RESULTS THAT MATTER

Improving Communities by Engaging Citizens, Measuring Performance, and Getting Things Done

Paul D. Epstein
Paul M. Coates
Lyle D. Wray
with David Swain

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"The authors effectively show how two compelling and potentially conflicting forces—modern managerial techniques and citizen engagement—can be combined to produce livable communities where things get done and people invest in the future and care about the present. As a local government educator and former mayor, I see in this book a rare combination of practical case examples and intellectual guidance that should appeal to citizens, public officials, and students concerned about community building."

—John Nalbandian, chair and professor,
Department of Public Administration,
University of Kansas

"Read *Results That Matter.* Learn how citizens, governments, and nonprofit organizations can work together and improve their communities."

—Joe Wholey, University of Southern California

"Achieving good governance in public purpose organizations is an uphill battle. Citizens are cynical. Voter turnouts are declining. Trust in institutions is plummeting.

Is there a solution? The authors of this intriguing new book think so. Drawing upon extensive case studies, they explore such questions as what is a citizen? How can we make community governance more focused on results? Why does citizen engagement matter? How do we move from concepts to "getting it done" to practical impacts?

The book argues persuasively that achieving "results that matter" has to start with citizen involvement. Too often, goals are determined by the managers of government and other service organizations, with no assurance that they reflect the priority concerns of community citizens. Citizen-defined goals provide a basis for accountability that is meaningful.

Well-researched and richly footnoted, this book outlines a model of community governance adaptable to different situations. It explores many practical topics, such as how to make use of balanced scorecards in a public sector setting, or when and how to use technology to assist in citizen consultation. Very valuable reading for political leaders, staff, and any others concerned with the performance of public organizations, with the health of our communities, and with the state of democracy today."

—Tim Plumtre, president, Institute On Governance

"What is more important than results? Rock solid examples to emulate."

—Michael Van Milligen, city manager, Dubuque, Iowa,
and International City/County Management
Association 2003 Outstanding Manager of the Year

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Many of the case examples in Chapters Three through Nine include graphic figures representing a system or process of a government or nonprofit organization. Unless a source is provided, these figures represent the authors' interpretation of the system or process and not necessarily the interpretation of the government or organization.

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PREFACE

At the end of the twentieth century, leaders, professionals, and citizen activists working in our public, nonprofit, and civic sectors had a lot to be proud of. In various ways, many of them brought about important performance-minded reforms focused on getting better results for people and communities. Government organizations and nonprofit service providers across the country have become more proficient at measuring service performance and managing for results for the people and communities they serve. Meanwhile, civic groups across the country have launched projects in which they have engaged citizens to determine what kinds of results to measure and which results should be the focus of their advocacy for improvement. Some of these civic projects measure results of public services. Many others focus broadly on conditions in the community and measure a mix of health, social, environmental, and economic conditions that together paint a picture of quality of life or community well-being as envisioned by engaged citizens.

This book sees these government, nonprofit, and civic reforms as important advances in community governance, describes them in that context, and provides numerous examples that people active in these sectors may learn from to improve their own communities and organizations. This book then builds on these late-twentieth-century reforms by describing a still more advanced state of community governance for the twenty-first century and presents four detailed examples from communities that have already made it there, at least for some of their community improvement processes. These most advanced examples include many collaborations among

citizens, governments, and volunteer and nonprofit organizations, such as community development corporations, neighborhood associations, volunteer fire companies, and health and human service providers. The focus of these examples ranges from county government, to city government, to nonprofit community development.

Essentially, this book is about making community governance more effective for the twenty-first century. Not in any abstract sense but in the very real sense of making communities and the organizations that serve them more effective at how they improve themselves over time in ways they can measure, and in ways that matter most to the people of the community. This book is also about how people can become more effective at improving their communities by participating in effective governance practices, whether as leaders or staff of government, nonprofit, or civic organizations or as citizens improving their own communities.

The rest of the Preface raises questions about effective, results-focused community governance that are useful to explore, at least in brief, before diving into models, practices, systems, and detailed examples provided throughout the book. Some questions, such as those that relate mainly to definitions and context, are answered most directly here, to provide a perspective for considering the ideas and examples in the book. Others are questions that the rest of the book attempts to answer. The brief answers to those questions provided here foreshadow what is to come in more depth in the chapters that follow.

• *What is community governance, and who can participate in it? Governance* means much more than "government." Governance encompasses the many ways decisions are made and actions taken that affect life in a community, whether by government officials or by other people participating in the community as individuals, organizations, or associations of interests. In addition to government, nonprofit organizations of all types (service providers, civic organizations, grant-making and operating foundations, and others), businesses, groups of citizens or other stakeholders, and individual people can all play important roles in community governance. This broad sense of governance is consistent with international concepts and definitions of governance.[1]

• *What makes community governance effective?* For community governance to be effective, it has to be about more than processes, but also about getting things done in the community. It is only through action that communities improve themselves, especially in a rapidly changing world where not to act often means to fall behind. But just "doing something" is not sufficient. What gets done has to make a difference. That is why measuring results is so important. But what should be done, and what results should be measured and improved? Communities are complex. The most important results vary among communities and among different people or stakeholders within a community. That is why engaging citizens in deciding what to do, or in deciding what results to measure or what goals to measure against, is also vital. The results a

community achieves need to matter to the people of the community by addressing their highest-priority concerns. So this book is not just about making governance processes more effective, but about making communities more effective in achieving results that matter to their people.

The heart of this book is the Effective Community Governance Model built on the three critical elements of governance noted above: engaging citizens, measuring results, and getting things done. Using the model involves combining these elements in different ways. The idea is not just to "do" each of these things, but to bring these elements into alignment with each other in a community so they systemically support each other to help achieve results that matter. To help you find ways to make your community more effective at achieving results that matter, this book provides numerous examples of communities and community-serving organizations that have aligned two or all three of these critical elements in various ways to improve their communities.

- *Haven't citizens always participated in community governance?* In the United States, they have in many communities; the tradition of citizens engaged in solving community problems and addressing important community issues goes back hundreds of years. And the Effective Community Governance Model recognizes more traditional citizen engagement in problem solving as an important part of governance, along with the newer, more results-focused advances in governance. However, participative problem solving by itself is missing the critical element of measuring results. The two more recent results-focused advances of community governance noted above have also been missing something, which is why a new advance in community governance is needed for a new century.
- *What was missing from late-twentieth-century reforms?* Leaders, professionals, and volunteers engaged in the civic sector who have initiated citizen-based measurement of community results should be given credit for making an important advance in how citizens are engaged in communities and for calling attention to measurable conditions of great concern to citizens. There has been so much activity of this type in the United States that several movements have emerged, with many of these community civic efforts aligning themselves with larger themes, such as "smart growth," "safe communities," "healthy communities," or "sustainable communities." Taken together, they are sometimes referred to as "community indicators projects" or as part of "community movements."[2] A common element of many of these projects—what makes them citizen based—is that citizens have been engaged either in determining directly what indicators to measure, or in determining priority goals or issues as the basis for selecting indicators to measure. However, something has been missing from most of their initiatives. Their measured results are rarely connected with accountable organizations with resources to dedicate to improving results of greatest concern. Citizens, often with the help of the same civic organizations that helped them measure community conditions, have to advocate to government or other organizations to dedicate resources to improve results.

People in government and nonprofit organizations who have improved service performance management should be given credit for making an important advance in serving people and communities. For example, in the past ten to fifteen years, more and more local governments started measuring service performance, an essential step in managing their services for results,[3] thirty-three states passed broad results management legislation,[4] and the federal government passed and implemented the Government Performance and Results Act and other management reforms.[5] This trend has been echoed in the nonprofit sector, with governments moving to performance-based contracts for nonprofit services and other major funders, such as United Ways, looking for measurable results for the people served by the programs they fund.[6] One of the government and nonprofit service reforms that seems destined to last is a change in mind-set to see public and nonprofit service recipients as valued customers who deserve to be satisfied by high-quality service.

But for all the modernization, satisfaction surveys, and measured performance gains, something has also been missing from most of these initiatives. In most cases, the results measured and improved are determined by the managers of government and other service organizations, with no assurance that they reflect the priority concerns of community citizens. That may be one reason that, by the end of the 1990s, after governments had spent years trying so hard to connect with their customers, those same people were feeling disconnected from their government. In a national public opinion survey, the Center for Excellence in Government found that 60 percent of Americans felt disconnected from government overall. At the local level, people had a greater sense of connection than they did at state and national levels. But still, 46 percent of Americans were feeling disconnected from their local governments,[7] suggesting a lot of room to improve how people relate to the governments of their own communities.

In considering government performance reforms toward the end of the twentieth century, Cheryl King of Evergreen State College cited the Center for Excellence in Government's survey and asked some fundamental questions, including, "Are we focusing attention on the right kinds of performance in government? . . . What would we have to do to make performance or results-oriented government more democratic? On what kinds of performance or results should we focus?"[8] At about the same time, a practitioner-based research team that included two of the authors of this book was essentially examining the same questions when searching for examples of citizens engaged in performance management in their own communities. Like King and her colleagues, our team concluded the most essential questions were not so much questions of government but of *governance,* and a broad range of citizen roles must be considered, not just their role as service customers.[9]

• *Is there really a problem with focusing on customers of community services?* There is nothing inherently wrong with improving performance from the perspective of customers of government and nonprofit services. It is better that nonprofit service providers

really *do* get their customers into jobs, or off drugs, or into affordable homes, than that they just count up the number of people who go through their program. And customers who now apply for government permits or licenses from their homes or offices using the Internet are not likely to prefer to go back to traveling to a city or county office to wait in line for their application. But improving customer service is insufficient by itself for improving our communities. Satisfied customers are not the same as connected citizens. And it is engaged citizens, not satisfied customers, who build communities. Frank Benest, then city manager of Brea, California, recognized this in 1996 when he wrote to his fellow city managers that "the future for local government lies in transforming passive consumers of public services into responsible citizens."[10]

• *How can governments and community-serving organizations reconnect with citizens?* A first step is to recognize that citizens play important roles in their communities besides that of service customer, and they can become engaged in governance in these other roles. Another key step is to support them in these roles to help them become effectively engaged and influence community governance processes to improve their communities. This book explores five major citizen engagement roles, including key variations of several of the roles, and fourteen ways to help citizens be effective in these roles, including examples from communities across the country.

• *Who are a community's citizens?* The word *citizens* is used here in half of the ancient Greek sense, as people who exercise their responsibility to take part in the public life and decisions of their community. This book explicitly does not mean the exclusive half of the Athenian definition that recognized only men of a particular status as citizens. Similarly, this book explicitly does not mean the legal definitions of citizens of modern countries. Both documented and undocumented "aliens" in a country are considered "citizens" in this book, so long as they want to participate in improving their community.

The National Civic League's view that "citizen refers to any community resident who participates in voluntary community enhancing efforts" is consistent with this book's view.[11] But this book goes further: *anyone* who wants to participate in results-based governance of the community they live in, work in, or have a significant interest in (for example, go to school in the community, own a business there, have family there) is considered a citizen, regardless of the person's legal status, or whether he or she has voting rights for that community's elections.

We respect the preference of many community organizations and practitioners to explicitly avoid the term *citizen* and instead use words such as *resident* or *stakeholder* to make it clear that immigrants or others who are not citizens in the legal sense are welcome to participate in community and organizational processes. Many community examples in this book use *resident* and *stakeholder* (often along with *citizen*) if those are prevalent terms used by the organizations involved. In considering citizen roles, however, "resident" is just one type of stakeholder, and "stakeholder" is only one of five major citizen roles. So *citizens* is a better word to use to convey how people participate

in their communities in many roles. However, actually improving governance is more important than semantic accuracy. The Effective Community Governance Model still works if "resident and stakeholder engagement" is substituted for "citizen engagement," and practitioners should make that substitution if it will make it easier to use the model in their communities.

• *Is it realistic to make citizen engagement a major part of community governance in an era of complexity and change?* When this book project was started, global terrorism was not on the radar screen in American communities. It now must be considered seriously by hundreds, if not thousands, of them. Two communities featured in this book—Lower Manhattan in New York City and Washington, D.C.—are perhaps the highest-risk communities in the nation. But even before global terrorism was recognized as a threat to American cities, the pace of global, national, and regional change that affects communities had become dizzying. To note just a few patterns, regional economies have been changing rapidly in response to global trade and technological innovation, leaving some people and communities behind while others thrive; new public health problems have been appearing; new approaches to public safety and education have been spreading across the country; and as suburban sprawl continues its advance, interest has been growing in strategies such as "smart growth," "sustainable development," and revitalizing the urban core.

However, effective citizen engagement involves deliberative dialogue, not just quick poll responses. It involves hard work to be sure the people who become engaged in decision processes are representative of the community, without leaving groups out. That takes time. How can communities take the time for proper engagement when faced with rapid change? Also, so many of these issues involve complex problems with serious consequences riding on decisions made by community leaders. How can lay citizens be expected to participate intelligently, when often even professional experts disagree on the answers?

From another point of view, citizen engagement has never been more important. The very consequences of these decisions mean that community leaders need to build the trust of citizens in order to make hard decisions that can be implemented rather than fought and perhaps blocked. The idea that effective engagement takes too long, or that citizens do not have the competence to participate in complex issues, involves too simplistic a view of citizen engagement and sells citizens short on their ability to deal with complexity when given the opportunity to do so deliberatively. Also, citizens usually do not have to deal with the most technical details of a problem to give professionals and leaders valuable guidance on priorities that should be followed and the nature of solutions that will be acceptable or most desired. If citizen engagement is well organized as part of a system of governance, they can be involved in setting strategic priorities, with technical decisions that follow those priorities left to professionals subject to approval by community leaders. Where practical, working

groups of citizens can stay involved to ensure the experts and leaders heard citizens correctly and to keep proposed solutions on track with expressed citizen priorities as details are worked out.

Finally, keep in mind that citizens can be engaged in a variety of roles, not just as participants in community decisions, giving them other ways to contribute to governance and community improvement. Citizens can even have an important role in as complex an issue as homeland security as it relates to their community, even if it is not practical or appropriate for them to participate in decisions involving highly sensitive information. For example, after Chapter Two was completed, volunteer citizens from the west side of Lower Manhattan, a community featured in that chapter, began intensive training to become a Community Emergency Response Team that will be prepared to help save lives in their neighborhoods in future disasters.

• *What kinds of communities can benefit from the governance model?* The Effective Community Governance Model is intended to be applicable to any place-based community in a democratic society. Sometimes a "community of interest" sense (for example, "civic community," "business community") is used in this book, but the focus of community governance is always on physical places where people live, work, and carry on public and private activities. The geographic scale of community can vary, as it does from example to example in the book. Sometimes *community* refers to a city, county, or rural village, and sometimes to a broader region that crosses local jurisdictional boundaries. Sometimes the focus of community is narrowed to neighborhoods or multineighborhood districts. Some examples involve both a neighborhood focus and a citywide or regional focus. The specific meaning of *community* should be clear from the context of each example.

• *How do communities with effective governance improve themselves?* In the many community and organizational examples throughout the book that demonstrate aspects of effective governance, four key community improvement themes recur often:

- Robust citizen engagement in multiple roles
- Use of performance feedback in organizational or community decisions
- Linking desired results to resources and accountable people or organizations
- Use of collaborations

Not every example features all four of these themes, as some of these improvement themes are more likely to occur in different stages of effective governance. A community experiencing any of the advanced stages of effective governance is likely to make extensive use of at least three of these community improvement approaches. A community that strongly aligns engaging citizens, measuring results, and getting things done is likely to make extensive use of all four. Briefly in Chapter One, and more extensively in Chapter Six, analyses of parts of the governance model are presented

based largely on how these key themes tend to play out in communities experiencing different stages of effective governance.

• *Should every community and community-serving organization strive to align citizen engagement, measuring results, and getting things done?* For communities as a whole, the long-term answer is yes, but the near-term answer is highly situational. Aligning, or systemically combining, all three of these critical elements represents the most advanced stage of effective community governance. It is an ideal to be sought by any community, but it is not always possible to determine, in advance, a direct path for a community to get all the way there from where it is now.

For organizations, the answer to the question depends on their roles in the community and their opportunities to build collaborations with others to help the community achieve more advanced stages of governance. For example, a nonprofit service provider with a relatively narrow mission that serves a clearly defined service population, such as youth at risk of dropping out of school or unemployed adults, may contribute best to the community if it focuses most on managing for improving measurable outcomes of its service population, and limiting engagement to those community stakeholders most clearly affected by its work: their service population and their families, for example, or residents of neighborhoods where they have facilities.

A nonprofit civic organization that has research and community facilitation capabilities may contribute best to the community by helping citizens obtain data on community results, helping them use the data to influence community processes, and facilitating deliberative community conversations about what results are most important and how best to improve results. Assuming the civic organization lacks the resources to provide direct services or make capital investments, if it wants to go further and actually stimulate action to change results, the organization would have to help citizens advocate for change or build collaborations with organizations that have resources to implement change.

However, a general-purpose local government that provides a wide range of services, makes budget decisions on how to use community funds, and makes policies affecting the living and working conditions of many people would ultimately do best to strive for the most advanced stage of governance that combines broad-based citizen engagement, measurement of results, and getting things done. Depending on its current measurement and management capabilities and the openness of its leaders to these approaches, it may not be practical to get there all at once. The local government may have to progress through several stages of improving governance and get there step by step, over a number of years. However, after taking a few modest steps and getting part way there, acceptance of engaging citizens may suddenly increase due to political change, or acceptance of using performance data to inform decisions may increase sooner than expected, so the local government may then be able to take giant steps quickly to get the rest of the way there in a shorter time and by a different route than they at first imagined.

Governments are not the only types of organizations that can take a community to the most advanced level of governance. Other organizations that invest in serving a community or region, such as a community foundation or regional United Way, can do so at least for the range of services it funds. Also, collaborations of investors (which may include nonprofit, business, and government investors) may bring together enough resources to make it practical to take a community to the most advanced stage of governance for important services or functions. This is the case in the detailed example of nonprofit community development presented in Chapter Eight.

Further discussions on appropriate expectations for improving governance, and guidance on setting near-term goals for change, are presented in brief in Chapter One and in some depth in Chapter Nine.

• *Do external forces or contextual situations, such as the regional economy, have more impact on a community's success than community governance?* That depends on how "community success" is defined, which, using the Effective Community Governance Model, should be based on citizens' goals for their community, not externally imposed goals. It is true that the contextual setting a community finds itself in, much of which may be determined by external forces, will have a lot to do with where its governance processes can take the community. A community's leaders should not discourage citizens from having high aspirations, even for aspects of community life, such as the private economy, that are hard for the government and civic sector to influence, let alone control. However, they also should present the facts of current conditions and trends and help citizens understand that specific, measurable objectives and time lines for improvement must be realistic and should be judged against realistic benchmarks.

That said, all in all, in a democratic society, a community should be better off following effective governance practices than not, whatever situational context it faces. The performance feedback attribute of effective governance will help an effectively governed community monitor its local and regional context—both conditions it can strongly influence and those it cannot—and adjust its strategy over time to do the best it can in improving conditions and making progress toward citizens' priority goals.

For example, two of the communities featured in Chapter Seven, Prince William County, Virginia, and Rochester, New York, have faced essentially opposite regional economic conditions for the past ten to twenty years. While any one- or two-year period may have included fluctuations up or down, generally northwestern New York State has faced a long-term economic slowdown that has consistently lagged behind the national economy, while northern Virginia has been a high-growth region that has outpaced national economic growth. That does not mean that northern Virginia communities can make use of effective governance practices and northwestern New York communities cannot. It means they face very different community challenges, so will use effective governance practices in different ways to accomplish different things.

The high-growth regional economy gives Prince William County an advantage over Rochester in raising government revenue to improve services and solve problems.

But that does not mean the county government just throws money at problems. Like Rochester, it uses a performance-based budget and monitors service performance rigorously. Prince William County maintains fiscal discipline and is guided by both performance feedback and a citizen-influenced strategic plan in setting and adjusting its spending priorities to keep overall service growth efficient, so the increase of county spending has not outpaced the growth of the population.

A locally contentious challenge in Prince William County has concerned how—and how much—to control growth and development. Local elections have been fought over growth, and citizens' opinions on the issue can be sharply divided. That has not kept county officials from engaging citizens with different views to help develop strategic economic development goals and measurable objectives, and to help develop land use plans that influence future development. As one citizen explains in Chapter Seven, he thinks growth has become more environmentally sensitive in recent years as a result.

Rochester has faced very different challenges. It has a broad economic development strategy not covered in this book, one that must work against weak domestic regional economic trends (and thus reaches across Lake Ontario to Canada), unlike Prince William, which can work with strong regional trends. Much of Rochester's citizen engagement has focused on neighborhood planning and improvement. With city government revenues severely limited, one of Rochester's challenges is finding resources to achieve citizens' neighborhood improvement goals. So an important part of Rochester's neighborhood planning and improvement strategy is to encourage engaged citizens to reach out to identify community assets, which are usually citizens, businesses, or nonprofit organizations that can bring needed skills or resources to accomplish parts of a neighborhood plan that the local government could not fund on its own. Rochester citizens have had success doing so. A citizen quoted in Chapter Seven talked about having an "asset budget" more than a government budget for implementing neighborhood plans, a budget that takes into account resources from all assets citizens identify, not just from the city budget. A city official quoted in the same part of the chapter said that "government resources only made up 30 percent of contributions" to the plans.

Beyond different economic conditions, many more characteristics of urban Rochester and suburban-rural Prince William County are very different, from their land use and density characteristics, to the age of their infrastructure and housing stock, to the ethnic and racial mix of the population, to the different state laws they operate under. The Rochester and Prince William County stories demonstrate the wide applicability of the Effective Community Governance Model. While the two communities are very different and face very different challenges, they both use effective governance practices in their own ways to accomplish their own community improvement goals. The specifics of their goals, strategies, and processes are different, but both follow the model quite well.

• *Can the Effective Community Governance Model work outside the United States?* All the case examples in this book are from the United States, and almost all of the research that led to developing the model was based on experiences of U.S. communities. However, the late-twentieth-century reforms included in the model—managing for results of public services and citizen-influenced measurement of community or regional conditions—are global phenomena, suggesting that the whole model is likely to be applicable outside the United States.

The better-known examples of public service performance management tend to come from highly developed countries.[12] Indeed, communities and community-serving organizations in developed countries are most likely to have the informational, management, and governance infrastructures for full, systemic implementation of the model. However, some of the civic groups or collaboratives in the United States that have undertaken citizen-based measurement of community conditions consider themselves to be part of worldwide movements, such as "healthy communities" and "sustainable communities," that apply to communities in developing as well as developed countries. Also, a few people with experience working in developing countries and regions who have seen the model have provided positive feedback as to its applicability and potential value in their settings. A former UN official even reports having used an earlier version of the model as an effective conversation starter with public officials in developing countries to help get them to see the value of developing citizen engagement as part of strengthening civil society, and of establishing accountability for improving conditions by measuring results. So while this book demonstrates the Effective Community Governance Model in the United States, practitioners who want to try to use the model wherever democratic conditions prevail are encouraged to do so.

• *Are the best examples of advanced community governance offered in this book, and will they stand the test of time?* Undoubtedly, more good examples of advanced community governance exist that fit the governance model, and some not in this book could be stronger examples than some here. Over the book research period, communities and organizations included here were ones that we found to fit the model and the roles of engaged citizens reasonably well. We were also able to collect enough information about these cases to offer practical examples of the model and the citizen roles and to make useful points for readers.

It is the nature of case study research, and of writing books, that you have to stop somewhere, you never quite get all the perspectives or as much information as you would like, and you would always like to wait a little longer to see how emerging developments will turn out. Given more time and resources, we may have told somewhat different stories about some of the communities in this book. There were also promising developments we heard about in other communities that we did not have the time, resources, or space to follow up for potential inclusion in the book.

By the time you are reading this, it is possible that some communities or organizations in the book no longer do some of the things they are said to practice here. With luck, it is because they have moved on to even more effective governance practices. But there is no guarantee that good practices will survive from one government administration to another, or one nonprofit executive director, board, or funding source to another. We hope this book will lay the groundwork for leaders, professionals, citizen activists, and researchers working in our public, nonprofit, and civic sectors to recognize the value of the advanced governance practices of the Effective Community Governance Model, so they will strive to emulate those practices in their communities, and to reinforce them where they already exist.

• *How can readers learn about new developments in effective community governance, in the communities featured here and others?* Several efforts are underway to develop and update knowledge bases of practices and examples of effective governance and make them available on the Internet. The Web site www.resultsthatmatter.net is keyed to the effective governance model and is intended to focus especially on the advanced governance practices presented here. The Web site of the Community Indicators Consortium (www.communityindicators.net) focuses especially on practices related to the community indicators movement, which includes some of the practices covered in this book.

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private sectors, to explore how they can contribute to improving outcomes and improving governance in their communities. Later in our writing process, Jim Perry helped us find some of the most useful insights in the excellent draft manuscript reviews solicited by Jossey-Bass, and Dorothy Hearst provided valuable editorial guidance to help us turn our collection of governance stories into a more focused, goal-directed work. We also thank Dorothy and Jossey-Bass associate editor Alison Brunner for their infinite patience.

When we opened up our model, it was clear we needed a place in it for the rapidly evolving community indicators movement. We are indebted to several people who have been leading practitioners and researchers in the movement for helping us understand it and how it fit within our work. These include Chris Paterson, a Vermont-based consultant; Tyler Norris of Community Initiatives; John Kesler of the Association for Community Health Improvement; Drew O'Connor of Capitol Hill United Neighborhoods in Denver; and our special contributor, David Swain. Not only did David contribute excellent material on Jacksonville, Florida, where, until recently, he was a leader of the Jacksonville Community Council's pioneering community indicators work, his broader insights and clear thinking were invaluable to us in clarifying some of the more complex ideas in this book.

Both opening up our model and expanding our work to book length led to the need for additional research and writing. We were blessed with a string of talented and productive research and editorial assistants over a four-year period. Assisting with primary research were Amy Avant-Kuehl, Zareen Mahmud, Veronica Neville, Eugene Perelson, and Brett Robinson. Assisting with secondary research and editorial support were Dana Barnes, Jennifer Johnson, and Alina Simone. Editorial assistant Kimberly Keaton was invaluable in helping us revise our draft manuscript.

We are indebted to the many people—too many to mention by name—who were generous with their time in the numerous interviews that made up most of our primary research and who also sent us supplementary materials to help us construct many of the case examples from communities and organizations across the country. Of that special group, we particularly thank a few people who not only provided information on their own organization's initiatives, but also helped us obtain information about other organizations doing related work. In some cases, they worked to arrange interviews for us with leaders of other organizations, which helped us make several case examples much richer than they otherwise would be. These included Audrey Jordan of the Annie E. Casey Foundation Making Connections Initiative, David Hunter of the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, Diane Patrick of the Greater Kansas City Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and Melissa Peacor of Prince William County, Virginia.

Finally, we must always remind ourselves and our readers that the real heroes are the people who play active roles in communities every day, including organizational leaders and staff willing to try new ways to improve their organizations and govern their communities, and especially the people who volunteer their time and effort to participate in governance processes and make their communities better places to live.

P. D. E.
P.M. C.
L.D.W.

THE AUTHORS

PAUL D. EPSTEIN is principal of Epstein and Fass Associates, a New York-based consulting firm. He was inspired to public service by New York mayor John Lindsay, whose office he joined in 1971. He was excited by Lindsay's high-profile attempts to connect people with city government and with each other, from "happenings" in the parks to "little city halls" to the community boards that were later enshrined in the city charter. But Epstein was hired as an MIT engineering graduate, so he was assigned technical projects that led to better, more efficient services, from street repair, to housing, to public health, but involved no contact with citizens. In the late 1970s, for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, he managed research and demonstrations of performance measurement and improvement of state and local services, which led to his 1984 book, *Using Performance Measurement in Local Government.* He wrote his 2004 book, *Auditor Roles in Government Performance Measurement*, with Stuart Grifel and Stephen Morgan. From 1981 to 1985, he returned to the New York Mayor's Office as manager of citywide productivity and helped integrate productivity improvement with the city budget, leading to over $1 billion in annual savings and revenue. As a consultant, Epstein has assisted organizations across North America, from nonprofits, to state and local governments, to the United Nations. In 2003 he received the Harry Hatry Distinguished Performance Measurement Practice Award from the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) for his lifetime achievements. An ASPA committee he chaired influenced the development of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, as cited by Congress. That year he helped

Vice President Gore's National Performance Review improve federal performance. He has also assisted and coauthored performance measurement research for the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, including a report on what citizens want from public performance reporting. In the late 1990s, Epstein finally started to satisfy his early interest, as citizen engagement in public performance became a central focus of his work, with the help of Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grants that funded the initial research for this book. Recently, when Epstein presented ideas from this book in Russia, he learned that citizens in a neighborhood in Tyumen, Siberia, facing similar issues as citizens in his own Manhattan neighborhood, followed a similar pattern of research and advocacy and achieved the same positive result.

PAUL M. COATES is director of the Office of State and Local Government Programs and associate professor in public policy and administration in the Department of Political Science of Iowa State University. He received his B.A. and M.P.A. from the University of Wyoming and Ph.D. from Iowa State University. Like Paul Epstein, much of Coates's career has been focused on helping state and local officials improve public management, and he recently had the opportunity to make citizen engagement a key focus of his work. Along with Alfred Ho, Coates directed the Sloan Foundation–funded Citizen Initiated Performance Assessment (CIPA) project in nine Iowa cities from 2001 to 2004. CIPA involved citizens in the process of creating performance measures for city government. The office Coates currently heads at Iowa State provides training, applied research, and technical services to state and local government in Iowa. In addition to having spent twenty-five years with Iowa State University, he also has been executive director of the Iowa State Association of Counties, director of extension to communities at Iowa State University, and an associate state planner with the Iowa Governor's Office of Planning and Programming. Coates also has experience providing assistance on performance measures at the national and the international levels through various State Department and USAID projects in eastern Europe.

LYLE D. WRAY is executive director of the Capitol Region Council of Governments based in Hartford, Connecticut. He has a B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. from the University of Manitoba, Canada. Like Paul Epstein and Paul Coates, much of Wray's early career focus was on measuring and improving public services, with citizen engagement later becoming central to his work. Wray started working with mental retardation services in Newfoundland and Labrador in the late 1970s and then on outcome measurement in the Minnesota Department of Human Services. He also worked for Dakota County, Minnesota, first as human services director, then for five years as the county administrator, when he led the county to performance management, with monthly graphic performance reports of key results against budget and performance targets. While Wray was county administrator, public deliberation became part of the