term involved building the momentum and the sense of urgency to set in motion new goals, new areas of activity, and new reforms, the institutionalization of those goals involves formalizing and “hardwiring” change in concrete, and in some respects, mundane ways. Stanley Brezenoff clarifies that the continuing and solidifying the work of the first term entails “preparing infrastructure and workforce within large agencies at the level of individual persons, understanding and doing their job well... [h]elping [front-line staff] understand how their job contributes to overall mission.” In particular, he notes the importance of focusing on front-line staff: “If one wants to achieve an agency that is markedly different than what it used to be, I would start with first- and second-line supervisors. And that helps to create legacy.”

For many leaders in City government, particularly aging senior managers, however, this job of institutionalizing success and this focus on the mundane concerns of infrastructure and leadership have traditionally been low priorities. This is because most such leaders are less attracted to the mundane work of operationalization than to the more exciting work of setting and building momentum for new priority areas. Linda Gibbs herself admits that, “Training is not sexy. I like putting out fires. Training and long-term institutionalization are not fun.” Ms. Cahill believes that this lack of attention to the work of institutionalization is largely due to the framing of the work of institutionalizing as static. The work of institutionalizing has been defined as separated too often from vision with the consequence of limiting the attractiveness of work in City government: “Professional and leadership development has been so institutional, episodic, so boring that someone with your talent would not be attracted.” Despite its perceived tediousness, such operationalization, according to Mr. Brezenoff, is absolutely vital to transforming and improving city government. Leaders in city government should recognize that achieving success at the outset of their second terms necessarily involves “hardwiring” the decisional changes enacted during the first terms. And the panel presents two strategies for achieving such “hardwiring”: leadership development and infrastructure development.

Michele Cahill presents her own recognition of the importance of leadership development: “[T]he whole focus on leadership is a critical point for creating change and continuing progress. Leadership is the greatest factor.” Specifically, formalization of change entails extending leadership to the “front-lines”—that is, at the level of supervisors, principals and teachers—and consequently, extending “autonomy and accountability” to those front-line leaders: “If you’re accountable and autonomous and given tools for individual development, then you’re anticipating and building leadership everywhere that can think through problems...[T]here are ten senior leaders and regions that report to me. So to senior leaders, I said that everything that they do—from attendance to health services—you have to show how you can support principals on how to have a good school.”

Commissioner Donovan, in turn, discusses how to institutionalize change by changing basic operations: “Government is a battleship or an aircraft carrier and it takes a long time to turn it around. You can build into operations those *basic practices, forms, procedures*, and that is powerful in the second term.” One good example he gives is the work of the Department of Correction’s discharge planning initiative, in which a new intake form was introduced to help institutionalize the new policy direction undertaken by the agency. [See the Executive Summary for ‘Prisoner Re-entry: A Case Example,’ a Leading Large-Scale Change briefing held on December 9, 2004. <http://www.wagnerbriefing.com/downloads/DECEMBER%209%202004.pdf>.] Thus for Commissioner Donovan, the formalization or institutionalization of change entails focusing on and routinizing basic procedures and practices. This is particularly important given certain new technological developments: “3-1-1 has fundamentally changed the work of agencies. We have not fully grappled with this. Housing calls have doubled since 3-1-1. We can’t keep doing business the same way and we can’t double staff. Unless we do something different, we’re going to get creamed.” Thus, in some instances, major policy changes adopted during the first term make operational and procedural change all the more imperative.

Key Challenge: Sustaining a sense of urgency and fighting complacency

When leaders in city government decide to leverage the mandate implicit in their second term reappointments to continue the work of their first terms, they face the new challenges of sustaining a sense of urgency during the second term. Even where leaders were able during their first terms to build the momentum to successfully set new directions and create new approaches or policies, they must now, in their second terms, grapple with the possible onset of complacency within their agencies and personnel.

Complacency is particularly a threat given the impression of uncertainty that term limits create, which may decrease motivation to pursue change during the second (and final) term. As Linda Gibbs notes, term limits function “like a cliff at the end of the road.”

The panel presented several approaches for sustaining a sense of urgency and fighting complacency. These approaches involve both an internal and external strategy. Michele Cahill, for example, focused on sustaining enthusiasm by focusing internally on public employees: “You have to create urgency and agency inside through an internal sense of accountability.” For Ms. Cahill, this means making principals accountable for school outcomes at the individual student-level. Thus, to such principals and other front-line supervisors, she explains, “I’m interested in your attendance numbers by school and your tactics for how to have good attendance for those schools that don’t have good attendance.” Likewise, for Commissioner Donovan, sustaining urgency also means focus on the front-line staff, in his case, on the code inspectors, and those running the programs.

At the same time, leaders can also sustain a sense of urgency through an external approach, specifically by leveraging external forms of pressure or enthusiasm. This externally imposed sense of urgency can come from national movements or priorities, as is the case with the federal “No Child Left Behind” Act increasing external accountability for the New York City Department of Education. Leaders can capitalize on such existing external reform movements to build and sustain a sense of urgency internally within their agencies and among their employees. In addition, leaders can create external pressure by engaging external parties and building external champions for work begun during the first terms. Commissioner Donovan suggests that the advocacy community can be engaged to provide such external pressure. Referring to Linda Gibbs’ experience in the city’s homelessness assistance policy, Commissioner Donovan remarks, “You’ve done this in the homeless strategy: how to get the advocacy community to get involved in the initiatives, how do you get them involved and make them champions for your work.” If supportive of the work of leaders and their agencies, these external parties can supply the enduring pressure and interest to ensure that the work continues throughout and beyond the second term.

LEVERAGING VICTORY TO PURSUE NEW AREAS AND AGENDA ITEMS

The political capital or “mandate” afforded by the re-election of the Mayor to a second term can also be used by leaders to advance new areas and initiatives as well. Briefing panelists seem to suggest that the use of political capital to expand the scope of initiatives during the second term was in many ways preferable over simply working to institutionalize and operationalize success in areas undertaken during the first term. Stanley Brezenoff, in particular, states his preference for leveraging the victory to pursue new areas: “Something for the Mayor to think about is how to use this stunning victory and acknowledged success. That is, to break out of the kind of issues we’ve been talking about, and speak to and challenge his people to create agendas or put forth agendas...that have compelling merit. For example, an agenda from city agencies around immigrant children and immigrant families. A program that goes to second chance for post-teen, early twenties [young adults] who didn’t make it through school and unsuccessfully connected to the workforce. Challenges like that. And then use the force of his ascendancy to try to accomplish things in those kind of areas for the future of the city...These are my issues, I’m sure he has his...[Since] you don’t often get a mandate like this, you don’t often have the aura of independence like this.” Brezenoff’s claim is that a second term attained through a significant re-election victory presents leaders in city government with the opportunity not only to continue initiatives begun during the first term, but also to take on new “agendas” or areas of pursuit, and in particular, those that have been particularly challenging.

In doing so, leaders face similar challenges that they faced during the first terms: building a case for an agenda item, building the internal and external urgency and credibility to pursue the new item including the leveraging of crises, etc. One example is the ongoing effort by the Buildings Department to adopt a new building code. This building code reform involved two components, the first of which was successfully authorized during the first term, and the second of which is planned for review during the second year of the second term. Just as with the first component, obtaining approval and achieving success around the second part of the reform involves engaging and mediating different standpoints among key stakeholders—unions, developers, etc.—as well as the parties external to the city’s executive branch who ultimately have authority to approve or reject the reforms, the City Council.

Pursuing new agenda items during the second-term differs in two regards from launching first term initiatives. First, as already discussed, the victory and re-election to the second-term provide leaders in city government with additional political capital not available during the start of the Mayor’s first term. With a recent re-election and re-appointment behind them, city leaders now are able to enjoy a certain level of credibility and a set of strategic relationships both established through the first term. Second, the second-term involves new time pressures and new political challenges as well. Moreover, there are limits to the political capital gained from a re-election victory; the Mayor’s mandate only extends so far.

The panel discussion presents three key challenges and considerations to using the political capital afforded by victory to pursue new areas or agenda items during the second terms. First, if the amount of political capital is deemed adequate, leaders should consider pursuing interagency initiatives, which many agree is the boldest and most risky pursuit of any leader in city government. At the same time, leaders should recognize the political challenges unique to second terms, which may limit the amount of time available to pursue new areas, or frustrate their pursuit altogether. Finally, leaders should recognize that even major victories have their limits, and are not a guarantee for success. Some areas may be extremely challenge or even impossible to pursue, regardless of how significant a mandate one has.

Key Challenge: Pursuing Interagency Initiatives

Leaders wishing to respond to the call by Stanley Brezenoff to take on new areas should consider pursuing interagency initiatives. Indeed, among the kind of new agenda items discussed by panel members, interagency work seems to stand out among others as being the highest, and thereby most challenging, form of achievement for a leader in city government.

For leaders in city government, work that spans across agency boundaries is far from typical or regular parts of practice. In fact, city leaders are held accountable for outcomes that are exclusive of, and in large part, competitive with any inter-disciplinary and cross-sector pursuits. Dennis Smith suggests that for the most part, mayors tell their agency heads, “Don’t screw up,” and implicit in this is the notion that “accountability is not about how you work with other agencies,” and furthermore, that interagency work is not worth the risk. Professor Smith and Linda Gibbs illustrate this further by referring to the discussion from the previous “Leading Large Scale Change” on discharge planning from city jails, in which the panelists discussed the fact that the Mayor typically holds the Correction Commissioner accountable for preventing escapes, but not preventing homelessness among people discharged from jail, and holds the Homeless Services Commissioner accountable for providing safe and humane shelter, not preventing re-incarcerations among homeless individuals. Thus, in the usual course of practice, leaders in city government are discouraged from investing resources and time into interagency work. Indeed, why should a Commissioner face the risk of pursuing work for which s/he is not held accountable?

Linda Gibbs explains further that interagency collaborative initiatives are “self-motivated...It’s seen as a hobby and not seen as core mission.” While many Commissioners do indeed have the desire to

pursue interagency initiatives, she points out that such work is considered marginal to the functions of agencies, a luxury of sorts: “Wouldn’t it be nice if we could do this as well as our *jobs*?” This mayor has a strong Commissioner form of government. The downside is that there isn’t that coordination coming from City Hall.”

Moreover, where such interagency initiatives have been pursued in the past, they have largely been performed without a significant degree of investment, or in the best cases, have remained at a superficial level. Ms. Cahill reflects upon her own experience with such interagency work: “I’ve participated in large taskforces and working groups of comprehensive services. So often, it degenerates into collaboration as a goal, rather than as a means.” Similarly, Mr. Brezenoff observes, “What [Commissioners] have done is good coordinating, avoiding conflict, agreeing upon mutually agreed-upon goals.” He adds that, “Moving to the next level, however, identifying a mission, and then encouraging, directing, stimulating agencies to get there... These are difficult things.”

The mandate available on the heels of re-election presents a critical moment for city leaders to elevate interagency collaboration from its current status of “hobby” to that of “core mission.” With their newfound reserves of political capital, such leaders should consider pursuing these crosscutting initiatives that typically take a “back seat” to the everyday work of agencies. The first step is recognizing how crucial this non-mandated work is to effective performance. Commissioner Gibbs makes a case for why such work is so crucial, “My agency is an example of how you can’t get anything done without working with other agencies: NYCHA, HRA, DOC.” In her case, reducing the number of homeless persons in New York City means both obtaining the resources to help move people on to permanent housing (i.e. through NYCHA’s resources), as well as preventing people from being discharged into homelessness (i.e. through DOC’s discharge planning and homelessness prevention.) Given the rareness of the moment and opportunity that the second term (earned by significant margin) represents, leaders should seize the moment to advancing interagency collaborations, the pinnacle of city governance and policy.

Key Challenge: Anticipating New Political Challenges and Time Constraints

Second terms also present different sets of political challenges not experienced during the first term, in particular, due to the role of term limits. For leaders in city government, such term limits function, as Linda Gibbs puts it, “like a cliff at the end of the road.” In other words, these term limits place constraints on the timeframes for advancing new areas of activity or accomplishing certain tasks.

Stanley Brezenoff explains the affect of term limits on city leaders: “Term limits are a change since I was in City government. Term limits did not use to be a motivation for hitting the ground running... In New York City, with term limits applied to the Mayor and City Council, this makes for a particularly dysfunctional period, particularly in terms of continuity.” Commissioner Donovan provided some insight as to what this dysfunctional period looks like based on his experience in a transition between presidential administrations in Washington DC: “[P]eople think about defense rather than offense. The Friday night before inauguration, people were running around with paper shredders. People were worried about what could hurt you. People thought about what mistakes we made, where we are vulnerable and how to show that things worked or didn’t work.” While the federal government is different - partisan, as Mr. Brezenoff points out, “municipal government tends not to be as partisan [as the federal government.] Municipal leaders move across administrations much more.” Nevertheless, term limits still present an uncertainty for city leaders and workers, and places constraints on the ability of leaders to make significant advancements of new initiatives or to accomplish much at all.

How long are those timeframes? Stanley Brezenoff provides some speculation: “I’d be loathe to predict. This is a Mayor who has come in without the usual kinds of [supporting] organizations. Usual

constituencies that are part of every administration—unions, business persons, et cetera—are going to be thinking about the next time. They know they lost, but they don't expect to lose every time. Around year two or year three of the administration, there's going to be a lot of activity, Union leaders' activity, for example... There's going to be a lot of jockeying [among political aspirants]" Whereas leaders in city government may be able to enjoy some immunity from political maneuverings during first two years of the second term, they are highly subject to political scrutiny during the second or "lame duck" half, when a new cacophony of voices, likely critical ones, will emerge. Given these new political challenges emerging in the second term, city leaders are well-advised to "hit the ground running" and move quickly to advance their new initiatives, as well as to continue and operationalize their existing initiatives.

At the same time, the second term's new political climate may also present opportunities for city leaders, if they are able to leverage the "crisis" represented by these political changes. Specifically, leaders may be able to leverage political changes to their advantage by keeping in mind and using other political calendars to instill or sustain a sense of urgency... As mentioned earlier, Commissioner Doherty discusses how changes in the City Council changes may help to advance his own priorities. Linda Gibbs presents an example of how state leaders used the Mayoral election to create a sense of urgency within state government to advance the City-State New York/New York III Agreement to House the Chronically Homeless at the state-level: "I realized that the Governor's staff was using this as an election issue. They were using the mayoral election cycle to motivate the State Division of Budget, and move this on the state side. If you don't have crisis, you don't have momentum." So too can city leaders use the state gubernatorial election cycle (which is staggered with respect to the mayoral election cycle) to create a sense of "crisis" and motivate internal change within and across their agencies.

Commissioner Donovan discusses how these external political calendars enter his own strategy for second-term success, "There are a number of things that create moments of opportunity. One thing we recently talked about is that there are excess funds at the state to create housing. We've started to think about building momentum for getting those resources to the City. [We could tell state government:] 'We can help you spend those resources. You can get the benefit of having used them before leaving next year. It's also a question about what alliances you want to build, with the Senate changing, with a new governor. We really have just begun to think through that in some detail.'" For Commissioner Donovan, political changes external to city government present an opportunity, a kind of convenient crisis that can be leveraged to his benefit. And recognizing and seizing such opportunities is vital to the successful pursuit of certain issues. As Mr. Brezenoff puts it, "There are some issues that, absent a crisis, or no losers... crisis is what generates the ability to get it done."

Key Challenge: Understanding the Limits of the Mandate

Although victory provides leaders in city government with an enhanced ability to pursue new areas, including those previously considered too difficult, some uncertainty remains regarding how far the mandate extends. Leaders should recognize that their and the Mayor's mandate does have limits. Certain issues or agenda items will always be too politically risky or challenging that no amount of political capital could make pursuing them easy.

One area to which the mandate may or may not extend is the Mayor's sanitation and solid waste disposal plan. The siting of solid waste treatment or transport facilities has historically been one of the most challenging and unpopular issues for any municipal leader, as such facilities are among those most subject to "Not In My Backyard" responses from the public. Commissioner John Doherty of the New York City Department of Sanitation explains this ongoing challenge well: "At different points in the city's history, changes were made around how to dispose of solid waste. First, since the 1930s, you can't dump

into the sea. Now we can't dump at Fresh Kills. Then you've reached a point where Giuliani and Pataki want to shut down Fresh Kills. If you go back to Koch or Dinkins, they all had kinds of plans, but couldn't do it. I don't think Giuliani brought it up." The new political capital gained by the re-election, however, may present an opportunity to pursue this historically inapproachable issue: "The Mayor has a new plan. It's interested about how to leverage victory in the second term, with the public on board, thinking about how to get the Council on board...With the popularity of the Mayor and the new City Council, hopefully we'll get it done."

Others at the briefing questioned Commissioner Doherty's belief that the mandate can be leveraged to tackle such challenging issues as the siting of solid waste facilities. As Ellen Schall points out, "The Mayor's mandate doesn't go to solid waste treatment. The mandate has to do with schools, police, and issues with which the Mayor was identified. I'm asking whether you think this mandate is so broad that it encompasses the issues that he wants to get done or is more limited." Stanley Brezenoff agrees that the issue is difficult even for an administration with significant amounts of political capital: "It's very hard to see how this is going to move."

Whether or not the Mayor's mandate does extend to such highly controversial issues and agenda items as the siting of solid waste treatment remains to be seen. Meanwhile, for city leaders it suffices to say that there are limits to the mandate and political capital that emerge in the aftermath of victory. While it is highly advisable and recommended that a mandate—given its rareness in politics and government—be leveraged to the greatest extent possible cases, it is also critical for success that leaders recognize the limits of political capital and the kinds of issues to which it extends.

LEVERAGING VICTORY TO ESTABLISH A LEGACY

A final consideration for leaders in city government at the outset of the second term is that of leaving and establishing a legacy. Given their foreshortened timeframe and indubitable finality, not to mention the uncertainty of employment that they entail for many city leaders, second terms present a critical moment in which leaders can establish a legacy and mark on the practice of governance. Doing so encompasses all of the area discussed above: institutionalizing success initiatives, raising and pursuing new agenda items, and facing all of the political and leadership challenges accompanying both. If successful, leaders can use their uncertain (and possibly remaining) time in city government to establish new paradigms for leadership and governance that can impact the practice of city leaders for years to come.

One strategy for creating legacy is to engage external parties to champion and become the "watchdogs" for initiatives or areas. Commissioner Donovan suggests that this external pressure can come from such external political entities as supervisory bodies. Comparing the current challenge with challenges faced during his tenure in the federal government, Commissioner Donovan recalled, "I think we spent a lot of time with legislative folks, working with Congress and staff explaining everything we had done. I wouldn't underestimate explaining to people why and how you did what you did." Engaging external parties and educating them about the work pursued by a city agency can build an external movement that can ensure the continuation of work or agenda items by future city governments. Another approach to creating legacy and leaving an enduring and historic mark on city government is through the pursuit of interagency initiatives. More specifically, moving interagency work from a marginal activity or "hobby" to that of the regular practice of agencies is an achievement that has lasting value. By broadening and reforming the mission and function of city agencies and the practice of governance in general, interagency initiatives not only create new areas of practice and programs, but also set new standards for and new models of approaching city leadership that may be emulated by future leaders.

A second way, and already discussed in this briefing, is that of institutionalizing practice by influencing personnel, in particular, those workers who will remain in city government beyond and through administration changes. Stanley Brezenoff touches on the creation of legacy through influencing long-term government workers when he notes that “If one wants to achieve an agency that is markedly different than what it used to be, I would start with first and second line supervisors. And that helps to create legacy.” Kathleen [??] further adds that “there are many loyal workers out there [who remain in city government] because they love the City and the job. And I want to think about the impact on permanent government.” Commissioner Gibbs agrees: “There is something inherent about municipal government...The thing that is important in my job is to build skill sets at the deputy level.”

In addition to influencing those already in “permanent government,” a final means of establishing legacy raised by the panel is by hiring, during the second term, a new generation of inspired employees. Changing hiring practices can be an end in itself. For instance, as Mr. Brezenoff recalls, “The golden age of city employment was when we hired people from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.” Others emphasize the importance of hiring young, inspired workers to establish a legacy. Ellen Schall affirms this point by noting the legacy that Mayor Lindsay had made through his hiring of young people, “You have to go back to [Mayor] Lindsay on inspiring young people...This Mayor should think about young people.” Doing so, however, has not been a traditionally accepted hiring practice. As Ms. Cahill remarks, “One thing we’ve gotten criticism for is bringing young people into positions of management in city government.” On the other hand, she defends her hiring practices, stating that ““It was really to add a mix to a workforce that had tremendous talent and had commitment, but which was in an extremely regimented, regulated environment,” and argues that, “If you’re trying to reform an organization and bring in ideas like charter schools, you want to mix up where those ideas are coming from... [Young people] saw government as new and changing and an opportunity to contribute to government.” For city leaders facing an uncertain future at the end of the second term, there seems no more direct and effective means of leaving their mark and legacy in city government than by influencing and determining who it is that will be in city government in the future.

CONCLUSION

The second mayoral term is a unique and significant political moment that has unfortunately received little attention among scholars and policymakers alike. Second terms, particularly those earned by an overwhelming electoral victory, provide a mayor and city leaders with a critical opportunity to solidify the work of the first term, as well as pursue new areas of interest, including those previously thought too risky or politically controversial. The latter areas include such risky efforts as interagency initiatives that cut across traditional lines of governance and agency responsibility. Such initiatives, along with new approaches and organizational and personnel changes, may allow city leaders to leave a lasting and enduring legacy on city government. At the same time, the role of term limits can make second terms highly urgent and stressful political periods. The political maneuvering that inevitably emerge towards the latter half of the second term, combined with the uncertain future faced by city appointed officials, create a critical time period in which much of the second term work can take place. The agenda of the mayor and city leaders must be set in motion roughly before the latter two years of the term, before the cacophony of political opposition rises. Presented with such a critical yet highly time-sensitive opportunity, leaders in city government should look to solidify their work of their first terms, pursue new areas of interest that were heretofore too challenging to pursue, as well as consider instituting those “bigger picture” changes that can leave their legacy and mark on city government.

First, leaders can leverage victory to “hardwire” the successes begun during the first term, shifting their focus from policy and decisional changes to operational and infrastructural changes. In particular, they should focus on training and leadership development among front-line supervisors and program administrators, who will likely remain in government for the long-term. Moreover, to fight the complacency that may arise among staff and employees who have been pursuing the same work for four years, leaders can sustain a sense of urgency by building both internal and external systems of accountability (holding front-line supervisors to specific outputs and outcome measures) as well as external allies who can “take up the torch” as champions of their causes.

Second, leaders can and should use their political capital to pursue new initiatives and agenda items, including those that were deemed in the first term to be too risky to pursue. These new areas include both particular issues that have historically been difficult to raise, as well as cross-cutting, interagency collaborations that represent new approaches to governance altogether. Pursuing new agenda items during the second terms entail the same kinds of crisis- and interest-building work as leaders faced during the first term. However, in governments with term limits, mayors and leaders face a new set of political challenges, namely, the impending criticisms and opposition that arises as new political aspirants emerge, as well as the challenge of achieving successes that last beyond administration changes. To contend with these challenges, leaders should “hit the ground running,” understanding that the first two years of the four-year second term are the critical window in which initiatives and agenda items need to be set in motion. They can also build external allies and champions for their work, engaging supervisory officials and members of the advocacy community to serve as “watchdogs” for future administrations. Finally, leaders should leverage external political events and changes, such as gubernatorial, supervisory, state legislator, or even federal government elections, to their advantage, using them to create a new sense of urgency.

Third, leaders, faced with an uncertain future given term limits, are well-advised to consider how their work can impact the functioning of city government for years to come. In other words, leaders should consider how they can leave an enduring mark and legacy on city government. They can do this through the pursuit of interagency initiatives that not only represent new issue areas, but also new methods and approaches for practice and governance. Leaders can also create legacy by developing leaders among “permanent government,” that is, those officials and employees who will likely remain in public service across several administrations. Building their skills and instilling particular perspectives on these permanent government employees can surely leave a lasting mark on the way city government is run.

Finally, leaders can create legacy by literally changing the face of government, hiring the next generation of young, inspired, and talented staff. Indeed, there seems no more direct way to leaving a mark on city government than by influencing and determining who will be city government in the future.

Mayor Bloomberg's second term, presented at the briefing summarized here, is an excellent case of the critical moment represented by a mayoral second term earned by a significant electoral victory. It is the hope of the Research Center for Leadership in Action and Accenture that the unfolding of Mayor Bloomberg's second term continue to inform and provide lessons to leaders in city government and of large-scale change efforts in other settings, and that mayoral terms in general, rich as they are in management challenges and lessons, become a new and growing area of examination and study among students of governance and management.