

Measures of Progress

Our current mandated measure of progress, GDP, counts car crashes and carbon emissions as progress. In short, GDP is a poor measure of the health of our economy, let alone wellbeing and progress. Meanwhile, Canberra has the highest ecological footprint in Australia, atmospheric carbon dioxide levels are over 400ppm, and extinction rates are 10,000 times higher than historical background levels. Are we measuring what really matters? Are we even progressing?

Question: How can we effectively measure, monitor, and display the wellbeing of Canberra's natural environment and its citizens?

Assets

- Renewable energy target.
- Public transport vision – park& ride, target measurement.
- Pedal power vision.
- Access to parks and open spaces.
- Integrated public housing.
- No waste/ recycling and waste.
- Living density targets.
- ANU Green – institutional sustainability.
- ACTSmart waste and energy.
- Tidbinbilla.
- Ecological measurement.
- Bushfire recovery
- Academics with strong knowledge of alternative progress measures – Rob Costanza, Ida Kubieszewski
- International and community scholars
- Community with holistic vision – a particular asset to Canberra.
- Accessibility of Canberra (small and open).

Ideas

- Problem – on one hand indicators are a concentration of power and intention but they are good at making sure things are done. They are only a proxy for some. Need for community based indicators.
- A lot of what we want is intangible.
- Quotas – diversity – ANU Athena Swann (?)
- Why do we (ACT) have the highest ecological footprint? Disposable income spent on more consumption. How do we change this?

- Can we measure the alternative economy? How many people use buy nothing, how many have access to these services?
- Linking to ABS social progress and sustainability.
- How to measure the input of art and the creatives?
- Intergenerational interaction.
- Intra-community interaction.
- Intercommunity interactions.
- Volunteering goals and targets
- Inequality in education. Impact of density.
- Health measures
- Mental health measures
- Measuring friendships and social cohesion
- Disability access
- Arts funding
- What will we measure? – time spent in transit, embodied energy in the way we live, sunk capital costs per person
- Mental wellbeing – sick days at work, psych wards, use of psych and counselling services
- Cultural cohesion
- Number of students finishing year ten
- Number of people happy to be living in Canberra
- Run an individual monitoring process
- Quality of life index

We need to think not only about what indicators we want but

- How they are developed.
- How they are measured quantitatively and evaluated qualitatively.
- How do we link indicators to stories? Creative evaluation.

Implementation?

- Involvement and ownership
- Indicators and measures of participation and democratic process
- Draw on indicators of empowerment
- Measures of accountability?
- Measures of equality – how are benefits flowing?
- Community wellbeing index in each suburb/ area
- Public measurement and reporting

How do we make things meaningful? If we have indicators we have to tell the stories behind them. People have to understand what we are measuring.

- Is there room/ need for self-assessment?

- What do we do with the information and where does it go?
- Participatory budgeting. (Collaboration opportunities with participatory democracy processes).
- My vote?