

POLICY SERIES



Pulling Back the Curtain: How Transparent are Regina and Saskatoon?

**A measurement of local government
transparency in Saskatchewan's
two major cities**

By Mike Bridge



About the Author

Mike Bridge is a policy analyst with the Frontier Centre. Originally from New Zealand, he graduated from Victoria University Wellington with a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Political Science. Mike is interested in all areas of public policy but in particular transparency and accountability within the public sector.

The Frontier Centre for Public Policy is an independent, non-profit organization that undertakes research and education in support of economic growth and social outcomes that will enhance the quality of life in our communities. Through a variety of publications and public forums, the Centre explores policy innovations required to make the prairies region a winner in the open economy. It also provides new insights into solving important issues facing our cities, towns and provinces. These include improving the performance of public expenditures in important areas like local government, education, health and social policy. The author of this study has worked independently and the opinions expressed are therefore their own, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the board of the Frontier Centre for Public Policy.

Copyright © 2009 by the Frontier Centre for Public Policy.

Date of First Issue: October, 2009.

Reproduced here with permission of the author.

ISSN 1491-78



www.fcpp.org

MB: 203-2727 Portage Avenue,
Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R3J 0R2
Tel: 204 957-1567 Fax: 204 957-1570

SK: 2353 McIntyre Street,
Regina, Saskatchewan Canada S4P 2S3
Tel: 306 352-2915 Fax: 306 352-2938

AB: Ste. 1280-300, 5th Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta Canada T2P 3C4
Tel: 403 230-2435

FCPP Policy Series No. 75 • October 2009

Pulling Back the Curtain: How Transparent are Regina and Saskatoon?

**A measurement of local government transparency
in Saskatchewan's two major cities**

By Mike Bridge

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Introduction	5
What is transparency?	5
Why is transparency important?	5
Outcomes vs Outputs	6
Saskatchewan examples	7
The Missing Reporting Areas	8
Roads	8
Housing	10
Public Transit	11
Graffiti	12
Fire Service	13
Snow Clearing	15
Parks and recreation	16
Waste water and water supply	17
Publicly funded stadiums and arenas	19
Quantifying performance measurement: counting performance measures	21
Regina	21
Saskatoon	22
Comparison	22
Conclusion	23
Recommendations	23
Endnotes and sources	24

Executive Summary

This backgrounder examines how easy it is for residents to assess the performance of their local governments. Transparent government is a basic expectation in the Western world. A crucial element of transparency is the ease with which people can find the policy goals of their government and the success of their government in achieving these goals. Any government will claim to perform well, but unless residents can test this performance, there is no way to distinguish between rhetoric and reality. Municipal government is no exception. Voters' only power over their municipal government officials is the ability to vote them in or out of office every three years.

With imminent municipal elections in Saskatchewan, the Frontier Centre compares the transparency of Regina and Saskatoon with other cities, both within Canada and internationally. Both cities measure their performance in certain areas but as a general rule fall short of the standard set by other municipalities. In each of the performance areas studied the Saskatchewan cities have fewer measurements. The report also examines the areas of expenditure noted in the financial report and finds that performance and expenditure are rarely linked, making it difficult for residents to gauge value for money.

List of Illustrations

Figure 1: Example of performance measurements from the city of Westminster, England	9
Figure 2: The number of performance measurements for each municipal road network	9
Figure 3: The number of performance measurements for housing	10
Figure 4: An example of key performance indicators from Prince Georg	11
Figure 5: The number of performance measurements for municipal public transit	12
Figure 6: The number of performance measurements for graffiti removal	13
Figure 7: The number of performance measurements for municipal fire departments	14
Figure 8: The number of performance measurements for municipal snow clearing	15
Figure 9: The number of performance measurements for parks and recreation	16
Figure 10: Example of City of Kelowna graph on water usage	17
Figure 11: The number of performance measurements for municipal waste-water and water supply	18
Figure 12: Examples of performance measurement from Christchurch	19
Figure 13: Examples of cost disclosure from Christchurch	20
Figure 14: The number of performance measurements for municipally funded stadiums	21
Figure 15: The number and type of performance measurements for Regina by area of expenditure	21
Figure 16: The number and type of performance measurements for Saskatoon by area of expenditure	22
Figure 17: The extent of performance measurement for each city	22

Introduction

What is transparency?

Transparency refers to how or whether municipal governments disclose their performance in achieving their goals. Two questions are asked:

- What does a municipal government want to achieve?
- What data are available to determine if the goal is being achieved?

This report does not examine how well the goals of a city are being met nor does it

judge the validity of the goals. The focus of the report is on whether residents can access the information that enables them to make these decisions themselves.

To be transparent, data must fulfil three criteria:

- It must be quantitative.
- It must be comparable to other cities and other years.
- It must be linked to expenditures.

Why is transparency important?

Municipal government is a natural monopoly. If people do not like the performance of their municipal government, they cannot easily choose a rival municipality. Broadly speaking, there are three courses of action open to unsatisfied city dwellers: a) move, b) run for office and change the municipal performance, or c) elect a council that will do so. The benefit of moving to another city needs to be substantial to justify the cost. One can hope that no municipal government would perform so badly as to compel a resident to move, but such an option is, in most cases, prohibitive for work-related and other reasons. It is also expensive. The cost of standing for office would outweigh the benefit that most residents would personally derive from doing so if their goal is to get better service from their municipality. The time, money and forgone income required to campaign for office acts as a sufficient barrier to all but the most civic-minded citizen.

This leaves the third option, voting, as the only realistic way for residents to influence the performance of their city. If people think the city is underperforming, they will, in theory, elect a different council. Conversely, if happy, they will re-elect the existing one. For democracy to function this way requires that the voters have the ability to discover how well their city performs. This is where transparency comes in.

This report addresses transparency in Regina and Saskatoon. These two Saskatchewan cities are compared with several Canadian cities (Prince George, Kelowna and Port Coquitlam) and then with Melbourne, Australia; Christchurch, New Zealand; and the City of Westminster, England. Data are taken from each city's most recent annual report. These cities were chosen because they are good examples of transparent performance reporting.

Outcomes vs. Outputs

The report seeks to measure the results that municipal governments are responsible for, namely outputs rather than outcomes. An output is a measure of what a city is responsible for producing; an outcome can be influenced by numerous other variables. While an outcome is important, it is not a fair way to measure municipal performance.

Examples of outcomes cited in the Regina annual report include the \$350-million investment from Loblaw Companies Limited and the expansion of the John Deere distribution centre. While both were good achievements, the municipal government cannot claim them. They were the achievements of the respective companies and not those of the city. In contrast, an example of an output is the increase in online registrations for sports and leisure activities because of Regina's e-registration program. The increased registrations occurred as a direct result of city expenditure, and residents can easily assess their government's

performance in this area. Because this report measures how easily residents can gauge the performance of their city, the report will draw a distinction between outputs and outcomes, measuring the former and not the latter.

The following indicators are examined for Regina and Saskatoon:

- Roads
- Housing
- Public transit
- Graffiti
- Fire service
- Snow clearing
- Parks and recreation
- Waste water and water services
- Municipally funded stadiums and arenas

Performance in these areas was regularly disclosed and reported by the other municipal governments. The report will list Regina and Saskatoon under each indicator and then compare them with examples from the cities previously mentioned.

Saskatchewan Examples

Regina

The City of Regina 2008 Annual Report places an emphasis on being “Performance Driven & Accountable.”¹ The report notes, “We are results oriented, providing excellent, responsive and accessible service.”² With performance being such a priority, one could assume Regina compares well with other cities. City Hall, however has not always welcomed a comparison of their claimed performance with that of other cities. Councillor Wade Murray responded to a critical report in 2009 by saying, “We can really only compare to ourselves.”³

As some of its achievements, Regina lists topping the “economic momentum” ranking of 24 Canadian cities and Loblaw’s decision to invest \$350-million in a distribution centre.⁴ These highlights are noteworthy as achievements, but they are not the municipal government’s achievements. They are examples of outcomes, which may or may not be correlated with a city policy. Thus, this report measures outputs rather than outcomes. The policies of a municipality might have a bearing on the economic and social success of its citizens—the outcomes, but it is not wholly responsible for them.

Of the 15 achievements noted in the annual report, ten were outcomes, four were outputs and one was a feasibility assessment (neither an outcome nor an output).⁵ Highlighted outputs included Think Regina travelling to Edmonton to promote investment opportunities and the creation of the Piapot First Nation reserve.

In terms of disclosing performance, Regina does well in some areas.

- The Office of the City Manager achieved level 1 out of 5 in the NQI Certification Process.⁶ This means the City has chosen

“its direction as an organization” and will “enhance the quality of life of residents and visitors.”⁷

- The City measured the performance of its e-registration service for sport, culture and recreation programs. The online registration service contributed to a 14 per cent increase in program registrations.⁸

Improvements in public works safety were published. These following improvements were included.

- An 80 per cent decrease in “Lost-time Accident Frequency”;
- A 25 per cent reduction in the number of Roadways operations work-related injuries;
- The waste-water treatment plant experienced 1,000 days without a time-loss injury.⁹

Regina carried out a Core Services Review in 2006. This report’s suggestions for improved service provision, however, has no data about any adopted improvements.

Saskatoon

Saskatoon also reports its performance in a number of areas.

The City of Saskatoon has published a productivity improvements report, outlining 56 improvements. 36 of these are measured quantitatively. Each quantitatively measured output clearly defines what the improvement is, as well as the cost savings or the improvements in performance or both.

A good example of a reported output is the “Chronic Offenders Parking Enforcement” (COPE). The Saskatoon productivity report cites how the COPE squad was funded, how many vehicles were seized and the increase in both number of tickets paid and total amount collected.¹⁰ While the productivity

report has useful indicators of improved cost efficiency, with the exception of the COPE example it does not generally mention what the actual performance was. Reduced costs mean little unless residents know the level of service they were getting before and after the reductions. The productivity report is also selective in that it only publishes the favourable results, to be transparent all areas of performance need to be published. Beyond the information above, Regina's and Saskatoon's perfor-

mance reporting falls below the standard set by other municipalities.

The Missing Reporting Areas

This section will note areas of performance that are either not adequately measured or are not measured at all, and it will use examples from other cities to show what can be achieved.

Roads

Regina

Regina provides some disclosure in infrastructure. The annual report notes, "Regina made its largest investment ever in street, road, and sidewalk infrastructure with the rehabilitation of nearly 26 kilometres of roadway."¹¹ The report also lists 12 city locations where street rehabilitation was carried out.

Saskatoon

Saskatoon does not provide details of the total length of the roads repaired, but it does explain the City's changing approach to road repair. By fixing the roads before they fall into disrepair, Saskatoon predicts repair costs will be reduced by 50 per cent over the life of the road.¹² While this projection provides insight into the rationale for future policy, there is no measurement of current performance.

Westminster

While it is useful for residents to know the quantity of rehabilitated streets and roads, to measure a city's performance in this area requires greater information. As an example, consider Westminster, England, which provides detailed information about the condition of roads. Performance

indicators include the following:

- The condition of principal and non-principal roads;
- The number of temporary road closures;
- The average number of days to repair a street-lighting fault.

An explanation of the statistics quoted in Westminster's Annual Report can be found in the publication Best Value Performance Indicators: 2005/2006.

Prince George

Defenders of Regina's and Saskatoon's records will say Westminster is a larger city with better resources. However, consider that Prince George, B.C., a city of just over 70,000 people, provides more-detailed information on street maintenance.¹⁵ Prince George has several key performance indicators including the following:

- Responding and prioritizing pothole complaints within two working days of receipt of the complaint;
- Completing line painting on the roads in early spring;
- Sidewalk maintenance;
- Response to traffic-sign damage.¹⁶

Prince George has similar performance indicators for street cleaning and dust control,

Figure 1: Examples of performance measurements from the City of Westminster (England)

What are we measuring?		How did we perform compared to last year and have we met our targets?				
BVPI No.	BVPI Title	Outturn 2006/07	2007/08 Target	Outturn 2007/08 March	Outturn 2007/08 March Target	2007/08 March Trend
Environment and Transport						
091b	Curbside collection of recyclables (two recyclables)	75%	79%	79.6%	Green	Improving
199a	Local street and environmental cleanliness (litter)	11	11	10	Green	Improving
199b	Local street and environmental cleanliness (graffiti)	1	3	2	Green	Declining
199c	Local street and environmental cleanliness (fly posting)	0	3	1	Green	Declining
199d	Local street and environmental cleanliness (fly tipping)	2	2	2	Green	Stable
223	Condition of principal roads	21.9	26	12	Green	Improving
224a	Condition of non-principal roads	21.7	26	9	Green	Improving
224b	Condition of unclassified roads	14.15	14	12.88	Green	Stable

Source: Westminster Annual Report 2007/2008.¹³ An explanation of the statistics quoted in Westminster's Annual Report can be found in the publication *Best Value Performance Indicators: 2005/2006*.¹⁴

not strictly an element of road care but still valid performance measurements.¹⁷

Prince George's annual report does not include data relating to achieving performance indicators. However, it does at least have performance indicators that provide residents with greater transparency.

Christchurch

The New Zealand city of Christchurch also measures the performance of its road network. Measurements include the following:

- The percentage of vehicle travel on smooth roads;
- The average travel time for a 10-kilometre trip on monitored portions of the city network.¹⁸

Figure 2: The number of performance measurements for each municipal road network

City	Number of performance measurements
Regina	1
Saskatoon	0
Westminster (UK)	3
Prince George	4
Christchurch (NZ)	2

Housing

Regina

The City of Regina discloses its contribution to affordable housing. It notes that over \$1-million worth of tax exemptions are provided every year for inner-city housing development and that in 2009 more than 400 units are projected to receive an exemption.¹⁹

- The number of vacant dwellings returned to occupancy;
- Rent collection;
- Rate of Arrears recovery for municipal housing;
- Average time to re-let council housing.²¹

Saskatoon

Saskatoon publishes the number of rental property inspections and the number of lots being built in Willowgrove and Hampton Village. In both cases the number of lots being built are outcomes rather than outputs.²⁰ Regina’s and Saskatoon’s reporting in the area of affordable housing is much less extensive than that of some of the cities studied.

Melbourne

The City of Melbourne report does not contain data regarding the tenancy of municipal housing, but it does measure the following:

- The number of affordable housing premises it inspects;
- The number of accommodation buildings it audits.²²

It should be noted that affordable housing is not in Regina’s or Saskatoon’s mandate. However, as Regina does note housing as one of its achievements, residents should expect information about its performance in this area.

Westminster

In comparison, and more helpful for its citizens, Westminster, rather than just disclosing the cost of affordable housing, measures several variables including the following:

Figure 3: The number of performance measurements for housing

City	Number of performance measurements
Regina	2
Saskatoon	1
Westminster (UK)	4
Melbourne (AU)	2

Public Transit

Regina

Regina discloses information about its transit bus fleet. The fleet travelled 5,200,000 kilometres in 2008, with the Paratransit fleet travelling 1,200,000 kilometres. The fleet totals 105 buses, eight of which are low-entry step, operated by 173 drivers on 16 routes. The report notes that there are a greater number of fuel-efficient and reduced-emission buses than previously, but it does not disclose how many.²³ The most important measurement for public transit facilities is how extensively the public uses them. The City of Regina does not publish this information in its annual report.

Other cities measure the performance and utilization of their public transit systems more thoroughly than does Regina.

Saskatoon

The City of Saskatoon measures the following indicators:

- The number of rides provided by Access Transit;
- The increase in Access Transit rides over the previous year;
- The decrease in the number of trip denials;
- The increase in total public transit ridership.²⁴

Prince George

Prince George measures the following indicators:

- Annual ridership;
- Rides per hour;
- Response time to complaints.

The following table is an example of the performance indicators published in Prince George's annual report.

Figure 4: An example of performance indicators from Prince George

Quality Indicator	Performance Indicator	Description/Rationale
Annual Ridership	Service level attained by the City of Prince George Transit System	Service level attained by the City of Prince George Transit System
Rides per hour	Service efficiency of the transit system	Indicator of how efficiently available service hours are allocated to the demand areas of the City
Timely response to transit concerns and complaints	Respond within 3 business days of telephone message receipt	Provide a measurement of the average time to respond to transit related concerns
Transit complaints	Monitor and attempt to reduce or limit telephone complaints to a maximum of 5 per year	Provide a measurement of the number of transit related concerns and issues

Source: Prince George Annual Report 2008.²⁸

Christchurch

The City of Christchurch measures the number of shuttle-bus passenger trips each year, something that residents can compare year on year.²⁶

Figure 5: The number of performance measurements for municipal public transit

City	Number of performance measurements
Regina	3
Saskatoon	4
Westminster (UK)	3
Christchurch (NZ)	1

Graffiti

Regina

Graffiti is a controversial issue that has recently gained media attention in Regina. The City of Regina's Crime Prevention Commission states in its 2006 Annual Report that graffiti is a priority issue and "[a] Graffiti Management Program was developed and implemented by the City Administration in partnership with the Regina Police Service in July 2005" Information from city hall shows that in the first half of 2008, 408 sites were inspected, which resulted in 187 graffiti actions (removals) and 86 charges. This information was not included in Regina's most recent annual report.

While Regina's removal of graffiti is reported, both Melbourne and Westminster provide more detail about their methods and effectiveness.

Melbourne

Going beyond the number of graffiti actions, Melbourne measures the total area of graffiti removed in square metres. Graffiti removal is further itemized with separate

statistics for each of the following:

- Graffiti removed by municipality;
- Graffiti removed by owners and occupiers using City graffiti removal packs;
- Graffiti removed via Community Service Orders.

Westminster

The City of Westminster measures its performance in similar areas including:

- Removing litter;
- Removing graffiti;
- Fly posting (illegal posters);
- Fly tipping (illegal garbage disposal);
- The percentage of land and roads from which "unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible."

Figure 6: The number of performance measurements for graffiti removal

City	Number of performance measurements
Regina	2
Saskatoon	0
Melbourne (AU)	3
Westminster (UK)	5

Fire Service

Regina

Regina's annual report did not contain any data regarding the performance of the fire service. The City of Regina web site outlines some of the services provided by the fire department including the emergency dispatch centre, emergency medical response and the Jaws of Life. The department also mentions that the presence of Automatic External Defibrillators on each truck increases the likelihood of a defibrillator arriving at a cardiac arrest patient within 3 to 5 minutes, although it does not say by how much the chances increase.³³ There is no more information about the performance of the fire service in Regina's annual report.

Saskatoon

Saskatoon refers to the number of rental properties inspected as evidence of fire prevention strategy.³⁴ The City's productivity report also notes the annual cost saving from a number of measures including:

- Its computer-aided dispatch system;
- An equipment-tracking system;
- A new emergency operations centre;
- The bulk purchase of fire apparatus.³⁵

While these are useful indicators of

improved cost efficiency, neither Saskatoon's annual report nor its productivity report mentions the performance of the fire service. Reduced costs mean little unless residents know the level of service they were getting before and after the reductions.

Kelowna, Prince George and Port Coquitlam are better at disclosing information about the performance of their fire services.

Kelowna

The City of Kelowna measures the following:

- The number of calls responded to by the fire department;
- The number of alarms, fire and motor vehicle accidents;
- The number of medical first-responder calls.

Fire prevention measures included the following:

- The number of fire investigations;
- The number of life and safety inspections;
- The number of public education presentations;
- The number of fire extinguisher training sessions.³⁶

Port Coquitlam

Port Coquitlam’s annual report does not disclose information about the performance of its fire department, but it does publish information about its fire-prevention community programs. The city published the following:

- The attendance rate for its emergency preparedness courses;
- The number of participants in emergency social services exercises, carried out by the municipality;
- The number of notices given to businesses not in compliance with preventative bylaws.³⁷

Prince George

Prince George has extensive Key Performance Indicators for its Fire & Rescue Department. Indicators include the following:

- The time taken from receipt of alarm to the notification of appropriate agencies;
- The time taken to respond to an emergency;
- The time taken for the first engine to arrive at an emergency, the arrival time for a first responder unit and the deployment time for a full first alarm assignment.³⁸

Not only does the City measure the performance of its fire but crews, but it also measures the timeliness of scheduled fire inspections and the response times to complaints.

Figure 7: The number of performance measurements for municipal fire departments

City	Number of performance measurements
Regina	0
Saskatoon	1
Kelowna	4
Port Coquitlam	3
Prince George	5

Snow clearing

Regina

Snow clearing is another area the City of Regina is responsible for and one where reporting standards are below that of other cities. Regina's annual report contains no data on snow clearance standards or times.

Saskatoon

Saskatoon claims that its snow clearing methods "resulted in a reduction in equipment and infrastructure repairs and an increase in the level of service."³⁹ There are neither measurements to back up this assertion nor are there any performance indicators showing how the City arrived at this conclusion.

Prince George

Prince George does not publish the results of its indicators, but it does have a comprehensive list of the maximum depth snow can reach before requiring ploughing.⁴⁰ The City has separate performance indicators for the following:

- Accumulated snow
- Compact snow
- Arterial roads
- Downtown roads
- Other roads
- Residential lanes and sidewalks

There are separate criteria for snow levels in civic facility parking lots as well as in entrances and on pathways. As is usual with Prince George reporting, if residents are unhappy about the performance of snow removal, the timeliness of responding to complaints is also measured.

Figure 8: The number of performance measurements for municipal snow clearing

City	Number of performance measurements
Regina	0
Saskatoon	1
Prince George	5

Parks and recreation

Regina

Regina prides itself on the provision and maintenance of public park and recreation facilities. The City’s annual report notes that \$79-million was spent on “parks, recreation and community services.”⁴¹ The City provides no information about public utilization of these facilities nor does it provide information about what value residents get for this expenditure.

- The number of visitors to its Botanic Gardens;
- The area of urban park per 1,000 people;
- The percentage of urban residences within 400 metres of a public park;
- Playing fields per 1,000 sports participants;
- The provision of recreation facilities per 1,000 children.⁴²

Christchurch

The City of Christchurch gives details about how much it costs to provide and maintain public-park space. As well as disclosing the cost of public parks, Christchurch also publishes the following:

Prince George measures the timeliness of park servicing as well as the percentage of weed and disease invasion in the grass.⁴³

Kelowna measures the area of municipal parkland and the number of hectares of green space per 1,000 people.⁴⁴

Figure 9: The number of performance measurements for parks and recreation

City	Number of performance measurements
Regina	0
Saskatoon	0
Kelowna	2
Christchurch (NZ)	5
Prince George	2

Waste-water and water supply

Regina

Waste-water and water supply is an area that Regina does extensively report its performance. Its annual report discloses that the waste-water treatment plant experienced 1,000 days without a time-loss injury.⁴⁵ Beyond its annual report Regina discloses a range of information within the City of Regina 2008 Water & Sewer Utility Budget. The budget, required under part V.1 of *The Cities Regulations*, publishes the cost and performance of the utility. The information is quantifiable and linked to expenditure. A drawback in this area of performance is that Regina does not include a summary of the information in its annual report. A vital aspect of transparency is that performance information is easily available. Rather than having to search numerous documents residents should be able to find most performance reporting from their city within the annual report. All performance measure-

ments of the non-Saskatchewan cities have been quoted from their annual report.

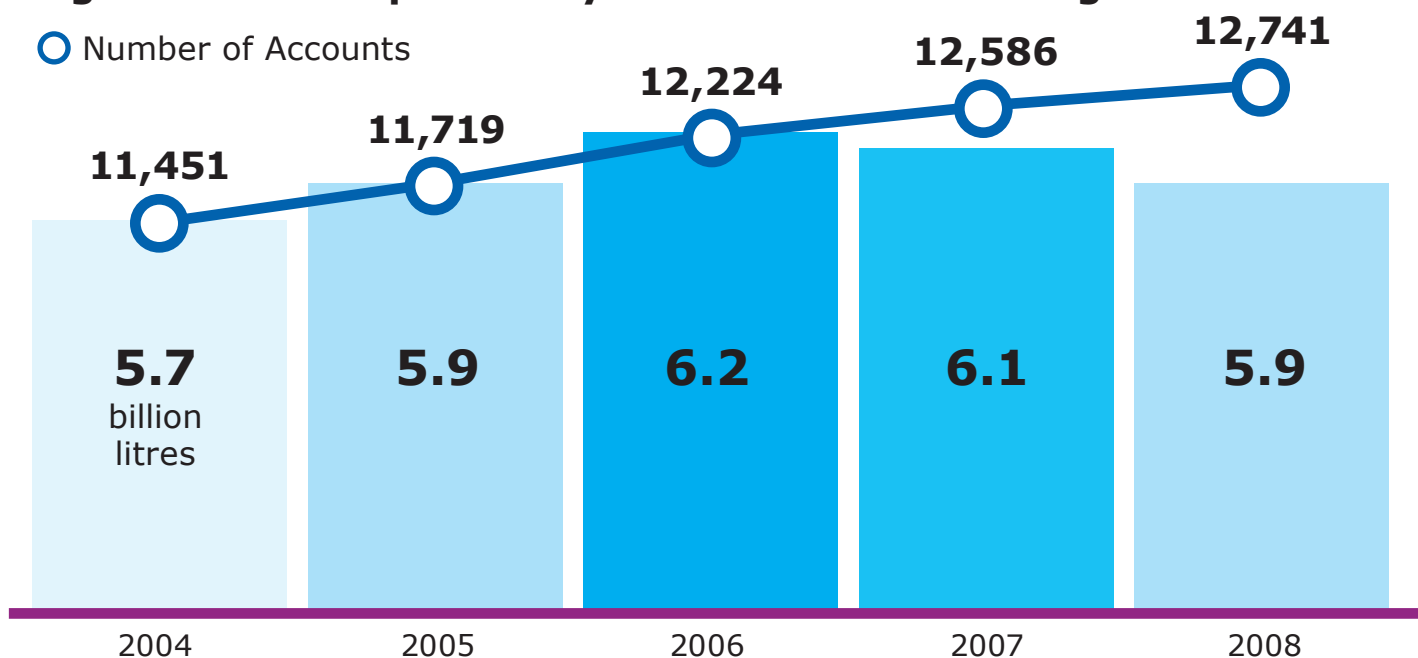
Saskatoon

Saskatoon discloses the number of water-meter readings submitted online and states that the number is increasing but does not say by how much.⁴⁶

Kelowna

Kelowna states that environmental protection is "a pillar of the City's strategic plan."⁴⁷ The City's annual report publishes the results of a survey asking residents what their priority environmental issues are. Results include improvement in air quality as well as improvement in water quality from the nearby Okanagan Lake. Performance in this area is not defined within the report; however, the City does measure its success in minimizing water consumption.

Figure 10: Example of City of Kelowna water usage



Source: City of Kelowna Works and Utilities Department.⁴⁸

Residential water consumption is not a municipal government output. The City does not have, nor should it have, absolute control over the habits of its residents. However, by publishing the data, the City does go some way to publishing the success of the City’s goals.

Christchurch

Christchurch measures a number of variables regarding the collection and treatment of waste-water including:

- The number of public-health issues attributable to the waste-water system;
- The timeliness of response to blockages and overflows;
- The number of breaches of resource consent (environmental regulations) by the waste-water treatment plant;
- Incidents of objectionable odour;
- Data about whether the City’s ocean outfall project proceeds within the approved budget and timeframe.⁴⁹

Regarding water supply, Christchurch also discloses:

- The number of unplanned shutdowns resulting in over four hours of water loss;

- Data about maintaining the highest Ministry of Health water-supply grade;
- The percentage of properties that can supply more than 25 litres of water per minute;
- The time taken to repair major, medium and minor leaks, and faults.⁵⁰

Prince George

Key indicators for Prince George sewer operations include the following:

- Collection costs per kilometre of main;
- Pump costs per cubic metre;
- Treatment cost per cubic metre;
- The number of hours the service is unavailable to customers.⁵¹

Water operations are measured similarly, with the report disclosing the following:

- The cost of pumping and treating water per cubic metre;
- The distribution cost per kilometre of main;
- The number of boil-water advisories per year;
- The number of service days without service.⁵²

Figure 11: The number of performance measurements for municipal waste-water and water supply

City	Number of performance measurements
Regina	1*
Saskatoon	1
Kelowna	0
Christchurch (NZ)	5
Prince George	8

* While Regina did include performance measurements in the Water & Sewer Budget, these were not included in the annual report. All performance measurements of the non-Saskatchewan cities have been quoted from their annual report so in fairness the measurements from the budget are not included.

Publicly funded stadiums and arenas

Regina

Regarding publicly funded stadium facilities, Regina's annual report mentions the expansion of Evraz Place. It notes that the arena will seat 1,500 and that the Regina pool of the 2010 World Junior Hockey Championship games will bring 300,000 attendees to Saskatchewan. No information is given about the performance of the facility throughout the year.

Saskatoon

Saskatoon's annual report mentions one facility operated by the City and one that had construction plans approved. There are no measurements of public utilization for the current facility or the capacity of the proposed site.

Christchurch

Christchurch publishes detailed information including a description of the level of service, a quantifiable target and the actual results for the public utilization of ratepayer-funded recreation and leisure facilities. Service levels measured include the following:

- The yearly number of customers using leisure centres;
- Provision of multi-use leisure centres per 50,000 people;
- Area of pool provided per capita;
- The number of visits to City-operated stadiums and sporting facilities;
- Attendance numbers at City recreation events.

Figure 12: The number of performance measurements from Christchurch

Activity	Level of Service	Actual	Target
(Performance measures for recreation & leisure as a whole)	Percent of customers with the range and quality of recreation, arts & sporting programmes	90%	90%
Events & Festivals	Percent satisfaction with the quality of major events and festivals provided	91% in residents survey	At least 90%
Pools & leisure centres, stadia, and sporting facilities	Facilities meet legislative requirements measured by WSNZ Pool Safe accreditation	Achieved	All indoor and summer pools accredited
	Number of customer visits to leisure centres/year	2.8 million	Over 2.6 million
	Provision of multi-use leisure centres/50,000 pop.	5 centres	6 centres
	Area of pool provided per capita	1 sq. meter/67 persons	1 sq. meter/105 persons
Recreation Programmes	Number of customer visits per year to Council - operated stadia & sporting facilities	678,832	410,000
	Attendance numbers at Council recreation, arts & sporting programmes & events	678,974	570,000 programme visits p.a.
		Revising targets in line with higher patronage	

Continued next page

Activity	Level of Service	Actual	Target
Sports support & promotion	Number of national or international events hosted in Christchurch per year	14 Internat'l 38 National (Whilst there were a higher number of events, they were of a smaller size)	6 International 12 National events hosted p.a.
	Dollar value of economic benefits delivered to the city per year, through the hosting of events	\$25.5 million	At least \$20 million benefit per annum

Source: Christchurch Annual Report 2008.⁵⁵

The Christchurch report goes one-step further than just a disclosure of the performance of its various functions. It also pub-

lishes the costs, income and net cost specific to each area of performance.

Figure 13: Examples of cost disclosure from Christchurch

Statement of cost of services for the year ending 30 June 2008

	2008				2007
	Costs (After Internal Recoveries) \$ '000	Income Net Cost \$ '000	Net Cost \$ '000	Plan \$ '000	Net Cost \$ '000
Operational service result					
Pools & leisure centres, stadia and sporting facilities	18,593	8,878	9,715	9,733	11,554
Events & festivals	4,056	319	3,737	3,073	3,047
Recreation programmes	3,128	835	2,293	2,803	2,419
Sports support & promotion	2,470	14	2,456	2,066	2,055
Capital revenues	-	33	(33)	(239)	-
Cost of service	28,247	10,079	18,168	17,436	19,075
Capital expenditure					
Renewals & replacements			11,584	13,880	4,241
Improved service levels			756	4,429	379
Increased demand			-	-	-
Total capital expenditure			12,340	18,309	4,620

Source: Christchurch Annual Report 2008.⁵⁵

Figure 14: The number of performance measurements for municipal funded sports stadiums

City	Number of performance measurements
Regina	1
Saskatoon	0
Christchurch (NZ)	5

Quantifying performance measurement: counting performance measures

The following two tables summarize the areas of expenditure for both Regina and Saskatoon. The areas are taken from each cities' annual report.

The number of performance measurements within the annual report for each area of expenditure is also recorded.

Regina

Figure 15: The number and type of performance measurements for Regina by area of expenditure

Performance Indicator	Number of quantifiable measurements	Number of comparable measurements	Number of measurements linked to expenditure
Parks, recreation and community services	2	0	0
Police	0	0	0
Legislative and administrative services	0	0	0
Water, waste water and drainage	1	0	0
Roads and traffic	1	0	0
Fire	0	0	0
Transit	1	0	0
Waste collection and disposal	0	0	0
Grants	0	0	0
Planning and development	0	0	0

Saskatoon

Figure 16: The number and type of performance measurements for Saskatoon by area of expenditure

Performance Indicator	Quantifiable	Comparable	Linked to expenditure
General government	0	0	0
Transportation	4	3	0
Protection of persons and property	1	1	0
Recreation and culture	0	0	0
Social & family services	0	0	0
Planning & development	0	0	0
Property purchases and development	0	0	0
Saskatoon Light & Power and disposal	0	0	0
Environmental health	1	1	0
Debt-servicing costs	0	0	0

57

Comparison

Figure 17: The extent of performance measurement for each city

City	Quantifiable	Comparable	Linked to expenditure
Christchurch	Most	Most	All
Kelowna	Some	Some	Few
Melbourne	Most	Most	Most
Prince George	Most	Most	Few
Port Coquitlam	Some	Some	Few
Regina	Few	Few	Few
Saskatoon	Few	Few	Few
Westminister	All	Most	Few

Conclusion

The municipal governments of Regina and Saskatoon report their performances far less often than do other cities cited in this report. As a rule, neither city discloses its performance as extensively as other cities do. There are exceptions as noted and where due. Regina has measured increased numbers for sporting and cultural activities resulting from its online registration option. Saskatoon measured the increase in fines paid because of its COPE program. It has made public its intention to start using Key Performance Indicators from 2009 onward. Its productivity improvement report published valuable information about where improvements were made. The productivity report did not, in itself, shed much light on the City's performance. Stating that a service

has improved when the service was not well defined in the first place does not make residents more informed.

In most categories, Regina and Saskatoon had fewer performance measurements than did other cities, and invariably those that they did have were less revealing. In terms of the number of performance measurements for each area of expenditure, the Saskatchewan municipalities scored worst. As residents go to the polls, they are charged with deciding which candidates will best manage their city. With the performance of Saskatchewan municipalities so poorly reported, citizens will be faced with a difficult task.

Recommendations

- Saskatchewan municipal governments should show greater transparency by using more extensive reporting of performance.
- Measurements should be clear about a) the goal, b) the target, and c) the actual performance.
For example:
Goal: Snow is cleared from Regina/Saskatoon streets in a timely manner.
Target: Accumulated snow is ploughed before reaching 75 mm in at least 90 per cent of measurements.
Actual: Accumulated snow is ploughed before reaching 75 mm in 80 per cent of measurements.
- All municipal government performance measurements should be linked to expenditure, as residents need to know if they are getting value for money.

For example: Annual expenditure on public transit service is \$-million; while x number of people use the service annually or annual expenditure on graffiti removal is \$-million; while area of graffiti removed per year is y sq m.

- Performance measurements should be comparable year on year.
For example:
Average fire department response time in 2008 is 5 minutes; average fire department response time in 2009 is 4 minutes, 30 seconds.
- Performance measurements for each municipality should be published in the cities' annual reports.

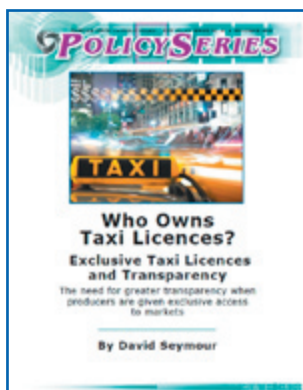
Endnotes and Sources

1. City of Regina 2008 Annual Report: Vision, Mission and Values, p. 4.
2. Regina 2008 Annual Report, p. 4.
3. Regina *Leader Post*: "Regina gets mid-range score in new 'Maclean's,'" July 17, 2009.
4. Regina Annual Report, p. 5.
5. Regina Annual Report, pp. 5-6.
Outcomes were:
 - Topping the economic momentum ranking
 - Loblaw Co. investment
 - Century West Superstore
 - Evraz expansion
 - John Deere expansion
 - iQmetrix acquisition
 - Consumers Co-op refineries expansion
 - Wingate Inn opening
 - Broad Street Crossing
 - The Saskatchewan Transportation Company opened a downtown building (is not an output of municipal council as STC is province owned).Outputs were:
 - Think Regina Mission
 - Piapot First Nation's reserve
 - Cowessess First Nation received urban reserve status.
 - Nekaneet First Nation received urban reserve designation
6. Regina Annual Report: Office of the City Manager, p. 13.
7. City of Regina web site, www.regina.ca: Read about the City's latest achievements.
8. Regina Annual Report: Community & Protective Services Division, p. 14.
9. Regina Annual Report: Public Works Division, p. 16.
10. City of Saskatoon 2008 Productivity Improvements: Infrastructure Services, p. 7.
11. Regina Annual Report: Infrastructure, p. 8.
12. Saskatoon Productivity Improvements, p. 8.
13. City of Westminster Annual Report 2007/2008: Best Value Performance Indicators, pp. 24-25.
14. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: Best Value Performance Indicators, p. 173, 179, pp. 183-187.
15. Statistics Canada Census 2006: Prince George (City).
16. City of Prince George 2008 Annual Report: Roads, p. 43.
17. Prince George Annual Report, pp. 43-46.
18. Christchurch City Council Annual Report 2008: Streets and Transport, p. 63.
19. Regina Annual Report, p. 9.
20. Saskatoon Annual Report, p. 5, 10.
21. Westminster Annual Report, p. 25
22. City of Melbourne 2008 Annual Report, p. 106.
23. Ibid. Regina Annual Report, p. 14.

24. Saskatoon Productivity Improvements, p. 12.
25. Prince George Annual Report, p. 42.
26. Christchurch Annual Report, p. 64.
27. Regina *Leader-Post*: "Schoolyard attack leaves Good Samaritan shaken," September 28, 2009.
28. *City of Regina Crime Prevention Commission 2006 Annual Report*, pp. 2-3.
29. City of Regina web site: "Community battling graffiti," September 18, 2008.
30. Melbourne Annual Report, p. 53.
31. Westminster Annual Report, p. 25.
32. Best Value Performance Indicators, p. 158.
33. City of Regina web site: "Fire Services: Know the services we provide."
34. Saskatoon Annual Report, p. 28.
35. Saskatoon Productivity Report, p. 6.
36. City of Kelowna 2008 Annual Report, p. 9.
37. City of Port Coquitlam Annual Report 2008: Enhance Community Safety, p. 19.
38. Prince George Annual Report, p. 26.
39. Saskatoon Annual Report, p. 7.
40. Prince George Annual Report, p. 41.
41. Regina Annual Report: Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities and Changes in Net Assets, p. 36.
42. Christchurch Annual Report, p. 47.
43. Prince George Annual Report, p. 48.
44. Kelowna Annual Report, p. 8.
45. Regina Annual Report: Public Works Division, p. 16.
46. Saskatoon Annual Report, p. 13.
47. Kelowna Annual Report, p. 13.
48. *Ibid*, p. 14.
49. Christchurch Annual Report, p. 67.
50. *Ibid*. p. 71.
51. Prince George Annual Report, p. 50.
52. *Ibid*. p. 50.
53. Regina Annual Report: p. 8.
54. Saskatoon Annual Report, p. 12.
55. Christchurch City Council Annual Report 2008: Recreation and Leisure, p. 51.
56. Christchurch Annual Report, p. 52.
57. City of Saskatoon 2008 Financial Report, p. 31.

Further Reading

POLICY SERIES



September 2009

Who Owns Taxi Licences?

David Seymour

<http://www.fcpp.org/publication.php/2925>

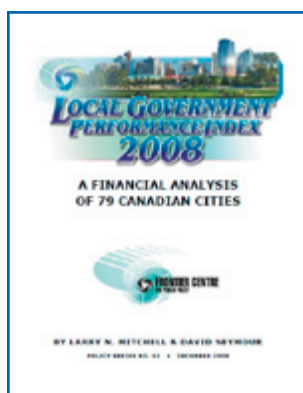


June 2009

How Free is Your Parking?

Stuart Donovan

<http://www.fcpp.org/publication.php/2839>



December 2008

Local Government Performance Index

Larry N. Mitchel and David Seymour

<http://www.fcpp.org/publication.php/2483>

For more see
www.fcpp.org