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How Indicators Have Been Used in Other Regions

Other regions across the country have carried out indicator projects and many have experienced significant progress because of their efforts. One of the critical factors in the success of regional indicator projects has been the support of business, community and government leaders committed to using indicators as catalyst for regional action.

For example, the *Chicago Metropolis 2020* regional indicators report led more than 100 Chicago business leaders to sign a unique pledge to include access to affordable housing and mass transit as a key criteria for future business sites and it has provided the data base for a broad based civic engagement process that created a Metropolis Plan for regional transportation and housing.

In Silicon Valley, indicators related to housing and education stimulated a call for regional change. The annual *Index of Silicon Valley* revealed a growing gap between housing supply and demand, resulting in rapidly increasing costs. As a result, a regional housing action committee led by business and environmental leaders was formed to deal with issues of affordable housing that were hurting both the economy and quality of life in the region. Also, indicators identified serious educational disparities between

Hispanics, African Americans, Whites and Asians, while also finding that many students were unprepared for positions that employers need to fill throughout the region. In response, local businesses raised a \$24 million venture fund for teacher training and curriculum development as part of a 21st Century education plan. As a result, higher test scores and a stronger partnership between the business and education sectors have been achieved.

Finally, the *Boston Foundation's Indicator Project* has helped to stimulate a national indicator movement through the Alliance for Regional Stewardship, a network of regional groups. This national affinity group is now sharing the results of Boston and other regional indicator projects including innovative ways to share information using the Internet.

According to Doug Henton, President of Collaborative Economics, "The Long Island Index represents the 'state of the art' in regional indicator efforts across the country, building on the experiences of other regions and demonstrating how objective data can be used to stimulate civic dialogue on critical regional issues. The Index provides an important foundation for regional stewardship."

Note: Doug Henton is President of Collaborative Economics, a strategic advisory firm based in Mountain View, CA and national coordinator of the John W. Gardner Academy of the Alliance for Regional Stewardship. Long Island has been a regional partner in the Gardner Academy.