

AGENDA ITEM # _____

CITY OF MADISON, WISCONSIN

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REPORT OF: Comptroller's Office
TITLE: DOT Organizational Options
AUTHOR: Dean Brassler, Administrative Analyst
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Following the retirement of the City's staff Traffic Engineer V and the announcement that the Director of the Department of Transportation would be retiring soon, you assembled a staff group to review possible options for the future organizational structure of the City's transportation related functions. As you indicated to us, an opportunity for full public discussion of any proposed changes would be an important step before final decisions can be made.

The staff group met several times during the past month to formulate a set of potential options for consideration. We looked at many different combinations and arrangements, and attempted to identify some of the strengths and weaknesses of each. We did not, in most cases, discuss the specific assignments of individual employees. Instead, we focused on the relationships between various organizational functions and the general policy considerations of each alternative.

No single structure was viewed as inherently superior to all of the others. While individual staff members expressed preferences for aspects of one proposal or another, we did not reach consensus and have not identified one particular structure which we could all recommend.

This memo is a summary the group's discussions and is intended to establish a framework to facilitate further consideration of possible organizational alternatives. The many alternatives we discussed as a staff group are distilled into five general options. These options are designed to represent the range of reasonable or likely alternatives available. Following is a brief narrative description of each general option.

It should be noted that the budgetary impact of these alternatives will be dependent, to a large extent, on the more specific staffing decisions which will be required once a general organizational structure has been determined. For purposes of our discussion, we have assumed that the overall staffing costs would be relatively similar for each alternative. A more detailed budgetary analysis can be developed once specific staffing recommendations have been completed.

OPTION 1:

Retain the existing organizational structure: Department of Transportation with three Divisions.

The first option is to retain the present structure. The Common Council created a Department of Transportation in September of 1968 to "plan, develop, coordinate, operate and regulate the various elements of City transportation in such a way as to provide for the safe, efficient and economical movement of people and goods." Following the City's acquisition of the Madison Bus Company in May of 1970, the Department of Transportation became responsible for administering transit operations along with the Parking Utility and Traffic Engineering. This structure was viewed as a way to enhance coordination between the various transportation modes. A single administrative entity would facilitate planning for a multi-modal transportation system and reduce potential competition between these operating agencies.

Many of the same arguments regarding a coordinated transportation department can still be made today. At a policy level, issues which span the various transportation modes can be addressed and coordinated from within one organizational unit. This includes responsibility for staffing and responding to the needs of the Transportation Commission which today formulates policy related to a broadly range of transportation issues.

At an operational level, the field units of the Parking and Traffic Engineering Divisions currently share facilities at the Sayle Street location, just as the engineering and administrative staff share office space in the Municipal Building. Continuation of the existing organizational structure would minimize disruption of existing relationships and administrative structures.

OPTION 2:

Retain a separate transportation function including the Transit and Parking Divisions. Reassign Traffic Engineering as a Division within Public Works.

Under this option, the present Transit and Parking Divisions would continue to coordinate their activities as a Transportation Department, while the Traffic Engineering Division would be realigned as a separate division within the Public Works function. The Traffic Engineering Division would be headed by a newly hired City Traffic Engineer. The Transportation Director position would be eliminated, and the Transit Manager and Parking Manager would work cooperatively on the administration of transportation issues affecting both divisions. This cooperative structure is similar to that which exists among the various Public Works divisions today.

This option would be intended to emphasize and strengthen the technical and field relationships between the Engineering and Traffic Engineering functions, yet preserve the distinct divisional aspects of the present Traffic Engineering unit. Under this option, the Transportation Commission would continue to serve in its role as the primary policy body with regard to transportation issues but would look to both the Transportation and Public Works functional areas for staff support.

Because the Transit, Parking and Traffic Engineering Division heads would no longer be reporting to a Director of Transportation, the number of managers directly supervised by the Mayor would increase by two when compared to the current organizational structure. The number of divisions in the Public Works functional group would increase from five to six.

OPTION 3:

Retain separate transportation function including Transit and Parking Divisions. Reassign Traffic Engineering functions to existing Engineering Division.

Like Option 2, this option would retain the cooperative relationship between Parking and Transit, without a Director of Transportation or a separate departmental administrative unit. The significant difference would be the integration of existing Traffic Engineering functions as sections within the current Engineering Division, supervised by the City Engineer. The number of managers supervised directly by the Mayor would increase by one from the current structure and the Transportation Commission would look toward the two functional areas of Transportation and Public Works for staff support.

Proponents of this option place emphasis on the similarity between the traffic engineering and civil engineering disciplines and the importance of coordinating staff efforts in these areas. Each division presently engages in both professional engineering design and field operations activities. It can be argued that fully integrating traffic engineering with other engineering functions would streamline project design and implementation efforts.

It should be noted that, from a job classification and labor relations perspective, the Engineering Division and the Traffic Engineering Division are presently quite distinct. Most employee job titles and classifications are unique to one division or the other, and the field employees of the two divisions are represented by different bargaining units. Full integration of these two units would probably require a some significant adjustments to the existing array of employee classifications and collective bargaining agreements.

OPTION 4:

Establish Transit as a separate departmental unit, reassign Traffic Engineering and Parking as Divisions within Public Works.

Since the City took ownership of the private Madison Bus Company in 1970, the transit operation has grown to become the second largest agency of City government when measured in terms of operating expenditures and number of employees. The division's 1995 expenditure budget approaches \$24,000,000. Decisions concerning the structure and financing of transit and the related paratransit services have become highly visible City service issues. As a City enterprise supported by substantial contributions from local, state and federal government sources, the Transit operation has always existed under unique regulatory requirements.

By separating Transit into a distinct departmental unit, this option would recognize the magnitude and unique nature of the issues surrounding transit operation. The Transit Manager would be directly responsible to the Mayor for the many issues relating to transit operations, financing and service structure.

With this option, the cooperative administrative and facility sharing relationships which exist today between the Parking and Traffic Engineering Divisions could be expected to continue without significant disruption. The Public Works functional group would be expanded from the present five divisions to a total of seven, making coordination between these units more complex. The number of managers reporting to the Mayor would increase by two.

This option suggests the creation of a Transit Commission to serve as the primary policy body with respect to all transit related issues, a model common in other cities with municipally operated transit systems. Under this approach, the broader range of policy issues currently addressed by the Transportation Commission might be split between an expanded Board of Public Works and the newly formed Transit Commission. Alternatively, the current Transportation Commission structure could be maintained to provide policy guidance, supported by both Transit and Public Works staff, similar to Options 2 and 3 above.

OPTION 5:

Merge Transit, Parking and Traffic Engineering as separate Divisions within Public Works, eliminating Transportation Commission.

Under this option, the separate organizational structure which has existed to support broadly defined transportation activities would be eliminated altogether, and the Transportation Commission would be eliminated as a separate policy body. The three divisions of Transit, Parking and Traffic Engineering would simply be added to the present Public Works functional area, increasing the number of agencies from five to eight. As in other options, the number of managers reporting directly to the Mayor would increase by two.

The Transportation Commission could be eliminated, with its current functions added to an expanded Board of Public Works agenda.

Other Considerations

During staff team meetings, the assignment of responsibility for transportation planning functions generated considerable discussion. Most viewed the City's present transportation planning effort as disorganized, with responsibility spread between the Department of Transportation, its three divisions, the Dane County Regional Planning Commission and, the Department of Planning and Development. Many considered a stronger link between land use planning and transportation planning to be an important ingredient for improving the City's overall planning effort. Consequently, the assignment of responsibility for transportation planning to the Planning Unit of the Department of Planning and Development is suggested, regardless of which organizational alternative is eventually selected. While this change should be accompanied with staff resources, the current Department of Transportation table of organization does not dedicate substantial staffing to these issues.

Another function which received unique attention was parking lot plan review. This function has historically been housed and staffed within Traffic Engineering. As an integral step in the zoning approval process, it was generally agreed by the staff group that the "one stop shop" concept for development review and approval could best be served by reassigning this function and related staff to the Building Inspection Unit of the Department of Planning and Development. Again, this change could be incorporated into any of the organizational options identified above.

Associated with assignment of responsibility for transportation planning staff functions is the question of where to address related policy issues within the Common Council committee structure. One possibility would be to leave the primary responsibility where it is now, with the Transportation

Commission. If, however, transportation planning is to become more closely tied to other land use planning decisions, a strong case can be made for reassigning policy issues related to transportation system design, including street geometrics, to the Plan Commission.

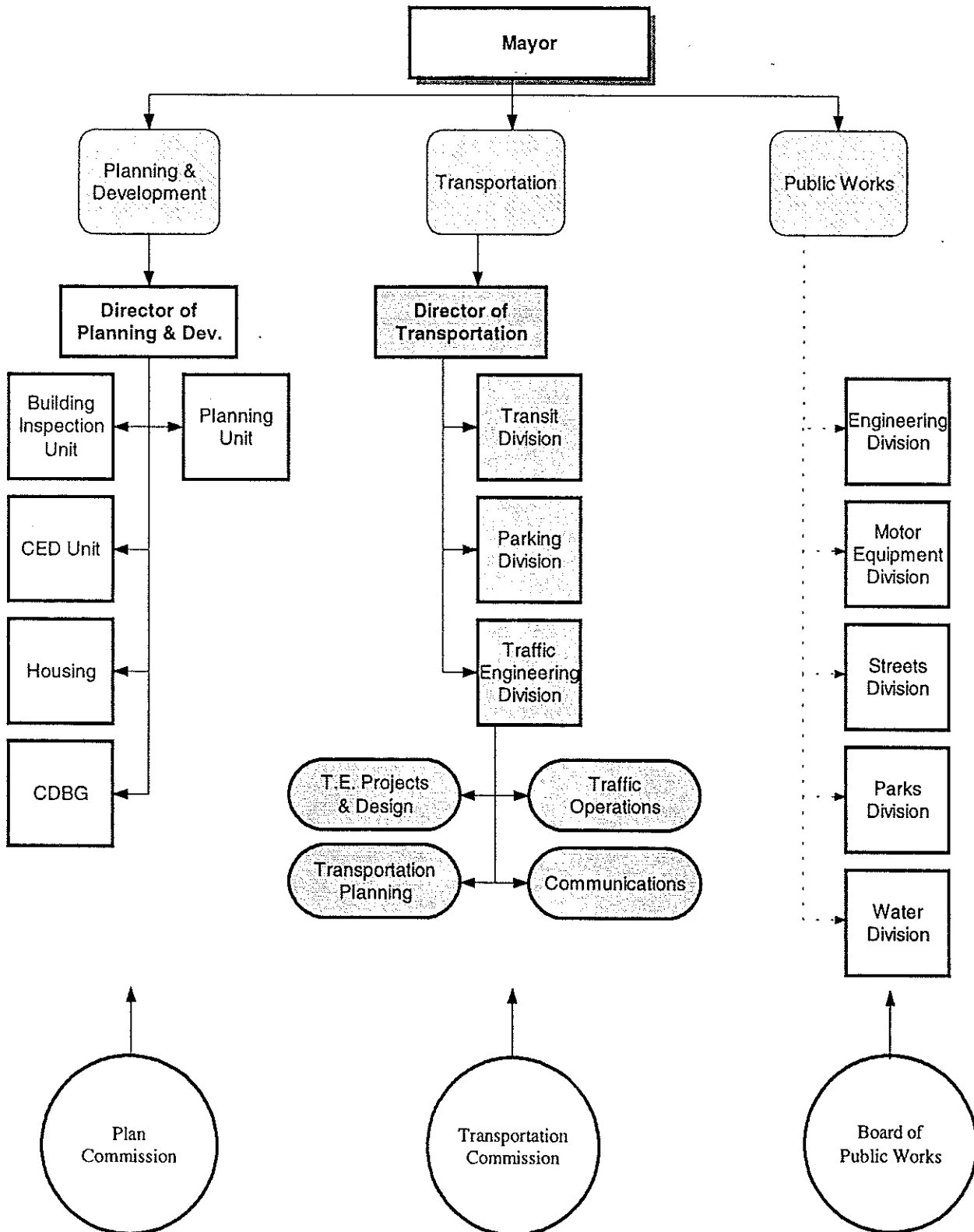
Organization Charts

Attached are organization charts depicting the five options outlined above. Each chart identifies the three major governmental functions of Planning and Development, Transportation and Public Works along with the departments and divisions proposed for inclusion within these areas. The existing organizational components of the Department of Transportation have been shaded so that the relocation of these units can be seen more easily in the various options. For Options 2 through 5, responsibility for transportation planning and parking lot plan review have been shown as reassigned to the Department of Planning and Development.

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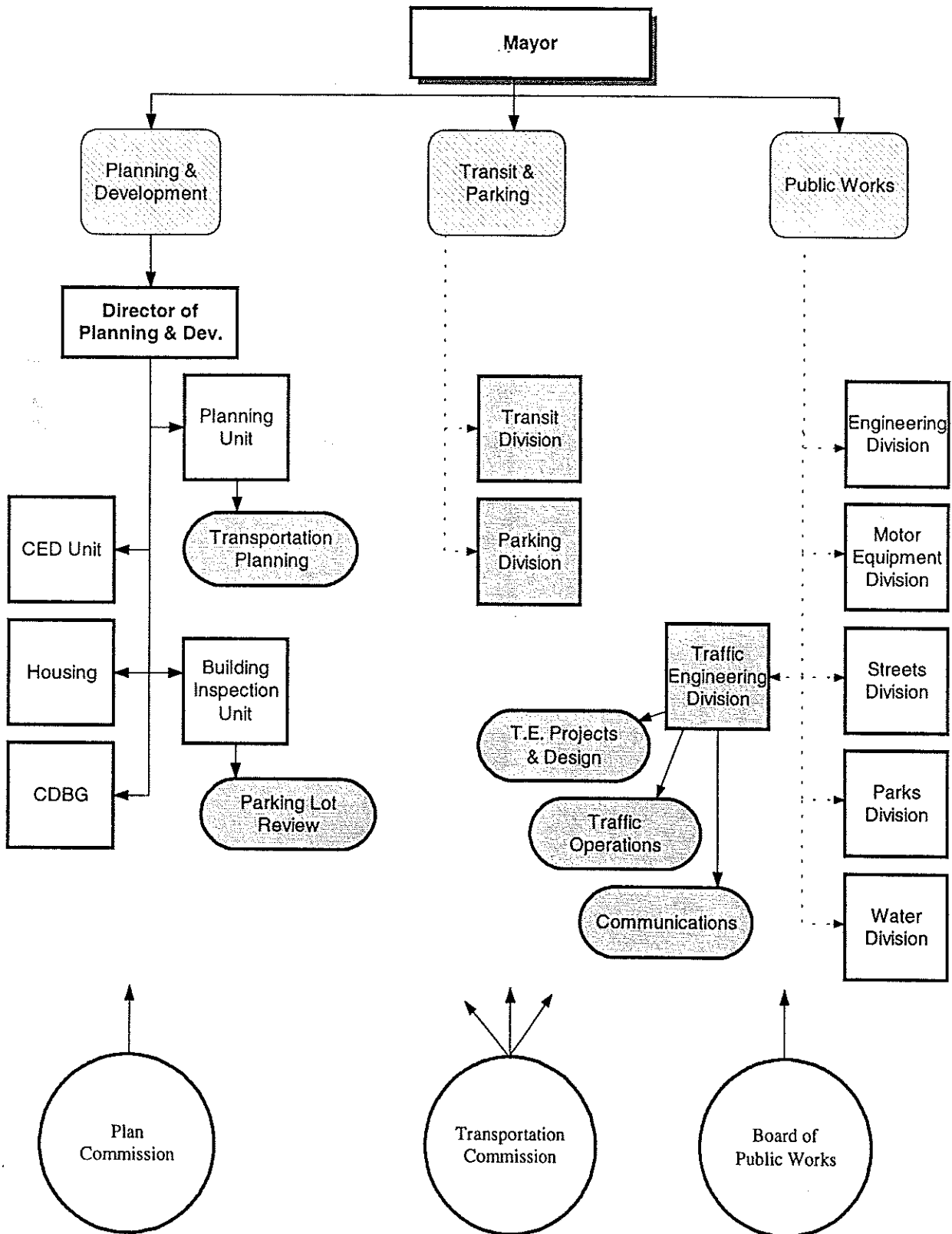
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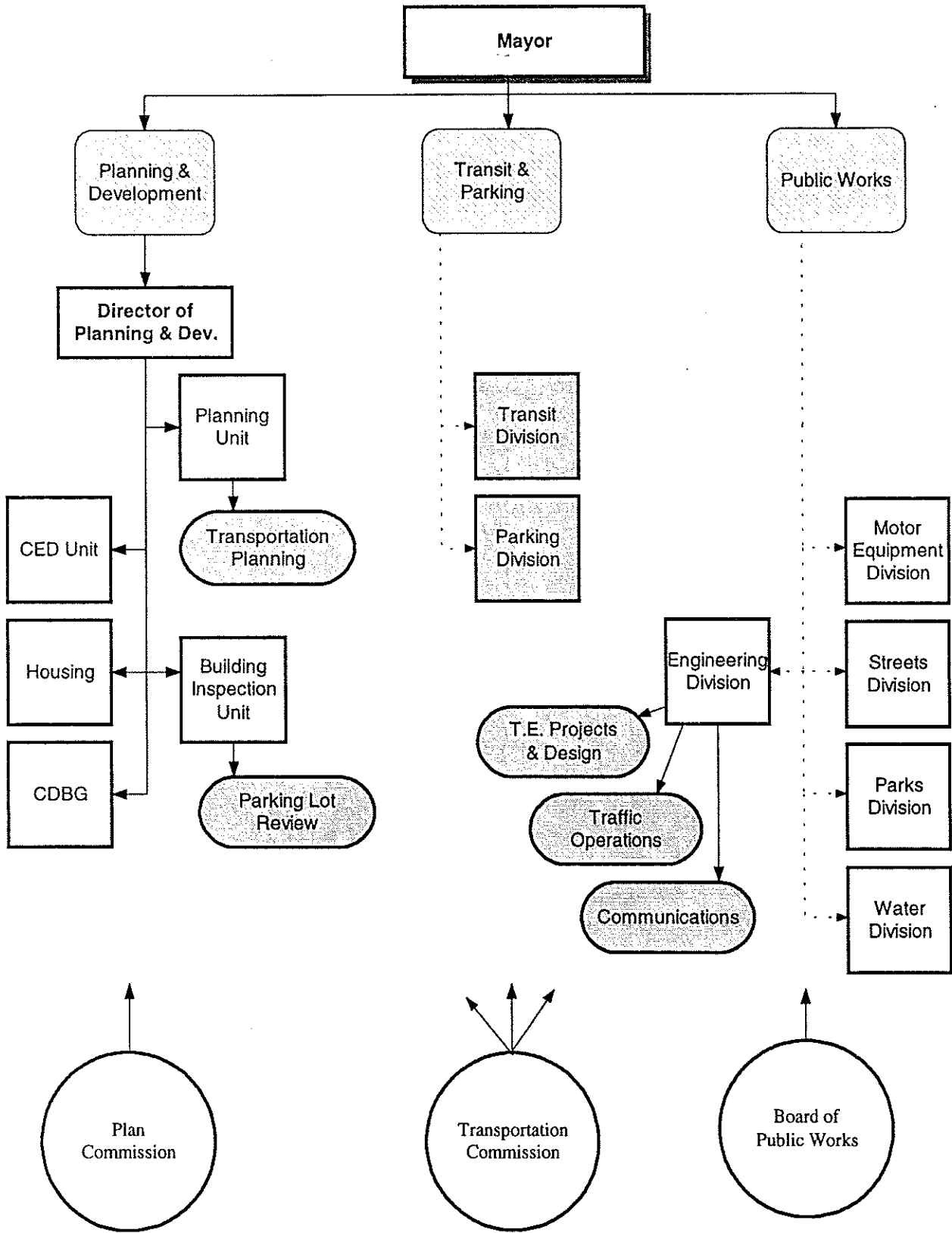
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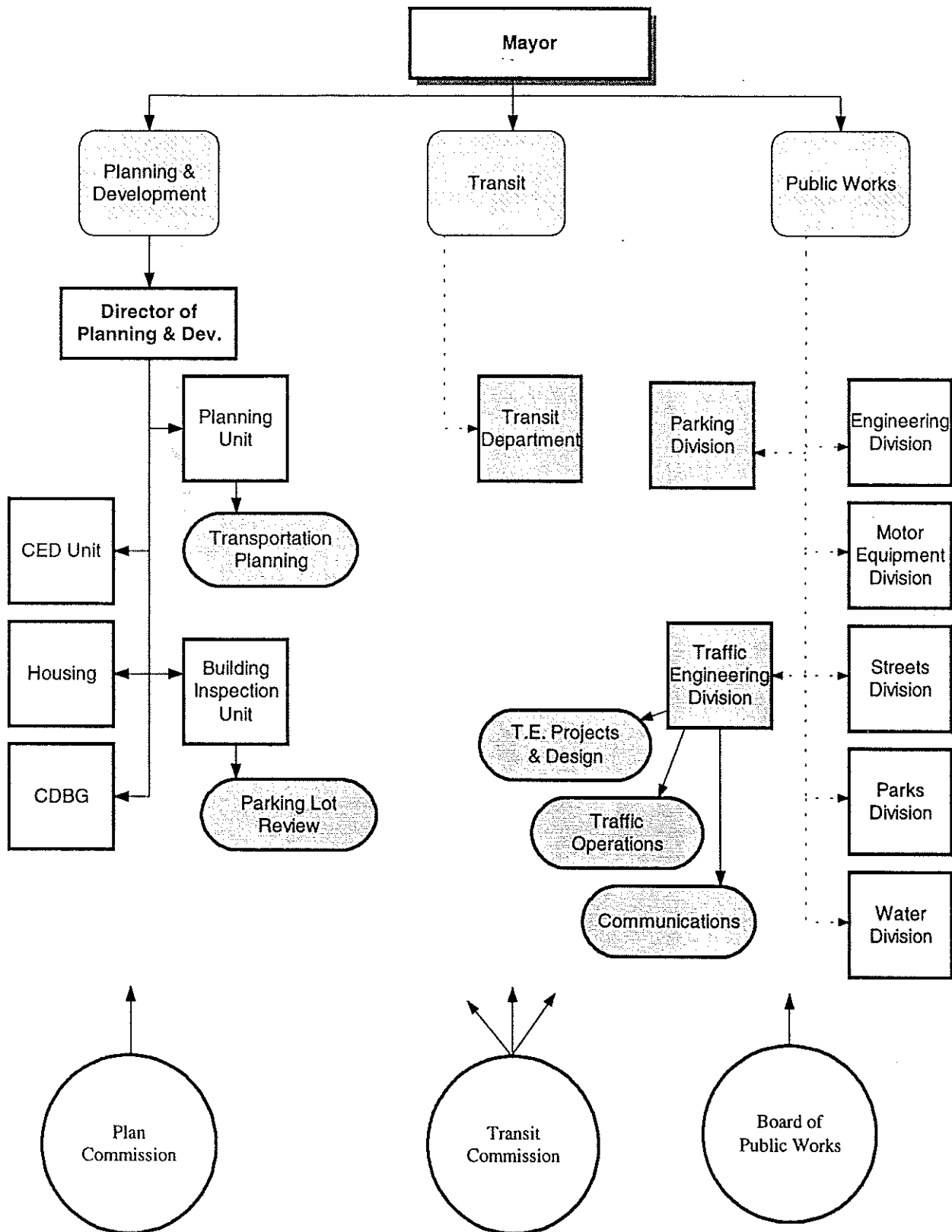
Option 3

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Option 4

Establish Transit as a separate departmental unit, reassign Traffic Engineering and Parking as Divisions within Public Works.



Option 5

Merge Transit, Parking and Traffic Engineering as separate Divisions within Public Works, eliminating Transportation Commission.

