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The city of Boston has been measuring its ability to provide services since 2007. Recently, the city expanded the range of data it tracks and made a sizable portion of the information available to the public online.

Devin Quirk, the city's performance manager, said Boston now tracks performance data for all 45 city departments. For 16 of those departments – including public works, public health, inspectional services and transportation – detailed metrics can be viewed online for data such as recycling rates, compliance with rental housing codes, and the percentage of parking meters that are in working order.

Each graph indicates whether the department is meeting its target. "Increase Recycling Diversion Rate," for example, shows that the Department of Public Works exceeded targets in May and July of 2012, while falling short in June, August and September.

The website indicates the measures of success for each department. The DPW, for example, is expected to deal with potholes within two days after they are reported, damaged streetlights in 10 days, and graffiti within 30 days.

"When we first started, we were not good at it," Quirk said. "Now we are meeting our service goals at least 80 percent of the time."

The data for internal use only is far more expansive than the public data, consisting of roughly 2,000 performance measures, according to Quirk. Weekly reports measure the performance of a department as a whole, while also showing how workers performed relative to each other.

A couple of years ago, the city's Parking Enforcement Office was getting "complaints about people taking ridiculously long breaks," Quirk recalled. "We don't have those problems anymore."

Public data can be viewed at www.cityofboston.gov/bar.

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