



NEWS RELEASE

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GLENDALE RECOGNIZED AS ONE OF THE BEST AMERICAN CITIES AT USING DATA AND EVIDENCE TO IMPROVE RESIDENTS' LIVES

Glendale Achieves Silver What Works Cities Certification

Glendale, Ariz. – The city of Glendale is proud to announce it has been recognized for achieving 2021 What Works Cities Certification, the national standard of excellence in data-driven city governance. What Works Cities Certification evaluates how well cities are managed by measuring the extent to which city leaders incorporate data and evidence into their decision-making.

What Works Cities is a national initiative by Bloomberg Philanthropies to help cities use data and evidence to more effectively tackle their most pressing challenges. Glendale, which achieved Certification at the silver level, is one of only 16 cities to be newly certified this year and one of only 40 cities to be certified since the program was launched in 2017.

Among the City's many accomplishments, Glendale was specifically recognized for the development and use of the GlendaleOne service portal and for providing new ways to reach and deliver service through the Community Action Office (CAP).

GlendaleOne became the City's new customer service portal starting in 2020. Residents now have the ability to submit requests for non-emergency services, see estimated time for resolution and track the City's performance. The portal has dramatically improved both efficiency and communications for service requests to the City.

"Earning this esteemed designation has been a goal of ours since this program began and we worked very hard to earn this," says Glendale City Manager Kevin Phelps. "We are thrilled to be recognized for our investment in the collection of data as part of our decision-making processes across the city and we look forward to continue using data in order to make a positive impact on the lives of our residents."

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During the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Glendale moved rapidly to provide emergency aid to residents using the Community Action Office. Demand for service skyrocketed during the pandemic. To meet that demand, Glendale quickly and efficiently used data to improve workflow and staffing, while also transitioning to a fully online application process and providing a new computer kiosk to facilitate online applications. By more efficiently managing and tracking the data, in two quarters alone, the city safely delivered almost \$9 million in COVID-19 relief funds to more than 2,000 families in need of rent and utility assistance

“I could not be more proud of our Glendale staff in earning this certification,” says Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers. “But this is about more than just a plaque to put on the wall, it signifies all of the hard work Glendale has put into using data to deliver fiscally responsible services to our residents.”

What Works Cities Certification assesses cities based on their [data-driven decision-making practices](#), such as whether they are using data to set goals and track progress, allocate funding, evaluate the effectiveness of programs, and achieve desired outcomes from contracts with outside vendors. The program also measures whether cities are publicly and transparently communicating about their use of data and evidence.

In addition to the launch of Glendale One and CAP office improvements, over the past year Glendale has demonstrated measurable progress on these foundational data practices. Other notable examples of the city’s use of data include:

- Launched new SmartGov portal for local businesses. The portal allows businesses to apply for and renew licenses online.
- Established a Data Governance program which includes training for every department and a citywide data inventory.
- Implemented an annual process to identify the upcoming three highest-priority procurements and assigned a dedicated team to manage those procurements to improve performance.

The 16 new cities that achieved Certification this year include four cities at the Gold level (Austin, TX; Chattanooga, TN; Detroit, MI; and Gilbert, AZ) and 12 cities at the Silver level: Baton Rouge, LA; Bellevue, WA; Fort Collins, CO; Glendale, AZ; Irving, TX; Little Rock, AR; Madison, WI; Minneapolis, MN; Norfolk, VA; Portland, OR; San Antonio, TX; and Syracuse, NY.

Additionally, three cities that had previously been certified advanced to the next level of Certification: Cambridge, MA (Gold); Memphis, TN (Gold); and Phoenix, AZ (Gold). Four cities renewed their Certification this year: South Bend, IN (Silver); San Jose, CA (Silver); Tempe, AZ (Gold); and Topeka, KS (Silver).

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“City leaders are using data to understand and support the needs of residents like never before,” said Michele Jolin, CEO and Co-Founder of Results for America, the lead partner in the What Works Cities initiative. “Throughout the COVID crisis and a historic reckoning with racial injustice, mayors have relied on data to identify and narrow racial gaps, and to make smarter investments that increase opportunity for all their residents. These cities are testing new solutions and measuring what works, rebuilding trust in government by engaging with their residents, and using evidence and data to drive faster progress on their toughest challenges.”

Cities that have achieved Certification in previous years include: Arlington, TX (2020 Gold), Boston, MA (2020 Silver), Boulder, CO (2020 Silver), Cambridge, MA (2020 Silver), Charlotte, NC (2020 Silver), Cincinnati, OH (2020 Silver), Kansas City, MO (2020 Gold), Los Angeles, CA (2020 Platinum), Louisville, KY (2020 Platinum), Memphis, TN (2020 Silver), Mesa, AZ (2020 Silver), New Orleans, LA (2020 Silver), Philadelphia, PA (2020 Silver), Phoenix, AZ (2020 Silver), San Diego, CA (2020 Silver), San Francisco, CA (2020 Gold), San Jose, CA (2020 Silver), Scottsdale, AZ (2020 Silver), Seattle, WA (2020 Gold), South Bend, IN (2020 Silver), Topeka, KS (2020 Silver), Tulsa, OK (2020 Silver), and Washington, DC (2020 Gold).

Jennifer Park, founding director of What Works Cities Certification, shared, “Since Certification was first introduced, cities have made tremendous progress in their ability to build the data capacity and skills needed to drive their decision-making with data and evidence. This year, cities used data and evidence to guide their response to COVID, address budget shortfalls, reimagine public safety, advance equity, and much more. Data wasn’t just a valuable tool for city leaders – it was a necessity.”

What Works Cities Certification was developed by a team of experts from Results for America in close consultation with the [What Works Cities Certification Standard Committee](#). To evaluate cities, these experts conducted a rigorous validation process of cities' Certification assessments and participated in site visits to the highest-performing cities to determine the city’s Certification level.

The program has inspired a movement of cities that are doubling down on their commitment to building the most well-managed local governments possible and using Certification as a roadmap for doing so. More than 200 cities have completed a [Certification assessment](#) to have their practices benchmarked against the national standard. The assessment is the first step to receiving exclusive support from What Works Cities to continue building a more effective local government. To learn more about the program and how to participate, visit <https://whatworkscities.bloomberg.org/certification/>. You can discover how Glendale is continuing to use technology and data to serve our residents at: www.glendaleaz.com/WhatWorksCities.

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