

**CASE STUDY:
Multnomah County, Oregon**

**A STRATEGIC FOCUS
ON OUTCOMES**

September 2002

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**Funding for this research has been provided
By a grant from the Sloan Foundation**



GASB SEA RESEARCH CASE STUDY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The modern era of performance measurement in Multnomah County can be traced back to 1975, when the program structure was introduced. *A Catalog of Multnomah County Programs, 1975-1976* presented a description of the County's program structure, and demonstrated the use of productivity indicators to measure program accomplishments and units of service for measuring outputs. Establishing program and activity structures and developing missions, goals, and objectives are generally considered to be prerequisites for developing a managing-for-results orientation. Over the past seven years, [Multnomah County](#) has incorporated performance measurement into strategic and decision processes to focus on, and highlight achievement of, outcomes and results. Beginning in 1993-1994, departments identified Key Results of programs. These are reported in the annual operating budget, as a result of [County Board Resolution 93-2758](#), which provided guidance on the development of a program-performance-based budget for Multnomah County. The Resolution mandated a budget format, budget cost centers, and a request that the Board Chair provide a comprehensive set of program descriptions and performance measures for use in the 1994-1995 budget (Board of County Commissioners, August 1993). . [The Oregon Benchmarks](#) provide a statewide focus on community outcomes; the [Portland-Multnomah Benchmarks](#) provide a regional focus on outcomes. According to the County's web page, [citizen involvement in developing County benchmarks](#) and selecting urgent benchmarks was coordinated by a Citizen Involvement Committee, which directly targeted more than 6,000 people who identified themselves as being interested in Multnomah County government. Efforts involved briefings to citizen advisory groups, community meetings, newsletter articles and a cable television show. Citizens also completed at-home ballots to vote on urgent benchmarks.

Within the County, the emphasis has been on narrowing the number of critical benchmarks, so that instead of focusing on the 85 original Portland-Multnomah benchmarks, the County focused in 1994 on [12 urgent benchmarks](#), and beginning in 1996 focused on [three Long Term Benchmarks](#). Appropriate use of data has been one of the hallmarks of Multnomah County's use of performance measures. This included integration of performance measurement with other data uses, such as program evaluation, to ensure program quality. A key to the Multnomah County program is the link between various levels of program measurement efforts, including Key Results at the program level, County-wide benchmarks that would be affected by several departments (Long Term Benchmarks), and the vision or goals for the community as a whole.

The County's Key Results, which as of 1998 had been developed for 307 programs, continue to be collected and reported. The County web page points out that, in reaction to a [November 1996 property tax revenue reduction and cap on future revenue growth](#), the Long Term Benchmarks provided part of the framework for decision making throughout 1997, including the budget process. It is not clear, however, whether decisions at the department or Board level are really driven by the use of performance measures, or if performance measures are used instead to explain, illustrate, and inform the Board and the public about those programs. A strategic focus on linkages does not come as a surprise, given the state-focused Oregon Benchmarks, the regionally focused Portland-Multnomah Benchmarks, the County-focused Long Term Benchmarks, and the program-focused Key Results. Three of the four, and in some cases all four, focus on improving community conditions, and focus government activities toward outcomes. Overall, there was a sense that the data-driven efforts are having a positive effect on the performance of County programs and the achievement of goals and outcomes.

Although accountability was cited by several interviews as being a driving force behind Multnomah County’s performance measurement initiatives, producing reports for internal or external accountability and communication was not indicated to be a primary intent of the development of the performance measurement system. One official indicated that internally, performance measurement has created a climate that values accountability and has given the County government a language to communicate about it. The Chair does a lot of work to talk about performance measurement, but citizens have not seen the work, presumably due in part because external reporting of performance measures seems to be downplayed. The [County Auditor’s Office](#) believes that creation of an SEA Report in 2000-2001 will shift the sense that Key Results are an external measure, and encourage citizens and county staff alike to focus on measures that are of interest to citizens.

Quality has been addressed by providing extensive training during 1993, by continued assessment and evaluation of the [County Auditor](#), and in evaluation reviews by the Office of Budget and Quality’s [Evaluation/Research Unit](#). Lessons learned include the importance of leadership; limiting the focus on a few core outcomes and goals; being patient, persistent, and realistic; and incorporating performance measurement with other uses of data. Future expectations are for increased integration of the numerous performance measurement efforts in the County. The County has also developed an extensive effort to involve citizens in their government process through the [Citizen Involvement Committee](#) and other efforts.

Table 1

TYPES OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED AND THEIR ORGANIZATIONS

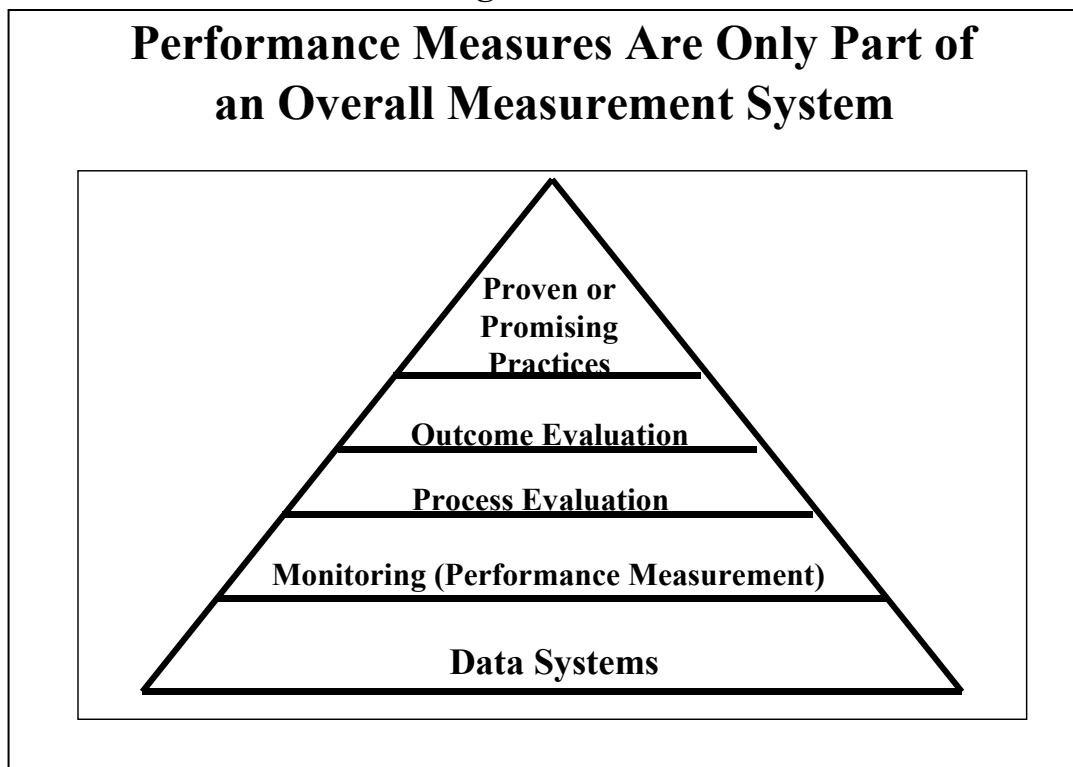
Interviewee or Official	Title	Organization
Dave Warren	Budget Officer	Budget and Quality Office
Meganne Steele	Budget and Policy Manager	Juvenile Justice
Jim Carlson	Evaluation Director	Budget and Quality Office
David Boyer	Finance Director	Finance Division
Judy Robison	Planning and Development Supervisor	Department of Community and Family Services
Carol Ford	Strategic Planning/ Benchmarks	Office of the County Chair
Elyse Clawson	Director of Juvenile Justice	Department of Community Justice
Gary Oxman	Health Officer	Health Department
Tom Frank		Health Department
Tom Potter (citizen)	Director	New Avenues for Youth
Suzanne Flynnne	County Auditor	Auditor’s Office

Beverly Stein	Multnomah County Chair	Board of County Commissioners
Sharron Kelley	Board Member	Board of County Commissioners
Robert Trachtenberg	Staff Assistant	Commissioner Kelley's Office
Larry Hildebrand (media)	Associate Editor	The Oregonian

OVERVIEW AND BACKGROUND

[Multnomah County](#) is in the northwestern portion of the state of Oregon. It has an estimated 1998 population of 641,900, making it the largest county in Oregon. Portland, the county seat, is the largest city in the county. With the city of Portland's focus on accountability, as well as other municipalities, such as [Gresham](#), Multnomah County is arguably one of the country's hotbeds for accountability and performance.

Figure 1



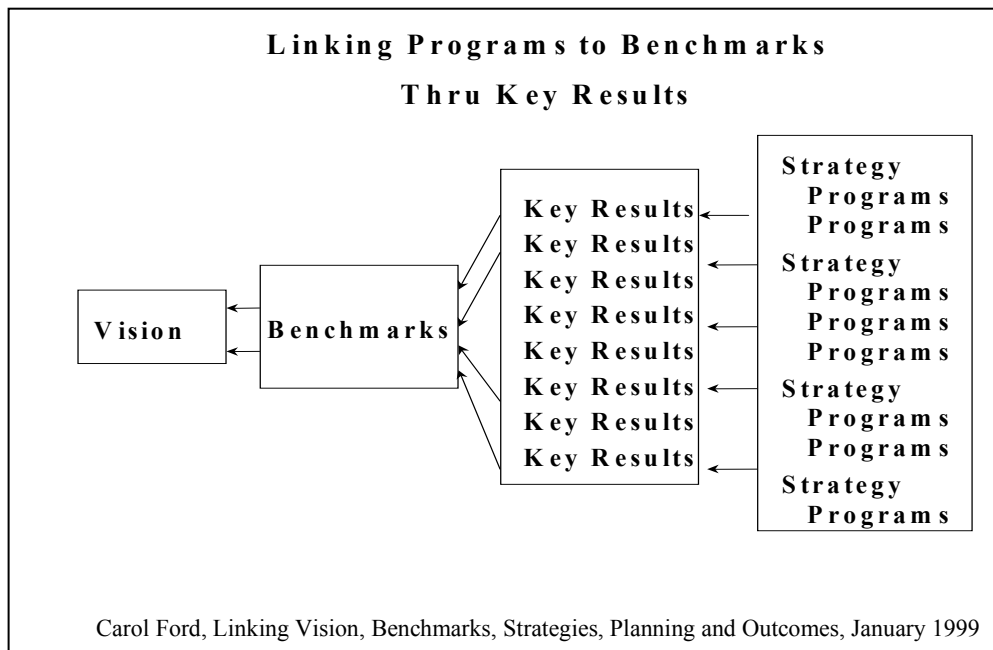
Source: Jim Carlson, Uses of Performance Measurement in Multnomah County. January 1998.

As indicated in Figure 1, performance measures are only part of Multnomah County's overall measurement system. Data systems (at the base of the pyramid) represent the possible range of data collection strategies and uses within the county, both in terms of

programmatic/departmental management and county measurement systems. Evaluation of processes and outcomes is a fundamental aspect of Multnomah County’s managing-for-results process. According to one official, since [Key Results](#) (one of the county’s major performance measurement initiatives) should be used for monitoring, but cannot indicate why something is happening, the best response to poor results may be to investigate further; hence, a role for departmental evaluations and higher-level evaluations conducted by evaluation staff in the [Office of Budget and Quality](#) (Carlson, 1999). Learning from the results of others about proven or promising practices constitutes the last aspect of the measurement system.

One of the keys to the Multnomah County program is the link between various levels of program measurement efforts, including Key Results at the program level, county-wide benchmarks that would be affected by several departments (Long-Term Benchmarks), and the vision or goals for the community as a whole. This process is illustrated in Figure 2 and, in greater detail, in Figure 3. The link is accomplished by identifying which programs are focused on the [Strategic Long-Term Benchmarks](#), identifying areas for coordination and collaboration, identifying gaps, and linking program outcomes to progress toward achieving benchmarks (Ford, 1999).

Figure 2



- [Primary Service Strategies](#): The various departments of the county have missions, goals, and objectives. The departments, in consultation with the chair of the Board of Commissioners, the Board of Commissioners, the Office of Budget and Quality, and stakeholders, citizens, and clients, develop programs to address needs and target service areas. Performance trends are tracked at the departmental level.

Key Results: [Board Resolution 93-2758](#) provided guidance on the development of a program-performance-based budget for Multnomah County, including a budget format, budget cost centers, and a request that the chair provide the Board with a comprehensive set of program

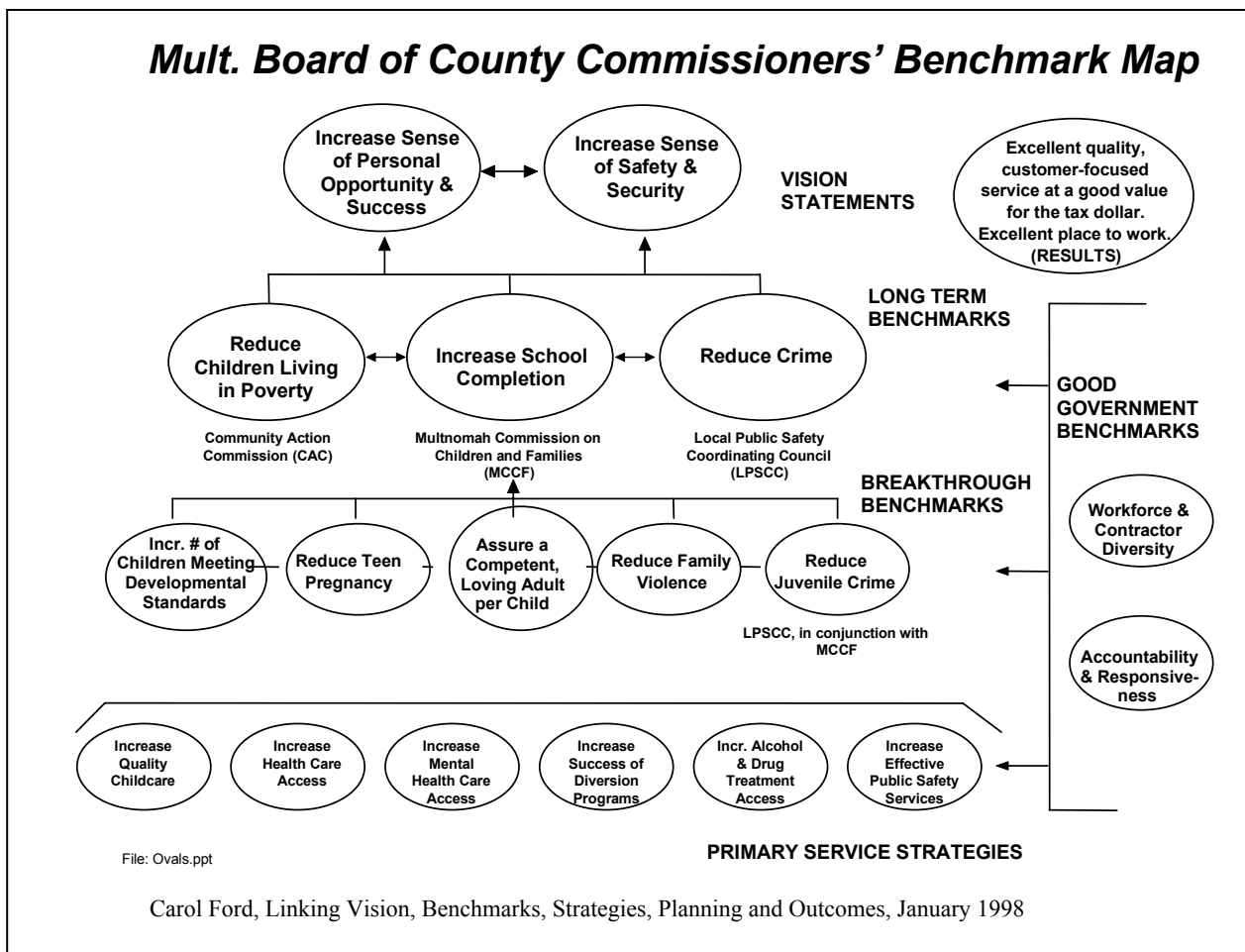
descriptions and performance measures for use in the 1994-1995 budget (Board of County Commissioners, August 1993). The departmental performance measures that resulted constitute the Key Results. An overview of the Key Results is provided in Figure 4. As of January 1998, Key Results had been developed for 10 departments and a total of 307 programs, of which 186 were direct services, 70 were internal support, and 51 were administrative. As a percentage, 80 percent of direct service programs had developed Key Results, whereas 74 percent of internal support programs had developed Key Results (Carlson, 1999). The Key Results constitute the largest number of published performance measures and are intended to communicate three things: (1) how many people (or other units of service) did the program serve (output measures); (2) how much does a unit of service cost (efficiency measures); and (3) what was the result of the service (outcome measure) (Carlson, 1999).

Auditor's Office noted that although the three points may have been the original intention, the experience of Audit staff is that that managers are only asked to submit outcome measures to the Budget Office annually, and that the Audit Office had quite a lot of difficulty measuring output and efficiency during a feasibility study on SEA reporting.

- **Long-term Strategic Benchmarks:** The three long-term strategic benchmarks include increased school completion; reduced number of children living in poverty, and reduced crime (Ford, 1999). Programs that address these three strategic benchmarks constitute 50 percent of the FY1999-2000 operating budget (Multnomah County Budget and Quality Office, 1999).

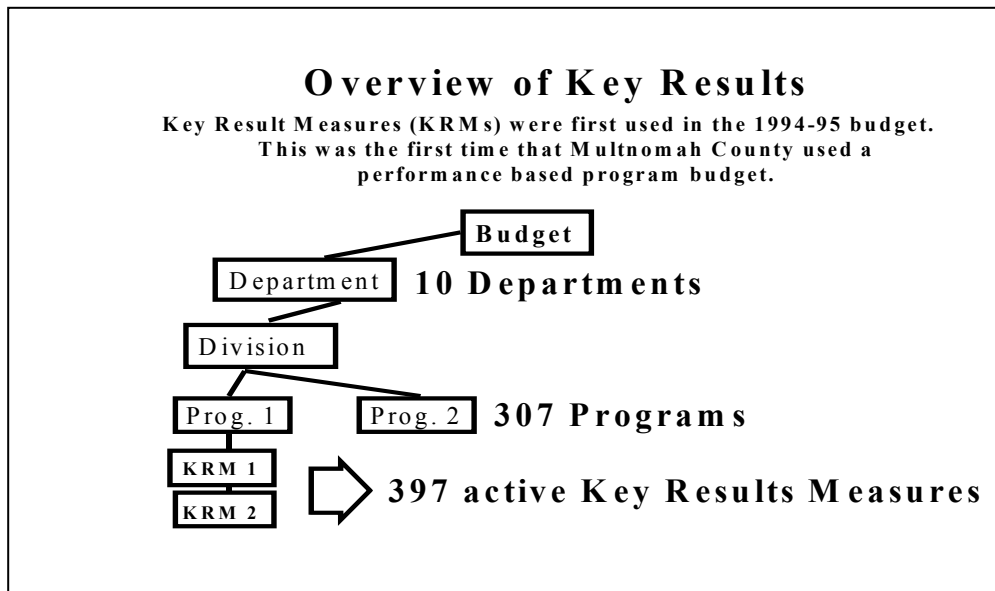
Figure 3

The major performance measurement components in Multnomah County include:



According to staff in the Office of Budget and Quality, as a general rule, output measures are discouraged in favor of efficiency measures or outcome measures. The best use of Key Results is at the program/division level, to identify whether intended outcomes are being met and to measure continuous improvement in programs. Upper-level management may periodically review Key Results to determine if further investigation or other management attention is necessary. Consistent poor performance may have budgetary implications. Good results indicate that no major upper-management attention is needed. Most Key Results do not require action from upper management. Some Key Results are linked to day-to-day *operational* issues, for example, how long it takes to see a client or to process an application. Other Key Results contribute to attaining benchmarks or other strategic goals (Carlson, 1998).

Figure 4



Source: Jim Carlson, Uses of Performance Measurement in Multnomah County. January 1998.

HISTORY

The modern era of performance measurement in Multnomah County can be traced back to 1975, when the program structure was introduced. *A Catalog of Multnomah County Programs, 1975-1976* presented a description of the county's program structure and demonstrated the use of productivity indicators to measure program accomplishments and units of service for measuring outputs. Establishing program and activity structures and developing missions, goals, and objectives are generally considered to be prerequisites for developing a managing-for-results orientation.

Accountability in Multnomah County government was given a boost with the introduction and passage of Resolution 90-45, which included the Board of County Commissioners' policy on evaluation. The Resolution, approved March 29, 1990, described plans to focus on outcome evaluation, involved both the county and community agencies in the evaluation process and

emphasized collection of “information that is essential to evaluate contract performance,” while reducing the paperwork burden on County employees and contractors” (Farver, 1990).

Many interviewees cited the election of Beverly Stein as [chair of the Board of County Commissioners](#) as the driving force behind development of performance-measurement and outcome-related activities in the county. Ms. Stein was elected in 1993 to fill an unexpired term of the previous chair (Stein, December 13, 1999). Several Board Resolutions and performance-related activities followed.

In 1993, the [Board of County Commissioners](#) passed a series of Resolutions that incorporated performance measurement as a mechanism to facilitate managing for results. These included the Board’s guidelines for preparation of the county budget (Resolution 93-41), which required that the budget should include goals of each program, include measurement standards for achieving the goals, and “present the information in a matter which facilitates the accountability and evaluation of each program.” Resolution 93-2326 mandated that programs be evaluated and have goals, objectives, and performance measures; it made the link between evaluation and performance measurement when it found that “services delivered need performance measurements for effective program evaluation.” Resolution 93-2758 recommended approval of a budget format and cost centers in the form of a Program Performance Budget Document for 1994-1995 and thereafter. The Resolution provided a budget format, budget cost centers, and a request that the chair provide the Board with a comprehensive set of program descriptions and performance measures for use in the 1994-1995 budget. The resolution also distinguishes between Performance Trends presented at the departmental level and Key Results at the program/service level.

Taken together, the three Resolutions demonstrated the commitment of elected officials in the county to managing for results, data-driven management, and accountability. By January 1999, in anticipation of the fiscal-year 1999-2000 budget, all programs that provided direct service to citizens were required to develop Key Results. Departments were encouraged to collect data even if measures were not reported in the budget ([Multnomah County Budget & Quality Office](#), January 7, 1999). Attention was drawn to the link between Key Results and the county’s three [Strategic Benchmarks](#), which were developed by the board and Ms. Stein in 1996. The Benchmarks included reducing crime, reducing the number of children living in poverty, and increasing school completion, as the priority framework for making future budget and policy decisions (Stein, December 13, 1999).

Beginning in 1993, training was provided to program staff and managers, including presentation of the initial definition of Key Results as “Performance measures of efficiency or effectiveness which are directly linked to services in the budget” (Multnomah County, September 1993a). Key Results were to be presented (1) to improve communication, including informing citizens, policymakers and other county program managers, and to establish accountability; and (2) to establish common direction towards county goals and towards state benchmarks (Multnomah County, September 1993a).

One impressive aspect of the county’s efforts is the sensitivity to concerns that employees will be held accountable for outcomes that are beyond their control. According to Ms. Stein, “Our performance measures will not be used to assess individual performance, and they will not be used to cast blame when things are not working well. They will be used to help us determine

what's working and to identify where and how we may need to change our approach” (Multnomah County, September 1993b).

Many who were interviewed considered the quality of performance measures to be critical to the credibility of the county's efforts. The quality process was enhanced in several ways, including the attention and visibility of the Board Chair in promoting the use of performance measures, as demonstrated by both interview results and documents reviewed; the attention to appropriate use of performance measurement as demonstrated in interviews with, and documents by, the Office of Budget and [Quality/Evaluation and Research Unit](#) and Board staff; and reviews of performance measures by the County Auditor. A 1996 memorandum from the Auditor's Office outlines the process of evaluating Key Results used in the budget. Steps included review of the orientation of the Key Results; review of program and Budget Office documents with emphasis on the reliability and validity of Key Results data; evaluation of the extent to which Key Results are an operational part of agency operations; determination of whether standards are reasonable; and determination of whether program or policy changes warrant modifications to a measure or standard (Nichols, 1996). Examination of audits completed after this date demonstrate that performance measures are reviewed as part of performance audits and that the criteria and methodology from the memorandum are in use (Multnomah County Auditor's Office, January 1997 and February 1998). A representative from the Auditor's Office indicated that the review process is no longer formally used, although performance measures might be examined as part of a larger audit.

In August 1998, the RESULTS Staff Group presented a plan for implementing a vision for quality in the county. RESULTS stands for “Reaching Excellent Service Using Leadership and Team Strategies.” Using data/outcome-driven approaches is among the RESULTS Guiding Principles; they seek to move the focus from level of effort to outcomes and performance. RESULTS uses Key Results, Performance Trends, and other data to measure outcomes and overall performance. The document describes the characteristics of quality-driven data collection and analysis, including data that is reliable, consistent, valid, culturally competent, readily accessible, and tied to Benchmarks, Performance Trends, and Key Results. Making decisions based on data is one of ten goals of the RESULTS process. RESULTS also established a five-year plan for making decisions based on data.

FINDINGS

PEOPLE AND THEIR ROLES

Who has been involved in initiating, developing, and using performance measurement, and how have they been involved?

As indicated above, the current chair of the Board of County Commissioners has been a driving force behind the implementation of performance measures and the shift in focus to an outcomes approach. Several of those interviewed cited the chair's personal commitment to using data to support decision making and to support development of coalitions to achieve desired community outcomes and strategically identified benchmarks. The chair was involved with the Oregon Benchmarks process when she was in the state legislature, and she was intrigued with how to implement an outcome-oriented type of initiative in government. While some of the performance measurement activities preceded Ms. Stein's election, it is obvious that the

continued attention to the initiative is due in large part to her personal commitment. This commitment is also evidenced by her hiring a project leader with experience in performance-based budgeting to develop the county's system in the mid-1990s, and having a position dedicated to benchmarking and strategic planning in the Office of the Chair.

Ms. Stein's strong leadership has resulted in what amounts to a top-down approach to performance measurement. The three Board Resolutions cited above are evidence of the commitment of the Board. According to one of the interviewees, the Board needed to learn about using performance measures. Some Board members were unrealistic in their expectations, and sometimes the Board focused on the wrong measures. This interviewee was clear that they never could have adopted this in one budget year, in contradiction to what one might have expected from Resolution 93-2758, which called for development of a program-performance-based budget document for FY1993-1994. According to this interviewee, the process has taken at least five years. There appears to be some sensitivity to the impact that electing new Board members can have, since, according to one interviewee, new Board members have different ideas about how money should be spent, which can be a problem.

<p>Chair's Office Guiding Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Care PassionatelyListen First with PatienceBe Willing to Take RisksQuestion AssumptionsBehave EthicallyFollow ThroughTreat All People with RespectBe a Catalyst for Positive ChangeThink 'Big Picture'No Excuses
--

The Budget Office was clearly involved in the development of the performance measurement system, as evidenced by budget guidance reviewed (Multnomah County Budget and Quality Office, January 7, 1999) and the reformatting of the budget to focus on programs and performance. There is some evidence that the process of selecting measures is largely decentralized, and it is unclear how extensively budget staff were involved in the selection and review of measures. Although some interviewees mentioned the Budget Office role in reviewing measures, there were too few examples to indicate that this role was widespread. However, several interviewees mentioned the role of the evaluation staff in the Budget and Quality Office as playing a strong role in encouraging appropriate use of performance measures, developing evaluation strategies, and in general encouraging the use of data in government processes.

The existence of an independently elected County Auditor adds to the sense that the county is highly committed to accountability, and to measuring the impact and performance of county programs. The Auditor's Office developed criteria for examining performance measures. The knowledge that the County Auditor may review performance measurement systems and results plays a role in the credibility of the system.

It is difficult to generalize about employee involvement in selection and use of measures. According to several of those interviewed, the majority of departments sent managers or budget or evaluation personnel to the training that was offered when the Key Results and program budgeting were introduced. Employees were also involved via the RESULTS Task Force, where use of data to support government processes was a high-priority strategic goal. Line staff involvement with collecting and using performance measures appears to vary by department.

Information on the involvement of citizens appeared to be contradictory. Although citizens, interest groups, and contract service providers seem to be extensively consulted and involved in government activities and work groups, several interviewees said that citizens were

not considered in the selection of performance measures. There did not appear to be any citizen interest groups driving the use of performance measurement information and calling for enhanced accountability, and it does not appear that citizens were involved in the development of the performance measurement model. Yet, several interviewees mentioned accountability to citizens and taxpayers as a driving force behind the county's results-oriented budget and performance processes.

Media consulted for this case study were clearly aware of county performance measurement efforts but were much more focused on, and impressed with, the efforts of the County Auditor in assessing the performance of government. None of those interviewed indicated that the media are a consideration in selection of measures, and the media representative interviewed believed that, in the interest of independence and objectivity, the media should not be involved in the selection and review of performance measures.

USES AND EFFECTS OF PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

What intended and expected uses and effects of performance measurement were articulated?

What actual uses and effects of performance measurement were identified?

Resource Allocation and Other Decision Making

It should come as no surprise that one of the fundamental expectations behind development of Multnomah County's program-performance budgeting system was a desire to demonstrate the results being achieved in county programs. According to one interviewee, prior to 1993-1994, decisions were being made subjectively, based on people's sense of what would be effective, with no measurement of what would result from proposed uses of resources. The intent was to create a system that would demonstrate that results were being achieved and that results were important, and to focus on best practices by asking, "What are we trying to achieve?" The resulting budget process attempted to relate the budget to outcomes and benchmarks.

According to another interviewee, the Key Results were a misapprehension of the Board members, who felt that if they knew how well programs are doing, they would know where to put their money; if they were not getting the results desired, it was assumed they would know what to do about it. According to another interviewee, before Ms. Stein was elected chair, the motivation was to provide the Board with answers, to guide which programs to cut and which to fund. In the opinion of this interviewee, the Board was pretty naïve and had unrealistically high expectations about how decisions could be made for it. In 1994-1995 there was an expectation that Key Results would provide stronger guidance for Board decision making; in practice, one official indicated that most output/outcome measurement does not do that, but instead causes Board meddling in department operations. The shift to focusing on the three Long-Term Benchmarks, with 50 percent of the County budget dedicated to those Benchmarks, would, according to one official, help keep the Board focused on the policy and budget process, using the policy direction of the Board to affect the budget and

In 1997-98, Multnomah County began focusing its planning efforts on three Long Term Benchmarks:

Increase School Completion With Life Skills Equivalency

Reduce Children in Living Poverty

Reduce Crime

Board management issues. It did not work at first, but election of new Board members helped move the process in that direction.

One interviewee thought performance measurement would increase the effectiveness of management and operations over time, but did not expect overall budgetary decisions to change. At the same time, according to that official, if the system was developed separately from the budget, it would be harder to institutionalize it. In his/her words, if performance measurement is tied to the budget, people will do it. According to another interviewee, department heads thought it was a budget exercise, and many still do. Yet another interviewee said that initially there was a great deal of fear on the part of administrators, who had been victims of earlier Boards that used information in a damaging way. The sense was that the Board got involved in micro-managing, second guessing, and mistrust, thus raising some concerns among departments that did not want any information about what was going on to be shared.

It is clear from reviewing budget documents that Key Results continue to be collected and reported, and that the focus on budgetary efforts is on the three Strategic Long-Term Benchmarks. It is less growth, the Long Term Benchmarks provided part of the framework for decision making throughout 1997, including the budget process. It is not clear, however, whether decisions at the department or Board level are really driven by the use of performance measures, or if performance measures are used instead to explain, illustrate, and inform the Board and the public about those programs.

Strategic Planning and Performance Improvement

Performance measurement in the county was intended to understand connections between activities, to focus on linkages, and to emphasize the importance of each job to the larger county vision, or, as one official put it, to align action with vision. Several interviewees indicated that this is an area of continuing concern. A strategic focus on linkages does not come as a surprise, given the state-focused Oregon Benchmarks, the regionally focused Portland-Multnomah Benchmarks, the county-focused Long-Term Benchmarks, and the program-focused Key Results. Three of the four, and in some cases all four, focus on improving community conditions, and focus government activities toward outcomes. As one interviewee put it, this allows for testing something bigger than Multnomah County by attempting to configure programs to address specific benchmarks, but at the risk that it may not embrace what the county government actually does.

Despite the county's strategic focus on results, at least one department has not included performance measures in its strategic plans, and although the plans are reviewed by policy groups, including one that is state mandated, there is no systematic monitoring of results. According to one official, he/she could talk for a long time about data limitations. The Strategic Plan has implementation strategies, including action steps with deadlines. Monitoring and measuring are implementation- and process-oriented. Other planning efforts, especially those required by the state or federal government, may include quantified performance results and targets.

According to several officials, Ms. Stein sought to empower people throughout the organization, including the Board and the community, to focus on continuous quality



Source: [Multnomah County](#)

improvement. The initiative was not a “gotcha” approach or a report card; it was a source of objective information. According to one official, by the time the Board agreed to implement the program budget design, they had moved a long way toward understanding the important but limited role performance measurement can play, and the importance of trust in that process. Ms. Stein’s quality initiative emphasizes use of data and evaluation, data-driven decision making, and the use of Key Results to focus on improvement of programs and achieving program outcomes. The intended focus was problem solving, and using outcome measures to gauge progress toward stated goals, while tying Benchmarks into programs funded by the county. The number of Benchmarks was narrowed to a more manageable number, to assist the county in remaining consistent, although interviews and a review of documents indicated that the focus had evolved over time.

There is a sense that expectations may be changing due to a change in the composition of the Board. According to one official, the concept of using performance measures has not changed, but the language has, with the Board shifting its attention away from performance-based program measures and putting more focus on evaluation. This is, in part, because evaluation as a methodology is better suited to saying why changes occurred and understanding the complex processes that can produce changes. The shift is to making decisions based on data, not just performance measures, which at least one official found to be too limiting a term.

The expectation that data of all types, including performance measurement, would be used in decision making is articulated in the RESULTS Roadmap. Making decisions based on data is one of ten goals of the RESULTS process. The five-year plan for making decisions based on data includes refining performance measures (1995-1996); quarterly review of performance measures and examining valid and reliable measures of factors that influence achievement of goals (1996-1997); comparison of measures with comparable organizations and more formalized evaluation of key policy issues (1997-1998); further development of comparative performance measurement (1998-1999); and routine use of evaluation for program planning and policy development (1999-2000). Work teams were developed to address issues and opportunities, and committees report monthly on progress toward RESULTS goals.

Despite the emphasis of the RESULTS Roadmap on comparative performance measurement, the county does not yet have a comprehensive, systematic county-wide focus on comparative performance measurement. Individual departments, however, may do such comparisons. The Libraries Department, for example, indicated to one official that there are measures that all libraries use. As a result, they compare their performance to others all the time. Comparison systems include Boston, San Francisco, King County, (WA), and 11 others. Reports produced by the County Auditor often compare results in Multnomah County to results in comparison jurisdictions. During 1999, the Auditor’s Office was conducting a feasibility study on development of an SEA report for the county. The Auditor indicated that this might involve examining the linkage between Key Results and the County’s Long-Term Benchmarks. The SEA report was being prototyped with the Sheriff’s Office and the Health Department. The auditor took a cursory look at other programs and started feeling optimistic about the effort, despite the fact that the comparative process would be costly for county services, which may not be comparable to any other place. The Auditor’s Office reported that the Feasibility Study was completed in January 2000 with a decision to proceed with SEA reporting for the County in the in 2000-2001. Not all county services will be reported. Rather, a rotating, thematic SEA report will be developed to cover Social and Health Services the first year and Public Safety the next, as

a reflection of citizen interest in performance reporting. The Auditor's Office has not yet decided how to incorporate the remainder of County services into a performance report.

One official indicated that expectations were quite high but that the process is not simple, and there is a long road ahead. In this official's opinion, the county's efforts need some strengthening. The Budget and Quality Office needs more power to get things done, and the Auditor's Office can hold people accountable, but getting commissioners to use performance measures may be a challenge.

Performance measurement was also expected to affect the quality of day-to-day program management. There is a sense that managers use performance measures themselves, but not publicly, since some managers may be concerned that if results were known they would look bad. At least one official expressed concern that the Key Results do not get down to lower levels of management. Another official echoed this concern, indicating that middle managers and lower levels of the organization do not pay attention to performance measurement. There was a general expectation that performance measures would have value to people doing the job, in terms of the quality and efficiency of program operations. One official stated that if there is poor leadership, then performance measures do not get used, and if they are not linked to processes, then it will not work. One department has started feeding data back to staff so it could be used for budgetary and contractor accountability purposes. According to one official, management practices were modified to incorporate and take advantage of available data.

There was a general sense that using performance measures for performance improvement and achieving targeted outcomes is becoming more of an expectation, and perhaps even ingrained behavior. According to one official, this represents a change from the attitude five years before. Focusing on the three Long-Term Benchmark goals, focusing workgroups on specific ways to improve programs and identify employee improvements are occurring, although it is not often that performance measurement will make the county do something different than what would have been done anyway. Data can reinforce a decision, and may result in starting new projects that otherwise would not have been begun.

In at least one department, performance measurement is used to manage personnel. Performance goals are established for each employee, with the focus on important goals only, and in some cases incentives are provided for reaching performance goals. The effect for this department has been that higher-level management is more aware of the importance of being timely and accurate in keeping up with new technology, and of examining and revising standards. Despite comments from other interviewees, this official felt that performance measures are getting down to all employee levels, albeit slowly.

There is a strong sense of customer service at the higher levels of county government. The Office of Budget and Quality performs customer surveys of both internal and external customers as well as contractors who perform work for the county. According to one official, the results were reviewed and changes in management practices were made as a result of the survey. By way of example, the official indicated that in the first survey of contractors, 62 percent reported they were satisfied with the county. As a result of the comments made by respondents, the county's administrative purchasing rules were changed. The official reported that in the latest survey, the contractor satisfaction rating had improved to 95 percent.

Overall, there was a sense that the data-driven efforts are having a positive effect on the performance of County programs and the achievement of goals and outcomes. As one official put it, performance measurement has been positive. “Managers of even ‘mediocre quality’ think about this stuff, and it has some impact on how they do their job. The Board is more likely to think about data, but they still don’t recognize that it takes time to set it up, and takes time for change to have an impact. It is tough in legislative environments to be patient for change.”

Accountability and Communication

As might be expected in a community that is focused on results, at least one official said that the purpose was to increase accountability to the public, in order to show the public that the government is spending money in effective ways. Another official was more candid, stating that information would be made available to the public, “even though the public might be ho-hum about it.” When specifically asked about the public, one manager said he/she never heard anything about the public during development discussions, saying that the focus was largely internal. Another official admitted that, during a focus group process with citizens, he/she did not hear any evidence that the general public was aware of performance measurement. The same official indicated that he/she had not seen performance measurement directed toward citizens and that it is used for internal management, not external accountability.

As has been well documented in the literature on performance measurement, in several departments, the inability to control data scared managers and staff. It was hard for folks to understand how to report everything, when they wanted only to report what they could control. Given the focus on community outcomes espoused by the Board chair and others, this concern is understandable and is an expectation that would have to be addressed. To address this concern, Ms. Stein indicated that individual employees would not be evaluated based on negative results that come to light as a result of the performance measurement process (Multnomah County, September 1993b). According to one official, performance measures have not yet played a role in holding people accountable, but people do see the value of tracking data for that purpose. He/she continued, “It will be really valuable if we finalize the loop so that people will be held accountable.”

The county has a large number of contractors and nonprofits performing county-funded services. There appears to be a trend toward identifying contract outcome measures (Contracts Performance Committee, April 1999), and the policy of the Board of County Commissioners is for contractors to collect performance-measurement data, and then evaluate performance based on those measures. According to one official, departmental contract units include performance measures in contracts and change those contracts based on analysis of those measures.

One official indicated that it is not clear how much performance measurement is used for accountability at the program level, since performance measurement is limited to monitoring program performance, without indicating why changes or outcomes occur. As a result, attention has been shifting away from use of one or two measures, and evaluation use seems to be expanding. At the departmental level, accountability is owned by many, and no one agency controls achievement of goals. At the societal level, according to this official, accountability for outcomes is difficult and frustrating because results are owned by so many agencies as well as the general public.

Interestingly, interviewees did not extensively focus on performance-measurement reporting. The Key Results are presented in the county's budget document. Multnomah County produces 250 copies of the budget; about half are used internally. Key Results are also reported on the county's website. The Portland-Multnomah County Progress Board published "Are We Making Progress?"; it presented information on some of the 76 benchmarks tracked by the Progress Board, a reduction from 85 benchmarks tracked earlier. The Progress Board tracks such issues as families, education, health, environment, governance, and safety, among others. The County Auditor publishes a Financial Condition report that highlights several measures, most of which are financial in nature, and as noted above, is considering development of a SEA report. County audits are also public documents, and according to one media representative, the press depends on and uses those reports, especially where county results are compared to other jurisdictions. Individual departments publish performance reports, highlighting results of their programs. These reports are shared with advisory groups or boards, where applicable, and in some cases discussions focus on the types of information collected and how they could be improved. However, producing reports for internal or external accountability and communication was not indicated to be a primary intent of the development of the performance-measurement system. One official indicated that internally, performance measurement has created a climate that values accountability and has given the County government a language to communicate about it. The chair does a lot of work to talk about performance measurement, but citizens have not seen the work, presumably, in part, because external reporting of performance measures seems to be downplayed.

As indicated above, the Auditor's Office intends to develop an SEA Report during 2000-2001. The Auditor's Office recognizes that the county has not focused on broadly reporting the results of government efforts. The Auditor's Office believes that the SEA report will fill a critical gap in the County's performance measurement system, namely reporting to and engaging citizens. Although some measures are publicly available in the budget and other documents, as indicated above, these are generally intended for internal use. According to the Auditor's Office, this internal focus has led to a general lack of citizen knowledge about the County's performance measurement efforts and to measures that often do not reflect the primary interests of citizens. The Auditor hopes to build on the County's strong performance measurement system and add accountability by creating a widely available SEA report. This will generally mean reporting on existing measures such as Key Results and Benchmarks, but it also means developing and collecting data on new measures that are more sensitive to citizen interests than Key Results. In addition, The SEA Report will follow GASB guidelines for reporting on the recommended array of measures (input, output, outcome, and efficiency) for each department so that efforts are more clearly linked to outcomes.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

How is the quality of performance information perceived, and how have performance measurement quality issues been addressed?

Perceptions of the Quality of Performance Information

The interviewees gave a broad range of responses when asked what they thought were the characteristics of quality performance measures, including the qualities that made those measures

useful. Not surprisingly, given the outcome/results orientation of the county's performance-measurement system, outcome-based performance measures were the most frequently mentioned quality characteristic. Other criteria of value mentioned by multiple interviewees included those that are of value to staff, those that are cost effective, and measures that are reliable and accurate. Some interviewees mentioned that data should be readily available, but one interviewee said that data should not be collected and reported simply because it is available.

We did not perform a comprehensive review of the quality of Key Results and other performance measures; therefore, it is difficult to objectively state whether the quality characteristics are being achieved in practice. The general perception of users is that the quality of the measures is pretty good, although concerns were expressed about the inadequacy of data-collection systems and about the lack of interrelatedness of various performance-measurement systems.

Efforts to Address Information Quality Issues

According to those interviewed, *everyone* questions the quality of data, beginning with program staff and management and going all the way up to the Board. As one interviewee put it, "All of us question the quality of measures at times." One interviewee indicated that staff question results that are counterintuitive, even if the results are shown to be correct. As might be expected, the Board of County Commissioners was also said to question data, even to the point of questioning the methodology used to collect the data. Some concern was expressed about the Benchmarks established by the Portland-Multnomah Progress Board, since it appears that a structured review of the Benchmarks has not been conducted, and some of the data has proven to be difficult to collect. In fact, with so many performance measurement efforts at so many levels, and with concerns expressed about the coordination between these efforts, one would expect that rigorous, regularly scheduled reviews would be the exception, not the rule, despite the best intentions of all involved.

Some formal structures exist for limited oversight of data quality. Key Results are collected as part of the annual budget development process and are subject to review by budget analysts in the Office of Budget and Quality, as well as others involved in the budget review process. The Office of Budget and Quality's Evaluation/Research Unit came about because of the emphasis on results. This unit reviews the quality of performance measurement systems and data as components of comprehensive evaluations performed by staff, including checks of the validity and reliability of data. However, at least one interviewee expressed a concern that the unit's work program prevents them from doing more thorough reviews.

The Auditor's Office developed criteria for reviewing performance measures (Nichols, 1996) and may include recommendations of alternative measures in its reports. The Auditor reviews three or four programs per year. Reviews of two performance audits for this case study demonstrated that reviews of performance measures are included as components of audits performed. Performance-measurement criteria covered in one of the audits included an assessment of whether performance measures:

- were clear, concise, and closely related to mission and goals
- were focused on outcomes and results
- were oriented toward customers
- had readily available data
- had reliable and valid data
- were useful and used by personnel

- were understood at all levels of the organization
- were analyzed over time against reasonable standards (Multnomah County Auditor, January 1997).

According to several interviewees, the knowledge that the Auditor, the Budget and Quality Office, or the Board may review Key Results or other performance measures serves as a quality-control mechanism. Nevertheless, despite encouragement to retain data, at least one interviewee said that departments stopped collecting some data elements “because they thought no one was looking.” Some interviewees indicated that the Key Results were not getting the attention they once had gotten because the focus had shifted to the three Long-Term Benchmarks. It may be that the inability to regularly review the broad amount of data collected has, in part, led to a focus on fewer measures and outcomes (see “Evaluation of Performance Measurement” below). Another interviewee indicated that the Key Results were in fact reviewed during the budget process and that, as a result, changes were made to the measures that were collected and reported.

What kinds of organizational supports are provided, and how have organizations been changing to accommodate performance measurement?

Guidance was provided in two forms early in the program-performance budgeting process. First, in August and September 1993, the Auditor, the Budget Officer in the Budget and Quality Office, and a consultant hired by the Chairman’s Office conducted six weeks of training. A review of the training slides indicates that the training explained why changes were being made in the budget process, how the process would be different, and what needed to be done. The budget would take a broader view, focusing on management plans, identification of significant changes, and performance measures (Key Results). The types of performance measures were reviewed, and formats were presented for discussion of issues and presentation of Key Results data. Over 350 people were trained. It was up to the departments to nominate people for the training. Many departments sent division managers, whereas others sent clerks. Second, budget instructions were provided, including examples of completed budget forms and a list of contacts to address questions and concerns about the program-performance budget. Ongoing training programs now focus on gathering and using data, and not on performance measurement specifically.

The Auditor’s Office and its staff was viewed positively by those interviewees who mentioned it, despite the public nature of the performance audits and the potential for embarrassment to department managers if the results of a review are not positive. The Evaluation/Research Unit was mentioned by several of the interviewees as a source of support for performance-measurement efforts, having grown as a result of expanded emphasis on data-supported decision processes. In the Department of Community Justice, an Evaluation Unit was created, in part, to support performance-measurement efforts and encourage data collection and analysis. As previously mentioned, a position in the Chairman’s Office is dedicated to Strategic Planning and Benchmarks.

What barriers have been identified to making effective use of performance measurement and are those barriers being addressed?

As might be expected in a jurisdiction with five years of recent experience and decades of earlier experience using data in budgeting and decision making, the interviewees did not have to

be coaxed to identify barriers to making effective use of performance measures. Barriers mentioned by more than one interviewee included:

Lack of continuity of elected officials; several interviewees, including elected officials, specifically cited changes in the membership of the Board and the points of view represented.

Outdated information systems and methods, although it is likely that the problem is more widespread. In 1999 the Department of Support Services was in the process of replacing its financial tracking/reporting and other core business systems, which may allow more efficient data collection, analysis, and reporting.

A top-down mandate to measure performance makes it difficult to encourage ownership of results and processes by employees, which can instill a fear of failure.

Other barriers included:

- The long-term strategic focus being out of sync with usual budget and elective cycles.
- Cultural differences that make it difficult to gain stakeholder support in using performance measures.
- Misaligned incentives (i.e., negative results that may mean increased funding for poor performance).
- Demonstrating that information is useful in addressing the quality of programs, and not just an end to itself that is in conflict with provision of direct services.
- Making performance measurement the focus of operational and managerial decision making, not just funding decisions.
- Building trust that information will be used in a responsible and constructive way.
- The difficulty in developing clear goals and measures, particularly when program goals are difficult to quantify.
- Many of the interviewees indicated that they felt they were making progress in addressing these barriers. The mechanisms by which these barriers were addressed are discussed in the next section, which discusses the lessons learned about performance-measurement use.

EVOLUTION OF PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

What lessons have been learned from the performance measurement experience to date, and what are future expectations for the use of performance measurement?

Interviewees identified the following lessons learned, either in interviews or in conference presentations. Lessons learned are categorized by major themes.

Leadership

The importance of leadership and support of elected officials in creating cultural change were mentioned by several interviewees. County Chair Stein is widely credited with encouraging the use of performance measurement, creative strategic benchmarks, emphasizing quality and data

for decision making, and overcoming political and bureaucratic obstacles to make it happen. Ms. Stein's leadership is so visible, in fact, that some interviewees expressed concern about what would happen when she leaves office. One aspect of leadership that was mentioned was the importance of getting line staff involved as soon as possible. Leadership was cited as a way to take advantage of staff is working knowledge of programs and problems, and to get staff involved who may be concerned about the burden of collecting and reporting data in addition to their regular duties. One example of the leadership provided is the receipt of the [Oregon Quality Award](#) by Multnomah County in 1999.

Having a Few Core Outcomes, Goals, and Measures

Several interviewees mentioned the importance of limiting the number of outcomes and goals, as well as the number of measures used to convey information about progress towards results. Although the county continues to collect and report a large number of Key Results as part of the budget process, senior leadership's attention has been focused on critical benchmarks. The attention of the elected officials and the focus of budget and decision processes have evolved from focusing on the 85 or so [Portland-Multnomah benchmarks](#), identified by the Portland-Multnomah Progress Board, to focusing on 12 urgent benchmarks in 1994-1995, to the focus on the [three Long-Term Benchmarks](#), to which approximately 50 percent of the budget is dedicated. Some Board-selected measures were dropped because the data could not be captured. Although there is still an expectation that data will be collected, the focus on a few key outcomes was felt to be critical for success of a results-oriented approach.

Be Patient, Persistent, and Realistic

A few interviewees mentioned the importance of being patient and persistent in the development of a results-oriented approach. Concern was expressed about the time it takes for the government culture to change. Several interviewees said that, five years after the introduction of Key Results and program/performance-based budgeting, they were only just starting to see an expectation about the use of data-supported approaches and decision making. Interviewees mentioned the need for county leadership to continually reinforce a consistent message, and to look for and document successes to keep the process going. A couple of interviewees also mentioned the importance of not punishing departments because of measurement results (presumably by cutting budgets), and in the start-up phase the county leadership made clear that the performance of individuals was not being measured.

Incorporate Performance Measurement with Other Uses of Data

The link between performance-measurement and other data-supported activities was frequently mentioned during interviews. In particular, the link between performance measurement for monitoring and evaluation for understanding the reason for changes was cited by several respondents. According to some interviewees, this effort has not been completely successful. As of early 1997, Key Results had not been aligned with Benchmarks or other strategic goals, and there was lack of integration between [Oregon Benchmarks](#), [Portland-Multnomah Benchmarks](#), [County Long-Term Benchmarks](#), and Key Results. Existing databases did not easily allow collection of Key Results. There had not been enough attention to developing and using Key Results by the departments, the [Budget and Quality Office](#), or the [Board](#). Key Results have not been put on a database, which allows their manipulation for analysis and reporting (Carlson, 1999).

Future Expectations

Several interviewees expect further integration of the various performance measurement and benchmarking efforts, including Oregon Benchmarks, Portland-Multnomah Benchmarks, County Long-Term Benchmarks, and Key Results. They also expect to see more of an impact on public policy and greater focus on how performance measurement relates to the budget. In particular, with the county's strategic focus on producing results, it is hoped that improved outcomes in strategic areas will demonstrate the usefulness of focusing data and measurement activities on selected goals and outcomes. Hope was expressed that measures could be made better and more usable; that performance measurement will be used more at higher, more strategic levels, including across departments and programs, and that the commitment of managers will increase as a sign of change in the culture of the organization. The Auditor's Office indicated that creation of an SEA Report in 2000-2001 should increase external interest in, and use of performance measures by citizens as well as county staff. As indicated above, some concern was expressed about the impact when Ms. Stein leaves her position as Chair of the Board of County Commissioners. It was felt that the next Chair also needs to be a strong leader in supporting use of performance measures and achieving identified goals and benchmarks, or run the risk that the county's efforts will be seen as a budget exercise.

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Describes the County's philosophy and approach for evaluation, including a draft resolution on Establishing a Philosophy for Evaluation of Multnomah County Programs.

Board of County Commissioners for Multnomah County, Oregon. August 1993. "Resolution 93 – 275, Recommending Approval of a Budget Format and Cost Centers for Multnomah County's New Program." Performance Budget Document for 1994-1995 and thereafter. Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

Resolution guiding development of a program-performance-based budget for Multnomah County, including a budget format, budget cost centers, and a request that the Chair provide the Board with a comprehensive set of program descriptions and performance measures for use in the 1994-1995 budget.

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Overview on the use of performance measurement in Multnomah County.

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Demonstrates the relationship between Key Results, Performance Trends, and other performance indicators, and presents a logic model demonstrating the relationship between inputs, outputs (process measures), intermediate outcomes, and long-term outcomes.

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Provides annual highlights of progress on Results Goal #7, Make Decisions Based on Data. Highlights include the routine use of Key Results by departments to monitor programs, and movement towards routine use of evaluation of major county programs to guide decision making.

Contracts Performance Committee. April 1999. "Report of the Contracts Performance Committee." Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

Report by a Committee formed in July 1998, in part in response to concerns about whether the County collects contrasting, conflicting, or irrelevant outcome measures rather than

significant and valid outcomes. The report primarily focused on contracting and payment procedures. One finding indicated that new requirements for reporting should not be added without compensating contractors for added cost of compliance, and that there was a need to evaluate programs and link performance to outcomes/benchmarks.

Farver, Bill, Staff to County Commissioner Anderson. September 4, 1990. "Implementation of Evaluation Policy." Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

Presents the Board of County Commissioners policy on evaluation, approved March 29, 1990 (Resolution 90-45), and describes plans to implement the policy. Implementation plans include a focus on outcome evaluation, involvement of both the County and community agencies in the evaluation process, and emphasize collection of "information that is essential to evaluate contract performance," while reducing the paperwork burden on County employees and contractors.

Flynn, Suzanne, Auditor. 1999. *1999 Financial Condition*. Portland, OR: Multnomah County, OR.

Provides a biennial summary of the County's fiscal condition. The report includes information on resources coming into the County; how resources are spent; the financial health of the County over time; and indicators of how the population and economy are changing and how these changes can affect County services.

Ford, Carol M. January 14, 1998. "Linking Vision, Benchmarks, Strategies, Planning and Outcomes. Excerpts from a Presentation to State of Oregon Department Managers." Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

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The Introduction includes a description of the County's program structure and demonstrates the use of productivity indicators to measure program accomplishments and units of service for measuring outputs.

———. 1998. "Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1998." Portland, OR: Multnomah County, OR.

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Describes the organizational structure of the County; County vision and values; strategic context; an organizational performance review; and other accountability activities.

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Slide presentation presenting format and definitions for a program performance budget. Includes refined definitions of types of measures, including demand, workload, efficiency, and effectiveness measures. Presents the initial definition of “Key Results” as “Performance measures of efficiency or effectiveness, which are directly linked to services in the budget.” Key Results are presented 1) to improve communication, including informing citizens, policy-makers and other County program managers, and to establish accountability; and 2) to establish common direction towards County goals and towards State benchmarks.

———. September 1993b. Multnomah County Program Performance Budget, Instructions for Phase II. Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

Instructions on how to develop a performance-based budget. According to the Transmittal Letter from Multnomah County Chair Bev Stein, “Our performance measures will not be used to assess individual performance, and they will not be used to cast blame when things are not working well. They will be used to help us determine what’s working and to identify where and how we may need to change our approach.” Guidelines include forms for presenting program mission statements, goals, and objectives; descriptions of department services; Performance Trends (which focus on a few important measures of performance for the department); descriptions of divisions, program groups, or branches; descriptions of activities and services; and Key Results. The last of these forms, the BUD J, became the basis for the annual collection of Key Results information, and includes the name of a measure; presentation of actual, current year, and projected data; descriptions of how the Key Result is calculated; source of the data; what the measure is intended to show; the baseline level of performance for the agency; and the maximum potential of what could be achieved. An accompanying memo demonstrated that training was provided to staff on development of the performance budget system.

———, Auditor’s Office. January 1997. “Community Corrections: Mixed Results from New Supervision Programs.” Portland, OR: Multnomah County Auditor.

Example of how the County Auditor analyzes performance data for a County program. The audit concluded that three Key Results reviewed were clear, concise, and closely related to mission and goals. The measures were found to collectively capture the primary objectives of the program. They focused on outcomes and results and were oriented towards customers. However, Key Results information was not well documented. The audit recommended that controls be introduced to ensure data reliability and validity, and that staff be provided with technical assistance and training so available data can be used regularly by staff.

———, February 1998. “Home Visiting: Focus Resources for Healthier Families.” Portland, OR: Multnomah County Auditor.

Example of how the County Auditor analyzes performance data for a County program. Four Key Results were evaluated based on criteria defined in the literature on performance measurement. Field staff were not familiar with the Key Results, and it was not clear that program managers were tracking them. Measures published in the budget were validated with other automated data used in the audit. Three of the four measures related to service levels rather than outcomes. The audit recommended that alternative outcome measures be documented. Criteria for the evaluation of measures included: clear, concise, and closely related to mission

and goals; focused on outcomes and results; oriented towards customers; data readily available; data reliable and valid; data useful and used by personnel; data understood at all organizational levels; and data analyzed over time against reasonable standards.

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Presents resolutions on the Board’s evaluation policy (Resolution 90-45); the Board’s policy on goals and objectives that include performance measurements for FY1994-1995 (Resolution 93-232); and the Board’s guidelines for preparation of the County budget (Resolution 93-4). Resolution 93-232 mandates that programs should be evaluated; have goals, objectives and performance measures; and makes the link between evaluation and performance measurement in finding that “services delivered need performance measurements for effective program evaluation.” Resolution 93-4 indicates that the budget should include goals of each program, measurement standards for achieving the goals, and “present the information in a matter which facilitates the accountability and evaluation of each program.”

———. January 7, 1999. “Budget Preparation Manual for Fiscal Year 1999-2000.” Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

Describes departmental responsibility to establish Key Results Measures (KRM)s for all direct service programs in the County. Provides guidance to help departments meet Oregon Quality Initiative Assessment to improve measurement by setting goals, measuring progress toward goals, and using data to manage, as intended in Board Resolutions 93-4 and 93-232. Encourages collection of data even if measures are not reported. Draws attention to link between Key Results and County Strategic Benchmarks. KRMs to be reported for a four-year period, including actuals for two prior fiscal years, budget estimates and actuals for the current year, and an estimate for the next fiscal year.

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Results from a survey of County employees.

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children in poverty, increasing school completion with life skills equivalency, and reducing crime.

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———, Department of Community and Family Services. 1997. *Annual Performance Report 1997-1998*. Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

Reports on the vision, benchmarks, strategies, Performance Trends, program descriptions, and Key Results of the Department of Community and Family Services.

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Example of an internal annual performance report.

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———. October 5, 1998. “Strategic Plan for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in Multnomah County.” Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

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Example of an internal monthly performance report.

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Provides a strategic plan for the Department that provides financial, information technology, human resources, and community emergency systems.

———, Mid County Caring Community Trends Action Team. April 1999. “1999 Community Trends: A Snapshot.” Portland, OR: Multnomah County Department of Community and Family Services.

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———, Oregon Program Budgeting. July 15, 1993. “Proposed Recommendations.” Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

Memo that presents recommendations for program definitions, performance measurements, and budget format that was then incorporated into Board Resolution 93-275.

Recommendations included a distinction between Performance Trends presented at the departmental level, and Key Results at the program/service level.

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Presents the plan for implementing a vision for quality in the County. RESULTS stands for “Reaching Excellent Service Using Leadership and Team Strategies.” Data/outcome-driven processes are among the RESULTS Guiding Principles, and they seek to move the focus from effort to outcomes and performance. RESULTS uses Key Results, Performance Trends, and other data to measure outcomes and overall performance. Benchmarks are the focus of efforts for achieving community vision and long-term results, and for forging partnerships to solve problems. The document describes the characteristics of quality-driven data collection and analysis, including data that is reliable, consistent, valid, culturally competent, readily accessible, and tied to Benchmarks, Performance Trends, and Key Results. Making decisions based on data is one of ten goals of the RESULTS process. The five-year plan for making decisions based on data includes refining performance measures (1995-1996); quarterly review of performance measures and examining valid and reliable measures of factors that influence achievement of goals (1996-1997); comparison of measures with comparable organizations and more formalized evaluation of key policy issues (1997-1998); further development of comparative performance measurement (1998-1999); and routine use of evaluation for program planning and policy development (1999-2000).

Multnomah County Workgroup. October 28, 1997. “Measuring for Results in Multnomah County.” Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

Presents guiding principles in program evaluation, including the importance of focusing on outcome and the overall goals of the County. Also emphasizes that evaluations should be useful and cost-effective in meeting needs of policymakers, administrators, and other stakeholders. Presents a model linking broad use of performance monitoring, easily done on many programs, and program evaluation, which is used to examine processes and outcomes, and can be triggered by performance monitoring to explain why something is happening. Demonstrates the relationship between Key Results (people served by individual programs), Performance Trends (measurement of the outcomes of programs in combination), and benchmarks (a measure of broad community conditions) that serve as Multnomah County’s system of accountability.

New York Bureau of Municipal Research. September 1913. “Administrative Methods of Multnomah County, Oregon: Report of a General Survey by the New York Bureau of Municipal Research for the Taxpayers League of Portland, Oregon.” Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

This report extensively discusses the operations, processes, and activities of the County government. While this report does not specifically mention nonfinancial performance measures, it does include an analysis of the cost of feeding prisoners, which may be one of the earliest examples of benchmark analysis in existence. The report details a summary of defective conditions requiring a change of methods, including those requiring statutory changes. The work of the auditor is described as largely financial. The report includes the recommendation that all employees be placed under civil service regulation and calls for standard account titles in the budget by means of codification of the budget organization. The report sets the basis for the professionalization of Multnomah County’s governance.

Nichols, Kathryn, Multnomah County Audit Office. February 14, 1996. “Methodology for Appendix A: Evaluation of Key Results.” Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

Memorandum outlines the process of evaluating Key Results used in the budget. Steps include review of the orientation of the Key Result; Review of program and Budget Office documents with emphasis on the reliability and validity of Key Results data; evaluation of the extent to which Key Results are an operational part of agency operations; determination of whether standards are reasonable; and determination whether program or policy changes warrant modifications to a measure or standard.

Portland Multnomah Progress Board. 1999. “Are We Making Progress?” Portland, OR: Portland Multnomah Progress Board.

Provides a summary from the 76 benchmarks tracked by the Progress Board. The Board also does more detailed analysis on selected benchmarks. The brochure presents highlights on “Our Thriving Region,” “Fulfilling Lives,” and “Safe and Caring Communities.”

Stein, Beverly. December 13, 1999. [Multnomah County Chair Web Site-Biography](#). Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

Stein, Beverly. 1999. “People, Partnerships, Possibilities: Multnomah County Reports Accountability and Innovation in County Government.” Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

Provides the story of the County’s effort to become more efficient and accountable to its taxpaying shareholders. The Report includes information on the County’s strategic planning process, including a vision statement, Long-Term benchmarks, and good government benchmarks. The document describes the relationship between benchmarks, Key Results, and other indicators; the RESULTS initiative for continuous improvement; activities of the County Auditor; FY1998 budget highlights; and community building initiatives.