



CITIZENS UNION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
Testimony to the NYC Council Governmental Operations Committee
on the Structure and Content of the Mayor's Management Report
April 6, 2016

Good afternoon Chair Kallos and members of the City Council Governmental Operations Committee. My name is Dick Dadey, and I am the Executive Director of Citizens Union of the City of New York. Citizens Union is a nonpartisan good government group dedicated to making democracy work for all New Yorkers. Citizens Union serves as a civic watchdog, combating corruption and fighting for political reform.

Thank you for the invitation to testify today about the 2016 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report (PMMR). Citizens Union has been previously engaged on this issue, having testified before the Governmental Operations Committee over the past five years at similar oversight hearings, and served on the Mayor's Management Report (MMR) Roundtable convened by the Mayor's Office of Operations in 2012. The Roundtable's goal was to redesign the MMR to make it more user-friendly to the public and more effective as a measurement of agency performance; we have been pleased to see that several recommendations from that discussion have been implemented.

Yet, we believe that improvements could be made to both the substance and presentation of the reports that would allow for a better understanding of city government's performance of and plans for service delivery, and which would strengthen accountability and transparency. These recommendations include:

1. Set targets for over half of the city's performance indicators.

As Citizens Union has noted in testimony over the years, much information is needed to present a comprehensive view of the city's performance targets. We have conducted analysis of the PMMR, and found that: targets are specified for less than half of the 1,964 performance indicators examined within the text of the report; while some targets are given direction (e.g. to reduce or increase the number), still more indicators do not have articulated targets; and more indicators are without targets for FY 2017 than FY 2016. Our data show:

| 1,964 Performance Indicators | FY 2016 | FY 2017 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Specified Targets | 907 | 873 |
| Directional Target | 94 | 94 |
| No Target | 948 | 961 |

(Please see the affixed spreadsheet for more supporting data)

This is disconcerting because a critical aspect of these management reports is to publicly disclose the goals that agencies have established to improve on their performance. The lack of targets indicates one of two troubling possibilities: either that agencies experience difficulty setting goals in coordination with the Office of the Mayor, or that these goals have been established but are being concealed from the public. Neither is satisfactory.

2. Provide more detailed budgetary information.

More detailed budget information should be included in the MMR to accurately measure the effectiveness of each agency. While general budget information is provided for each agency - including expenditures, revenues, personnel costs, capital and overtime expenditures - there is no way to tell if service delivery reflects dollars well spent. The MMR and PMMR should provide detailed budget information for each agency service delivery goal established. This would enable the Mayor and Council during its budget hearings to determine the levels of funding appropriate for each service delivery goal agencies are trying to achieve.

Citizens Union understands that other budget documents produced by the Council and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) contain more detailed financial information for agencies. However, those documents do not measure performance. We cannot stress enough the need for OMB to make detailed agency spending that is linked to actual program performance more transparent and accessible to the public, and the MMR is one important way to deliver this information.

3. Expand reporting on cross-agency initiatives to include data on transparency and voting programs.

The PMMR currently is structured to share information not just about agency performance, but also cross-agency programs such as Hurricane Sandy Recovery and Vision Zero. We believe this feature is valuable for assessing key projects initiated by the Office of the Mayor, and would like to see it expand to include additional programs that are crucial for good government in New York City.

The city currently engages in several transparency and accountability initiatives, and it is important to track progress and set targets for growth, both within agencies and throughout the administration. These include:

- a. Complying with the Pro-Voter Law requiring certain agencies to provide voter registration opportunities.
- b. Responding to Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) requests.
- c. Webcasting or recording and publishing public meetings and hearings.
- d. Including data on the Open Data Portal.

We note that while there is one performance indicator addressing datasets on the Open Data Portal within the Department of Information Technology and Communications' portion of the PMMR, more information about the implementation of the Open Data Law that should be shared within the report. For example, the report could track the number of datasets published to the Open Data Portal by agency and within each agencies' section of the report – as it could do for all four of these cross-agency programs.

Thank you again for providing the opportunity for Citizens Union to share our findings and thoughts regarding the Preliminary Mayor's Management Report. I am happy to answer any questions you might have.