

**Service Efforts and Accomplishments
&
The Indianapolis Popular Budget**

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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Purpose of Thesis

This thesis examines a system of reporting in the governmental accounting field that is known as Service Efforts and Accomplishments (SEA) reporting. It is a revolutionary form of reporting that strays from the traditional forms of governmental financial reporting. SEA is now being used in some very successful governments, such as Portland and Indianapolis. The Indianapolis application of SEA reporting, and more specifically the Indianapolis Popular Budget, is examined to outline key elements of SEA reporting that improve the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of governments.

Many people feel skepticism when they think of the lack of productivity, efficiency, and honesty that exists within their governments. Political parties grumble at each other, and citizens echo the dispute over the magnitude of taxes that are levied. Yet, the citizens cry out for more and better services to be provided by their government. People relay horror stories describing hammers costing \$500. However, the name of the individual who purchased the hammers, or the reasons the purchasing agent spent this much is not disclosed. This general lack of understanding, and consequent lack of trust of government, can be ameliorated by the use of service efforts and accomplishments information. This paper will provide a description of service efforts and accomplishments reporting. In addition, this form of reporting will be examined in the Indianapolis Popular Budget.

SERVICE EFFORTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Service Efforts and Accomplishments (SEA) reporting is a system of reporting that measures the economy, effectiveness, and efficiency of government entities. Economy, effectiveness, and efficiency can be defined as follows:

* Economy is "essentially a resource-acquisition concept with a least-cost notion and is concerned with the acquisition of resources of appropriate quality and quantity at the lowest reasonable cost."

* Efficiency is "essentially a resource-usage concept, also with a least-cost notion, that is concerned with the maximization of outputs at minimal cost or the use of minimum input resource."

* Effectiveness is "an ends-oriented concept that measures the degree to which predetermined goals and objectives for a particular activity or program are achieved."

[Government1 1995]

Business entities have balance sheets, income statements, and other financial reports to show investors what assets and liabilities they have and how profitable they have been. These statements provide a basis to compare the business to other businesses and to statements of years past. The taxpayers in this country have less definite means of evaluating their investment in governments, which includes their tax dollars and their rights that they entrust to their governments. SEA information provides taxpayers with the means to compare a government's performance to other governments and to previous years.

Accountability

SEA reporting forces each division of a government to be accountable for its actions. There are numerous occasions when we come in direct contact with the ineffectiveness of our governments. It may be driving around the same pothole for two years or slipping and sliding on roads four days after a snowstorm. SEA reporting puts each department manager in a position where he actually has to

produce results, and he must do this in an efficient manner. The department of transportation manager would have to show how many potholes were filled, how long it had taken to fill them, and how much of the budget was devoted to filling the potholes. Being accountable for these items makes the manager use his resources to the best of his ability. Accountability encourages the manager to improve on everything from motivating the support staff to negotiating more effectively with suppliers. This accountability creates a more efficient use of dollars and better results for the public.

Comparability

With SEA reporting, the performance of each department is measured and documented in a standardized manner. This standardization gives the reports comparability in two ways. The data provided in the reports is compared to years past to show evidence of trends and to highlight any problems that may be forming. The second way this data can be used is to compare governments of similar size and composition. This comparability adds an element of competition. Department heads would want to outperform their predecessors and those who they are compared to in other governments. This element of competition is no different from the competition that takes place in the private sector. To keep one's job or move up the ladder, employees in the private sector usually have to perform as well as or better than his predecessors or rivals. For example, if the Department of Transportation Manager in Louisville is repairing the same amount

of potholes as the Department of Transportation Manager in Indianapolis for six times the cost, the Louisville manager might possibly look for ways to improve his department's performance. His incentive to do this would be that the SEA report would show the comparison of his performance to Indianapolis manager's performance. This is assuming that the Louisville manager's job depends on performance. An active and aware public would help make this performance more important. If the public is aware of poor performance, they may choose to replace the elected official responsible for hiring this manager. This possibility may give the elected official an incentive to demand higher performance standards of this manager.

However, people evaluating SEA information must be cautious. In many cases difficulty arises when comparing different governments because of complex differences between the structures, systems, and environments. Also, certain unavoidable circumstances arise which could cause adverse statistics to appear on reports. In these instances, footnotes should explain the source of the problem. Despite some of the inconsistencies inherent in comparisons, SEA reporting gives the user a worthwhile tool for evaluating a government's performance.

Reporting

SEA reporting can be used to show the economy, effectiveness, and efficiency of departments to the public in a concise and understandable manner. This can be via newspaper, newscasts, public service announcements, radio spots, newsletters, or

television advertisements. The method of public reporting that each government uses should be the most cost-efficient method for its region. The reporting should cover a limited amount of departments and services to avoid information overload to the user. The public does not need to know exactly how many pens their elected official used over the year. The public needs to know the performance of departments like the fire department, police department, transportation department, and parks and recreation department.

Benefits

The benefits associated with reporting this information to the public are numerous. For instance, pretend the SEA report disclosed the name of the elected official responsible for managing the department of transportation. The report clearly shows his department's inefficiency and ineffectiveness over the past two years. Would the public find this information useful when determining whether to re-elect this official? Would this method of reporting be an extremely effective method of motivating this elected official to perform to the best of his ability? Would this method of reporting make the public feel closer to the political process? Would this method of reporting provide for a better system of feedback from the public concerning its needs? If the answer to all of these questions is "yes", why is SEA reporting not being used in every government?

Awareness

There are probably many reasons that SEA reporting is not

being used in governments. Perhaps one reason for this is that there is not enough awareness of this reporting in the public sector. Even most collegiate level accounting students have never heard of the concept of SEA reporting. The public simply has no idea what this method of reporting is or entails.

Cost

Another reason for the hesitation of initiating SEA reporting is the issue of cost. The implementation of this new form of reporting would require a great deal of time to plan, carry out, and enforce. This use of time by accounting resources within a government would call for additional budget requests. Many officials are not eager to request additional funds from a tight budget, regardless of whether this system would save their governments money in the long run.

Change

Another obstacle that may be blocking the installation of this revolutionary method of reporting is people's fear of change. Public officials have a grip on their jobs and know what strings to pull with the current system to keep their jobs. The people already employed and in power will give great resistance to this program and come up with excuses to keep SEA out of their government. The public officials may not want to be held accountable. The person responsible for the department of transportation discussed in the example above may not want the public to have access to the results of his performance. This information may endanger his job security. Many politicians do not

want to be held accountable for their responsibilities to the public. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board realizes this and is doing something about it.

Governmental Accounting Standards Board

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) was organized in 1984 by the Financial Accounting Foundation (FAF) to establish standards of financial accounting and reporting for governmental entities. The Foundation is responsible for selecting members of the GASB and its Advisory Council, funding their activities, and for exercising general oversight [Governmental2 1991-1992]. The GASB issues concept statements to solicit commentary and advice from the governmental accounting community on proposed standards.

Concept Statement No. 2

The GASB has issued its Concept Statement No. 2, Service Efforts and Accomplishments Reporting (CONS 2), in April 1994. SEA reporting is in its experimental stage, but it is only a matter of time before the GASB adopts specific reporting standards. According to the GASB, the main objective of SEA reporting is to:

...provide more complete information about a governmental entity's performance than can be provided by the operating statement, balance sheet, and budgetary comparison statements and schedules to assist users in assessing the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of services provided [Governmental1 1994].

The GASB's concept statement identifies the elements of

financial reporting that SEA reports would contain. This includes monetary financial data, non-monetary financial data, and even non-quantitative data that measures outputs and outcomes. The concept statement suggests a system of feedback from the public to determine the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of departments' efforts. The importance of CONS 2 is that governmental reports by state and local governments that follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principals (GAAP) would have to follow standards for SEA-type reporting. SEA reporting links inputs with performance outputs and external outcomes and improves accountability of governments to citizens. Use of SEA reports would provide governments a means to improve the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of their service delivery [Wrege 1995].

Government Finance Officers Association

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) also believes that performance objectives and measurements are critical components and key tools for use in budget planning, decision making, and program management by all levels of government. Since its founding in 1906, the GFOA has been dedicated to providing professional support to government finance officials. The association offers a wide array of products and services designed to keep its more than 11,000 members atop the government finance profession [Government 1987]. As an organization that sponsors the FAF and is responsible for nominating its Trustees, the GFOA takes an active interest in the affairs of the GASB.

The GFOA supports the theory that a good budget practice is the root to the measurement of all service accomplishments. However, the GFOA does not agree that the GASB should attempt to set standards for all types of SEA reporting. Jeffrey L. Esser, executive director of the GFOA, thinks that measures of the quality of services go beyond the scope of accounting and financial reporting, and thus are beyond the competence and jurisdiction of the GASB. The GFOA policy statement asserts that any ultimate "decisions on quality of service or outcome measures need to be made by professionals with specialized expertise in the services under consideration, not by accountants" [Esser 1992].

Portland

Nevertheless, many small governments are following GASB's advice and issuing SEA reports. One such government is the city of Portland, Oregon. In 1988 the city auditor decided to explore into the concept of service efforts and accomplishments reporting. After numerous feasibility tests were performed, the auditing department finally accepted the new system in 1991. Over the past three years, the city has undergone several changes that have helped it significantly. They were able to draw comparisons against other cities to see how they measured up. Their report also displayed the results of an annual citizen satisfaction survey administered by the audit services division.

The City of Portland Service Efforts and Accomplishments Report contains information on the performance of the city's six major departments which comprise about 75 percent of the city's

staffing and spending. Examples of information provided on each department are:

- a brief description of the service mission, goals, objectives, and major activities;
- background information on service area spending and staffing levels;
- service workload and demand data; and
- performance data on service results, outcomes and efficiency.

This type of reporting format is common under the new SEA reporting [Jean 1993].

Through Portland's reporting cycle, improvements were constantly being made. Departments were becoming more efficient in collecting the data needed for the reports. For instance, the auditor and support staff hours were decreased from 3,000 hours spent on the first SEA report to 1,800 hours spent on the second SEA report issued in 1993. The producers of the 1993 report had the benefit of looking to the 1992 report for format and presentation which significantly reduced the time. This serves as a bonus for other governments of its size. Similar governments can use the Portland model, with kinks worked out of it, to eliminate much of the time required to adopt SEA reporting.

Portland's case is just one of the many cases in which the benefits of SEA reporting outweigh the costs. This dispels the assertions made by government officials that SEA reporting would be too costly. The performance of governments that have experimented

with SEA reporting suggests to all that service efforts and accomplishments reporting is an efficient and effective wave of the future in government accounting.

THE INDIANAPOLIS POPULAR BUDGET

One government that has taken advantage of the benefits of SEA reporting is the city of Indianapolis. Stephen Goldsmith, mayor of Indianapolis, took office in November, 1991. Goldsmith inherited a bureaucracy that was budgeting appropriations at a level higher than expected revenues. In 1992 that gap was \$20 million, or 4% of the budget. In 1993, the city cut the gap to \$2.9 million; and further reduced it to \$879,000 in 1994. With the 1995 budget, the City has achieved its goal of a balanced budget and in fact produced a budget surplus of \$522,000 [Goldsmith 1995]. This progress is a direct result of service efforts and accomplishments reporting.

Goldsmith & KPMG

Stephen Goldsmith wanted to do away with the standard form of simple budget-request government. To aid him in the transition, he contracted for the services of Big Six accounting firm KPMG Peat Marwick. KPMG investigated every division within the government and looked very closely at the cost involved with doing the jobs for each respective division. KPMG used activity-based costing (ABC) to measure the costs of these divisions. Goldsmith comments

on the importance of knowing the cost of activities:

By spelling out the cost of each activity performed by Indianapolis city government and the specific performance measures on which the activity is judged, the popular budget puts a bright spotlight of accountability on everyone in city government from the front-line employees to the mayor's office itself. [Goldsmith 1995]

Job Bidding

This "spotlight of accountability" has proven to be very efficient. Goldsmith used the data to bid out jobs across the board with the exception of the jobs in the Department of Public Safety. Government employees were now competing with private sector companies. If the private sector companies could do the same job for significantly less money, then the job went to the private sector. Jobs were privatized from window washing to sanitation control. Workers, such as the unionized road crews, were able to outbid the private sector and retain their jobs. Through ABC, SEA reporting, and job bidding, Indianapolis has saved millions of dollars. Mitch Roob, head of the Department of Transportation stated, "Across the board, every time we've competed a service from wastewater treatment to trash (pick up) to crack sealing, each and every time, we have saved a minimum of 25% whether the public sector's got it or the private sector's got it" [KPMG 1994].

The Popular Budget

To document progress and flag negative trends, the City

created the Popular Budget. This annual report shows the budgeted inputs for each department and in turn shows the non-financial outputs these funds should create. The Budget begins by stating the broad *Policy Goals* of being a competitive city that has safe streets, strong neighborhoods, and a thriving economy. Each department lists external outcomes of specific duties and services that tie directly to the Policy Goals. The intertwining of these goals, outcomes, and services show a relationship between goals and service outcomes that are products of the taxpayers' contributions.

The Popular Budget is openly available to the public. It is written in a manner that is digestible to the lay person. This is done to encourage the taxpayers to read the budget and give feedback. Public feedback is a vital tool in the construction of the Indianapolis Popular Budget. Much of the public feedback comes from a customer survey that is described in Appendix A. In the 1995 Popular Budget, Mayor Goldsmith writes:

The Popular Budget encourages public debate on the activities and outcomes provided by the City, as well as the related priority of these activities and outcomes. Taxpayers have the ability to mold the activities they feel should be provided, and in what priority. Through public debate and increased accountability, the Popular Budget will help my administration and the City-County Council carry out the wishes of the citizens.
[Goldsmith 1995]

Evolution

The Popular Budget is a rapidly evolving report. The 1994

Popular Budget was the first of its kind for Indianapolis. It profiled four departments:

- Department of Transportation
- Department of Public Works
- Department of Metropolitan Development
- Department of Parks and Recreation

The 1995 Popular Budget replaced the Department of Transportation with the Department of Capital Asset Management and added three new departments:

- Executive Offices
- Department of Administration
- Department of Public Safety

The addition and re-classification of departments were not the only changes in the Popular Budget. Many of the divisions and services were shuffled around among departments. This was done to facilitate an easier measurement of costs and a more accurate means to allocate overhead.

Comparability

The element of comparability is very important when examining Popular Budget reports. The Popular Budget is, as stated before, an easy report to read. However, there is not a great deal of comparability between the 1994 and 1995 Popular Budgets. The first reason for this is the shuffling of divisions between departments. The reclassification of service divisions makes it difficult for the users of documents to compare data and develop opinions on economy, effectiveness, and efficiency. Another reason for the

lack of comparability is the infancy of this project. Managers have been given a good deal of latitude to re-evaluate estimates and targets throughout the year [Wilkes 1995]. This leeway creates discrepancies in budget figures between the 1994 and 1995 budgets. The third reason lies in the allocation of overhead. In 1995, each department was required to allocate overhead items to the combined activities performed by the department. In 1994, overhead items were accumulated in the basket of costs allocated to "City Management". This change caused the per unit cost of many activities to increase [Goldsmith 1995].

To evaluate the usefulness of the Popular Budget, two services are examined in this paper: snow and ice control, and street crack sealing. I picked these services for their simplicity.

Snow and Ice Control

The service of snow and ice control is contained in the Department of Public Works. Each department lists a budget summary by external outcome (Figure 1). In 1994, snow and ice control was listed under the external outcome of "Traffic Flow." In the 1995 budget, it is categorized under "Safe Roads and Sidewalks." A brief description of the function of snow and ice control, like other functions, is provided for the taxpayers' information (Figure 2).

Figure 2

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL	\$2,934,715
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A quick response time is key in fighting snow storms. DPW will utilize its state-of-the-art weather and pavement monitoring system to effectively and

Figure 1

Budget Summary by External Outcome

EXTERNAL OUTCOME	1995 BUDGET
Timely and Safe Solid Waste Collection and Disposal	\$35,715,325
Effective Storm & Sanitary Sewers	14,955,405
Efficient Traffic Flow	3,621,087
Safe Roads and Sidewalks	13,903,949
Grass and Weed Control	1,971,946
Safe Air, Water and Land	3,694,076
Safe & Efficient Wastewater Treatment	22,298,895
Total Budget	\$96,160,683

Budget Summary by External Outcome

EXTERNAL OUTCOME	1994 BUDGET
Safe Solid Waste Disposal	\$12,440,024
Improved Flood Control	2,202,004
Safe & Efficient Wastewater Conveyance	9,871,960
Safe Air	2,121,121
Clean Effluent Water	19,856,167
Timely Solid Waste Collection	31,480,637
Safe Waste Processing & Disposal	17,202,585
City Management	4,448,555
Traffic Flow	10,158,229
Safe Roads & Sidewalks	3,749,692
Total Budget	\$113,530,974

efficiently deliver the appropriate snow and ice control service. Care will be taken to assure that the activities required before, during, and after a snow emergency, including cleaning and lubrication of equipment, are properly addressed. DPM has also commenced a 3 year snow fleet upgrade program to reduce the average age of the snow fleet from 6.5 to 4.5 years, which will significantly reduce down time (from 30% in 1994) and improve snow removal

The user can then flip a few pages to the analysis of inputs and outputs. Figure 3 displays this analysis section from the years 1994 and 1995.

First, look to the 1994 analysis of snow and ice control. The Budget lists the input measure (dollar amount budgeted) of \$2,807,508. Then it lists the output measures that the function would like to accomplish. One output goal is 20,500 manhours of salting and plowing. The other output goal is to be on the street within 1/2 hours of the initial call with an 80% response rate. This is objective and measurable.

Now, focus on the 1995 analysis of snow and ice control. It begins by showing the full-time equivalent (FTE) of annual workers for this function is 40.59. It then shows the 1994 target, the actual fiscal 1994 cost, the budget for 1995, and the percentage change between the 1994 and 1995 budgets. Upon comparison of the 1994 and 1995 analysis data, one can see discrepancies. Look back to the 1994 analysis; it lists the 1994 budget as \$2,807,508. However, the 1995 analysis asserts that the 1994 budget was actually \$2,124,210. Rob Wilkes, director of the Popular Budgets, explains that this difference is attributable to changes in budget estimates throughout the year.

Figure 3

ANALYSES OF SNOW AND ICE CONTROL

1994

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY	1994 PERFORMANCE TARGET	EXPLANATORY DATA
Snow & Ice Control		
Input Measure	\$2,807,508	
Output Measure		
Salting & Plowing		20,000 Manhours
Efficiency Measure		
Salting & Plowing - Be on street with in 1 1/2 hour of initial call with an 80% turnout		80% Safer Roads

1995

FTE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	1994 TARGET	JUN 30-94	1995 TARGET	% OF CHANGE
40.59	Snow & Ice Control	\$2,124,210	\$3,124,909	\$2,934,715	38.16%
	Service level (lane miles)	20,500	16,400	108,000	n/a

Below the budgeted dollars is the target service level for 1994, the actual service level for 1994, and the target service level for 1995. The 1995 analysis states that the service levels are measured in lane miles (20,500), but the 1994 analysis states that the services levels are measured in manhours (20,500). Since the measurement base changed between 1994 and 1995, an "n/a" appears in the percentage change column to reflect that these are not comparable figures. The manager changed the character of the measurement to lane miles to better reflect the service level of the snow and ice control function, but appropriate changes in the numerical data were not made. These changes will be quite common over the "childhood" of this budget. Mayor Stephen Goldsmith recognizes this in the 1995 Popular Budget:

We learned a lot from last year's Popular Budget. One of the real difficulties in creating a performance-based budget was that city government was not accustomed to being asked to define what its outcomes and performance measures were. For example, one street crew worker might think that his performance measures was the number of potholes filled; others might think it was the smoothness of the roadway; still a third might identify citizen satisfaction with the streets as identified by surveys. As a result, many of our performance measures from last year weren't quite right. Working through to the proper performance measures has been a fascinating, useful, and still-evolving conversation between the public, our workers, and city hall. We look forward to the process of figuring out what the "right" government services are. [Goldsmith 1995]

Crack Sealing

This function is also included in the Department of Public Works. Crack sealing provides the external outcome of "safe roads and sidewalks." A description of this function is listed (Figure 4).

Figure 4

CRACK SEALING

\$1,078,884

Sealing joints and cracks in paved streets reduces the amount of moisture that can enter and undermine the integrity of the pavement. DPW will perform 1,100 lane miles of crack sealing to extend street pavement life.

The analyses for the crack sealing function are similar to those for snow and ice control (Figure 5). The only difference is that a percentage change is listed for targeted service levels of crack sealing. This is because the methods of measurement remained consistent between the '94 and '95 budget.

Attributes of SEA Reporting

Indianapolis' Popular Budget is compatible with the main objectives stated of SEA reporting specified in the GASB Concepts Statement 2:

- providing more complete information about a governmental entity's performance
- assisting users in assessing the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of services provided

The Indianapolis Popular Budget provides more complete information

Figure 5

ANALYSES OF STREET CRACK SEALING

1994

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ACTIVITY	1994 PERFORMANCE TARGET	EXPLANATORY DATA
Crack Sealing		
Input Measure	\$837,676	
Output Measure		
Crack Sealing - Increase annual production from 263 to 550 lane miles	550	Fewer Chuckholes
Double Boiler Crack Sealing - Increase annual production from 54 to 325 lane miles	325	Increase Rideability

1995

FTE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	1994 TARGET	JUN 30-94	1995 TARGET	% OF CHANGE
14.92	Crack Sealing	\$837,375	\$97,987	\$1,078,884	28.84%
	Service level (lane miles)	875	106	1,100	25.71%

about the services provided by tax dollars than past reporting. The Indianapolis taxpayer now has access to data pertaining to seven departments and hundreds of services that he pays for. The users can evaluate this information to assess the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of services provided. At the present date, the users receiving the greatest benefit from this form of reporting are the department managers and the elected officials who have the ability to observe performances first-hand and the power to change policies (e.g. the privatization of several jobs) for the betterment of the government. The availability of this information is providing a means for these government employees to assess the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the services provided. The taxpayers will have very limited ability to assess the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the services provided until the performance measures are standardized. Standardization will provide the taxpayer with a base with which to compare performance of years past and present and a means to evaluate his government function by function.

Observations

The Indianapolis Popular Budget fits GASB's description of SEA reporting. With a massive project like the Popular Budget, perfection is nearly impossible to achieve in the first years. Those responsible for the Popular Budget are correcting mistakes and finding better ways of reporting daily. Indianapolis, the twelfth largest city in the nation, has a long way to go, but they are a leader in developing SEA reporting in the United States.

They have been referred to as "honor student" among major cities for their work with popular budgeting. The mayors of New York and Los Angeles represent just two of nearly one hundred governments that have sought Mayor Goldsmith's advice on this "revolutionary" form of government. The work and efforts being put forth by the employees of the Indianapolis government are forging the way for other governments who are taking note of Indianapolis' progress. This performance can only help facilitate GASB's efforts to adopt specific reporting standards.

Conclusion

It is evident that GASB needs to issue standards on SEA reporting to force the governments that are leery of entering this game to do what is best for government and for the public. Governments should follow the lead of pioneer cities like Indianapolis and Portland. SEA reporting creates an atmosphere that motivates managers of service departments to work more efficiently and effectively. It gives the taxpayers an opportunity to have a more hands-on approach to managing their tax dollars by seeing what their elected officials are doing. SEA reporting will aid government auditors in their jobs because the auditors will be more familiar with the operations of the different government departments. The economy as a whole will benefit from this reporting because tax revenue may go towards public improvement rather than bureaucratic waste. Indianapolis has taken advantage of such benefits. Service efforts and accomplishments reporting is coming soon to all governments. The public needs to prepare to be

more involved in government, and the elected officials need to perform or retire.

CUSTOMER SURVEY

An informed public is the foundation for good local government. Unfortunately, in many situations, citizens feel alienated from their government and lose interest or feel their concerns are lost in the bureaucracy. The public's perception of alienation is the reason the Popular Budget was created. The Popular Budget allows citizens to see where the City is spending tax dollars, where more needs to be spent, and where too much is currently being spent. The Popular Budget is also a tool that citizens can use to voice concerns and suggestions. Recently, a public opinion survey conducted by the Public Opinion Laboratory of Indiana University Purdue University at Indianapolis sought out those very concerns and suggestions from the people of Marion County (excluding Beech Grove, Speedway, and Lawrence).

The purpose of the City preparing an annual budget is to plan where and how revenues need to be spent. Areas determined as priorities may receive more funding, while outdated projects may be terminated. The survey uncovered three areas that the people of Indianapolis felt were in need of major improvements. The first two, streets & roadways and public safety were expected concerns. The third, safety in the parks, was not as obvious to city officials. More dollars and resources have been, and will continue to be, allocated to these three areas.

The first concern, Indianapolis' infrastructure, has largely been ignored for decades. The City's streets, sidewalks, meridians, and parks have suffered. To combat this problem the largest infrastructure project in the history of Indianapolis, Building Better Neighborhoods, was introduced in 1992. The plan outlined a three year, \$530 million, initiative that would become a vital component of the administration's plan to rebuild the neighborhood infrastructure of Indianapolis. In the first year of implementation, Building Better Neighborhoods was responsible for 404 community improvements and an investment of \$149 million. 1994 will even be a bigger year for infrastructure improvements. By the last year of BBN, 1995, the city will

once again have a strong infrastructure that will meet the city's needs into the 21st century.

Major improvements are being made to address the public's second concern as well. In an effort to improve public safety, more police officers were added to the police force in 1993 than any other time in recent history. Indianapolis enlisted the help of Dr. Lawrence Sherman, a criminologist, to provide guidance in the city's effort to reduce gun violence. However, police officers realize the war on crime is only possible with the support of the community. An innovative police take-home car program has increased police patrol time and visibility in the neighborhoods. The creation of a Public Safety Corps and a bold policy of civilianizing positions has freed up police officers, and has helped to create a stronger link between officers and citizens. Public safety is improving, but the focus is on the future. Continued efforts will reduce crime and increase safety for the citizens of Indianapolis.

The final greater concern has to do with safety in Indianapolis' parks. In the survey, citizens have said they would like to use the City's parks, but often don't feel secure taking their children on a picnic or going for a walk later in the evening. To confront this worsening problem, the City recently introduced a ranger program which will enhance safety and address security issues in City parks. The Indy Parks Ranger Program will geographically disperse 11 rangers to police 125 neighborhood and regional parks. This effort also complements the community policing initiative as rangers will work with the community to define problem areas in addition to patrolling neighborhood parks and responding to park patron concerns. Public feedback led directly to the development of the park ranger program.

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