

# Boston About Results – Performance Goals

## ***INTRODUCTION***

Mayor Menino believes that high quality City services are the building blocks for healthy neighborhoods and a successful city. For this reason, the City of Boston is continually developing new strategies that evaluate program performance, reduce costs, and deliver better services to the City's residents, businesses, and visitors.

A key component of these efforts is Boston About Results (BAR), the City's performance management program. This commitment to measuring performance allows City leaders to drive top priorities, provides decision makers with actionable analysis, and empowers the public to better understand the results the City is delivering. The City plans to expand the BAR program in FY12 through more collaboration, enhanced analytical tools, and new ways to reach the public.

## ***OVERARCHING GOALS***

As its name implies, the BAR is centered on improving results for the people of Boston. BAR achieves these results by focusing on three tightly-integrated strategies for better City management:

**Supporting the Mission:** The cornerstone of BAR is a web-based system for collecting and tracking performance data for all City departments. The data collected in the BAR system is tied to both programmatic and strategic goals – allowing City leaders to better identify how departments are working toward their overall mission. Measures are consistently refined in order help managers focus their time and attention on those areas that will best serve the people of Boston.

**Strengthening Management:** Analysts, policy-makers and senior officials use BAR data to identify trends, raise questions, and devise new management strategies. Departmental performance review meetings provide a regular

venue for senior City leaders to discuss performance and follow up on ideas to produce results. Furthermore, BAR analysis is used during the annual budget cycle to make performance-based policy and funding decisions.

**Sharing Results:** Above all, BAR represents a citywide effort to increase accountability and transparency both within government and with citizens. Performance data is published quarterly on the Boston About Results website ([www.cityofboston.gov/bar](http://www.cityofboston.gov/bar)) to clearly communicate the City's performance to constituents.

## ***BAR IN PRACTICE***

To achieve the overarching goals listed above, the information collected by BAR is analyzed and used in a variety of venues.

### **Monthly Performance Scorecard Reporting:**

Administration staff and program managers in over forty City departments update performance results monthly in the BAR database. This information is used to create web-based performance scorecards for departmental, cross-departmental, and central administration use. Departments also include a written narrative on their scorecards to provide additional context on key performance trends.

**Regular Performance Reviews:** Launched at the start of the 2010 fiscal year, the City's regular departmental performance reviews provide an opportunity for senior City leadership to review operational, administrative and financial trends with major departments. These formal meetings provide a regular opportunity for senior City leadership and department heads to use data to analyze performance, develop strategies, and track success in achieving performance goals.

**Bi-Weekly City Services Meetings:** Line managers of the Inspectional Services, Parks, Property Management, Public Works and Transportation

departments meet regularly to discuss the recent requests for City services recorded in the City's Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) system. During these data-driven sessions, performance is measured against the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for each case. The SLA defines the City's goal for on-time delivery of services to citizens.

**Annual Performance Measure Development and Approval:** The Office of Budget Management uses BAR data throughout the budget development and approval process. Funding requests and projected service delivery outcomes are informed by prior year performance results and help frame policy discussions held with the Mayor. During this time, departments evaluate their measures and strategies to ensure that the data being collected is relevant to their mission. These discussions result in an improved set of strategies, measures and targets for the next fiscal year.

**Ongoing Budget Accountability:** Budget implementation follows City Council approval. Throughout the year, financial and operational performance is monitored against the established budget plan and expected service levels, utilizing monthly revenue and expenditure variance reports and data from BAR.

### ***RECENT PROGRAM ENHANCEMENTS***

During the FY11 budget process, the City laid out several goals for the evolution of BAR over the fiscal year:

- Increasing the use of BAR data at all levels of City government;
- Enhancing on-line BAR materials;
- Further integrating data from citywide management and financial systems.

Accountability against stated goals is an important part of the BAR mission. Therefore, the BAR program offers the following progress report on the strategies being used to achieve these goals.

**Expanding the Performance Review Process:** The City has held 19 departmental performance review meetings in the first three quarters of FY11.

**Developing New Performance Dashboards:** During the course of FY11, the City embarked on a project to overhaul the BAR website and provide more tools for the public to interact with performance information. The City will deploy these new resources to the public website in FY12.

**Deploying an Improved Scorecard for Boston Public Schools:** In FY11, the City launched a scorecard for Boston Public Schools (BPS) based on the Acceleration Agenda performance measures. These measures have been highlighted by the Superintendent as vital components for rapidly improving student achievement across all grade levels and communities in the BPS system.

**Linking Strategies to Measures:** BAR provides an opportunity for departments to create measureable objectives that align with their overall objectives. In FY11, the BAR performance reports were enhanced to include the mission statement for each department. Many measures were also reworked to more clearly indicate the strategy which they support.

**Integrating Data:** In FY11, the City successfully linked its Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) system with the Automated Permitting Information System (APIS) to more comprehensively manage the delivery of services to citizens. Departments involved with building, health, and housing permitting will be able to use APIS to monitor their progress toward issuing these permits to residents and business owners.

### ***CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT IN FY12***

The City plans to strengthen the Boston About Results program by leveraging recent IT investments, connecting performance across departments, and further emphasizing the delivery of results for constituents.

**Increase Accountability and Transparency through More Navigable Reports:** The City will expand on the improvements made to the BAR public website over the course of FY12. This includes building

features which will make it easier for the public to interact with performance information, adding new public scorecards, and replacing outdated measures with the best possible performance information.

**Connect Data Sources to Improve Results:** The City is investing in a data warehouse which will connect sources of key performance information from across City departments. In the first phase, this warehouse will include constituent service request data, public safety information, permitting and inspection records, and the BAR performance database. The analytical tools that accompany this warehouse will enable managers to better understand how actions taken in one department may affect the results delivered by another.

**Promote Innovation:** Throughout FY12, the City will focus on building partnerships to promote innovation and deliver improved results. As part of the data warehouse project, the City will expand data sources available to outside partners and institutions. Beyond just providing data for analysis, these open data partnerships will be focused on developing new ideas for improving service delivery.

**Put Performance Tools in the Hands of City Managers:** During the course of FY12, the BAR program will focus on providing performance improvement tools to employees on the front lines of City services. For example, utilizing new performance tools will allow the Public Works Department (PWD) to retrieve performance reports detailed to individual PWD district yards. Working in conjunction with BAR, the Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics is planning to literally put performance in the hands of employees by deploying a new "City Worker" mobile application. This tool will allow employees to manage constituent requests while in the field using handheld technology.

**Expand Cross-Departmental Collaboration:** Mayor Menino has emphasized the importance of cross-departmental collaboration as a focus of his FY12 budget priorities. Boston About Results will support this priority by creating new performance scorecards to support cross-departmental programs, such as the Mayor's Climate Action Agenda.

**Drive Top Priorities:** The BAR program helps departments and City leaders focus on delivering its highest priority goals. For FY12, the Mayor has prioritized forming collaborations across agencies, external organizations, and the community to achieve better results. On the following page, these key FY12 goals are listed as the first step towards achieving these budget priorities. The City will commit to tracking performance against these goals on a quarterly basis using a new scorecard on the BAR website.

## Common Goals, Uncommon Results

### Boston About Results: Priority FY12 Performance Goals

The Mayor’s FY12 budget priorities emphasize the importance of citywide collaboration. The performance measures listed below reflect the City’s top priorities and the partnerships necessary to achieve these ambitious goals. To track progress against these goals, visit the BAR website at [www.cityofboston.gov/bar](http://www.cityofboston.gov/bar)

<b><i>Collaborating – Together with Non-Profits</i></b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Target</b>
Boston Summer Learning Project Participants	Schools with Boston After School and Beyond	1,500
Number of Circle of Promise families referred to LIFT programs	Advocacy and Strategic Investment Cabinet with LIFT organization	600
Youth engaged by Street Workers	Boston Centers for Youth and Families with community partners	21,500

<b><i>Collaborating – Public-Private Partnerships</i></b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Target</b>
Businesses assisted with financial or technical assistance	Neighborhood Development with local businesses	2,125
All jobs created through Office of Business Development programs	Neighborhood Development with local businesses	1,351
Residential energy assessments and energy conversion retrofits	Environment, Neighborhood Development with NSTAR and National Grid	4,400
New Parks partnerships	Parks and Recreation with various non-profit and private organizations	10
Rentable bikes available through BikeShare program	Transportation Department, Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and private vendor	600

<b><i>Collaborating – Across Departments and Agencies</i></b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Target</b>
Homeless households provided with housing assistance and/or support services	Neighborhood Development with Public Health Commission and Schools	4,825
% of permits issued online	Information Technology with Neighborhood Development, Inspectional Services, and Fire	75%
Persons served through classes or open access programs at community computing centers	Information Technology with Housing Authority, Community Centers and Libraries	7,200
Recycling diversion rate	Public Works with Inspectional Services and Housing Authority	19%
<b><i>Collaborating – With Communities and Neighbors</i></b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Target</b>
Number of police walk-and-talks	Police Department with residents and business owners	200,000
Value of NICE (Neighborhood Improvements through Capital Expenditure) approved projects	Property and Construction Management with community groups	\$250,000
% of citywide service requests completed on time	Mayor’s Office, Public Works, Transportation, Inspectional Services, Parks, Property Management, Innovation and Technology with residents and business owners	80%
% of requests submitted through mobile application	Mayor’s Office with residents and business owners	15%
<b><i>Collaborating – On Educational Opportunities</i></b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Target</b>
4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate - All Students	Schools with students, parents and families	80%
4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate - ELL Students	Schools with students, parents and families	70%
Homework assistance program (HAP) participants	Library and Schools with students, parents and families	16,000

