1. ***“What are the biggest blind spots in how we measure a local government’s fiscal health, and which emerging data sources or analytic methods could close those gaps?”***

* With so many local governments there is no “average” government. Very heterogeneous. Needs to be treated that way. For example, the state you are in creates different constraints, etc.

1. ***“Looking ten years out, which systemic stressors are most likely to upend local balance sheets, and what kinds of cross-field research are missing to turn those threats into manageable risks?”***

* State governments – reduction in autonomy – what is the good and the bad of autonomy? How do we have more of the former and less of the later.
  + This is a first principles question – principle of subsidiarity
  + There is a also a question of what services and decisions should be located where
  + Whittling away at local autonomy not help
* Uncertainty at the federal level – how to backfill that
* Trickle down – could cuts at federal level result in higher taxes at the local level – how are local governments going to deal with these cuts
  + Human services might be particularly impacted
* Who pays for what and who gets back

**3. *“How should research on fiscal health integrate with the goal of having thriving communities so that prescriptions don’t just balance budgets but also improve well-being?”***

* Need to ask the question “for what” when it comes to spending money. What kind of guidance can we provide the public (and elected officials)
  + First principles question – how does a community optimally choose to spend more money
* How do we redesign services given available resources
* Widening scope of responsibility for local governments – definition of basic services is changing
  + What are local governments doing right now, what services being provided? Program analysis
* Tying normal fiscal stuff to outcomes –
* We shouldn’t fall into the trap of local governments always needing more money – can they be more efficient or effective with that they have
* How do you sequence the need for fiscal capacity? Do you need more money first or first demonstrate that you deserve more
  + First principles question – how does a community optimally choose to spend more money
* To what extent is there a fiscal illusion – where is the money come from for services?
* How to balance local contributions vs local services. If things are pushed down via unfunded mandates, what does that look like.