



City Feature:

West Palm Beach, FL

Using data to improve employment outcomes

The Opportunity

As the oldest city in the Miami metropolitan area, West Palm Beach is a regional hub of industry and tourism. The City has seen dramatic growth over the last couple of years, and Mayor Jeri Muoio is driving efforts to use data for effectively growing the city into a place where people love to live and work.

A champion of increasing the use of municipal data in daily processes, Mayor Muoio has led the City to create its first strategic plan in many years. The plan's development drew on the expertise of senior leaders and outside stakeholders to craft a cohesive vision for the City, supported by key performance indicators, goals, and supporting metrics.

Departments in West Palm Beach are responsible for determining targets based on historical data, or regional benchmarks when local data may be sparse. However, city staff had often described themselves as overwhelmed by the new glut of information coming at them, and they lacked the tools to incorporate it into their day-to-day processes.

To help address these challenges, Mayor Muoio asked What Works Cities (WWC) to work with her team to improve the City's ability to deliver results for its residents by making data more consumable and readily available for residents and city departments.

Our Work Together

WWC experts at the [Center for Government Excellence](#) (GovEx) at Johns Hopkins University, [Results for America](#), and the [Sunlight Foundation](#) worked with the West Palm Beach team to help ground the City's goals in data, specifically by inventorying, prioritizing, releasing, and maintaining those data.

What Works Cities and West Palm Beach worked together to make data more accessible for residents and city departments.

Summary of Key Accomplishments

This work in open data lays the groundwork for the city to incorporate data and evidence in further aspects of its decision-making. Together, WWC and the City of West Palm Beach worked together to accomplish the following:

Deliver results for residents by making the City's data more consumable

- The City developed an open data policy, incorporating leading best practices, to establish a framework for proactively publishing municipal data and sharing it with residents.
- Beyond a public policy, the City drafted and adopted an internal data governance policy for identifying, reviewing, and publishing data, ensuring departments can better access and draw on each other's data as a resource in decision-making.
- The City established a data governance team to help manage its open data program. The team includes key departmental stakeholders and staff who will act as coordinators for their departments' data. The committee has begun convening regularly to review the quality and value of city data and to make decisions on how to prioritize and release those data. Initially, this will expand the availability of city data for internal and external uses, but can also be used in future data-cleaning and performance analytics projects.
- The City completed a first inventory of its available data sets—including key public safety data—and began a review and gaps analysis to understand the quality of existing data and what has not yet been collected.

What's Next

With this work, West Palm Beach has taken critical steps to equip staff with the tools necessary to use data and evidence in day-to-day processes and, ultimately, to deliver improved results for residents. The City should continue to build on this work by publicizing its open data policy, and bringing community members into the continued development of its open data program. Further, the City should expand its data inventory to include other departments, and advocate that departments across City Hall use it more extensively.