

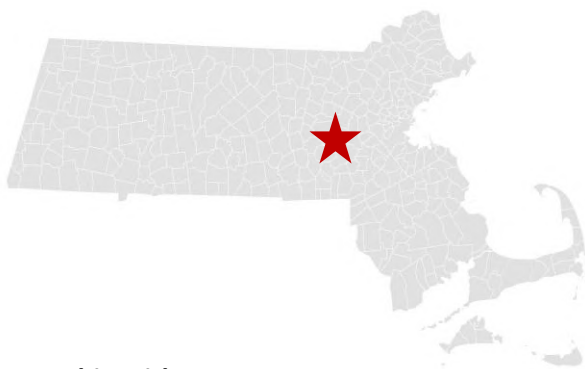
TOWN OF FRAMINGHAM



TRANSPARENCY BEST PRACTICE | JULY 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Framingham, Massachusetts adopted the Transparency best practice as part of a Community Compact agreement signed with the Baker-Polito Administration in February of 2016. The Town signed agreements with ClearGov and Socrata to develop open data portals showcasing Framingham's municipal information. In the spring of 2017, ClearGov's portal for Framingham went live as part of the Town website's "Financial Transparency Center". Socrata's portal for permitting activity, licensing information, and project information is expected to go live later in 2017. Both portals when launched will combine to provide valuable information to Framingham's citizens.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Town of Framingham is located in the eastern part of Massachusetts in Middlesex County. Its location near several major highways has made it a popular location for office complexes and retail stores, including Shoppers' World – one of the first open-air shopping malls in the United States. Framingham is also home to three colleges including Framingham State University.

Population is 69,900 residents*
Annual Budget is \$270.51 (FY 2017)
Median Household Income is \$68,881*

**As of ClearGov portal for Framingham*

In partnership with:





THE CHALLENGE

With a population of almost 70,000 – 577% higher than the state’s median population – Framingham has been known as the largest town in Massachusetts. In 2017, residents voted for the Town to become a City starting in 2018.

In times of change, information becomes especially vital. It allows residents to understand what’s going on and allows them to make informed decisions. Providing interactive tools, rather than traditional documents can greatly improve the ability of residents to interact with their local government.

THE SOLUTION

Framingham contracted with two open data companies – ClearGov and Socrata – to develop open data portals for Framingham’s municipal information. The ClearGov allows residents to see a breakdown of the Town’s finances and how their taxes are spent on various budget line items. The Socrata tool will allow residents to see a variety of municipal data sets which may be of interest to them, increasing transparency and allowing for insight into the operations of the Town.

THE RESULTS

In the spring of 2017, Framingham’s ClearGov portal went live as part of the “Financial Transparency Center” on the Town’s website. The portal, seen in screenshots below, allows a resident to input their tax bill and see how the funds are spent in the Town’s budget. Framingham hopes to launch the Socrata portal later in 2017, which will provide public access to dynamic municipal data sets like permits, fire incident logs, and 311 requests.

ClearGov Portal




Source: Framingham ClearGov portal - <http://www.cleargov.com/massachusetts/middlesex/town/framingham/2017>

“The Finance Office can use ClearGov to reduce the number of manual comparative calculations for reports and budget data. It’s an easy click from our website under the Financial Transparency Center which is open 24/7.”

-Mary Ellen Kelley, CFO, Town of Framingham