

# What Works Cities Standard

The What Works Cities Standard reflects a set of aspirations and activities that create a strong foundation for the effective use of data and evidence within city government.

## 1 Commit

What Works Cities leaders make powerful, public commitments to getting better results for their residents by using data and evidence.

- 1 Define Goals and Progress:** The Mayor and city leaders work collaboratively to define city goals and the measurable progress they intend to see toward meeting those goals.
- 2 State Commitment Publicly:** The Mayor speaks publicly about using data and evidence to inform policy, funding, and management decisions.
- 3 Engage Residents:** The Mayor engages residents regularly about progress on city priorities, and provides data and evidence to discuss achievements and challenges.
- 4 Collaborate and Galvanize:** The Mayor builds buy-in around using data and evidence and empowers city leaders to effectively harness these resources.

## 2 Measure

What Works Cities leaders use the data and tools at their disposal to measure progress and engage citizens along the way.

- 1 Collect Data:** The city systematically collects high-quality, relevant, administrative and performance data.
- 2 Focus on Results:** The city uses outcome-based performance measures to determine the impact of its core operations and contracted services.
- 3 Share Openly and Often:** Through the public release of accessible data, the city enables residents and other decision-makers to track and discuss progress on important public services and programs—and promotes a culture of government transparency and accountability.

## 3 Take Stock

What Works Cities leaders consistently review and reflect to measure progress, learn, and make corrections and improvements.

- 1 Understand Performance:** The Mayor uses a citywide performance management system to enable decision-makers to understand trends, spot opportunities, advance citywide goals, and improve outcomes for residents.
- 2 Assess Progress:** The city uses data and evidence on an ongoing basis to assess progress toward goals and support continuous improvement.
- 3 Evaluate Impact:** The city regularly evaluates programs and services to determine and improve their impact.

## 4 Act

What Works Cities leaders use data and evidence to inform major decisions and take action.

- 1 Use Data and Evidence to Inform Decisions:** The city's review of data and evidence informs the city's planning, budget, funding, and management decisions.
- 2 Facilitate Public Use of Data:** The city empowers the public—including citizens, journalists, local institutions, researchers, and entrepreneurs—to use city data to create value for residents and communities.
- 3 Use Evidence of Impact:** The city uses evidence of impact from a range of evaluation methods to inform new and improve existing policies and programs.
- 4 Redirect Funds:** The city redirects funds away from policies and programs that do not show measurable impact or contribute to city goals.

