

EXPLANATION OF JUDGING STANDARDS

Used in the Maine Municipal Report Competition

20% Attractiveness

1. Cover - Cover should be of an attractive design and make clear that it is the annual report of the city or town government for a specified period of time.
2. Layout - Balance between illustration and text to draw attention and sustain interest, effective use of white space, placement of tables and charts, and pertinence of illustrations.
3. Reader appeal to average citizen - The clarity and effectiveness in assisting citizens to better understand and appreciate local government.

60% Content

1. Arrangement of material - Material organized in terms of municipal services and function is considered better than arrangement by municipal department. Good reporting includes an introduction signed by the chief administrator, making clear the purpose of the report.
2. Presentation of comparative fiscal statistics and trends - Inclusion of sufficient information on finances and in such form as to make clear to the reader the past, present and possible future fiscal status of the community.
3. Presentation of other comparative statistics and data - Selected material that shows interesting aspects on the use of the various services of local government.
4. Evidence of local planning for the future - This item is included as a stimulant to encourage local officials to think ahead and to inform citizens, in advance, of likely developments and challenges in the community.
5. Summary of year's achievement - Effective reports should include a bird's eye view of outstanding effort with some results of the year's operations and the state of municipal affairs. In some cases it will be found that the municipal officers have included this in a single statement in the introductory section of the report.

20% Utility

1. Table of contents - A table of contents which guides the reader to particular sections of the report in their order or arrangement should be judged higher than a detailed index referring to several items on a single page. A table of contents and a well-selected index generally enhance the usefulness of a report, though both are not mandatory.
2. Brevity - Reports should be brief, consistent with telling a full story of community activity during the year covered.
3. Graphic presentation - Imaginative presentation of facts by chart, graph or photos. Such presentation should convey information relevant to the operation of the local government and to community life.