

Imagine Brownsville Technical Committee

Comprehensive Planning Glossary of Terms



Baseline – a specific numeric value of an indicator that describes the current status of a community with respect to the indicator.

Benchmark – a specific numeric value of an indicator that provides a reference point relative to either other communities or professional standards.

Community Scorecard – a mechanism for articulating and establishing consensus about what we want and think is important. The scorecard consists of four elements. First, a set of detailed objectives organized in a hierarchical structure that encompass the five project dimensions (economic, social, civic, environment and infrastructure); second, a set of indicators for each objective that provide a direct measure of the degree to which an objective is being met including benchmarks, baselines and targets; third, a common scoring scale between 0 to 100 for each indicator that allows a direct comparison among different objectives from within and between dimensions; and finally, priorities that establish the relative importance among indicators/objectives within and between dimensions.

Dimension Score – a measure of the community benefits associated with a given dimension as a result of a implementing given strategy. It is calculated as the average of the objective scores for all objectives corresponding to a given dimension weighted by their relative priorities.

Goal - a qualitative statement that describes in general terms a desired future condition for a community.

Hierarchical Structure – a framework for describing objectives in a step-wise fashion; model for organizing objectives and sub-objectives. The further down the hierarchy, the more detailed the description of the desired outcome.

Lower Threshold – a specific numeric value of an indicator below which the community receives zero benefit.

Outcome Indicator – a metric that measures the degree to which an objective or sub-objective is realized or obtained as a result of a given strategy.

Outcome Indicator Level – a specific numeric value of an outcome indicator.

Outcome Indicator Score – a specific numeric value that provides a comparable measure of the community benefit associated with a given outcome indicator level as a result of a

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implementing given strategy. An indicator score provides a uniform scale for comparing directly the benefits of different indicators.

Outcome Objective – a qualitative statement of a desired outcome. Objectives are organized into five dimensions (economic, social, infrastructure, civic and environmental)

Objective Score – a measure of the community benefits associated with a given objectives as a result of a implementing given strategy. It is calculated as the average of the sub-objective scores for all sub-objectives corresponding to a given objective weighted by their relative priorities.

Overall Score – a measure of the overall community benefit as a result of implementing a given strategy. It is calculated as the average of the dimension scores weighted by their relative priorities.

Priority Weight – a numeric value that provides the relative importance of a given objective or sub-objective or indicator.

Quality Taxonomy:

- a. Availability of Goods/Services (availability and accessibility to meet demand)
- b. Reliability of Goods / Services (system performance down time)
- c. Efficiency of Goods/Services (cost per unit output; user fee per unit output)
- d. Sustainability of Goods/Services (ability to provide service over the long run through effective fiscal, operational and environmental resource management)
- e. Effectiveness of Goods/Services (ability to meet user's direct functional needs)

Target – a specific numeric value of an indicator that provides a precise description of the desired outcome.

Strategy - a grouped set of individual projects/action designed to achieve a given objective.

Social Capital – a collective value of all social networks in a community and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other. It is considered to be a key producer of Civic Engagement and also a broad measure of a community's social health by some social

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scientists who also believe that it can be measured by the amount of trust and "reciprocity" in a community or between individuals.

Sub-objectives – a measurable qualitative description that provides a more detailed definition of an objective. An objective can be described by more than one sub-objective.

Sub-objective Score – a measure of the community benefit associated with a given sub-objective as a result of implementing a given strategy. It is calculated as the average of the indicator scores for all indicators corresponding to a given sub-objective weighted by their relative priorities.

Sustainable Development – the progressive and balanced achievement of long term economic development, social equity and environmental quality needs of the present generations without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

Upper Threshold – a specific numeric value of an indicator above which the community receives the maximum benefit.