

Date June 5, 2006

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR THE 2005 PERFORMANCE REPORT

WHEREAS, the City of Des Moines City Council received and filed the City of Des Moines 2005 Performance Report on March 6, 2006 by Roll Call No. 06-452; and,

WHEREAS, Advancing Government Accountability (AGA) has identified several noteworthy features in the Report, including the use of art for the design and providing a transmittal letter that summarizes the positive and negatives results and accomplishments for each section; and,

WHEREAS, AGA has acknowledged the City's outstanding efforts by awarding the prestigious *Certificate of Achievement in Service Efforts and Accomplishments Reporting*; and,

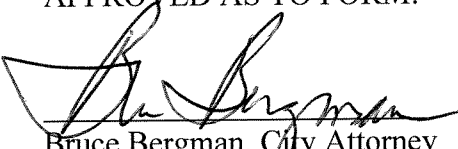
WHEREAS, by receiving the Certificate of Achievement in both 2004 and 2005, the City of Des Moines is now recognized as a leader in excellent performance reporting and serves as a model for other state and local governments;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, that the City receive and file the letter of recognition and Certificate of Achievement from AGA.

(Council Communication No. 06-340 attached)

Moved by _____ to adopt.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Bruce Bergman, City Attorney

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
BROOKS				
COLEMAN				
HENSLEY				
KIERNAN				
MAHAFFEY				
VLASSIS				
TOTAL				
MOTION CARRIED			APPROVED	
_____ Mayor				

CERTIFICATE

I, DIANE RAUH, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

_____ City Clerk



May 23, 2006

Mr. Michael Matthes
Assistant City Manager
City of Des Moines
400 Robert D. Ray Drive
Des Moines, IA 50309

RECEIVED

MAY 30 2006

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

*Advancing
Government
Accountability*

Dear Mr. Matthes:

2208 Mount Vernon Ave.
Alexandria, VA 22301

PH 703.684.6931
TF 800.AGA.7211
FX 703.548.9367

www.agacgfm.org
agamembers@agacgfm.org

On behalf of AGA's Certificate of Excellence in Service Efforts and Accomplishments Reporting program, I would like to congratulate the City of Des Moines for the excellent 2005 Performance Report. We are honored to acknowledge the City's outstanding efforts by awarding the AGA's prestigious *Certificate of Achievement in Service Efforts and Accomplishments Reporting*.

The Certificate of Excellence in Service Efforts and Accomplishments Reporting program has been established to encourage and improve performance reporting by state and local governments and to publicly recognize outstanding performance reports. The program is based on the Governmental Accounting Standards Board's (GASB) suggested criteria for reporting performance information, which address all aspects of what should be considered for a performance report. The Certificate of Achievement recognizes those reports that meet the GASB suggested criteria. Attainment of the Certificate represents a significant accomplishment by a state or local government entity and its management.

We were particularly impressed with several noteworthy features in Des Moines's 2005 Performance Report. They were:

- Improving the report's readability by using reproductions of works of art located throughout the City for the cover design and as section dividers.
- Identifying in the transmittal letter the areas for which services are presented in the report, the reasons why they are presented, the percent of the budget represented; and the overall results--positive and negative--of the services presented in the report.
- Presenting a succinct, but informative summary in the report's transmittal letter of positive and negative results and accomplishments, including the goal each result is striving to achieve; a symbol to indicate whether the results are positive, negative or mixed; and the page number in the report that presents the additional information, for each area presented.
- Explaining in the report's transmittal letter why comparisons with other cities' performance do not always encompass the same cities.



- Using side bars to present other useful information, e.g., points of contact for working with volunteer boards and commissions, conditions for which the Neighborhood Inspection division should be contacted, process for obtaining a tax abatement.
- Including a glossary that both defines and explains the significance of terms.

Recommendations for improving the report are enclosed with this letter. Also enclosed is a Scoring Sheet that identifies the reviewers' impressions of the Report in relation to the suggested criteria. It should be noted that the Program's guidelines state that receiving the Certificate requires that at least 13 of the 17 suggested criteria be fully applied and 0 criteria be deemed as not applied; and that for Des Moines' 2005 Performance Report, 14 of the criteria were considered fully applied and 0 as not applied.

A copy of the current guidelines, which include the suggested criteria, can be obtained by visiting www.agacgfm.org/performance/sea or contacting the SEA Program at SEA@agacgfm.org or 800-242-7211. A copy of the suggested criteria can also be obtained by visiting the GASB home page at www.gasb.org.

We hope the recommendations are helpful, that your interest in the program continues and that other state and local governments will follow your example in seeking and maintaining an appropriate standard of excellence in performance reporting.

We will contact you again as this review year draws to a close to obtain your evaluation of the performance report review program, ask for your insights about this experience and the value of the review team's recommendations, and ascertain your intention to again submit the City's report in order to obtain constructive feedback and public recognition.

Again, we commend Des Moines' active engagement in this pioneering effort. Hopefully, with your sustained leadership and commitment, Des Moines will continue this series of awards and serve as a model for excellent performance reporting by other state and local governments.

Sincerely,



Relmond P. Van Daniker
Executive Director

Enclosure: Review Team Recommendations
Scoring Sheet

CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE IN
SERVICE EFFORTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING
RECOMMENDATIONS

The City of Des Moines
2005 Performance Report

OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Criterion 4-Multiple Levels of Reporting. The City's web page for the 2005 report includes a link to departmental performance measures. Citing in the report that the more detailed additional performance information is available on the Internet would increase the likelihood it is accessed and thereby increase readers' understanding of Des Moines' performance. (This recommendation was made last year.)
2. Criterion 5-Analysis of Results and Challenges. The report's introductory letter presents the key results for each of the twelve core issue areas, which includes plans for addressing negative performance (pages 4-5). Using the letter to present other significant challenges facing the City would further readers' understanding of the City and its overall condition. (This recommendation was made last year.)
3. Criterion 9-Resources Used and Efficiency. The annual budget and costs per resident or household were presented for a few (e.g., pages 18, 22, 26) but not all services. Nor were measures that related costs to outputs or outcomes (efficiency measures) presented. These types of measures would be helpful for evaluating both the amounts of resources used to provide the various services and the efficiency and cost-effectiveness with which the resources have been used.
4. Criterion 11-Comparisons for Assessing Performance. The report presents prior years' and other cities' performance as benchmarks for comparing Des Moines' performance. Establishing and presenting target results for the measures would provide another way in which Des Moines can demonstrate accountability for performance. (This recommendation was made last year.)
5. Criterion 13-Aggregation and Disaggregation of Information. The report presents citizens' satisfaction with the various City services disaggregated by areas within the City (e.g., pages 10, 15, 19, et. al.). Disaggregating the results for at least some of the objective measures presented would enable the report to present possible variations in actual (in contrast to perceived) performance among areas, and thereby avoid the possibility of misleading readers about the levels of performance for specific groups.
6. Criterion 14-Consistency. The transmittal letter states that the report "does not report all results from all services" but instead presents measures based on feedback from the community and residents' participation in the citizen satisfaction survey (page 3). Identifying the measures presented for the first time and measures no longer reported

would increase readers' confidence in the objectivity with which measures for reporting performance are reported.

7. Criterion 15B-Easy to Understand. The eight areas presented in the report are summarized in the report's transmittal letter (pages 4 and 5). Explaining why the titles of the areas are printed in different colors would increase readers' understanding of the report.
8. Criterion 15B-Easy to Understand. The report presents results using both narrative and charts (pages 10-11, 14-15, 18-20, et. al). Some of the charts present explanatory information rather than results, which might lead readers to question their significance (e.g., Times Traveling To and From Work, which identifies the times when people are traveling rather than how long it takes them to travel to work-page 31). Differentiating between charts reporting results and those presenting explanatory information would avoid reader confusion.

Likewise, some results are reported in the narrative, but not with charts. These results are easy to overlook among the considerable explanatory information (e.g., acres of parkland per 10,000 residents-page 10; average time to bring violations into compliance, number of junk and debris violations-page 15). Consideration should be given to using some means, e.g., boldface, to highlight the results reported in the narrative as to assure not to be overlooked.

9. Criterion 16-Regular and Timely Reporting. The report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2005 was issued February 20, 2006. Issuing performance reports closer to the end of the fiscal year to which they pertain, e.g., no later than six months after the end of the fiscal year, increases the likelihood that the information will be used for decision-making.

RECOMMENDATIONS PERTAINING TO THE REPORTING OF INDIVIDUAL MEASURES

1. The report states that in regard to the quality of fire protection, the City "still out performs the other cities" (page 39). Measures are provided for persons served by a fire station, response time to calls, number of arrests for arson and number of elementary school students benefiting from fire and life safety education programs. Presenting measures for fire suppression would increase readers' understanding of the City's performance regarding the quality of fire protection.

Des Moines--2005
Scoring Sheet

Criteria No.	Criteria	Reviewer #1	Reviewer #2	Reviewer #3	Average score	Number of reviewers scoring 2 or above	Number of reviewers scoring 0
1	Purpose and scope	3	3	3	3.00	3	0
2	Statement of major goals and objectives	3	3	3	3.00	3	0
3	Involvement in establishing goals and objectives	2	2	3	2.33	3	0
4	Multiple Levels of Reporting	3	3	3	3.00	3	0
5	Analysis of results and challenges	3	3	2	2.67	3	0
6	Focus on key measures	2	3	3	2.67	3	0
7	Reliable information	3	1	2	2.00	2	0
8	Relevant measures of results	2	3	3	2.67	3	0
9	Resources used and efficiency	2	2	1	1.67	2	0
10	Citizen and customer perceptions	3	3	3	3.00	3	0
11	Comparisons for assessing performance	1	1	1	1.00	1	0
12	Factors affecting results	3	1	2	2.00	2	0
13	Aggregation and disaggregation of information	3	3	2	2.67	3	0
14	Consistency	1	2	1	1.33	1	0
15A	Easy to find and access	3	3	3	3.00	3	0
15B	Easy to understand	3	2	3	2.67	3	0
16	Regular and timely reporting	1	1	1	1.00	0	0
	Totals	41	39	39	39.67		

Summary

Number of criteria scoring 2 or above	<u>14</u>
Number of criteria scoring below 2	<u>3</u>
Number of criteria not addressed at all, i. e., scoring zero	<u>0</u>