



# NEWS RELEASE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
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## **GLENDALE HONORED AS ONE OF THE BEST U.S. CITIES AT USING DATA AND EVIDENCE TO IMPROVE LIVES**

*Glendale is the only city in the state to achieve What Works Cities Gold Certification this year*

**GLENDALE, Ariz.** – The City of Glendale is proud to announce that it has advanced to Gold Level What Works Cities Certification, the national standard of excellence in data-driven city governance. Glendale achieved Silver Level Certification in 2021.

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 Certification, the national Bloomberg Philanthropies initiative led by Results for America, has certified 55 U.S. cities for outstanding data practices since 2017.

“We are thrilled to be recognized at the gold level for our continued hard work and investment in using data to help guide our decisions,” said Glendale City Manager Kevin Phelps. “It makes us proud to be able to say that Glendale is among the best American cities using data to make strategic decisions in order to have a positive impact on the lives of 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.

Over the past year, Glendale has demonstrated measurable progress in data practices. Some notable examples of the city’s use of data include:

- Glendale’s [Department of Organizational Performance](#) built on the City’s [Balanced Scorecard Strategic Plan](#) by launching quarterly performance management meetings. In these meetings, the department reviews data related to measurable goals, discusses insights, course corrects and makes decisions about strategic goals in partnership with other departments and the Budget and Finance Department.
- The Glendale Police Department added [Call for Service](#) and [Crime Maps](#) to Glendale’s [Open Data Portals](#), allowing citizens to access important safety data in

real time. These resources support Glendale's commitment to maintaining an open data system that promotes informed decision-making, transparency and citizen engagement.

- Glendale sent representatives from various departments to Balanced Scorecard Training. In these workshops, employees outline a customized organizational strategy to drive performance improvements.
- Glendale designated August 12, 2021 as [Inaugural Data Excellence Day](#), to honor the hard work that earned the city What Works Cities Certification in 2021. The declaration also helped to teach the community about Glendale's use of data.

"Our City Manager, Kevin Phelps, presented this program to the City Council in February of 2017 and I am so proud of the City Manager and his staff in delivering on what they promised at last year's recognition event – working to upgrade to a gold certification this year," Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers said. "In the past year, the city staff has worked hard to deliver useful data to our residents, and I know it's been appreciated."

Each city that participates in the certification program receives a customized city assessment that highlights its unique strengths and opportunities for improvement. What Works Cities partners then provide coaching, training and technical assistance to help city leaders improve their data and evidence capabilities, embrace new practices aligned to the certification standard and drive results for their community.

Since the program launched in April 2017, U.S. cities with populations of 30,000 or more have been eligible to participate. Cities are [awarded](#) Silver, Gold or Platinum Certification depending on their level of data sophistication.

"Cities using data are more resilient and able to respond in crisis situations," said Lauren Su, Director of What Works Cities Certification. "Through its Community Action Program, Glendale has done an outstanding job of using data and analytics to identify and support residents experiencing financial crises by providing assistance where it is needed most, whether it be for rent, mortgage or utility payments or homelessness assistance. This is what excellence in data-driven government looks like."

Glendale is proud to advance among an elite group of cities, leading a growing movement of data-driven decision-making across the country. A [report](#) released last fall by the Monitor Institute at Deloitte, in collaboration with What Works Cities, detailed the increase in cities using data to drive decision-making and the benefits of this approach for residents. Since 2015, the percentage of cities tracking progress toward key goals has more than doubled, the percentage of cities engaging with residents on a goal and communicating progress has more than tripled, the percentage of cities with a platform and process to release data to the public has more than tripled and the percentage of cities modifying their programs based on data analytics has more than doubled. These are some of the data practices assessed as part of What Works Cities Certification.

Certification was developed by a team of experts from Results for America in close consultation with the [What Works Cities Certification Standard Committee](#) and with support from other What Works Cities partners including the Government Performance Lab at the Harvard Kennedy School, the Center for Government Excellence at Johns Hopkins University, and the Behavioral Insights Team. More than 200 cities have completed a [certification assessment](#), comparing their practices to the national standard.

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**About What Works Cities:**

What Work Cities, a Bloomberg Philanthropies initiative, helps cities use data and evidence to tackle their most pressing challenges and improve residents' lives. The initiative's [What Works Cities Certification program](#) is the first-of-its-kind national standard of excellence in city governance that evaluates how well cities are managed and whether cities have the right people, processes and policies in place to put data and evidence at the center of decision-making. Through the initiative's expert [partners](#), cities around the country are receiving support, guidance and resources to succeed. For more information, visit [whatworkscities.org](http://whatworkscities.org).