

ROLE 5: ASSIST ELECTED OFFICIALS OR CITIZENS

Practice 5b. Report performance: Produce and issue external periodic performance reports.

Kansas City, Missouri, City Auditor (www.kcmo.org/auditor): The City Auditor issued its first two annual *City Services Performance Reports* in March 2002 (for Fiscal 2001) and March 2003 (for Fiscal 2002), for the fiscal years that ended the previous April 30th. In several previous years starting in the mid-1990s, the City Auditor issued reports on citizen surveys and on a 1999 survey of business owners and managers (see 3b), providing performance information on satisfaction with city services, perceptions of community conditions, and priorities for services or issues that should receive future emphasis from city leaders. In March 2002, the City Auditor issued a report on a series of October 2001 focus groups of business owners and managers, providing more depth of information to complement the satisfaction and perception ratings business people provided in 1999 (see 3b). Results of the citizen surveys through 2001 were released as separate reports (the last in March 2002). Results of the 2001 survey were also included in the Fiscal 2001 *City Services Performance Report*. Starting with the 2002 survey, survey results are only being reported in the City Services Performance Report. These citywide performance report projects have taken an average of about 1,200 staff-hours each.

The Fiscal 2002 *City Services Performance Report* presents a summary of citizen survey results followed by performance information in six broad categories: streets, public safety, parks, water and sewer, neighborhood livability, and overall quality of life. A section in the report on each category includes both relevant citizen survey results and relevant indicators of service performance or community conditions. The City Auditor's Office intended for the performance information to provide balance and context for the survey data—both to be fair to city staff to address their concerns that survey results aren't a complete picture, and to be fair to citizens so that their perceptions are considered. To help determine what performance measures should be included in the report for each category, the City Auditor assembled a nine-member advisory panel, including two city management staff and seven community representatives (see 5d).

Starting in 2000, the City Auditor's Office decided to change its citizen survey rating scale from four points to five points, in order to obtain results comparable to results of citizen surveys done by the same survey research firm in up to 18 other communities in the metro Kansas City area, and to results of other cities in and near the wider Midwestern region. Each year since then, in separate reports or in the City Services Performance Reports, the City Auditor has provided benchmarking data comparing Kansas City citizen satisfaction and perception ratings with those of citizens in other communities. Graphically, the reports have included two types of comparative bar charts showing benchmarking data for a number of questions and related sets of questions allowing readers to quickly see how Kansas City satisfaction ratings compare with other cities or with its own metropolitan region. One type of chart shows Kansas City results positioned clearly within the range from lowest to highest of a group of comparison cities, with average results also shown as a comparison point. Another type of chart simply shows bars with results of individual cities, generally the other large cities from the wider region. The Fiscal 2002 report includes comparative citizen survey data from 12 other cities across the Midwest, and into the mountains and the Southwest, from Indianapolis to Denver, and from Minneapolis to

San Antonio. Also, in Fiscal 2001 and Fiscal 2002, year-to-year comparisons are reported for Kansas City results, with the 2002 report showing three-year comparisons.

The following reports are available from the City Auditor's website (www.kcmo.org/auditor):

- *Survey of Kansas City Businesses*, February 2000
- *Kansas City Citizen Survey*, April 2000
- *2000 Kansas City Citizen Survey*, November 2000
- *City Services Performance Report for Fiscal Year 2001 & Survey*, March 2002
- *2001 Business Focus Group Report*, March 2002
- *City Services Performance Report for Fiscal Year 2002*, March 2003