



# Budgetary Forecasting in Local Government: New Tools and Techniques

*Howard A. Frank*

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Local governments are hard-pressed to balance their budgets in the 1990s. Part of any budget-balancing effort is accurate forecasting. In this new work, Howard Frank introduces time-tested forecasting techniques from the private sector and military in a local forecasting environment. In a lucid, user-friendly treatment, Frank shows how simple and complex methods can be put to use in the contemporary local government setting. Through examples--many of them from his own research--the author delineates the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and non-quantitative forecasting methods. Frank also shows how these techniques can be used to monitor changes in public programs--an increasingly important part of contemporary budget execution.

Frank does not assume an extensive mathematical or statistical background on the part of the reader--indeed, a forecast neophyte will have no difficulty understanding the text. Questions at the end of each chapter focus the reader on the major concepts and provide insights on practical applications within the urban setting. A cornerstone of the work is that local forecasters must be intelligent experimenters with the new tools--there is no canned advice that applies to all cities and forecast situations. But with application of forecasting approaches treated in this unique work, local budgeters--and those in training to become budgeters--will be able to adopt forecasting approaches that have been underutilized in local government.

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