

**Can E-Government Promote  
Civic Engagement? A study of  
local government websites in  
Illinois and the U.S.**

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# **CAN E-GOVERNMENT PROMOTE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT?**

## **A study of local government websites in Illinois and the U.S.**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Civic engagement consists of knowledge, discussion, interest and participation in public affairs – in government and politics, policy issues, and the community. Recent trends have emphasized greater involvement of both citizens and nonprofit organizations in governance and public policy. The internet offers convenient and flexible access to information about government and community affairs, as well as a channel of communication with public officials. Recognizing this, the Obama administration has prioritized the use of federal websites to increase government transparency and citizen input.

Local government websites, however, have unique opportunities to connect citizens with *both* government and community (neighborhood organizations and nonprofits). Representing the level of government closest to citizens, city websites may also facilitate face-to-face interaction between citizens or between citizens and government. **This study examines the websites of the 20 largest cities in Illinois and the 75 largest cities in the U.S., ranking them according to features that could be expected to encourage civic engagement.**

Previous studies concerned with civic engagement and local e-government have concluded that there is scant evidence of democratic participation online at the local level. We argue that it is time to take another look, however, as many of these studies are several years old and preceded the development of social networking, blogs, RSS feeds, email alerts, and other interactive tools. Moreover, many researchers have defined civic engagement rather narrowly, in terms of online deliberation. This is one important aspect of civic engagement on the web. But, the information capacity of the internet is also critical for civic engagement, and we argue that local government websites can promote knowledge about government, policy, and the community, including awareness of offline participatory opportunities.

Toward that end, we examine the information on local government websites as well as opportunities for participation both online and offline. Additionally, we assess the transparency and accessibility of the websites. More specifically, the list below details the types of information we coded in a content analysis of these 95 websites.

### INFORMATION

- Government officials, duties, and organizational structure
- Government processes, laws, and regulations
- City policies and performance information, including budgets and audit reports
- Neighborhood data and resources
- Neighborhood and nonprofit organizations

### PARTICIPATORY OPPORTUNITIES

- Contact information for public officials
- Offline events sponsored by the city, such as hearings

- Offline events, volunteering, donating or other activities involving neighborhoods and local nonprofits
- Online interactive tools such as blogs, comment forms, electronic town meetings, or social networks
- Online customization of information search – signing up for email alerts and newsletters, RSS feeds.

#### **ACCESSIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY**

- Information that is up-to date, private and secure
- Access to information through online search, transactions, and downloading
- Language and disability access

Based on the above criteria, we ranked the websites on civic engagement overall. We also created rankings for the subcategories of: organizational information; processes and regulation; neighborhood information; policy and performance information; information for offline participation; online interactivity and participation; and transparency and accessibility. Differences across categories reveal some trends, where local governments as a whole are stronger or weaker in their promotion of civic engagement.

For the overall rankings, the 75 largest U.S. cities receive between 53 percent and 96 percent of possible points on the civic engagement index with an average score of 78 percent. The five highest-ranked U.S. cities meet at least 90 percent or more of the civic engagement criteria, and the top 10 cities achieve at least 85 percent.

**The 10 highest-ranked U.S. cities are: Seattle (96%), Phoenix (95%), Louisville (93%), San Francisco (92%), New York (92%), Boston (88%), Virginia Beach (87%), Chicago (86%), San Jose (86%), and Columbus (85%).** With a few exceptions, most of these top cities are fairly large, although they also include places that are known for participatory cultures, and for the presence of technology firms.

How do Illinois city websites stack up? The overall average score of 66 percent is lower for Illinois cities than for the 75 largest U.S. cities (78 percent). This partly reflects differences in size; only Chicago is large enough to appear on both lists. Yet, there are some Illinois cities that score quite well. Size does not completely determine rankings on civic engagement. Naperville’s first-place website edges slightly past Chicago’s, even though Chicago is well-ranked nationally.

**The top 5 Illinois cities exceed the national average, and they are: Naperville (87%), Chicago (86%), Aurora (82%), Champaign (79%) and Elgin (78%).** The top five cities include the state’s largest local government, satellite cities within the Chicago region, and a university town.

A comparison of the 75 U.S. and 20 Illinois cities shows that Illinois cities on average score a little lower in most areas, other than organizational information. The summary table below shows differences across the categories we tracked.

<b>CIVIC ENGAGEMENT INDEX</b>			
<b>COMPARISON BETWEEN 75 LARGEST U.S. CITIES AND 20 LARGEST ILLINOIS CITIES</b>			
<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>75 U.S. CITIES</b>	<b>20 ILLINOIS CITIES</b>	<b># OF ITEMS</b>
	<b>(Average)</b>	<b>(Average)</b>	<b>IN CATEGORY</b>
Overall Score	78%	66%	74, 78*
Contact Information	95%	89%	12, 16*
Organizational Information	63%	65%	3
Processes and Regulations	75%	64%	11
Neighborhood Information	99%	85%	2
Policy and Performance Documents	95%	66%	8
Offline Participation Information	86%	78%	12
Online Interactivity & Participation	55%	46%	13
Transparency and Accessibility	67%	52%	13

\*No city manager – 74 points possible rather than 78

The largest gaps between the Illinois and U.S. scores are in policy and performance documents. Online interactivity and participation was the category with the lowest average scores, for both U.S. and Illinois cities.

Local government websites provide a fair amount of basic information about government that is important for engagement (as well as accountability).

- The most common information on government allows citizens to contact officials, find city departments and agencies, attend or follow the results of council meetings and public hearings, and examine municipal codes, budget documents, financial audits, and press releases or major speeches.
- Video presentations of council meetings, which are widespread, have the advantage of allowing citizens to more fully experience the discussions and debates within meetings.
- While the posting of government information is “one-way” dissemination from governments to citizens, most local websites, including the smaller cities in Illinois have advanced beyond a

simple phone directory approach to e-government to include substantive documents and records of council meetings.

- Local government sites almost universally include both descriptive and policy information on their neighborhoods. Between 40-60 percent of local government websites have various types of information on nonprofits and charities, including appeals to participate in events or fundraising.
- Information about how to participate in political processes is also present on local government websites, including links for elections and voting, and announcements for council sessions and public hearings.
- There are opportunities for citizen input, although this is generally between individual citizens and government officials through complaint forms or surveys rather than through collective deliberation.
- Online interactivity has improved since earlier studies. For large U.S. and Illinois cities, downloadable information and online transactions are nearly universal.
- Customization of information through email alerts, online newsletter subscriptions and (to a lesser extent) RSS feeds is also common.
- Web 2.0 is generally underutilized for interaction, with a small minority of cities using social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. This may be a temporary phenomenon, for cities will likely need time to experiment with these new media and to decide how or whether they contribute to citizen knowledge and participation.
- There is almost no trace of deliberative democracy online, however, as measured through discussion boards or electronic town hall meetings. Seattle provides video of many offline town hall meetings, and both Seattle and Bloomington, Illinois use discussion boards for citizen input. Council members and mayors in many cities have blogs, but these resemble online diaries rather than serving as platforms for comments from residents.
- Local governments in general could do better on accessibility for individuals with disabilities and for non-English speakers. This is particularly true for Illinois cities, although this is an area for improvement nationally as well.

Overall, there is some progress in the use of websites for information, online transactions, and for community information, in comparison with earlier studies. This research demonstrates a great variety

of information provided by local government websites, and less development in terms of newer Web 2.0 tools and online deliberation.

A number of questions for further research emerge from this study. While this research examines the categories of information provided on local websites, more needs to be known about the quality of that information – for example, whether policy analyses are provided on major issues, and whether they are made available before decisions are made by government officials. Government websites can facilitate but not create citizen engagement, and so it would be useful to understand the extent to which citizens use these features on local government websites, and whether they affect knowledge, discussion, interest and participation. Finally, these rankings raise questions about why some cities outperform the others, and further analysis is needed to understand the factors associated with higher rankings on the civic engagement index.

## INTRODUCTION

The past few decades have witnessed substantial shifts in the relationship between citizens and government, toward what has often been described as “governance.” The idea embraces interaction between the state and civil society – that is, more involvement of citizens in decision making, as well as a larger role for voluntarism and organizations such as nonprofits in the delivery of services or public policy (Pierre and Peters 2005; John 2001; Denters and Rose 2005; Stoker 2000; Peters 2001). At the same time, the development of information technology has affected the way that government interacts with citizens. E-government is “the delivery of [government] information and services online via the Internet or other digital means,” (West 2000, 2) and may also include opportunities for online political participation. Technology has the potential for increasing government openness and transparency, as the Obama administration has emphasized. It can also promote greater citizen access to information and services online, and enhanced communication between citizens and government through e-mail and Web 2.0 applications such as blogs. Digital government has the potential to support collaborative governance, including the dissemination of information about volunteer efforts, neighborhood groups, or other civic initiatives. In an era of networked governance, information technology can provide critical linkages to connect government with citizens and civic partners. **This study examines the extent to which the information and communication opportunities on local government websites facilitate civic engagement.**

Civic engagement refers to *involvement in the public sphere*, broadly construed (Bennett 2008), and it is particularly important to examine the role of local government websites in facilitating such citizen engagement. Local government is the level closest to citizens, and arguably the site where multisectoral governance has had the most impact. Nonprofit organizations and volunteer efforts have long supported local service delivery, and residents are often organized in block clubs, district councils, and community-based development organizations (Provan and Milward 1995; Berry, Portney and Thomson 1993). Local government websites may facilitate civic engagement through information and opportunities for participation, including:

### INFORMATION

- Government officials, duties, and organizational structure
- Government processes, laws, and regulations
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- Neighborhood and nonprofit organizations

### PARTICIPATORY OPPORTUNITIES

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- Online customization of information search – signing up for email alerts and newsletters, RSS feeds.

#### ACCESSIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

- Information that is up-to date, private and secure
- Access to information through online search, transactions, and downloading
- Language and disability access

This report explores the extent to which local government websites offer information and participatory opportunities online, based on an examination of the websites of the 20 largest cities in the state of Illinois, and the 75 largest cities in the U.S. The report presents rankings and raw scores for both sets of cities in the following categories: overall civic engagement; contact information; organizational information; processes and regulation; neighborhood information; policy and performance information; information for offline participation; online interactivity and participation; and transparency and accessibility.

While researchers have studied various aspects of government websites (West 2004a; Musso, Weare and Hale 2000; Ho 2002; Moon 2002), conclusions about the use of e-government for participation have been relatively bleak. There are persuasive reasons for a current reassessment of local government practice.

First, previous studies have often defined participation in terms of collective deliberation online, through devices such as discussion boards or electronic town hall meetings (Ho 2002; Moon 2002). Such forms of deliberative democracy have been advocated as a means to engage citizens and improve public policy (Dryzek 1980; Barber 1984; Fishkin 1993). Information technology can potentially widen the networks of individuals involved in such deliberation by reducing the costs of participation, such as time and effort. But, it is important to acknowledge broader issues in civic engagement, including the significance of *information* for knowledge and interest regarding public affairs. Information online may also be provided to mobilize individuals for participation offline. The criteria used in this study include



more information measures than in previous research and also encompass neighborhood and voluntary engagement as well as citizen participation in government.<sup>1</sup>

Second, some scholars have predicted that participatory opportunities online would grow with the further development of e-government (Ho 2002; Moon 2002; Layne and Lee 2001). This suggests that local governments will gain experience in the use of technology and find new ways to promote online democracy. Still another factor may be the progress of technology itself. A notable advance within the past few years is the emergence of “web 2.0,” or the interactive web, which allows for: 1) the customization and sharing of information through RSS feeds, tagging, real-time audio chats, Twitter, email alerts and social networks; and 2) the creation of content through blogs, podcasts, wikis and online videos. To what extent have these new online tools affected the possibilities for promotion of civic engagement through local government websites? Most of the research that has evaluated local government websites was conducted nearly a decade ago (Musso, Weare and Hale 2000; Ho 2002; Moon 2002). West’s (2004) work on the 70 largest U.S. cities is the most recent available, but still preceded many recent tools.

Before presenting the results from the city websites, we discuss the aspects of civic engagement that are applicable to e-government and prior research on the topic, particularly for local government. We then explain the methodology used in this study and present the results. We include some examples of noteworthy practices drawn from city websites, as well as the scores and rankings for U.S. and Illinois cities. Finally, we discuss the findings by characterizing trends among the cities, gaps in practice (especially for Illinois cities), and directions for further research.

## **FACETS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FOR E-GOVERNMENT**

What, exactly, constitutes civic engagement – in particular, what is meant by “civic”? *Civic engagement is focused on public concerns (Bennett, 2008) and includes both political involvement (in government policy or political institutions) and community involvement (in associational or voluntary activities or institutions).* Some political scientists differentiate cooperative and public-spirited civic engagement from political and policy-oriented activities, which are conflict-laden (Verba and Nie 1972; Uslaner and Brown 2005). Yet, many observers have referred to civic engagement as primarily concerned with politics, policy or the legal status of citizenship (Norris 2001, chapter 11; Mossberger, Tolbert and McNeal 2008, chapter 3; Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley 2003; Brint and Levy 1999), or as related to *both* politics and community (Mettler 2002; Jennings and Zeitner 2003; Keeter et al. 2002; Bennett 2008; Putnam 2000). Other scholars reject a dichotomy between politics and community or conflict and cooperation, for they view deliberation and collective problem-solving as the ability to listen to the positions of others and to build consensus around conflictual policy issues (Dryzek 1980; Barber 1984). While elections and neighborhood watches undeniably have different dynamics, for the purposes of this study, both are public in their aims. We define the objects of civic engagement as political institutions (such as governments and elections), policy, and community association.

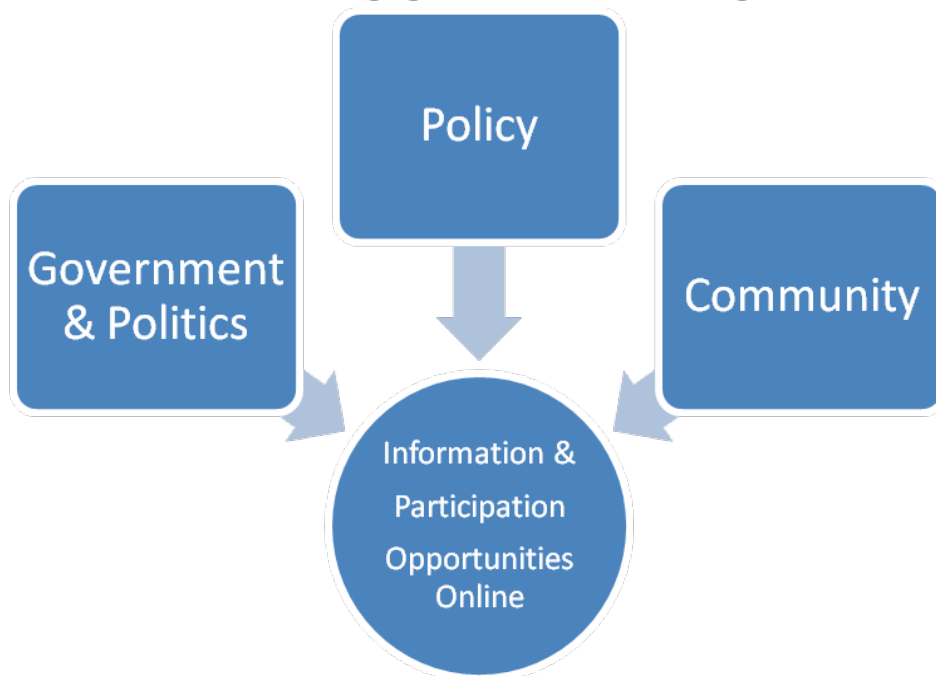
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<sup>1</sup> Musso, Weare and Hale (2000) also included some information on neighborhood, nonprofit, and political organizations in their analysis of California local government websites. Their study, which compared the prevalence of services and civic engagement, provided a good model to adapt for our purposes.

There are multiple aspects of civic engagement as well, and both information and participation are critical to examine in the case of e-government. Authors differ on how to conceptualize the relationship between information and civic engagement, but there is a consensus on its significance. Civic engagement for some can be understood as providing a foundation for participation. Mossberger, Tolbert and McNeal describe civic engagement as consisting of knowledge, interest, and discussion. Norris (2001) defines civic engagement as knowledge, trust, and participation. Similarly, Jennings and Zeitner (2003) measure it in terms of both behaviors and attitudes, including media attentiveness (knowledge), political involvement (political participation), volunteerism (civic participation), and social and political trust. Micheletti (2006) views active information-seeking on an issue or candidate as a form of participation.

The online environment of e-government could plausibly enhance knowledge of government, policy, and community through the provision of *information*, and could promote *participation* through information about activities or events offline as well as through communication online. Participatory forms of communication on local government websites might include individual citizen-initiated contact (such as e-mail or online comment forms), collective feedback (through online surveys or the posting of survey results), content creation and sharing through social media (such as Facebook or Twitter), requests for customized information (such as email alerts or online subscriptions) or online discussion (through blogs that allow comments, discussion boards, or electronic town hall meetings).

**Figure 1. Elements of Civic Engagement for Local E-government**



## WHY STUDY CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH *LOCAL* E-GOVERNMENT?

There are contradictory trends in local e-government that could either promote or inhibit use for civic engagement. First, the emphasis on localism in theories of civic engagement suggests shared interests between citizens and closeness between government and citizens. On the other hand, e-government is less technically sophisticated at the local level, and local government websites are less frequently visited than state and federal sites.

Civic engagement is often described as a local phenomenon (Bennett 2008). John Stuart Mill referred to local governments as schools for democracy, and the American ideal of civic republicanism is embedded in the town hall meeting of colonial New England. In practice, city government is more accessible to citizens than state or local government, due to both proximity and scale. In recent years, participatory budgeting and planning processes have been encouraged by professional organizations such as the National League of Cities.<sup>2</sup> Experiments with civic engagement in community policing and school reform have emphasized neighborhood involvement in Chicago and many other cities across the country (Fung 2004; Briggs 2008). Likewise, the City of Seattle has promoted inclusive and participatory neighborhood planning with technical support and grants (Sirianni 2009), and the City of Minneapolis has had a neighborhood engagement process for 20 years (see description of NRP under results for Neighborhood Information).

Although the internet does not feature the same face-to-face interaction afforded by offline forms of local participation, the internet may still support civic engagement in different ways, including by mobilizing or supporting local face-to-face interaction. While skeptics like Putnam have warned that the internet may in fact diminish the trust and social capital that are necessary for civic engagement, there is little rigorous empirical work that supports such a conclusion. Early studies portray frequent Internet users as socially isolated (Nie and Erbring 2000) or less likely to volunteer, trust, or spend time with one another (Putnam 2000, 479). Yet Putnam's arguments were based on a market survey with a nonprobability sample, and the Nie and Erbring study did not use multivariate analysis to probe other possible explanations for their results. Some subsequent multivariate research concludes that online participation through bulletin boards and chat rooms does not build social trust (Uslaner 2004). But, some former critics later argue that changes in technology and its more widespread use have produced positive outcomes for participation (Kraut et al. 1998; Kraut et al. 2002). Overall, more recent studies have revealed some positive effects of the internet for social trust or volunteering. Experiments conducted by Price and Capella (2001) demonstrate that online discussions can enhance social trust, as well as political knowledge and interest. One analysis of national survey data indicates that those who spend time interacting frequently with people whom they know only online do in fact develop generalized social trust (Best and Krueger 2006). Shah et al. (2005) discover that online information seeking and messaging about political and civic issues leads to greater community voluntarism. Further, there is some evidence that e-government increases positive attitudes toward government, including trust and confidence in government (Welch, Hinnant and Moon 2005), particularly at the local level (Tolbert and Mossberger 2006).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>See Democratic Governance projects at the National League of Cities (NLC) website at [http://www.nlc.org/resources\\_for\\_cities/programs\\_\\_\\_services/697.aspx](http://www.nlc.org/resources_for_cities/programs___services/697.aspx)

<sup>3</sup> Some research has suggested an association between e-government use and attitudes toward government, including trust. E-government has been proposed as a reform that can increase citizen trust and confidence in government through greater transparency and better services, in part reversing the decline of the past few decades (Norris 2001, 113). The evidence on whether e-government promotes trust is mixed, as many factors

Just as cities have promoted civic engagement offline, there are some noteworthy forays into civic engagement online at the local level. Perhaps the most famous is Santa Monica's Public Electronic Network (PEN) during the 1990s. In 2000, Moveon.org collaborated with Berkeley, California's city government to host electronic town meetings on the comprehensive plan (see Mossberger, Tolbert, and Stansbury 2003). As detailed later in this study, Seattle's website provides support for offline participation in the neighborhoods, and Minneapolis is using the internet for citywide transparency and neighborhood involvement. Yet, these examples tell us little about more general patterns.

## **LOCAL E-GOVERNMENT: USE AND PRACTICE**

E-government is a common activity online, and local e-government use differs somewhat from the use of other government websites. About 59 percent of internet users have looked up information from a federal, state, or local government website, according to a December 2008 survey conducted by the Pew Internet and American Life Project.<sup>4</sup> In Chicago in 2008, 49 percent of residents and 65 percent of internet users had visited the City of Chicago website. This is slightly lower than the 57 percent of city residents (76 percent of Chicago internet users) who have used any e-government website, and is consistent with prior national surveys that showed that local e-government use was lower than traffic on federal and state websites.<sup>5</sup> National surveys show that African-Americans and women are more likely to use local government websites (Larsen and Rainie 2002), although e-government users overall are more likely to be white, male, young, and better-educated (Larsen and Rainie 2002; Hart-Teeter 2003). In Chicago, there are no statistically significant differences in local government website use based on race or ethnicity; women, parents, and younger and more educated Chicago residents are more likely to use the local government website. This is more inclusive than the general patterns for e-government use in Chicago, which fit prior national trends (Mossberger and Tolbert 2009).

The majority of local governments have some type of web presence (around 87 percent even in 2002, according to Norris and Moon 2005). Local governments with larger populations tended to be the first adopters of e-government (Musso, Weare and Hale 2000; Ho 2002; Moon 2002) and cities with council-manager governments were also among earlier adopters (Moon 2002). In his study of websites in the 55 largest U.S. cities, Ho found that cities with websites that were primarily administrative in content had less experience with e-government and had higher minority populations (in contrast to cities with information-oriented or user-oriented approaches). The sophistication of local web sites tends to lag behind other levels of government, in terms of online transactions and the use of a single portal (Norris and Moon 2005). West (2008) recently criticized state and federal agencies for being slow to adopt interactive Web 2.0 features on their websites, so local governments may be expected to utilize these new tools at an even lower rate.

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influence trust in government (see Nye 1997). Technology use may affect citizen perceptions because of increased transparency, opportunities for democratic participation, efficiency and effectiveness, responsiveness, responsibility (for privacy and security), and government accessibility (Tolbert and Mossberger 2006). Welch, Hinnant and Moon (2005) found support for improved trust and confidence in government; Tolbert and Mossberger (2006) for improved trust at the local level only; and West (2004b), McNeal, Hale and Dotterweich (2008) found no relationship between e-government use and trust. More consistently, however, studies have revealed other positive attitudes toward government as a result of e-government use (West 2004b; Tolbert and Mossberger 2006; McNeal, Hale and Dotterweich 2008).

<sup>4</sup> See trend data at [www.pewinternet.org](http://www.pewinternet.org)

<sup>5</sup> According to Hart-Teeter (2003), the percentage of U.S. internet users who had visited government websites was 59 percent for federal government, 54 percent for state governments, and 43 percent for local governments.

While most researchers acknowledge democratic participation as a goal of e-government, they have not found widespread support for this goal in content analyses of local government websites (Musso, Weare and Hale 2000; West 2004a; Ho 2002). There are multiple goals for e-government, including more efficient service delivery as well as communication with citizens. Musso, Weare and Hale (2000) compared the content of 270 local websites in California, asking whether they had either an entrepreneurial (efficiency) or participatory approach. To measure participatory orientation, they examined contact information for elected and administrative officials, and links to other governmental, nongovernmental, neighborhood, and interest group organizations. They found that the majority of these early local websites had no clear orientation of any type, but where one existed, it was more likely to be entrepreneurial. Less than 20 percent of the cities had links to neighborhood groups or other organizations in the community. In their sample of 35 exemplary websites, 7 facilitated online discussion through chat rooms or electronic bulletin boards (Musso, Weare and Hale 2000). A more recent study of the 70 largest U.S. cities measured various forms of "public outreach" online and found that 78 percent of cities had email contact information for administrators or elected officials, 20 percent allowed the posting of comments, and 10 percent allowed users to register for email updates. Interestingly enough, the posting of comments online was down from previous years. In 2002 and 2003, 36 percent and 35 percent of cities had a comment area on the website. Other than the use of email contact information, there is little to suggest widespread attention to civic engagement. In his study of the 55 largest U.S. cities, Ho concluded:

. . . only a few cities engage citizens in online policy dialogues or partner with community organizations to strengthen citizen participation at the neighborhood level. Some basic features of public accountability and citizen empowerment, such as performance measures of public services, online discussion groups, or information about grassroots organization activities, are seldom found in city Web sites. Hence, the question of how to move beyond the focus on customer service is another challenge for cities' effort to reinvent government through information technology. (Ho 2002, 441)

Local government websites are not unique in this respect. All levels of government have utilized the internet more for service delivery than for online participation (Chadwick and May 2003). In part, this may be because the participatory model challenges existing administrative practices and institutions to a greater extent. This is not a technical issue alone, but also a matter of institutional change. There are many demands for implementing a more participatory model of government well, both online and offline. Local governments with participatory traditions worry about the extent to which they can or should monitor and censor online discussions because of libel (Mossberger, Tolbert and Stansbury 2003). Apart from this, effective interaction requires speedy and frequent responses from local government. A participatory approach entails information, feedback, and response in a meaningful dialogue online (Welch and Fulla 2005). This places new demands on government, with more complex and long-term requirements beyond traditional citizen engagement through public hearings. Moon (2002) has argued that local governments are likely to increase online participation with more experience. He has posited five stages for e-government, with the participatory stage as the most demanding. In a related vein, Welch and Wong (2004) find that national government websites become more transparent and interactive over time. The features we measure in this study are related to transparency, offline participation, and online interactivity, so it is possible that some improvement will have occurred in comparison with previous studies.

## **METHODS**

This report examines the potential for local e-government to facilitate civic engagement through a content analysis of the official websites of the 20 largest Illinois cities and 75 largest U.S. cities (as measured by population). Appendices A and B contain a list of the U.S. and Illinois cities ranked by population. Prior studies have identified large cities as the leaders in local e-government, so an assessment of the largest cities may be more likely to reveal cutting-edge practices in civic engagement.

Content analysis was conducted from March through May 2009, assessing cities on 74 to 78 different variables, depending on whether or not they had a city manager. A detailed coding manual with website examples and instructions was used to train the 5 coders and to assure reliability.<sup>6</sup> Pre-tests of the website-assessment instrument were conducted for both the U.S. and Illinois cities. Intercoder reliability ranged between 66 and 75 percent, which parallels the results for other website coding (see Musso, Weare and Hale 2000). The greatest challenge is the complexity of websites and layout that often makes it difficult to find features. To insure greater reliability, each website was coded carefully and independently by two coders, and differences were reconciled by a third coder. Measurements that are dichotomous – such as the presence or absence of background information on an issue – are more appropriate for this method than a judgment about the quality of the information. The measures show the availability of some information, but not the ease of finding it, the prevalence of the information, or its utility. The trade-off is to cover a wider range of cities and to depict trends with greater generalizability. A further step could be a more in-depth study of cities that have relevant features or that rank high overall.

One issue in website content analysis is how to define the “website,” especially for governments that have a variety of departments and multiple links (Weare and Lin 2000). In most cases we restricted our analysis to the main website and avoided examining separate departments. Conceptually, we were most concerned with the policies of the city leadership, especially the mayor, city council, and city manager (where applicable). We recorded links from the main website to the election information or to community organizations. Coders did go to the community or neighborhood page (where it existed) to find descriptive or policy information or participatory opportunities. For certain documents, such as budget or audit information, coders were allowed to go to a separate finance page, if necessary. It is possible that this research understates some participatory opportunities or information located only on department websites. For that reason, we emphasize that we are researching the main city web page, the city leadership, and major city-wide policy documents. This is consistent with Musso, Weare, and Hale (2000), who concentrated on the main website for the local governments they studied; it contrasts with West (2004), who examined thousands of web pages related to the 70 largest cities, but on a narrower range of variables.

## **RESULTS: U.S. AND ILLINOIS CITIES**

Since city size has been generally associated with more sophisticated use of technology by local governments, larger cities could be expected to set the pace in terms of civic engagement online. The 75 largest U.S. cities receive between 53 percent and 96 percent of possible points on the civic engagement index with an average score of 78 percent. The five highest-ranked U.S. cities meet at least 90 percent or more of the civic engagement criteria, and the top 10 cities achieve at least 85 percent. Seattle is the top-ranked city overall, with a score of nearly 96 percent. Of the top 10, most are fairly large cities, with the exception of Virginia Beach, which ranks only 41<sup>st</sup> in population, but fares well on

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<sup>6</sup> Available from the authors upon request.

the civic engagement index at number 7. Chicago ranks 8th on the national list, with over 86 percent. The 10 U.S. cities with the lowest scores met less than 70 percent of the civic engagement criteria. The lowest-ranked city was Newark, at 53 percent (with a rank of 41 because of a number of ties). See Appendix A for the complete ranking for the 75 U.S. cities.

What separates the top-performing city websites from the rest? Each of the top five city websites has its own strength. The City of Seattle is number one because its website is designed specifically to promote community engagement and citizen participation. The New York City portal is one of the top performers thanks to the City's formal policy mandating increased government transparency through the publication of official documents in the City's website. Phoenix, Louisville, and San Francisco are three of only six cities which use both YouTube and social-networking sites such as Facebook to expand local residents' access to government and community-related information. But what really separates the five cities from the remaining 70 cities is consistency. In every category – from facilitating access to organizational, policy, and community-related information, to promoting online and offline civic engagement, and finally in terms of website's user friendliness, accessibility, and security features – Seattle, Phoenix, Louisville, San Francisco, and New York are among the top performers.

How do Illinois city websites stack up against the nation's largest cities, in terms of their potential for facilitating civic engagement? The overall average score of 66 percent is lower for Illinois cities than for the 75 largest U.S. cities (78 percent). This partly reflects differences in size; only Chicago is large enough to appear on both lists. Yet, there are some Illinois cities that score quite well. Size does not completely determine rankings on civic engagement. Naperville's first-place website edges slightly past Chicago's with 87 rather than 86 percent of our criteria. All of the top five Illinois cities exceed the national average (with 78 percent of the possible criteria – see Table 3).

**Naperville, IL – Customization and Citizen Orientation**

Among the 20 most populous Illinois cities, Naperville employs technology in creative ways for promoting local civic engagement. The Naperville website enables users to sign up for e-news, and provides residents on-demand access to videos of city council meetings. Among the 20 Illinois cities, Naperville is one of three cities which use Twitter to provide information updates to residents, and only one of two cities with a Facebook account. The Naperville website also has a "Citizen Support Center" which can be customized through the creation of user accounts. Through this link, local residents can find answers to frequently asked questions, provide feedback to local government officials, view the community events calendar, and request services. An online-survey is also under construction. Another online service – "Your Place" – is offered exclusively to Naperville residents. Users need to enter their street address or Parcel Identification Number to find detailed information about their property, school district, polling place, zoning policies, and other information.

Table 1 displays the overall ranking for the top 10 U.S. cities. Table 2 shows the overall ranking for all 20 Illinois cities, with a shaded line marking the top 10 Illinois cities. The full rankings for all 75 U.S. and 20 Illinois cities, across all categories, are listed in Appendix A.

<b>Table 1. OVERALL RANKING FOR 75 LARGEST U.S. CITIES</b>							
<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>City rank by population</b>	<b>Raw Score</b>	<b>Highest possible score</b>	<b>Raw score weighted by total possible score</b>	<b>Rank by weighted score</b>
Seattle*	Washington	594210	24	71	74	95.95	1
Phoenix	Arizona	1552259	5	74	78	94.87	2
Louisville*	Kentucky	557789	29	69	74	93.24	3
San Francisco	California	799183	13	72	78	92.31	4
New York*	New York	8274527	1	68	74	91.89	5
Boston*	Massachusetts	608352	21	65	74	87.84	6
Virginia Beach	Virginia	434743	41	68	78	87.18	7
Chicago*	Illinois	2836658	3	64	74	86.49	8
San Jose	California	939899	10	67	78	85.90	9
Columbus*	Ohio	747755	15	63	74	85.14	10

\*No city manager – 74 points possible rather than 78



City	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
Naperville	68	78	87.18	1
Chicago*	63	74	86.49	2
Aurora*	61	74	82.43	3
Champaign	62	78	79.49	4
Elgin	61	78	78.21	5
Peoria	59	78	75.64	6
Des Plaines	59	78	75.64	6
Evanston	58	78	74.36	7
Rockford*	55	74	74.32	8
Palatine	51	78	65.38	9
Schaumburg	47	78	60.26	10
Springfield*	44	74	59.46	11
Bloomington	46	78	58.97	12
Skokie	45	78	57.69	13
Arlington Heights	43	78	55.13	14
Bolingbrook*	40	74	54.05	15
Cicero*	39	74	52.70	16
Joliet	40	78	51.28	17
Decatur	40	78	51.28	17
Waukegan*	36	74	48.65	18

\*No city manager – 74 points possible rather than 78

The cities were also ranked in a number of categories, shown below. The table below compares average scores within each of these categories for the large U.S. cities and the Illinois cities, and the rest of this section discusses the results in more detail.

CATEGORY	75 U.S. CITIES (Average)	20 ILLINOIS CITIES (Average)	# OF ITEMS IN CATEGORY
Overall Score	78%	66%	74, 78*
Contact Information	95%	89%	12, 16*
Organizational Information	63%	65%	3
Processes and Regulations	75%	64%	11
Neighborhood Information	99%	85%	2
Policy and Performance Documents	95%	66%	8
Offline Participation Information	86%	78%	12
Online Interactivity & Participation	55%	46%	13
Transparency and Accessibility	67%	52%	13

\*No city manager – 74 points possible rather than 78

The following section discusses the way these categories were measured and the patterns within these categories, for both the U.S. and Illinois cities.

### **Contact Information**

Contacting officials has long been tracked as a form of political participation, and the availability of email and contact information online has improved the convenience of citizen-initiated contacts (Thomas and Streib 2003). Contact information was measured for mayors, council members, departments, and city managers (if applicable).

**U.S. Cities.** This is common on most websites. There is modest variation in this category, as 53 of the 75 U.S. cities score 100 percent. All of the cities have at least 75 percent of the contact information we counted, with the exception of two cities: Fort Worth (63 percent) and Newark (50 percent). The average score for contact information is 95 percent.

**Illinois Cities.** Most cities in the state also scored well on contact information, as the average score for Illinois cities – 89 percent - is only slightly lower than the national average. All but three Illinois cities have at least 80 percent of the contact information items. Joliet (69%), Skokie (50%) and Schaumburg (44%) are the exceptions.

### **Organizational Information**

Civic engagement does not automatically occur. A number of conditions must be satisfied before citizens can actually engage their governments and be involved in community affairs (Gaventa 2004; Brady, Verba, Schlozman 1995). Two of the most important preconditions for engagement are citizen awareness and knowledge of various aspects of government – what government does and who does what. This enables citizens to request services, complain, and share their views regarding community issues and city policies. We measured three aspects of organizational information on websites: details on the duties and functions of elected officials; organizational structure (either as a graphic or a central list of departments); and a description of the activities of municipal departments on the main web page.

**U.S. Cities.** Fifteen cities have 100 percent (all 3 types of information), 36 have 2 of these, and the remaining 24 have one. The description of city departments is the least likely of the three types of organizational information to be present on the websites, and the central listing of departments and agencies most common (at 91 percent). On average, cities have 63 percent of the organizational criteria.

**Illinois Cities.** The Illinois cities in the study have a slightly higher average score (65 percent) for organizational information than the largest U.S. cities. Six cities have all three of these items (100 percent). Descriptions of city departments on the main web page are least common for Illinois cities as well as U.S. cities. But, 35 percent of Illinois cities have such a description in comparison with only 27 percent of the largest U.S. cities.

### **Processes and Regulation**

Knowledge about government processes is also necessary for participation. Our items include: information on how budgets, capital plans, and laws are made, as well as information on how citizen

initiatives or referenda work; municipal codes; information on other current government policies and regulations; information on council meetings (agendas, minutes, online videos, podcasts, background on issues); and information on voting and elections.

***U.S. Cities.*** Three cities score 100 percent – San Francisco, Seattle, and San Jose – and 11 more have over 90 percent. Two cities – Buffalo and Toledo – have only 45 percent of the information on government processes. To what extent have cities used multimedia to document council meetings? Online videos are common, with 84 percent of cities using those. Podcasts of council meetings are fairly rare, offered by just over 17 percent of cities. Election information is often provided through links, as counties or election commissions are generally responsible for conducting elections. But, over 90 percent of cities have these links or other election information. On average, city websites display 75 percent of the possible types of information on government processes.

***Illinois Cities.*** The Illinois cities have somewhat less information on government processes than the U.S. cities, with an average score of 64 percent for the process and regulation items. Only 40 percent of the Illinois websites discuss processes for legislation or planning, compared with 61 percent of the U.S. cities. The posting of information on city council meetings is ubiquitous on both state and national websites. Background information on issues is slightly more common in Illinois, as 75 percent of state websites include this, compared to 70 percent of the U.S. cities. Podcasts of council meetings are even less likely to be available for Illinois cities. The city of Decatur had council podcasts on its website.

### **Neighborhood Information**

The neighborhood or community is a significant site for theorists of democratic participation or civic engagement (Putnam 2000). Neighborhood interaction can promote the discussion and deliberation needed for strong democracy (Barber 1984) and collective problem-solving (Yankelovich 1991; Briggs 2008). Often civic engagement occurs at the neighborhood level, with residents becoming involved in block clubs, district councils, local schools, or in volunteer efforts in their immediate surroundings. Cities may encourage residents to become knowledgeable about their neighborhoods by providing information on neighborhood characteristics (such as demographic information, local economic condition, business information, or maps). Further, city websites may feature information on neighborhood-related issues (such as affordable housing, safety, etc.)

***U.S. Cities.*** This was nearly universal. All of the U.S. cities provided both descriptive and issue-based neighborhood information online, with the exception of Fort Worth, which didn't have anything posted on neighborhood issues. Neighborhood information is clearly an important feature of local government websites, as the average score for this category was 99 percent.

### **Minneapolis, MN – Neighborhood Revitalization Program**

The City website provides information on the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP), which has been in existence for two decades now. Residents participate in a priority-setting process to develop neighborhood investment plans. The NRP is a systematic citizen participation process in which neighborhoods organize and coordinate a planning process, gather and analyze information on local community problems, draft a concrete investment program with assistance from city staff, distribute the plan for approval by neighborhood stakeholders, submit the plan to the NRP Policy Board and the Minneapolis City Council for approval and funding, and finally, implement the program. In 2000, Minneapolis' NRP received the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements Global 100 Best Practices award. (See the Neighborhood Revitalization Program at <http://www.nrp.org/>).

**Illinois Cities.** All Illinois cities except Decatur have some neighborhood information online, but the average score for this category is lower in Illinois, at 85 percent. The difference between Illinois cities and U.S. cities is that information about neighborhood *issues* is less common. Only 75 percent of Illinois cities include this information. Still, local governments overall use the websites to connect residents to their neighborhoods in some way.

### **Policy and Performance Information**

Transparency is an important feature of government online. To the extent that citizens can find information on policies and track government performance, they are better prepared to hold government accountable for its actions. We counted the presence of a number of policy and performance documents online: budgets; background information on budgets; press releases; text or video of major speeches of the mayor, manager or council leadership; capital improvement plans; explanations of the plan; financial audit reports; and agency annual performance reports.

**U.S. Cities.** Fifty-two of the cities have all eight of these documents online, and only two cities have less than 75 percent (Buffalo at 63 percent and Indianapolis at 50 percent). Budget documents are available on all of the sites, and financial audits are accessible through 99 percent of them. Cities are making good use of the web for posting basic policy and performance documents online. Cities score an average of 95 percent for the policy and performance documents that we counted. This is an area that merits further investigation, however. Although transparency on policies and performance is potentially a significant benefit of e-government, there is likely to be wide variation in the quality of information online. An assessment of quality is complex, requiring a careful examination of the documents against a variety of criteria. Such a project is beyond the methods and goals of this study; at best we can say that most of these large cities do post information on budgets, audits, and some other basic policy documents.

### **Minneapolis, MN – Results Minneapolis**

Minneapolis, Minnesota, is one of the few cities combining two powerful tools – results-based management and information technology – to promote citizen engagement with government. “Results Minneapolis” is a results-based management system that uses information about outcomes of government activities to shape policy, budgetary, and programmatic decisions. Some of the main objectives of results-based government are to ensure efficient use of scarce public resources, effectively produce results that local residents value, and increase government transparency. Results-based management practices permeate all aspects of government – from strategic planning and goal prioritization, to departmental planning, budgeting, performance measurement and evaluation, and process improvement.

Citizens play a key role in results-based government. Residents inform their local government of their demands and preferences regarding service levels, resource allocation, and tax bills, which then shape the long-term strategic plan of the city. Additionally, city residents also assess the performance of departments and the city government as a whole, and provide feedback for improving government programs.

Clearly, a crucial component of results-based government is how to gather information from residents, and at the same time, raise citizen awareness and understanding of government processes, programs, and activities. For Minneapolis, information technology – in particular, the City website – is the answer. Through the City’s website, the local government carefully describes the results-based management process, and makes available key documents at each step of the process. For instance, Minneapolis residents learn of the results of multi-year scientific citizen surveys. The surveys reveal information on resident satisfaction with city services and perceptions about key quality of life indicators, citizen priorities and expectations, and residents’ information needs. Next, residents can access Minneapolis’ “2020 Vision” which is the City’s five-year strategic plan, and see how the City’s long-term goals are linked with citizen priorities. Local taxpayers can then view the specific departmental plans to understand how these plans are aligned with the City’s overall goals, how departments’ budget allocations are linked to the achievement of specific objectives, and how departments plan to measure their progress. City officials regularly track the performance of each department. Up-to-date performance reports can be downloaded from the city website, enabling residents to understand how effectively the government is using their taxes to produce the outcomes they have prioritized. (Visit “Results Minneapolis” at [http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/results/.](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/results/))

**Illinois Cities.** The average score for Illinois cities is only 66 percent for basic policy and performance information online. One city, Waukegan, has none of the 12 items, although 5 cities have all of them. The most common items are the budget, background information on the budget, press releases, and financial audits; 70-80% of the cities display these on the websites. This is somewhat reassuring, as the budget and financial audits are critical for transparency and accountability. Cities without these basic documents available in electronic format should post them for public view.

### **New York, NY – Required Publication of Documents**

Local government websites can facilitate civic engagement by increasing access to relevant and timely information. New York City mandates the publication of government documents in the city website. In 2003, the City Council of New York enacted an ordinance requiring all city agencies to submit to the Department of Records and Information Services all documents required by law to be published or transmitted to the Mayor or Council within ten business days after the date of transmittal. Within the same time period, the Department is responsible for posting the documents on the city website. The stated goals of this policy are to increase efficiency and accessibility of municipal government, as well as to promote good environmental practices such as reducing government's use of paper. (See [http://www.nycouncil.info/pdf\\_files/bills/law03011.pdf](http://www.nycouncil.info/pdf_files/bills/law03011.pdf).)

### **Information for Offline Participation**

While prior research has faulted local government websites for the lack of participation online, this is not the only way that city websites can encourage civic engagement. It is important to examine the extent to which cities use the web to disseminate information about events or organizations to encourage participation offline as well. Within the category of "offline participation," we track information about the time and place of official events such as council sessions or hearings or administrative hearings. Local governments can also encourage voluntarism by publicizing charity events, volunteer opportunities, or the need for donations to charities or nonprofits. Finally, they can highlight local groups through either information or links to city-sponsored citizen organizations (such as community councils or district councils), other neighborhood-oriented organizations, and nonprofits or charities. They can directly assist such organizations through funding or technical assistance, and advertise such assistance online.

**U.S. Cities.** Twenty-seven cities display all of this information on their websites; five cities have 50 percent or less. Forty-six percent of cities advertise the activities of charities or nonprofits, and 52 percent have some mention of such organizations on the website. Similarly, 52 percent of cities offer grants, training or technical assistance to nonprofit or neighborhood organizations. On average, U.S. cities meet 86 percent of these criteria for the promotion of offline participation.

**Illinois Cities.** Average scores for offline participation are a bit lower for Illinois cities, at 78 percent. Yet, 5 cities still have all 12 of the items that were counted for offline participation. As with the U.S. websites, information on charities is less common than information about city activities. Only 40 percent of cities provide information on charity events, 60 percent ask for donations to charities or nonprofits, and 65 percent have links or information about local groups that are nonprofits or charities. Illinois cities actually list local nonprofit groups somewhat more frequently than the U.S. cities.

### **Online Interactivity and Participation**

The internet has also become an important tool through which citizens express their views about politics, policy, and community (Eggers 2005; Bimber 2003; Jensen, Danziger, and Venkatesh 2007). For instance, a number of local governments use online surveys to gather information on citizen perception of local government performance, and even citizen fiscal policy preferences (Robbins, Simonsen, and Feldman 2008). Some cities also allow local residents to post comments in their websites. A more advanced use of websites is to facilitate virtual town hall meetings (Thomas and Streib 2003).

More recently, local governments have also exploited new developments in information and communication technology such as Twitter to facilitate residents' access to up-to-date information. City governments are also using social networking sites such as Facebook to expand their outreach to youth and young professionals (see Raynes-Goldie and Walker 2008 on other civic engagement tools).

For the purposes of measuring online engagement, we aggregate aspects of interactivity within the index, including online transactions for services along with customized information and opportunities for discussion or feedback. This includes downloadable forms, online transactions, citizen surveys, online newsletters or email updates, downloadable information, searchable databases, online comment forms or message boxes, RSS feeds, Twitter, discussion boards, virtual town hall meetings, Facebook links, and YouTube links. While these are aggregated in an index of online participation in the appendix, it is useful to separate these elements for discussion.

***Online Transactions for U.S. Cities.*** Downloadable forms and online transactions are likely more service-oriented, and prior studies have shown that these are much more common than opportunities to voice opinions. Downloadable forms are available in 100 percent of the U.S. cities, and some type of transaction can be completed online in 93 percent.

***Online Transactions for Illinois Cities.*** Illinois cities compare favorably with the U.S. on these criteria. All of the Illinois cities that were coded make forms available online, and transactions can be completed online in 95 percent. Only one of the 20 cities – Cicero – did not have online transactions. Cicero is the smallest of the 20 cities.

***Customization and Web 2.0 for U.S. Cities.*** Interactivity allows citizens to obtain the information that matters to them in ways that are convenient. Customization of information is more prevalent than social media (sites for sharing information) such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. Between 56 and 80 percent of cities offer online newsletter subscriptions or e-mail updates, downloadable information materials, and RSS feeds, while all cities have searchable databases. Twitter is the most popular of the new media (25 percent of cities), with Facebook and YouTube still relatively modest at 16 and 13 percent respectively. Seattle has an extensive online video channel of its own, with a number of public hearings and town hall meetings that can be viewed, as well as information about the community.

***Customization and Web 2.0 for Illinois Cities.*** The most common forms of customized information used by Illinois cities are online newsletter subscriptions or email updates (at 75 percent), and about 45 percent use RSS feeds. All have downloadable information materials, but only 55 percent have searchable databases. Search capabilities and RSS feeds for Illinois cities are a little lower than the averages for the large U.S. cities. New media use is also a bit lower for Illinois, particularly for Twitter. Only 15 percent of Illinois cities use Twitter, and only 10 percent have links to Facebook or YouTube. The cities that use these social media tend to be among the higher-ranked overall. Twitter is used by Naperville, Champaign, and Elgin. Naperville and Elgin have Facebook pages. Chicago has a YouTube channel for the mayor. Cicero, which is a lower-ranked city overall, has a link to YouTube.

### Seattle, WA – Seattle Channel

The City of Seattle's Department of Information Technology operates the Seattle Channel, which is both a government television channel and a website. The TV Channel and its website are the core components of the City's electronic democracy program. Among the objectives of the Seattle Channel is "to create two-way communication between city government and its citizens." The channel-cum-website does this, for instance, by hosting neighborhood blogs in which residents create a free wikidot account to start a new topic or participate in an on-going online discussion. The channel also hosts the monthly "Ask the Mayor" program in which residents can either call in or email questions to the mayor regarding issues ranging from youth violence, pedestrian safety, and the budget, among others. (Visit the Seattle Channel at <http://www.seattlechannel.org/>.)

**Online Participation for U.S. Cities.** The most critical use of the web for advocates of deliberative democracy is collective problem-solving through discussion. While local government websites show little evidence of this, they do provide some important mechanisms for feedback. Discussion boards and virtual town hall meetings are rare. No city has a virtual town meeting that could be found by examining the pages we focused on and using the search engine. Only one city – Seattle – has a discussion board. It is worth noting that there are numerous videos of *offline* town hall meetings in Seattle. Collective deliberation over policy issues is clearly encouraged, but more commonly through face-to-face community meetings rather than through the internet. There are no online town meetings that could be found at official websites, although there are some examples outside this study. For example, St. Paul, MN participates in an online forum that is hosted on the website of E-democracy.org. Websites also offer a convenient tool for citizen contacting and for surveys, and these are quite common online. Eighty percent of cities have comment or message boxes, and 60 percent of cities have information posted on a citizen survey (taken online or offline) within the past 3 years. This allows for citizen input, but not for an exchange of views between citizens. The surveys, however, have some advantages over the comment boxes, because the posting of results, even if they are not based on scientific samples, allows for some sense of collective opinion to be aired online.



### **Seattle, WA – Community Engagement Website**

The City of Seattle stands out among the 75 largest cities in its emphasis on the use of its official website as a tool to promote civic awareness, understanding, and participation in governmental and community affairs. Within a single webpage, the city provides various links to information needed by residents to be civically engaged. For instance, the website contains a citizen guide on local government processes, as well as the duties and responsibilities of city officials. Another link provides substantive information on various local issues including police accountability, the local public school system, and transportation and infrastructure. In order to allow citizens to express their views, the website has a discussion board which allows residents to post their opinions online. The City's website is the only portal from among the 75 largest cities which has this feature. For residents more interested in offline participation opportunities, the website also contains information about donating and volunteering opportunities, serving on city boards and commissions, and attending city council hearings and neighborhood events. (See "Get Involved" link - <http://www.seattle.gov/html/CITIZEN/participation.htm>)

**Online Participation for Illinois Cities.** As might be expected, direct participation online is rare in Illinois websites as well. One city – Bloomington – has a discussion board online, and there are opportunities for feedback through comment or message boxes in 55 percent of the cities. Thirty percent of the cities have survey information posted online. This includes all three cities with the highest overall ranking (Naperville, Chicago and Aurora) and three lower-ranked cities (Schaumburg, Skokie and Decatur). The large U.S. cities have significantly more comment boxes and surveys available. City size apparently makes more of a difference for online feedback and survey feedback than for some of the other categories in the index.

U.S. city websites are not particularly interactive, for on average they feature only 55 percent of the customization and participation features. Overall, Illinois cities score 46 percent for this category. Online services are nearly universal, whereas more civically-oriented interactivity is not. Deliberative democracy does not exist online in these cities, if that is conceptualized as dialogue between citizens. The internet facilitates some citizen voice, however, through mechanisms such as surveys and online comment boxes that allow individuals to contact officials. Searchable and customizable information is available in most cities, but new social media are just emerging on city websites. Nationally, Phoenix, Mesa, Oklahoma City and Seattle tie for first place in this online interactivity category with 85 percent of these interactive features, and 17 more cities tie for second and third place with 77 percent and 69 percent of these features (Chicago is in third place). Within Illinois, Naperville ranks first for this category with 76 percent of these features, and Elgin ties with Chicago for second place.

### **Transparency and Accessibility**

How a website is designed contributes to its potential to promote both online and offline civic engagement. For instance, even if a government website makes available a volume of information, residents benefit only if such information can be easily found. Additionally, information given to citizens must also be up-to-date. To be relevant to the widest range of citizens, websites should be accessible to non-English speakers and individuals with disabilities. Finally, residents can be dissuaded from using city websites if there is no clear policy on how local governments protect citizens' online privacy and security (see La Porte, Demchak, and de Jong 2002 on the importance of website openness, transparency, and interactivity).

We assessed how much local websites prioritized being up-to-date, open, accessible, and secure. Two criteria measured “freshness” of information: whether the main page features a publication date, and whether there is evidence of updates (such as news items or new documents posted) within the past 30 days. Openness is measured by: the presence of a searchable index for archived newsletters, laws, regulations, and requirements; whether or not there is a charge for downloaded or printed publications; and whether the website provides either a link or text for public information laws or regulations, such as the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). User-friendliness is measured through inclusion of a search bar and uniform templates with tool bars or menus in the same place on each page. This makes it easier to find information and provides some indicator of usability. We coded for the presence of language translation and also icons (such as flags) that indicate the availability of translation. Sites were examined for accessibility statements and audio or visual enhancements intended for individuals with disabilities. Security and privacy of information were assessed by privacy statements and the use of passwords or secure servers for online transactions. (The items that examine these areas were adapted from [Website Attribute Evaluation System \(WAES\)](#), Cyberspace Policy Research Group <http://www.cyprg.arizona.edu/>.)

**U.S. Cities.** Nationally, cities score an average of only 66 percent on these criteria. Fifteen cities have 80 percent or more of these features, and seven cities have less than half (see Appendix A for full results). Most websites – between 88 and 100 percent - have been updated within the past 30 days, have search capabilities, free information, and privacy statements and security for transactions. Accessibility is less prevalent, as only 45 percent of sites offer foreign language translation and only 55 percent of sites display a statement on accessibility for users with disabilities. Comparing the results with previous studies, local government websites show more cognizance of issues such as privacy and security than in past years, and are fairly open, up-to-date, and searchable, although more progress could be made on accessibility.

#### **Sacramento, CA – 101 Things You Can Do on the City Web**

City websites may contain an abundance of information that can potentially promote civic engagement, but whether or not that possibility is realized ultimately depends on how easy it is to find the information in the city portal. Officials of the City of Sacramento, California clearly understand this need. The City’s website provides an important service that cuts the time spent by users navigating the city webpage in search of information that they need. Aptly titled “101 Things You Can Do on the City Web,” the service lists in one webpage various types of information that enable residents to be civically engaged. The service allows residents to view the latest information on the city budget, read the city charter, see the city organization and list of departments, receive e-mail alerts, file a crime report, find volunteer opportunities, attend meetings with city officials, search for neighborhood associations, and find out what city offices will be up for reelection, among other topics.

(See [http://www.cityofsacramento.org/101\\_Things\\_You\\_Can\\_Do\\_on\\_the\\_City\\_Web/](http://www.cityofsacramento.org/101_Things_You_Can_Do_on_the_City_Web/))

**Illinois Cities.** Illinois cities scored lower, at 52 percent, but they follow similar patterns. Ninety-five percent of the Illinois cities have websites that have been updated in the past 30 days and all cities provide downloadable publications for free. Eighty percent have search engines and uniform site templates, making information search easier. Where Illinois cities fall measurably behind is in the area of accessibility, both for individuals with disabilities and for foreign language translation. The three cities with translation capabilities are Rockford, Peoria and Cicero. These cities have high proportions of Latinos, but so do a number of other cities on the list, including Chicago. Only 20 percent of cities have accessibility statements – Naperville, Chicago, Rockford, and Des Plaines. Illinois cities score better on

security. Fifty-five percent have a privacy or security statement, and 80 percent have security for financial transactions or personal information.

One aspect of usability that we did not measure was the ease of finding information. Coders commented frequently that it was difficult to find information because of clutter, inconsistencies, confusing indices, and inefficient search engines. Usability and accessibility will continue to be important areas for local governments to address in order to facilitate civic engagement.

#### **SUMMING UP: E-GOVERNMENT AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT TODAY**

Cities provide an important wealth of information that has evolved over time. Compared to Ho's assessment in 2002, there is greater transparency and interactivity. In contrast with the early efforts of the 1990s, cities use their websites without exception to connect citizens to their neighborhoods. Nearly half include some information about voluntary sector organizations or activities as well. Customization of information is common. But, there is little that resembles e-democracy as collective problem-solving or deliberation through technology. Accessibility is an area for improvement both in Illinois and nationally, as many local websites are not user-friendly for people with disabilities or with limited English. Although privacy and security have improved, not all cities have this, particularly the smaller cities that were examined in Illinois. Table 4 shows features that are present in nearly all local government websites in the U.S. and Illinois, and Table 5 lists those that are found in less than 20 percent of websites.

<b>Table 4. WHAT DOES A TYPICAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT WEBSITE LOOK LIKE?</b>		
The following characteristics are present on all (or all but one) of the 75 U.S. or 20 Illinois websites		
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>US</b>	<b>ILLINOIS</b>
Contact information		
• Mayor, departments, agencies		X
• City council	X	
Government Processes		
• Information on current government policies or regulations	X	X
• Text or links for the municipal code	X	
• City Council agendas	X	X
Neighborhood Orientations		
• Information on neighborhood characteristics	X	X
• Information on community or neighborhood issues	X	
Policies and performance		
• Press releases	X	
• City budget	X	
• Financial audit reports	X	
Participatory opportunities offline		
• Information on offline events or opportunities for participation	X	X
• Time and place of council sessions or hearings	X	X
Convenient information access		
• Downloadable forms	X	X
• Downloadable information materials	X	X
• No charge for downloadable information or printed materials		X
• Searchable index for archived newsletters, laws, and regulations	X	
• Search engine	X	
• Web page updates in past 30 days		X

<b>Table 5. UNCOMMON FEATURES ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT WEBSITES</b>		
The following features are present on less than 20 percent of the 75 U.S. or 20 Illinois websites		
<b>ITEMS</b>	<b>U.S.</b>	<b>ILLINOIS</b>
• Podcasts on council meetings	X	X
• Highlights or summaries rather than full council minutes		X
• Foreign language translation		X
• Icons to indicate availability for foreign language translation	X	X
• Audio or visual enhancement for people with disabilities		X
• Twitter		X
• YouTube link	X	X
• Facebook link	X	X
• Discussion boards	X	X
• Virtual town hall meetings	X	X

Based on the tables above, it is clear that local government websites provide a fair amount of basic information about government that is important for engagement (as well as accountability). The most common information on government allows citizens to contact officials, find city departments and agencies, attend or follow the results of council meetings and public hearings, and examine municipal codes, budget documents, financial audits, and press releases or major speeches. Video presentations of council meetings, which are widespread, have the advantage of allowing citizens to more fully experience the discussions and debates within meetings. While the posting of government information is “one-way” dissemination from governments to citizens, most local websites, including the smaller cities in Illinois have advanced beyond a simple phone directory approach to e-government to include substantive documents and records of council meetings. Information about how to participate in political processes is also present on local government websites, including links for elections and voting, and announcements for council sessions and public hearings. The availability of such information clearly differentiated high and low-information cities online, but there are some limits to what can be said about the quality of the information based on a simple count. For example, to better understand how information might encourage civic engagement, it would be useful to assess whether cities post background information or analysis before decisions are made.

Local government websites have an opportunity to involve citizens close to home and to cooperate with locally-organized civic groups such as charities and nonprofits. It appears that local governments recognize this opportunity by displaying information on neighborhoods and charities, publicizing events and the need for volunteers and donations. Local government sites almost universally include both descriptive and policy information on their neighborhoods. Between 40-60 percent of local government websites have various types of information on nonprofits and charities, including appeals to participate in events or fundraising.

Interactivity is improving in comparison with early studies that cited of a lack of online transactions or other interactive uses (Musso, Weare and Hale 2000; Moon 2002). There are opportunities for citizen input, although this is generally between individual citizens and government officials through complaint forms or surveys rather than through collective discussion. For large U.S.

and Illinois cities, downloadable information and online transactions are nearly universal. Customization of information through email alerts, online newsletter subscriptions and (to a lesser extent) RSS feeds is also common. Web 2.0 is generally underutilized for interaction, with a small minority of cities using social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. This may be a temporary phenomenon, for cities will likely need time to experiment with these new media and to decide how or whether they contribute to citizen knowledge and participation.

There is almost no trace of deliberative democracy online, however, as measured through discussion boards or electronic town hall meetings. Seattle provides video of many offline town hall meetings, and both Seattle and Bloomington, Illinois use discussion boards for citizen input. Council members and mayors in many cities have blogs (see for example, Seattle council members and the mayor of Los Angeles). But these resemble online diaries rather than serving as platforms for comments from residents. In contrast to social networks like Facebook, the technology for online discussion has been around for awhile. The barriers for cities are likely political, legal, and administrative rather than technical. Organizations such as E-democracy.org and MoveOn.org have hosted electronic town hall meetings to alleviate worries that cities may have about the potential for legal issues. But, such efforts remain the exception, even in an era when newspapers host blogs brimming with reader comments.

There are many avenues for further study suggested by this research. While we provide rankings, we do not explain why some cities are ahead of others. Does size alone explain much of the variation? The example of Naperville in Illinois suggests this is not so. What accounts for Seattle's first-place ranking? Perhaps cities with higher civic engagement potential online have more educated populations, and more technology-savvy cultures because of the presence of high-tech firms. The next step in this study is to examine the characteristics that explain greater attention to civic engagement on local government websites. A more in-depth examination of the information that is available online in the highest-ranked cities could also answer important questions about how well that information is positioned to facilitate civic engagement. Are documents made available before decisions are made, or only after? Is there in-depth information or policy analysis made available to the public? To what extent do citizens use these features, and how do they affect knowledge, interest, discussion and participation? These are some of the questions that emerge from this research and merit further investigation.

APPENDIX A. RANKING FOR U.S. AND CITIES

OVERALL RANKING FOR 75 LARGEST U.S. CITIES							
City	State	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
Seattle	Washington	594210	24	71	74	95.95	1
Phoenix	Arizona	1552259	5	74	78	94.87	2
San Francisco	California	799183	13	73	78	93.59	3
Louisville	Kentucky	557789	29	69	74	93.24	4
New York	New York	8274527	1	68	74	91.89	5
Boston	Massachusetts	608352	21	65	74	87.84	6
Virginia Beach	Virginia	434743	41	68	78	87.18	7
Chicago	Illinois	2836658	3	64	74	86.49	8
San Jose	California	939899	10	67	78	85.90	9
Columbus	Ohio	747755	15	63	74	85.14	10
Mesa	Arizona	452933	38	66	78	84.62	11
Nashville	Tennessee	590807	25	62	74	83.78	12
St Louis	Missouri	350759	52	62	74	83.78	12
Austin	Texas	743074	16	65	78	83.33	13
Plano	Texas	260796	69	65	78	83.33	13
Los Angeles	California	3834340	2	61	74	82.43	14
San Diego	California	1266731	8	61	74	82.43	14
Baltimore	Maryland	637455	20	61	74	82.43	14
Washington DC	N/A	588292	27	61	74	82.43	14
Tampa	Florida	336823	54	61	74	82.43	14
San Antonio	Texas	1328984	7	64	78	82.05	15
El Paso	Texas	606913	22	64	78	82.05	15
Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	547274	31	64	78	82.05	15
Greensboro	North Carolina	247183	74	64	78	82.05	15
Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	1449634	6	60	74	81.08	16
Long Beach	California	466520	36	63	78	80.77	17
Wichita	Kansas	361420	51	63	78	80.77	17
St Petersburg	Florida	246407	75	63	78	80.77	16
Houston	Texas	2208180	4	59	74	79.73	18
Memphis	Tennessee	674028	18	59	74	79.73	18
Albuquerque	New Mexico	518271	34	59	74	79.73	18
St Paul	Minnesota	277251	67	59	74	79.73	18
Dallas	Texas	1240499	9	62	78	79.49	19
Sacramento	California	460242	37	62	78	79.49	19
Minneapolis	Minnesota	377392	46	63	78	80.77	19
Glendale	Arizona	253152	70	62	78	79.49	19
Denver	Colorado	588349	26	58	74	78.38	20
Tulsa	Oklahoma	384037	45	58	74	78.38	20

Las Vegas	Nevada	558880	28	61	78	78.21	21
Fresno	California	470508	35	61	78	78.21	21
Aurora	Colorado	311794	58	61	78	78.21	21
Henderson	Nevada	249386	72	61	78	78.21	21
Portland	Oregon	550396	30	57	74	77.03	22
Charlotte	North Carolina	671588	19	60	78	76.92	23
Kansas City	Missouri	450375	39	60	78	76.92	23
Arlington	Texas	371038	50	60	78	76.92	23
Jacksonville	Florida	805605	12	56	74	75.68	24
Milwaukee	Wisconsin	602191	23	56	74	75.68	24
Atlanta	Georgia	519145	33	56	74	75.68	24
Fort Wayne	Indiana	251247	71	56	74	75.68	24
Colorado Springs	Colorado	376427	47	59	78	75.64	25
Anaheim	California	333249	55	59	78	75.64	25
Cincinnati	Ohio	332458	56	59	78	75.64	25
Riverside	California	294437	61	59	78	75.64	25
Miami	Florida	409719	43	58	78	74.36	26
Corpus Christi	Texas	285507	63	58	78	74.36	26
Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	311218	59	55	74	74.32	27
Honolulu	Hawaii	375571	49	57	78	73.08	28
Fort Worth	Texas	681818	17	56	78	71.79	29
Oakland	California	401489	44	56	78	71.79	29
Anchorage	Arkansas	279671	65	56	78	71.79	29
Detroit	Michigan	916952	11	53	74	71.62	30
Lexington	Kentucky	279044	66	53	74	71.62	30
Tucson	Arizona	525529	32	55	78	70.51	31
Cleveland	Ohio	438042	40	52	74	70.27	32
Omaha	Nebraska	424482	42	52	74	70.27	32
Indianapolis	Indiana	795458	14	51	74	68.92	33
Stockton	California	287245	62	53	78	67.95	34
Buffalo	New York	272632	68	50	74	67.57	35
Santa Ana	California	339555	53	52	78	66.67	36
Lincoln	Nebraska	248744	73	49	74	66.22	37
Toledo	Ohio	295029	60	48	74	64.86	38
Bakersfield	California	315837	57	50	78	64.10	39
Raleigh	North Carolina	375806	48	48	78	61.54	40
Newark	New Jersey	280135	64	39	74	52.70	41
AVG. SCORE						78.02	



**CONTACT INFORMATION, 75 LARGEST U.S. CITIES**

City	State	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
New York	New York	8274527	1	12	12	100.00	1
Los Angeles	California	3834340	2	12	12	100.00	1
Houston	Texas	2208180	4	12	12	100.00	1
Phoenix	Arizona	1552259	5	16	16	100.00	1
Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	1449634	6	12	12	100.00	1
San Antonio	Texas	1328984	7	16	16	100.00	1
San Diego	California	1266731	8	12	12	100.00	1
Dallas	Texas	1240499	9	16	16	100.00	1
San Jose	California	939899	10	16	16	100.00	1
Jacksonville	Florida	805605	12	12	12	100.00	1
San Francisco	California	799183	13	16	16	100.00	1
Columbus	Ohio	747755	15	12	12	100.00	1
Austin	Texas	743074	16	16	16	100.00	1
Memphis	Tennessee	674028	18	12	12	100.00	1
Baltimore	Maryland	637455	20	12	12	100.00	1
Boston	Massachusetts	608352	21	12	12	100.00	1
El Paso	Texas	606913	22	16	16	100.00	1
Seattle	Washington	594210	24	12	12	100.00	1
Nashville	Tennessee	590807	25	12	12	100.00	1
Denver	Colorado	588349	26	12	12	100.00	1
Washington DC	N/A	588292	27	12	12	100.00	1
Las Vegas	Nevada	558880	28	16	16	100.00	1
Louisville	Kentucky	557789	29	12	12	100.00	1
Portland	Oregon	550396	30	12	12	100.00	1
Tucson	Arizona	525529	32	16	16	100.00	1
Atlanta	Georgia	519145	33	12	12	100.00	1
Albuquerque	New Mexico	518271	34	12	12	100.00	1
Fresno	California	470508	35	16	16	100.00	1
Long Beach	California	466520	36	16	16	100.00	1
Mesa	Arizona	452933	38	16	16	100.00	1
Kansas City	Missouri	450375	39	16	16	100.00	1
Cleveland	Ohio	438042	40	12	12	100.00	1
Virginia Beach	Virginia	434743	41	16	16	100.00	1
Omaha	Nebraska	424482	42	12	12	100.00	1
Miami	Florida	409719	43	16	16	100.00	1
Oakland	California	401489	44	16	16	100.00	1
Colorado Springs	Colorado	376427	47	16	16	100.00	1
Wichita	Kansas	361420	51	16	16	100.00	1
St Louis	Missouri	350759	52	12	12	100.00	1
Tampa	Florida	336823	54	12	12	100.00	1

Cincinnati	Ohio	332458	56	16	16	100.00	1
Bakersfield	California	315837	57	16	16	100.00	1
Aurora	Colorado	311794	58	16	16	100.00	1
Toledo	Ohio	295029	60	12	12	100.00	1
Corpus Christi	Texas	285507	63	16	16	100.00	1
St Paul	Minnesota	277251	67	12	12	100.00	1
Buffalo	New York	272632	68	12	12	100.00	1
Plano	Texas	260796	69	16	16	100.00	1
Glendale	Arizona	253152	70	16	16	100.00	1
Fort Wayne	Indiana	251247	71	12	12	100.00	1
Henderson	Nevada	249386	72	16	16	100.00	1
Lincoln	Nebraska	248744	73	12	12	100.00	1
Greensboro	North Carolina	247183	74	16	16	100.00	1
St Petersburg	Florida	246407	75	16	16	100.00	1
Charlotte	North Carolina	671588	19	15	16	93.75	2
Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	547274	31	15	16	93.75	2
Sacramento	California	460242	37	15	16	93.75	2
Arlington	Texas	371038	50	15	16	93.75	2
Anchorage	Arkansas	279671	65	15	16	93.75	2
Chicago	Illinois	2836658	3	11	12	91.67	3
Tulsa	Oklahoma	384037	45	11	12	91.67	3
Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	311218	59	11	12	91.67	3
Minneapolis	Minnesota	377392	46	14	16	87.50	4
Honolulu	Hawaii	375571	49	14	16	87.50	4
Detroit	Michigan	916952	11	10	12	83.33	5
Indianapolis	Indiana	795458	14	10	12	83.33	5
Lexington	Kentucky	279044	66	10	12	83.33	5
Santa Ana	California	339555	53	13	16	81.25	6
Anaheim	California	333249	55	13	16	81.25	6
Riverside	California	294437	61	13	16	81.25	6
Milwaukee	Wisconsin	602191	23	9	12	75.00	7
Raleigh	North Carolina	375806	48	12	16	75.00	7
Stockton	California	287245	62	12	16	75.00	7
Fort Worth	Texas	681818	17	10	16	62.50	8
Newark	New Jersey	280135	64	6	12	50.00	9
AVG. SCORE						95.33	

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION, 75 LARGEST U.S. CITIES**

City	State	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
New York	New York	8274527	1	3	3	100.00	1
Chicago	Illinois	2836658	3	3	3	100.00	1
Phoenix	Arizona	1552259	5	3	3	100.00	1
San Antonio	Texas	1328984	7	3	3	100.00	1
San Diego	California	1266731	8	3	3	100.00	1
San Francisco	California	799183	13	3	3	100.00	1
Baltimore	Maryland	637455	20	3	3	100.00	1
El Paso	Texas	606913	22	3	3	100.00	1
Seattle	Washington	594210	24	3	3	100.00	1
Washington DC	N/A	588292	27	3	3	100.00	1
Louisville	Kentucky	557789	29	3	3	100.00	1
Long Beach	California	466520	36	3	3	100.00	1
Tulsa	Oklahoma	384037	45	3	3	100.00	1
Wichita	Kansas	361420	51	3	3	100.00	1
Milwaukee	Wisconsin	302191	23	3	3	100.00	1
Los Angeles	California	3834340	2	2	3	66.67	2
Houston	Texas	2208180	4	2	3	66.67	2
Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	1449634	6	2	3	66.67	2
Dallas	Texas	1240499	9	2	3	66.67	2
Jacksonville	Florida	805605	12	2	3	66.67	2
Austin	Texas	743074	16	2	3	66.67	2
Fort Worth	Texas	681818	17	2	3	66.67	2
Charlotte	North Carolina	671588	19	2	3	66.67	2
Boston	Massachusetts	608352	21	2	3	66.67	2
Nashville	Tennessee	590807	25	2	3	66.67	2
Denver	Colorado	588349	26	2	3	66.67	2
Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	547274	31	2	3	66.67	2
Atlanta	Georgia	519145	33	2	3	66.67	2
Albuquerque	New Mexico	518271	34	2	3	66.67	2
Fresno	California	470508	35	2	3	66.67	2
Sacramento	California	460242	37	2	3	66.67	2
Mesa	Arizona	452933	38	2	3	66.67	2
Kansas City	Missouri	450375	39	2	3	66.67	2
Omaha	Nebraska	424482	42	2	3	66.67	2
Miami	Florida	409719	43	2	3	66.67	2
Minneapolis	Minnesota	377392	46	2	3	66.67	2
Colorado Springs	Colorado	376427	47	2	3	66.67	2
Arlington	Texas	371038	50	2	3	66.67	2
Bakersfield	California	315837	57	2	3	66.67	2

Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	311218	59	2	3	66.67	2
Toledo	Ohio	295029	60	2	3	66.67	2
Riverside	California	294437	61	2	3	66.67	2
Stockton	California	287245	62	2	3	66.67	2
Corpus Christi	Texas	285507	63	2	3	66.67	2
Newark	New Jersey	280135	64	2	3	66.67	2
Glendale	Arizona	253152	70	2	3	66.67	2
Fort Wayne	Indiana	251247	71	2	3	66.67	2
Henderson	Nevada	249386	72	2	3	66.67	2
Lincoln	Nebraska	248744	73	2	3	66.67	2
Greensboro	North Carolina	247183	74	2	3	66.67	2
St Petersburg	Florida	246407	75	2	3	66.67	2
San Jose	California	939899	10	1	3	33.33	3
Detroit	Michigan	916952	11	1	3	33.33	3
Indianapolis	Indiana	795458	14	1	3	33.33	3
Columbus	Ohio	747755	15	1	3	33.33	3
Memphis	Tennessee	674028	18	1	3	33.33	3
Las Vegas	Nevada	558880	28	1	3	33.33	3
Portland	Oregon	550396	30	1	3	33.33	3
Tucson	Arizona	525529	32	1	3	33.33	3
Cleveland	Ohio	438042	40	1	3	33.33	3
Virginia Beach	Virginia	434743	41	1	3	33.33	3
Oakland	California	401489	44	1	3	33.33	3
Raleigh	North Carolina	375806	48	1	3	33.33	3
Honolulu	Hawaii	375571	49	1	3	33.33	3
St Louis	Missouri	350759	52	1	3	33.33	3
Santa Ana	California	339555	53	1	3	33.33	3
Tampa	Florida	336823	54	1	3	33.33	3
Anaheim	California	333249	55	1	3	33.33	3
Cincinnati	Ohio	332458	56	1	3	33.33	3
Aurora	Colorado	311794	58	1	3	33.33	3
Anchorage	Arkansas	279671	65	1	3	33.33	3
Lexington	Kentucky	279044	66	1	3	33.33	3
St Paul	Minnesota	277251	67	1	3	33.33	3
Buffalo	New York	272632	68	1	3	33.33	3
Plano	Texas	260796	69	1	3	33.33	3
AVG. SCORE						62.67	

**PROCESSES AND REGULATION, 75 LARGEST U.S. CITIES**

City	State	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
San Francisco	California	799183	13	11	11	100.00	1
Seattle	Washington	594210	24	11	11	100.00	1
San Jose	California	939899	10	11	11	100.00	1
Phoenix	Arizona	1552259	5	10	11	90.91	2
Louisville	Kentucky	557789	29	10	11	90.91	2
New York	New York	8274527	1	10	11	90.91	2
Boston	Massachusetts	608352	21	10	11	90.91	2
Nashville	Tennessee	590807	25	10	11	90.91	2
Austin	Texas	743074	16	10	11	90.91	2
Baltimore	Maryland	637455	20	10	11	90.91	2
Memphis	Tennessee	674028	18	10	11	90.91	2
Charlotte	North Carolina	671588	19	10	11	90.91	2
Jacksonville	Florida	805605	12	10	11	90.91	2
Fort Worth	Texas	681818	17	10	11	90.91	2
Virginia Beach	Virginia	434743	41	9	11	81.82	3
Columbus	Ohio	747755	15	9	11	81.82	3
Mesa	Arizona	452933	38	9	11	81.82	3
San Diego	California	1266731	8	9	11	81.82	3
San Antonio	Texas	1328984	7	9	11	81.82	3
El Paso	Texas	606913	22	9	11	81.82	3
Greensboro	North Carolina	247183	74	9	11	81.82	3
Long Beach	California	466520	36	9	11	81.82	3
Wichita	Kansas	361420	51	9	11	81.82	3
St Petersburg	Florida	246407	75	9	11	81.82	3
Albuquerque	New Mexico	518271	34	9	11	81.82	3
St Paul	Minnesota	277251	67	9	11	81.82	3
Sacramento	California	460242	37	9	11	81.82	3
Glendale	Arizona	253152	70	9	11	81.82	3
Kansas City	Missouri	450375	39	9	11	81.82	3
Atlanta	Georgia	519145	33	9	11	81.82	3
Colorado Springs	Colorado	376427	47	9	11	81.82	3
Miami	Florida	409719	43	9	11	81.82	3
Corpus Christi	Texas	285507	63	9	11	81.82	3
Anchorage	Arkansas	279671	65	9	11	81.82	3
Detroit	Michigan	916952	11	9	11	81.82	3
Chicago	Illinois	2836658	3	8	11	72.73	4
St Louis	Missouri	350759	52	8	11	72.73	4
Plano	Texas	260796	69	8	11	72.73	4
Los Angeles	California	3834340	2	8	11	72.73	4

Tampa	Florida	336823	54	8	11	72.73	4
Minneapolis	Minnesota	377392	46	8	11	72.73	4
Denver	Colorado	588349	26	8	11	72.73	4
Las Vegas	Nevada	558880	28	8	11	72.73	4
Aurora	Colorado	311794	58	8	11	72.73	4
Henderson	Nevada	249386	72	8	11	72.73	4
Milwaukee	Wisconsin	602191	23	8	11	72.73	4
Cincinnati	Ohio	332458	56	8	11	72.73	4
Riverside	California	294437	61	8	11	72.73	4
Honolulu	Hawaii	375571	49	8	11	72.73	4
Oakland	California	401489	44	8	11	72.73	4
Indianapolis	Indiana	795458	14	8	11	72.73	4
Bakersfield	California	315837	57	8	11	72.73	4
Washington DC	N/A	588292	27	7	11	63.64	5
Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	547274	31	7	11	63.64	5
Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	1449634	6	7	11	63.64	5
Dallas	Texas	1240499	9	7	11	63.64	5
Tulsa	Oklahoma	384037	45	7	11	63.64	5
Arlington	Texas	371038	50	7	11	63.64	5
Anaheim	California	333249	55	7	11	63.64	5
Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	311218	59	7	11	63.64	5
Lexington	Kentucky	279044	66	7	11	63.64	5
Tucson	Arizona	525529	32	7	11	63.64	5
Cleveland	Ohio	438042	40	7	11	63.64	5
Omaha	Nebraska	424482	42	7	11	63.64	5
Stockton	California	287245	62	7	11	63.64	5
Santa Ana	California	339555	53	7	11	63.64	5
Lincoln	Nebraska	248744	73	7	11	63.64	5
Houston	Texas	2208180	4	6	11	54.55	6
Fresno	California	470508	35	6	11	54.55	6
Portland	Oregon	550396	30	6	11	54.55	6
Fort Wayne	Indiana	251247	71	6	11	54.55	6
Raleigh	North Carolina	375806	48	6	11	54.55	6
Newark	New Jersey	280135	64	6	11	54.55	6
Buffalo	New York	272632	68	5	11	45.45	7
Toledo	Ohio	295029	60	5	11	45.45	7
AVG. SCORE						75.03	

**NEIGHBORHOOD INFORMATION, 75 LARGEST U.S. CITIES**

City	State	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
Phoenix	Arizona	1552259	5	2	2	100.00	1
Louisville	Kentucky	557789	29	2	2	100.00	1
San Francisco	California	799183	13	2	2	100.00	1
New York	New York	8274527	1	2	2	100.00	1
Seattle	Washington	594210	24	2	2	100.00	1
Boston	Massachusetts	608352	21	2	2	100.00	1
Virginia Beach	Virginia	434743	41	2	2	100.00	1
San Jose	California	939899	10	2	2	100.00	1
Columbus	Ohio	747755	15	2	2	100.00	1
Mesa	Arizona	452933	38	2	2	100.00	1
Nashville	Tennessee	590807	25	2	2	100.00	1
St Louis	Missouri	350759	52	2	2	100.00	1
Austin	Texas	743074	16	2	2	100.00	1
Plano	Texas	260796	69	2	2	100.00	1
Los Angeles	California	3834340	2	2	2	100.00	1
San Diego	California	1266731	8	2	2	100.00	1
Baltimore	Maryland	637455	20	2	2	100.00	1
Washington DC	N/A	588292	27	2	2	100.00	1
Tampa	Florida	336823	54	2	2	100.00	1
San Antonio	Texas	1328984	7	2	2	100.00	1
El Paso	Texas	606913	22	2	2	100.00	1
Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	547274	31	2	2	100.00	1
Greensboro	North Carolina	247183	74	2	2	100.00	1
Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	1449634	6	2	2	100.00	1
Long Beach	California	466520	36	2	2	100.00	1
Wichita	Kansas	361420	51	2	2	100.00	1
St Petersburg	Florida	246407	75	2	2	100.00	1
Chicago	Illinois	2836658	3	2	2	100.00	1
Houston	Texas	2208180	4	2	2	100.00	1
Memphis	Tennessee	674028	18	2	2	100.00	1
Albuquerque	New Mexico	518271	34	2	2	100.00	1
St Paul	Minnesota	277251	67	2	2	100.00	1
Dallas	Texas	1240499	9	2	2	100.00	1
Sacramento	California	460242	37	2	2	100.00	1
Minneapolis	Minnesota	377392	46	2	2	100.00	1
Glendale	Arizona	253152	70	2	2	100.00	1
Denver	Colorado	588349	26	2	2	100.00	1
Tulsa	Oklahoma	384037	45	2	2	100.00	1
Las Vegas	Nevada	558880	28	2	2	100.00	1
Fresno	California	470508	35	2	2	100.00	1

Aurora	Colorado	311794	58	2	2	100.00	1
Henderson	Nevada	249386	72	2	2	100.00	1
Portland	Oregon	550396	30	2	2	100.00	1
Charlotte	North Carolina	671588	19	2	2	100.00	1
Kansas City	Missouri	450375	39	2	2	100.00	1
Arlington	Texas	371038	50	2	2	100.00	1
Jacksonville	Florida	805605	12	2	2	100.00	1
Milwaukee	Wisconsin	602191	23	2	2	100.00	1
Atlanta	Georgia	519145	33	2	2	100.00	1
Fort Wayne	Indiana	251247	71	2	2	100.00	1
Colorado Springs	Colorado	376427	47	2	2	100.00	1
Anaheim	California	333249	55	2	2	100.00	1
Cincinnati	Ohio	332458	56	2	2	100.00	1
Riverside	California	294437	61	2	2	100.00	1
Miami	Florida	409719	43	2	2	100.00	1
Corpus Christi	Texas	285507	63	2	2	100.00	1
Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	311218	59	2	2	100.00	1
Honolulu	Hawaii	375571	49	2	2	100.00	1
Fort Worth	Texas	681818	17	1	2	50.00	1
Oakland	California	401489	44	2	2	100.00	1
Anchorage	Arkansas	279671	65	2	2	100.00	1
Detroit	Michigan	916952	11	2	2	100.00	1
Lexington	Kentucky	279044	66	2	2	100.00	1
Tucson	Arizona	525529	32	2	2	100.00	1
Cleveland	Ohio	438042	40	2	2	100.00	1
Omaha	Nebraska	424482	42	2	2	100.00	1
Indianapolis	Indiana	795458	14	2	2	100.00	1
Stockton	California	287245	62	2	2	100.00	1
Buffalo	New York	272632	68	2	2	100.00	1
Santa Ana	California	339555	53	2	2	100.00	1
Lincoln	Nebraska	248744	73	2	2	100.00	1
Toledo	Ohio	295029	60	2	2	100.00	1
Bakersfield	California	315837	57	2	2	100.00	1
Raleigh	North Carolina	375806	48	2	2	100.00	1
Newark	New Jersey	280135	64	2	2	100.00	1
AVG. SCORE						99.33	



**POLICY AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION, 75 LARGEST U.S. CITIES**

City	State	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
Phoenix	Arizona	1552259	5	8	8	100.00	1
Louisville	Kentucky	557789	29	8	8	100.00	1
San Francisco	California	799183	13	8	8	100.00	1
New York	New York	8274527	1	8	8	100.00	1
Seattle	Washington	594210	24	8	8	100.00	1
Boston	Massachusetts	608352	21	8	8	100.00	1
Virginia Beach	Virginia	434743	41	8	8	100.00	1
San Jose	California	939899	10	8	8	100.00	1
Columbus	Ohio	747755	15	8	8	100.00	1
Mesa	Arizona	452933	38	8	8	100.00	1
St Louis	Missouri	350759	52	8	8	100.00	1
Los Angeles	California	3834340	2	8	8	100.00	1
San Diego	California	1266731	8	8	8	100.00	1
Washington DC	N/A	588292	27	8	8	100.00	1
Tampa	Florida	336823	54	8	8	100.00	1
San Antonio	Texas	1328984	7	8	8	100.00	1
El Paso	Texas	606913	22	8	8	100.00	1
Greensboro	North Carolina	247183	74	8	8	100.00	1
Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	1449634	6	8	8	100.00	1
Long Beach	California	466520	36	8	8	100.00	1
St Petersburg	Florida	246407	75	8	8	100.00	1
Houston	Texas	2208180	4	8	8	100.00	1
Memphis	Tennessee	674028	18	8	8	100.00	1
Albuquerque	New Mexico	518271	34	8	8	100.00	1
St Paul	Minnesota	277251	67	8	8	100.00	1
Dallas	Texas	1240499	9	8	8	100.00	1
Sacramento	California	460242	37	8	8	100.00	1
Minneapolis	Minnesota	377392	46	8	8	100.00	1
Glendale	Arizona	253152	70	8	8	100.00	1
Denver	Colorado	588349	26	8	8	100.00	1
Las Vegas	Nevada	558880	28	8	8	100.00	1
Fresno	California	470508	35	8	8	100.00	1
Henderson	Nevada	249386	72	8	8	100.00	1
Portland	Oregon	550396	30	8	8	100.00	1
Arlington	Texas	371038	50	8	8	100.00	1
Milwaukee	Wisconsin	602191	23	8	8	100.00	1
Atlanta	Georgia	519145	33	8	8	100.00	1
Colorado Springs	Colorado	376427	47	8	8	100.00	1
Anaheim	California	333249	55	8	8	100.00	1
Cincinnati	Ohio	332458	56	8	8	100.00	1

Riverside	California	294437	61	8	8	100.00	1
Honolulu	Hawaii	375571	49	8	8	100.00	1
Fort Worth	Texas	681818	17	8	8	100.00	1
Oakland	California	401489	44	8	8	100.00	1
Anchorage	Arkansas	279671	65	8	8	100.00	1
Detroit	Michigan	916952	11	8	8	100.00	1
Lexington	Kentucky	279044	66	8	8	100.00	1
Tucson	Arizona	525529	32	8	8	100.00	1
Cleveland	Ohio	438042	40	8	8	100.00	1
Stockton	California	287245	62	8	8	100.00	1
Lincoln	Nebraska	248744	73	8	8	100.00	1
Toledo	Ohio	295029	60	8	8	100.00	1
Chicago	Illinois	2836658	3	8	8	100.00	1
Nashville	Tennessee	590807	25	7	8	87.50	2
Austin	Texas	743074	16	7	8	87.50	2
Plano	Texas	260796	69	7	8	87.50	2
Baltimore	Maryland	637455	20	7	8	87.50	2
Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	547274	31	7	8	87.50	2
Wichita	Kansas	361420	51	7	8	87.50	2
Tulsa	Oklahoma	384037	45	7	8	87.50	2
Aurora	Colorado	311794	58	7	8	87.50	2
Charlotte	North Carolina	671588	19	7	8	87.50	2
Kansas City	Missouri	450375	39	7	8	87.50	2
Jacksonville	Florida	805605	12	7	8	87.50	2
Fort Wayne	Indiana	251247	71	7	8	87.50	2
Miami	Florida	409719	43	7	8	87.50	2
Corpus Christi	Texas	285507	63	7	8	87.50	2
Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	311218	59	7	8	87.50	2
Omaha	Nebraska	424482	42	7	8	87.50	2
Santa Ana	California	339555	53	7	8	87.50	2
Bakersfield	California	315837	57	6	8	75.00	3
Raleigh	North Carolina	375806	48	6	8	75.00	3
Newark	New Jersey	280135	64	6	8	75.00	3
Buffalo	New York	272632	68	5	8	62.50	4
Indianapolis	Indiana	795458	14	4	8	50.00	5
AVG. SCORE						95.00	

**OFFLINE PARTICIPATION INFORMATION, 75 LARGEST U.S. CITIES**

City	State	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
Phoenix	Arizona	1552259	5	12	12	100.00	1
Louisville	Kentucky	557789	29	12	12	100.00	1
San Francisco	California	799183	13	12	12	100.00	1
New York	New York	8274527	1	12	12	100.00	1
Seattle	Washington	594210	24	12	12	100.00	1
Boston	Massachusetts	608352	21	12	12	100.00	1
Virginia Beach	Virginia	434743	41	12	12	100.00	1
San Jose	California	939899	10	12	12	100.00	1
St Louis	Missouri	350759	52	12	12	100.00	1
Austin	Texas	743074	16	12	12	100.00	1
Los Angeles	California	3834340	2	12	12	100.00	1
San Diego	California	1266731	8	12	12	100.00	1
Baltimore	Maryland	637455	20	12	12	100.00	1
Washington DC	N/A	588292	27	12	12	100.00	1
Tampa	Florida	336823	54	12	12	100.00	1
San Antonio	Texas	1328984	7	12	12	100.00	1
Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	547274	31	12	12	100.00	1
Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	1449634	6	12	12	100.00	1
Wichita	Kansas	361420	51	12	12	100.00	1
Chicago	Illinois	2836658	3	12	12	100.00	1
Houston	Texas	2208180	4	12	12	100.00	1
Memphis	Tennessee	674028	18	12	12	100.00	1
Minneapolis	Minnesota	377392	46	12	12	100.00	1
Aurora	Colorado	311794	58	12	12	100.00	1
Charlotte	North Carolina	671588	19	12	12	100.00	1
Anaheim	California	333249	55	12	12	100.00	1
Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	311218	59	12	12	100.00	1
Santa Ana	California	339555	53	12	12	100.00	1
Columbus	Ohio	747755	15	11	12	91.67	2
Nashville	Tennessee	590807	25	11	12	91.67	2
El Paso	Texas	606913	22	11	12	91.67	2
St Petersburg	Florida	246407	75	11	12	91.67	2
Arlington	Texas	371038	50	11	12	91.67	2
Milwaukee	Wisconsin	602191	23	11	12	91.67	2
Atlanta	Georgia	519145	33	11	12	91.67	2
Riverside	California	294437	61	11	12	91.67	2
Fort Worth	Texas	681818	17	11	12	91.67	2
Lexington	Kentucky	279044	66	11	12	91.67	2
Omaha	Nebraska	424482	42	11	12	91.67	2
Buffalo	New York	272632	68	11	12	91.67	2

Mesa	Arizona	452933	38	10	12	83.33	3
Greensboro	North Carolina	247183	74	10	12	83.33	3
St Paul	Minnesota	277251	67	10	12	83.33	3
Dallas	Texas	1240499	9	10	12	83.33	3
Denver	Colorado	588349	26	10	12	83.33	3
Tulsa	Oklahoma	384037	45	10	12	83.33	3
Henderson	Nevada	249386	72	10	12	83.33	3
Portland	Oregon	550396	30	10	12	83.33	3
Jacksonville	Florida	805605	12	10	12	83.33	3
Fort Wayne	Indiana	251247	71	10	12	83.33	3
Cincinnati	Ohio	332458	56	10	12	83.33	3
Oakland	California	401489	44	10	12	83.33	3
Anchorage	Arkansas	279671	65	10	12	83.33	3
Detroit	Michigan	916952	11	10	12	83.33	3
Indianapolis	Indiana	795458	14	10	12	83.33	3
Raleigh	North Carolina	375806	48	10	12	83.33	3
Plano	Texas	260796	69	9	12	75.00	4
Long Beach	California	466520	36	9	12	75.00	4
Albuquerque	New Mexico	518271	34	9	12	75.00	4
Glendale	Arizona	253152	70	9	12	75.00	4
Fresno	California	470508	35	9	12	75.00	4
Miami	Florida	409719	43	9	12	75.00	4
Cleveland	Ohio	438042	40	9	12	75.00	4
Stockton	California	287245	62	9	12	75.00	4
Sacramento	California	460242	37	8	12	66.67	5
Las Vegas	Nevada	558880	28	8	12	66.67	5
Lincoln	Nebraska	248744	73	8	12	66.67	5
Toledo	Ohio	295029	60	8	12	66.67	5
Kansas City	Missouri	450375	39	7	12	58.33	6
Honolulu	Hawaii	375571	49	7	12	58.33	6
Colorado Springs	Colorado	376427	47	6	12	50.00	7
Corpus Christi	Texas	285507	63	6	12	50.00	7
Tucson	Arizona	525529	32	6	12	50.00	7
Bakersfield	California	315837	57	5	12	41.67	8
Newark	New Jersey	280135	64	5	12	41.67	8
AVG. SCORE						86.00	

**ONLINE INTERACTIVITY AND PARTICIPATION, 75 LARGEST U.S. CITIES**

City	State	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
Phoenix	Arizona	1552259	5	11	13	84.62	1
Mesa	Arizona	452933	38	11	13	84.62	1
Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	547274	31	11	13	84.62	1
Seattle	Washington	594210	24	11	13	84.62	1
Louisville	Kentucky	557789	29	10	13	76.92	2
Boston	Massachusetts	608352	21	10	13	76.92	2
Plano	Texas	260796	69	10	13	76.92	2
San Francisco	California	799183	13	10	13	76.92	2
New York	New York	8274527	1	9	13	69.23	3
Columbus	Ohio	747755	15	9	13	69.23	3
St Louis	Missouri	350759	52	9	13	69.23	3
Greensboro	North Carolina	247183	74	9	13	69.23	3
Long Beach	California	466520	36	9	13	69.23	3
Glendale	Arizona	253152	70	9	13	69.23	3
Denver	Colorado	588349	26	9	13	69.23	3
Tulsa	Oklahoma	384037	45	9	13	69.23	3
Portland	Oregon	550396	30	9	13	69.23	3
Corpus Christi	Texas	285507	63	9	13	69.23	3
Honolulu	Hawaii	375571	49	9	13	69.23	3
Chicago	Illinois	2836658	3	9	13	69.23	3
Minneapolis	Minnesota	377392	46	9	13	69.23	3
Virginia Beach	Virginia	434743	41	8	13	61.54	4
San Jose	California	939899	10	8	13	61.54	4
Los Angeles	California	3834340	2	8	13	61.54	4
Baltimore	Maryland	637455	20	8	13	61.54	4
Albuquerque	New Mexico	518271	34	8	13	61.54	4
St Paul	Minnesota	277251	67	8	13	61.54	4
Las Vegas	Nevada	558880	28	8	13	61.54	4
Aurora	Colorado	311794	58	8	13	61.54	4
Anaheim	California	333249	55	8	13	61.54	4
Lexington	Kentucky	279044	66	8	13	61.54	4
Nashville	Tennessee	590807	25	7	13	53.85	5
Austin	Texas	743074	16	7	13	53.85	5
Washington DC	N/A	588292	27	7	13	53.85	5
Tampa	Florida	336823	54	7	13	53.85	5
Wichita	Kansas	361420	51	7	13	53.85	5
St Petersburg	Florida	246407	75	7	13	53.85	5
Houston	Texas	2208180	4	7	13	53.85	5
Sacramento	California	460242	37	7	13	53.85	5
Fresno	California	470508	35	7	13	53.85	5

Henderson	Nevada	249386	72	7	13	53.85	5
Kansas City	Missouri	450375	39	7	13	53.85	5
Arlington	Texas	371038	50	7	13	53.85	5
Milwaukee	Wisconsin	602191	23	7	13	53.85	5
Fort Wayne	Indiana	251247	71	7	13	53.85	5
Colorado Springs	Colorado	376427	47	7	13	53.85	5
Fort Worth	Texas	681818	17	7	13	53.85	5
Tucson	Arizona	525529	32	7	13	53.85	5
Indianapolis	Indiana	795458	14	7	13	53.85	5
Stockton	California	287245	62	7	13	53.85	5
San Diego	California	1266731	8	6	13	46.15	6
El Paso	Texas	606913	22	6	13	46.15	6
Memphis	Tennessee	674028	18	6	13	46.15	6
Dallas	Texas	1240499	9	6	13	46.15	6
Charlotte	North Carolina	671588	19	6	13	46.15	6
Jacksonville	Florida	805605	12	6	13	46.15	6
Riverside	California	294437	61	6	13	46.15	6
Cleveland	Ohio	438042	40	6	13	46.15	6
Omaha	Nebraska	424482	42	6	13	46.15	6
Buffalo	New York	272632	68	6	13	46.15	6
San Antonio	Texas	1328984	7	5	13	38.46	7
Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	1449634	6	5	13	38.46	7
Cincinnati	Ohio	332458	56	5	13	38.46	7
Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	311218	59	5	13	38.46	7
Anchorage	Arkansas	279671	65	5	13	38.46	7
Detroit	Michigan	916952	11	5	13	38.46	7
Newark	New Jersey	280135	64	5	13	38.46	7
Atlanta	Georgia	519145	33	4	13	30.77	8
Miami	Florida	409719	43	4	13	30.77	8
Oakland	California	401489	44	4	13	30.77	8
Santa Ana	California	339555	53	4	13	30.77	8
Lincoln	Nebraska	248744	73	4	13	30.77	8
Toledo	Ohio	295029	60	4	13	30.77	8
Bakersfield	California	315837	57	4	13	30.77	8
Raleigh	North Carolina	375806	48	4	13	30.77	8
AVG. SCORE						55.49	

**TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESSIBILITY, 75 LARGEST U.S. CITIES**

City	State	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
Phoenix	Arizona	1552259	5	12	13	92.31	1
Louisville	Kentucky	557789	29	12	12	92.31	1
New York	New York	8274527	1	12	13	92.31	1
Virginia Beach	Virginia	434743	41	12	13	92.31	1
Plano	Texas	260796	69	12	13	92.31	1
Philadelphia	Pennsylvania	1449634	6	12	13	92.31	1
Seattle	Washington	594210	24	12	13	92.31	1
San Francisco	California	799183	13	11	13	84.62	2
Columbus	Ohio	747755	15	11	13	84.62	2
Nashville	Tennessee	590807	25	11	13	84.62	2
Tampa	Florida	336823	54	11	13	84.62	2
Chicago	Illinois	2836658	3	11	13	84.62	2
Dallas	Texas	1240499	9	11	13	84.62	2
Sacramento	California	460242	37	11	13	84.62	2
Fresno	California	470508	35	11	13	84.62	2
St Louis	Missouri	350759	52	10	13	76.92	3
Washington DC	N/A	588292	27	10	13	76.92	3
Houston	Texas	2208180	4	10	13	76.92	3
Las Vegas	Nevada	558880	28	10	13	76.92	3
Kansas City	Missouri	450375	39	10	13	76.92	3
Fort Wayne	Indiana	251247	71	10	13	76.92	3
Boston	Massachusetts	608352	21	9	13	69.23	4
San Jose	California	939899	10	9	13	69.23	4
Austin	Texas	743074	16	9	13	69.23	4
Los Angeles	California	3834340	2	9	13	69.23	4
San Diego	California	1266731	8	9	13	69.23	4
San Antonio	Texas	1328984	7	9	13	69.23	4
El Paso	Texas	606913	22	9	13	69.23	4
Albuquerque	New Mexico	518271	34	9	13	69.23	4
St Paul	Minnesota	277251	67	9	13	69.23	4
Tulsa	Oklahoma	384037	45	9	13	69.23	4
Portland	Oregon	550396	30	9	13	69.23	4
Colorado Springs	Colorado	376427	47	9	13	69.23	4
Cincinnati	Ohio	332458	56	9	13	69.23	4
Riverside	California	294437	61	9	13	69.23	4
Miami	Florida	409719	43	9	13	69.23	4
Pittsburgh	Pennsylvania	311218	59	9	13	69.23	4
Indianapolis	Indiana	795458	14	9	13	69.23	4
Mesa	Arizona	452933	38	8	13	61.54	5
Oklahoma City	Oklahoma	547274	31	8	13	61.54	5
Greensboro	North Carolina	247183	74	8	13	61.54	5

St Petersburg	Florida	246407	75	8	13	61.54	5
Memphis	Tennessee	674028	18	8	13	61.54	5
Minneapolis	Minnesota	377392	46	8	13	61.54	5
Henderson	Nevada	249386	72	8	13	61.54	5
Arlington	Texas	371038	50	8	13	61.54	5
Milwaukee	Wisconsin	602191	23	8	13	61.54	5
Atlanta	Georgia	519145	33	8	13	61.54	5
Anaheim	California	333249	55	8	13	61.54	5
Honolulu	Hawaii	375571	49	8	13	61.54	5
Detroit	Michigan	916952	11	8	13	61.54	5
Tucson	Arizona	525529	32	8	13	61.54	5
Buffalo	New York	272632	68	8	13	61.54	5
Baltimore	Maryland	637455	20	7	13	53.85	6
Long Beach	California	466520	36	7	13	53.85	6
Wichita	Kansas	361420	51	7	13	53.85	6
Glendale	Arizona	253152	70	7	13	53.85	6
Denver	Colorado	588349	26	7	13	53.85	6
Aurora	Colorado	311794	58	7	13	53.85	6
Jacksonville	Florida	805605	12	7	13	53.85	6
Corpus Christi	Texas	285507	63	7	13	53.85	6
Fort Worth	Texas	681818	17	7	13	53.85	6
Oakland	California	401489	44	7	13	53.85	6
Cleveland	Ohio	438042	40	7	13	53.85	6
Toledo	Ohio	295029	60	7	13	53.85	6
Bakersfield	California	315837	57	7	13	53.85	6
Raleigh	North Carolina	375806	48	7	13	53.85	6
Newark	New Jersey	280135	64	7	13	53.85	6
Charlotte	North Carolina	671588	19	6	13	46.15	7
Anchorage	Arkansas	279671	65	6	13	46.15	7
Lexington	Kentucky	279044	66	6	13	46.15	7
Stockton	California	287245	62	6	13	46.15	7
Santa Ana	California	339555	53	6	13	46.15	7
Lincoln	Nebraska	248744	73	6	13	46.15	7
Omaha	Nebraska	424482	42	5	13	38.46	8
AVG. SCORE						66.77	



**OVERALL RANKING, 20 LARGEST ILLINOIS CITIES**

City	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
Naperville	142,479	5	68	78	87.18	1
Chicago	2,836,658	1	64	74	86.49	2
Aurora	170,855	2	61	74	82.43	3
Champaign	75,515	13	62	78	79.49	4
Elgin	104,288	8	61	78	78.21	5
Des Plaines	57,008	20	59	78	75.64	6
Peoria	133,546	6	59	78	75.64	6
Evanston	75,905	12	58	78	74.36	7
Rockford	156,596	3	55	74	74.32	8
Palatine	67,317	18	51	78	65.38	9
Schaumburg	72,147	16	47	78	60.26	10
Springfield	117,090	7	44	74	59.46	11
Bloomington	72,416	15	46	78	58.97	12
Skokie	66,659	19	45	78	57.69	13
Arlington Heights	73,693	14	43	78	55.13	14
Bolingbrook	70,476	17	40	74	54.05	15
Cicero	80,976	10	39	74	52.7	16
Decatur	76,674	11	40	78	51.28	17
Joliet	144,316	4	40	78	51.28	17
Waukegan	91,138	9	36	74	48.65	18
AVG. SCORE					66.43	

**CONTACT INFORMATION, 20 LARGEST ILLINOIS CITIES**

City	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
Aurora	170,855	2	12	12	100	1
Bolingbrook	70,476	17	12	12	100	1
Champaign	75,515	13	16	16	100	1
Cicero	80,976	10	12	12	100	1
Elgin	104,288	8	16	16	100	1
Evanston	75,905	12	16	16	100	1
Naperville	142,479	5	16	16	100	1
Palatine	67,317	18	16	16	100	1
Peoria	133,546	6	16	16	100	1
Rockford	156,596	3	12	12	100	1
Springfield	117,090	7	12	12	100	1
Waukegan	91,138	9	12	12	100	1
Bloomington	72,416	15	15	16	93.75	2
Chicago	2,836,658	1	11	12	91.67	3
Des Plaines	57,008	20	14	16	87.5	4
Arlington Heights	73,693	14	13	16	81.25	5
Decatur	76,674	11	13	16	81.25	5
Joliet	144,316	4	11	16	68.75	6
Skokie	66,659	19	8	16	50	7
Schaumburg	72,147	16	7	16	43.75	8
AVG. SCORE					89.9	

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION, 20 LARGEST ILLINOIS CITIES**

City	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
Arlington Heights	73,693	14	3	3	100	1
Champaign	75,515	13	3	3	100	1
Chicago	2,836,658	1	3	3	100	1
Evanston	75,905	12	3	3	100	1
Naperville	142,479	5	3	3	100	1
Skokie	66,659	19	3	3	100	1
Aurora	170,855	2	2	3	66.67	2
Decatur	76,674	11	2	3	66.67	2
Des Plaines	57,008	20	2	3	66.67	2
Palatine	67,317	18	2	3	66.67	2
Rockford	156,596	3	2	3	66.67	2
Schaumburg	72,147	16	2	3	66.67	2
Waukegan	91,138	9	2	3	66.67	2
Bloomington	72,416	15	1	3	33.33	3
Bolingbrook	70,476	17	1	3	33.33	3
Cicero	80,976	10	1	3	33.33	3
Elgin	104,288	8	1	3	33.33	3
Joliet	144,316	4	1	3	33.33	3
Peoria	133,546	6	1	3	33.33	3
Springfield	117,090	7	1	3	33.33	3
AVG. SCORE					65	

<b>PROCESSES AND REGULATIONS, 20 LARGEST ILLINOIS CITIES</b>						
<b>City</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>City rank by population</b>	<b>Raw Score</b>	<b>Highest possible score</b>	<b>Raw score weighted by total possible score</b>	<b>Rank by weighted score</b>
Champaign	75,515	13	9	11	81.82	1
Naperville	142,479	5	9	11	81.82	1
Palatine	67,317	18	9	11	81.82	1
Chicago	2,836,658	1	8	11	72.73	2
Decatur	76,674	11	8	11	72.73	2
Elgin	104,288	8	8	11	72.73	2
Peoria	133,546	6	8	11	72.73	2
Waukegan	91,138	9	8	11	72.73	2
Aurora	170,855	2	7	11	63.64	3
Bloomington	72,416	15	7	11	63.64	3
Des Plaines	57,008	20	7	11	63.64	3
Evanston	75,905	12	7	11	63.64	3
Arlington Heights	73,693	14	6	11	54.55	4
Cicero	80,976	10	6	11	54.55	4
Joliet	144,316	4	6	11	54.55	4
Rockford	156,596	3	6	11	54.55	4
Skokie	66,659	19	6	11	54.55	4
Springfield	117,090	7	6	11	54.55	4
Schaumburg	72,147	16	5	11	45.45	5
Bolingbrook	70,476	17	4	11	36.36	6
<b>AVG. SCORE</b>					63.64	

**NEIGHBORHOOD INFORMATION, 20 LARGEST ILLINOIS CITIES**

<b>City</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>City rank by population</b>	<b>Raw Score</b>	<b>Highest possible score</b>	<b>Raw score weighted by total possible score</b>	<b>Rank by weighted score</b>
Aurora	170,855	2	2	2	100	1
Champaign	75,515	13	2	2	100	1
Chicago	2,836,658	1	2	2	100	1
Des Plaines	57,008	20	2	2	100	1
Elgin	104,288	8	2	2	100	1
Evanston	75,905	12	2	2	100	1
Joliet	144,316	4	2	2	100	1
Naperville	142,479	5	2	2	100	1
Palatine	67,317	18	2	2	100	1
Peoria	133,546	6	2	2	100	1
Rockford	156,596	3	2	2	100	1
Schaumburg	72,147	16	2	2	100	1
Skokie	66,659	19	2	2	100	1
Springfield	117,090	7	2	2	100	1
Waukegan	91,138	9	2	2	100	1
Arlington Heights	73,693	14	1	2	50	2
Bloomington	72,416	15	1	2	50	2
Bolingbrook	70,476	17	1	2	50	2
Cicero	80,976	10	1	2	50	2
Decatur	76,674	11	0	2	0	3
<b>AVG. SCORE</b>					85	

**POLICY AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION, 20 LARGEST ILLINOIS CITIES**

City	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
Aurora	170,855	2	8	8	100	1
Chicago	2,836,658	1	8	8	100	1
Evanston	75,905	12	8	8	100	1
Naperville	142,479	5	8	8	100	1
Champaign	75,515	13	7	8	87.5	2
Des Plaines	57,008	20	7	8	87.5	2
Rockford	156,596	3	7	8	87.5	2
Schaumburg	72,147	16	7	8	87.5	2
Arlington Heights	73,693	14	6	8	75	3
Elgin	104,288	8	6	8	75	3
Peoria	133,546	6	6	8	75	3
Springfield	117,090	7	6	8	75	3
Decatur	76,674	11	5	8	62.5	4
Palatine	67,317	18	4	8	50	5
Bloomington	72,416	15	3	8	37.5	6
Bolingbrook	70,476	17	3	8	37.5	6
Joliet	144,316	4	3	8	37.5	6
Skokie	66,659	19	3	8	37.5	6
Cicero	80,976	10	1	8	12.5	7
Waukegan	91,138	9	0	8	0	8
AVG. SCORE					66.25	

**OFFLINE PARTICIPATION INFORMATION, 20 LARGEST ILLINOIS CITIES**

<b>City</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>City rank by population</b>	<b>Raw Score</b>	<b>Highest possible score</b>	<b>Raw score weighted by total possible score</b>	<b>Rank by weighted score</b>
Chicago	2,836,658	1	12	12	100	1
Des Plaines	57,008	20	12	12	100	1
Elgin	104,288	8	12	12	100	1
Naperville	142,479	5	12	12	100	1
Schaumburg	72,147	16	12	12	100	1
Aurora	170,855	2	11	12	91.67	2
Bolingbrook	70,476	17	11	12	91.67	2
Champaign	75,515	13	11	12	91.67	2
Palatine	67,317	18	11	12	91.67	2
Rockford	156,596	3	11	12	91.67	2
Joliet	144,316	4	10	12	83.33	3
Skokie	66,659	19	10	12	83.33	3
Evanston	75,905	12	9	12	75	4
Peoria	133,546	6	9	12	75	4
Springfield	117,090	7	8	12	66.67	5
Cicero	80,976	10	7	12	58.33	6
Arlington Heights	73,693	14	6	12	50	7
Waukegan	91,138	9	5	12	41.67	8
Bloomington	72,416	15	4	12	33.33	9
Decatur	76,674	11	3	12	25	10
<b>AVG. SCORE</b>					<b>77.5</b>	

**ONLINE INTERACTIVITY AND PARTICIPATION, 20 LARGEST ILLINOIS CITIES**

<b>City</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>City rank by population</b>	<b>Raw Score</b>	<b>Highest possible score</b>	<b>Raw score weighted by total possible score</b>	<b>Rank by weighted score</b>
Naperville	142,479	5	10	13	76.92	1
Chicago	2,836,658	1	9	13	69.23	2
Elgin	104,288	8	9	13	69.23	2
Aurora	170,855	2	8	13	61.54	3
Bloomington	72,416	15	7	13	53.85	4
Champaign	75,515	13	7	13	53.85	4
Des Plaines	57,008	20	7	13	53.85	4
Peoria	133,546	6	7	13	53.85	4
Cicero	80,976	10	6	13	46.15	5
Decatur	76,674	11	6	13	46.15	5
Evanston	75,905	12	6	13	46.15	5
Schaumburg	72,147	16	6	13	46.15	5
Skokie	66,659	19	6	13	46.15	5
Rockford	156,596	3	5	13	38.46	6
Arlington Heights	73,693	14	4	13	30.77	7
Springfield	117,090	7	4	13	30.77	7
Bolingbrook	70,476	17	3	13	23.08	8
Joliet	144,316	4	3	13	23.08	8
Palatine	67,317	18	3	13	23.08	8
Waukegan	91,138	9	3	13	23.08	8
<b>AVG. SCORE</b>					45.77	



**TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESSIBILITY, 20 LARGEST ILLINOIS CITIES**

City	Population	City rank by population	Raw Score	Highest possible score	Raw score weighted by total possible score	Rank by weighted score
Aurora	170,855	2	11	13	84.62	1
Chicago	2,836,658	1	11	13	84.62	1
Peoria	133,546	6	10	13	76.92	2
Rockford	156,596	3	10	13	76.92	2
Bloomington	72,416	15	8	13	61.54	3
Des Plaines	57,008	20	8	13	61.54	3
Naperville	142,479	5	8	13	61.54	3
Champaign	75,515	13	7	13	53.85	4
Elgin	104,288	8	7	13	53.85	4
Evanston	75,905	12	7	13	53.85	4
Skokie	66,659	19	7	13	53.85	4
Schaumburg	72,147	16	6	13	46.15	5
Bolingbrook	70,476	17	5	13	38.46	6
Cicero	80,976	10	5	13	38.46	6
Springfield	117,090	7	5	13	38.46	6
Arlington Heights	73,693	14	4	13	30.77	7
Joliet	144,316	4	4	13	30.77	7
Palatine	67,317	18	4	13	30.77	7
Waukegan	91,138	9	4	13	30.77	7
Decatur	76,674	11	3	13	23.08	8
AVG. SCORE					51.54	

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