

These functions are surrendered or delegated by the government only at the risk of losing touch with the basic objectives of the residents, who will ultimately be the most important customers, or constituents, of the project. They will also elect the officials who must appropriate sufficient up-front capital to build the public infrastructure that will be necessary to attract privately motivated development.

Therefore, the key to a “delivery system” is to have a mechanism that is able to conduct business like a private entity for the sake of speed and efficiency, but which also remains subject to the policy and fiscal control of the publicly elected officials. Such an entity can take many forms, depending on the laws and customs of the locality and the nation involved. In Baltimore, we found the solution in a private, single-purpose, no-stock corporation which contracted to manage the development process as the surrogate of the Mayor and City Council. The contract called for the municipality to pay all of the costs of the corporation’s operation, and the corporation to turn any profits over to the municipality.

The corporation was named Charles Center–Inner Harbor Management, Inc., because the Mayor at that time wanted to make sure its purpose was focused strictly on those two projects, and not on creating a larger empire for itself. Put another way, the administrative principle was that the officers of the corporation would have no other thought in their heads when they got out of bed in the morning but to make those projects succeed, in spite of any obstacles that may occur.

The contract with the city gave the corporation a specific list of functions:

- to coordinate (not duplicate) the normal functions of the City Government in the project area: property acquisition, relocation of existing uses, design and construction of infrastructure, and public funding and appropriations;
- to act as spokesman for the plan and the process, creating favorable public relations both locally and externally;
- to recruit developers – private, public or non-profit – who would construct the uses called for by the Master Plan, and to negotiate development agreements with those developers for approval and execution in public by officers of the municipality;
- to review and coordinate the architectural design of all construction, both public and private, to ensure a uniformly high standard of aesthetic quality throughout the projects;
- to control and coordinate the timing of construction, in order to achieve a complementary phasing process and minimize the disruption of other activities;
- to monitor evolving changes in the marketplace and identify changes in the Master Plan as they became indicated.

Obviously, such a public–private contract could be a disaster if it were allowed to run the gauntlet of changing fortunes and factions in local politics. In Baltimore, that was avoided by, first, the designation of respected private, politically neutral executives to head the management corporation, and second, by the early and continuing success of the