



Town of Lanesborough

Engagement & Transparency

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EOTSS | Executive Office of Technology Services & Security



Newton Memorial Town Hall¹

Executive Summary

In the fall of 2018, The Town of Lanesborough signed a Community Compact agreement with the Baker-Polito administration. The Town selected the Engagement and Transparency best practice to better provide public information to constituents. The Town of Lanesborough is located near the western border of Massachusetts. First named Richfield, then New Framingham, the name of the Town was finally changed to Lanesborough when it was incorporated in 1765.² Today, the Town is known for its natural attractions, such as Mount Greylock State Reservation,

¹ Heiligmann, Carlos. Newton Memorial Town Hall, Lanesborough, Mass.: exterior front, ca. July 4, 2017. Carlos Heiligmann Collection (PH 076). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts. Amherst Libraries. <http://credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/muph076-l36-n49-i002>

² History and Attractions. Town of Lanesborough. <https://www.lanesborough-ma.gov/community/pages/history-and-attractions>

Balance Rock State Park, and others. The Town has a population of 3,004 and a median household income of \$76,016.³

Challenges

Through this Community Compact initiative, the Town sought to be more open and transparent by upgrading the municipal website to streamline public information dissemination, including municipal financials, and address the growing demand and expectation of easier access to information access.

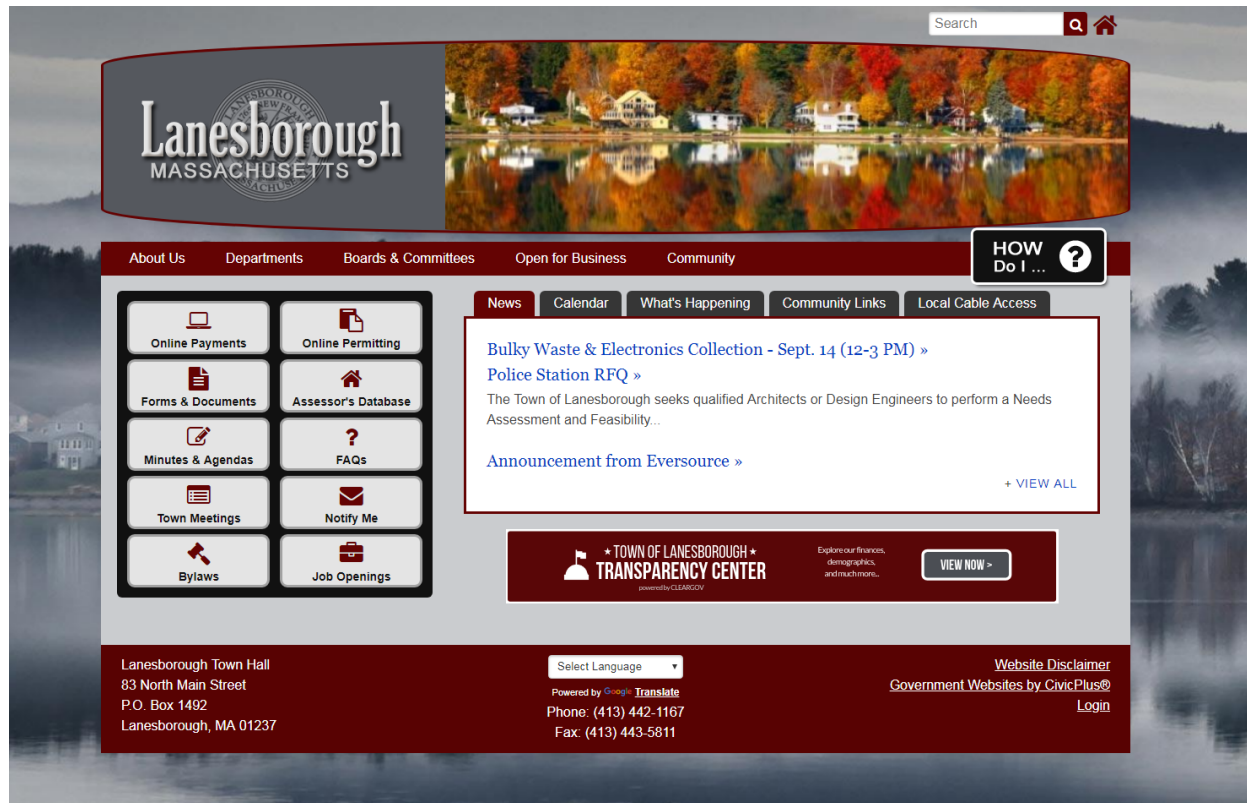
Given limited resources, the Town needed to address constrained business hours, which directly impact public information accessibility. In addition, that town had keep ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliance in mind when considering the implementation of online resources.

The Town was also challenged in developing a sustainable strategy for the deployment of a new website, in that financial resources and staffing for content management and dissemination are limited.

³ Lanesborough town, Berkshire County, Massachusetts. U.S. Census Bureau.
<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/profile?q=Lanesborough%20town,%20Berkshire%20County,%20Massachusetts&g=0600000US2500334340>

Solutions

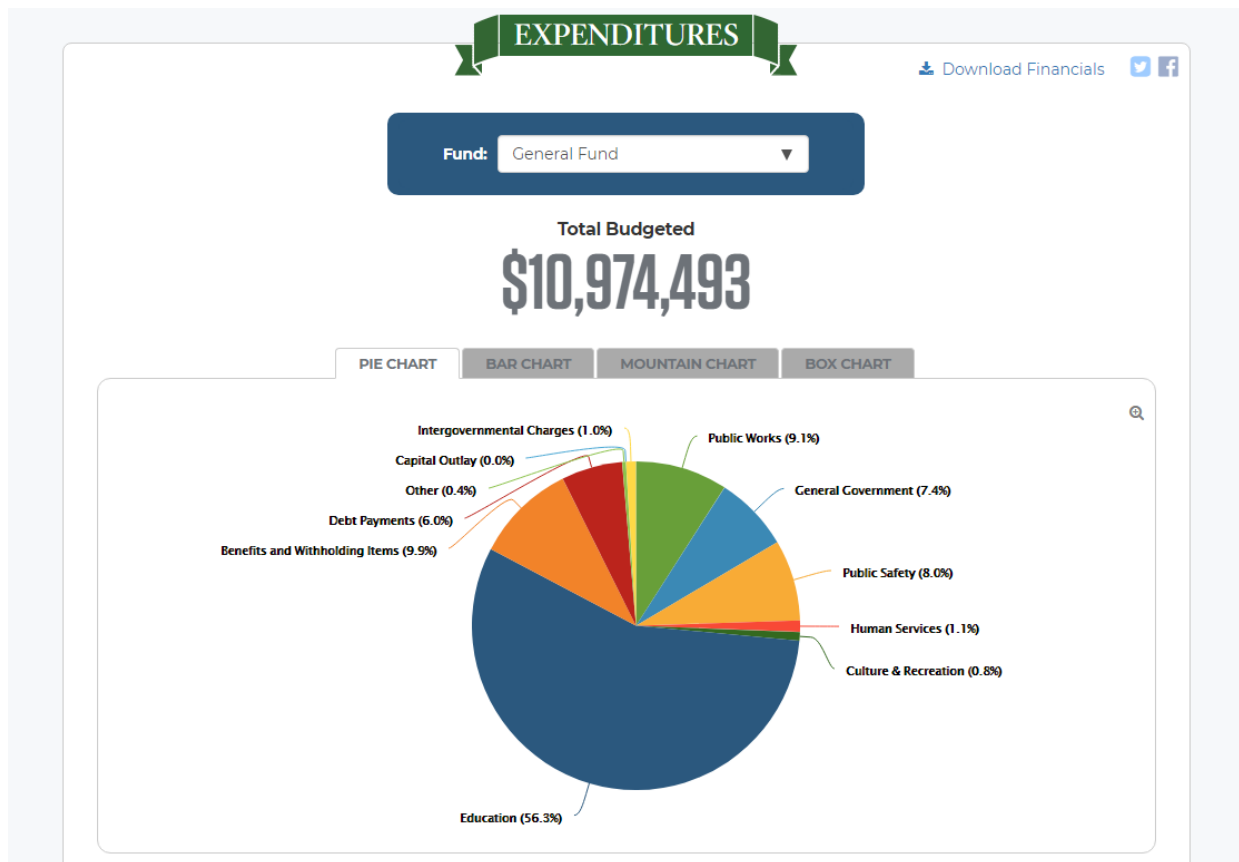
Leveraging Community Compact best practice grant funding, the Town hired vendors CivicPlus and ClearGov to deploy and enhanced website and municipal financials transparency platform. With the newly upgraded municipal website, the Town was able to improve navigation, the ability to keep content current and ensure accessibility for all website visitors.



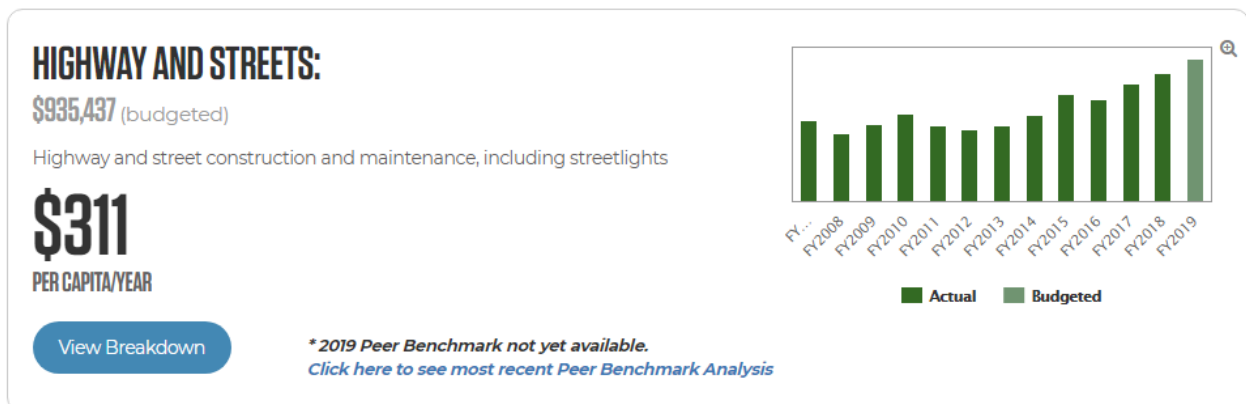
Redesigned Town of Lanesborough Website⁴

Deploying a new Financial Transparency Center provides residents with easy to digest information around municipal finance. The solution allows site visitors to drill-down into revenues and expenses by area, and allows residents to provide their property tax obligation, providing a better idea of where their tax dollars are being allocated.

⁴ The Town of Lanesborough. CivicPlus. <https://www.lanesborough-ma.gov/>



Redesigned Transparency Center Expenditures⁵



Example of Highway and Streets Contribution of in a given Fiscal Year⁶

⁵ Expenditures of the Town of Lanesborough. ClearGov.
<https://www.cleargov.com/massachusetts/berkshire/town/lanesborough/2019/expenditures>

⁶ Highway and Streets Contribution of the Town of Lanesborough.
ClearGov. <https://www.cleargov.com/massachusetts/berkshire/town/lanesborough/2019/expenditures/public-works>

Conclusion

With new municipal website and financial transparency platform, and by leveraging the programs available through the Community Compact Cabinet, the Town of Lanesborough was able to achieve the goal of better transparency and public engagement.