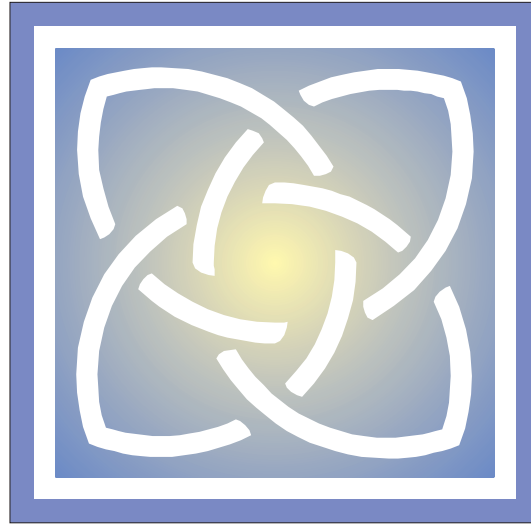


The Coordinating Council of Broward



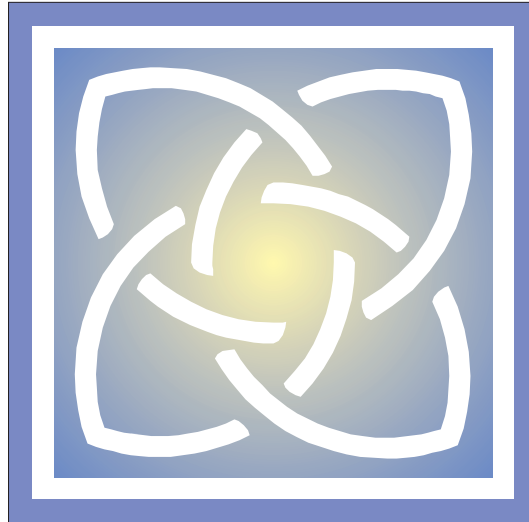
The Broward Benchmarks

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

February 1998



The Coordinating Council of Broward



The Broward Benchmarks

1300 South Andrews Avenue, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33316
Phone: (954) 462-4850 Ext. 210 FAX (954) 523-8309 E-mail: ccbrp@bellsouth.net



Council Members

Frank V. Sacco, CEO (Chairman)
Memorial Healthcare System

Jeffrey H. Atwater, Market President
NationsBank, Broward County

Johnny Brown, District Administrator
Department of Children & Families-District 10

Janet Craft, VP/GM Florida
Bell South Business Systems

Roger Desjarlais, County Administrator
Broward County Government

James Garver, President/CEO
Broward Economic Development Council

Daniel Gordon
Bateman, Gordon & Sands Insurance

Kim Gorsuch, Acting Manager
Department of Juvenile Justice-District 10

Will Holcombe, President
Broward Community College

Mason Jackson, Executive Director
Broward Workforce Development Board

Kenneth C. Jenne, Sheriff
Broward Sheriff's Office

Kathy Koch, President
Ambit Marketing Communications

Edith Lederberg, Executive Director
Area Agency on Aging

Robert MacConnell, President/CEO
United Way of Broward County

Jasmin Shirley Moore
Multicultural Advisory Board

Jack L. Moss, Sr. Vice President
Florida Fun Train

Bill Norkunas, Director
Disabled Assisting the Disabled

Frank R. Petruzielo, Superintendent
School Board of Broward County

David L. Roach, Senior Administrator
Broward County Health Department-District 10

Gary Rubin, Executive Director
Jewish Federation of Broward County

Thomas H. Shea, Managing Principal
Right Management Consultants

Wil Trower, President/CEO
North Broward Hospital District

Bishop Thomas G. Wenski, President
Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami

STAFF

Robert A. Burton, President/CEO
Renée Pravda, Office Manager
Sasha Midyette, Secretary

The Coordinating Council of Broward

1300 South Andrews Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316



Dear Broward Residents:

The Broward Benchmarks break new ground by telling us how well the needs of all our residents are being met. Are our children getting the education they need to become self-sufficient and think critically? Do we feel safe in our homes, communities and workplaces? Does Broward have the jobs we need to prosper? Are we able to afford good healthcare? Is our air clean and our water supply adequate? Is our local government telling us what outcomes it gets from taxpayer-funded programs? *The Broward Benchmarks* answer such questions—and suggest where improvement is needed to better serve our people.

The Coordinating Council of Broward is working to challenge all of us to become more informed about our community as we work collaboratively to enhance the Quality of Life in Broward. This report is intended to establish a baseline for measuring our progress towards such an improved Quality of Life. *The Broward Benchmarks* will be produced on an annual basis, which will facilitate a more focused approach to identifying areas of strength and priorities requiring improvements as we reach our established goals.

The Broward Benchmarks can serve as a model to encourage our local communities and citizens to form a more constructive partnership with government to improve our quality of life. We must work together to build a better, stronger Broward County, neighborhood by neighborhood.

As you review this document, you will see from the goals that our work has only just begun. All of us who care about the future of Broward County must get involved in helping to progress towards achieving the quality of life goals for our community. The Council hopes that these benchmark goals will help focus public attention on what needs to occur to make our community an even better place to live and work.

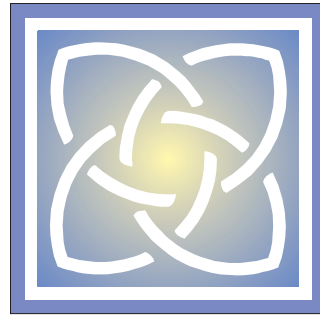
I would like to thank everyone who contributed in the preparation of this first edition of *The Broward Benchmarks*. The countless hours you have devoted has moved us forward toward improving our community.

Please accept my invitation to use this information to challenge all of us to an even higher standard of performance in the days ahead.

Sincerely,

Frank V. Sacco
Chairman





Introduction

What do you want Broward to be in the dawn of the next century? Where should rates of crime and employment and graduation be? Better? Yes, but better than what? This is the role of benchmarks – to frame accurately where we were, where we are, and where we’re going.

Broward’s unique universe has been divided into seven areas that touch all parts of our lives. These areas are further divided by sections and topics. Ultimately, each topic has benchmarks which are measured past and present with future targets – our goals for Broward. If these goals are reached, our community will be better – measurably better - in specific ways. They will be safer, better educated, and more. However, if the numbers move in the wrong direction, we will know clearly that change is needed.

We are already seeking to involve local agencies in using benchmarks and tying their budgets to these outcomes. This process may suggest budget shifts to effect better results in areas of greater public concern. Costly programs that don’t work will be revealed, prompting new approaches to the problem.

Citizens won’t have to rely upon vague instinct about what’s going on in our county. In the information age, knowledge is power. This report is intended to arm citizens in their battle for a better Broward County.

Every successful business has a plan that management is accountable for attaining. Benchmarks are Broward’s plan for where we must go. All of us should be held accountable for achieving our goals. Benchmarks will report those outcomes in clear ways and will help citizens fairly judge how well we are doing and, by inference, how effectively we are using our resources.

We all have a role in making Broward a better place to live.

At the same time, we hope that you will look at the total picture of how Broward is doing and decide how you can contribute. Take a look and get involved!

BACKGROUND

Designing and compiling this initial report has been a two-year project of the Quality of Life Committee of The Coordinating Council of Broward, but this work-in-progress document is the work of many. The general public, the business community, universities, constituency groups, government agencies and others all have contributed. They share our excitement about the prospect of a document which will provide specific information about conditions in our community.

Initially, The Council examined existing statewide benchmarking such as Oregon’s *Benchmarks*, and similar work being done in Duval, Leon and Hillsborough counties. The greatest contribution came from the Florida Commission on Government Accountability to the People (GAP Commission).

This is a work-in-progress. Several indicators in this edition of *The Broward Benchmarks* are without data because it is currently unavailable, currently being analyzed, or because existing information is either invalid or untrustworthy. However, we have chosen to include them because the need for the data is so compelling. By their inclusion we hope to encourage the availability of this information for future editions of *The Broward Benchmarks*. You also will note that the initial column presents statewide data for each indicator where the data was meaningful and available.

One salient gap in the Benchmarks presentation is that of

the multicultural composition of the resident population of Broward, and how to represent the cultural and linguistic complexity obscured by data that is categorized in blocks of white and non-white, white and black, or white, black, Asian, Native American and Hispanic. These are categories that do not fit the reality of Broward County, a county that grew from 1,255,488 to 1,438,228 from 1990 to 1996 (Census).

This is clearly a critical issue, as diversity is not so simple as language and origin, but encompasses myriad cultural beliefs and ways of being, experiences, expectations and priorities. Its significance is lived in all domains: health, education, employment, communication, safety, laws and governing. Recognizing the complex composition of Broward’s growing populations in the next Benchmarks edition will more fully inform those who would set goals and develop interventions toward improved quality of life for everyone living in Broward County.

PRELIMINARY PRIORITIES

The Council has selected 36 preliminary priorities to focus efforts on the community’s most critical needs. Criteria for choosing these priorities were 1) supported by benchmark data, 2) the severity or frequency of the problem, and 3) the significance of the impact on our community’s desire to achieve the maximum quality of life for all Broward citizens. The preliminary priorities identified by The Council are presented in the following section.



APPLICATIONS

The Broward Benchmarks will be of use to at least five groups.

1. **Citizens** who wish to participate in improving their communities will use the information and concrete measures of outcomes to shape public opinion needed to help make Broward a better place to live, work, and retire.
2. **Public officials and business executives** will use the Benchmarks as a basis for setting priorities and allocating resources.
3. **Cities and neighborhoods** can develop their own benchmarks as a guide to address short and long-term problems locally.
4. **The Coordinating Council of Broward** will use the Benchmarks as a starting point for focusing the community on system performance and accountability. To what extent are local programs and activities geared toward reaching the outcomes and goals in the Benchmarks?
5. **Provider and Service Agencies** can use the Benchmarks as a constant reminder of the bottom line. Citizens want employment, not just job training programs; skills for the workforce, not just a high school diploma. Local agencies need to show how their programs and services help improve that bottom line. They need to demonstrate that tax dollars and private resources are being used to benefit the daily lives of Broward residents. In short, they need to be results-oriented.

SCOPE

The Council selected issues that affect Broward broadly and can be easily understood. We looked for benchmark measures that were both compelling and actionable.

The Benchmarks measure results, not efforts (job placements, for example, not number of persons trained). A few definitions can help us through the language of performance measurement.

- **Inputs** tell us the volume of resources used to produce services or achieve a goal. Most often inputs are measured by dollars or number of staff. This is the traditional frame of reference for line-item budgets.
- **Outputs** are measures of services and products, such as number of children vaccinated, voter turnout or quantity of waste recycled.
- **Outcomes**, the indicators The Council has strived to emphasize, tell us how we have benefited in some way from services provided. Examples of outcomes are throughout this document and include water and air quality, unemployment rate, student achievement and citizen trust in government.

It is tempting to measure inputs because they are easily obtained. However, inputs, such as dollars or number of teachers or law enforcement officers, tell us only about our commitment. We need information about what really counts: the results of our commitment. In some cases, you will see benchmarks that do not measure outcomes. Examples are class size or people without health insurance. Ideally, what we want to know is whether students are learning and whether people are healthy. These other measures are included because we believe they illuminate important ele-

ments in our understanding of the issues.

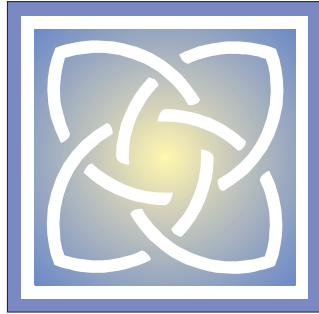
We encourage you to read the endnotes for each benchmark before you try to interpret the numbers. The endnotes explain what has been measured and provide information that will help you understand why each benchmark has been included. The endnotes are also useful for those of you who want additional detailed information about a topic; you will find the data source listed for each benchmark.

BENCHMARKS, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Benchmarking is an evolutionary process. The first edition will also change over time and circumstance. Access to information will improve. Conditions and priorities will change. We will need to adopt new benchmarks or drop old ones. We invite your comments and suggestions. Should topics be added or dropped? Could the format or wording be made clearer?

We hope that the potential of the approach is evident here. We invite your use of this exciting tool for improving our community at large.





Preliminary Priorities

PRELIMINARY PRIORITIES

A)

MOST OFTEN MENTIONED - ALPHABETICAL LISTING



AIDS



Crime, Juvenile



Environmental Issues



Growth Rate - Infrastructure



Healthcare Access (Indigent and Hidden Populations)



Homelessness



Housing, Affordable



Infant Mortality



Jobs, Better Pay and Benefits



Life Cycle Job Training



Mental Health, Access to



Public Transportation



School Overcrowding

Guidance, Internship

Independent Living

Injuries, Unintentional

Jail Overcrowding

Job Creation

Literacy, Adult

Low Birth-weight Babies

Mental Health, Adolescents

Nursing Home, Access to Quality

Poverty Level, Percentage of Population

Recreational Facilities

Re-development

Relations (Race, Cultural, Religious)

School to Work Programs

Substance Abuse

Suicide Rate

Teenage Unemployment

Unwed/Teenage Motherhood

B)

OTHER MENTIONED PRIORITIES - ALPHABETICAL LISTING

Abuse, Elderly

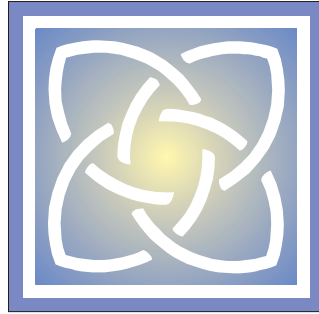
Business Development

Crime Rate

Day Care, Subsidized

Domestic Violence





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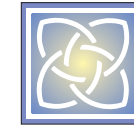
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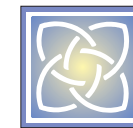
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