Decision-making for Quality Services: Information, Indicators and Dialogue

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LOCAL FISCAL STRESS:
State Austerity Policy and Creative Local Response
December 9, 2014
Gideon Putnam, Saratoga Springs, NY
Overview

- Why Indicators?
- Trends in NYS local government spending
- Examples of Indicator Projects to support informed decision-making about government service provision
- Measuring Impact with Indicators
Why are we talking about indicators?

- Fiscal Stress → Changes in Funding → ? Impacts ?

- *Informed Decision-Making* means including a consideration of the consequences and *impacts* of these decisions.

- How to measure impacts?
  - Role of data and other indicators

- How to connect indicators to decision-making?
Trends in NYS Local Government Spending
Service Expenditure Trends

- What has happened to municipal service expenditures since FY 2007?

  - Examples
    - Counties
    - Towns
    - Source: NYS Comptroller

  - Compared to inflation trends
    - Source: State and Local Government Implicit Price Deflators, Federal Reserve Bank St. Louis
County Expenditure Trends by Service Area

- Major Expenses (10% or more of all spending)
  - Social services (24%) < inflation
  - General government (17%) < inflation
  - Employee benefits (15%) > inflation
  - Public safety (12%) < inflation
  - Total expenditures (100%) < inflation

- Spending Grew More or Less Than Inflation?
Debt Service: 5% of Expenditures

Employee Benefits: 15% of Expenditures

Total Expenditures: 100% of Expenditures

Total Expenditures of Counties - Expenditure Area (FY 2007=100)
Town Expenditure Trends by Service Area

- Major Expenses (10% or more of all spending)

- Spending Grew More or Less Than Inflation?
  - Transportation (20%) < inflation
  - Employee benefits (17%) > inflation
  - General government (14%) < (declined absolutely)
  - Public safety (13%) = inflation
  - Sanitation (11%) < inflation
  - Total expenditures (100%) < inflation
Only transportation (20%), general government (14%), and public safety (13%) account for more than 10% of expenditures.
Examples of Community Indicator Projects that support informed decision-making about government service provision
Putting Indicators to Work

CI-PM Integration

Integrating Community Indicators and Performance Measures

Let us know how we’re doing! Please take this brief survey about CIC’s CI-PM integration effort. Thank you!

http://www.communityindicators.net/
Social Services: Children

The Broward County Children’s Strategic Plan (CSP) exists to eliminate duplicative planning efforts of child-serving agencies by using the Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework to identify goals and gaps in the children’s services continuum and taking a Collective Impact approach to achieve the 5 desired community conditions of well-being for Broward County. What does this all mean? Developed by Mark Friedman.

Results Based Accountability is a disciplined approach that uses community data to collectively take action to improve the lives of children, families, and the community.
Public Safety

"Every society, all government, and every kind of civil compact therefore, is or ought to be, calculated for the general good and safety of the community.”
— George Mason

Overview

Safety in our neighborhood, as well as safety in our larger community, is a high priority for most area residents. Crimes are often devastating to individual victims and usually disruptive to the community at-large. The impact of a high crime rate can make an area less attractive for people who are buying a home and lower not only the sale prices for those homes, but also the property values.

This section provides measures of crimes in various standardized reporting categories. Also included are measures of 911 call activity and total fires.
Public Safety Indicator: Violent Crime

Violent Crimes

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services
What's Being Done

Domestic Violence Report
Alternatives for Battered Women has released their second annual report on Domestic Violence in the Community for 2014. According to this report, the domestic violence report rate is 40.68 and 125 per 10,000 residents in New York State, Monroe County, and the City of Rochester respectively.

Data Mapping in City of Rochester
RIT’s Center for Public Safety Initiatives releases periodic reports that include extensive mapping of data and crime trends over time. Click here to access the most recent reports.

Project Impact Program Announced
Project Impact is a program that coordinates the efforts of the Rochester Police Department, Monroe County Sheriff’s Office and the New York State Police. The program aims to increase collaboration and provide enhanced patrols in city neighborhoods and commercial areas.

Pathways to Peace — Working With Youth
Pathways to Peace is a City of Rochester program that seeks to channel young city residents toward an array of community resources to prevent youth violence. The program works through community organizations at “street level” to intervene with specific individuals.

Police Agencies Involve the Community
Area police departments strive to involve citizens in many aspects of their work. Some have programs that involve residents in actual field activities. The PAC-TAC Program (Police and Citizens Together Against Crime) of the Rochester Police Department encourages citizens to conduct neighborhood walks and report suspicious activities using special two-way radios. In Greece, citizens can participate in the special police, a unit which is called upon to assist the police department during special events, emergencies and storms. The Wyoming County Sheriff works with a nonprofit organization with a time-honored name — the Wyoming County Sheriff’s Posse. This is a group of mounted patrol volunteers who provide their own horses and assist with traffic and crowd-control activities.

Citizens Recognized
Another means of encouraging citizen efforts is to provide awards and recognition for positive actions. Several local police agencies operate such programs.

- The Rochester Police Department sponsors the Do the Right Thing Award, a program to recognize youth for outstanding examples of positive actions.
- The Ontario County Sheriff’s Department also sponsors a Do the Right Thing Program to recognize positive actions of young people.

The City of Rochester Employs Technology to Fight Crime
Rochester police already use a wide array of technology in their efforts to combat crime, and several more are on the way. Additional cameras have been ordered for the Police Overt Digital Surveillance System, which can help police track major crimes. Additional technology is being developed to assist police with crime investigations.
Real Story No. 1

Citizen-driven Performance:
Truckee Meadows Tomorrow and Washoe County, Nevada

How Washoe County integrates TMT’s community indicators:

1. County commissioners use the indicators in strategic planning to establish strategic priorities important to citizens.

2. Departments then use the indicators to identify the purpose of their units in measurable and auditable terms—through outcomes achieved, rather than services provided.

3. Departments set annual objectives and identify “metrics” to measure how they’ll meet their objectives—often the community’s indicators.

4. Management sets annual performance targets—including benchmarks compared to prior years or other jurisdictions or agencies.

5. Budgets are developed based upon achieving the objectives.

6. Managers monitor performance and adjust the allocation of resources.

7. TMT uses the performance measures in tracking the indicators and reporting quality of life improvement and decline over time.

TABLE 3
Board of County Commissioners’ Five Adopted Indicators

- Energy: Per capita consumption by source (75% alternative fuel vehicles purchased by county in 1998-99)
- Vehicle miles: Traveled per person per day
- Solid waste management: Tons recycled of residential and nonresidential; tons put in landfills
- Litter Index
- Community appearance: Number of people who believe our community has a pleasant appearance in which to live and work

TMT’s Quality of Life Indicators Today

- Arts and Cultural Vitality
  1. Expression of culture through the arts
  2. Participation in the arts & cultural activities
- Civic Engagement
  3. Voter turnout
  4. Effective government engagement
  5. Civility & neighborhood pride
  6. Emergency preparedness
- Economic Wellbeing
  7. Individual & Family economic wellbeing
  8. Economic vitality
  9. Workforce development
  10. Entrepreneurship
- Education and Lifelong Learning
  11. Educational infrastructure to meet community needs
  12. Educational success
  13. Community-wide involvement in education
  14. Literate community
- Enrichment
  15. Recreation
  16. Philanthropy and voluntarism
  17. Access to faith communities and spiritual wellbeing
- Health & Wellness
  18. Access to healthcare
  19. Wellness and preventative healthcare
  20. Mental health and social wellbeing
- Innovation
  21. Renewable energy
  22. Technology infrastructure and engagement
  23. Transformative community initiatives
- Land use & Infrastructure
  24. Affordable housing
  25. Land use balance and sensitivity
  26. Mobility and convenience
  27. Development that encourages healthy lifestyles and neighborhood livability
- Natural Environment
  28. Air quality
  29. Clean and available water
  30. Open space access and connectivity
- Public Wellbeing
  31. Perception of safety
  32. Secure families
  33. Community responsiveness to its most vulnerable populations
Connecting Indicators with Decision-Making
Cause & Effect & Indicators

Funding enables activities which affect outputs which influence outcomes.

Immediate:
- Increased physical security of educational institutions, places of worship, and community centres in targeted communities (SIP)

Intermediate:
- Targeted at risk individuals and populations are reached through support and interventions provided by projects (CPAF, NACFP, YGPF)
- Positive changes in awareness, skills, and attitudes/motivations among targeted populations (CPAF, NACFP, YGPF)
- Reduction in incidence of hate-motivated crime in community facilities funded (SIP)
- Positive changes in risk and protective factors and antisocial behaviour among at-risk children and youth, and high risk offenders (CPAF, NACFP, YGPF)
- Increased sense of security among users of facilities
- Reduction in offending behaviour among targeted populations

Long term:
- Increased understanding and knowledge by relevant stakeholders of evidenced-based crime prevention
- Utilization and sustainability of evidenced-based strategies to prevent/reduce crime

Connecting Indicators to Decision-Making

A Project Proposal:
“Understanding the Impacts of Fiscal Stress: Developing Community-Driven Indicator Models”

Goals:
Lay the foundation for establishing and measuring causal relationships between funding changes and community well-being.
Support informed decision-making around fiscal issues.
Provide communities with a process for exploring impacts of fiscal decisions.

Approach:
Work with community partners to develop logic models tracing likely cause/effect relationships
Interviews to measure perceived local impacts
Indicator sets developed to measure these impacts and track other trends.

Questions:
What methods do you currently use to estimate the impacts of your fiscal decisions?
Do you think projects linking indicators to decision-making have the potential to be useful?
Why or why not?