

The Untapped Potential of Best Practice Benchmarking

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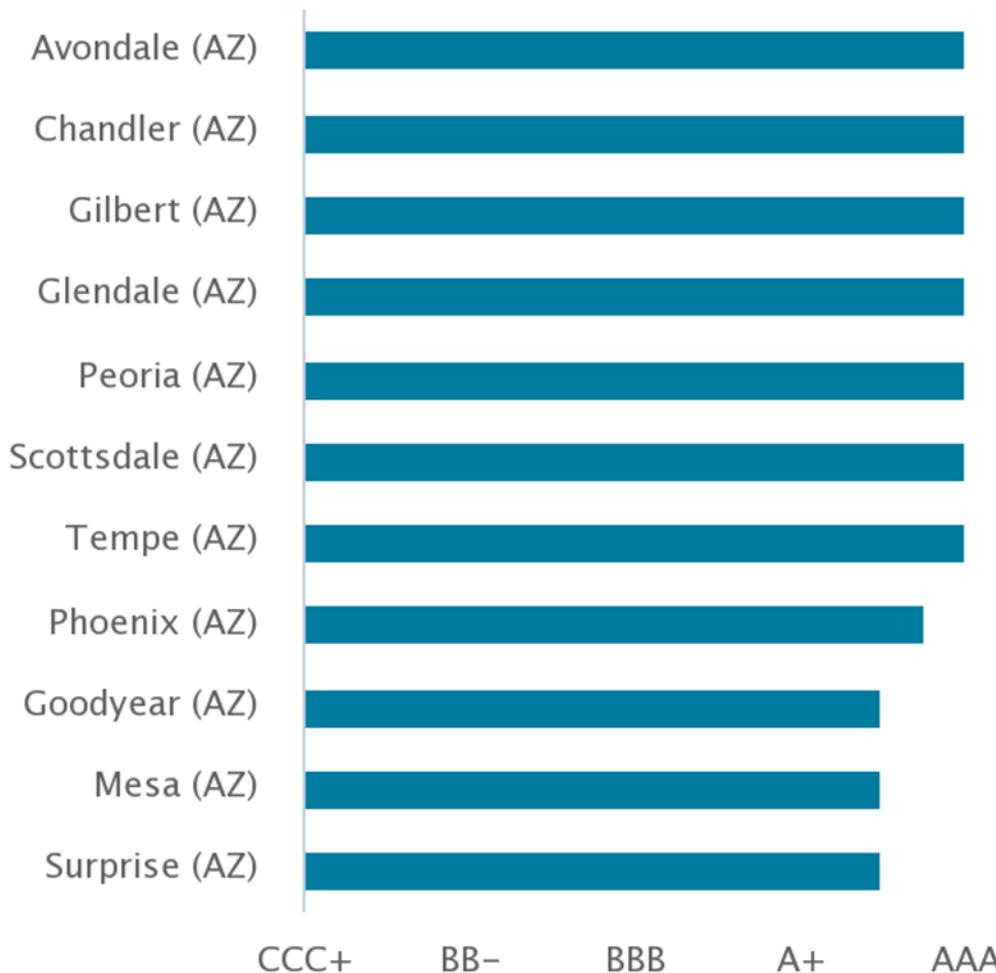
A Common Example of Benchmarking

Property Crime Clearance Rates (%)							
	FY 2013-14	FY 2014-15	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20
Mesa	30%	33%	29%	31%	28%	28%	27%
Gilbert	22%	25%	25%	23%	24%	26%	22%
Scottsdale	23%	27%	30%	26%	21%	25%	22%
Surprise	24%	21%	24%	26%	20%	19%	20%
Peoria	21%	21%	21%	18%	17%	20%	19%
Chandler	17%	18%	22%	17%	19%	18%	18%
Avondale	22%	20%	17%	14%	16%	15%	14%
Goodyear	21%	17%	16%	14%	14%	17%	14%
Phoenix	17%	17%	16%	14%	12%	12%	13%
Tempe	13%	12%	12%	12%	9%	9%	11%
Glendale	6%	10%	19%	17%	19%	17%	10%
Source	Self-reported by participating Valley Cities. Calendar year.						

Source: *Valley Benchmark Cities FY 2019-20 Appendix*. Posted at <https://www.transformgov.org/valley-benchmark-cities>

FY19/20 Bond Rating

General Obligation Bond Rating of each city



Source: *Valley Benchmark Cities FY 2019-20 Trend Report*. Posted at <https://www.transformgov.org/valley-benchmark-cities>

Major Types of Benchmarking in Local Government

		Also Known As...	
METRICS BENCHMARKING	Compares performance results reflected in performance measures or metrics	Results benchmarking; data benchmarking; comparative performance measurement; relative performance evaluation	Indicators benchmarking
BEST PRACTICE BENCHMARKING	Compares methods and practices of top performers with methods and practices of others	Process benchmarking	Ideas benchmarking

Are You Playing Offense or Defense?



It's defense if...



- You react to the discovery of a negative performance gap as if it is an attack on you or your operation.
- You are preoccupied with having a “level playing field”—rather than with learning new ideas.
- You often complain that comparisons are unfair.
- You only want to compare to other communities just like yours.

It's offense if...

- The reason you benchmark is you want to get better.
- You are preoccupied with finding good ideas.
- You follow up with performance leaders to learn about their practices.
- You are willing to brain-storm and experiment.



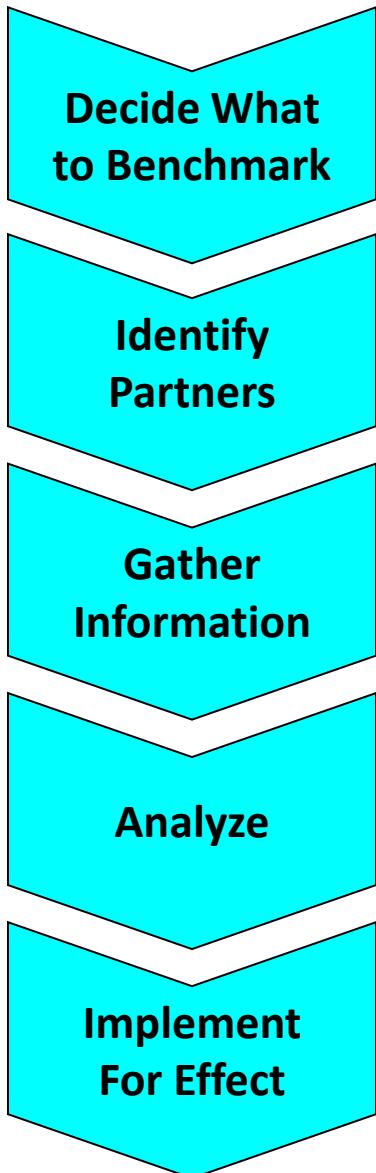
Defense or Offense?

You are preoccupied with having a “level playing field” and only want to compare to other communities just like yours.

You are preoccupied with finding good ideas.

Best Practice Benchmarking





The Best Practice Benchmarking Model

Diagram Source: Adapted from Bengt Karlöf and Svante Ostblom, *Benchmarking: A Signpost to Excellence in Quality and Productivity* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1993).

An Example of Best Practice Benchmarking in Local Government

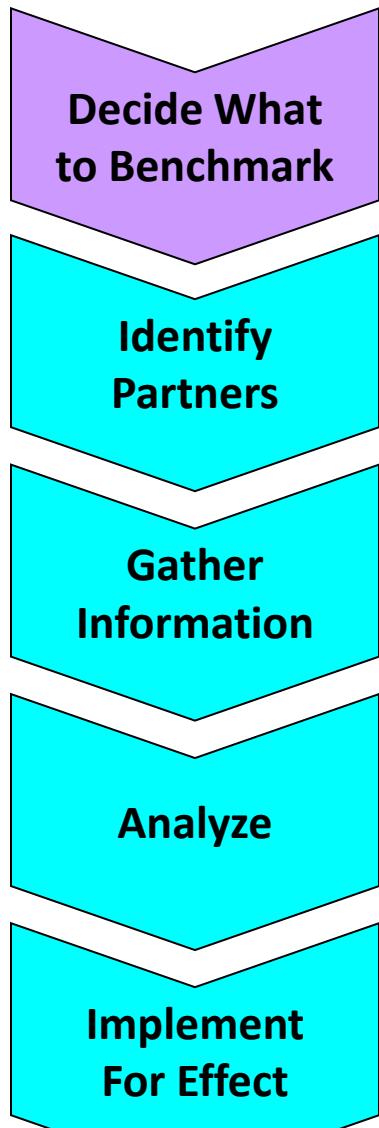
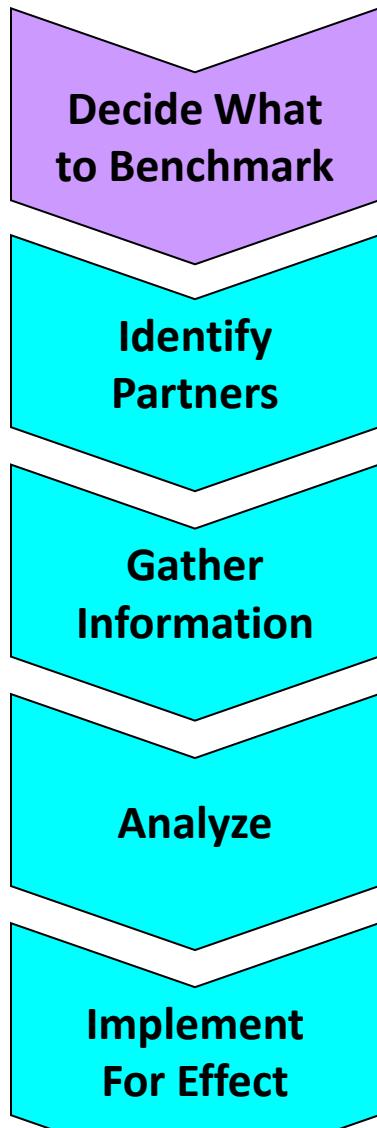


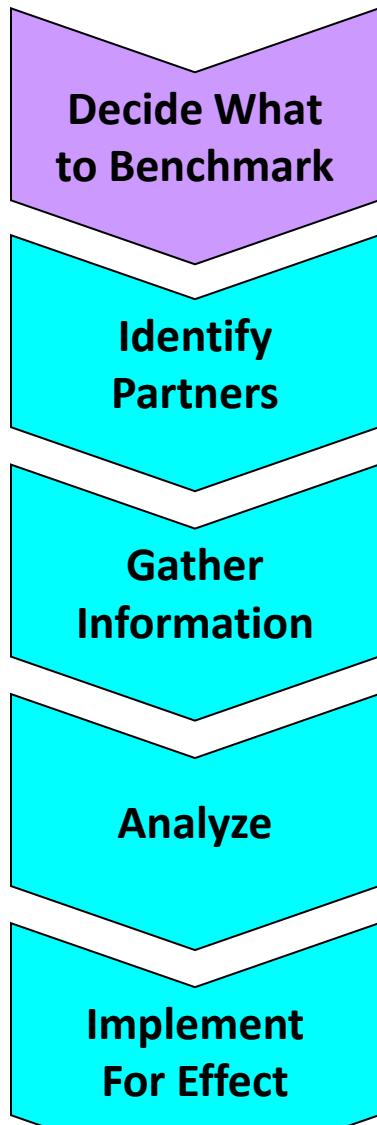
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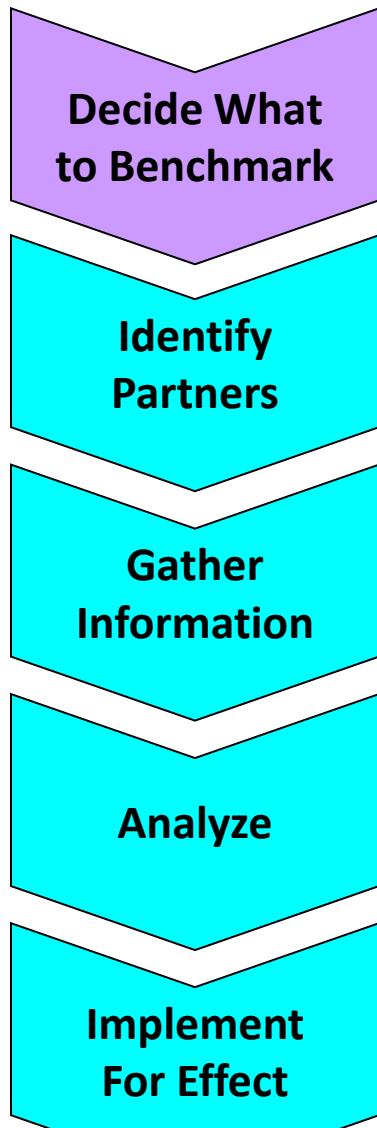
- 9 North Carolina cities sponsored project
- 100+ municipal processes nominated as project focus

An Example of Best Practice Benchmarking in Local Government



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- **Selected focus: "Development Review Process"**

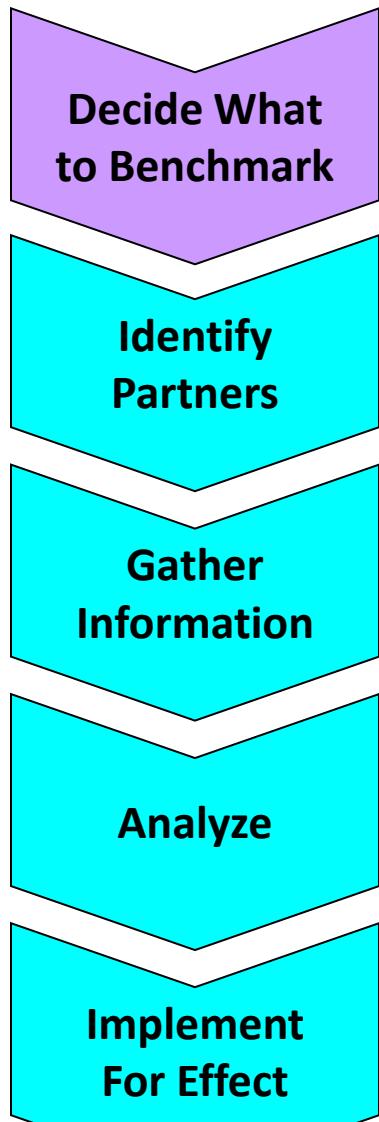
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Excellence in Development Review. What does it mean?

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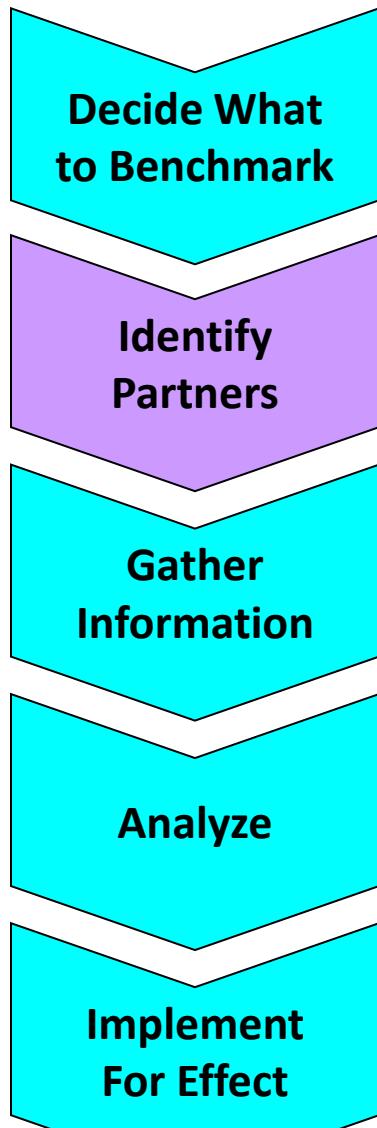


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Excellence in Development Review. What does it mean?

- **Fast**
- **Thorough**
- **Fair**

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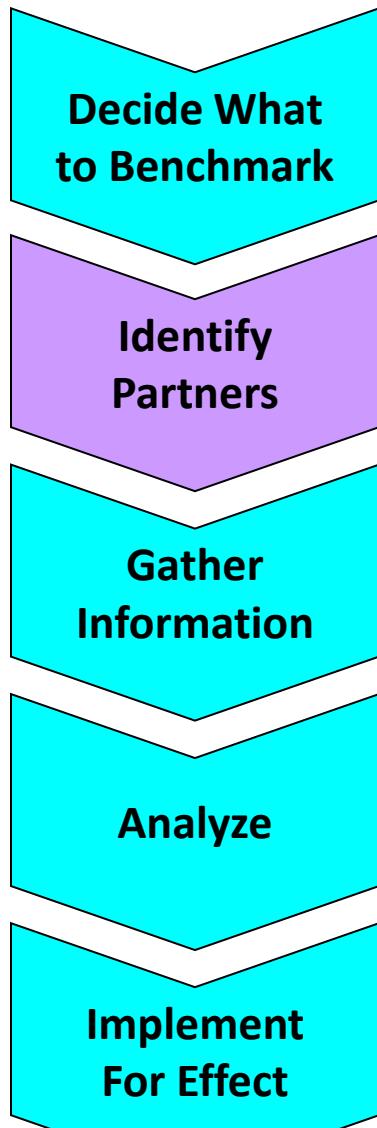
Multi-stage process

1. Expert panel	3. Contact the 161 nominees for information
2. Solicit nominations	4. Narrow list to top 2 or 3 (key qualities: -Local govts -Other experts
	5. Secure cooperation

Top 28 Localities



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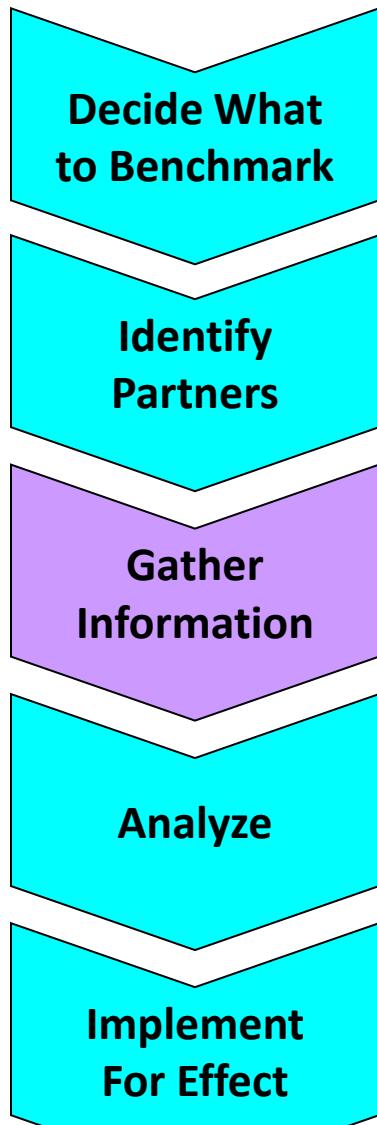
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Benchmarking partners—**Henderson, NV; San Diego, CA;**
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Benchmarking Partners



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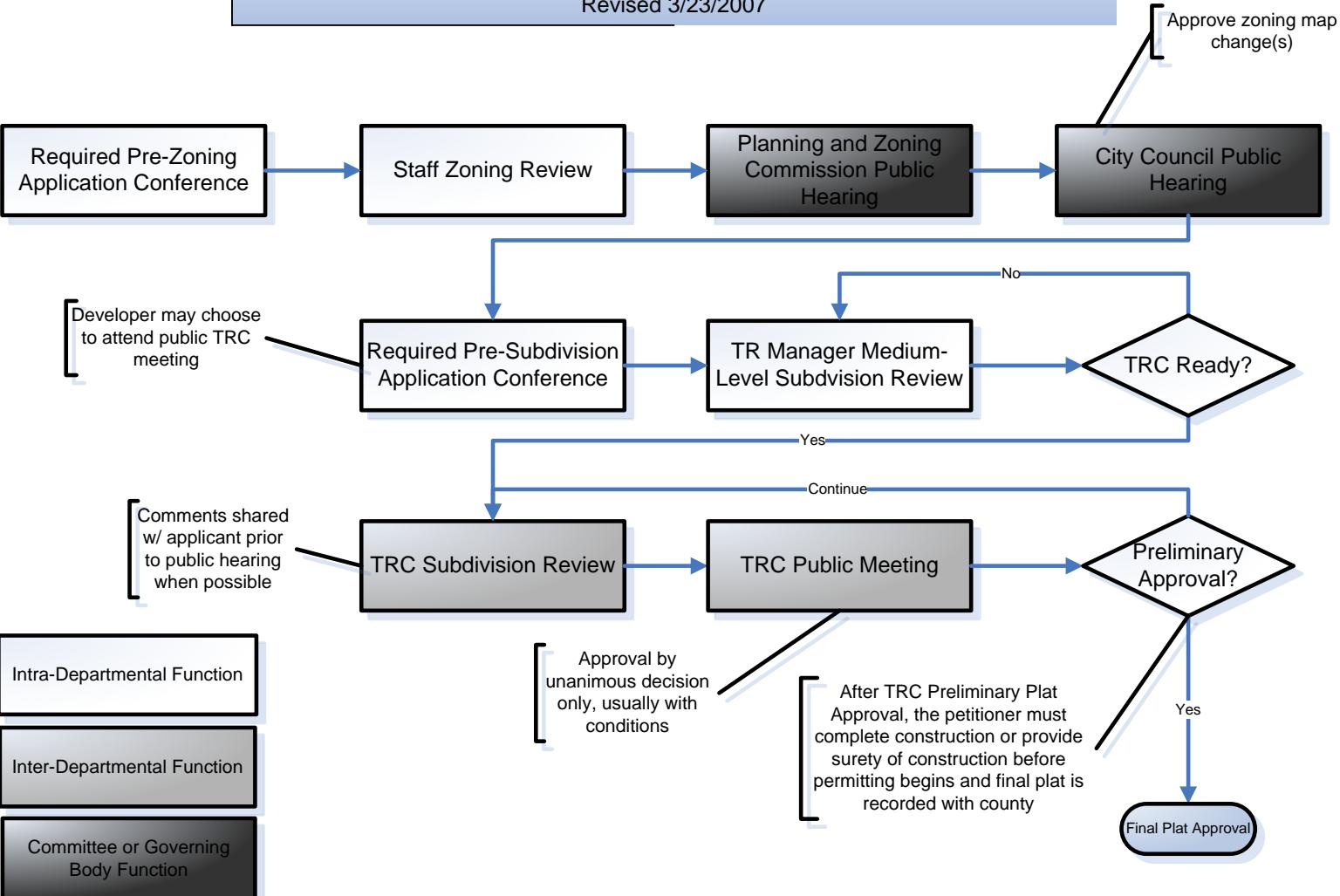
Compile detailed process information for...

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DRAFT City of Asheville Development Review Process

Subdivision w/ Rezoning, w/o Annexation, 30 units

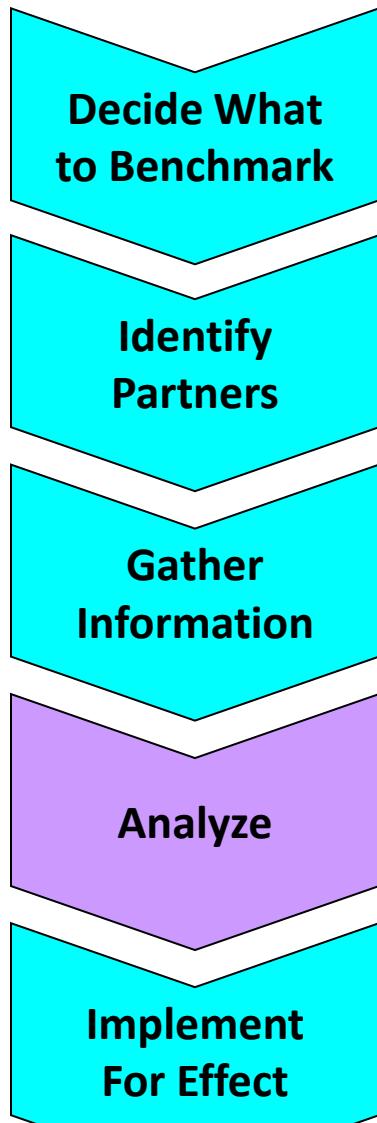
Revised 3/23/2007





Site Visit Team at the Development Services Center of the City
of Henderson, Nevada

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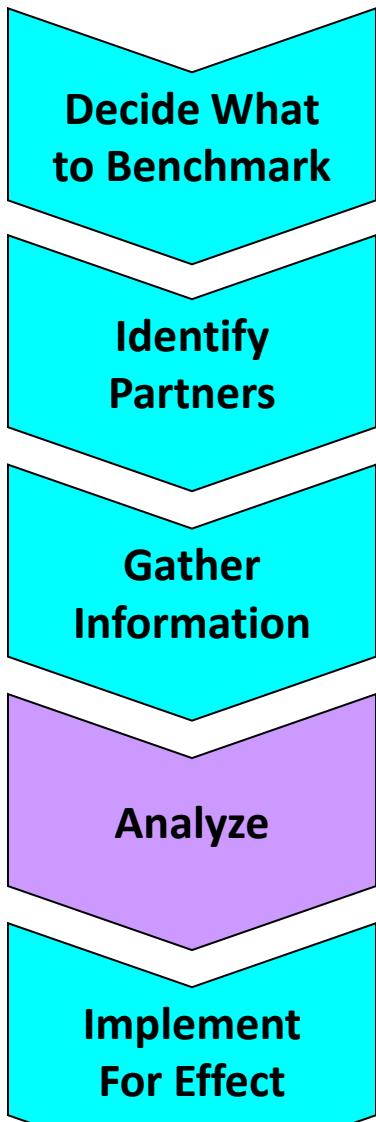
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Identify process differences that account for the superior results of benchmarking partners

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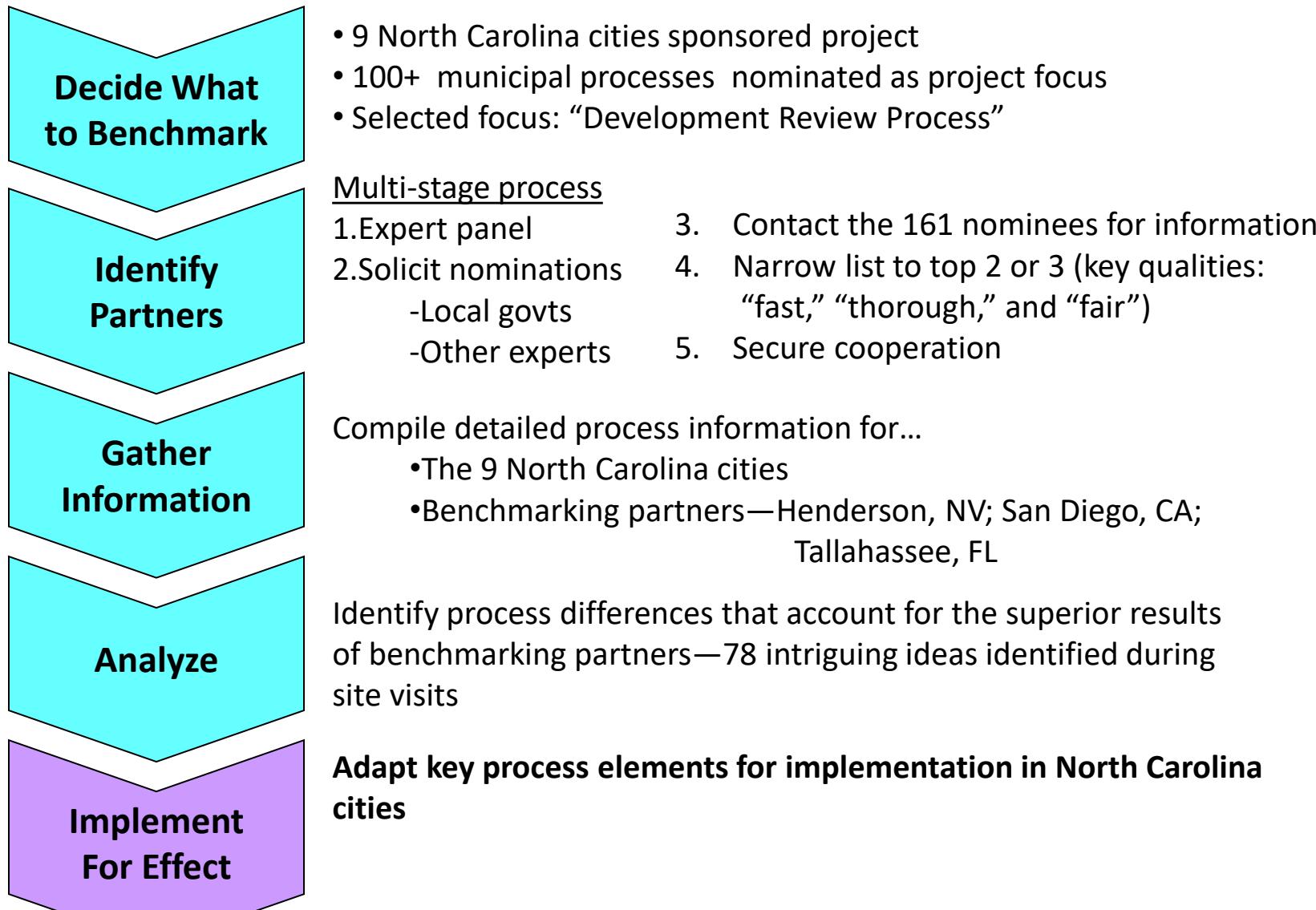
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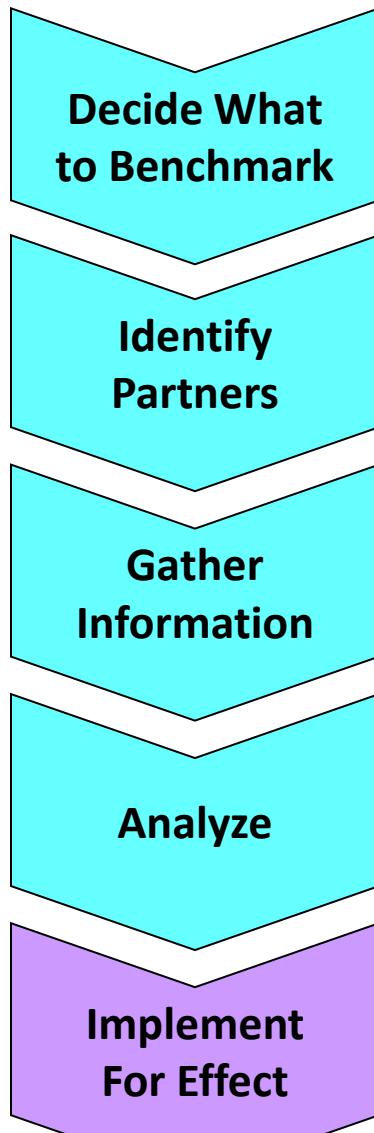
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Identify process differences that account for the superior results of benchmarking partners—78 intriguing ideas identified during site visits****

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Identify process differences that account for the superior results of benchmarking partners—78 intriguing ideas identified during site visits

Adapt key process elements for implementation in North Carolina cities—*38 of the 78 ideas implemented by at least one of the sponsoring cities within six months, most within a month and a half of final site visit*

Strategic Issues

- Defense or Offense?
- Comparison outside your comfort zone

The question in each case is this: *“Are you willing to push yourself to figure out how to make your services better or more efficient than they are right now?”*

References

- Ammons, David N., and Dale J. Roenigk. 2015. “Benchmarking and Interorganizational Learning in Local Government.” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 25 (1): 309-335.
- Ammons, David N., Ryan A. Davidson, and Ryan M. Ewalt. 2009. *Development Review in Local Government: Benchmarking Best Practices*. Chapel Hill, NC: School of Government/University of North Carolina and Alliance for Innovation.
- Ammons, David N. 2009. “Benchmarking the Development Review Process,” *Public Management Bulletin*, No. 4. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, School of Government.
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The Promise of Best Practice Benchmarking

The End