ENGAGING CITIZENS, MEASURING RESULTS, GETTING THINGS DONE

If you get a community that stays engaged in the process, they begin to trust the system. People realize, "This works," their . . . engagement, and their trust, increase.

PAUL MOESSNER, CITIZEN OF PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Prince William County, Virginia, has well-developed processes of engaging citizens. And it also has well-developed processes of measuring and managing the performance of county-funded services. What is especially powerful, for both county officials and engaged citizens, is that all these processes are part of the same system—the system that Paul Moessner and other citizens have come to trust. Because county officials listen to Moessner and others engaged in the process, these citizens have learned that they really do influence the goals and strategies that drive the county's budget and services. Moessner, for example, worked with other citizens to help the county set human service goals that resulted in more public funding of key services to meet the needs of a growing population and do more to address problems such as homelessness and drug abuse, which had been increasing. Because county officials listen to citizens, when they manage the performance of county services to produce measurable results, they get results that matter to the people of the county.

Prince William County is one of many communities, governments, and nonprofit organizations featured in this book that exhibit one or more forms of effective governance to achieve results that matter. Paul Moessner is one of many people in this book who have been empowered by effective governance processes to improve their community.

The purpose of this book is to help people and organizations find ways to become more effective at improving communities. The many people featured here who are effective at improving their communities include volunteer citizens like Moessner, directors and staff of nonprofit organizations, and elected officials and staff of

governments. By reading about their experiences, as organized around key governance ideas in this book, you can find ways to:

- Help citizens become more effective at influencing community change.
- Make organizations that serve communities more effective at achieving measurable results and more responsive to the priority concerns of people and communities.
- Help citizens or organizations become more effective at using information to influence decisions and improve results for the community.
- Make investments (for example, by foundations, local funders, governments) in non-profit service providers or community developers more effective at achieving results.
- Build more effective collaborations or partnerships focused on results that matter for the community.

What you find most useful in this book will depend on your role in your community or your organization's role in communities it serves. It will also depend on the current governance practices and results orientation in your community or organization, including ways results are measured and citizens are engaged, and how citizen engagement and measured results are used to influence community and organizational decisions and actions. To help you think about governance and results in your community and how they can be improved, the Effective Community Governance Model is provided, as well as examples of parts of the model in action in communities and organizations across the United States. Also, to help you explore how citizens can be better engaged in your community, five major roles citizens can play in results-oriented governance are defined and highlighted in many community examples: citizens as stakeholders, advocates, issue framers, evaluators, and collaborators. One gauge of the effectiveness of community governance is how many different roles citizens engage in effectively. "Effective" engagement means citizens are able to exert a reasonable amount of influence on a community decision, action, or process.

The citizen roles and the Effective Community Governance Model take an expansive view of both citizens and governance. In this book, all people who want to participate in the affairs of their community are *citizens,* regardless of their legal status. And *governance* encompasses more than government, to include how many actors in the community—citizens, private organizations, and governments—make decisions and take actions that influence community well-being. See the Preface for more on the expansive views of "citizens" and "governance" used here.

Model of Effective Community Governance

This book tells community and organizational stories from across the country in the context of the Effective Community Governance Model, which involves three critical elements of governance: engaging citizens, measuring results, and getting things done

FIGURE 1.1. EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE MODEL
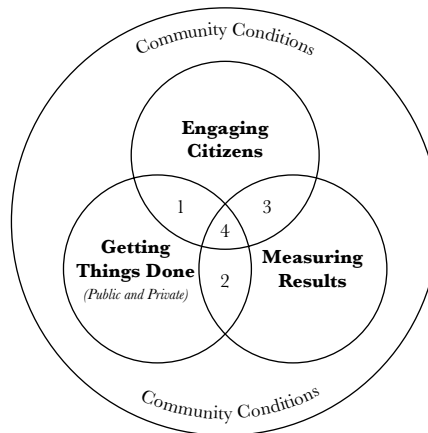
The four Advanced Governance Practices are represented by the overlapping areas in the figure, which represent alignment of "core community skills" as follows:

1. Community Problem Solving: Aligns Engaging Citizens and Getting Things Done

2. Organizations Managing for Results: Aligns Measuring Results and Getting Things Done

3. Citizens Reaching for Results: Aligns Engaging Citizens and Measuring Results

4. Communities Governing for Results: Aligns all three core skills

(see Figure 1.1). These elements are core skills a community needs to survive and improve. As community well-being can be affected as much by private actions as by public ones, the model applies to both government and private decisions and actions, as noted by the words *"public and private"* in the lower left circle in Figure 1.1.

Core Community Skills Aligned as "Advanced Governance Practices"

Teams perform best when they combine different skills of their members in effective ways, making the team as a whole more effective than its individual members. When the efforts of people with different skills are all aligned in support of an organization's goals, the organization can perform at a more advanced level than if it applied all those skills separately, with no sense of supporting each other. In the same way, communities perform at a more advanced level if they align individual community skills in support of each other. The real power of using the effective governance model comes in aligning the core skills into one or more of four advanced governance practices shown in Figure 1.1. Every community or organizational story in this book involves alignment of at least two of the three core skills for the benefit of the community. Four of the stories—those of Prince William County, Virginia; Rochester, New York;

Washington, D.C.; and the nonprofit community development corporations in the bistate Kansas City region—involve aligning all three.

The Core Community Skills

This book mostly focuses on the four advanced practices of the governance model. Here are brief descriptions of the three core community skills, with defining characteristics, that are important in ideas and examples explored throughout the book.
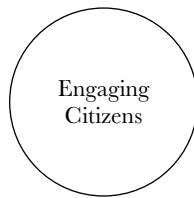
Engaging citizens means giving them real opportunities to make a difference, including opportunities to influence decisions and actions that affect the community. That may happen, for example, because decision makers are listening to citizens from the beginning of a community process, or because after citizens have developed their own priorities or solutions, they effectively advocate to decision makers to implement desired community change. While many ways of gathering citizen input can be used in the course of a community process, such as surveys and public comments, deliberative methods involving dialogue among people are most desirable and should tend to be the most decisive methods of a process that uses multiple methods. It is important that all potentially affected interests in an issue be represented in deliberations, which can sometimes be just those most likely affected (for example, people who live near a proposed new building or facility), and other times should be a group that is demographically and geographically representative of the whole community. Citizen engagement can go beyond deliberation and advocacy, to citizens' collaborating in implementing change by volunteering their efforts or other resources to coproduce solutions or services.
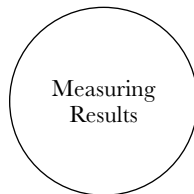
Measures of results are measurable indicators of either conditions in the community or the results of services provided to the community as a whole or to targeted groups of people within the community. Indicators of community conditions, often called "community outcomes," can measure health, safety, social, economic, or environmental conditions. They can focus on conditions of people, or on conditions related to place or physical attributes of a community, such as housing, parks, streets, air, water, and sewers. Results can include indicators of citizens' satisfaction with services or perceptions of conditions. Community outcomes may or may not be a result of services or public policies, or they may be affected to different degrees by services and policies and by external forces such as the economy, weather, or actions of private parties such as landlords or businesses. In many examples in the book, terminology of the organizations

Engaging
Citizens

Measuring
Results

involved is used, such as "performance measures," "quality-of-life indicators," "community indicators," "targets," or "neighborhood impact indicators." Unless an example separates out results or outcome measures from other measures (such as outputs), all of these types of indicators can, for purposes of this book, be considered "measures of results." Key to the effectiveness of measuring results is how the information is used in the community to improve results. For example, is performance information on measurable results fed back to inform community decisions? Are organizations in the community held accountable for improving measured results, or at least for taking actions that contribute to improving them?

Getting
Things Done
(Public and Private)

Things get done when plans, decisions, and actions that affect conditions in the community are taken by public or private parties. "Actions" can involve provision of government or nonprofit services, including efforts to improve a service or adjust it to be more responsive to community needs or citizen priorities. They can also involve regulating or subsidizing parts of the economy to enforce or stimulate desired conditions, such as affordable housing, a desired density of residential or commercial development, use of mass transit, or creation of jobs. Actions can be focused on people or on the natural or built environment. Engaged citizens can help implement actions. Plans and decisions can indicate broad policy priorities as a public budget often does or changes in priorities as when funding is shifted to increase emphasis on certain goals or services relative to others. Or plans and decisions can be very specific, such as a plan to gradually replace diesel buses with alternative fuel buses to get cleaner air; a change in a zoning, health, or safety code; a decision on where to locate nonprofit housing or a public facility, or about what gets built on a specific site. A key to effectively getting things done is for organizations in the community to commit resources and to be accountable for implementing policies, plans, and actions as decided. Organizations can get things done on their own or in collaboration with other organizations or citizens. Collaborative efforts can involve multiple parties committing resources and holding themselves accountable, including citizens.

Key Themes of Effective Community Governance and Improvement

Each case example in this book describes a community's or organization's own specific approach to effective governance and improving the community. Four key themes that are common to multiple examples are briefly explored here: roles citizens play, use of performance feedback, accountability and resources, and collaborations. Some of these themes are stronger in some practices than others, and some are weak or missing from some practices. The many case examples throughout the book make it clearer how these themes play out differently for each advanced practice of the governance model.

Roles Citizens Play. Citizens can play a variety of different roles when engaged in their community. Generally the more roles citizens have an opportunity to play, the more they will get involved, contributing more energy to community improvement. A community that provides citizens opportunities to play a variety of roles can gain many ways to take advantage of citizens' ideas, talents, skills, and resources. Also, those communities can provide more opportunities for citizens with different interests to engage with each other to find common ground on a solution to a specific problem or, more generally, on priorities for improving the community.

Use of Performance Feedback. The cost and effort to collect and report data on measurable indicators of results is of little value if the information is not used in an effort to improve the community. Communities and organizations increase their ability to improve results when they analyze performance data related to results and feed back what they learn into their planning and decision making. In this way, they can adjust their resource allocation and operations as best they can to get better results in the future. Some organizations and communities have developed cyclical systems of management or governance with built-in performance feedback loops to ensure that performance information is considered in processes such as strategic planning, budgeting, designing programs, and analyzing service delivery practices. When organizations and communities repeatedly use systematic performance feedback, they are repeatedly giving themselves opportunities to find ways to improve results and making themselves more effective at achieving results.

Accountability and Resource Commitments. Community plans to solve a problem or enforce a policy, or goals to improve results, mean little if not backed up by resources for implementation. An organization might commit resources by making a formal budget allocation or assigning specific people, equipment, or funds to implementation. Several collaborating organizations or citizens might also commit resources. Commitments of resources in the community take on greater meaning if the organizations or people involved are willing to be held accountable for following through on a plan or achieving a goal. Measures of results similarly take on greater meaning if organizations in the community can be held accountable for improving results or achieving measurable goals or targets.

Collaborations. Many kinds of partnerships or collaborations can support effective community governance, including collaborative efforts to find compromise solutions to a community problem, reach consensus on community goals, or implement solutions and achieve common goals. Effective collaborations can be formed among organizations, among citizens, and between citizens and organizations. Indeed, the National Civic League sees the need for a broad base of collaborations for communities to be successful today, with businesses, government, and nonprofit organizations working

with citizens to meet complex challenges.[1] Often organizations with related missions (say, a public health agency and a private hospital) agree to pursue a common strategy to achieve a goal or coordinate their efforts to solve a community problem, thus forging a partnership that makes more effective use of existing community resources. Some collaborations end up focusing added resources on a community goal, particularly when an effort is made to identify and reach out to citizens or organizations that have not previously been involved but have time, expertise, or other resources useful for achieving that goal. Collaborations can make all four advanced practices of the governance model more effective, and they appear in many of the examples in this book.

The Advanced Governance Practices

The brief descriptions that follow highlight key tendencies of each advanced governance practice to help you begin to understand these practices and the overall governance model.

Advanced Practice 1—Community Problem Solving: Alignment of Engaging Citizens and Getting Things Done

1. Community Problem Solving

Engaging Citizens

Getting Things Done *(Public and Private)*

- Robust citizen engagement in all major roles.
- Citizens tend to influence what gets done.
- If solutions are developed collaboratively between citizens and an accountable organization, then accountability is achieved and resource commitments are often made as part of the problem-solving process. In other cases, citizens deliberate among themselves to develop their own solutions, and then must advocate to leaders of community organizations to commit resources and be held accountable for implementing solutions.
- While citizens will generally know whether a solution is implemented, the success of the solution over time with respect to impact on desired community outcomes will probably not be known because results are not systematically measured. Lack of results measurement also means there can be no systematic performance feedback into community decision making.
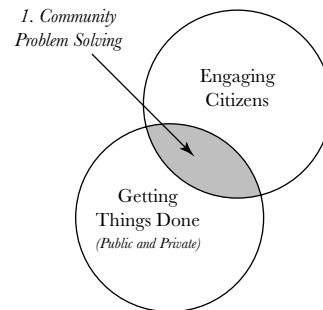
Advanced Practice 2—Organizations Managing for Results: Alignment of Measuring Results and Getting Things Done

- Engagement is limited. Citizens are primarily engaged as stakeholders, and only occasionally in other roles.
- Regular results measurement provides useful information on community outcomes or the performance of programs and services, or both.

- Performance information is fed back into orga-
nizational decision making on a regular basis in
systematic managing-for-results cycles, which
leads the organization to commit resources and
assign clear accountability for achieving measur-
able results.
- Performance feedback can help identify where
collaborations are needed, which tend to be
results-focused collaborations among organiza-
tions.

*2. Organizations Managing
for Results*

- While this practice can be very effective at achieving measurable results, results
achieved do not necessarily reflect citizens' main concerns, because citizens are not
involved in framing issues or setting priorities.

Advanced Practice 3—Citizens Reaching for Results: Alignment of Engaging Citizens and Measuring Results

- Citizens can have opportunities to play most or
all major engagement roles. Engagement tends
to be robust.
- Citizens are engaged in deciding what results get
measured, collecting results data, deciding what
data to use for advocacy, or using the data them-
selves. Results measures and data used tend to
reflect citizen priorities and concerns.

*3. Citizens Reaching
for Results*

- Although citizens act as advocates for change who call results data to the attention
of decision makers, there are no built-in performance feedback loops to ensure that
measured results are systematically fed back to influence community decisions.
- Measures of results are not systematically connected to resources to achieve desired
results or to organizations accountable for achieving results. Citizens must advo-
cate to community organizations or build collaborations with them to get them to
commit resources and accept accountability for achieving desired results.
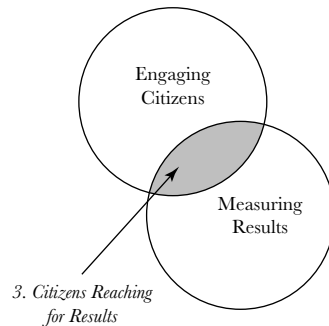
Advanced Practice 4—Communities Governing for Results: Alignment of Engaging Citizens, Measuring Results, and Getting Things Done

- Robust citizen engagement occurs in most or all major roles.
- Citizens tend to influence what gets done. They also tend to influence what gets
measured, for example, by developing or influencing priorities, goals, or plans that
one or more organizations' performance is measured against, at least in part.

- Regular results measurement provides useful information on community outcomes or the performance of programs and services, or both.
- Performance information is fed back into organizational decision making on a regular basis in systematic managing-for-results cycles, which are also *governing*-for-results cycles because citizen engagement is also a systemic part of the process.
- One or more organizations commit resources and assign clear accountability for achieving measurable results, which tend to reflect citizen priorities.
- Collaborations tend to be results focused and are likely to include both collaborations among organizations and between citizens and organizations.

*4. Communities Governing
for Results*
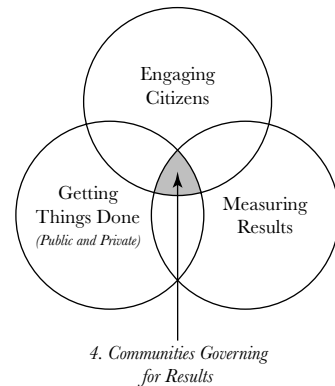
Some Observations About the Four Advanced Governance Practices

Although the concept of the Effective Community Governance Model and its advanced governance practices is new, the combinations of community processes ("core skills") that make up the advanced practices are not. They have precedents that go back to different times, so some advanced practices have become more established and definable, while others are in more of a state of development. The observations about each of the four advanced practices are coupled with brief descriptions of how each is treated in the chapters that follow.

Community problem solving, explored in Chapter Two, is the advanced governance practice that has been with us the longest. Citizens have been actively engaged in getting things done in North American communities since colonial times. Rather than attempt to catalogue or assess the many approaches that have emerged in hundreds of years to engage citizens in community issues, most of Chapter Two uses the lens of community problem solving to examine the five major citizen engagement roles, including ways to support citizens in each role. Examples include citizens engaged in neighborhood groups and district-based boards, self-help coproduction projects, and policy study and advocacy committees.

Organizations managing for results, explored in Chapter Three, has become a well-established organizational practice. A few local governments have practiced some form of managing for results dating back at least to the 1970s,[2] and many more began doing so in the 1990s when the practice also started growing among nonprofit organizations. Performance measurement, which provides much of the required information for

managing for results, goes back almost a hundred years for U.S. local government services.[3] Although there are many government and nonprofit organizations that have not yet adopted results management practices, well-defined patterns have emerged. Chapter Three focuses most on the defining cyclical nature of managing for results, including the systematic use of performance feedback to inform organizational planning and decision making. The chapter progresses from simpler to more complex managing-for-results cycles, including examples focusing on a single nonprofit program or government service, examples of enterprisewide managing for results, an example of a foundation investing in results, and examples of governments budgeting for results.

Citizens reaching for results, explored in Chapters Four and Five, is a newer phenomenon that is still rapidly developing. While it has significant precedents in the United States dating at least back to 1985,[4] only recently has it been spreading to a large number of communities. It is emerging in different forms, including very different ways to attempt to empower citizens with measures of results and other critical data about their communities. Different kinds of nonprofit organizations with data management capabilities, and some local governments, have been helping citizens reach for results. Some of these organizations have gone beyond the role of data intermediaries to help citizens advocate for change and help them build collaborations that can lead to results. These projects measure different things, from narrowly defined physical problems citizens find walking their streets and through their parks, to broad indicators of community social, environmental, and economic conditions. Their geographic focus also varies greatly, from neighborhoods within a city, to small and medium-size towns, to larger cities, counties, and regions. Two chapters are devoted to citizens reaching for results to help capture some of this emerging variety.

Chapter Four first presents several key ideas and strategic issues related to citizens reaching for results that have implications for how to increase citizens' influence on improving the community through the use of results data and other community information. The discussion of these ideas and issues is also intended to help you interpret the five community examples in Chapters Four and Five. Chapter Four ends with the first three of these examples, which vary from citizens using handheld computers to record and report on physical problems in their neighborhoods, to citizens working with government staff and elected officials to define performance measures for Iowa municipalities, to a Denver operating foundation that helps put citizens from poor neighborhoods in charge of how to use community information. Chapter Five features two in-depth case examples of regional quality-of-life indicators and how they have been developed and used in different ways by citizens and nonprofit organizations in the Jacksonville region of Florida and the Truckee Meadows region of Nevada.

Communities governing for results, which aligns all three core community skills, is the most complex advanced practice. It is not surprising, then, that it is harder for communities to attain this fourth advanced practice than the first three, and that it is harder to find

examples of this practice in the field. Four detailed case examples are presented in Chapters Seven and Eight, but because of their complexity, Chapter Six first provides an analysis of communities governing for results as an overall concept to set the stage for understanding the community examples in the next two chapters.

While the first three advanced governance practices are all beneficial to communities, they also have limitations on their overall effectiveness because they align only two core community skills instead of three. The analysis in Chapter Six looks at the strengths and weaknesses of the first three advanced practices and shows how the three-way alignment of the fourth practice builds on the strengths of the others and resolves governance issues caused by their weaknesses.

For effective governing for results, significant community resources should be systematically guided by citizen priorities and measurement of results. Organizations that normally control significant resources used for community well-being, such as a local government, can be well positioned to help their community govern for results if they are willing to empower citizens and use regular performance feedback. But nongovernmental organizations can also be effective in helping their communities govern for results, particularly if they collaborate to pool or leverage significant resources for citizen-influenced, performance-based use. Chapter Seven presents three case examples of local governments leading governing for results, all in different ways: Prince William County, Virginia; the City of Rochester, New York; and the District of Columbia (Washington, D.C.'s city government). Chapter Eight presents a case example of nonprofit community development being governed for results in the bistate Kansas City metropolitan area. A regional private-public investment collaborative has contributed local funds and leveraged national funds to create a large funding pool to invest in community development corporations (CDCs) that serve low-income neighborhoods across the metropolitan region. The CDCs engage citizens in governing for results at the neighborhood level. Their emphasis on both program results (such as affordable housing) and citizen engagement is reinforced by how they are evaluated and funded at the regional level.

Finding Ways to Improve Governance and Results

This book does not provide a step-by-step map to better governance and results. All communities are different and have to chart their own course. And the course may be very different depending on who is taking the initiative to improve governance and results, what their roles are in the community, and what partners are available and willing to help improve community governance.

Although the Effective Community Governance Model is not a map, it is a template that can be valuable for assessing a community or organization and helping a community find its way to better governance and results over time. Also, the citizen

TABLE 1.1. BRIEF TEMPLATE VIEW OF THE EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE MODEL

Advanced Governance Practices	*Aligned Core Community Skills*		
	Engaging Citizens	**Measuring Results**	**Getting Things Done**
Community problem solving	X		X
Organizations managing for results		X	X
Citizens reaching for results	X	X	
Communities governing for results	X	X	X

roles and the many examples in this book from across the country can be a source of practical ideas and approaches for local settings. Here are some suggestions for using the model, the roles, and the examples to find ways to improve community governance and results, whether the focus is on an entire community or one organization and the people it engages or serves.

Use the Governance Model as a Template

A useful starting place for finding ways to improve governance or results is to use the Effective Community Governance Model as a template to make an initial assessment of your community's or organization's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for constructive change. The graphic in Figure 1.1 and the descriptions of the advanced governance practices express the essence of the model as a template. Table 1.1, which summarizes the four advanced practices based on the core community skills aligned in each, provides a briefer view of the model as a template for an initial assessment.

From your current knowledge of how key community or organization processes work and how citizens are engaged in those processes and what influence they tend to have, you can assess the extent to which your community or organization exhibits any or all of the advanced governance practices. Keep in mind that different community functions or services often exhibit different governance practices. For example, if engaged citizens influence community development decisions, but the results of development are not measured, community development would be assessed at advanced practice 1: community problem solving. Meanwhile, other services may be well managed for measured performance, without citizens involved, so they would be assessed at advanced practice 2: organizations managing for results. Still other functions or services may not exhibit any advanced practices.

If you are assessing an organization with a relatively narrowly defined mission, such as community development, public health, or education, or if you are assessing how your community addresses a narrowly defined set of issues, such as land use or public safety, you may be able to identify a single place on the governance model for your organization or community. If you are considering a broad range of issues in your community or an organization that serves a community in many ways, such as a general-purpose city or county government, you are more likely to find that your community or organization exhibits different governance practices for different things.

It is best to consider this initial assessment of your organization or community as preliminary. For example, you may need to find out more about how key decision processes work and the extent that citizens are really engaged or have influence. Or you may need to learn more about how community conditions or service results are measured, if at all, and how the performance information is used. Also, as you read further in the book, you will develop a fuller understanding of the governance model and the advanced governance practices, which may also cause you to change your assessment of your own organization and community. Be sure to return to the governance model as a template for your own local assessment as you come to understand the model better and learn more relevant information about how things work in your community or organization.

Consider Ways to Strengthen Citizen Effectiveness in Different Roles

As you think about how citizens are engaged in your community, consider whether there are missed opportunities for citizens to play additional roles or opportunities to strengthen their influence by providing them better support in any or all roles. Chapter Two describes fourteen ways to support citizens in five major engagement roles, which may guide you in determining how best to strengthen citizens. Some of the community and organizational examples throughout the book may also offer guidance, especially those that include organizations supporting citizens in particular engagement roles. Another source of guidance may be the section of Chapter Nine on citizen capacity building, which focuses on citizen leadership development programs.

Look for Lessons in the Many Community and Organizational Examples

The community and organizational examples throughout the book provide the richness of detail to bring the Effective Community Governance Model and its advanced governance practices to life. Each example demonstrates at least one part of the governance model. It will then be up to you to determine which examples have the most relevant lessons for your community or organization. To find useful lessons, it makes sense not to focus too much on specific issues or services in an example and whether

they match issues or services that most concern you. An example covering different services from those you work with may still describe approaches to general processes (for example, priority setting, planning, budgeting, measuring performance) or citizen roles that are adaptable in beneficial ways to your local setting.

Instead, it is more important to focus on whether any of the community or organizational processes or citizen roles described in an example give you ideas for strengthening processes or roles in your community or organization. For example, is there something you can learn from a community or organization's approach to engaging citizens in setting goals even if your organization sets very different goals? Is there something you can learn from how a community or organization determines what it will measure or feeds back measured results to make operational improvements or inform policy or budget decisions? What ideas do the examples give you for helping your organization or community become stronger at performing any of the advanced practices of the governance model or for attempting a new advanced practice not yet prevalent in your community?

Look for More Ideas for Improving Governance and Results

As numerous and varied as the examples of citizen roles and governance practices are in Chapters Two through Eight, they are not fully comprehensive about how to improve community governance and results. No single book can be. To supplement those governance examples, Chapter Nine takes another look at improvement themes treated throughout the book and presents additional ideas and techniques that can be useful for implementing change, for example, new roles for leaders and professionals in communities that want effective citizen engagement. Chapter Nine also covers additional ideas for effective engagement, including suggestions for ensuring citizen engagement is inclusive, a draft scale for ranking public participation processes from passive to active engagement of citizens, and opportunities and risks of using technology to enhance engagement. Chapter Nine explores as well the use of performance modeling techniques, referred to generally as community performance value chains, to make performance feedback and analysis more effective for improving community or organizational results.

Determine Appropriate Expectations, Near-Term Goals, and a Starting Point

Your assessment of current governance strengths and weaknesses of your community or organization, and the ideas and processes you find in the book that you think can be adapted to your local setting, should help you determine appropriate expectations

for change and what your early improvement goals should be. Generally, appropriate near-term goals should depend on your role or your organization's role in your community, how well the community is doing on each governance practice, and what opportunities exist for improvement. Keep in mind that just as the community may exhibit different practices for different issues or services, appropriate near-term improvement goals may vary for different issues or services. Chapter Nine can help guide you in your early planning for improving governance and results.

Work to Attain or Improve Any Advanced Governance Practice

Advanced practice 4 (communities governing for results) aligns all three core community skills and thus has the greatest inherent potential to help a community continually improve its governance and results. However, not all organizations are positioned to move a community to governing for results on their own, and the potential partners they will need in the community may not be ready to help them go all the way there. For example, a nonprofit civic organization may determine that it can help citizens obtain and use data on indicators of community conditions the citizens think are important. However, local government or other organizations that provide services to address those conditions may not have the performance management capability or openness to citizen empowerment to use citizens' indicators in a systematic governing for results process. In this situation, it would be unrealistic for the civic organization to set a near-term goal to implement practice 4. Instead it makes sense to set a goal to attain practice 3 (citizens reaching for results), first by helping citizens obtain data on priority community indicators, and then by helping them use the data to advocate for change or build collaborations to improve desired outcomes.

By developing a measurement capability in the community and building citizens' experience at using data, the civic organization will position the community to move quickly to governing for results should the local government or other major service funders become willing or able to empower citizens and use results measurement in the future. In the meantime, the community may still gain significant improvement benefits from the actions taken as a result of citizen advocacy or new collaborations formed to improve results as measured by the community indicators.

Some community organizations may decide that the best they can do at a given time is to get better at an advanced practice they already perform. For example, a nonprofit service provider with a narrow mission, such as homeless services, may already manage for results. The organization may decide that its opportunities to engage citizens beyond its service population are currently very limited, but it can do a better job of learning from performance data to improve its service program. Therefore, its best near-term goal may be to improve how it manages for results to get better results for the

people it serves. That may translate to better results for the community as a whole, as may happen, for example, if better-managed services help more people who have become homeless move expeditiously into transitional or permanent housing.

Community problem solving, managing for results, and citizens reaching for results all can be beneficial to communities. It is worthwhile to attempt to attain or improve any of these advanced governance practices, even if governing for results appears to be currently unattainable. An improvement in a different advanced practice may serve the community well for the near term. Over time, the community may yet find its way to governing for results.

Effective Governance: Communities Keep Learning to Improve Themselves

The Effective Community Governance Model should be viewed as a template for helping communities, and the organizations that serve communities, for the long run, not just once. Active citizens and community leaders can come back to the model from year to year and keep using it to reassess how their community or organization is doing and what their next steps in governance improvement should be.

As the model is based on a community's having core skills, then the advanced governance practices that align those skills are really advanced competencies that the community can collectively learn. Charting a community's progress against the model over time is akin to charting the collective learning by the community to govern itself better and get better results. Community leaders and citizens who stay engaged in this learning process over a period of years may find that they end up charting a winding course to governing for results that they could not have imagined when they started their journey. In the meantime, as the community keeps learning from its experience, it will get better at achieving results that matter for its citizens, even before the community makes it all the way there. In the best case, once a community has demonstrably achieved the three-way alignment of engaging citizens, measuring results, and getting things done, its leaders and citizens will not stop there; they will keep learning from how they govern for results and will keep getting better at it over time.