



# More than Metrics

## Making Annual Reports Matter

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# What is Your Annual Report Really Used For?

*Be honest – where does yours fall today?*



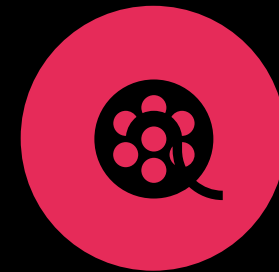
COMPLIANCE  
REQUIREMENT?



DATA  
REPOSITORY?



DECISION-  
MAKING TOOL?



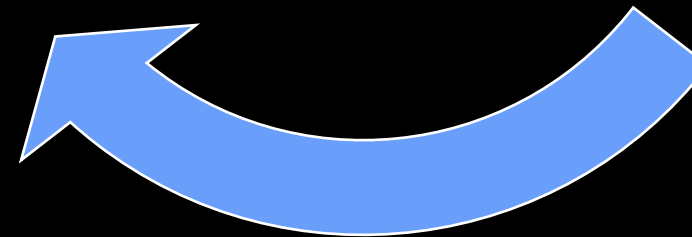
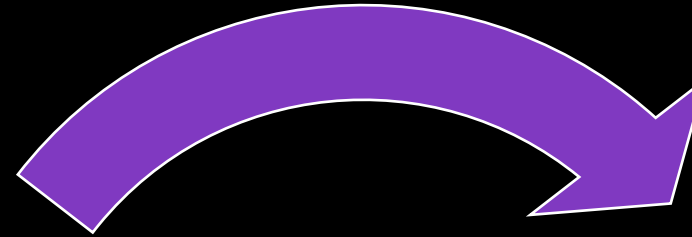
STORY OF  
IMPACT?

# Why Annual Reports Matter

They are leadership tools that:

- Tell your department's story
- Demonstrate impact beyond numbers
- Build trust with commissioners and stakeholders
- Shape strategic priorities
- Anchor your department's identity and value

Annual Reports are not compliance documents.





# Common Pitfalls in Annual Reports

Most annual reports fall into predictable traps:

- Data-heavy, no takeaways
- Written to meet a checkmark, not decision-making
- No audience in mind
- Not connected to outcomes

The real question is:

*What changed because we exist?*

# Start With Purpose, Not Pages

Before writing anything, answer the right questions.

- **What did we do?** (Outputs)
- **What changed?** (Outcomes)
- **Why does it matter?** (Impact)



# Know Who You're Writing For

*Different stakeholders care about different outcomes – your report should speak to each.*



Commissioners: Return on Investment, System Impact



Judges: Case Flow, Compliance



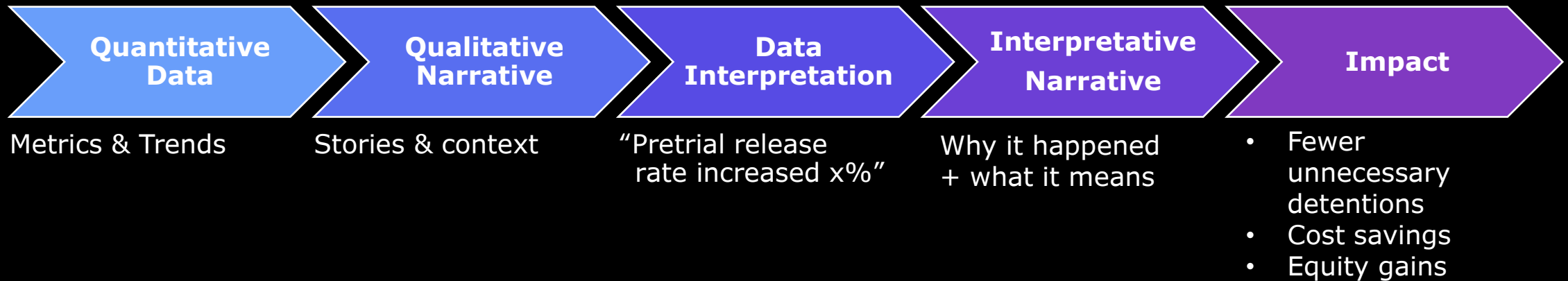
County Administration: System Performance & Efficiency, Risk Mitigation & Strategic Alignment



Community: Fairness, Safety, Transparency

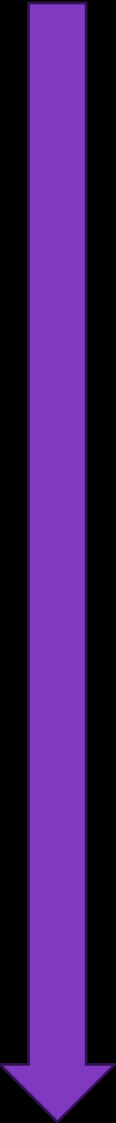
# Mixed Model: Data + Narrative

*Data tells you what happened. Narrative tells you why it matters.*



# A Structure That Builds Trust and Clarity

	Executive Summary or Message from Leadership	Key achievements Major trends Strategic priorities
	Department Overview	Mission Role in the system Key functions
	Key Metrics & Trends	Core indicators (not everything that can be measured) Multi-year comparisons Clear visuals
	Program Highlights	What changed this year Innovations or pilots Partnerships
	Impact Stories	1-3 short, human-centered examples
	Challenges & Opportunities	Be Transparent Frame as forward-looking
	Strategic Next Steps	What you'll do next year and why



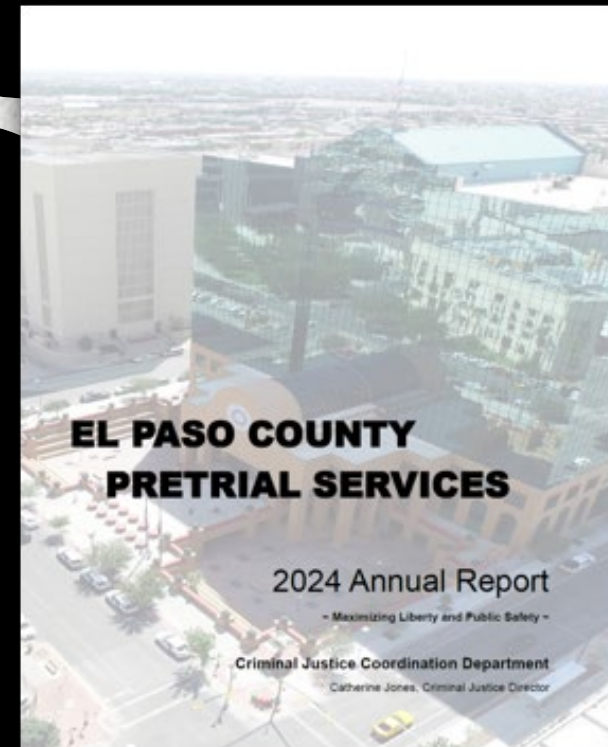
# How to Choose the Right Metrics

More is not  
better.

The  
right  
metrics  
are:

- Relevant to decision-makers
- Comparable over time
- Actionable
- Tied to outcomes (not just activity)

# El Paso County as an Example



# Design and Communication Tips



*Clear design reinforces clear thinking.*

Use fewer but very clear charts.

Charts should include a takeaway.

- Good: Pretrial Outcomes
- Better: Pretrial Outcomes have remained consistent despite changes in release rates.

Provide key insights

Avoid jargon.

Use consistent colors and scales.

# What Great Reports Achieve



*Strong reports create impact – and they do it by following these principles.*

## Good reports can:

- **Improve** policy discussions
- **Build** public trust
- **Align** stakeholders
- **Influence** funding decisions

## Takeaway report goals:

- **Focus** on what matters
- **Translate** data into meaning
- **Connect** to stakeholder goals
- **Act:** support decision-making
- **Personalize:** make it your own

When your report does these things, it becomes a leadership tool – not a compliance document.



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EL PASO COUNTY  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATION  
DEPARTMENT



2025 ANNUAL REPORT