BECOMING SMARTLY RESOURCED
Learning from the 2017 leaders

Equipt to Innovate

A smartly resourced city optimizes its revenues, people and technology to make the greatest difference in the life of the community and the well-being of its residents. By definition, tradeoffs are inherent in municipal budgeting, as are tough decisions around borrowing and making infrastructure and other investments. By acting as stewards for current and future generations, city leaders strategically plan to use scarce resources toward their greatest and highest use.

High-Performing Cities:
- ▸ **El Paso, TX (Top Performer)**
- ▸ **Boston, MA**
- ▸ **Knoxville, TN**
- ▸ **San Antonio, TX**
- ▸ **San Jose, CA**
- ▸ **Virginia Beach, VA**

Field Notes:
- ▸ El Paso has Goal Teams present proposed departmental budgets. These teams are tasked with ensuring continuity and focus on strategic goals through holistic views of the city organization and careful allocation of funds.

- ▸ Knoxville invests in technology to more efficiently deploy its resources. One project is the development of a data dashboard for anti-blight initiatives to help combat neighborhood decay.

- ▸ Boston requires any new budgetary initiative, when proposed, to be accompanied by proposed evaluation measures and an implementation plan.

Signs of Strength:

1. Data use:
- • Regularly conduct evidence-based evaluations of city economic development incentives
- • Use data visualizations to achieve spending efficiencies
- • Connect strategic goals to procurement actions through data
- • Require strategic business plan and outcome goals accompany budget proposals
- • Have departments identify programmatic budget reductions with each budget development cycle

2. City strategic plan alignment:
- • Involve all departments in applying resources to strategic objectives, and keep budget activities attuned to the city strategic plan
- • Strategically deploy both financial and non-financial resources to achieve targeted outcomes

3. Program and process refinement:
- • Examine measurable outcomes and eliminate programs that have not yielded sufficiently positive results
- • Effectively use process changes and technology to redeploy staff where needed
- • Establish a history of eliminating underperforming programs

4. Financial outlook:
- • Establish 80 percent-plus funded municipal pension fund
- • Have AAA bond rating
- • Invest in economic development

Areas to Stretch:

1. Program evaluations:
- • Improve the city's evaluation and elimination of programs that have not yielded sufficiently positive results
- • Use data analytics and performance metrics to evaluate program performance and inform decision-making
- • Strengthen evaluations of economic development incentives

2. Transparency:
- • Develop an open budget or other fiscal transparency tool available for resident viewing

3. City strategic plan alignment:
- • Identify how resource allocations tie to city strategic goals
- • Provide examples and details of the programs that have been evaluated, modified or ended to achieve city goals
- • Support innovation and experimentation by building on public and private resources

4. Financial outlook:
- • Provide examples of city investments to strengthen the local economy
- • Develop a savings fund/emergency preparedness strategy
- • Strategically budget to maximize resources

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