Citizen Participation: Innovative and Alternative Modes for Engaging Citizens

Cases from the United States and South Korea

Editors

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# Table of Contents

**Introduction**
*Daniel Bromberg and Marc Holzer* .............................................. 1

**Chapter One**
From Passive Participation to Participatory Deliberation:
The Case of an Evolving Performance Management System in Chattanooga, TN
*Weerasak Krueathee* .......................................................... 7

**Chapter Two**
Citizen-Driven Government Performance:
The Straphangers Campaign New York City
*Aroon Manoharan* ............................................................... 37

**Chapter Three**
Sustainable Seattle: The Sustainable Indicators and the Sustainable Urban Neighborhood Initiative
*Daniel Bromberg and Étienne Charbonneau* .......................... 55

**Chapter Four**
Clean Air Council: An Effort to Evaluate The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
*Jonathan Woolley* ............................................................... 77

**Chapter Five**
The Huge Success of the Cheonggyecheon Restoration Project: What’s Left?
*T.J. Lah* ................................................................. 97
Chapter Six
Monitoring and Inspecting Public Projects through Ubiquitous Citizen Participation
Hunmin Kim ................................................................. 119

Chapter Seven
Citizen Participation on the Web: The Case of ‘epeople’ in Korea
Cheol H. Oh ................................................................. 137

Chapter Eight
Citizen Participation in the Budget Process: Participatory Budgeting in Gwangju Bukgu District of Korea
Byong Seob Kim and Seung Hoo Lim ..................................... 155

Chapter Nine
Citizen Evaluation System of Public Services: The Case of Seoul Metropolitan Government
Seok-Hwan Lee and Kyungho Cho ........................................ 177

Chapter Ten
Citizen Participatory Budgeting (CPB) Implementation in Korea
Yunwon Hwang ............................................................... 189
While this book does not express an ideological stance on citizen participation, clearly the development of this text demonstrates the importance that the editors and authors think about this subject. This text presents a compilation of case studies that make the argument for citizen participation through examples. Developed over the past four years, this text presents case studies from both the United States and South Korea. It presents accounts of citizen participation that may serve as models for those looking to implement similar projects, or it may simply stir the imagination and help many recognize what is possible.

Citizen participation is not a novel idea. However, as government
services continue to devolve, and an array of different entities are providing public services, citizen participation offers answers to issues of democratic accountability. As Donald Kettl (2002) observed, “Top managers, for example, cannot order contractors to perform certain activities,” (p. 491). Managers must use techniques typically associated with a market framework to ensure compliance, such as negotiation and persuasion and threats upon future contract agreements (Kettl, 2002). When public managers simply assume markets will solve all problems, then issues pertinent to democratic foundations such as accountability and transparency will suffer. Incorporating citizens into the equation changes the dynamic of the accountability challenge.

Some feel that it is in the hands of the public administrator to take advantage of the changing structures of governance to increase collaborative arrangements and citizen participation. Bingham et al. (2005) hold that “…public administrators have a unique opportunity to become the direct conduit for the public’s voice in policy making, implementation, and enforcement…” (p.550). Smith and Ingram (2002) write, “American democracy is an unfinished and open-ended project.” They continue, “Especially during times in which patterns of governance are undergoing fundamental change, it is important to examine carefully whether expansion or contraction of democracy is taking place,” (p.567). If anything has been constant over the past few years in the political discourse, it has been the concept of change. Citizen participation offers one such change. This book provides examples of that change in action.

In Chapter One, Weerasak Krueathep provides a case on the city government of Chatanooga and their efforts to realign the perspectives of citizens to government. He explores the transformation from “citizen as a customer to the view of a citizen as a partner.”

Chapter Two presents research on The Straphangers Campaign in New York City. The campaign was founded in 1979 by the New York Public Interest Research Group as an advocate for riders of the New York City Transit system, and has grown substantially over the years
presenting detailed reports and advocating on behalf of citizen-riders of the transit system. By conducting periodic rider surveys and transit evaluations, The Straphangers Campaign has become an essential source of riders’ information. Aroon Manoharan provides an in depth look at the campaign, providing readers with an example of a successful operation.

In Chapter Three, Daniel Bromberg and Etienne Charbonneau explore initiatives from Sustainable Seattle. The effort put forth by Sustainable Seattle was considered one of the most advanced models of citizen participation and demonstrates a collaborative effort in performance measurement, data collection, and sustainability.

In Chapter Four, Jonathon Wooley looks at public transportation from an environmental perspective. Examining the Clean Air Council in Philadelphia, he explores how an environmental advocacy organization can incorporate citizen perspectives and participation into its operations. Wooley’s case presents some of the obstacles that may occur when an organization’s mission may not be exclusively to incorporate citizens.

The book then shifts focus to a South Korean perspective on citizen participation. In Chapter Five, T.J. Lah explores the Cheonggyecheon Restoration Project. This was a revitalization effort taken on by the government of Seoul, Korea which met a great deal of resistance. As Lah describes it, it was the government’s effort to incorporate citizens into the planning process which enabled them to find success during this effort.

In Chapter Six, Hunmin Kim introduces the reader to a concept of citizen monitoring in construction projects. By enabling a live video feed, citizens are provided access to government projects developing a different form of accountability. Hunmin’s example begins to explore the possibilities in which technology may reinvent modes for citizen participation.

Chapter Seven presents an initiative in which technology is once again utilized to enable citizens to participate in government. In Citizen Participation on the Web: The Case of ‘epeople’ in Korea, Cheol H. Oh presents a case in which citizens may access government through the in-
ternet. Citizens may file civil complaints or policy proposals, both of which engage city officials in this participatory process. Citizens often find their suggestions implemented by the city government.

Chapter Eight provides a specific case study on the government of the Gwangju Bukgu District of Korea. Modeled after the Porte Alegre efforts, Byong Seob Kim and Seung Hoo Lim explore how participatory budgeting takes place in Korea.

In Chapter Nine, Seok-Hwan Lee and Kyungho Cho explore citizen evaluation of government services. As citizen participation increases one of the major assets may be that governments can assess themselves by speaking directly with those to whom services are provided – the citizen. This chapter explores a long standing positive effort in making this happen.

In Chapter Ten, Yunwon Hwang provides an overview of the Citizen Participatory Budgeting (CPB) process in Korea, a process that is one part of citizen involvement, an essential tool for government policy making.

The cases presented in this book offer a wide variety of efforts towards gaining citizen participation. While some are more successful than others, each has something essential to offer. Practitioners, scholars, students, and teachers can all learn from this book – whether it is by example or simply introducing concepts that were previously unfamiliar.

References


**About the Editors**

Marc Holzer (MPA, PhD University of Michigan) is Dean of the School of Public Affairs and Administration, and Board of Governors Professor of Public Affairs and Administration, at Rutgers University's Newark Campus. He is a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration and a Past President of the American Society of Public Administration. Since 1975, he has directed the National Center for Public Performance. He is the founder and editor-in-chief of the journals *Public Performance and Management Review* and *Public Voices*, is the co-founder/co-editor of the *Chinese Public Administration Review*, and is editor-in-chief of the *International Review of Public Administration*. He has also recently founded the Public Performance Measurement and Reporting Network. His research, service, and teaching has been honored by awards from the American Society of Public Administration, the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, and the Chinese Public Administration Society. He has published well over one hundred books, monographs, chapters, and articles.

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From Passive Participation to Participatory Deliberation: The Case of an Evolving Performance Management System in Chattanooga, TN

Weerasak Krueathee
Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

Introduction

This chapter provides a concrete example of a city government that has revamped its fundamental conception of a citizen from a customer (the passive receiver of public services) to a partner of government. It focuses on the efforts of the city of Chattanooga, Tennessee, and its efforts at major performance measurement and citizen participation. Chattanooga has implemented three major management systems that elevate the city’s performance and citizen participation: (1) 3-1-1, a one-call means to access non-emergency city services; (2) ChattanoogaRESULTS, a CitiStat-like program that enables the mayor, city leaders, and
department heads to regularly review organizational performance based on recorded data; and (3) ChattanoogaCITIZEN, a series of focus groups and town hall meetings meant to develop performance measurements for the city government that was funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation in March 2005.

**Chattanooga, Tennessee:**

**Background and the Origin of Performance Initiatives**

Chattanooga is the fourth largest city in Tennessee and is located in the southeast of the state. It has a population of 155,554 (as of 2000 census). The latest census indicates that 59.7 percent of the population is white, and 47.2 percent and 52.8 percent are male and female, respectively. A majority of the population (55.1 percent) is part of the working-age population (between ages 20 and 59). The city has 65,499 total households, with an average size of 2.29 persons (http://www.researchcouncil.net/City2000.htm).

The city is noted for improving government performance through the effective use of information technology, public-private partnerships, and significant civic involvement. It is governed by a popularly elected mayor and a nine-member city council, with one elected member from each of the city’s districts. City government has 2,360 full-time employees and 127 part-time employees and is responsible for the delivery of most essential services, except jails and schools, which are the county’s responsibilities. Its general fund budget was approximately $152.5 million in fiscal year 2005.

Chattanooga’s performance management improvements were mainly initiated by Mayor Bob Corker, who was elected in March 2001 and brought considerable business experience to office. He sought to measure and manage city government performance and to promote citizen involvement in the city’s affairs. In his 2002 State of the City address, he said:

“[I]n response to that need, we developed the Strategic
Neighborhood Initiative which focuses on 15 key neighborhoods. Areas of our city where high crime rates, decreasing real estate values, absentee landlords and code violations plague the neighborhoods. . . .

In addition, we said we would meet formally with the leadership of our newly formed Chattanooga Neighborhood Association Council, CNAC, and address their needs. This is a great way for that organization to help us in understanding those bigger issues that need to be addressed throughout our community…

Neighborhoods are on the rise. They trust that our city is going to partner with them. And we are…”

(Source: http://www.chattanooga.gov/Mayors_Office/9_1872.htm)

Prior to Corker’s election, some Chattanooga residents felt that the city government was difficult to reach and difficult to access, even though it is a mid-sized city and a mid-sized city government. David Eichenthal, the then-director of the Office of Performance Review of Chattanooga, summed up the sentiment:

“[C]itizens did not know the one place to go for resolving problems. Residents were faced with literally dozens of different phone numbers for dozens of different city services. They might randomly point your finger on the page and hope that the phone number you call will eventually get you to somebody who can help. So, there was that problem of citizen access to government” (Eichenthal 2004a).

In addition, there was general frustration about the lack of reliable information about department performance. Coming from the private sector, Corker was accustomed to regularly looking at the bottom line of a profit
and loss statement and knowing how well his business was performing. However, when he became mayor, Corker found that there was little good information about how many city departments were delivering the services that were essential to their missions. In other words, there was little information that could be used to evaluate department performance.

This lack of information piqued Corker’s interest in systems such as 3-1-1 and a CitiStat-like system of performance measurement (Eichenthal 2004a). Looking at the city of Baltimore as a model, Chattanooga officials realized that a 3-1-1 system not only provided a single phone number for citizens to access city services, but it also served as a point of entry to city government and as a tracking system for city departments’ performance. The system collected data about the kinds of services that citizens were requesting and about how well each department responded to service requests.

In May 2002, Corker decided to let the public into the city government on the grounds that it was a priority for him and announced the creation of 3-1-1 in his first State of the City address:

“Chattanooga 3-1-1 democratizes the City by giving every member of our community an equal voice and ability to access City Hall. I believe that this new service will revolutionize the way city government interacts with its citizens, making it far more responsive to their needs.”

“We have tried to take into consideration all the right things that ensure this service functions properly and is of value to our citizens…”


Corker also created an Office of Performance Review (OPR) and brought in Eichenthal, a former New York City official, to be the office’s director and the city’s finance director, and Mark Keil to be the city’s
chief information officer. OPR’s major responsibilities were to create a performance audit function within the city government, to promote public accountability and citizen access to the government, and to oversee the implementation of 3-1-1.

**Early Performance Activities:**

**3-1-1 and Chattanooga RESULTS**

*Development of 3-1-1*

After it created OPR with a mandate to use performance data to improve local government performance, Chattanooga introduced the 3-1-1 system, a one-call means of accessing non-emergency city services in February 2003. The 3-1-1 system generates service information collected from citizens’ calls and complaints and tracks the government’s response. Prior to 3-1-1, citizens bore the burden of determining which city department was responsible for responding to a particular complaint. The 3-1-1 system shifted that burden back to the city government. Citizens who need to request a service or to report a complaint dial 3-1-1 and speak with a city customer service representative who can address all issues pertaining to government services.

After his appointment in July 2002, Eichenenthal was given the mandate of creating the 3-1-1 system. Between September and December 2002, the city went through the intense process of configuring the system’s technology base and designing a questionnaire that captured the city’s departmental processes (Motorola). Customer service representatives were hired and trained by January 2003, and the system was launched at the end of February 2003. At the same time, the city completed an overhaul of its eight-year-old website, www.chattanooga.gov. The overhaul was designed specifically to make the website more user friendly, to enhance 3-1-1 reporting online, and to facilitate communication between residents and the city government.

During the first three months of 3-1-1 operation, from February through May 2003, 39,890 calls were placed to the service, and of those,
23,202 were specific requests for city services (City of Chattanooga’s press releases, July 15, 2003). By the end of 2004, 3-1-1 service representatives had handled 260,386 calls and entered 153,588 requests for service. The top-ten service requests for 2004 are shown in Table 1.

**Key Characteristics of 3-1-1**

At its launch, the 3-1-1 call center had 5 customer service representatives, but due to an increase in demand for services, the staff was upped to seven representatives and one coordinator. Customer service representatives are primarily responsible for providing information, keying in service requests, and referring callers to the appropriate city departments. When a service request is made for any of the 12 city departments, the 3-1-1 staff enters it into a designated database system. If service requests are made via the 3-1-1 website, they are electronically transferred to the appropriate city department for prompt response. Figure 1 shows the overall framework of the 3-1-1 system.

When citizens access 3-1-1 through the city’s website, they are asked for basic contact information and to identify the problem that needs to be solved. After completing their service request, citizens receive a follow-up email confirming that their problem has been entered into the system and providing a tracking number for future questions.

**ChattanoogaRESULTS**

In addition to the 3-1-1 system, the City of Chattanooga also launched a program known as ChattanoogaRESULTS, which regularly convened city leaders and department heads to review department performance based on 3-1-1 data. The ideas behind ChattanoogaRESULTS are similar to those of Baltimore’s CitiStat program and the New York Police Department’s CompStat. In using the 3-1-1 data for performance measurement, city administrators can monitor the amount and type of service requests and works completed, as well as the staff assigned to each request. The process works like this: The city con-
### Table 1 – Top-ten service requests via 3-1-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer Service Request Type</th>
<th>2004 Total</th>
<th>Monthly Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulky Trash Item Collection</td>
<td>17,607</td>
<td>1,467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbage Collection Missed</td>
<td>2,789</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbage Container Request</td>
<td>2,575</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overgrowth (Property Not Vacant)</td>
<td>1,996</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garbage Container Repair</td>
<td>1,963</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandoned/Inoperable Vehicle</td>
<td>1,942</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litter</td>
<td>1,899</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal Dumping</td>
<td>1,386</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drainage/Erosion Problem</td>
<td>1,325</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>1,249</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: City of Chattanooga, 2005 Report to the Citizens of Chattanooga, pp. 25.)

...ducts weekly two-hour meetings with select departments or agencies regarding their performance. Departments drive the meetings, presenting data and indicators, and the mayor, chief of staff, OPR director, or others follow up with questions. Typically, two departments or agencies present each week.

OPR staff develops agendas for the meetings. The goal of the performance reports is to provide and use timely data, and so they focus on month-to-month trends and, where possible, on outputs not inputs. The performance reports can be on specific departments (e.g. response to service requests or the monthly Crime Strategy Report) or they can be citywide reports (e.g. biweekly overtime reports, telecommunications, and 3-1-1 service request resolution reports).
Figure 1 – Overall Framework of 3-1-1 and Customer Service Request System (Source: Office of Performance Review (undated). Getting Results for Chattanooga, p. 10.)
The service information gathered through 3-1-1 has given the city an important tool for measuring performance and long-term strategies. City managers now have centralized data that help them to analyze trends in service demands and the timeliness and effectiveness of service delivery in general and to look at service requests via 3-1-1 in particular. Directors and supervisors also use 3-1-1 data during the budget-planning process to help determine what resources are needed for an upcoming fiscal year. In short, ChattanoogaRESULTS enhances the city government’s ability to be accountable to its citizens (Office of Performance Review, 2003).

In summer 2003, city staff and department heads worked together to develop about 100 standardized indicators for city departments and select funded agencies. They started by figuring out “what counts.” That is, “what are the priorities for the city government and what are we promising to our citizens?” Then, they selected a series of measurements that could be used to reasonably answer the question “how well are we doing?” for policy makers, the mayor, council members, and citizens. The kickoff meeting for performance monitoring was held on September 30, 2003, and ChattanoogaRESULTS was officially launched in October 2003.

**Impacts of 3-1-1 and ChattanoogaRESULTS**

**Access to City Government**

The 3-1-1 system and ChattanoogaRESULTS both give citizens direct access to government services, effectively replacing the often-confusing phonebook “blue” pages. Also, operating a single call center to address all citizens’ needs is far more efficient than operating multiple department-based communication centers. Indeed, a February 2005 3-1-1 customer survey found that 92.5 percent of respondents called 3-1-1 rather than a specific city department to get information or register a complaint, compared to 47 percent in June 2003 (3-1-1 Customer Survey Report, February 2005, p. 3). Eichenthal, the director of the OPR, put it this way: “Chattanooga 3-1-1 does more than just make the city more
accessible to its residents. For the first time, we are able to quantify the number of requests we receive for service, evaluate our response times, and streamline communication with constituents” (City of Chattanooga’s Press Releases, February 27, 2003).

Moreover, focus groups conducted in 2005 by Chattanooga’s Community Research Council, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, and Georgia State University found that, for the most part, residents felt well informed about their city government and the services it provides. Chattanooga residents get information about their city government and services from 3-1-1; most are familiar with and have used 3-1-1 and say that it is extremely helpful when it comes to finding information on basic city services, such as garbage pickup, or registering a complaint. Examples of opinions from the focus group follow:

“I have called 3-1-1 many times, and eventually they will get around to what you need” (African-American Male, Community Research Council. 2006, p. 36).

“You call for anything, a phone number you need, information about what’s happening in the city, information about garbage services and recycling…it has all the information you need about the city” (White Female, Community Research Council. 2006, p. 36).

After Mayor Ron Littlefield took office in 2005, staffing for 3-1-1 increased, and ChattanoogaRESULTS continued. In June 2005, the city government released an annual report on its performance and made public for the first time data collected as part of ChattanoogaRESULTS. The report detailed the performance of city departments during the 2004 calendar year.

The 2003 citizen satisfaction survey of 3-1-1 callers, which was conducted by the Center for Applied Social Research at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, also found that the one-call center increased citizens’ access to city government and service satisfaction. The survey
found, “80 percent of telephone respondents rated 3-1-1’s customer service representatives as good or excellent in courteously handling calls. Sixty-nine percent of survey participants rated the customer service representative handling of their problem as good or excellent. Finally, the survey evaluated average wait times and found that 69 percent of respondents waited only 1-2 minutes, 17 percent waited 3-4 minutes, and only 10 percent of callers surveyed waited more than 6 minutes to receive assistance” (City of Chattanooga press release, July 15, 2003).

The 3-1-1 system has also proven to be an important part of the city’s emergency response operations. Citizens relayed important information to city departments and the media through call center staff during the floods of February and May 2004, Hurricane Ivan in September 2004, and the first ice storm of 2005 (Office of Performance Review, undated).

**Monitoring the Performance of City Government**

The 3-1-1 system and ChattanoogaRESULTS force the mayor and city administrators to regularly focus on what the city government has or has not achieved. As the present mayor, Ron Littlefield (then a city councilman) said in 2003:

“I call Chattanooga 3-1-1 on a regular basis to begin service requests on behalf of citizens in my district. I have the ability to track the progress that is being made on each request and report back to my constituent that their problem has been resolved. The welcome addition of the online component makes the service even more powerful for the residents of our community” (City of Chattanooga press releases, July 15, 2003).

Likewise, a 2005 *Time* article acknowledged the role 3-1-1 systems were playing in improving the performance of city governments:

“[A] few cities like Chicago, Dallas, and Chattanooga,
Tenn., are not only answering 3-1-1 calls but also analyzing the larger patterns that emerge from them. In those places, 3-1-1 has become a direct line into the urban consciousness—a way of harnessing the collective needs of an entire population to make a city work better. That is urban reform at its most elegant…” (Time, February 7, 2005. p. 52.)

While the launch of 3-1-1 and ChattanoogaRESULTS benefitted city residents and city government, the city still wanted to improve citizen involvement in the governing process. The next section reviews how it developed robust citizen participation.

**Performance Activities Evolved:**

**Citizen Participation in ChattanoogaCITIZEN**

*Origin and Development*

While Chattanooga made significant progress toward integrating performance measurement systems into its operational management and attempted to expand and enhance citizen access to government, it had not meaningfully engaged citizens in the design process. For example, citizen input was lacking from the design and development of performance indicators for ChattanoogaRESULTS. In other words, the city didn’t know whether the performance measurements it was tracking were the measurements most relevant to citizens.

The city did engage citizens in the design and development of the 3-1-1 system through focus group meetings, yet the system had no mechanism for citizen feedback. Due to this lack of citizen input, ChattanoogaRESULTS was largely dependent on administrative data compiled by government employees. The demand for emergency and non-emergency services were captured in citizen calls made to 9-1-1 and 3-1-1, yet data on actual staff response, e.g. timeliness and quality, were largely missing. City staff subjectively measured these variables and fre-
quently focused on inputs and outputs, rather than the broader outcomes that might have been more important to citizens.

To learn about citizens’ perspectives on city government performance, the OPR and Eichenthal asked local experts how the city could incorporate citizen input in performance evaluation. In March 2005, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation awarded a $100,000 grant to the Chattanooga Community Research Council (CRC), as part of its program on Performance Assessment of Municipal Governments. The council then designed ChattanoogaCITIZEN, in order to create the foundation for regular, meaningful, and direct citizen involvement in the city government. Through ChattanoogaCITIZEN, the city and researchers sought to gather new information on citizen concerns and to establish the areas of interest for overall performance reporting and for the performance reports of city departments and city-sponsored initiatives.

The program held a series of focus groups and town hall meetings in each of the city’s nine council districts. Graduate students at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga recorded and transcribed the data in order to maintain data neutrality, and were guided by a sixteen-member Citizen Advisory Group (CAG). The CAG consisted of individuals recommended by civic and community leaders, as well as individuals who became aware of the project through media reports. (Starting at its launch, ChattanoogaCITIZEN was the subject of regular and repeated media coverage in the Chattanooga Times Free Press and on television.) The CAG met twice during the program’s development, once in April 2005 to review and contribute to the focus group and town-hall meeting processes and once in September 2005 to review findings and recommendations for which areas should be the focus of performance measurement.

**How the Focus Groups Determined the Performance Measures**

ChattanoogaCITIZEN convened a series of focus groups to help identify citizens’ areas of interest and to increase the level of citizen in-
volvement in performance measurement. The groups consisted of average citizens, rather than civic or community leaders, and offered perspectives that frequently went unheard in conversations about the city government. Global Strategy Group, a private consulting firm, conducted the five focus groups, which took place on May 4th and 5th of 2005 and were broken out as follows:

- May 4th: White Women (ages 24 to 59)
- May 4th: White Men (ages 24 to 59)
- May 5th: Seniors (ages 60+)
- May 5th: African-American Women (ages 24 to 59)
- May 5th: African-American Men (ages 24 to 59)

Participants varied along a range of demographic categories, including level of educational attainment, income, parental status, and occupation. Each focus group had ten participants on average, and members of the City Council were informed of the meetings. The focus groups specifically set out to (1) express overall perceptions of the quality of life in Chattanooga and probe quality of life concerns facing residents; (2) assess public perceptions of the city government and its services, and identify service areas in need of quality improvement. The focus groups were also used to test the effectiveness of the new city website.

In addition, upon the CAG’s recommendation, the consulting firm ran two additional focus groups for the Latino community. According to the CRC’s Report on ChattanoogaCITIZEN (2006, pp. 11), the areas of greatest interests among focus group participants, excluding schools since they are not a city service, were the (1) availability of affordable housing; (2) employment; (3) crime/police misconduct; (4) neighborhood conditions—parks, recreation, arts and culture; and (5) traffic and parking. These service areas later became the focus of a system to measure the performance of city government, a point to which I will turn, momentarily.
*Town Hall Meetings and Chattanooga CITIZEN Listening Tour*

After the focus groups, CRC and its research partners began to plan a series of nine town hall meetings, one in each City Council district, plus one for the Latino community, to help ensure geographic representation. Under the plan, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga professors Stephanie Bellar and David Edwards, along with their graduate students, conducted the meetings. They first met with individual council members to understand the best ways to publicize the meetings, and the meetings were scheduled for August 2005.

Few citizens participated in the town hall meetings. Approximately one hundred people attended all ten meetings; attendance varied considerably across districts, with a low of one attendee to a high of twelve attendees. The Latino community meeting was the largest, with more than 30 people participating. The average number of participants in the remaining district meetings was six. Meetings were held on Monday and Thursday evenings and on Saturday mornings and lasted approximately two hours.

Publicity for the meetings was widespread. The local newspaper covered the events, public service announcements were made, and television newscasts broadcast meeting dates. Citizens were told to attend any of the meetings if they missed the meeting in their geographic area. Meetings were held in community centers or other public venues, such as the community room of a local hospital.

Attendees were introduced to the project staff, observers from the city’s Neighborhood Services office, and CAG observers. When City Council members were in attendance, their presence was acknowledged. At the beginning of each meeting, participants were told that the city officials, including council members and Neighborhood Services representatives were there to listen to citizens rather than to lecture to them. When citizens had questions, Neighborhood Services representatives and council members were able to address some of them. Throughout the meetings, participants selected the performance
measures they thought should be developed, rather than having city staff explain what could not be done or why service processes were delayed.

The tone of the meetings was conversational. Unlike the citizens chosen for the focus groups, participants in the town hall meetings were mostly the same residents who were regularly involved in their community or neighborhood associations. The small audiences allowed for a rich discussion of the issues and concerns that drive residents’ interests in city government. What had been planned as town hall meetings in reality became part of a listening tour, or a series of small, structured focus groups of community leaders.

The first part of the meetings permitted the facilitator to discuss the importance of accountability and the different ways for citizens to assess government performance. Then, members of the group were asked to turn their attention to the public and jot down the services they wanted to see. Once participants had started thinking about government services, the research team asked them to suggest ways to measure the delivery of those goods and services.

During the entire process, the CRC and its research partners were in regular communication with city officials. They met with each member of the Chattanooga City Council prior to commencing and conducting district-based town hall meetings. In some instances, council members attended the meetings and publicized them in their districts. After all of the meetings were held, the experts developed a series of performance measures based on the priorities discussed by participating residents. Eventually, the city published the State of Chattanooga Region Report, a report of surveyed and administrative data that tracked more than one hundred different performance indicators, broken down demographically and geographically across the city. It also includes a 20-minute Survey Report of 1,000 residents asking, among other things, what factors determined their quality of life. The first issue of the report was released in fall 2006.
The Development and Implementation of Citizen-Driven Performance Measurement

Officials and researchers analyzed all of the data that was gathered during the focus groups and town hall meetings. From the transcripts and rubrics, it was evident that themes raised in the focus groups were reflected in the town hall meetings, as well. Blight, housing, economic development, public safety, and government responsiveness were among the main priorities of the citizens of Chattanooga. Town hall meeting participants suggested performance measures for these areas. For example, blight was an issue for the participants of seven out of the ten meetings. Three groups of participants thought that the city was not responsive to their calls about trash dumps, abandoned cars, and litter in their neighborhoods. In two neighborhoods, participants were also concerned about the responsiveness of police; while in two neighborhoods located farther from the city center, participants were much more concerned about economic development and traffic congestion.

Based on the results of both the focus groups and the Chattanooga-CITIZEN listening tours, the researchers who ran the events identified four conclusions that would influence the development of performance measures:

(a) citizen interest in reporting on measurement was high;

(b) administrative data was not being collected by the city, or others, through ChattanoogaRESULTS;

(c) performance measurements would aid both the city government and citizen-based organizations;

(d) citizens could participate in the data collection process.

Additionally, the focus groups and listening tours identified two major areas where additional city reporting would be beneficial: (1) regular neighborhood reporting on crime and misconduct and (2) regular
online reporting on status of road work projects (Community Research Council’s report on ChattanoogaCITIZEN, 2006, p. 21). All of these inputs were eventually used to construct the city government’s performance indicators. Examples of the type of data that were compiled in the 2005 Report to the Citizens of Chattanooga include:

**Human Service**
- 5,115 household assisted
- 868 children received up-to-date immunizations
- 193 housing units weatherized
- 2,952 households received emergency and regular heating assistance
- 635 households received summer cooling assistance
- 925 housing units received homeless prevention assistance

**Police**
- 26 percent reduction in index crime and a 51 percent reduction in violent crime
- 544 weapons seized, up 26 percent from 2003
- 107 citizen complaints against police officers, up 30 percent from 2003

**Fire**
- Average response time of 5:32 minutes
- 53 fire injuries and no fire fatalities in 2004
- Conducted a full-scale homeland security exercise at Finley Stadium; received a very positive evaluation from Department of Justice

**Public Works**
- Maintained approximately 1,200 miles of sewer, which ranged in age from new to 110 years old
- 87 percent of citywide customer service requests (CSR) closed on time
Table 2 – Indicators Relevant to Measuring Quality-of-Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Percent of respondents who selected “Very Important”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety from crime</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality health care and hospitals</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean streets and neighborhoods</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean air</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of jobs that pay a living wage</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality schools</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordability of housing</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place where people of all backgrounds are welcome</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A strong religious community</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A strong sense of community</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and other outdoor recreational opportunities</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Community Research Council, State of Chattanooga Region Report, April 2006, pp. 1-2.)

- 96 percent of codes and inspection CSR closed on time
- 13,287 building permits issued

Quality of Life Report in State of Chattanooga Region Report (SOCRR)

In an April 2006 phone survey of 1,000 citizens that was part of ChattanoogaCITIZEN, about 86 percent of respondents indicated that “quality of life” was either one of the most important factors of their life in Chattanooga or was very important. Residents were asked to rate fif-
teen different factors as very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important to their conception of quality of life. More than half of the respondents indicated that the eleven factors were “very important” (see Table 2).

This citizen survey is crucial for assessing the quality of city services in comparison with those of other adjacent cities. In April 2006, for example, the survey compared: quality of public schools; public safety; infrastructure, such as roads and airports; quality colleges and universities; and tax burden.

**Impact of ChattanoogaCITIZEN on the Performance of City Government**

ChattanoogaCITIZEN’s focus groups and town hall meetings provided to the city’s government useful information that had not been gathered via ChattanoogaRESULTS. For example, a research team of four graduate students from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, employed a windshield survey technique to review and analyze a list of 3-1-1 complaints that had been closed during September 2005. These checks were aimed at verifying if the identified problem was actually resolved. In total, the researchers examined 207 cases: 105 (about 50 percent) of the complaints were about overgrowth; 37 (or 17.9 percent) were about housing; 32 (or 15.5 percent) were about litter; 27 (or 13 percent) were about abandoned/inoperable vehicles, and 6 (or 2.89 percent) were about illegal dumping.

Using data provided by the city, the students revisited the “closed” complaints during the last two weeks of November and the first week of December 2005. The assessment showed that 53 (or 25.6 percent) of the complaints had not been corrected. For example, in just under one out of every four overgrowth cases, or 24 out of 105, the conditions appeared either to still be present or to have reappeared between September and November. In short, ChattanoogaCITIZEN helped to reveal effectively potential discrepancies between administrative data and citizen percep-
tions as captured by ChattanoogaRESULTS (State of Chattanooga Region Report, pp. 31-32).

Additionally, the focus group meetings have guided the city government’s development of performance indicators that are relevant to citizens. As stated above, citizens identified five major areas where they wanted more information about city performance: the availability of quality, affordable housing; policing; road construction; access to employment; and city responsiveness to complaints about blight (2006 State of Chattanooga Region Report, p. 3). Furthermore, the focus groups also revealed citizens’ perceptions about their quality of life so that the city government could improve its performance in the areas most important to citizens. For example, one white male participant of a focus group said: “[Chattanooga] is a good place to raise a family. It is safe, not that expensive, you can get anywhere you want in the city without having to spend two hours in traffic. With everything going on downtown, you have all the museums, parks, the aquarium” (2006 State of Chattanooga Region Report, p. 11). Another male in the focus group added: “I feel real safe in Chattanooga. I come from Atlanta, and if I compare the two, this place is [so much safer]. I have never had anyone bother me. I have ridden the buses here. I walk all over my neighborhood and I have never had any incidents happen to me” (Ibid, p. 16). Likewise, one senior citizen was positive about the responsiveness of city’s police department: “I think the city government is pretty good. If I am home alone and I need something, I call the police, and they come right out” (Ibid, p. 16).

**Impact of ChattanoogaCITIZEN on Access to City Government**

In addition to developing a system of citizen-driven performance measurement, ChattanoogaCITIZEN also sought to assess how well the city provides citizen access to government departments, either to complain about city services or to get information. As previously noted, the city took two major steps to enhance citizen access, the creation of 3-1-
1 and the renovation of its website, www.chattanooga.gov. Both programs were assessed through ChattanoogaCITIZEN’s focus group meetings.

Participants in the focus groups indicated that, for the most part, they felt well informed about their city government and the services it provides. Chattanooga citizens get their information about city government and services from a variety of sources, including 3-1-1. Indeed, most residents are familiar with and have used the 3-1-1 system and say that the service is extremely helpful when it comes to finding information about basic city services, such as garbage pickup, as well as making a request or registering a complaint with the city. One white female focus group participant said: “They have the 3-1-1 program. If you see someone down the street has put something out there that has not been picked up, you can call 3-1-1” (2006 State of Chattanooga Region Report, p. 35). Similarly, one African-American male focus groups participant said: “I have called 3-1-1 many times, and eventually they will get around to what you need” (Ibid, p. 36).

By comparison, most focus group participants were unaware of the city government’s website. Only a handful had used the website to find information about city services, even though it was designed to “create a web-based forum for citizen engagement and to encourage more online access to city services and information.” A 2004 survey of 3-1-1 users found that only 4 percent of 3-1-1 users made requests through the website (2006 State of Chattanooga Region Report, p. 37). In addition, the 2005 ChattanoogaCITIZEN’s report revealed that 3-1-1 access via the website was low and declining (see Table 3).

Lesson Learned from the 3-1-1, ChattanoogaRESULTS, and ChattanoogaCITIZEN

The case examined above demonstrates that the promotion of civic participation in local government requires careful and persistent work
Table 3 – Visit to Chattanooga.gov and 3-1-1 at Chattanooga.gov

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Total page views</th>
<th>Total page views of 3-1-1</th>
<th>Rank of 3-1-1 page among all pages of Chattanooga.gov</th>
<th>Percent of total page views</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2005</td>
<td>54,190</td>
<td>2,216</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2005</td>
<td>56,643</td>
<td>2,499</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2005</td>
<td>54,066</td>
<td>2,133</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2005</td>
<td>50,442</td>
<td>1,576</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2005</td>
<td>47,550</td>
<td>1,180</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


from all invested parties. While the development of 3-1-1 and ChattanoogaRESULTS secured only modest public participation, ChattanoogaCITIZEN significantly shifted the city’s focus. By integrating the results of focus groups and town hall meetings into the development of performance measurements, Chattanooga achieved a citizen-centered performance measurement system. In sum, the case of Chattanooga affirms our first research hypothesis.

Another important insight about citizen-driven government performance that was gained from this case is that it is always evolving. It is not a static model and it doesn’t always provide expected results. As King, Feltey, and Susel (1998) concluded, authentic public participation that works for all parties and stimulates collaboration from administrators and citizens requires rethinking the underlying roles of, and relationships between, administrators and citizens.
Figure 2 – Conceptual Framework on the Evolving Performance Measurement System

**Pushing Factors**

- Political support
- Organization redefine
- IT and staff commitment
- Collaboration between citizen and public officials
- Shared authority and responsibilities
- Citizen delegation
- BI and staff commitment
- Organization redefine
- Political support

**Implications on Performance Measurement**

- Comprehensive issues focused narrowly on inputs and outputs, and on technical side of policy, customer surveys is produced and is meaningful only to public officials.
- Performance measures focused narrowly on inputs and outputs, and on technical side of policy, customer surveys is produced and is meaningful only to public officials.

**Performance Measures**

- Focus on outcome measures, as well as inputs and outputs.
- Focus on outcome measures, as well as inputs and outputs.

**Evolution of Performance Measurement**

- Customer as a partner model
- Customer as a model

**CITIZEN**

- Chattanooga
- Chattanooga
- Chattanooga

**Results**

- Chattanooga
- Chattanooga
- Chattanooga
Conclusion

This case study and discussion provide critical insight into performance measurement in city government and can serve as the basis of a conceptual framework (see Figure 2).

The shift in ideology from ChattanoogaRESULTS to ChattanoogaCITIZEN marks a move from the view of a citizen as a customer to the view of a citizen as a partner. This shift requires collaboration and deliberation, and for authority to be delegated to citizens. The implications of this movement on performance measurement systems are critical. Within ChattanoogaRESULTS, performance measurements are focused on narrow, internal input and output measures, or so-called technical aspects of public policy. Surveys of customer opinion are important only to public officials and not to citizens in general.

With ChattanoogaCITIZEN, citizens were given a louder voice, which translates to a more comprehensive set of performance measures. Under such a scheme, performance indicators include outcomes, as well as input and output measures. Performance reports are made public, as is the quality-of-life report, and this data is important to citizens. Chattanooga’s experience suggests that it is possible to develop systems that promote public accountability and citizen access to government. Implementing a successful performance measurement system is not easy, yet there should be ample opportunity to build such a system in the years to come.

References

Academic Literature


Chapter One


**Internet Resources**


**About the Author**

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Citizen-Driven Government Performance: The Straphangers Campaign, NYC

Aroon Manoharan
Kent State University – New Philadelphia, Ohio, USA

Introduction
In jurisdictions around the world, a citizen’s role has evolved from being a subject to being an “owner” of government (Vigoda, 2002). With this shift, citizens are considered to be partners or collaborators, and government administrators emphasize building and sustaining these collaborative channels. This is hard to achieve in practice. While administrators may be willing to take on this role, they may be restricted by bureaucratic obstacles, leaving the responsibility on the shoulders of advocacy groups. An example of such a group is the Straphangers Campaign, an advocacy organization for transit users in New York City. The
group’s goal is to represent the 7 million riders of the city’s subways and buses, and to actively improve the services offered by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) subway system (Straphangers, 2006). The following case study examines the capacity of an advocacy group such as the Straphangers Campaign to influence government performance and focuses on the campaign’s citizen participation activities.

**Background of the Straphangers Campaign**

The New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) created the Straphangers Campaign in 1979, during a time when the city’s subway system was notoriously unreliable and dirty. Trains and stations were often covered with graffiti; crime was on the rise. The system’s problems contributed to public frustration and declining use, bringing ridership down to the lowest levels in 80 years (Straphangers Campaign, 2006). In response to the deteriorating conditions, passenger groups and commuters protested and demanded better services. With the support of the Fund for the City of New York and the New York Foundation, NYPIRG’s Marilyn Ondrasik founded the Straphangers Campaign. Since the campaigns’ inception, it has produced periodic reports and subway report cards that assess aspects of New York City’s subways. In 1996, the Straphangers Campaign received a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to continue its campaign for better transit service and to launch “a new in-depth effort to measure the quality of transit service” (Straphangers Campaign, 2006a).

**Goals of the Straphangers Campaign**

Since its founding, the campaign has generated more than 50 reports on the state of the city’s subway and bus systems. The campaign also conducts opinion polls, action campaigns, and line reports, and supports a discussion forum on its website. Below is a list of the types of reports the campaign has generated, a subset of which will be studied in depth and used in later comparative studies:

- **A Survey of Subway Car Announcements.** This report focuses on
the announcements broadcast on each subway line. The basic in-car announcements are recorded and measured on their adherence to the MTA guidelines on line announcements, stop announcements, and transfer point and delay announcements.

**Phone Survey.** This report studies and categorizes the status of pay telephones in the 25 most-used New York City Transit subway stations as either functioning or non-functioning. The latter category includes phones that: have no dial tone, are unable to connect, have blocked coin slots, do not return coins, or have a bad or missing handset.

**Fun Pass Survey.** The MTA issues Fun Passes that provide unlimited access at a discount for frequent riders, tourists, and other riders. The campaign tracks the accessibility and availability of Fun Passes at subway stations.

**Shmutz Cleanliness Reports.** These reports are based on surveys conducted by campaign volunteers that track the cleanliness of subway cars, especially floors and seating. The cars are rated as “extraordinarily clean,” “clean,” “dirty,” or “heavily dirty.”

**State of the Subways Report Card.** The Report Card is perhaps the campaign’s most-awaited performance report. The Report Card ranks the subway lines based on six different metrics—scheduled frequency, service regularity, breakdown rate, crowding, cleanliness, and announcements. The performance data is obtained from the MTA New York City Transit. The lines are ranked individually for each of the six indicators, and an overall ranking assigns a dollar value to the service provided by each line.

In addition to the annual subway report, the campaign also surveys the status of New York City transit buses. On behalf of NYPIRG and Transportation Alternatives, the campaign identifies the slowest bus routes in the city and awards them the annual “Pokey” award, represented by a golden snail on a pedestal.

**Performance Measurement Efforts**

The passage of the federal Government Performance and Results Act
(GPRA) in 1992 expanded the public administration literature to include measuring the performance of public organizations. Academics and practitioners understand and interpret the practice of performance measurement differently (Radin, 2000). Predictably, this process has evolved over time and is on the verge of becoming a decisive tool for substantially enhancing the performance of government.

According to the National Performance Review, which was launched by President Bill Clinton in 1993, performance measurement is defined as “a process of assessing progress toward achieving predetermined goals, including information on the efficiency with which resources are transformed into goods and services (outputs), the quality of those outputs (how well they are delivered to clients and the extent to which clients are satisfied) and outcomes (the results of a program activity compared to its intended purpose), and the effectiveness of government operations in terms of their specific contributions to program objectives” (GAO, 1998).

According to the Campaign for Better Transit, performance measurement can also be defined as “the use of statistical evidence to determine progress toward specifically defined organizational objectives” (CBT, 2006). This process depends on rigorously defining a program or organization’s goals or objectives. An important step in performance-based management is the involvement of stakeholders and the provision of timely information, especially to citizens. Since GPRA became law, officials have developed many performance measures without sufficient emphasis on the resulting information being useful for citizens. They underestimated the usefulness of citizen participation, and as a consequence, some public managers have failed to adequately incorporate performance measures into their decision-making, and performance information has been oriented toward managers, not citizens. However, if citizens were given access to these reports, it might motivate public managers to better respond to performance measures.

**State of the Subway Report Card**

The most important reports published by the Straphangers Campaign
are the State of the Subways Report Cards, which measure the performance of the subway lines based on six different metrics developed with stakeholder input. The first Report Card was released in 1996 and Report Cards have been published every year since, except 2002 (Straphangers Campaign, 2006g). The performance indicators were originally adopted from opinion polls administered by the Straphangers Campaign, from which a total of eight indicators were selected. These indicators were then ranked simultaneously by two groups—one representing transit experts, activists, and commuter volunteers, and the other consisting of MTA officials. Both groups ranked these indicators based on their relevance and the availability of data. “Crime” and “enroute schedule adherence” were ultimately eliminated from the indicators list, owing to the unavailability of data. The remaining six indicators were:

**Scheduled Frequency.** This is a measure of the scheduled headways, the amount of time between consecutive trains during the weekday morning rush hour, the afternoon rush hour, and midday hours. Morning and afternoon rush-hour schedules were credited at 40 percent each, and midday hours were credited at 20 percent.

**Regularity of Service.** This indicator measures the difference between scheduled intervals and actual intervals, i.e., how well the trains adhere to the scheduled timings.

**Mean Distance Between Failures.** As the name suggest, this indicator measures the reliability of each train line by estimating the average subway car miles traveled between each mechanical failure on a particular line.

**Crowding.** The report card uses the crowding metric to measure the chance of getting a seat in a train. Using the data from New York City Transit’s 2004 report on the “instance of greatest crowding” for each subway line, the campaign identified the most crowded one-hour interval for each subway line. The chance of getting a seat during this period was calculated by dividing the number of seats by the number of passengers in a particular car.
**Cleanliness and Announcements.** The two indicators are largely based on the Passenger Environment Survey conducted by New York City Transit. The survey was conducted by independent surveyors who had no association with the transit authority. Cleanliness is measured by the number of spots visible in a subway car, while announcements were expected to: announce the next station, announce transfer options, announce route designation, and warn riders to “stand clear of the closing doors.”

**Subway Line MetroCard Rating**

Based on the scores recorded for each subway line, the campaign calculates “MetroCard ratings,” which provide citizens a dollar-based rating to be measured against the benchmark of $2.00, enabling easy understanding and readability among commuters. From a rider’s point of view, only the subway that he travels is relevant, so the results were broken down line-by-line to enable comparison (Straphangers Campaign, 2006g). For example, the best subway line in 2006 was the number 6 line, which had a MetroCard rating of $1.40. The line’s cars broke down less frequently than the average line, and it was also ranked highly for in-car announcements. The worst subway line was the W line, with a rating of $0.75. Although the W line was cleaner than average, the chances of getting a seat on the train were low; it had poor announcements, and a higher than average number of breakdowns. Other overall findings for 2006 included:

- the subways were more crowded than during the previous year and the chances of getting a seat on trains during rush hour decreased as ridership increased;
- breakdown rates did not improve compared to 2005;
- the results of announcements evaluations remained unchanged, while subway car cleanliness markedly decreased;
• measures of regularity slightly decreased compared to 2005.


*Subway Shmutz Cleanliness Report*

Apart from the MetroCard ratings, the Straphangers Campaign conducts two popular surveys—the Subway Shmutz “Cleanliness Survey” and the Subway Announcement Report. Each year, the campaign surveys individual subway lines and ranks them based on the cleanliness of subway cars (Straphangers Campaign, 2006e). The first cleanliness report was released in 1998, and annual reports have been released every year since, except for 2002. Each survey is conducted over a span of 3–4 months by a group of staff members, volunteers, and commuters. The 2006 Subway Shmutz report was a result of the efforts of more than 40 volunteers, who recorded the state of the subway cars in which they commuted between September 2, 2005 and January 5, 2005. One hundred cars were rated on each subway line. The Grand Central-Times Square, Rockaway, and Franklin Avenue shuttles were omitted from the survey due to the routes’ short lengths. The cars were surveyed at all times of the week—weekdays and weekends—during rush hour, evenings, and night hours. The cars were assessed on the general cleanliness of the floors and seats, and were rated according to the following metrics (Straphangers Campaign, 2006e):

- Extraordinarily clean (score 1) - Basically dirt-free.
- Clean (Score 2) - Occasional ground-in spots but generally clean.
- Dirty (Score 3) - Dingy floor, one or two sticky dry spots.
• Heavily dirty (Score 4) - Spilled food, hazardous conditions, sticky, wet spots, or seats in unusable conditions.

Subway Announcement Report

As the name suggests, this report is based on a survey of the subway car announcements on each line (Straphangers Campaign, 2006f). This survey was first done in 1998 and has been completed every year since, except for 2002. Each survey is conducted over a span of 4–5 months by a group of staff members, volunteers, and commuters. The 2006 Subway Announcement report was completed by more than 75 volunteers who recorded the in-car announcements during their commutes between January 2, 2005 and May 9, 2005. Three hundred basic announcements were recorded for each of the 22 subway lines. As in other surveys, the Grand Central-Times Square, Rockaway, and Franklin Avenue shuttles were omitted from the survey due to their short length. A total of 6,600 basic announcements were recorded. The cars were surveyed at all times of the week: weekdays during rush hour, weekends, evenings, and night hours. The survey is meant to determine how well subway announcements adhere to the announcement guidelines developed by New York City Transit. The following announcements were observed: the first stop of the trip; the second stop of the trip; the final stop of the trip; and the first transfer point of the trip. The surveyors also recorded announcements during emergencies, changes of service, or delays of more than two minutes.

Citizen Participation

The Straphangers Campaign is a direct result of a citizen-driven process to improve the performance and quality of subway services in New York, which culminated in NYPIRG’s initiative. From its founding in 1979 till today, the campaign’s role in gauging the opinion, interests, and suggestions of subway and bus commuters has increased, as has its work to convey these views to transit authorities. As a result, the cam-
ampaign has transformed the subway system into a more user-friendly service. The campaign’s citizen-participation efforts and subsequent actions by authorities will be discussed in the following pages. A discussion of citizen and media perceptions of the campaign and suggestions about how to improve its advocacy efforts follows (Straphangers Campaign 2006a).

The campaign regularly conducts online opinion polls that focus on a range of issues—services, fares, routes, security, etc. More than 4,000 users have participated in some polls (Straphangers Campaign, 2006c), whose purpose is to provide a simple and quick way for subway and bus users to express their opinions. Their responses are then used to build effective performance indicators for the campaign’s other surveys. However, these polls suffer from a lack of publicity, and a first-time site visitor would not notice the polls on the front page of the campaign’s website. In addition, the date the poll was posted and the period in which it is valid should be specified.

The campaign’s website provides links for users to register complaints directly with New York City Transit, through email or regular mail, and contact information for parts of the city transit system. The website also provides tips on writing letters to transit authorities and canvassing at MTA meetings; a tool for searching the names of elected officials; information about reducing their transit fares through the TransitChek program; and the subway and train schedules. Perhaps the most frequently visited feature of the website is the Reader Diaries, an online discussion forum where users post comments and document their experiences with the city’s transit system and the Straphangers campaign. The forum has more than 2,400 registered users. The website also offers a blog, “Transit Talk,” that discusses survey results and the performance of the subways and buses (Straphangers Campaign, 2006d).

The public opinion provided by these channels of citizen participation, especially commuters’ comments, is evaluated by the campaign’s staff, reported to the transit authority, and made public. By virtue of its ef-
forts to encourage and translate citizen participation into effective results, the Straphangers Campaign considers itself the voice of the city's nearly 7 million daily subway and bus riders. A September 1995 *New York Times* article, “Two Very Loud Voices for Five Million Riders,” echoed this assessment and acknowledged the efforts and selflessness of staff Gene Russianoff and Joseph G. Rappaport in coordinating such a large-scale public campaign (Perez-Pena NY Times, 1995). As mentioned earlier, the city’s subways have vastly improved their services during the past few decades, and according to the campaign, these improvements didn’t happen all of a sudden. Indeed, much of the credit for these gains goes to the campaign’s regular publication of its surveys and reports.

The next part of this case study compares reports published by the Straphangers Campaign and those published by MTA New York City Transit with regard to: 1) data collection/evaluation and 2) performance reporting.

Performance measurement is not an end in itself. Instead, it should be seen as part of a process to continuously improve the productivity of an organization. In 1998, the then-Government Accounting Office (GAO) published a report that redefined performance measurement as “an ongoing monitoring and reporting of program accomplishments, particularly progress towards preestablished goals” (GAO, 1998). In general, performance measures should address the process, outputs, and outcomes of an organization, and this is possible only if a multi-dimensional measuring process is used. Such a process is not possible without citizen involvement. Thus, the need for citizen-driven government performance measurement.

**Citizen-Driven Government Performance**

A citizen-driven government results from three different factors: the appropriate definition of citizens’ roles, the recognition of democratic values, and the building of a theoretical foundation for a performance-oriented government. In some jurisdictions, the role of the citizen has
slowly evolved from being a subject of the state to being a partner of the government. This evolution suggests that citizens should be able to play an important role in measuring government performance. For example, the common assumption is that government administrators focus on the good areas of their performance and hide those that show their agency in a bad light. However, the burden on administrators can be substantially reduced by recognizing the potential role of advocacy groups and involving them in the decision-making process.

The MTA New York City Transit polls city residents in general and subway riders in particular on the quality of its services. The Straphangers Campaign relies on this data when it compiles its MetroCard ratings of subway lines. The campaign also gathers separate data to rank the lines based on their cleanliness and their public announcements. Thus, when evaluating the data collection/evaluation methods of MTA New York City Transit, I’ll look at the campaign’s MetroCard results, and when looking at the campaign’s methods, I’ll evaluate the Announcement Survey and Shmutz Report.

### A Comparison of Cleanliness Data

A comparison between 2006 MTA and Straphangers data on the cleanliness of subway lines is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Type</th>
<th>Best in Cleanliness</th>
<th>Ranking on Other Report</th>
<th>Worst in Cleanliness</th>
<th>Ranking on Other Report</th>
<th>System Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MTA NY Transit (Straphangers MetroCard Rating)</td>
<td>2, C</td>
<td>C - #11 2 - #19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>#18</td>
<td>79 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straphangers Shmutz Report</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>#16</td>
<td>E, M</td>
<td>E - #11 M - #5</td>
<td>47 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Straphangers data differs from the MTA data. The most confounding differences are the rankings of the best and worst lines. For example, the MTA data ranks lines no. 2 and C as best in cleanliness, however these lines rank 19th and 11th on the Straphangers Shmutz Report, respectively. Similarly, no. 4 line, which is ranked as best in cleanliness on the Shmutz Report, is ranked 16th according to the MTA data. Moreover, the data sets’ system averages differ by the large margin of 32 percent.

**Comparison of Announcement Data**

A comparison of 2006 MTA and Straphangers data on train announcements is shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Type</th>
<th>Best in Announcements</th>
<th>Ranking on Other Report</th>
<th>Worst in Announcements</th>
<th>Ranking on Other Report</th>
<th>System Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MTA NY Transit (Straphangers MetroCard Rating)</td>
<td>2, 5,6</td>
<td>2 - # 3, 5 - # 4, 6 - # 2</td>
<td>J, Z</td>
<td>J - # 8, Z - # 8</td>
<td>79 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straphangers Announcement Report</td>
<td>4</td>
<td># 5</td>
<td>W</td>
<td># 12</td>
<td>77 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, the differences in the data sets are striking. However, unlike the survey on cleanliness, the data sets findings vary less widely. For example, the MTA data lists lines nos. 6, 2, and 5 as best in announcements, while these lines are ranked 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, respectively, in the Straphanger’s report. Similarly line no. 4, which the MetroCard ratings rank as best in announcements is listed 4th on the Straphangers report. The data sets’ system averages differ by only 3 percent, much less than they did for the cleanliness reports.
A September 10, 2000, New York Times editorial, “Is the No. 7 a Good Line? Or Poor? It All Depends on the Measure,” captured this stark variation in rankings when the Straphangers Campaign ranked the no. 7 line as the best performing line in the Summer 2000 report (O’Grady, J, NY Times, 2000), while the same line was ranked 20th in a survey conducted by the New York City Transit Riders Council, an advisory group to the MTA. Reacting to this disparity, a spokesman for New York City Transit admitted that the council’s measures were too statistically small to arrive at any significant conclusion. The spokesman added that both the council’s and the campaign’s strategies for measuring reliability underestimated the subway system’s performance and that the rankings would improve under the performance indicators used in the MTA survey. These comments underlined the disagreements between the campaign and the MTA on the performance of the transit system.

Although the two surveys drew different conclusions about the system’s performance, they found that the system exhibited similar trends during recent years. The improved performance of the transit agency is documented in the preceding graphs.

Although the surveys had different values for each of the corresponding years, the trends captured by each set of data closely resembles the other. In general, both data sets show that the number of clean subways and clear announcements has increased during the past decade, during which the Straphangers Campaign published its reports.

Conclusion

This case discusses the role of the Straphangers Campaign in promoting citizen participation and performance measurement, and its findings can be grouped around three subjects: 1) the role of advocacy groups, 2) an emphasis on outcome measures and 3) the potential of information communication tools.

The increasing role of advocacy groups such as the Straphangers Campaign substantially impacts citizen participation, by creating chan-
Comparison of the Trend in Percentages of System Averages Cleanliness Report Data:

![Trend in Percentages of Clean Floors and Seatings in Subway Cars](image)

Announcement Report Data:

![Trend in Percentage of Clear Announcements in Subway Cars](image)

nels to provide feedback on government performance. The involvement of advocacy groups also positively affects the performance of government agencies, and the public sector should acknowledge this capacity and involve advocacy groups in its decision-making process. The transit sector, in particular, has a lot to gain by building relationships with advo-
cacy groups, many of which have consistently increased citizen participation, and thus, enhanced government performance.

Performance measures generally examine one of two different areas: outcomes or outputs (Holzer & Rhee, 2006). An emphasis on outputs is based on the rational model, and is more willingly accepted by administrators (Julnes & Holzer, 2001). The outcome model determines the quality of services experienced by citizens, and outcomes are more complex to measure. To be successful, performance measures require a balanced approach, one that incorporates both outcome and output measures, which would satisfy the aspirations of citizens and the needs of administrators.

Finally, the Straphangers Campaign’s success can be attributed to its extensive use of the internet to publish performance reports and encourage citizen feedback. For the internet to significantly enhance citizen participation, advocacy groups can use tools such as bulletin boards, feedback forms, policy forums, and performance reporting systems. The Straphangers Campaign has been successful in all three of these areas and can serve as a role model to other advocacy groups, particularly those in the transit sector, that are looking to implement a citizen-driven government performance model.

References


Straphangers Campaign (2006e). Reports and Features. Subway Shmutz
Chapter Two


About the Author

Aroon Manoharan is an Assistant Professor of Public Administration at the Department of Political Science, Kent State University, USA. His research focuses on e-governance, performance measurement and reporting, organization management and comparative administration. He received his PhD from the School of Public Affairs and Administration, Rutgers University-Newark and MPA from Kansas State University. As Associate Director of the E-Governance Institute at Rutgers-Newark, he directed major initiatives including the Digital Governance in Municipalities Worldwide Survey 2009 and the U.S. States and Municipalities E-Governance Survey 2008.
Sustainable Seattle: The Sustainable Indicators and the Sustainable Urban Neighborhood Initiative

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**Introduction**

Seattle is the largest city in Washington State, with a population of 578,700, nearly three times larger than the next largest city, Spokane (Washington Office of Financial Management, 2006). According to the U.S. Census, as of 2000, 70.1 percent of Seattle’s population was white and 47.2 percent held a bachelor’s degree. As of 1999, the median household income was $45,376. Seattle encompasses 84 square miles and as of 2000 had a population of 6,717 per square mile.

The city has a charter form of government, with an elected mayor and nine elected city council members. Other elected officials include an
attorney general and eight municipal judges. The city provides a full range of services, including arts culture and recreation, health and human services, neighborhoods and development, public safety, and utilities and transportation.

This chapter focuses on Sustainable Seattle ($S^2$), an organization that emerged in the early 1990s to promote citizen participation at both the neighborhood and city levels of government. The two $S^2$ initiatives that will be discussed in this chapter are the Sustainable Development Indicators and the Sustainable Urban Neighborhood Initiative (SUNI).

**Background Information**

Sustainable Seattle emerged in 1990, when a Washington D.C.-based nonprofit, Global Tomorrow Coalition, sponsored a one-day forum in Seattle. Seventy Seattle citizens from various professional fields attended the conference to develop solutions for social, economic, and, particularly, environmental problems that were likely to affect the city in the long term (AtKisson, 1996; Victurine, 2000). Lee Hatcher, a Sustainable Seattle trustee and the organization’s eventual executive director, recalls that at the end of the meeting, a participant asked: "Do we want to meet again or just go home enlightened?" (Holden, 2004:187). The citizens did meet again, and they continue to meet to this day. Although the participants, the structure, the boards, and the mission of the organization have changed substantially throughout the years, in general, $S^2$ has worked to enhance “participatory community development,” (Guy & Kilber, 1998: 42) and has developed city-wide indicators to measure the city’s “progress and the problems” (Sustainable Seattle, 1998).

**Goals of the Organization**

A few months after their initial meeting, where no decisions were made aside from the decision to meet again, participants decided to label, research, and publish a set of "indicators of sustainability," with the hope of laying the groundwork for future policy work and citizen ac-
tivism (AtKisson, 1996; Victurine, 2000). The group’s initial activities grew into a larger set of initiatives that were adopted by the organization. The S² mission today is to “advances an integrated vision of urban sustainability by measuring progress, building diverse coalitions, and undertaking key initiatives.” The two projects described below were among the initiatives the organization undertook to achieve these ends.

**Sustainable Seattle Indicators Project**

Soon after its founding, S² sent out 600 invitations to participate in a 6-month project. It expected to receive fifty positive responses, but much to its surprise, more than half of the recipients agreed to participate (AtKisson, 1996:339). From the very beginning, the participants sought to keep the project independent from government for two reasons: First, they believed that the government had little interest in sustainability goals; second, they believed that to measure sustainability, the process itself had to be sustainable and that government participation, which would be constantly subject to the whims of political will, was unlikely to fulfill that requirement.

The S² sustainability indicators project was one of the first of its kind in the United States and was a precursor to similar projects in other U.S. cities. Seattle was the first to start this type of initiative for several reasons, including it utopian Scandinavian influences; its Native American legacy; demographic pressures; its liberal, entrepreneurial, resource-based economy; its long tradition of citizen participation in civic life; and the influence of environmentally conscious planners (Holden, 2004:139).

**Performance Activities**

An early goal of S² participants, which was documented in the February 11, 1992 “Indicator Summary,” was to set in motion changes in behavior that contributed to sustainability. The group chose to use performance measurement to attain this goal. But it was concerned about
Table 1 – Sustainable Seattle 1993 Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population of King County</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gallons of water consumed per capita in King County</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tons of solid waste generated and recycled per capita, per year in King county</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle miles traveled per capita and gasoline consumption per capita</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renewable &amp; nonrenewable energy consumed per capita</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of unemployment concentrated in the top ten employers</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours of paid work at the average wage required to support basic needs</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children living in poverty</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing affordability for median- and low-income households</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita health expenditures</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Holden, 2004:201)

the availability of data and the validity of the indicators it developed, because it wanted to ensure that they could be trusted resources (Holden, 2004:191).

Three types of indicators were initially developed: key indicators, secondary indicators, and provocative indicators. “Key indicators” would measure basic facets of sustainability, and “secondary indicators” would support key indicators in measuring particular dimensions of sustainability. The third kind of indicator, “provocative indicators,” was intended to attract media attention and to bring attention to the project as a whole (AtKisson, 1996:339). (An example of this third kind of indicator is the number of paper cups consumed as part of Seattleites’ infamous coffee-drinking habits.) Ninety-nine indicators were initially developed.
Table 1 – Sustainable Seattle 1993 Indicators *(continued)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library and community center usage rates</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of youth participating in some form of community service</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult literacy rate</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in the arts</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of population voting in odd-year (local) primary elections</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile crime rate</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of infants born with low birth weight</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of good air quality days per year</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Seattle streets meeting “pedestrian-friendly criteria”</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild salmon runs through local streams</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The organization’s Civic Panel, which was composed of more than 150 civic leaders, decided that the list should be narrowed by a technical review group (AtKisson, 1996:341). A more manageable list of twenty indicators was released in time for the first S² report.

In late 1992, after five draft versions, S² members met in plenary sessions and small groups and decided to focus on ten areas that represent essential dimensions of sustainability: resource consumption, education, economy, transportation, natural environment, health, social environment, culture and recreation, population and community participation.

In Table 1, the third column indicates the “trend,” which serves as the actual indicator. It was a deliberate choice to settle on trend as the indicator rather than aims or goals. We will see why in the next section.

For the updated version of the report, which was released two years later, twenty new indicators were added to the twenty originals indicators.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wild salmon returning to spawn</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetland health</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil erosion</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air quality</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian &amp; bicycle friendly streets</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open space near urban villages</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity (amphibian &amp; plant)</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impervious surfaces</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population growth rate</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential water consumption</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid waste generated &amp; recycled</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollution prevention &amp; renewable resource use</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm acreage</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle miles traveled &amp; fuel consumption</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renewable &amp; non-energy use</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduation</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic diversity of teachers</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts instruction</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer involvement in schools</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile crime</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service by youth</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult literacy</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Sources: Holden, 2004:204; AtKisson, 1996:343-344)
Table 2 – Sustainable Seattle 1995 Indicators *(continued)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low-birth weight infants</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children asthma hospitalizations</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voter participation</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library &amp; community center use</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public participation in the arts</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening activities</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborliness</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived quality of life</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equity in justice</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency room use for non-emergencies</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment concentration</td>
<td>↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real unemployment</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of personal income</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care spending</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work required for basic needs</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing affordability ratio</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children living in poverty</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community capital</td>
<td>↔</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New categories were also added. Table 2 illustrates the indicators that were part of the second report.

The group often adjusted indicators and categories as the process developed. S² employed local college interns to investigate the relevant literature to find and refine indicators. Measures were often changed according to their complexity or the challenges associated with data collection. For example, the indicator that measured the proportion of Seattle food grown in-state was adjusted, because it was too complex an indicator to track (AtKisson, 1996:346). Some indicators deemed impractical after the 1993 report were adapted rather than dropped. This was the case for the indicator that concerned salmon populations. The issue was perceived to be particular to the bioregion of the northwest United States and dear to Seattleites, therefore, it was adapted and kept (Wheeler, 2000:141).

In 1995, at the launch of its second report, S² planned to update its indicator report every 2 to 3 years (AtKisson, 1996:347). Though, the group has been unable to meet this timetable, the S² indicators have continued to influence Seattle policies. For example, the city’s Planning Policies Benchmark Program, which tracks 40 indicators that measure sustainability, uses categories that are nearly identical to those contained in the 1998 S² report.¹ The S² Board has acknowledged that the Sustainable Indicator Reports have “missed the mark in significantly influencing actions and expenditures of local governments in the Seattle region” (Holden, 2004:248). However, this did not curtail S² efforts to remain a viable voice in the Seattle community. It simply led to a shift in emphasis.

In 2002, S² received a four-year Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grant to measure quality of life at the neighborhood level, which led to the development of the Sustainable Urban Neighborhoods Initiative (SUNI) in July 2003 (Sustainable Seattle, 2006a).

In a shift from the city-wide indicators developed as part of the Sustainable Seattle Indicators Project, the SUNI project developed sustainability indicators on a neighborhood level (http://www.
Table 3 – Themes and Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local business district</td>
<td>shop local stats, # employees, sales volume, # of businesses, types of businesses, business enter/exit data, vacant store fronts, streetscape factors, abandoned buildings, community gathering spaces, property ownership, neighborhood event affect on economy, # small businesses, sales-tax revenue, pedestrian activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shopping activities, building/sidewalk maintenance, new businesses, business recognition in media, locally owned businesses, local patrons, business turnover, business licenses, chamber of commerce, small-business loans, economic diversity index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>street lights, sex offender locations, auto theft/vandalism, sidewalk conditions, street furniture, crosswalks, drug activity, active police presence, bus stop conditions, police per capita, crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>block watch groups, outside activities of neighborhood residents, blind spots, public inebriation, transient population, police response time, proactive police work, public health reports, police assignments, safety alerts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>bus stop conditions/connections (intervals), # linear feet of new sidewalks, sidewalk repair stats, # people who walk to work, frequency of buses, # of bus shelters, traffic counts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>traffic signal timing, 911 accident reports, pedestrian counts, mode split, # bike lanes, sidewalk conditions, roadway conditions, signage, streetlights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood activism</td>
<td>foreign born, ability to speak English, affordable housing, small-business vitality, local talent/skills, mix of business, alternative lifestyles, mixed housing, cultural variation, volunteering, historic structures, city funding for community groups, active community members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>neighborhoods with adopted design guidelines, community media, number of organizations, community gathering places, NMF applications, neighbors known, voter participation, polling/story telling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsive city government</td>
<td>better representation at city/council levels, response to citizen calls/letters, public/private partnerships that address neighborhood improvements, communication from city hall, better strategizing with neighborhoods in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ability to track work orders completed, follow-up, evidence of inter-departmental communication, city representation in community/personal attention, grant dollars, complaints, methods city uses to reach out</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sustainableseattle.org/Programs). Neighborhoods, after all, were what S\textsuperscript{2} called the “building blocks of cities.” According to SUNI collaborators from the University of Washington, a group that made up the Seattle Neighborhoods Cartographic Task Force, “The question of whether neighborhoods are livable and healthy as well as the community’s own interest in making sustainability a reality by being involved and seeing action through local efforts and improvements is the basis for the creation of the Neighborhoods Initiative” (Boyce, Jenkins, Harris, Lam & Yu, 2006: 6).

To reach its goal of measuring neighborhood health, S\textsuperscript{2} took several steps. In 2003, it partnered with four neighborhoods, whose selection resulted from discussions with both city employees and local community leaders. By 2005, SUNI grew into a ten neighborhood effort. The final six neighborhoods were selected as part of a rigorous application process, in which community organizations throughout the city were asked to apply. Each neighborhood was represented by a local community organization, such as a community association or a local business association. Sustainable Seattle engaged the community partners in a range of activities throughout the initiative. The main activities were neighborhood dialogues, street surveys, pedestrian reporting, and citizen interviews. Each activity involved a different level of citizen participation and helped develop indicators, thereby engaging citizens in different modes of measurement throughout the process.

**The Sustainable Urban Neighborhoods Initiative**

As noted, the initiative used a range of activities to develop performance measures, including neighborhood dialogues and citizen interviews. SUNI attempted to collect performance data in additional ways, including street-level surveys and pedestrian counts. Each process used a different level of citizen participation, which will be discussed in the following section.

Neighborhood dialogues were held on August 10, 2005, in order to
### Table 4 – Sample HNS Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Thriving commercial districts | (a) Is there an adequate mix of businesses in your neighborhood?  
(b) What do you need to buy outside of your neighborhood?  
(c) Do you typically see lots of people walking in the business district?  
(d) What are the obstacles to shopping in your business district? |
| Responsive city agencies       | (a) Is your neighborhood receiving adequate city services?  
(b) Have you tried contacting the City of Seattle? How was the service you received? How do you know if it was resolved?  
(c) Do you feel your neighborhood is consulted in city decision making? Explain. |
| Pedestrian friendly            | (a) Is this a walkable neighborhood (For need or recreation)?  
                                 | Why or why not?  
(b) Why do you think people do or don’t walk? |

bring together local community leaders to provide input on local priorities. In total, 35 leaders from the 10 different participating communities participated. The leaders convened for a half-day, facilitated session in which they were placed in heterogeneous neighborhood groups and urged to develop universal priorities that all neighborhoods felt were important. Each group was tasked with developing three to five priorities. The groups were given a theme matrix to anchor their discussions but were free to make additional theme suggestions. Ultimately, ten priorities were agreed upon by all participants. In addition to developing priorities, the community leaders developed indicators that they could use to measure these priorities. (See Table 3 to see specific themes and indicators.)

Sustainable Seattle gained further information about neighborhood priorities by conducting citizen surveys. The Healthy Neighborhood Survey (HNS) provided $S^2$ with more detailed information than the neighborhood dialogues were able to provide. According to the organization, the findings illustrated, “an important lesson about the need to dig deeper within communities in order to gain a better understanding of the
social, economic, and environmental conditions that play in a variety of ways out across the city” (2005: 16). The information gathered as part of the HNS was used to assess citizen perceptions of quality of life questions and aided in the development of future performance measures. Some of the questions asked are presented in Table 4.

The priorities identified by citizens, who helped S² refine its understanding of local level issues on a smaller scale, are displayed in Table 5.

As mentioned above, S² primarily collected performance information through what it called “street level” data. It used two approaches: First, it completed Street-Level Surveys where community members recorded neighborhood conditions with the aid of computerized devices; second, it conducted pedestrian counts to determine the amount of “foot traffic” in each community. The surveys and the pedestrian counts supplemented the neighborhood dialogues and the Citizen Surveys with observable data from the physical environment. They provided a quantitative measure of specific indicators and themes developed in earlier projects.

Street Level Surveys were conducted by neighborhood volunteers who were trained by S² to conduct this type of research. The volunteers were given two hours of training on “methodology and terminology for following the route, identifying conditions, entering data, and taking digital photographs (http://www.sustainableseattle.org/Programs/SUNI/researchingconditions/streetlevelsurveys/index_html ). They were given handheld computers with digital cameras to collect and record information about the physical environment. The computers, called ComNET (computerized neighborhood environment tracking), were adapted from a program created by the Center on Municipal Government Performance (http://www.fcny.org/cmgp/comnet.htm ) and directly link a specific neighborhood condition with the city department responsible for resolving it.

The SUNI initiative’s performance measurement efforts were not terribly different from those developed in the original indicators project. In both projects, S² convened a large group of citizens invested in the future of Seattle. Although SUNI was implemented on a more local level, in ag-
Table 5 – Neighborhood Priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIORITY</th>
<th>Admiral</th>
<th>Capital Hill</th>
<th>Columbia City</th>
<th>International District</th>
<th>North Beacon Hill</th>
<th>Ballard</th>
<th>Greenwood Primary</th>
<th>Lake City</th>
<th>Uptown</th>
<th>Wallingford</th>
<th>TOTALS</th>
<th>NORTH TOTALS</th>
<th>SOUTH TOTALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affordable Housing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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| TOTALS                            | 15      | 38           | 40             | 37                     | 34               | 40      | 38                | 39        | 44      | 43          | 368    | 204         | 164          |

| Number of Respondents             | 5       | 10           | 10             | 11                     | 9                | 10      | 9                 | 9         | 9       | 10          | 92     | 47          | 45           |

(Source: Sustainable Seattle Healthy Neighborhood Survey.)
aggregate, both efforts highlight the common themes and concerns of Seattleites throughout the city. Furthermore, both efforts engendered a great deal of citizen participation, the subject of the section below.

**Citizen Participation**

Although citizen participation has been a consistent S² goal, the group’s efforts to engage and sustain participation have fluctuated through the years. In an April 4, 2002 interview, Vicki Robin, co-founder of S², described the tenor of the group, as "more professionalized" as opposed to "motivated" and "dedicated" (Holden, 2004:229). In October 2000, facing yet another internal financial crisis, the organization faced two possibilities, according to meeting notes: “[S² is] nearing the point of either initiating, with large funding, some significant new programs or declaring victory and closing doors" (Holden, 2004:240). As mentioned earlier, the organization received a four-year Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grant in 2002 to measure Seattle quality of life at the neighborhood scale. This led to SUNI in July 2003 (Sustainable Seattle, 2006a) and a reinvigorated effort to involve citizens in performance measurement.

The three primary projects that maintained citizen participation were the neighborhood dialogues, the Healthy Neighborhood Survey, and the Street Level Surveys. The dialogues were the first formal action of citizen participation that was part of SUNI. The dialogues eventually influenced many other aspects of the initiative and served as a foundation for events to come and as a demonstration of the appropriate level of citizen involvement.

**Neighborhood Dialogues**

The goal of the dialogue “was to foster a cross-neighborhood discussion to identify a core set of neighborhood concerns around which to focus… SUNI,” (Sustainable Seattle, 2006, p. 9). More specifically, the purpose was to convene leaders from each of the ten communities involved in SUNI in order to establish neighborhood priorities and indicators to
measure them. In total thirty-five community leaders, representing all ten of the SUNI communities, attended the Neighborhood Dialogue. The leaders were divided into “cross-neighborhood teams” and tasked with arriving at three to five priorities per group. The idea was to allow for priorities to be chosen that represented each neighborhood’s interests. With all Seattle neighborhoods represented in the dialogue and the cross-neighborhood composition of dialogue groups, the initiative proved to be an effective way to include voices from everyone involved. Furthermore, the dialogue gave citizens the power to influence the direction of the initiative.

Healthy Neighborhood Survey

The Healthy Neighborhood Surveys were used to further determine citizens’ priorities on the local level. One of SUNI’s stated goals was to “explore whether findings from the Neighborhood Dialogue resonated with a broader range of citizens” (Sustainable Seattle, 2005, p. 8). Therefore, the HNS exercise incorporated the opinions of more people from the communities involved. In total, the project conducted 92 interviews with residents from across the ten communities. SUNI used the following six criteria in selecting interviewees to participate in the survey:

(a) “Represented a wide range of perspectives...

(b) “Were active in and/or knowledgeable about their community...

(c) “Worked or resided in the community…

(d) “Represented varying political views...

(e) “Traveled in different circles from other interviewees...

(f) “Represented various ethnicities, cultural backgrounds, and ages”

(Sustainable Seattle, 2005, p. 9-10)
Table 6 – Sample Asset and Deficit Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Environment Example</th>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Deficit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalk</td>
<td>Clean</td>
<td>Bollard damaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decorative utility</td>
<td>Dumping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cover</td>
<td>Invasive plants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good &amp; safe walking Space</td>
<td>Litter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Needed</td>
<td>Narrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sandwich board</td>
<td>Pavers damaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Properly displayed &amp; Located</td>
<td>Sandwich board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under construction/ Repairs</td>
<td>Blocking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Slippery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uneven pavement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vegetation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Obstruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Light</td>
<td>Needed</td>
<td>Damaged</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Graffiti</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pedestrian scale</td>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provides sufficient Lighting</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflects community</td>
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</table>

SUNI staff identified possible participants using two techniques. First, they asked Neighborhood Dialogue participants to identify a diverse set of community leaders who could help represent the needs of the community. Second, interviewees provided the names of additional participants as the surveys were conducted. According to Sustainable Seattle, this “snowball sampling strategy–where each community member was asked for several names of additional individuals–was designed to try to get at some of the informal leaders in each community” (2005, p. 10). The interviews were typically conducted at coffee shops in the interviewee’s neighborhood. Sustainable Seattle was successful in getting a wide array of community members to participate in the HNS, specifi-
cally because it considered including diverse voices. Meeting participants in their own neighborhoods also alleviated the need for participants to travel.

**Street Level Surveys**

Street level Surveys mobilized local volunteers to collect data about a neighborhood’s assets and deficits. In total, 123 volunteers worked for a total of 738 hours. Deborah Kuznitz (2006), director of SUNI, explained that the initiative uses “community-based volunteers because we felt like they would feel more ownership of the data that was being collected, and eventually to use the data to support actions in their neighborhoods.” Volunteers were typically from local community partners with whom S² had developed relationships throughout its years of operation. These organizations used their email listservs, electronic newsletters, and, at times, local media to recruit volunteers (Kuznitz, 2006). Kuznitz (2006) reported that recruiting volunteers was challenging, so the initiative attempted to recruit additional college- and high schooled-aged volunteers. According to Kuznitz, much of the volunteer organizing was left to local community partners (2006). Local entities had additional connections that could have mobilized local volunteers; however, SUNI did not control the recruitment process.

**Conclusion**

Gahin and Paterson (2001:353) present the findings of a 2000 survey where 54 percent of communities practicing citizen-driven performance measurement cited S² as a model for their local indicators project, making it the most influential program and demonstrating that there are lessons to be learned from the organization. One lesson learned from the initial phases of S² was that calculating and publishing indicators can consume an awful lot of resources, resources that could be better spent on the process of developing the indicators (Pocantico, 2002:11). Amy Solomon, a former S² president, outlined the
value of the development process:

“[T]he power of the indicators was the process used to arrive at them. It helped to build community, it helped to build a sense of cohesiveness across diverse groups, and it helped people to bust myths—which freed them to think about things in a new way” (Victurine, 2000:122).

Citizen involvement in the indicators lessened after the initial activity, in large part because citizens could not keep up with board members who were working to be ever-more precise in measuring sustainability. One lesson, then, is that there is a trade-off between the number of indicators that are needed to measure a concept (in this case, sustainability) and the involvement of citizen participants in choosing, selecting, collecting, analyzing, and reporting those indicators. This lesson was first learned in the early days of S2, and it was further engrained while working on SUNI.

SUNI demonstrated how such initiatives can gain citizen participation. Its model wasn’t perfect, yet it was a step in the right direction and offered clues for other communities to follow. One of the most important aspects of SUNI, which falls outside the scope of this study, was its networked relationship with the City of Seattle. As the federal government devolves and private-sector entities gain more service-provision responsibilities, public administrators need to ensure that citizens are represented. Citizen participation is vital to functioning democracies, and public administrators can employ innovative structures and relationships to make this a reality. Using networks of local community organizations provides one possibility.

Overall, S2 did a commendable job in encouraging citizen participation. It gained the participation of a representative slice of Seattle and gave typically disenfranchised groups an equal opportunity to participate. It enabled an environment in which participants could express their independent views. It involved citizens from its beginning, ensuring that it would be shaped by citizen input. It took citizen input seriously and
ensured that the appropriate weight was given to citizen influence. Lastly, S^2 initiated a transparent process, in which documents and data were readily available to participating citizens and the general public.

Although incorporating citizen participation is a challenging process, it is an essential piece of the democratic puzzle. Who is responsible for engendering such participation remains an open question, eluding public servants and the public alike. A limited view may place the burden on citizens, yet this view ignores systematic inequalities and social challenges. A holistic view realizes our entire society is responsible for ensuring citizen participation. This view sees a lack of citizen participation as a fundamental problem for our democratic ideals and places the burden for ensuring participation on everyone who promotes democracy.

References


39-45.


U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.


Endnotes

1 For a comparison, go to the Metropolitan King County Highlights of the 2002 Benchmark Report. http://www.metrokc.gov/budgetbenchmrk-bench0202bnch_Exsm.pdf

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Clean Air Council: An Effort to Evaluate the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

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Introduction

This chapter describes an effort by the Clean Air Council, an environmental activist organization, to conduct two citizen-based evaluations of a public transportation agency’s performance. It focuses on the effect of the Clean Air Council’s mission of activism and its environmentalist goals on the process of conducting a citizen-driven evaluation of a government agency. First, it describes the methods that were used and the results that were found, focusing on individual evaluations of the agency. Later, it critiques the evaluation process and the quality of the reports that describe the findings. The impact of the organization’s mis-
sion and goals on the process of conducting a citizen-driven evaluation of a government agency is also discussed.

The Clean Air Council

The Clean Air Council is a Philadelphia, Pennsylvania-based organization that seeks to improve the environment in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. It uses a combination of public outreach and advocacy work to accomplish this goal. The council covers the Philadelphia region and the surrounding areas, focusing primarily on issues affecting Pennsylvania, though it is also involved in issues affecting Southern New Jersey and New Castle County, Delaware. The council’s main office is in Philadelphia, and satellite offices are located in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, the state capitol, and in Wilmington, Delaware, a city with shipping facilities that is within commuting distance of Philadelphia. The council was founded by a group of policy makers, doctors, businessmen, and community leaders from the Philadelphia area in 1967.¹

The council divides its activities among six main areas of environmental concern: indoor air, children’s environmental health, air pollution, energy, waste and toxics, and transportation. “Indoor air” refers to the quality of air people breathe when they are inside public or quasi-public spaces, such as offices, shopping malls, or restaurants. “Children’s environmental health” deals with environmental pollutants to which children are particularly vulnerable, often because their bodies’ internal systems are smaller than those of adults and cannot tolerate as much of particular pollutants as adult systems. “Air pollution” deals with the quality of air people breathe when they are outdoors, such as the level of ozone in the atmosphere. “Energy” deals with pollution caused by electrical power generation. “Waste and toxics” deals with the reduction of pollutants, such as the dangerous waste stored in landfills, that affect the ground, groundwater, and in surrounding bodies of water. “Transportation” deals with pollution caused by the transport of people and cargo from one place to another.
These areas are not clear cut, however, and many of the council’s activities address two or more areas. For example, the council’s ongoing attempt to reduce automobile pollution is primarily a transportation issue, but it also affects air pollution, ground pollution (in terms of reducing leaks of oil and other fluids into the ground), and other areas.

The council uses both public outreach and advocacy work to accomplish its goals. Public outreach includes informational and educational activities aimed at increasing public knowledge of environmental issues and at making people’s lifestyles more environmentally friendly. These types of activities include distributing newsletters and leaflets, the daily posting of air-quality reports for Philadelphia and surrounding regions, and providing information on and encouraging the public to switch to wind-generated energy. Advocacy work consists largely of lobbying state and local officials to adopt more environmentally friendly policies. For example, the council lobbied Delaware legislators to pass a bill promoting recycling, and it successfully lobbied the Philadelphia City Council to ban cigarette smoking in public places in the city.

The council’s largest effort to use citizen input to evaluate government performance focused on the area of transportation. In April 2003, the council embarked on an evaluation of the local public transportation agency’s performance using criteria developed by citizen focus groups. The purpose of this analysis is to understand whether citizen-driven government can succeed under the auspices of an activist organization with a larger mission than simply improving government performance through the use of citizen input.

Citizen-driven government is the idea that citizens should have a defining role in determining the activities and goals of their government, rather than leaving this role to elected officials and public administrators. Citizen-driven government is often seen by its implementers as a central feature of attempts to improve government. In Hartford, Connecticut, and Worcester, Massachusetts, for example, attempts to implement citizen-driven government by establishing performance targets for government
agencies were conducted by organizations whose primary goals were to improve municipal government with this method. In contrast, the council didn’t view its evaluation of the Philadelphia transit agency’s performance as its only goal but rather as something that would contribute to its overall mission of reducing environmental pollution, since an agency that could surpass its benchmarks would presumably attract additional riders.

The Agency Being Reviewed

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), the state government agency responsible for providing public transportation in Philadelphia and the surrounding counties of Pennsylvania, is required by state law to conduct an annual performance assessment, to conduct customer surveys and monitor customer complaints, and to report this information to the public and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. The annual performance assessment must include a focus on: the utilization of routes (how many people ride each bus, train, subway, or trolley route), staffing ratios (the number of operational staff per administrative personnel, etc.), the relevant financial information (cost per passenger, etc.), and productivity indicators, which are listed as “vehicle miles per employee; passenger and employee accidents per 100,000 vehicle miles; on-time performance; [and] miles between road calls.” In addition, the agency also assesses itself using a set of mostly customer-oriented goals previously submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, including tracking on-time performance, minimizing customer complaints, evaluating the quality of responses to public requests for information, and meeting the needs of disabled passengers.

By law, SEPTA must allow “a formal public comment period prior to the adoption of [any new] evaluation measures” but is not required to offer “any other formal opportunities for public involvement in the process of setting evaluation measures.” This gives the agency considerable control in the process of evaluating its performance, particularly if
there is a lack of interest from the administrative and legislative agencies that share the task. Furthermore, while the process allows for citizen input on measurement criteria, it does not specifically mandate changes in response. The council, which places “a high priority on enhancing public participation in transit assessment” as part of its general policy of promoting the use of public transportation in order to reduce automobile emissions, felt that this was an inadequate level of citizen influence on the transportation agency’s performance benchmarks, particularly when one considers that SEPTA’s purpose is to provide transportation services for the general public. The council thus decided to focus its transit activism “on strengthening rider input in the agency’s performance assessment procedures.”

Performance Activity

As a result of the aforementioned issues, the Clean Air Council decided to investigate “the role of citizen input in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority’s (SEPTA) decision-making and performance assessment processes.” The overall goal of the project was to understand “what Philadelphia [transit riders] consider most important in a transit system and to assist SEPTA in ensuring that citizen input is included in their performance assessment procedures.” The project, “Citizens Assessing Transit Performance of SEPTA: A Pilot Project,” lasted from April 2003 to March 2004 and studied citizens’ needs and desires. The project was supported by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and received technical assistance from the Eagleton Institute of Politics and the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University. In addition, a number of outside experts and transit advocates helped to determine appropriate performance benchmarks. The results of the study were described in a report for the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation in July 2004. Furthermore, the study’s results were used to help determine the council’s subsequent lobbying on transportation issues.

The project itself was divided into six separate tasks. The initial task
was to survey the current performance assessment methods for public transportation. As part of this task, project officials conducted interviews and thoroughly reviewed relevant academic, industry, and activist literature. Next, they analyzed existing SEPTA performance measurement methods, using both literature from the field and interviews with SEPTA’s board of directors and staff members. This proved to be particularly useful, as it provided insight into how SEPTA handles citizen input and citizen complaints about performance. The third task involved comparing the results of the two previous analyses. The comparison determined that “SEPTA’s current methods of collecting and incorporating citizen input fall far short of the best practices of other transit agencies around the world.” The Clean Air Council then convened focus groups to solicit citizen input regarding “citizen priorities and how best to incorporate these priorities into SEPTA’s long-term planning processes.” These focus groups had an additional purpose: to serve as “a first step to actually implementing a formal process for assessing and incorporating citizen input.” The final two tasks were to present the investigation’s findings in a report and to devise methods to provide ongoing citizen review and citizen input regarding SEPTA’s performance and policies.

The Focus Groups

The Clean Air Council used the focus groups to gather citizen input on SEPTA’s performance and on appropriate performance measurement standards. As stated previously, the focus groups were designed to solicit views on SEPTA’s performance and to encourage the use of citizen input on an ongoing basis. Specifically, this meant examining why people used buses or subways instead of cars (or vice versa) and determining what level of bus and subway service is deemed necessary by the traveling public.

In February 2004, the council conducted three focus groups. One group was comprised of people who commute by bus between their home and their office in downtown Philadelphia; one was comprised of people who commute by rail between their home and their office in downtown
Philadelphia; and one was comprised of people who generally commute by automobile. Each focus group concentrated on two issues, why people do or do not use public transportation for their commute and what level of SEPTA service they considered acceptable. The focus groups ranged in size between eight and ten participants. Each group was led by a moderator from the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University and followed the same format, with the moderator generally asking the same questions at each session. The participants were recruited by the council from neighborhoods throughout the city. They consisted of both men and women (although not in equal numbers), Caucasians, African-Americans, and, at each session, one Hispanic woman. People who lived in suburban towns were excluded from participating, as were people who lived within a mile of their place of employment.

The focus groups rated several aspects of SEPTA’s operational performance, including courtesy of employees, maintenance of equipment, on-time performance and reliability, speed of vehicles/appropriateness of journey times, convenience of bus and train stops, comfort, safety/perception of safety, difficulty of using buses and trains, providing information on service changes to users, and whether the cost of the fare equaled the overall level of service provided. The responses varied between the groups, but all agreed the level of service did not justify the current fare ($2.00 per ride). Most people felt the level of service provided by SEPTA was worth $1.00, or perhaps $1.50. There was a clear feeling that SEPTA did not meet an acceptable level of cleanliness, that bus rides were uncomfortable (primarily because bus seats are too small), that “an unacceptably large minority” of employees were rude to passengers, that people ought to feel somewhat safer, that SEPTA needed to improve its ability to inform people of service alterations, and that SEPTA would probably be unresponsive to rider input (“since SEPTA has a monopoly on transit, it doesn’t feel the need to be responsive to its customers”).11 The focus group participants also agreed that SEPTA needed to establish a quantifiable benchmark for lateness—more than
five minutes for a bus and more than fifteen minutes for a train—and that the agency is not well managed ("a cold bureaucracy characterized by waste and non-responsiveness").

Even without the occasional prodding by the focus groups’ moderators, the participants indicated a clear desire to see standards set, against which operational performance could be measured in future years. The groups’ agreement that there needs to be a standard for what constitutes an acceptable on-time performance is a case in point. However, because many of the participants’ responses were qualitative in nature, the boundary between acceptable and unacceptable standards was unclear. Thus, on a whole, the focus group’s data provided insufficient information from a public administrator’s point of view. For example, most participants agreed that the buses were dirtier than they should be, but there was no consensus on what constituted an acceptable level of cleanliness—an important measure considering that frequently crowded buses are likely to get dirty relatively easily—or on how often the buses should be cleaned.

Current methods and schedules for cleaning buses are clearly insufficient and can serve as a standard against which future performance can be compared, but the focus groups produced no clear target to help SEPTA allocate resources. Should management reassign staff to clean windows more frequently or to clean floors more frequently? Or, should management attempt to reduce the dirt and smell created by exhaust fumes? It may have been too much to ask a group of twenty-seven people to provide specific guidance in this area, particularly when they presumably had little knowledge of transit operations, but, from a public manager’s point of view, specific guidance would have been helpful. The council’s post-project activities, however, have attempted to assist SEPTA in setting standards that are acceptable to the public and have helped to fill the void left by the lack of quantitative responses on some issues.

The 2008 Project

Following the 2003-2004 project, the Clean Air Council realized that
further efforts were needed. It needed to identify quantifiable benchmarks and to broaden its pool of public respondents, as well as gather information on whether or not public perceptions of SEPTA had changed over the years. In 2008, the council received funding from the William Penn Foundation to conduct a follow-up project. This project was conducted by The Melior Group, a market research and consulting firm located in Philadelphia. The council defined the project’s goals as understanding public perceptions of SEPTA among both riders and non-riders, determining how to increase public transportation usage in SEPTA’s service area, understanding what people view as the most important issues when riding public transportation, and determining the best means of conveying information about SEPTA (especially service interruptions) to the rider community and the general public.13

The Melior Group conducted phone surveys with residents in Philadelphia and in four suburban counties served by SEPTA. More than 1,000 adults were surveyed, of whom 29 percent were not regular SEPTA riders. About 50 percent of the respondents resided in the city, while the remainder lived in the suburbs. Roughly 350 respondents each primarily used bus or commuter rail services, with the remaining regular riders primarily using either subway or trolley car services.14 Survey respondents were asked about their perceptions of SEPTA, courtesy, convenience, cleanliness, safety, and overcrowding, and they used a ranking system to indicate their views and to define each issue. (They were also asked to give basic demographic information about themselves.) Non-riders were asked why they do not use SEPTA and what might convince them to use one or more of its services.

The Melior Group then tabulated and analyzed the results and prepared a summary report. The report looks at respondents’ rankings of each issue, and at how SEPTA can best define successful performance with regards to each. Twenty-eight percent of respondents, for instance, defined safety as “safe driving behavior for [SEPTA] drivers,” while 19 percent defined it as “visible police or security in stations and vehicles.”
Similarly, 35 percent of respondents defined cleanliness as “clean vehicles, both windows and cars,” while 21 percent defined it as “being able to sit on clean seats,” and 19 percent defined it as being litter free.\textsuperscript{15} Non-riders’ views on switching from private transportation to SEPTA were also discussed. As part of its analysis, the report included illustrative tables and graphs, as well as quotes from some respondents.

**Changes Resulting From The Project**

*After the First Project*

The Clean Air Council used the first project’s results, particularly the interviews with the focus groups and SEPTA staff members, to help shape its subsequent lobbying efforts on Philadelphia-area transit issues. Indeed, this was one reason the project was originally initiated. The council felt that this was an appropriate way to increase citizen input on SEPTA operational performance and the direction of its own transportation advocacy. This effort improved SEPTA’s response to customer complaints, as SEPTA began referring complaints to middle- and lower-level supervisors and managers, rather than simply having upper-level management view complaints in the aggregate.

The most important result of the council’s attempt to set performance standards for SEPTA has been an improvement in how SEPTA handled complaints received through its annual customer satisfaction surveys. While completing the project’s second task, interviews with SEPTA board members and staff, the council was told that the information gathered by SEPTA’s customer satisfaction surveys was not specific enough. The surveys did not, for instance, ask about which bus or train route a complaint was being made. As a result, SEPTA management could not determine whether certain routes were particularly in need of improvement or whether complaints were based on isolated instances spread relatively evenly across the entire system.\textsuperscript{16}

As a result of the first project, since the beginning of 2006, SEPTA has asked riders to be route-specific when answering customer-satisfac-
tion surveys, particularly with regard to certain bus routes. The survey information is then sent directly to the supervisor at the corresponding bus depot so that the problem can be corrected. A major impetus for this change, according to the council, was the public attention that the project’s results received and the council’s resulting lobbying efforts. The council’s efforts to encourage ordinary citizens to improve the performance of a government agency can thus be seen as a success. By proposing standards, citizens improved SEPTA management’s focus on solving problems at the agency.

The council has lobbied SEPTA on additional issues, often using data generated by the project. These attempts have often been thwarted, in part, because the organization seeks to maintain a positive working relationship with SEPTA, but mostly because SEPTA officials have been viewing issues from a budgetary rather than a rider perspective. (SEPTA’s budget depends on annual appropriations from the Pennsylvania legislature, and they have been only grudgingly issued in recent years.) However, the publication of the council’s study has empowered citizens and SEPTA’s Citizens Advisory Committee when asking SEPTA for operational changes.

One long-term effect of this evaluation is that SEPTA has put more emphasis on publishing the results of its own customer service surveys. The surveys are now published online and highlight the results of questions similar to those asked by the council between 2003 and 2004 (and also in 2008). Any person with access to the internet can now access SEPTA’s own survey results in order to evaluate SEPTA service. Prior to the publication of the council’s report to the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, this was not the case.

**After the Second Project**

In addition to publishing the results of its own customer service surveys, since 2008, SEPTA has been conducting online surveys regarding customer service and other operational issues. These surveys ask riders to
answer questions on a variety of issues, including usage patterns, clarity of information provided to customers, riders’ on-board experiences, and the setting of SEPTA’s operational priorities. However, unlike the focus groups conducted by the Clean Air Council (and the SEPTA customer surveys), these online surveys do not ensure the representativeness of the sample of respondents. Indeed, by only accommodating online participation, the surveys are automatically biased toward those willing to visit the agency’s website. Nonetheless, these surveys attempt to collect feedback on specific issues highlighted by user survey respondents and evaluations conducted by the council (as well as by SEPTA itself).

Another improvement resulting from the council’s evaluation and its resulting lobbying is SEPTA’s recent interest in modernizing its fare-collection system. Whereas other cities, such as New York, allow riders to use a prepaid, magnetic-striped card to pay for subway and bus rides, SEPTA’s operations have remained cash-oriented. Such a system is inconvenient for riders, since it prevents them from using the system if they do not have the necessary cash on hand. (In SEPTA’s case, this often means having the exact amount, as some fare collectors do not provide change.) Respondents in the council’s focus groups raised this issue and others like it that relate to convenience and, consequently, the council lobbied for a more user-friendly system. The agency decided to implement such a system. While the council’s lobbying cannot be entirely credited for this policy change (operational savings and revenue enhancement probably also played a part), the council’s lobbying helped to convince SEPTA to bring its fare collection system into the twenty-first century.

In fact, the Clean Air Council has noticed a general improvement in its relationship with SEPTA in recent years, as well as a general openness on the part of SEPTA management compared to previous years. The council’s officers credit this general openness to a number of factors but believe that the results of the two evaluations, which showed both positive and negative aspects of SEPTA’s management, played a role. Council officials also believe that the evaluation results and their lobbying
played a role in improving the group’s relationship with SEPTA. SEPTA is “much more pleasant to deal with,” according to one, which in turn makes lobbying for service improvements easier.\textsuperscript{19} SEPTA used the information generated by the council’s 2008 survey to help refine its performance targets, particularly as the survey contained quantifiable information.\textsuperscript{20} In general, SEPTA views the council as a potentially important source of information on agency performance and rider dissatisfaction, and of knowledgeable suggestions for improvement.

**Conclusion and Lessons Learned**

From the point of view of increasing an individual’s role in government, one problem with the Clean Air Council is that it views itself as an environmental advocacy organization rather than as an organization dedicated to citizen-driven government. Indeed, its mission statement defines the council as an “environmental organization …. [which] works through public education, community advocacy, and government oversight to ensure enforcement of environmental laws.”\textsuperscript{21} Consequently, its focus is primarily on enforcing existing environmental laws and on promoting environmentally friendly public policy rather than on promoting citizen oversight of government and/or citizen-based leadership of government. Citizen-driven government is viewed as a means to an end, rather than as an end in itself.

This is a crucial difference. An organization whose primary focus is on “citizen-driven initiatives that involve citizens in the measurement of government performance” is more likely to emphasize the role of the individual citizen in encouraging government improvement.\textsuperscript{22} This is particularly the case regarding the use of citizen-imposed standards that outline public service goals (i.e. “The community’s knowledge in the field—rather than professional theory—is the key to understanding whether the situation is improving”).\textsuperscript{23} Whereas, an organization that is primarily focused on changing government on the public’s behalf is more likely to emphasize how the individual citizen can help the organization achieve change.
Such an organization is likely to view citizens as an important part of a wedge that is moving forward, rather than the driving force of the wedge itself. Indeed, the council’s evaluations of SEPTA’s performance “attempt[ed] to include citizens in its campaign.” However, citizen input was viewed as an important component in achieving a larger outcome (evaluating SEPTA) rather than as an essential outcome itself.

The council made a commendable effort to include representatives of the city’s neighborhoods and racial groups in determining performance benchmarks. Every focus group included representatives from at least seven different neighborhoods and some neighborhoods were represented by more than one person. Similarly, each group included both men and women—although not always in equal numbers—and both African-Americans and Caucasians (and one Hispanic woman). While the number of people representing each neighborhood, gender, or racial/ethnic group was not proportional to that group’s population, the focus groups’ emphasis on encouraging discussion ensured that participants had ample opportunity to air grievances.

The greatest deficiency of the focus groups was their small scale. None of the groups had more than ten participants, and none met more than once. Consequently, there was no follow-up to what was said at the sessions, and participants weren’t able to reflect on what was said or respond to it. Had additional sessions been held in April 2004, for instance, the participants would have been able to comment on any changes in SEPTA’s service. Similarly, had additional focus groups been conducted with three groups each of bus riders, train riders, and automobile users, rather than one of each category, the number of responses would have increased, decreasing the potential for the results to be affected by statistical outliers.

The Second Project

The 2008 project was a more comprehensive effort than the first project, and its results, while similar to those of the 2003-2004 project,
were more convincing. Indeed, many of the initial project’s flaws were corrected in the 2008 project due to the council’s previous experiences and the help of a professional market research firm.

Whereas the initial project included only a small number of citizens, the 2008 project included responses from more than 1,400 people (n=1,408). About half of these respondents lived outside Philadelphia. These changes provided a more complete picture of the issues facing public transportation in the Philadelphia metropolitan area than did the 2003-2004 project, which is probably why SEPTA places an emphasis on the issues highlighted by both projects.

The survey also obtained a more representative demographic cross-section than did the previous project. Adults of every age group and income level were represented. Both Caucasians and African-Americans were well-represented among all types of travelers, particularly Caucasians. While the telephone survey obtained a greater cross-section of the population, the phone data did present challenges. While the survey asked if a person was Hispanic or Asian-American, the resulting report does not differentiate between groups other than Caucasian or African-American. This omission may limit the council’s, or other advocacy groups’, efforts to lobby on behalf of a particular ethnic/racial community. In contrast, the income and age group information should assist lobbying efforts on behalf of low-income and middle-income travelers, as well as on behalf of senior citizens.

Overall, the process worked well and highlighted areas of concern even when no clear benchmarks were set. In areas where clear benchmarks were determined, there is now a clear, independently derived standard against which SEPTA’s performance can be measured, either by SEPTA or by outside citizens or groups. These standards should encourage SEPTA to improve its performance for areas in which citizens, not government officials, outlined performance measurements.

It is also fair to conclude that the Clean Air Council does encourage citizen-driven government, viewing it as a manifestation of the organiza-
tion’s grassroots efforts to lobby for change. Indeed, the council views citizen input as a necessary component of projects like the evaluation of SEPTA; the role of citizen input in other council projects, such as the Manayunk Travel Awareness Campaign, confirms this. Since SEPTA now holds managers responsible for the performance of individual bus routes, it is fair to conclude that citizen input leads to results even when it is solicited by an activist organization rather than by a government entity.

A few lessons can be drawn from this case. If an activist group wants to evaluate a government agency’s performance, it should focus on evaluating activities that are germane to its core mission, and it should allow outsiders to assist in developing evaluation criteria. This will ensure that the group receives citizens’ true views, rather than views colored by its own prejudices. It is too easy for an activist group, whose members are convinced that their beliefs are correct, to ask biased questions, to only recruit like-minded travelers as respondents, or to interpret responses through the prism of its own views. A group’s members need to set aside their own views and accept the responses they receive as they are, in order to obtain citizens’ honest views. If they do not do this, then basing future lobbying on the responses they receive will only result in charges that the group’s lobbying does not truly reflect citizens’ views.

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Dissertations and Articles

**Reports**


**Interviews**

Emily Linn, Transportation Program Director, Clean Air Council. Telephone Interview. August 7, 2006.

Emily Linn, Transportation Program Director, Clean Air Council. Telephone Interview. August 8, 2006.


**Media Articles and Websites**


Manayunk Travel Awareness Campaign: Residents Speak Out On Transportation Problems (FactSheet Number 4). Clean Air Council. Un-


Endnotes
1 “General Information”. 5K Run for Clean Air. On-Line. Available:
Chapter Four

4 Ibid. It should be noted SEPTA does maintain a permanent advisory group of twenty-nine ordinary transit-riding citizens (the Citizens Advisory Committee) which is supposed to represent the views of the traveling public on a variety of issues to SEPTA’s management.
9 Final Report. p. 6
10 Ibid. p. 6.
12 Ibid. p. 4.
14 Ibid. p. 2-4.
15 Ibid. p.6.
16 Emily Linn, Transportation Program Director, Clean Air Council. Telephone Interview. August 8, 2006.
17 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.

About the Author

Jonathan Woolley is a financial and policy analyst specializing in public transportation, capital infrastructure, citizen participation, and performance measurement. He has worked in corporate, nonprofit, and public finance, served on oversight bodies in municipal government dealing with issues extending from recycling to ethics, been affiliated with various advocacy groups working on transportation, and has offered testimony in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania on transportation and budgetary concerns. He is currently pursuing a doctorate at Rutgers University’s School of Public Affairs and Administration where he is researching capital infrastructure projects at airports.
Chapter Five

The Huge Success of the Cheonggyecheon Restoration Project: What’s Left?

T. J. Lah  
_Yonsei University_

Introduction

The Cheonggyecheon restoration project has been a big hit in Seoul, Korea. The project’s success is important given that other mega-scale development projects, such as the Saemankeum reclamation project and the Sapaesan highway construction project, are struggling to manage stakeholder conflicts.

The conflict management process used during the restoration project was not as successful as the project itself. However, it ultimately worked and can simultaneously provide lessons and warnings for future projects. This chapter analyzes how the restoration of Cheonggyecheon was suc-
cessful despite the public confrontation it created. In particular, it focuses on the government’s strategies to foster public collaboration. After discussing the project’s background and relevant government initiatives, the chapter recommends that future public projects employ a collaborative approach.

**Brief Overview of the Case**

In 2002, the new mayor of Seoul, Lee Myung-bak, proposed restoring the Cheonggyecheon, a stream that flows through downtown Seoul that had been previously covered up by a road and an elevated highway. He believed that restoring the stream could benefit the city in several ways, including providing opportunities for development, revitalizing the downtown economy, and by becoming the “breathing place” for the entire city. He envisioned the Cheonggyecheon restoration drastically shifting the city’s urban policy paradigm from development to sustainability.

The Seoul Metropolitan Government pushed forward with project, and after careful political consideration and multi-faceted research studies, the project was launched on July 1, 2003. The Cheonggyecheon Restoration Project (CRP, hereafter) consisted of removing the roads that covered the stream and the adjacent elevated highway. The project took two years and cost approximately $387 million dollars (SMG, 2005).

**Background Information**

The Cheonggyecheon is located at the core of downtown Seoul. The stream was originally a seasonally flowing brook but was developed into a stream with fourteen waterways in 1412, at the beginning of the Chosun Dynasty. In the early 1900s, the government began covering the stream for military, sanitary, and flood-control purposes. In the mid-1970s, officials built the elevated highway, which carried approximately 168,000 vehicles a day (Hwang, 2005). The area around the Cheonggyecheon has traditionally been a commercial area, full of industrial facilities and small
Table 1 – Content Analysis of Newspaper and Magazine Articles that Examined the Basic Tenets of the CRP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Tenets</th>
<th>Don’t Like Very Much</th>
<th>Don’t Like</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Like</th>
<th>Like Very Much</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>40 (11.4%)</td>
<td>58 (16.6%)</td>
<td>129 (36.9%)</td>
<td>66 (18.9%)</td>
<td>57 (16.3%)</td>
<td>350 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


shops. After the highway was constructed, the area developed a reputation as an unpleasant urban commercial district with old buildings, narrow streets, severe traffic conditions, and illegal street vendors.

Because of the Cheonggyecheon’s historical relevance, the restoration project was not seen as just another urban planning project; it became a symbolic task and the entire nation was eager to revive its historical and natural heritage. When the project was completed on October 1, 2005, Seoul became a friendlier city to both the environment and the people. Yet, the initiation and implementation of the project also caused conflicts, by, for example, increasing local traffic and affecting local markets during the reconstruction. As such, the project illustrates the possible conflicts that can arise between the government and the local merchants (Hwang and Lah, 2005; Lah, 2005a).

When the CRP was announced, the media praised the idea. Indeed, it was thought that the project would have many tangible benefits for the city. It would create “green” areas amidst the city’s grey. The 5.84-kilometer-long stream would bring back life into the city’s otherwise development-oriented business district. The whole city, not just the business district, would likely enjoy the refreshing environment.

The restoration delivered on these benefits and more. The CRP also
restored the country’s history by removing the elements of the Cheonggyecheon built by the Japanese colonial government decades ago. It also helped to restore and revitalize the area’s cultural legacy through the excavation of the waterbed and through soft cultural programs (festivals). By attracting more businesses and more shoppers to the Cheonggyecheon area, city officials also hoped to begin correcting the economic imbalance between the northern and southern parts of the city.

All of these benefits, however, could not have been realized if citizens had not bought into them. The media favorably covered the planning and execution of the CRP and published stories about the Cheonggyecheon and the project’s likely impact (Lah, 2003). If it weren’t for the newspaper articles, magazine columns, and radio broadcasts about the project, it would have been difficult for citizens to visualize its benefits, and in turn, it would have been much more difficult to realize them.

The CRP would also have been impossible without its three-part, interconnected implementation system. The Cheonggyecheon Restoration Headquarters was the project’s major engine. Its task force of staff was made up of capable public officials that had been scouted from various departments, making it a “dream team.” This task force served as the project’s administrative facilitator. Created on July 2, 2002, the headquarters were originally staffed by 28 elite officials and an additional 15 administrative assistants. Professor Yang Yune-Jae, a well-known name in the field of urban planning, headed the organization. Two months after its establishment, the headquarters’ responsibilities expanded to include addressing conflicts with local merchants and establishing a negotiating team.

The Seoul Development Institute (SDI), the city’s research institution, also played an important role. Dozens of scholars and researchers with a range of research specialties—architecture, ecology, hydrology, urban planning, engineering, economics, sociology, and public administration—made up the CRP research team. The scholars not only prepared
the master plan for the architectural restoration, but they were expected to foresee possible difficulties in the plan’s implementation, including conflicts with citizen participation.

The third and final element of the implementation system, the Cheonggyecheon Restoration Citizens’ Committee, provided a link between the public and the city and played an important role in facilitating the exchange of ideas. The 127-member committee was established on September 12, 2002, and consisted of a main division and six subdivisions. Each subdivision focused on a particular subject area: history and culture, natural environment, construction safety, transportation, urban planning, and citizen communication. The citizen communication division was expected to resolve CRP-related conflicts by monitoring and responding to public opinion. The committee’s results were mixed. It played a major role in facilitating meetings between the city and citizens, including local merchants, but when its suggestions were rejected, some members resigned.

In hindsight the committee’s role was less important than its existence. That the mayor made the political gesture of forming and using a huge civic organization of famous professors, journalists, pastors, and professionals signaled his seriousness about the project. Yet, the committee’s lack of impact also hurt the broader effort. Mayor Lee wanted the committee to provide the city with manageable advice, not opinions that would risk stopping or delaying the project. Thus, the committee lacked members who could work from the “bottom-up.” Local residents, merchants, and related nongovernmental organizations did not have seats on the committee, leading some to question the committee’s democratic validity and to argue that it did not represent citizens’ in a true sense.

The three implementation organizations established strong interrelationships. Some committee members were SDI doctors; the SDI doctors were dependent on data provided by headquarters; the headquarters could not proceed to the project’s next phase without the advice and authorization of the committee. These strong ties created a triangular interdependence, which proved to be a major reason behind the project’s success:
Table 2 – Citizen Attitudes on the CRP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For</th>
<th>Against</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Like Very Much</td>
<td>Like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>146 (29.2%)</td>
<td>227 (45.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Don’t Like Very Much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>373 (74.6%)</td>
<td>88 (17.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29 (5.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>117 (23.4%)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>


while the headquarters was the implementing arm; the SDI served as the brain; and the committee played a (limited) role as the eyes and ears.

**Goals of the Organization**

The creation and use of the triangular system—the headquarters, SDI, and the committee—pushed forward the complicated project. The visible goal of the three-part organization was simple—restoring the Cheonggyecheon. Yet, the ultimate goals were multi-faceted and included reviving the historical and natural heritage of the commercial area, improving flood control, lowering the temperature of the downtown area, and improving the aesthetics of Seoul. The CRP showcased all of the characteristics that you’d expect from a large-scale public project and provided as an excellent opportunity to understand what happens when policy implementation meets the realities of public opposition.

The idea of revitalizing the Cheonggyecheon first emerged among engineering professors in the late 1990s. Upon realizing that the project was not only doable but necessary, the deeply respected novelist Park Kyung-ri decided to support the idea. A research circle, the “Cheonggyecheon Reviving Research Forum,” was formed and nurtured the idea. The “dream” grew to be serious enough to be the subject of scholarly symposiums. The then-mayoral candidate, Lee Myung-bak, was searching for a big and fancy idea to present in the approaching mayoral election, and the revitalization project caught his attention. After receiving
Table 3 – Major Reasons behind Citizens’ Attitude toward the CRP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For</th>
<th>Against</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>downtown aesthetics improvement</td>
<td>heavy traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>233 (46.6%)</td>
<td>147 (29.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water pollution improvement</td>
<td>high cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141 (28.2%)</td>
<td>147 (29.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>restoration of city’s old shape</td>
<td>daily inconvenience during restoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 (15.0%)</td>
<td>141 (28.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


professional advice, Lee made the project his number one official campaign promise and announced that he would restore the Cheonggyecheon when he won the election. Throughout this process, the idea publicly ripened, and Lee won the mayoral election.

Performance Activities

Despite its publicity, the project lacked public confidence. Most Seoulites wanted to see the stream opened up but simultaneously doubted the project’s feasibility (see Tables 2 and 3). Would the public buy into the idea as fervently as the mayor did?

Before becoming mayor, Lee Myung-bak was the CEO of a large construction company. Having completed a long list of big projects, Lee knew that the CRP was more than possible. He also knew that, as the most important project of his first term, the CRP’s success would dictate his political life. Known by his long-time nickname, the “Bulldozer,” Lee demonstrated strong leadership in selling the idea. He persuaded opinion leaders at every chance; he formed a city restoration task force; he advertised the CRP on street banners and subway bulletins; he launched the multi-faceted research campaign; he made many media ap-
appearances; and he earnestly defended the project against opposing views. Professor Eugene McGregor of Indiana University saw the project this way:

“At first sight, the case looks so simple. The city government did not reinvent the wheel; the stream was always there. After all, all we mean by restoration of a stream is to demolish the concrete structure and open up the cover so that people see the water flow back again. One merely needs to decide where and when to begin the digging and then implement the choice. But in reality, the project demanded a high level of sophistication. What remains is to understand the design variables that must be manipulated in order to achieve the outcome of the restoration” (McGregor, 2002).

A list of the operational realities that the project faced is presented in Table 4. Each consideration raised a number of sub-considerations, many of which were potential sources of conflicts.

The project would have been impossible if the city had decided to directly compensate local businesses impacted by the restoration. The cost would have far exceeded the CRP’s budget. The city’s basic political strategy was not to offer direct compensation; instead, the city provided indirect benefits to the effected merchants, including low-interest loans, an offer to exchange land with those who wanted to move to a new apartment-type shopping area, and a promise that Cheonggyecheon-area businesses would be given priority when the city purchased commodities, such as stationery and furniture.

**Accomplishments**

The restoration brought about many changes (2005). Contrary to expectations, the traffic in the area lightened, and the average speed increased, despite having significantly fewer roads serving the area. In
### Table 4 – The CRP’s Operational Considerations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consideration Issue</th>
<th>Specific questions for each issue</th>
<th>Perspectives/Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Framing</strong></td>
<td>--Whether to do the project? --When to do the project? --Where to include in the project? --What to include in the project?</td>
<td>--Decided by mayoral election (Do it) --Do cost/benefit analysis first --Do pilot project and see the results --Now (restoration + urban renewal) --Long term as part of urban redevelopment --Kwanggyo, Sejongro, or upper stream --Confine to stream and related ecosphere --Include business-area development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure Demolition</strong></td>
<td>--What is the scope of the destruction? --What is the time frame of destruction?</td>
<td>--Complete destruction vs. Leave ramps --Link or block Cheonggyero-Ringroad --Destruct blocks simultaneously or gradually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stream Restoration</strong></td>
<td>--What is the appropriate type of the restored stream? --How to secure a sufficient quantity of water? --What is the appropriate water quality? --How to maintain flood control?</td>
<td>--Natural type/ Early Natural (Snake) Type --Natural Type + Canal in Down Stream --Canal Type --Groundwater + treatment plant --Groundwater + Han river + treatment plant --Groundwater + rainwater in water tanks --Level I(BOD1mg/l)–Level III(BOD6mg/l) --Combine or separate rainwater/sewage --Snake type stream + trees planting --Extra rainwater pipes for flood control --Ground permeation --Rainwater collection in water tank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area Development</strong></td>
<td>--What is the scope of urban redevelopment? --What is the level of urban industry renewal? --Whether to include development cost in the project?</td>
<td>--Focus on restoration only --Restoration + General urban planning --Link restoration and area redevelopment --Aggressive area redevelopment --Improve current industry --Mix industry and residence --Turn into history/culture-oriented industry --Restructure CBD to meet 21st century leading edge --Limit cost to the stream restoration --Include compensation and urban renewal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>History &amp; Culture Restoration</strong></td>
<td>--What is the spatio-temporality scope? --What is the scope of the review site for cultural/historic excavation?</td>
<td>--Cheonggyero only vs. Adjacent areas --Gwanggyo–Dongdaemun vs. Whole area --Restoration of old bridges vs. No action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Impact</strong></td>
<td>--How to deal with the stagnant area market?</td>
<td>--Direct compensation vs. indirect methods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
fact, when the roads covering the Cheonggyecheon disappeared, the use of public transportation increased. After the restoration, the number of passenger cars heading downtown fell by 2.3 percent, while the number of metro bus users grew by 1.4 percent, and the number of subway users grew by 4.3 percent to 430,000 thousand users daily.

The reduction in passenger cars translated into less stress on the area’s air quality. Test results collected from five spots in the Cheonggyecheon area recorded overall reductions in all types of pollution, except for Benzene and Ethyl Benzene. A White Paper also reported an overall reduction in the local temperature. Before the restoration, the temperature in the Cheonggyecheon was approximately 5 degrees Celsius higher than the city average. The new water flow, lighter traffic, and natural air flow have all helped to cool down the area from an average of 30 degrees Celsius to 26.6 degrees Celsius. An increase in area wind speed by 2.2–7.8 percent helps to explain the air temperature reductions.

The CRP’s biggest accomplishment, however, was not the temperature changes or the traffic and air quality improvements. It was the way the project shifted public perspectives. At first, citizens doubted the project’s feasibility. Now, people celebrate it and credit the city’s government. Most importantly, they’ve begun to have faith and confidence in themselves, faith that they can give up old conveniences and that something more valuable is waiting for them in the end.

They began to realize that the “old” was more than compensated by the “new.” The CRP brought about a more attractive and environment-friendly city and restored forgotten history and culture. A totally new culture unfolded through the CRP’s success and cleared the way for a series of additional changes in the city. New pedestrian crossings were erected in major junctions, plazas were created in the most heavily trafficked areas in the center of the city, bus-only lanes were constructed and designated on major roads, a system to link bus and subway fares was launched, research into restoring other Seoul streams was launched, and other elevated highways were demolished—all as a consequence of the CRP’s success.
In addition, more than eleven Korean cities are considering or are implementing stream restoration. And the story of the CRP grabbed headlines around the globe, including in the *International Herald Tribune*, the *Asia Wall Street Journal*, BBC News, Radio France International, the *Financial Times*, CNBC, *Asahi Shimbun*, the *Sankei*, and the *Yomiuri*. The project also received international accolades, including awards from the Biennale di Venezia and the World Health Organization.

**Citizen Participation**

Depending on their economic position, local stakeholders in the CRP belonged to one of three groups: property owners, tenant-merchants, or street vendors. Property owners were happy that the value of their land would increase after the restoration due to the revitalized shopping district, improvements in natural scenery, and new urban development. However, most tenant-merchants did not like the CRP, since it was likely to increase rents or force them to relocate their shops. In fact, tenant-merchants made up the fiercest opposition to the CRP. The well-established industries of the Cheonggyecheon area were interdependent. Relocating an industry—button makers, for example—would force another industry—shirt makers—to follow. The merchants opposed the project, but eventually gave in because of political persuasion and policy promises. The third group of local stakeholders was the street vendors, to whom the city had no legal responsibility. The city provided street vendors an interim refugee in the Dongdaemun sports stadium, giving them a grace period until they found other job opportunities.

The city made a tremendous effort to reach out to these communities through the three-part implementation system. In the end, though, the restoration of the Cheonggyecheon meant a reduction in the district’s commercial area and led to the relocation of stores to which merchants and their families had been long attached. To others, particularly the street vendors, it simply meant abrupt job loss. As a result, the CRP met with a great deal of resistance. A survey among the 3,265 area merchants
reported that 95.75 percent of those surveyed opposed the CRP (Park, 2004: 118).

The biggest and the most representative anti-CRP group was the Cheonggyecheon Business Area Defenders United. The group consisted of seven shopping center merchants and twenty-one separate organizations. The organization turned out to be a rather short-lived, weak coalition, however it organized wild picketing when the CRP master plan was announced on February 11, 2003. It held several rallies during the following months.

The other major coalition, the Clothes Stores Association, held together better. Since the members of the association worked in the same industry, they had strong ties before the CRP. Also, the association’s stores were located close to the Cheonggyecheon walkways, meaning that their businesses would feel the first-hand physical and economic impact of the construction.

Both of these groups put up strong opposition to the CRP. The merchants demanded direct compensation for reductions in sales and lost parking spaces, and/or to be relocated from their current location. They also wanted to talk directly to the mayor (a demand that was later realized). In addition to the pickets, the groups gathered petitions to send to: the city council, political parties, the media, and others.

The city used a mix of strategies to foster collaboration with the opposition and the broader public. It didn’t want to squarely confront the public, but it didn’t want to passively avoid the conflict, either. Its overall strategy was to proactively sell the CRP plan to the public, while also seeking to collaborate on specific issues. Summaries of a few of the city’s particular strategies follow below.

**Choosing Counterpart.** City officials wisely avoided an exhausting confrontation with the anti-CRP groups. Recognizing that the two anti-CRP organizations thought differently, the city differentiated its approaches to them. The city chose to talk to the Cheonggyecheon Business Area Defenders United, the group with relatively weaker inter-
nal ties, and figured that it could split up the merchants’ internal coalitions. The city hoped that either Defenders United could persuade the Clothes Stores Association to collaborate with the city, or that the two groups would become alienated from each other.

**The results differed from the city’s plans.** Defenders United had weak leadership, and it collapsed by itself. The city’s political threats and economic incentives also broke down the organizations. The city promised to provide economic compensation and administrative convenience to those who joined the city’s initiatives and made it clear that relief would not be given to those who didn’t cooperate. The opposition died down gradually.

**Rationalization.** For the CRP to succeed, the city needed to do more than provide political persuasion. It also needed to back up its claims with science. The Seoul Development Institute, backed by 58 researchers, did a masterful job of collecting information and analyzing data. Its research results included case studies on city development projects; data from surveys and interviews with local merchants; benefit-cost analysis, with a B/C ratio of 1.58 (Lee and Hwang, 2004); content analysis of newspaper articles that helped to diagnose public opinion and prescribe measures that would induce positive media response (Lah, 2005a; Lah, 2005b); and statistical analysis of Cheonggyecheon industrial networks. Through SDI’s rigorous research, the project accumulated important data and earned credit from citizens, which in turn gave the general public and local merchants confidence in the project.

**The Effect of a Deadline.** The city set July 1, 2003 as the deadline for the project’s start; this was non-negotiable. Instead, local merchants could negotiate how much support, economic or otherwise they could get from the city before this date. The city utilized a “take it or leave it” strategy, and it worked effectively. The image of the mayor as a bulldozer surely helped, too.

**Information Sharing and Trust Building.** Because city officials were committed to the CRP’s success, they strove to promote the proj-
ect, listen to public opinion, share critical information, and negotiate with local merchants. Between July 1, 2002 and July 1, 2003, officials travelled to the Cheonggyecheon area at least 3,000 times (Hwang, Byun & Lah, 2005: 250). All of the information that was shared with the street-level bureaucrats was passed directly to the mayor, much to the merchants’ surprise, as is evident in the following merchant interview:

“Once when I visited the mayor’s office, I was surprised to find a report sitting on the mayor’s desk. The report included exactly what we said. Since then, I was ensured that what we say goes all the way up to the mayor and what he says comes all the way down to us.”

Local merchants’ trust grew as they realized that the statements of low-level public officials echoed what they heard from the highest-echelon decision-makers, and vice versa.

**The Leadership.** The mayor listened to people. He learned about the project’s progress in detail, through regular and ad hoc reports. Since his decisions were based on detailed information, he didn’t alter them often. Officials and merchants both knew this well, which gave the headquarters enormous leeway to pursue the CRP plan. In short, there was policy consistency throughout the entire implementation process. A few principles helped the mayor to maintain the consistency:

– Don’t offer direct compensation for those affected.

– Use oral communication. Government is different from the private sector. Public policy is not a matter to be negotiated, rather it is to be implemented.

– Provide administrative and financial assistance to merchants who want to relocate their businesses.

– Fully compensate for damages incurred during CRP construction.
– High-level decision makers should not reverse decisions made at lower levels.

The mayor also delegated de facto negotiating authority to his subordinate, the director of planning. This was particularly important, as negotiations can only see progress when parties have the authority to make final decisions (Fisher and Ury, 1983).

**Various Communication Channels.** The city government sought a number of ways to communicate with merchants and residents. The work of the Citizen’s Committee was the major communication channel. But the city’s efforts also included public hearings, an on-site complaints reception center, a presentation of the CRP outline to residents and merchants, the local representative council, a regular policy conference, official site visits, and meetings with the mayor (Table 5).

Through these channels, the city collected opinions and accepted reasonable requests, under the belief that authority, incentives, and persuasion are not the only ways to move people. Indeed, the government’s willingness to accept reasonable demands opened up people’s mind and contributed to the project’s implementation. In response to merchant concerns, the city tried to minimize the inconveniences of doing business. The parking lot at Dongdaemun stadium was opened as interim public parking for area shoppers and visitors, and shoppers were allowed to use the new Cheonggyecheon-area shuttles at no charge.

The city also provided financial assistance for old-city market improvement projects and made public loans available at a low interest rate. It also built a new merchandising complex outside of Cheonggyecheon and encouraged merchants to move to the new location.

**Conclusion: Toward Collaborative Governance**

The CRP is going to be remembered as a rare success in the history of Korean public projects. However, the two-year project will also forever be characterized by the confrontation the project sparked between the government and local merchants. The government had to continu-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Operation Frequency</th>
<th>Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Hearing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Explained CRP and collected public opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens’ Committee</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Major channel for collecting stakeholders’ opinion. Had conference with CBADU.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site Complaints Reception</td>
<td>7,200</td>
<td>Operated CRP information center and PR center. Received and managed complaints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRP outline presentation</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Presented and promoted CRP throughout the area. Collected public opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local representative council</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Met with the representatives of the four CRP area districts, including merchants, residents and district councilmen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy conference</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Had conference with CBADU leaders. Focused on specific business issues such as stores relocation, area redevelopment and business revitalization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site visit</td>
<td>3,987</td>
<td>Headquarter officials made frequent site trips. Met and talked with merchants informally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with the Mayor</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Merchants’ representatives had face-to-face conference with the mayor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Park, 2004: 128

Tously deal with the opposition of local tenants, who suffered from decreased sales and inconveniences during construction. The tenants also worried about potentially unaffordable rent increases as a result of the restoration. In fact, many had to leave the Cheonggyecheon area.

The city also had to find ways to deal with street vendors. Although street vending is illegal, the city had a public obligation to help vendors find alternative ways to make a living, as most of them belonged to the lowest economic class. Citizen groups that advocated for the handi-
capped also appealed to the government because they felt that the CRP violated the pedestrian rights of handicapped people.

Large-scale urban projects, such as the CRP, need collaborative approaches that incorporate participatory decision making. In the case of the CRP, the conflicts between the government and local merchants were never fully resolved. Though the city tried, some of its communication efforts were insufficient. For example, the Citizen’s Committee didn’t have local merchants among its members. Public hearings satisfied procedural requirements, yet it is unclear how much the project reflected the gathered public opinion. There were informal communication channels between the city government and local merchants, but could they be considered collaborative governance or participatory decision-making in the truest sense?

Collaborative governance is likely to be the dominant form of decision-making in the coming years. Without citizen input, especially from stakeholders who have direct interests in a project, cities will be unable to successfully develop urban projects. Bingham (2005) neatly summarizes the need for skills in negotiation and collaboration:

“Devolution, decentralization, and privatization all have an unintended consequence: government leaders are more dependent upon the voluntary cooperation of others to get the public’s work done. Power and authority are shared across federal, state, regional, and local governments. To do governance, government must collaborate with non-profit organizations, voluntary associations, stakeholder and interest groups, any one of which may have the power to block government officials from achieving their goals. In other words, the new governance requires new ways to engage citizens and stakeholders in the policy process: dialogue and deliberation or deliberative democracy, and also new processes for resolving conflict: negotiation, mediation, and other forms of dispute resolution.”
Stewart (2005) also suggests, “Where there is a problem, and a range of stakeholders, there are opportunities for participatory governance.” Today’s public managers, who are accountable to multiple, conflicting, and ever-changing public expectations, should consider collaborative urban governance for any large-scale project. By strengthening public dispute resolution and consensus-building methods, they can change the way they manage societal differences. This would also increase the number of choices available to public officials when they consider launching large projects (Susskind and McKearnan, 2005).

Although the Cheonggyecheon restoration project is complete, it is not a complete success. This analysis shows that even after a project is developed, the resulting system is incomplete if it is confronted by public opposition. How then should this conflict be managed? The most obvious lesson is that a public project should be completed with citizen collaboration, and strategies should be implemented to build public consensus. The CRP case reinforces the notion that public organizations should have strategies (Lipsky, 1980; Heymann, 1987; Wilson, 1989; Moore, 1995). Public organizations typically have well-planned decision making processes, yet their success depends on decisions being well received by the public. Organizations need to make the necessary adjustments as conditions warrant. McGregor (2002) suggests that ambitious projects, such as the CRP, should develop the following strategies:

- creating a political arena within which conflict can be resolved;
- managing incentives, so that the winners compensate the losers;
- promoting a powerful vision that can be embraced by the public;
- empowering an implementation organization that is capable of doing the work and accounting for progress along the way.
The case of the CRP sheds light on strategies that should be in place for urban development governance.

**References**


**About the Author**

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sity, Seoul, South Korea. He received his BA and MA from Yonsei University; his MPA from the Maxwell School of Syracuse University; and his PhD from Indiana University. He published in the fields of environmental policy and public management, including performance management, citizen participation, and conflict resolution.
Monitoring and Inspecting Public Projects through Ubiquitous Citizen Participation

Hunmin Kim
Ewha Woman’s University – Seoul, Korea

Introduction

One strategy to improve public sector performance is to encourage citizen participation, through which governance can become more democratic, user oriented, transparent, and efficient. Citizen participation can have drawbacks as well. It can be time consuming and can result in the voices of laymen overshadowing expert opinion or in the promotion of special interests rather than public interests (Crosby et al., 1986; Jones and Ranson, 1989; Redburn et al., 1980; Kim, 1997). The Public Project Quality Management OK (PPQM OK) system, a quality management system for public construction projects initiated by the government of...
Yeungdeungpo district in southwest Seoul, South Korea, attempts to minimize such drawbacks and to maximize the benefits of citizen participation. By employing a well-planned and designed system that combines information communication technology (ICT) and management techniques, PPQM OK allows for the ubiquitous monitoring and inspection of public construction projects by both experts and general citizens. This paper describes how PPQM OK works, highlighting its performance management and citizen participation systems. An analysis of the process through which PPQM OK was adopted and implemented follows, and the paper concludes with remarks about the program’s innovative strategies.

**Brief Overview and Background Information**

The Public Project Quality Management OK (PPQM OK) system was created by the Yeungdeungpo District government to address the poor quality of public construction projects, which threatened citizen welfare and undermined district governance. The system was developed through interdepartmental collaboration, and enables the systematic monitoring of public construction projects through its website. Conceived of in 2005 and launched in 2006, PPQM OK is coordinated by the district’s Audit and Inspection Services. As of December 2008, 64 projects had been or were being managed by PPQM OK.

The PPQM OK website contains construction progress reports and hosts live web cams that have been installed at project sites, allowing citizens to view the construction process in real time and post opinions. As part of the system, a 33-member Citizen Inspectors committee, composed of experts and resident representatives, conducts regular inspections on-site and online. District officials developed a manual to standardize the system’s operating procedures and to facilitate better management and wider use.

The system has saved the district money, increased the number of channels for citizen participation, and introduced greater efficiency and
transparency into public projects. The PPQM OK’s quality management functions prevent substandard construction, as well as fraud. By disclosing information about public construction projects through webcams and other channels, PPQM OK aims to increase effective and meaningful citizen participation.

PPQM OK’s success has been well recognized. In 2006, the system was awarded the Local Administration Innovation Award’s best prize; in 2007, the central government of Korea listed it as one of the top ten Innovation Brands; and it has received other awards from public and private organizations. As a testament to its success, five other Korean municipalities have replicated it, and ten others are considering adopting it. Several Asian and European countries have expressed interest in learning more about PPQM OK.

Goals of the PPQM OK System

The PPQM OK system was initiated to prevent substandard construction and corruption by making the project management process transparent and allowing for reinforcing inspections. With the stated vision of “Zero Substandard Construction, Infinite Citizen Satisfaction,” the program set up two fundamental strategies: a citizen-oriented strategy and performance-oriented strategy. The goals of the citizen-oriented strategy are to enhance citizen satisfaction, to attain trust and transparency, to increase citizen participation, and to protect public properties. The goals of the performance-oriented strategy are to enhance systematic work processes, to assure high-quality construction within public projects, and to establish a performance-based remuneration system.

With these strategies and goals in mind, tasks were assigned according to the system’s elements: citizen participation, performance improvement, and information technology. As shown in Figure 1, citizens were responsible for increasing participation and evaluation, using citizen inspectors and private-sector experts, and conducting user-satisfaction sur-
Figure 1 – Mission of PPQM OK

Source: Audit and Inspection Services, Yeongdeungpo District Government, 2008 (translated by the author).
veys. Tasks related to performance improvement include standardizing business processes, creating an operation manual, developing relevant institutions and cases, conducting on-site quality management, and gathering evaluations and feedback. Many of these tasks use computerized information technology and are processed online.

**System for Performance Management**

The PPQM OK system is an e-government program that consists of four subsystems: a project-management system, a quality-management system, a data-management system, and a comprehensive-monitoring system that is open to the public (see Figure 2). Information from each subsystem feeds into the others. The project-management system provides detailed information about project plans; design, bidding, and contracting procedures; and post-project management, such as repairs. On-site reports on construction progress are posted in real-time on the website. The bidding and contracting procedures for a project are disclosed online, assuring the transparent selection of contractors. By posting all of this information online and making transparent every step of the construction process, from planning to contracting to construction, the system helps to prevent fraudulent contracts, substandard construction, and mismanagement.

The quality-management system, which is essentially an inspection system for assuring high-quality construction, is connected to the project management system. Construction projects are audited and inspected on a regular basis, from start to completion. Contract bidding, construction progress, construction quality, and post-project management are all also subject to inspections. Inspections are made on-site as well as online. Online inspections allow more frequent and easier inspections and provide greater accessibility to inspectors. District government employees and Citizen Inspectors conduct the inspections, give penalty points for defects or low-standard work that they detect, and order specific measures to remedy them. The data-management system outlines standard
Figure 2 – PPMOK System Composition
operating procedures, technical information, case reports, and other materials related to system operation and management.

A System for Citizen Participation

The PPQM OK system’s citizen participation comes in two forms: Citizen Inspectors and a Comprehensive Monitoring Room that is open to the public. The group of Citizen Inspectors is composed of eleven specialists and twenty-two resident representatives, community members nominated from each of the twenty-two “dongs” or sub-districts of Yeungdeungpo. The eleven specialists include architects, civil engineers, electric engineers, landscape designers, and claims managers. A team of inspectors is usually composed of one resident representative from the sub-district of the project site, one or two specialists, and two officers of the district government. This type of joint inspection is unique to the PPQM OK’s quality management system.

On-site inspection reports can be readily filed through the PPQM OK website. The reports are viewed by Audit and Inspection Services, which notifies the relevant departments of actions they need to take to remedy the detected problems. Each department then reports back to Audit and Inspection Services about how it responded to the inspectors’ reports. This entire process takes less than a week. Tables 1 and 2 show the number of inspections conducted since 2005 and the number of problems identified by type of construction project during the same period.

The system’s Comprehensive Monitoring Room is accessible from the Yeungdeungpo District Government’s homepage. Information for each project is divided into the following categories: project summary, plan steps, design steps, construction steps, and support steps. The information available to the public through the monitoring room includes the project feasibility study, project design, winning contractors’ bids, project cost, time schedule, completion rates of different project parts, defects, repairs, names and contacts of people in charge, and others. At each step of the construction process, citizens can post comments, questions, or re-
Table 1 – Number of Inspections and Inspectors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Projects</th>
<th>Number of Inspections</th>
<th>Total Inspectors</th>
<th>Citizen Inspectors</th>
<th>Government Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>1396</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Audit and Inspection Services, Yeungdeungpo District Government, 2008 (translated by the author).*

quests and expect them to be promptly answered. A special feature of this cyber-monitoring room is that citizens can view the construction process in real time through the use of web cams with a 220x zoom capability, which can be rotated 360 degrees. Using all of these tools and procedures, the Comprehensive Monitoring Room makes transparent every stage of construction projects and allows citizens and government officers to monitor those projects anytime, anywhere.

The Process of Adopting and Implementing PPQM OK

The PPQM OK system introduced innovations and highly acclaimed practices. This section examines the system’s conception and implementation. Rogers (1995) divides the process of adopting and implementing an innovative program into five stages. During agenda setting, “a general organizational problem that may create a perceived need for an innovation is defined” (Rogers, 1992: 391). “Matching” is when “a problem from the organization’s agenda is fit with an innovation” (Rogers, 1995: 394). The redefining/restructuring stage is when “the innovation is re-invented to accommodate the organization’s needs and structure more closely, and the organization’s structure is modified to fit with the innovation” (Rogers, 1995: 394). “Clarifying” is when “the innovation is put into more widespread use in an organization, so that the
Table 2 – Number of Problems Identified, by Project Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Bldgs</th>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
<th>Water Management</th>
<th>Parks</th>
<th>Parking</th>
<th>Sanitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1718</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>684</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Audit and Inspection Services, Yeungdeungpo District Government, 2008 (translated by the author).

The meaning of the new idea gradually becomes clearer to the organization’s members” (Rogers, 1995: 399). During the routinizing state, the innovation is “incorporated into the regular activities of the organization, and the innovation loses its separate identity” (Rogers, 1995: 399). The development milestones for PPQM OK parallel these stages.

Agenda Setting

The change management group of Yeungdeungpo’s district government, otherwise known as the “fireflies,” had a so-called reverse brainstorming session in March 2005. In thinking about threats to the district government, the fireflies identified persistent poor-quality public construction projects as the most assured way to bring down Yeungdeungpo. This is how preventing faulty public construction became a critical issue for the district and how the idea of creating a quality management system for public projects was conceived. The PPQM OK system became more important in 2006 when it was designated an Innovation Brand by the Ministry of Public Administration and Security (MOPAS) of the central government.

Matching

To find a matching solution to the problem of poorly managed, sub-
Source: Audit and Inspection Services, Yeungdeungpo District Government, 2008 (translated by the author).

Figure 3 – Comprehensive Monitoring Room

Select an area for project list. Click a web cam to view the site of a project.
standard public projects, the district’s leaders took several steps. A team was created to conduct an in-depth analysis of the problem and to search for an effective prevention system, and a request for a system design and manual development were issued. A comprehensive plan for PPQM OK was prepared, and in April 2006, a task force was created to design and implement the program through multi-departmental collaboration.

The team assigned to analyze the problem found that the most serious problem was negligent and insufficient on-site supervision (see Table 4). The failure of contractors to perform quality management, the lack of a database management system, and the limited knowledge of related government employees were also cited as leading to fraudulent and substandard construction projects. The team also identified several items that were needed at projects: advance notices of review schedules, compilations of post-construction data, and penalties for contractors who were responsible for poor work.

Redefining/Restructuring

In adopting and implementing PPQM OK, Yeungdeungpo most needed technical and managerial knowledge. To address this need, the district held advisory committee meetings, consulting sessions with experts, public forums, and training sessions. Experts and peers conducted many educational sessions on construction, engineering, management, and ICT, etc.

One of the biggest obstacles to PPQM OK implementation was the resistance of government employees who feared negative repercussions from greater public exposure, an increased workload, and more rigorous supervision. A series of workshops and information exchanges educated employees about the system, and as they became more familiar with it, the employees realized its benefits. By emphasizing how the new system would boost employees’ performance and prevent misses or errors in their work, the workshops emphasized the system’s preventive and proactive functions rather than its retributive ones. The development of a standard operation procedure manual reinforced the civil servants’ un-
Table 3 – Milestones of PPQM OK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2005</td>
<td>Reverse brainstorming by “Fireflies.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2005</td>
<td>Prevention of substandard construction adopted as an internal innovation program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2005</td>
<td>District Mayor promises to end substandard and fraudulent construction projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2005</td>
<td>The Prevention of Substandard Public Project formed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2006</td>
<td>MOPAs designates PPQM OK as an Innovation Brand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2006</td>
<td>The comprehensive plan the PPQM OK is developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2006</td>
<td>A research project to develop the prevention system is launched.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2006</td>
<td>A task force of 23 people from 10 district departments is created.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2006</td>
<td>The Advisory Committee holds its first meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2006</td>
<td>A forum on the PPQM OK system is held.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2006</td>
<td>The system design is changed, and an operational manual is developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2006</td>
<td>The Advisory Committee holds its second meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2006</td>
<td>Experts are invited to consult on the system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2006</td>
<td>The operational manual is completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2006</td>
<td>An electronic manual for advanced functions is developed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2006</td>
<td>A detailed operation plan is prepared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2007</td>
<td>Citizens are given access to continuous monitoring through the district government homepage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2007</td>
<td>A task force is set up to oversee institutional improvement and functional enhancement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2007</td>
<td>The rules of operation are established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2007</td>
<td>The PPQM OK system is reported to the president.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2007-June 2008</td>
<td>The system is introduced to foreign governments at international conferences, through visits to Korea, and at Korean consulates abroad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2008</td>
<td>The PPQM OK Invention Patent is registered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2008</td>
<td>Regulations to reward reports of frauds in bidding and subcontracting are established.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Audit and Inspection Services, Yeungdeungpo District Government, 2008 (translated by the author).
derstanding of PPQM OK, and they became still more confident about its potential advantages.

**Clarifying**

The operation of PPQM OK became more widespread and secure as officials prepared a detailed operation plan and as they added advanced functions to the system. The advanced functions included: an electronic manual, records of design changes, daily job logs, a penalty score system, and staff profiles. In January 2007, the Comprehensive Monitoring Room opened to the public.

**Routinizing**

In its third year of operation, PPQM OK has entered the routinizing stage. The system has been rewarded for its innovativeness by public and private sector organizations. It has been replicated in five other Korean municipalities, and ten other local governments are considering adopting it. More than 100 other localities have requested materials and presentations about the system in order to benchmark it, and foreign countries want to learn more about it. PPQM OK has not been fully routinized yet, however, for it is still a relatively new practice, and its novelty has not yet expired.

**Concluding Remarks: Assessment of Strategies**

PPQM OK was developed through planning, research, and interdepartmental collaboration. The system has thus far saved 700 million KRW annually in maintenance and repair costs, and reduced the number of site visits from four or five to one or two times per week. Its successful implementation is a realization of transparent governance and is expected to prevent corruption (Kim and Park, 2008). As proof of its effectiveness, no serious construction defects have been found in the district since 2005.
## Table 4 – Identified Problems and Solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Solutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>System &amp; Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1(30%)</td>
<td>Negligent on-site supervision</td>
<td>Webcam, real-time on-site management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2(22%)</td>
<td>Absence of quality management by construction companies</td>
<td>Use of check list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3(21%)</td>
<td>Data management</td>
<td>Database management system, electronic blueprints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4(12%)</td>
<td>Lack of expertise of government employees</td>
<td>Provide professional/technical materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(15%)</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Incorporate post-project evaluation &amp; management functions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Audit and Inspection Services, Yeungdeungpo District Government, 2008* (translated by the author).

The system’s most prominent, innovative strategy is integration or holism. By taking a system approach, PPQM OK integrates planning, designing, contracting, inspecting, monitoring, repairing, recording, and evaluating into a single management system. This type of integration or holism is a frequent strategy in government. Many of the recent initiatives recognized as best practices in both the central and the local governments of Korea involve integrating services (Kim, 2006b; 2007). Meanwhile, innovative government programs in the United States, Canada, other Commonwealth countries, Asia, and the Pacific demonstrate the predominance of service integration (Alberti and Bertucci, 2006; Borins, 1998; 2001a; 2001b; Kim, 2006a; 2006b; 2007). It would be fair to say that one of the most effective ways to improve government performance is by bringing together separate procedures into a single
system. The PPQM OK system relied on the application of ICT to integrate the oversight of public construction, demonstrating the popularity of ICT in bringing about visible and tangible improvements in government performance in Korea and other Asian countries (Kim, 2007; 2008).

Another element of PPQM OK’s innovative strategy is its reliance on citizen participation. Such meaningful and effective citizen participation is common in only a small proportion of Korean government performance improvement initiatives (Kim 2006a; 2007). In this sense, PPQM OK stands out for how it assigns citizens inspection and monitoring roles. What distinguishes citizen participation within PPQM OK is the amount of information-sharing that is made possible by the ubiquitous monitoring system that permits citizens to post remarks and requests about the construction process. In addition, the monitoring system provides advanced notice of future project plans. By creating a channel for citizens to express opinions on future projects and for government officers to respond to them, serious conflicts about public projects can be prevented. However, few citizens are aware of the ubiquitous monitoring system. In fact, most citizens are uninterested in public construction projects unless they are located near their residences. Citizens have posted only about ten comments or requests to the monitoring room, and these comments were too general to have a real effect on preventing faulty construction.

The system practices some degree of devolution by giving residents inspection functions. One resident representative participates in inspections of projects within his or her sub-district. In addition this representative is typically a community member who works closely with the district government.

The form of citizen participation in the PPQM OK system seems meaningful in that it makes accessible to the public an unprecedented amount of information about the entire public construction process. That citizens can monitor project sites anytime, anywhere is a good example
of transparent and ubiquitous governance. However, as only a limited number of citizens have participated in the monitoring and inspecting parts of the process, the achievement seems more symbolic than substantive. In other words, how does citizen monitoring and inspecting contribute to the system’s goals? PPQM OK’s goals of preventing faulty construction, upgrading the quality of public projects, uprooting corruption from the bidding process, practicing proactive project management, etc. seem to be more a product of the online performance management system than citizen participation.

References


Jones, George and Stewart Ranson. (1989). “Is there a need for partici-


**Endnotes**

1 Yeungdeungpo, one of 25 districts or “gu” of Seoul, has a population of about 408,000. A district is a lower level autonomous government in the two-tier local government system of Korea. District mayors and council members are elected at large every four years.

**About the Author**

**Hunmin Kim** is the Dean of Scranton College and a professor in the Department of Public Administration at Ewha Womans University in Seoul. She received a BA in economics from Wellesley College, a Master's degree in City and Regional Planning from the Harvard Kennedy School and a PhD in Urban Planning from Harvard University. Previous to her appointment at Ewha, she was a lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania and Seoul National University. Her research works on urban and regional policy, government innovation, and public conflict resolution have been published in *The Innovation Journal, International Review of Public Administration, Korean Policy Studies Review*, and others. She has been an advisor to major public agencies such as the presidential committees, United Nations Project Office on Governance, and OECD/Korea Policy Centre. In 2011, Dr. Kim served as the first woman president of the Korean Association for Policy Studies.
Citizen Participation on the Web: The Case of ‘epeople’ in Korea

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Introduction

Brief Overview

Resolving the general public’s complaints—either individually or collectively—has been a perennial issue in Korean public administration. Since the beginning of the e-government movement, the government of Korea has actively used innovative information technologies to encourage citizen participation in government processes, resulting in a more convenient and effective way of resolving grievances and complaints.

Throughout Korean history, the government has implemented insti-
tutional measures to support an open dialogue with the public—these measures are sometimes referred to as communication channels. About 600 years ago, King Taejong in the Joseon Dynasty installed a Shin-mungo (a big drum) in front of the royal palace. Individuals could beat the drum and directly appeal to the king. The vision behind this channel was "Beat & Change" and aimed to provide administrative services to people, based on the belief that the people’s voice was the voice of God (or heaven). The creation of the Ombudsman of Korea learned from this experience and reinforced the vision of direct contact between government (the king) and the public.

Connecting people to government in the digital age has been a fundamentally different process. Rather than person-to-person contact, direct contact is created through cyberspace and the Online Citizen Participation Portal. The portal integrates all administrative agency channels whose main purpose is to provide methods for public participation (e.g., channels for civil complaint, civil proposal, and policy participation). In setting up the portal, the Korean government expects to meet the needs of citizens who want to participate in government processes.

As an indication of its influence, the portal was selected as one of the top 10 projects that changed the world of the internet and politics at the October 2006 World eGov Forum in Paris. The portal was also acknowledged as the world's first single online channel for citizen participation.

**Background Information**

The vision of former South Korean President Rho Moo-Hyun’s administration (2002–2007) was to make Korea a leader in using innovative technology in government. The Rho administration recognized that fundamental and sustainable innovation efforts were needed (for more detail, see Yoon, 2006). Such sustainable innovation strategies in large measure would target innovation through people and culture, performance-oriented changes, integrated approaches, and the use of information communication technology.
Under Rho’s “Participatory Government,” several government organizations initiated and carried out innovation and decentralization, for example, building the epeople system (see the Presidential Committee on Government Innovation and Decentralization, 2007: 35-41). The departments involved included the Office of the President, known as Cheong Wa Dae or Blue House; the Presidential Committee on Government Innovation and Decentralization (PCGID); and the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs (MOGAHA). The Blue House determined the overall direction of the reforms and coordinated the projects. The PCGID focused on planning and designing programs and projects, while MOGAHA was in charge of executing them.

**Goals of Organizations**

*Functions and Roles of the Presidential Committee on Government Innovation & Decentralization (PCGID)*

The PCGID was established on April 7, 2003, to advise the president on government innovation for national development and to devise new ways for the government to better serve the public and establish local autonomy (see PCGID, 2007a: 47-48). The committee consisted of about 30 members, including the chairman, and had an administrative office and seven sub-committees, which were called expert committees. Each expert committee gave advice on innovation projects within its jurisdiction of expertise.

The PCGID’s Innovation and Decentralization Planning Office dealt with managerial affairs and consisted of six functional teams, including the Policy and Public Relations Teams, the Government Innovation Team, the Decentralization and Finance Innovation Team, the E-government Team, the Planning and General Affairs Teams, and the Policy Research and Evaluation Team. The president selected the PCGID’s main members from among experts with knowledge and experience in government innovation and decentralization. The PCGID’s chairman appointed the members of the expert committees.
Figure 1 – Network of Innovating Authority

Identifies government innovation tasks, manages innovation tasks, manages innovation projects, prepares promotions by task, develops guidelines, inspects each ministry's promotions, monitors innovation projects, accepts promotions by task, manages government innovation tasks, manages innovation and expansion of innovation and a comprehensive evaluation of innovation promotions.

Handles innovation planning and design planning for innovation directions and strategies, management of administrative reform, manages innovation in the central administration, and manages promotion of changes, as well as provides guidance for the overall direction and encourages public organizations.

Source: PCGID, 2007a: 35
The PCGID aimed to reform the central government and strengthen local independence and accountability by improving laws, institutions, and administrative culture. Government innovation included a range of national affairs agendas. In order to fulfill its goals, the committee developed 149 national agendas in six policy areas and in late December 2006 started implementing 121 of them. In addition, the committee enacted or revised 36 laws, including the Special Law on Decentralization, the Law on Local Educational Autonomy, and the National Fiscal Law. It also executed 110 agendas that the president ordered and 22 agendas that the committee initiated of its own accord.

In short, these activities sought to encourage national development and local autonomy by reforming laws and institutions as well as clearing out old practices and culture by reforming the national and local administration.

Establishing and Executing the Roadmap Agendas

The government’s so-called innovation roadmap was an important part of the participatory government’s efforts to realize its national goals and principles (see PCGID, 2007a: 49-51). The tasks (or national agendas) included in the roadmap were selected from key areas of state affairs such as administration, personnel management, decentralization, financial tax system, e-government, and records management.

The PCGID assembled and promoted the roadmap in three steps: it collected opinions through public hearings with experts and citizen groups; it ran an internal self-selection process; and it reviewed individual government ministries’ project suggestions. Different segments of the public, including scholarly experts, citizen groups, local autonomous entities, and local research institutes were all part of the remarkable process of collecting opinions and ideas. These groups actively participated and offered their opinions not only in the official meetings, but through opinion surveys as well.

Next, the PCGID created task forces of approximately 5-6 people to
President & PCGID

- Guidelines for government reform
- Agenda setting & planning

Parities & National Assembly

- Ex. 16 units

Local Administrative Agency (with Research Centre)

- Case analysis on policy systems
- Institutionalization & legislation
- Participation and support
- Application and execution
- Planning and execution plans

Ex. 2 Local Administrative Advisory Body

- Application & execution

Ex. 232 City and Local Province

- Application & execution

Ex.2 City and Province

- Application & execution

Ex.4 Local Administrative Body

- Application & execution

President & PCGID

MAIN ROLE

NGOs

Academia

Home Affairs

Ministry of Government Administration

PCGID

NGOs & Media

Academia

Research Centre

Local Administration

Figure 2 – Roadmap Agenda: Setting And Planning

Source: PCGID, 2007a: 50
write the roadmap in detail. These teams completed the foundational work necessary to set up the basic plan, to integrate tasks that needed to be innovated, and to select key tasks to be included in the national innovation roadmap. In turn, the expert committees reviewed and discussed the plans prepared by the task forces, and the teams revised the plans, if necessary.

The PCGID again discussed the final plan prepared by the expert committees in its plenary sessions, and further suggestions were incorporated by the expert committees. Throughout this process, there was close interaction between the roadmap task forces, the expert committees, and the PCGID. The expert committees’ final roadmap was confirmed at the National Task Committee’s meeting with the president.

In short, the government went through several steps, from collecting expert/citizen opinions, to collecting basic materials, to the final confirmation process, as it developed its innovation roadmap. Throughout the process, the PCGID played a major role in guiding the process.

**Building Systems for Citizen Participation**

In the process of reforming government, the Rho administration’s first priority was citizen participation as indicated by its embrace of the slogan “participatory government.” As it made its national roadmap, the administration worked to secure the proper level of participation from stakeholders including nongovernmental organizations, government agencies, and experts. On the other hand, the administration put special emphasis on using information communication technology to promote citizen participation. As a result, the Online Citizen Participation Portal was created.

Korean e-government initiatives are generally expected to enhance transparency and reliability in public administration by providing online civil services, disclosing administrative information, and encouraging public participation (see Oh, 2002, 2006; Zittel, 2000). Administrative institutions at various levels have set up websites to encourage public
Roadmap
Accomplishment
The Execution

An agenda
By each agency
Proposed by Ministry

Proposal by Ministry

By operational time
Transfer control
Proposed by Candidate

Roadmap Deliberation
Classification and Analysis

By proponent

Plenary session

7 sectional committees

Various Social Groups

NGOs, Citizen’s Group

Expert Committee

Figure 3

Source: PCGID, 2007a: 51
participation and provide communication channels, as well as other opportunities to participate via policy discussions and surveys (see PCGID, 2007b: 216-219). Nevertheless, public use of the channels and satisfaction in the handling of the government work is quite low. In addition, institutional websites and their civil petition registration and management systems are in many cases not linked, leading to redundancy in civil tasks, reductions in work efficiency, and administrative waste.

To solve such problems, the various windows for public participation should be merged into one, much like they have been for civil complaints and public suggestions, thereby boosting efficiency in civil affairs. The administration needs to fundamentally resolve current setbacks. A truly participatory administration requires the establishment of an administrative foundation for public participation that enables participation-based policies, administration, information generation, and decision-making.

From June to September 2004, the Business Process Reengineering/Information Strategy Planning (BPR/ISP) established an online, public-participation portal, with measures to provide online services in 3 sectors: civil complaints, public suggestions, and policy participation. At the same time, officials proposed mid- to long-term plans to integrate the system step by step. By the end of December 2004, five central administration institutions, including the Ministry of Construction and Transportation, the Blue House, and the Office of the Ombudsman had begun the trial operation of an integrated system and an improved work process for civil complaints, public suggestions, and participation in policymaking.

By April 1, 2005, the Blue House’s Internet Shinmoongo (or ombudsman), which handles civil complaints; the People’s Participatory Zone, which manages public suggestions and participation in policymaking; and the Office of the Ombudsman, which processes civil complaints and public suggestions were all integrated into the Ombudsman of Korea (www.epeople.go.kr). Since August 2005, five additional ministries, including the Ministry of Construction and Transportation, have also con-
Figure 4 – Online Citizen Participation Portal

- Identify and process similar petitions at the same time
- Collect public opinion from communities
- Online community for citizen

• Online discussion
• Online public hearing and opinion poll
• Review on suggested discussion topic

- Management of follow-up measures
- Collect public opinion on the same time
- Identify and process similar petitions at the same time

- Improvements of administrative system
- Collect public proposals on the same time
- Search for public proposals
- Collect public proposals

- Public Proposal
- Policy Discussion
- Civil Petition

Source: PCGID, 2007b: 218
ducted trials, and each has been expanded and applied across all administrative units.

**Performance Activities**

The Online Citizen Participation Portal (i.e., epeople) has several distinct features that allow it to connect the public to the government. The portal’s performance, thus, varies depending on which part you are examining. (To design a proper evaluation of the portal, see Sangmyung University, 2006).

**One-stop Service for Civil Complaints and Proposals**

When citizens file civil complaints (or proposals) with the Online Citizen Participation Portal, the complaints/proposals are automatically sent to the appropriate government agencies. This removes the potential inconvenience of visiting multiple government agencies in person.

**Improved Efficiency in Administration**

Civil complaints/proposals that are filed with inappropriate agencies are digitally transferred to the relevant agencies in real-time. Civil complaints involving several government agencies are addressed jointly.

**Systemic Reform through Civil Proposals**

Civil proposals have played an important role in forming government policies/programs, and many unreasonable processes could be improved this way. In some cases, citizens may file civil complaints as civil proposals in order to initiate a review of a particular government system.

**Better Policy Participation**

Through the portal, citizens can propose an agenda and discuss it with the government. The government accepts public comments when making policies through e-forums, e-hearings, and by using e-surveys.
Overall, the portal has improved public services by upgrading business procedures and integrating the management of civil complaints and proposals, and policy participation. For example, the portal automatically identified 3,534 chronic complaints and transferred these cases to the Ombudsman of Korea, who made 48 recommendations and resolved 315 cases through settlement.

The portal’s single channel for filing civil complaints also enhances agency efficiency. The portal identified a total of 21,491 redundant complaints filed by the same people at multiple agencies, which reduced the number of unique complaints to 7,276. The portal also shortened the turnaround period for handling civil complaints from 12 days to 7.8 days, while the public’s satisfaction level for handling complaints increased from 30 percent in 2005 to 45.9 percent in 2006. The number of civil proposal and electronic hearings surged, evidence of active citizen participation.

As institutions from every level of government were able to address their civil affairs within 3.5 days (a decrease from 5.3 days), the satisfaction levels of civil petitioners went up. The portal shortened the time required to handle multiple civil petitions with inter-institutional collaboration from 44 to 22 days, further reducing institutions’ administrative burden. In addition, the portal ensured that the Office of the Ombudsman investigated repeated civil petitions about chronic problems in order to find fundamental solutions, boosting overall reliability in administrative affairs. (For a more detailed account of recent performance, see Anti-corruption & Civil Rights Commission, 2008).

Citizen Participation

What actions did the government take to promote citizen participation using information technology? The system, epeople, is the government’s online channel for citizen participation. In order to establish the proper information technology systems and encourage public participation in government processes through cyberspace, the government
needed to establish legal and institutional frameworks, and operational structures and procedures for administrative institutions (for more detail, see PCGID, 2007b: 218-219).

Starting in April 2005, the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs made it a priority to better integrate public opinions and suggestions regarding government policies and to improve on systems that were seen as unreasonable in the past. It enacted a new set of guidelines for public suggestions, including rules that outlined registration procedures, prompt inspection processes, and rewards for excellent suggestions. In addition, the Office of the Ombudsman was turned into a legally binding operational entity of the Ombudsman of Korea, which already had related organizations in place. This reorganizing resulted in new operational guidelines on public suggestions, new protocols to encourage public participation, and a work process for policy participation. The incentives for excellent suggestions were established as part of the Public Suggestion Guidelines and helped to increase the number of public suggestions. They also ensured that the public’s creative ideas were reflected in government policies and system improvements. By establishing a more complete public suggestion system and providing integrated service, the government was able to increase public participation in policymaking, leading to a higher quality process.

By June 2006, the government had integrated the public participation-related systems in all central administrative institutions, and established a database related to civil complaints, public suggestions, and policy participation. The Ombudsman of Korea (www.epeople.go.kr), operated by the Online Office of the Ombudsman, is a representative e-democracy institution that provides the public with opportunities to participate in policymaking, especially at the central level.

Up until December 2006, select local governments also started trial operations of the system. In 2007, all local governments and public institutions were expected to be using the system. These trials aimed to improve usability in order to enable all citizens to conveniently use the
services, expanding online public participation further. In addition, public participation in policymaking would be encouraged by improved accessibility and functions would be added to the system to make better use of public opinion, without burdening policymakers.

**Conclusion**

Throughout the past decade, governments at various levels within Korea have tried to encourage public participation and to build administrative governance with the hope of gaining experience and knowledge to address national or local issues (see Kim et al., 2006 and Loader, 1997). In general, there are three types of public participation in Korea: participation before a decision, participation after a decision, and participation during the process (PCGID, 2007a: 196).

The nature of the participation depends on when it takes place. Participating after a decision is made is a call to correct a government decision. Examples of this type of participation include regional referenda (national referenda in some countries), recall votes, citizen audit systems, and others. These measures are meant to hold local governments more accountable and responsible. Participation before a decision is meant to make citizens’ voices heard when governments make decisions. Examples include the participatory budgeting system, regional referenda, and others. Participation during the process allows governments and citizens to co-produce and co-supply administrative services.

Among these types of citizen participation, participation after a decision is made is the most critical to holding governments accountable and responsible, and for ensuring their responsiveness. But the cost of this type of participation is heavy. On the other hand, both participation before a decision and participation in the process can be more efficient ways to ensure civic engagement and oversight than participation after a decision. These two types of participation cost less and make participation after a decision less necessary. In order to boost these two types of participation, governments and the public should work together to build
partnerships. Such partnerships can only grow through active public participation.

The Ombudsman of Korea’s portal service (i.e., epeople) has played a major role in encouraging public participation in the form of civil applications, public suggestions, policy discussions, and involvement in the civil participation club. Civil applications and public suggestions refer to people’s complaints about unfair civil affairs management and related systems. The establishment and maturation of e-government in this regard should boost administrative efficiency. Policy discussions and the civil participation club are directly linked to participatory democracy. Citizens may propose policy issues and related information in the form of agendas in policy discussions. Meanwhile, the civil participation club enables them to organize policy discussions, exchange views, and deliver public opinion to administrative institutions in the form of civil petitions or suggestions. As of May 2006, approximately 200 civil participation clubs were in operation, a sign of active citizen participation on the internet.

Although Korean governments have vigorously sought to enhance the level and degree of public participation in government processes, such efforts do not guarantee increased public participation. It remains to be seen whether the quality of government programs has really improved and whether public satisfaction with government programs has also increased. The introduction of information communication technology has increased expectations that greater public participation will lead to more democracy in government processes. According to government data, the Online Citizen Participation Portal (i.e., epeople) seems to have helped the public gain more access to government processes; in turn, government officials may pay more attention to the public’s wants and needs. These changes mark an improvement in compassion, but has quality of life improved due to greater participation?

Many questions remain about how the internet can improve citizen participation and increase the quality of government programs. The
most important question is whether it is possible to build a so-called public sphere in cyberspace (Yun, 2008), leading to good governance based on trust among societal stakeholders. The case presented here is only the first step in the process of examining issues germane to the realization of citizen participation in cyberspace.

References


**About the Author**

**Cheol H. Oh** earned a PhD in policy studies from the University of Illinois-Urbana and served as a professor in the Department of Political Science as well as director of the Office of Government Research and Service of Arkansas State University. He is currently working as a professor in the School of Public Administration at Soongsil University in Seoul, Korea. He has written voluminous articles on knowledge utilization, eGovernment, research methodology and program evaluation, and is the author of several books on public administration in the digital society.
Citizen Participation in the Budget Process: Participatory Budgeting in Gwangju Bukgu District of Korea

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Seung Hoo Lim  
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**Introduction**

Since the resumption of South Korea’s autonomous local government system in 1991, citizen movements have tried to make local governments more responsive and more efficient. Budget issues have always been at the heart of these movements. Bureaucrats have typically monopolized the local budget allocation process and were often criticized for not responding to citizen demands. Given more power to shape their local governments, citizens demanded a more democratic and transparent budget process. One system they pursued was Participatory Budgeting, which originated in Porto Alegre, Brazil, and is considered
an effective mechanism to meet these demands.

The Bukgu (Northern District Office) of Gwangju Metropolitan City introduced Participatory Budgeting into the budget process on March 25, 2004. The district’s successful experience with Participatory Budgeting inspired other Korean cities and regions to follow their lead. As of December 2009, nearly a third of local governments in Korea, 75 localities out of 250, have introduced some sort of Participatory Budgeting program.

Five years after its introduction, has Participatory Budgeting improved the responsiveness and efficiency of its first South Korean adopter, the Bukgu Office? Has it helped citizens get the services they want, with fewer taxes? Who participates in the Participatory Budgeting processes? Do groups that were formerly underrepresented, such as the poor, have more access to budget processes now? Through which channels do they participate? This paper addresses these types of questions.

How Participatory Budgeting was Introduced and Sustained in Bukgu Office?

Before discussing the above questions, we briefly describe how the Bukgu Office introduced Participatory Budgeting. Kim Jae Kyun, the former mayor in the Bukgu Office, introduced the process in 2004. Kim had previously worked for nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and ran a local-autonomy research institute. He was also a member of the Gwangju Metropolitan City Council for 8 years. During his career, he developed close relationships with academicians and other NGOs, including the Budget Watch Network, a nationwide group of 30 NGOs that monitors local government expenditures and petitions to institutionalize Participatory Budgeting systems. A local Bukgu NGO, “Participation and Autonomy 21,” advocated for the introduction of Participatory Budgeting, and research groups at Bukgu’s Chonnam National University were also attracted by Porto Alegre’s success with the program.

Kim reviewed whether Participatory Budgeting could be introduced
in his district and decided that it was completely in accordance with his goal of citizen participation. He believed that Participatory Budgeting could enhance government transparency, improve the delivery of public services, hold civil servants accountable, and eventually contribute to a form of financial democracy. During the 2004 mayoral election, Kim pledged to introduce Participatory Budgeting into the Bukgu Office should he be elected, and after he won, he introduced the ordinance.

Since 2004, the Bukgu Office has run a Participatory Budgeting system. After Kim left the National Assembly, the present mayor, Song Gwang Woon, pledged to reinforce Participatory Budgeting during his mayoral campaign. Both mayors provided strong leadership, and the district ordinance provided a legal basis for the system’s sustainability. Public recognition also positively impacted the system’s sustainability. In 2006, Bukgu’s Participatory Budgeting was selected as one of the 10 best examples of administrative innovation in local government. In addition, scholars have studied and highlighted the Bukgu system as a successful case of democratic and transparent local government. Global recognition for the Participatory Budgeting system contributes to its sustainability. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development’s 2009 *OECD Studies on Public Engagement* includes the Bukgu case as an example of citizen engagement.

**Participatory Budgeting for Performance Improvement**

Scholars and NGOs have argued for Participatory Budgeting systems because of their potential to improve the efficiency of local governments. But such systems could also improve a government’s responsiveness. Participatory Budgeting requires turning over budget decisions to citizens who are affected directly by those decisions. In other words, Participatory Budgeting provides the basis for citizens to participate in the budget process and to decide the priorities of public projects.

To improve its responsiveness and efficiency, the Bukgu District Office tried a range of tactics: improving the quality and quantity of budget
information available to citizens and providing it in a more accessible and user-friendly format; increasing the number of budget consultations between the district office and citizens; determining district priorities through citizen participation in the formulation of budget proposals; and building public trust of the district office by increasing public participation in decision making.

The Participatory Budgeting system has improved citizens’ rights to be informed about the budget and created greater budget transparency. The number of requests for administrative information disclosure in Bukgu increased from 44 in 2003 to 591 in 2008. As further evidence that participatory activities in the budget process contribute to greater budget transparency, there were few requests for information about how and where citizens’ money was spent during the same period.

The Participatory Budgeting system also collects public opinion during the budget proposal process. As is seen in Table 1, the Bukgu Office collected 47 budget opinions from citizens in 2005, and 130 proposals in 2009. In 2005, 39 of the opinions were reflected in the official budget proposal that was sent to the local council. In 2009, 64 opinions were included in the administrative budget proposal. While the number of pub-
lic opinions included has substantially increased, the reflection ratio (defined as the number of opinions included in the budget proposal divided by the total number of opinions) has decreased, which might reflect recent limits on the budget.

The reflection ratio differs by policy area. Citizen opinions are divided into three policy categories: public management policy (including planning & coordination, administrative management, and resident autonomy), development policy (including regional economy, urban development, and transportation), and redistributive policy (including health & welfare, environment, and culture). Table 2 shows that redistributive policy opinions have a higher reflection ration than do other policy areas. The reflection ratio for redistributive policy is 54 percent, while it is only 44 percent and 31 percent for public management policy and developmental policy, respectively.

The ratio for budget allocation is similar to the ratio for budget approval. That is, in the District Council’s budget approval process, we can find a similar tendency. The council approves 76 percent of the redistributive policy budget proposal and only 51 percent and 40 percent of the public management policy and developmental policy budgets, respectively. These results roughly correspond with previous studies that have found that increased citizen participation can lead to better outcomes for pro-poor policy making (Bäutigam, 2004; Koonings, 2004; Munck, 2003).

In addition to improving Bukgu’s reflection ratios, Participatory

### Table 2 – Budget Allocation and Approval ratio by Policy Area (Unit: ₩1,000, %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Areas in Proposals</th>
<th>Avg. of Reflected Amount (Avg. Percentage of Reflection)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Policy Areas in Proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Mgt. Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developmental Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Redistributive Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>48,171 (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34,997 (31%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44,667 (54%)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>39,735 (38%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approval</td>
<td>48,596 (51%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41,043 (40%)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49,129 (76%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44,331 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Cases</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>191</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73</td>
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<td>328</td>
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</table>
Budgeting positively impacted the area in other ways. A local university studied the impact of Participatory Budgeting 3 years after it was launched by surveying citizens and civil servants who participated in the process. According to the survey, most Participatory Budgeting members had positive responses about the process, and they outlined a range of positive impacts, including a better understanding of the budget, increased transparency in local finance, more opportunities to voice their opinions, and increased trust in government. Civil servants emphasized how the system led to a better understanding of citizens’ needs, greater legitimacy in the eyes of public, and the prevention of waste (see Figure 3).

**Citizen Participation**

How does the Participatory Budgeting system enhance participation? In which stages and through which channels can a citizen participate? Can disadvantaged groups, such as the poor or women, participate in the process?

**Designing the Operational Processes for Bukgu’s Participatory Budgeting**

When it implemented Participatory Budgeting, Bukgu’s budget process increased from 5 to 14 steps and added citizen input channels (Figure 1). Citizens are now allowed to submit opinions through participatory channels until October every year. The preparatory forums on budget policies are held in August and September, and the guidelines for budget allocation are made at the same time. After collecting citizen opinions, the Bukgu Office makes the budget allocation plan and discloses the submitted budget proposals to the public. The Bukgu Office deliberates and adjusts the budget allocation plan by holding subcommittee forums and overall budget process forums, and by consulting with the District Council and the Joint Committee up until November. Finally, it submits its confirmed budget plans to the District Council for approval.
Figure 1 – Survey Results of the Impacts of the Participatory Budgeting in Bukgu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Results (2006.8)</th>
<th>The First Committee Members</th>
<th>The Second Committee Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. Increased opportunity of citizens’ participation in budget formulation period
2. Higher accepting rate of citizens’ suggestion in budget formulation
3. Increased transparency of local finance
4. Contributing for the citizens’ right to know
5. Reducing factors of budget waste
6. Increased satisfaction in budget formulation process
7. Increased satisfaction in budget formulation results
8. Improved equity of government’s expenditure
9. Increased general satisfaction with local government finance
10. Improved accountability of local finance
11. Improved capacity of citizens participated
12. Contributing to build partnership between the Office and citizens
13. Higher degree of understanding the Office’s policies
14. Higher degree of trust on the Office’s policies

Source: Chonnam National University (2006)
Figure 2 - Operational Processes of the Participatory Budgeting in the Bukgu
Channels of the Participatory Budgeting in the Bukgu

Since its launch in 2003, the Participatory Budgeting System of Bukgu has provided 3 channels of participation: the civil committee, the Local Community, and an e-budget chamber (over the internet). The Civil Committee was established at the very beginning of the process; the e-budget chamber was started in 2004; and local community was adopted in 2006.

The civil committee consists of 100 members, including one member from each local community’s autonomous resident committee who is recommended by the committee, two members from resident committees who are publicly selected, experts recommended by NGOs, and others. The civil committee installs subcommittees to collect and articulate opinions regarding budget allocation in the fields under its authority. These subcommittees also collect/integrate the opinions of residents and local communities, participate in the budget allocation process by submitting their own proposals, educate citizens about the budget by running Citizen Budget Schools, hold forums on budget policies 5 times a year on average (or up to 12-15 times a year in case of a leaders’ meeting), and participate in demonstrations of budget account settlement.

If the civil committee’s activities become formalities or end up being led by policy implementers, the entire process will not represent residents' authentic opinions. Yet, thus far the committee’s activities have been autonomous, and citizens are voluntarily participating in committee processes, using the committee’s discussion channels as a space to exchange opinions on matters that are important to their lives and that they can directly affect. The civil committee’s activities also reflect the opinions and work of citizens that don’t have specific interests, and the committee recruits citizen representatives to represent broad public interests in order to avoid having a particular group’s or region’s interests dominate the political process. Tables 4 and 5 show the demographic breakdown of committee membership.

Ordinary citizens can participate in the budget process at any point
Table 4 – Distribution of Members of 2006 Civil Committee based on Towns, Genders, and Ages


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>30s</th>
<th>40s</th>
<th>50s</th>
<th>60s</th>
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<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>66</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: This table shows the distribution of members of the 2006 Civil Committee based on their town, gender, and age. The total number of members is 100, with 66 males and 34 females. The age groups are 30s (11), 40s (38), 50s (11), 60s (40), and 70s (38).
through the Bukgu’s “e-Budget Participatory Chamber” (http://bukgu.gwangju.kr/life). This online site opened in 2004 in an effort to increase the accessibility and openness of budget-related information for the elderly, disabled and others. Another goal was to provide a convenient way for regular citizens to participate in the budget process. By institutionalizing online and in-person citizen participation, the Bukgu makes the Participatory Budgeting process more effective and efficient, which encourages further participation (Lee Seung-jong, 2005). Though opinions expressed on website bulletins are often discounted or seen as symbolic, the opinions expressed through the e-Budget Participatory Chamber are reflected in official decision making processes and are addressed in the same manner as opinions submitted through in-person participatory channels. Through the continuous management of the Bukgu homepage, advanced information technologies, aggressive Bukgu promotions, and the availability of a range of budget-related data, resident participation via the e-Budget Chamber has increased since 2004 compared to other channels. As of March 2009, citizens had posted 68 items and each page had an average of 39.5 views.

In order to expand their in-person channels of participation, 26 towns adopted Local Community in 2006. Local NGOs have consistently called for the institutionalization of participatory channels on the grassroots level as a way for citizens to input their opinions from the bottom up. Each town’s Local Community is composed of 7 to 10 members for each town, with autonomous members recommended by the town authority and publicly subscribed members drawn from citizen applications. Each Local Community collects and integrates citizens' opinions on a range of issues, including budget allocation and tax expenditures, but Local Communities have a lower status and meet less frequently than the Civil Committee. For example, the Local Community holds only 4 budget policy forums and demonstrations a year on average. In addition, most resident community members are active only in their own neighborhoods or towns (see Table 6).
Lessons from this Case

Certain factors contributed to the successful adoption of Participatory Budgeting in Bukgu. As the survey results in Figure 3 show, the system had consistent support from the local government head, public servants’ maintained a positive attitude toward the system, and citizens and citizen groups vigorously supported and participated in it. All of these factors led the Bukgu District Council to consistently improve the system.

The general purpose of the Participatory Budgeting system has been to give citizens a greater role in the budget allocation process, which had previously been the exclusive domain of executives who operated on the basis of closed, bureaucratic decisions. Changing this tradition was bound to elicit negative or passive reactions from executives. In order for the Participatory Budgeting system to succeed, officials needed to recognize its necessity and adopt a positive attitude about it. Bukgu District Office accomplished this through the strong will of its leader and by continually training officials. Particularly when the system was introduced, specialists were invited to work with officials to bring them on board.

While the Participatory Budgeting system was being introduced, District Council members were also severely concerned that the system would infringe on their authority to review budget proposals and approve the budget. The District Council has the authority to hold budget discussions and vote and enact ordinances, and their objections to the system could have been an obstacle to the system’s introduction. To

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Running a nursery</th>
<th>Self-employed</th>
<th>Housewife</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Company employee</th>
<th>Restaurant owner</th>
<th>Builder</th>
<th>Farmer</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Retired public servant</th>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Others</th>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
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### Table 6 – Distribution of 2006 Local Community Members for Each Town

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<td>9</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Planning and Inspection Bureau of Bukgu District Office (2006b).*
**Figure 3 – Factors of Successful Adoption of Participatory Budgeting in Bukgu**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Central governments support and citizens</th>
<th>Trust relationship between the Office and budget information</th>
<th>Disclosure on budgeting process and districts supporting resources</th>
<th>CSOs, supporting activities and policies</th>
<th>Citizens' general understanding of the District Office</th>
<th>Supporting activities of the District Office</th>
<th>Affirmative attitude of public officers</th>
<th>Council members' support</th>
<th>Political leaders' interest and supports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</table>

Survey Results (2006.8)

Source: Chonnam National University (2006)
overcome the District Council’s objections and to persuade opposing council members that the Participatory Budgeting system would not violate the council’s budget approval rights, new Bukgu laws were established to protect the District Council’s rights, and informational meetings were held.

The introduction of Participatory Budgeting in Bukgu has led to remarkable changes. First, the quality of budget information available to the public has improved through the publication of a handbook of budget terms and revisions in the budget proposal process that make it into a performance-based format, and by developing citizens’ capacity to analyze and influence government budgets (e.g. budget schools). In addition, the degree of public disclosure about budgets has improved through preliminary public presentations, open fora, and administration-Participatory Budgeting joint debates.

Second, the district now finalizes its budget proposal through the District-Citizen Joint Conference before submitting it to the District Council with various citizen opinions and administration reviews attached. Third, the number of preliminary and/or regular consultations between district officials and the District Council has increased in order to reconcile conflicts before the budget proposal is formally sent to the District Council.

Fourth, as the final stage of the budget process, the district now evaluates citizens’ inputs and outcomes, and awards those who have actively contributed feedback as part of the Participatory Budgeting process. Above all, the district office has improved collaboration between citizens and public officials by developing performance measures that emphasize citizen perspectives and are not oriented toward internal managerial needs but instead focus on citizens’ needs and whether or not the district office is satisfying them.

Despite its successes, the implementation of Participatory Budgeting in Bukgu, has had some negative outcomes, too. The major contention is that the Participatory Budgeting system results in poorly formed budg-
ets, because participants have insufficient experience and skill at budgeting. Critics also suggest that the system has provoked conflicts among citizens through the process of allocating limited resources. The Participatory Budgeting system also makes the budget process more time consuming and inefficient, and could simply be used as a means of justifying the mayor’s decision making.

In theory, as well as in reality, these are reasonable arguments, but the district has overcome these internal and external barriers through:

- strong mayoral leadership and educating public officials on the positive aspects of Participatory Budgeting;
- increased formal and informal dialogues and consultations between the District Council and citizens;
- the establishment of the Participatory Budgeting Civil Committee and its subcommittees as a key channel of budget deliberations;
- the operation of budget schools and workshops/forums to develop the capacity and ability of citizens;
- continuous training programs for civil servants aimed at changing their attitudes and helping them to find better ways of working with citizens;
- the institutionalization of the initiative to guarantee its sustainability;
- a series of activities that promote citizen-based assessment of the Participatory Budgeting system as a way to ensure that what is measured and reported matters to citizens.

With all of the system’s benefits and accomplishments, practitioners need to keep potential risks and challenges in mind. First, the system may increase the demand for local finances and raise citizen expecta-
tions beyond the district’s financial reality. Since local governments cannot finance every citizen demand, district officials will need to think about how to increase disposable revenues and design reasonable criteria that permit the allocation of limited resources among regions according to regional priorities.

Second, Participatory Budgeting may cause civil servants to concentrate more on short-term, technical, microscopic perspectives of local budgets rather than strategically planning for the mid- or long-term, which could negatively affect the management of local finances. Participatory Budgeting needs to begin addressing the budgetary implications of regional demographic changes and the long-term sustainability of current policies.

Third, the system may evolve to become a means of legitimizing mayoral decision making or to the point where it lacks continuous active citizen participation and civil servants fail to open budget processes and disclose information to the public. To avoid this fate, the system’s initiatives need to be institutionalized and communication networks need to be established for the regular review of citizen inputs and feedback.

Fourth, the system may widen the current gap between groups who participate in the budget process and those who can’t participate. One of the principal goals of introducing Participatory Budgeting was the more equitable distribution of public resources, so officials need to continue to work to incorporate the voices of citizens who are “willing but unable” to participate in the system.

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The International Budget Project, http://www.internationalbudget.org/


The People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy, http://eng.people-power21.org/
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Citizen Evaluation System of Public Services: The Case of Seoul Metropolitan Government

Seok-Hwan Lee
Kookmin University – Seoul, Korea

Kyungho Cho
Kookmin University – Seoul, Korea

Introduction

Brief Overview

This chapter posits that getting citizens involved in performance management produces benefits for both the local community and public managers. It also assumes that citizen participation can improve government effectiveness in two ways: (1) by evaluating the performance of government operations by surveying citizen satisfaction and (2) by continually influencing government decision-making processes.

We seek to draw lessons learned from the success story of the Seoul Metropolitan Government, South Korea. This chapter introduces the
Example 1 – Facet-specific Questionnaire Items of Subway Performance

| Train Operation: arrival and departure intervals, noise level, etc. |
| Transfer and Connection: connection time, convenience of direction map, etc. |
| Travel Environment: safety, cleanliness, etc. |
| Station Arrangements: escalators, restrooms, etc. |
| Station Services: kindness, swiftness, etc. |

government’s citizen evaluation system and examines how citizens' evaluation of government performance can improve operations. Based on this analysis, some lessons are discussed.

**Background Information**

In international administration, performance-based management—from the era of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the 1970s and the “Next Step” of Prime Minister John Major in the 1980s to Reagonomics in the 1980s and President Bill Clinton’s “National Performance Review” in the 1990s—has shifted to citizen-satisfaction management, such as Major’s ”The Citizen's Charter” and Clinton’s “Customer Service Standards.” In Korea, reform of the public sector, in particular local governments, was desperately needed to overcome the 1997 financial crisis, the nation’s worst crisis since its foundation, as well as to bolster its international competitive edge.

Under pressure to be more responsive and efficient, Seoul Metropolitan Government sought to improve its performance in all dimensions of public service. And it believed that getting citizens to rate public services was the first step necessary to improve them.

After a year of preparation, in 1999 Mayor Goh Kun implemented a system that permitted citizens to evaluate administrative services. From the outset, the system received somewhat mixed responses from parts of the city government and from external expertise. Many city officials and academics were uncertain about the effects of the citizen survey and criti-
Example 2 – Three Questionnaire Dimensions of City Hospital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Operational Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| City Hospital | Job Attitude       | - Kindness  
|             |                    | - Job competence  
|             |                    | - Willingness  |
|            | Convenience        | - Guidance availability  
|             |                    | - Treatment process  
|             |                    | - Timeliness in Treatment  |
|            | Service Quality    | - Doctor’s honesty  
|             |                    | - Consideration in Treatment  
|             |                    | - Reliability in Prescription  
|             |                    | - Cost-effectiveness in service  
|             | Facility Propriety | - Kindness in Nurse’s Treatment  
|             |                    | - Cleanliness  
|             |                    | - Comforts  
|             |                    | - Building temperature  
|             |                    | - Quality of meal plan  
|             |                    | - Parking service  |

cized the plan as too liberal and too restrictive as a means of assessing the performance of city services. Nonetheless, the forces for reinvention outweighed the conventional needs of the bureaucracy at a time of crisis, and the system was efficiently instituted.

Goals of Organization

The building of the evaluation survey model was initiated in February 1999. More than 20 scholars and practitioners from a variety of fields, including public administration, political science, and industrial psychology, met several times to clarify the key theoretical and technical issues about the survey instrument, data collection, and sampling. In March of 1999, the Board of Citizens' Evaluation, which became the Board of Quality Evaluation under Mayor Lee Myung Bak, was established and given primary responsibility for deciding and consulting on
almost every aspect of the evaluation. The board's first assignment was to select prospective professional institutions to conduct the field survey. In 1999, it selected six outside organizations from more than 15 bids, based on a full competitive rule.

At the outset, the Seoul government felt that citizens should rate public services systematically and on a continual basis. The government has carried out citizen ratings continually since the first half of 1999, and its evaluations have had three main goals: (1) to arrange quality benchmarks that can ultimately enhance customer satisfaction about the government’s six core services—civil affairs, health/medical services, waterworks, inter-city buses, subways, and trash hauling—through citizen ratings that reflect the voice of citizens; (2) to annex the results of evaluation with the improvement of services; and (3) to evaluate departments (agencies or organizations) by comparing the customer satisfaction of departments that offer similar services. The Seoul government directly annexes the results of citizen ratings with evaluations of actual results, and applies what it learns to allocating budgets and/or offering incentives.

Performance Activities and Citizen Participation Efforts

Significance of the System

The citizen evaluation system was originally designed to disclose administrative information to citizens and achieve qualitative improvement in administrative services. It also sought to achieve administrative reforms that would improve the quality of citizens’ lives and induce a paradigm shift in city governance. Also, by evaluating the satisfaction level of citizens and public officials, the system would clarify the roles of citizens, public officials, and public organizations, providing motivation to those in charge.

The management system of the growth-oriented era, which stressed the roll of the bureaucracy as the supplier of government services, needed to be completely reshaped into a more mature and sophisticated regime that focused on the interests of citizens, who, as the consumers of
government services and the government’s clients, justify the government’s existence. The necessary quantity of public services needs to be fully provided, while the quality of services is enhanced. Significant effort is required to achieve the full satisfaction of citizens.

**Overview of the Implementation and Operation of the System**

The Seoul Metropolitan Government began surveying how satisfied citizens were with the provision of public services in 1999. The evaluation procedures included: establishing evaluation plans, conducting surveys on citizens’ satisfaction levels, reporting on survey findings, establishing measures based on findings to improve citizen satisfaction levels, and establishing and promoting general plans to improve services.

In 1999, six service areas were included in the evaluation—civil affairs, health/medical services, waterworks, inter-city buses, subways, and trash hauling. The survey was administered in June 1999, and the results were documented and distributed to all department heads and elected officials. The results were also published in the national news media. The results of the evaluation were used to prepare the city's monetary incentives for 25 lower-level localities, or gus, in Seoul, and the budget for the forthcoming fiscal year. For example, the Seoul Metropolitan Government gave the five gus with the highest satisfaction scores for civil affairs monetary incentives of 10 million U.S. dollars. As part of the 2000 evaluation, the original organizational and procedural arrangements were used, but several special service fields were added to the survey: municipal hospitals, tax and fee services, public utilities, and social welfare services.

The citizen surveys aim to gauge citizens' general level of satisfaction about service quality and their satisfaction with specific facets of service. The former is meant to capture respondents' general feelings about service outcomes in a manner that allows them to be easily compared with evaluations of other services. The latter aims to collect specific information about services, especially information that could be used to solicit feedback on administrative services, such as service deliv-
Figure 1 – An Example of Portfolio Analysis About Assessment Items and Indices

![Portfolio Analysis Diagram]

Lee and Cho

ervy and service attitude. As a result, the evaluation questionnaire contains one item per service provision that looks at citizens' general satisfaction with service performance and questions pertaining to specific service delivery processes and outcomes. The item that measured citizens' general feeling on service results ("Overall, how much were you satisfied with the ××× service?") was included for another important reason. With a single item, it becomes possible to control the unknown, extraneous factors that affect valid evaluation of service quality. The overall questions also avoid possible omissions or misspecifications that come with developing facet-specific questions that ask about, for instance, “door-shuts of a subway train” “stepping convenience of subway station,” and “timeliness of inter-city bus arrival,” which are specifically relevant in evaluating subway and inter-bus system performance.

The Seoul government adopted a method of calculating a total satis-
faction score by combining the results of general satisfaction questions and facet-specific questions (See Example-1 below). While the general items were believed to measure citizens' comprehensive feelings and emotional attitudes toward a service relatively well, the specific items were helpful in understanding citizens’ views about service factors and in allowing the government to process information and understand the cognitive dimensions of satisfaction. Every facet-specific question had three dimensions to it (see Example-2). The first addressed the nature of the target service, the second specified the general dimensions of the target questions, and the third provided operational definitions for items in the general target questions.

The Seoul Metropolitan Government’s citizen-rating indices yield customer satisfaction data about services, and they are also used to create specific policy variables needed for management diagnosis. For example, the government’s citizen-rating results have introduced two variables for policy improvement—the degree of importance and the points of satisfaction—that are used in portfolio analyses (Figure 1), and information acquired through portfolio analysis is fed directly into policy.

**Targets of Evaluation**

The initial citizen satisfaction survey targeted six sectors: civil affairs, health/medicine, waterworks, inter-city buses, subways, and street cleaning. In 2000, four new service fields were added to the evaluation: the supply of natural gas, social and welfare centers, tax administration, and municipal hospitals. The evaluation has gradually expanded the services it addresses, beginning with the areas that are directly linked to citizens’ daily lives. Three years after it was first implemented, the evaluation covered 26 areas, including general hospitals and private residential apartment buildings.

**Anticipated Effects**

The new system was intended to achieve several goals. First, it in-
tended to help the government articulate its administrative goals more efficiently. Second, it intended to improve relations between citizens and public officials and to decentralize the government. Third, it intended to enhance public officials’ fiscal performance and promote their sense of responsibility. Fourth, through citizen evaluations, it intended to advance entrepreneurship by improving understanding and business competitiveness. Though the citizen evaluation system was small in scope, it proved to be a big step toward citizen participation in local government processes. It proved meaningful because it helped the government to understand citizens’ satisfaction levels and ultimately led to the provision of high-quality services.

Conclusion: Lessons Learned from the Success Story

It is possible to elicit some important lessons from the development of the Seoul Metropolitan Government’s citizen evaluation project. If applied, they can contribute to the development of effective citizen engagement that can improve performance in the public sector.

1. **Top management support and leadership are the keys to initiating citizen engagement projects with the goal of effective government operation.** The case of the Seoul Metropolitan Government demonstrates how top management can play an important role in boosting citizen engagement in performance evaluation and decision-making processes. For instance, the strong support of Mayor Goh Kun, which was reinforced by his successor Lee Myung Bak, contributed to the citizen evaluation system’s success.

2. **It is important to have a systematic design for getting citizens involved in the evaluation process.** A citizen evaluation system needs an organizational arrangement that ensures open and active participation from stakeholders, on an ongoing basis. Seoul’s detailed performance measurement system enabled public managers to make more effective decisions, thereby increasing citizens’ positive feelings toward the government’s vision and strategic objectives. An open and accountable
process for understanding citizen satisfaction was a necessary first step. In a sense, citizens are co-investors in the process and participate in order to effectively achieve a common goal. In addition to initiating citizen engagement, the public sector also needs to monitor activities to ensure that they continually move in the right direction. The above case emphasizes the importance of well-designed performance management and monitoring systems.

3. **Performance management should help public managers make important decisions.** Unless a performance management system contributes to effective decision making at the organizational level, it can be seen as just a tool to control individual members of an organization. Such a system does not provide meaningful information to the individuals or the organization. The information acquired from citizens’ evaluations should be an important source for deciding the direction of policy and the allocation of resource at all levels of government.

4. **Research centers and academic societies should help local governments set up and run performance management systems.** As it designed and created its evaluation indices, the Seoul Metropolitan Government received professional assistance from experts in the field. As part of the government, the Seoul Development Institute had an important role in designing the system and analyzing its results. The government also invited professional academic societies, including the Korean Association of Public Administration, to contribute to the system’s success.

From this example, we can conclude that it is critical for a government to partner with several entities in the field. These networks play a continuous role as facilitators and in bringing citizens together to work toward collective solutions.

Performance management in the public sector is hard. Citizen engagement is equally difficult. It requires a variety of strategies, ranging from the commitment of top management to designing effective monitoring systems. Underlying each of these efforts is the knowledge that
reforms and improvements in service require public officials responsible for delivering services to change their attitudes. Government tasks, regulations, or systems that fall short of serving the public or are prone to waste need to be restructured, and better take into consideration public opinion.

Some people may argue that relying on the input of citizens is risky, as they are often unfamiliar with government operations. It is to be noted, however, that citizens are owners, not customers, in a real sense. If they do not understand the operations of government, then the government is responsible for persuading them and helping them to understand a situation.

As Robbins, Simonsen, and Feldman (2008) argue, “ignoring citizens because of their lack of knowledge means that managers might substitute their own preferences for that of the public—or act on their heuristics about what the public wants. For many this is also unsatisfactory” (p. 564).

Operating a performance management system that incorporates citizen input is not costly, and many people agree that meaningful citizen involvement in decision-making processes is not particularly difficult (Callahan, 2007; Fischer, 1997, 2006; Lee, 2001, 2008). Governments and citizens owe it to themselves to establish together a process of deliberation in order to get consensus within a community.

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Citizen Participatory Budgeting (CPB) Implementation in Korea

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Budgeting in Participatory Democracy

The idea of participatory democracy in Korea emerged in the 1980s, and it became a political and administrative concern for governments and citizens alike after the democratic constitution of the 6th Republic was adopted in 1987. During the last 20 years, citizen involvement, of which the Citizen Participatory Budgeting (CPB) process is a part, has become an essential tool for government policy making. Indeed, among the many citizen participation tools, those that involve budgeting have been the most influential and concrete. As explored in Chapter Nine by Kim and Lim, the use of the CPB process in Gwangju Bukgu District has been one of the most successful examples.
Citizen participation in budgeting is most successful when CPB is institutionalized, as shown in both Korea and in an international context. This chapter provides an overview of the CPB process in Korea.

**CPB as an Instrument for Achieving a Participatory Government Goal**

Since the democratic constitution was adopted in 1987, most Korean national governments have made citizen involvement in the government a major issue. Between 2003 and 2008, the Rho Moo-hyun regime in particular highlighted it. Rho's administration, which was named “Participatory Government,” launched a comprehensive government innovation project, led by the Presidential Committee on Government Innovation and Decentralization, to bring about “trust and confidence” in the government. The Participatory Government put more effort into solving social problems than economic problems in order to lessen the gap between the haves and have-nots. Among the five goals of the administration’s innovation project, the work to develop a participatory administration was key to realizing people-oriented policies and establishing cooperation between the government and the people (Hwang: 45).

**Participants of Korean CPB Promotion**

Various factors played critical roles in promoting and supporting CPB in Korea. The two most influential factors were the nongovernmental participants, which were led by civic organizations, and the governmental agencies that have been used as citizen participatory-budgeting incubators.

**Nongovernmental Participants.** The push for citizen involvement in the Korean budgetary process originated from the citizen movement of nongovernmental organizations. The earliest and most influential organization was the Citizen’s Coalition for Economic Justice, which began in 1989 and consisted of several committees, one of which was the Citizen's Watchdog Committee on Government Budget Waste. This committee has played a critical role in ensuring citizen participation in
the government budgetary process for the last 20 years. Its mission has expanded to all levels of governments, central and local. The scope of its oversight stretches from tracking budget waste to anti-corruption activities, and its activities range from attending and overseeing the legislative budget committee to actively participating in street picketing and demonstrations. The committee has been awarded several prizes, such as the “Friend of the Taxpayers Award,” the “10 Best Budget Practice Award,” the “10 Worst Budget Practice Award,” and the “Budget Waste Hollow Leg (Bottomless Jar) Award.” Through its enthusiastic activities, it has accumulated a high level of knowledge, and many of its former employees currently work in government budgeting.

**Governmental Participants for CPB.** Most government agencies in the Korean central government offer citizens both online and off-line participation channels in budget preparation and implementation. In the budget approval stage, the legislative body of the Korean National Assembly opens all of its committee meetings to the public. It also institutionalizes online and off-line budget waste reporting centers and budgetary information disclosure centers.

The Ministry of Strategy and Finance (MSF) is the primary agency in the executive body that oversees citizen involvement in budgeting. MSF currently employs online participatory schemes for grievance appeal; as part of its civil service consultation center (Ombudsman); to conduct electronic surveys, quizzes, events, and discussions; to accept civil proposals; as part of its fraud-waste-abuse case report center; and as part of its unfriendliness and corruption report center.

The Budget Waste Report Center offers a hotline that is open to every citizen in order to prevent central government agencies, local government offices, and public enterprises from neglecting their budgetary duties. Center employees respond promptly to each report and appeal through fact-finding, follow-up investigations. If a reported case is verified, a budget-saving incentive bonus of no more than 30,000,000 won (roughly $30,000) is presented to the citizen reporter. By and large, all of

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Chapter Ten
these government agencies have laid the groundwork for successful CPB planning in Korea.

**The Process of Korean CPB Implementation**

The development of the Korean CPB process can be divided into three stages: the embarkation stage, the probing stage, and the expansion stage.


By the early 2000s, Korean society had come to expect full-fledged citizen involvement in every aspect of government operation. This expectation forced the Korean government to dramatically transform the traditional practices of government administration. Citizens and civic organizations had long asked for greater involvement in the government budgeting process, and the Korean administration concluded that it was time to realize the public’s desires and introduce a mechanism for citizen participation in budgeting. In July 2003, the MOGAHA proposed the “budgeting guidelines of Citizen Participatory Budgeting” for use by all local governments. A number of early adopters including the Buk-gu (Northern District) local authority of Gwangju Metropolitan City (discussed in chapter nine), the Dong-Gu (Eastern District) local authority of Ulsan Metropolitan City, Suncheon City, and the Buk-Gu (Northern District) local authority of Ulsan Metropolitan City all started CPB in the early 2000s. Of the 250 localities in Korea, these four became champions of participatory budgeting. Thus, this early period of CPB in Korea may be called the “embarkation stage.”

**Probing Stage – from 2005 to 2006: The Revision of Local Finance Law and its Enforcement Ordinances.**

The Korean government, particularly MOGAHA, proposed revising
Article 39 of the Local Finance Law in August 2005 to ensure the active involvement of local residents in the local budget preparation process. The following December, the MOGAHA subsequently announced specific CPB procedures by outlining the following instruments of citizen participation, which were designated in Article 46 of the Enforcement Ordinances of Local Finance Law:

- public hearings and informal gatherings for major projects;
- official letters and internet surveys for major projects;
- open bidding for projects;
- others needed for citizen participation specified by local bylaws;
- the chief executive of a local government may reflect the results of discussions between local residents and administrators on local budget making; and
- further information and procedures may be included in the local bylaws.

Many local authorities seriously considered institutionalizing their own CPB processes that built on these base legal provisions. The first local authority to enact its own provisions was the Daedeok-gu (Daedeok District) of Daejeon Metropolitan City, which did so on December 9, 2005. The Ansan-si of Chungnam-Do followed soon thereafter. During this early stage, only these two local authorities took action, while others probed and explored the new system of CPB. This stage in the CPB institutionalization process can therefore be called the “probing stage.”


In 2006 alone, a total of 22 localities institutionalized their local by-
laws for CPB. Among these, only one locality, Ansan-si, had adopted its bylaws before August 2006. The other 21 localities introduced their bylaws after August 2006, when the Standard Local Bylaw circulated. From 2007 to March 2008, 48 localities adopted the CPB process. In total, roughly a third of local governments in Korea, 75 localities out of 250, activated their local bylaws for CPB during this period. The circulation of the Standard Local Bylaw for CPB can thus be considered a triggering device that lead to the expansion of CPB practices.

Performance Efforts and Barriers

Performance Measures

Most localities are adopting CPB processes that are guided by Ministry of Public Administration and Security (MOPAS)’s models, thus implementation is standardized. The Korean CPB model is based on three steps: a Regional CPB Committee Meeting, a Main CPB Committee Meeting, and a Joint CPB Committee Meeting.

Regional CPB Committee Meeting. The Regional CPB Committee consists of less than 10 members recommended by neighborhood representatives and recruited through an open competition. This committee collects opinions that contribute to budget formulation, determine the priorities among sectors, and evaluate the settlement of accounts. It also chooses members to represent the region on the main CPB committee.

Main CPB Committee Meeting. The Main CPB Committee consists of around 100 members recommended by Regional CPB Committees, civic organization representatives, and members recruited through open competition. This committee collects opinions and suggestions from citizens and Regional CPB Committees. It also organizes meetings to manage local government budgetary affairs and policies.

Joint CPB Committee Meeting. The Joint CPB Committee consists of less than 15 members who are from both local governments and sit on the Main CPB Committee. This committee makes the final adjustments to the budget proposal. It reviews the opinions and information that were
collected by the Regional and Main CPB committees and inserts them into the final budget. The chief executive typically becomes the chairman of committee.

Citizen Involvement in the Whole Budgetary Process. The Korean CPB process ensures that there are citizen participation mechanisms throughout the entire budget cycle, from budget preparation to auditing via internet surveys, from on-line bidding, cyber forums, online bulletin boards, to d-budget participation corners, faxes, public hearings, off-line visits, telephone calls, seminars, and so on. The CPB Research Council is also set up to manage the citizen budget schools and budget policy seminars, and to conduct research projects.

Barriers to CPB Implementation

The introduction and implementation of the CPB process in Korea has run into many barriers. The three most critical constraints have been: the discretionary provisions of CPB adoption and implementation, the uniformed CPB module, and a lack of budgeting time.

Discretionary Provisions of CPB Adoption and Implementation. Article 39 of the Local Finance Law says, “The chief executive of localities may enact and execute the procedures for citizen participation in the local budget process as provided by the Presidential executive order.” The inclusion of the word “may” gives local chief executives the choice, the discretionary power, to enact or not enact the CPB process, according to their own needs.

A survey of Korean CPB processes shows that political leaders’ interest and support in the process are among the most critical factors to developing a successful CPB (Kwack, 2007; Kwack and Seong, 2007). Another analysis suggests that the political system’s capacity for citizen participation is the most powerful factor (Kim and Kim, 2007). For this reason, the local chief executive’s ability to disclose (or not disclose) administrative information is important. According to local bylaws, the local executive has the option of releasing administrative information. If
he/she does not release information, there is no punishment mechanism. Another institutional weakness is that the local chief executive has the power to use information gathering instruments, such as public hearings, policy seminars, online and off-line surveys, and the like. That this power is discretionary is problematic because local opinions and information should be the essential ingredient of the CPB process. Without it, the genuine CPB spirit is undermined.

To remedy these shortcomings, all clauses in local CPB bylaws should be compulsory, rather than discretionary or optional, and their wording should be changed to say “must” rather than “may.”

Uniformed CPB Module. In conforming to MOPAS’s standardized local bylaws, most localities adopt similar or regimental forms of CPB processes without seriously considering their demographic, economic, social, political, or industrial characteristics. Some don’t even consider their financial capacity. As a consequence, most localities neglect to develop a form of CPB that is suitable to their own environments; they simply imitate and modify the standard local bylaws. Urban localities should have a different type of CPB than rural localities, and localities with lower socio-economic standards should implement different CPBs than wealthy localities.

Lack of Budgeting Time. Bottom-up, participative budgeting is theoretically more time consuming and expensive to develop and administer because of its iterative process for development and coordination (Walther, 2008). The Korean CPB process is a typical bottom-up participative approach and conforms to this theory.

Benefits and Peculiarities of the Korean CPB process

Benefits of Korean CPB

In general, there are two exclusive approaches to budgeting: the top-down mandated approach and the bottom-up participative approach. The bottom-up approach gives all budget stakeholders the opportunity to participate in setting their own budgets. This approach is viewed as self-imposed and thus enhances employee morale and job satisfaction. In
general, it fosters the participative management philosophy that has proven to be efficient and effective in modern organizations (Walther, 2008). The Korean practice of CPB is an example of this approach.

The Enhancement of Participative Democracy. The citizen-oriented budgeting system in Korea improves local quality of life through active citizen participation. It is also used to realize direct democracy. Research has demonstrated that CPB in Korean localities enhanced the quality of democracy through direct and active citizen participation (Kwack, 2007; Kim and Kim, 2007; Rhee, 2005; An, 2005). In particular, an impact analysis of the CPB in Bukgu district, Gwangju Metropolitan City, an early adopter of the process, shows how it created opportunities for citizens to participate in the budgeting process, thus enhancing Korean participative democracy (Kwack, 2007).

Increase in Administrative Transparency. CPB also increases administrative transparency on a local level, by creating opportunities for citizens to watch over the budget waste-reduction process (Kwack, 2007). For example, the local government office room is open to the public, and citizens are encouraged to view local budget documents.

Enhancement of Government Trust. Everywhere in the world, including in Korea, citizenries lack trust in their governments. With the adoption of the CPB process in local Korean governments, residents have become well aware of what their governments are doing. And studies have shown, that residents’ better understanding of local policies has contributed to stronger partnerships with the government (Kwack, 2007; An, 2005; Rhee, 2005).

Improvement of Administrative Efficiency. In theory, participatory budgeting should improve government administrative efficiency and effectiveness. However, this has not yet been clearly proven with the Korean practice of CPB. Administrative efficiency and effectiveness are expected to be long-term results of the CPB process.

In closing, it is worth noting what Hazel Blears, a community secretary in a Canadian locality said in 2007, “I think the world has changed. I
think voting every four years and basically handing over responsibility and power to other people and then doing nothing again for four years, I think our democracy is not like that anymore” (Wintour:1). The CPB process in Korea started long before Gwangju Metropolitan City introduced the system in 2003. The cry for citizen participation in government administration began in the 1980s when Korea adopted a democratic system. The adoption of CPB is a token of Korean democracy.

The practice of CPB in Korea is still in its beginning stages and is likely to continue facing trials and errors; it cannot be considered a success yet, nor can it be seen as a failure. Porto Alegre’s Participatory Budgeting started on a small scale and developed over time. It took years before the public gained confidence in the process and before it produced results that were taken seriously by the city administration (Involves:5). Within three years, Korea introduced and implemented a Korean version of CPB in a third of its localities. It is expected and hoped that all Korean localities will adopt CPB and that Korea becomes a model country of participatory budgeting.

A final, cautionary note is that centrally determined budgets can undermine the participatory budgeting process. Where most of a locality’s budget is non-negotiable and determined by outside forces, the participatory process can function as a way for government to hand over difficult decisions to the people to administer (Forgue, F. and J. Turra, 2004). Indeed, as of 2004, 76 percent of all Korean governmental affairs were handled by the central government, and the remaining 24 percent was conducted by localities (PCGID:121).

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Endnotes

1 The author served as the chairman of this committee from 1999 until he was appointed to the government agency position of the president of the Korea Institute of Public Administration in 2000.

2 This award, along with “10 Worst Budget Practice Award,” was first given on March 3, 2000 during the National Taxpayers Congregation.

3 The purpose of this award was to denunciate the worst individual civil servants or agencies for wasting government funds and became a well-known public warning notice against budget waste.

4 Among them is Changsoo Jung (38), who was recruited to be a civil servant in the division of public-private cooperation of the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission in April 2008.

5 MOGAHA was replaced by MOPAS (Ministry of Public Administration and Security) in February 2008 as part of the changes implemented by the new regime of Lee Myungbak.

6 See the Appendix for the detailed dates that each locality adopted the CPB process.

7 Article 39 of Local Finance Law says, “The chief executive of localities may enact and execute the procedures for citizen participation in the local budget process as provided by the Presidential executive order.”

8 Usually the Regional CPB Committee covers the lowest administrative unit (dong).
About the Author

Yunwon Hwang (PhD, University of Pittsburgh, 1987) is a professor of public administration at Chung-Ang University, Seoul, Korea. He was the Secretary to the President for Social Policy, the Republic of Korea (1997-98), the President of the Korean Institute of Public Administration (KIPA, 2000-03), the President of the Korean Association of Public Administration (KAPA, 2004), and Vice Presidents of Chung-Ang University for External Affairs (2005-06) and An-Seong Campus (2007-08). Currently, he is an ARC/KF Senior Research Fellow at London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), UK. He has written many books and articles in public administration and budgeting.
## Appendix

### Localities Adopted Local Bylaw for Citizen Participatory Budgeting in Korea (2008. 3.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Localities</th>
<th>Si - Do</th>
<th>Si - Gun - Gu</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Haeundae-Gu</td>
<td></td>
<td>2007.7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Nam-Gu</td>
<td></td>
<td>2007.10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Dalseo-Gu</td>
<td></td>
<td>2007.7.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incheon-Si</td>
<td>Dong-Gu</td>
<td></td>
<td>2007.8.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwangju-Si</td>
<td>Gwangsan-Gu</td>
<td></td>
<td>2007.1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Dong-Gu</td>
<td></td>
<td>2007.6.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Seo-Gu</td>
<td></td>
<td>2007.1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Nam-Gu</td>
<td></td>
<td>2006.11.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Buk-Gu</td>
<td></td>
<td>2004.3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daejeon-Si</td>
<td>Si Office</td>
<td></td>
<td>2006.11.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Jung-Gu</td>
<td></td>
<td>2006.10.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Daedeok-Gu</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Ulsan-Si</td>
<td>Dong-Gu</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Buk-Gu</td>
<td></td>
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