

City of Malden

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Prepared By: Sam Hammar, Michael Hamel, John Kafalas, Amelia Percentie, and Lauren Shuffleton

Office of Municipal & School Technology

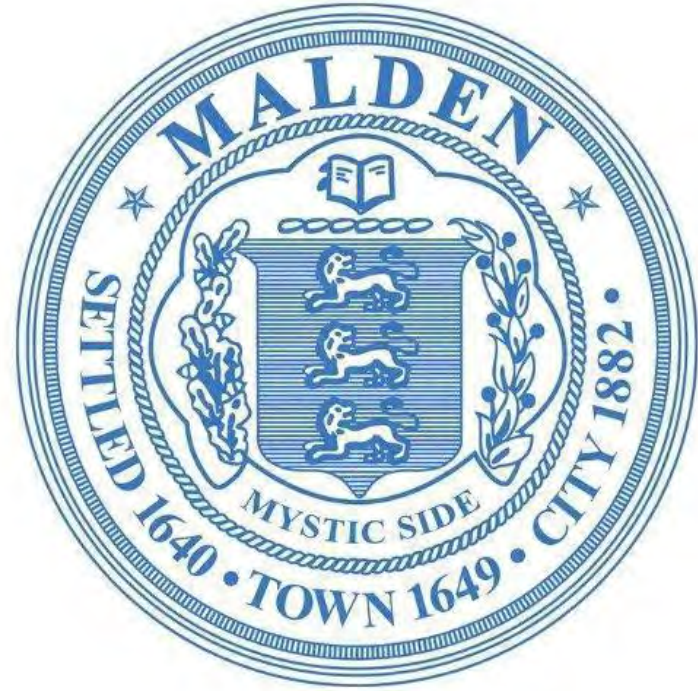


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Introduction

In fall 2015, the City of Malden signed a [Community Compact agreement](#) for Citizen Engagement as an IT Best Practice. The following spring, a team from MassIT's Office of Municipal and School Technology (OMST) conducted several meetings with Malden's administrative staff to discuss the goals of the Compact, assess how the City has implemented technology as a means of improving citizen engagement, and develop a roadmap for continuous improvement in this area.

This Citizen Engagement Best Practice document includes a strategy for deploying technology solutions, including a public communications strategy and a professional development plan. The collaborative effort between the Commonwealth and the City should result in residents feeling that City government is more responsive to their needs and concerns. Opening up new channels of communication and new ways to make transactions with the City should benefit both residents and City staff.

Malden Community Profile

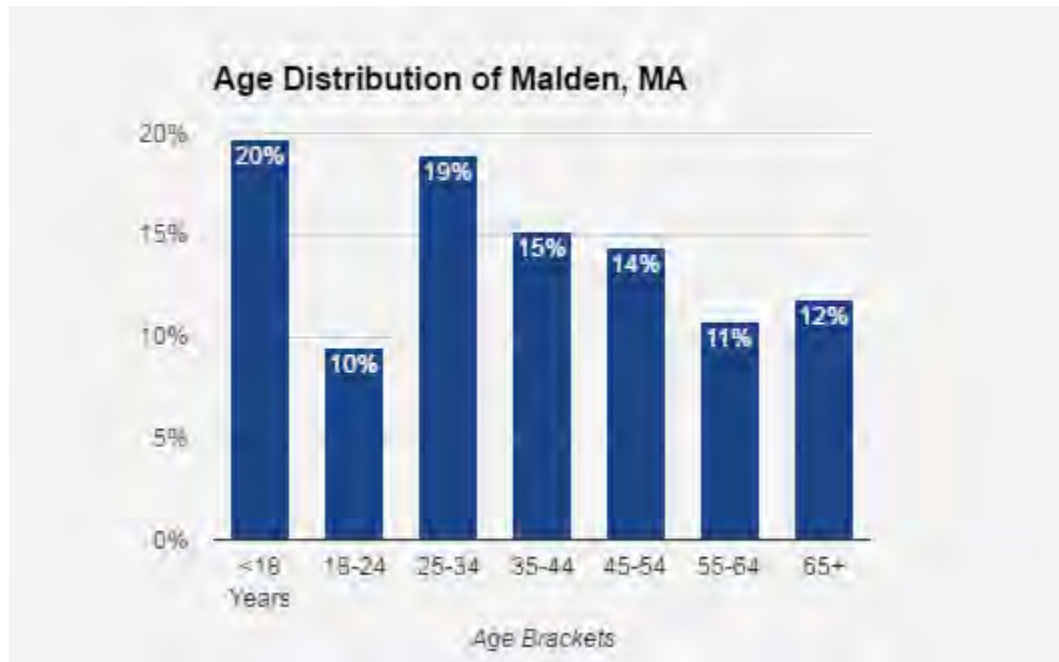
Malden is a city located northwest of Boston with approximately 60,000 residents¹. The median income is \$55,523, placing it in the lowest quintile for Massachusetts municipalities². Malden has a reputation for international diversity, as 42% of its population is foreign-born³. As a result, the City boasts an impressive cultural identity, including a vibrant international restaurant scene. Other notable locations in Malden include the Middlesex Fells Reservation, a historic public library, and numerous parks. The Malden public school system serves one of the most diverse populations of students in Massachusetts at one Pre-K school, five elementary and middle schools, and one high school. Catholic schools, the Mystic Valley Regional Charter School, several career training schools, a Bunker Hill Community College campus, and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education are also located in Malden.

Malden government officials include the Mayor, eleven-member City Council, and the nine-member School Committee. In addition, boards of assessors, health, library trustees, planning, licensing, public works, and other City functions oversee the administration of the corresponding aspects of City governance. City preliminary and general elections give registered voters a chance to vote on the candidates for elected City office and on referendum questions.

¹ American Community Survey 2014, 5-Year Estimates

² Ibid

³ Ibid



Source:
United States Census 2010

Internet Access & Usage

As more Americans gain access to the Internet and rely on it as a key information source more regularly, constituents demand that their governments offer more resources online. According to 2015 data available from the Pew Research Center, 84% of adults now use the Internet. Even senior citizens, which make up 12% of Malden's population, are becoming avid Internet users — 58% percent of senior citizens are on the Internet as of 2015.⁴

Web design must be mobile-friendly to meet constituent needs. Other Pew Research suggests that the way people access the Internet is shifting as well. 2015 data show that an increasing number of people use smartphones exclusively, with no fixed broadband or desktop/laptop computer in the household. A significant sub-trend is that phone-only households skew heavily toward the lower end of the income spectrum, indicating that many lower-income households find mobile-based internet access to be capable enough that they are able to do without fixed broadband. Of households with incomes under-\$21,000, 21% are phone-only. By contrast, only 10% of households earning between \$50,000 and \$75,000 are

⁴ Pew Research Center, [Americans' Internet Access: 2000-2015](#), June 26, 2015

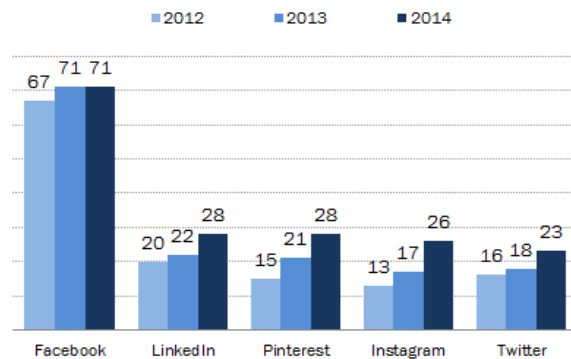
phone-only. Pew Research says that nationwide home broadband connectivity has actually gone down from 70% to 67% from 2013 to 2015, while the percentage of households using smartphones but no home broadband has risen dramatically, from 8% to 15% of all households during the same period.⁵ This means that mobile apps and responsive Web design are a high priority for any technology initiatives; fortunately, Malden's web site looks great on a smartphone.

Social media is a high-impact opportunity for municipal communications. As Internet usage increases, so does participation in social media. According to Pew Research Center, 65% of all adults are on at least one social media site.⁶ Social media participation is closely correlated with age; 90% of adults between the ages of 18 and 29 use social media, compared to 77% of adults between the ages of 30 and 49 and 50% of adults between the ages of 50 and 64.⁷ Senior citizens are less likely to use social media—only 35% do according to the same study—but this number is increasing by the year.

A different study by Pew Research indicates that Facebook is by far the most popular social media site, but we have also seen very effective Instagram and Twitter presences from municipal governments, including Malden, as will be discussed below.

Social media sites, 2012-2014

% of online adults who use the following social media websites, by year



Pew Research Center's Internet Project Surveys, 2012-2014. 2014 data collected September 11-14 & September 18-21, 2014. N=1,597 internet users ages 18+.

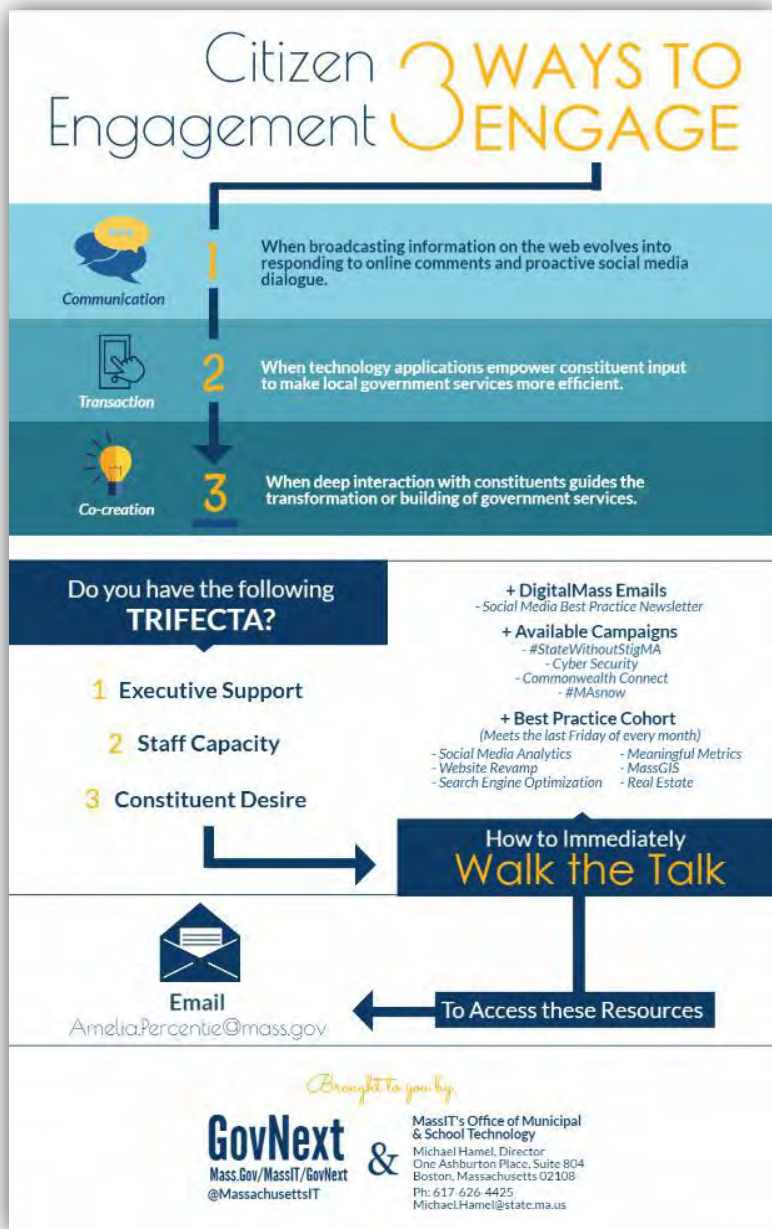
Source:

Pew Research Center, [Social Media Update 2014](#), January 9, 2015.

⁵ Pew Research Center, [Home Broadband 2015](#), December 21, 2015

⁶ Pew Research Center, [Social Media Usage: 2005-2015](#), October 8, 2015

⁷ Ibid.



Our Citizen Engagement Philosophy

This infographic was developed to illustrate the essential ingredients for successful citizen engagement. The big picture is that we see three levels of engagement within a city or town as it embarks on a program to get residents more closely involved in their government:

1. Communication
2. Transaction
3. Co-creation

COMMUNICATION

The first and broadest level of engagement is communication; this is the level we addressed with our maps of the City Hall relocation and associated social and traditional media campaign for Malden. In this layer, the City is using a variety of media to “broadcast” information and is engaging in two-way communication (Facebook timelines, the ability to receive Twitter messages and replies, and other media). By implementing a blended campaign involving traditional media -- such channels as letters to the editor and coverage on [MATV local cable](#) -- with digital media, we have developed campaigns for cities and towns that are designed to reach all demographic groups.

A municipality focusing on this level of engagement might use a Facebook page or Twitter feed to share information like:

- Road or office closures
- Upcoming construction
- Event announcements or updates
- Meeting agendas, locations, or cancellations
- Hot topic issues
- Celebrations of events, like holidays or graduations
- Requests for help or announcements from other agencies

An important aspect of this type of communication is that feedback from residents—especially when it takes the form of complaints and service

requests—requires a fair amount of staff time to monitor and reply to. In the marketing world, companies with active Facebook pages often find that they need to devote a lot of staff time to this. For Malden, this may not be a problem—the existing Police Department pages do not appear to have major issues with negative feedback, “trolls,” or otherwise difficult user comments.

TRANSACTION

After establishing active communication channels with residents, the next step to citizen engagement involves making common transactions simple to accomplish online. These transactions can include bill payments, ticket appeals and payments, permit applications, service requests and public records requests.

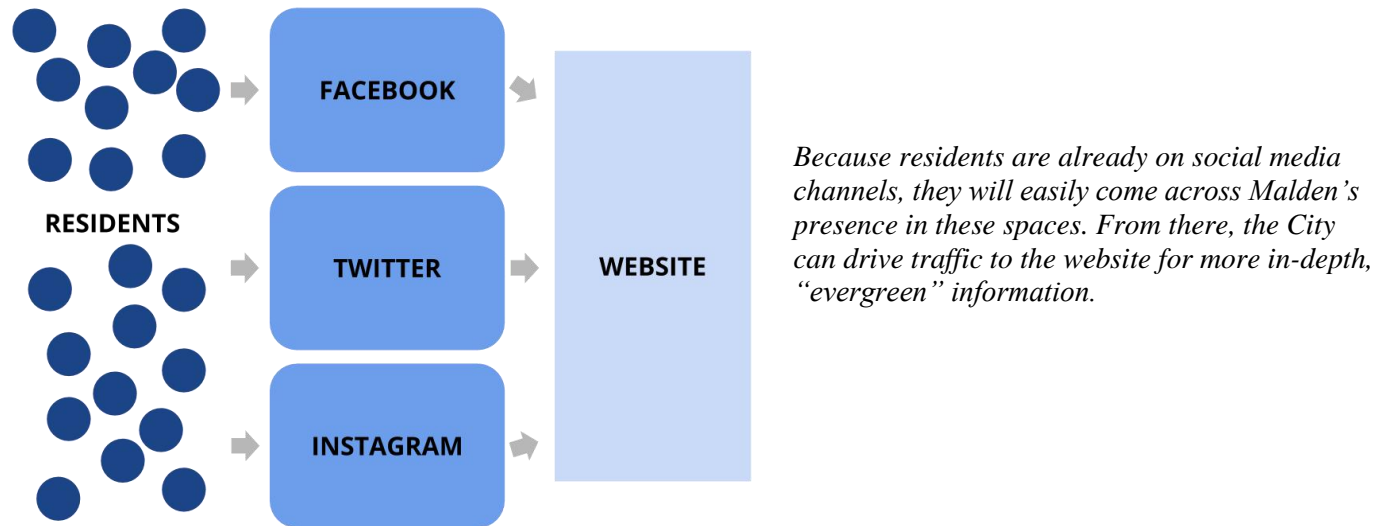
The City of Malden has an online payment system in place via [Kelley & Ryan Associates](#) for parking tickets and [InvoiceCloud](#) for property taxes, excise taxes, and water and sewer bills. In implementing online payment, Malden has taken an important step to improve customer service, saving both consumers and businesses a lot of trips to City Hall. This also frees up city staff to spend more time on long-term tasks that add value to the services the City provides to its residents. A number of Massachusetts cities and towns have begun to implement online application for permits such as building, trench, street opening, wiring, and consumer permits such as yard sales and park rentals. In other municipalities, funding constraints have hampered efforts to implement the technology needed to implement online permitting. As Malden continues to build out its capacity for citizen engagement via technology, online permitting may in the future prove to be a promising way of making it easier for local businesses to conduct transactions with the City.

CO-CREATION

The ultimate goal of citizen engagement initiatives is to achieve a state where residents are so heavily “engaged” that they become actively involved in governing their City. Social media can be a powerful component of a citizen engagement campaign by providing real-time information about City issues, so voters can get involved earlier and take a proactive role, instead of finding out late in the process and having to say, “Why didn’t we hear about this sooner?” In addition, there are a number of unpaid boards and commissions that perform important functions to maintain and enhance the quality of life in Malden. The City provides a Web-based application form that residents can use to express their interest in serving on one or more city boards and commissions when there are vacancies.

Ongoing Citizen Engagement

In the citizen engagement planning that OMST has done for cities and towns, the basic idea is that the city or town's website is the main source of detailed information, while social media outreach is a way of broadcasting time-sensitive news items. Many residents will be attracted by the City's social media presence, make their initial contact there, then go to the website to drill down for more information on such topics as public board meetings and real-estate development project documentation, as well as city services like online bill payment.



One goal identified by the City's administrative team is to develop a strategy for increasing traffic to the City's website and increasing the volume of transactions performed online instead of in person at City Hall. Related goals include increasing voter turnout and resident involvement in City government, such as volunteering to fill vacancies on boards or committees when they occur.

In a nutshell, OMST's recommendations emphasize using social media techniques borrowed from the marketing industry to alert residents to the wealth of information available on the City's website and the transactions they can make there. The desired outcome is increased community involvement resulting from a better-informed citizenry.

SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

The citizen engagement strategy currently being implemented by Malden involves a consistent social media campaign to get people following the City regularly so they'll be aware of what's going on, whenever it's happening. It also involves being engaged through traditional local news media in encouraging residents to vote, to volunteer or run for positions in City government, and generally to get involved in serving the City of Malden.

Despite the increasing audience reach of social media, it's still important to run a blended campaign, maintaining frequent contact with traditional media outlets such as the Malden Observer and the Malden Evening News. The advantage of social media, however, is the potential for tighter integration (via direct linking) with the City's web-based information resources.

Social Media Usage: Current “As-Is” and Recommendations

The City of Malden currently has a Facebook page and a considerable Twitter presence. These resources can be used both to broadcast information about City events and to drive traffic to the information available on the City's website.

SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

As of writing, the City's Facebook Page has more than 7,600 followers, or roughly 12% of the City's population. The Police Department's Page has more than 2,100 followers. The Fire Department has a Facebook Profile instead of a Page, but nonetheless has more than 4,000 friends. It's important to keep in mind that a Profile is limited to 5,000 friends, so the Fire Department will probably want to convert its Profile to a Page in the not too distant future. The City also has an active presence on Instagram.

Malden's Twitter presence (@TheCityofMalden) sees even more activity – The City posts frequently, several times per day, highlighting the most time-sensitive issues such as school or office closings, road construction and weather updates, and other local news notes.

In Malden, there are a lot of social media users that have varying degrees of connection with their local government: everything from “official” school IDs, those of related organizations such as athletic departments, individual athletic teams, performing arts groups, student activity groups, to school officials like the Superintendent of Schools and principals or teachers at individual schools, to students and parents. Local businesses, political organizations (such as the Democratic and Republican City Committees), and residents make their voices heard.

The important piece to notice here is that social media conversation is highly decentralized; there isn't a “bright line” between official City communications team, municipal staff members expressing their individual professional or personal views, and those not speaking “for” the City at all but who are simply communicating as members of the general public. So the breadth of Malden's social media presence is actually much broader than it might appear. This is why we recommend using hashtags such as #VoteMalden, #MaldenMA, #MaldenHS, or other city-specific tags geared toward the subject matter you're tweeting (or posting) about. Doing this will maximize the chance that someone else in Malden will retweet or share the message, thereby amplifying it.

Recommendations: Drive Web traffic via social media drip campaigning

Malden does a great job publicizing local news via social media, frequently tweeting announcements that link to news articles on the City's website. We recommend building on this success by adding periodic social media posts that draw attention to evergreen content on the website, as well as posting information about City Council meetings and other events that are important to residents. These meetings are already listed on the City's home page - sending out a tweet with a link to the calendar listing is a good way to drive traffic to the site.

This would drive web traffic to related resources such as:

- Forms and documents
- City services
- Online payment of city taxes and bills
- Malden Monitor (Senior Center newsletter)
- City committees and boards that need volunteer members
- City Calendar

Our recommendation is for social media “drip” campaigning aimed at gradually engaging residents to go to the website as their first stop when looking for information or services from the City. By highlighting something different every couple of days or so, the idea is to keep the website in the public eye; one subject may not capture the attention of a given resident, but another topic will. Over time, traffic will increase and with it, the volume of business transactions done through the website. Here are a few example tweets that might make up such a drip campaign:

- **Malden City Council and other board meeting minutes are here:** <https://cityofmalden.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx> #MaldenMA
- **Malden’s Web site lets you pay tax bills online:** <http://www.cityofmalden.org/content/bill-pay> #MaldenMA
- **Need info on Malden trash pickup? Find it here:** <http://www.cityofmalden.org/trash> #MaldenMA

These are examples of how a social media drip campaign works. Posting tweets or Facebook messages that link to the City website on a regular basis -- at least a few times a week is recommended -- will gradually get residents to find the site and to get into the habit of coming back when they’re looking for information about the City.

Drip campaigns take time -- content marketers generally say that it takes around six months to achieve a significant increase in site traffic. But a consistent flow of social media messaging will gradually increase the proportion of City residents who go to the website for information and to carry out transactions.

TIME-SENSITIVE CAMPAIGNS: THE DAILY COUNTDOWN

Our recommendation that Malden use social-media drip campaigns to increase citizen engagement mirrors what we’ve seen works successfully in other Massachusetts cities and towns. However, specific initiatives will differ, according to the time span and the type of campaign. With a short-term campaign oriented toward a specific event, such as an election, it may be possible to write a campaign’s worth of content ahead of time, and post a series of daily “countdown” messages each day preceding the event you want to highlight. For example:

- **Seven days until November Election. Malden City Council debate tonight! Details at <http://www.cityofmalden.org/content/city-councillor-large-candidate-debate> #VoteMalden**
- **Did You Know: Candidates for Malden City offices have campaign financial statements online: <http://www.cityofmalden.org/content/campaign-finance> #VoteMalden**

This type of messaging is designed to create a groundswell of interest in the event, generate voter turnout, and at the same time, drive traffic to the City website (which will have news items related to such a topical event as an election or an important City Council meeting).

For longer-term or ongoing efforts such as publicizing new web features including, but not limited to, expanded online payment and permitting, incident reporting, service requests, etc. It may make more sense to write a week's worth of content at a time, or write and post just one message at a time.

You can maximize the effectiveness of tweets by routinely sending them out using a social media scheduling tool. Studies have shown that the time of day tweets are posted has a significant effect on how widely they're read, and that posting three times during the day further increases your audience reach. However, keep in mind that tweets scheduled in advance might not always be topical -- if there's a blizzard, your followers might not be that interested in a tweet about park and field rentals! So it's a good idea to have a content calendar, or at least review the schedule of tweets to make sure anything upcoming is compatible with real-time events such as weather and news that may be occurring on a given day -- particularly in case of "bad news" such as terrorist attacks at home or abroad, or other events that might make a humorous or light-hearted post seem out of place or insensitive. Keep scheduled tweets fairly neutral in tone.

Although the City's current Facebook and Twitter presence do not tend to draw a large volume of complaints or negative feedback, it's important to be aware that such feedback may happen at times. When an angry resident posts a complaint, it's nice to respond quickly and defuse potential disputes and misunderstandings by directing the commenter to the right issue-related information or department at City Hall. The upside is that negative feedback provides an opportunity for City officials to show that they're responsive; after all, social media are just the newest ways for people to "petition the government for redress of grievances." On the other hand, it is also perfectly acceptable to leave a negative comment alone.

Although most of the emphasis in "technology-based citizen engagement" tends to be on social media, it's important to keep in mind that print media still draw a wide audience and that a blended campaign across all possible communication vehicles will reach a wide spectrum of constituents.

In addition to the social media campaigning described above, cities and towns can significantly enhance their audience reach by sending letters-to-the-editor to local publications such as the Malden Observer. Why a letter to the editor? Most local newspapers will publish the vast majority of the letters they receive -- generally, they'll publish a letter from a City official as a matter of course. An op-ed article is less likely to be published, or at least will require a certain amount of selling, on the part of the author, to get the paper to publish it. For examples of the type of letter to the editor we recommend, see the Appendix to this document.

CAMPAIGN CHECKLIST FOR NEW PUBLIC-FACING INITIATIVES

Follow these steps in any informational campaign when trying to raise public awareness of a new City of Malden public-facing initiative -- this would include technology rollouts, new features on cityofmalden.org, or any other important city issue.

- Develop a timeline for the project.
- Identify the social media and traditional media outlets, and the audience segments to target with each.
- Write tweets and other social and traditional media content for each phase of the timeline. In each case, develop a timeline, and compose social media posts and letters to the editor designed to be sent on specific dates. Send the letters to the editor out to print media on their specified dates (approximately -- this is not an exact science!).
- Post the tweets to the City's own social media on the scheduled dates. Send letters to the editor as scheduled.
- Be prepared to respond to public feedback on social media!
- Maintain a consistent campaign of social media messaging -- primarily Twitter and Facebook, to gain gradual increase in traffic to cityofmalden.org. Marketing industry best practices show that posting consistently on social media leads to return viewership and increased website traffic (gradually -- as noted above, it usually takes several months to notice a significant increase in website traffic; that's why it's important to post on social media regularly). Our recommendation to highlight a different area of the site with each social media post is intended to help you target as wide a range of Malden residents as possible. An individual resident might be interested in what's going on at the High School, but not interested in how to file reports about abandoned properties. Another might be interested in real-estate developments in the City, or in the Malden Teen Enrichment Center. By highlighting each of these types of resources, you can gradually attract visitors from a cross-section of the Malden community profile; any one resident might only be interested in one out of five postings, but that's the one that will get him or her to go over and visit the City website; that's how you expand readership over time.

Recommendations for Social Media Effectiveness

Convey the voice of the City of Malden to your key audiences through consistent messaging. Aim to show all segments of the demographic and political spectrum that City government is responsive to their needs, viewpoints, and concerns.

STYLE AND TONE

- Always use subject's handle (ID) if possible, in upper/lowercase; for example, @MassachusettsIT
- Use a smart, personal voice. Do not use chat-speak (abbreviations like "2day," "4eva")
- Be gracious but modest. Don't retweet kind words; just thank people!

FREQUENCY AND DIALOGUE

- Tweet when you have something to teach, or to announce timely news items.
- Conversations happen organically on social media, but try to have the last word, even if it's just a simple "Thanks!"
- Don't use all 140 characters; save 16 characters for someone else to include your handle in their re-tweet.
- If you want to share information strategically; copy community organizations, other agencies, or public figures by adding their handles at the end of the tweet
- Use hashtags when tweeting during live events, for example, #MaldenAlumniHomecoming

LISTENING TO THE CONVERSATION

- Use a robust app like Hootsuite or TweetDeck, to manage incoming streams. Twitter is more about listening than talking!
- Stay on top of what's being said about Malden, by searching for hashtags such as #MaldenMA, #MaldenMass, #VoteMalden, #MaldenOverride, or whatever's topical at the moment. Be proactive -- don't wait until someone sends you a re-tweet asking, "Why hasn't the City done something about this?"
- If possible, decentralize management of the City's Twitter ID ("handle"), so that more than one authorized staff member can check message traffic and reply or take action when necessary. It's important to reply -- especially to negative feedback -- within 24 hours.

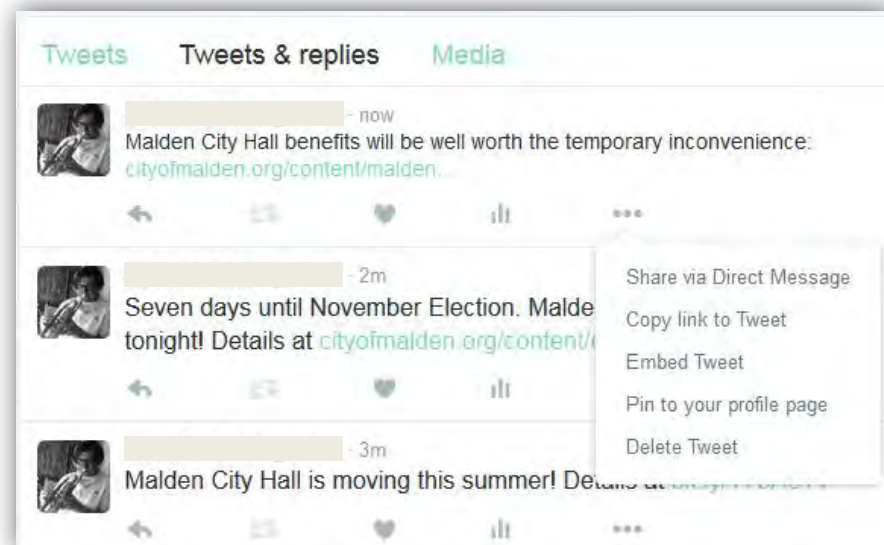
TUTORIAL: PINNING A POST

When posting on the City of Malden's own social media, we recommend pinning them to the top of your Twitter Profile and Facebook Page. This helps draw attention to important announcements because it is the first item people will see.

Pinning a post to Twitter and Facebook also enables your visitors to share this important information easily.

Pinning to a Twitter profile

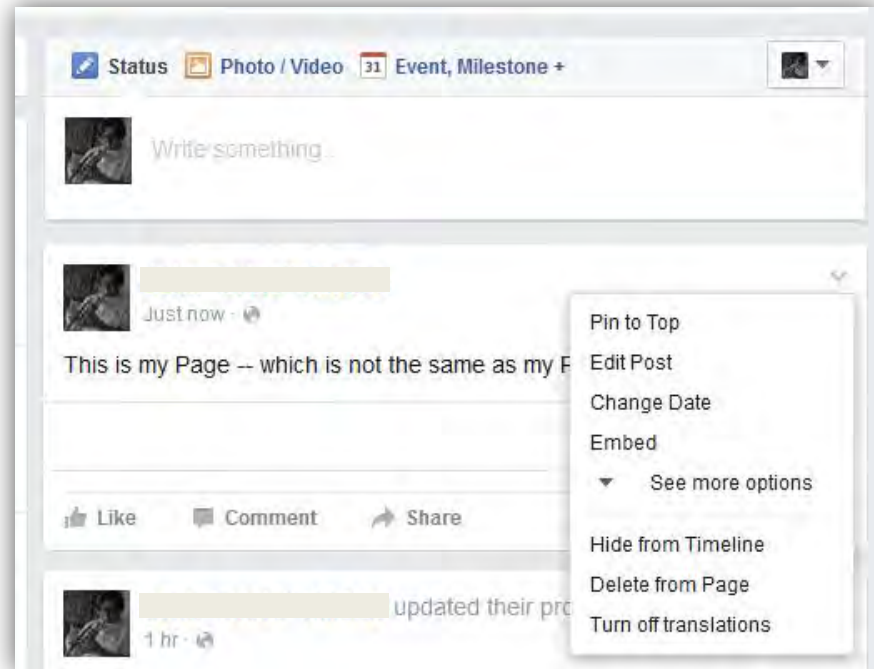
To "pin" a tweet to the top of your Twitter profile, just go to the tweet, then click the "3 dots" icon at the bottom-right, and select **Pin to your profile page** (see illustration on right).



Pinning to a Facebook page

To pin a post to the top of a Facebook Page, follow these steps:

1. Go to the post on your Page's Timeline
2. Click the down-arrow icon at the top-right of the post (see illustration on right)
3. Select **Pin to Top**



Professional Development Plan

Developing your Citizen Engagement Team

Municipalities are juggling numerous responsibilities, so we recognize that citizen engagement is not always a central focus. Social media is a terrific way to establish communication lines with residents and engage them in important municipal affairs, and it does not have to be an overwhelming task. The first step is to determine who is responsible for what, and then to set reasonable expectations.

DEFINING ROLES

We recommend that municipalities begin by clarifying the roles of those involved in citizen engagement. Different municipalities might arrange their Citizen Engagement Teams differently. A city with many recreational social media users among its staff might decentralize ownership over the social media profiles, encouraging many staff to post to different social media accounts throughout their day. Another might have one person who drives all of the social media posting across every account.

Regardless of how many people are engaged with social media in a municipality, it is helpful to assign one as the Social Media Champion. This person can take the lead in orchestrating campaigns around important issues or information on the City, and ensure that a social media feed is updated regularly. This could be someone who runs communications for the municipality as a part of his or her official job responsibilities, or it could be someone who elects to take on the role because they are enthusiastic about social media.

This effort can be backed by Social Media Supporters. Ideally, these Supporters would have access to any accounts or tools and be empowered to post and engage with people on social media. These Supporters should receive some guidance around the Champion about expected tone and content, but ideally will feel free to post about their activities without needing supervisor approval.

In the City of Malden, Ron Cochran has already demonstrated social media skills on behalf of the City. As the Communications Director, he would make an ideal Social Media Champion for the municipality. By explicitly selecting Social Media Supporters and decentralizing control over the social media accounts, he might be able to lighten the responsibilities on his plate while also increasing the frequency and breadth of content on these channels.

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

Successful social media use will look different for different municipalities. It's helpful to sit down with the full Citizen Engagement Team and establish some basic goals for social media presence. Some topics to consider:

- Which are the best social media channels for your municipality to engage on?
 - Malden is already on Facebook and Twitter, the most-frequently used social media channels, as well as Instagram.

- It is best to avoid over-committing before being sure there is staff capacity to maintain multiple accounts.
- What is the expected frequency of posting?
 - Malden already follows best practices by posting regularly, and often multiple times a day. We suggest staying the course as possible.
- What content is appropriate?
 - The City of Malden already does a great job with posting appropriate content. Our only recommendation for the future is that they consider making more frequent mentions of the City website. The newly designed site is a terrific resource for residents and may not be utilized to its full potential if citizens are not often reminded to visit it.
 - Municipalities often walk the line between official and friendly in the tone of their social media posts. The Citizen Engagement Team should make sure everyone is on the same page about what content and voice is appropriate.
 - Some of the most successful tweets are also the more edgy ones like the example on the right that [@CityofBoston](#) sent out about their recent website redesign. If inspiration for something funny strikes, should your team have a sign-off policy? Should everyone agree not to schedule funny posts for the future, in the case something tragic should happen?
- Who will post during emergencies?
 - In the event of a national emergency, someone should be responsible for rescheduling any scheduled posts during that day. A municipality wouldn't want to be caught tweeting about a fun fact when the rest of the world is mourning a sad event.



- Residents will be looking to your social media accounts during local emergencies like fires, snowstorms, police action. If multiple people are posting to social media majority of the time, it might be advisable to make one person responsible for sharing information relating to these events to avoid crossing the signals.
 - For more information about crisis communication, check out this YouTube video that MassIT's communications team created: <https://youtu.be/FTfxuuUo2mQ>

EXAMPLES FOR INSPIRATION

One of the most difficult parts about social media management is to create consistently compelling, useful content. For inspiration, here are a few examples of municipalities and officials regularly engaging with their audiences, pay extra attention to the various methods they're using to interact with their constituents.

The [City of San Jose, CA](#) tweets and retweets helpful information about city affairs, interspersed with cheers for sports teams. Its Twitter and [Facebook](#) page serve as solid examples of municipalities broadcasting important information on social media.

Although he is posting to his personal account, [Dongho Chang](#) exemplifies how municipalities can share their achievements and day-to-day activities. 2,000 people follow this Seattle Traffic Engineer and often engage with his posts.

The [City of Somerville's Facebook Page](#) is a great example of a warm, but informative, social media channel.

The City of Cambridge's Community Development Division keeps their [Instagram feed](#) well-fed with fun happenings throughout the City.

The [Bangor, Maine Police Department](#) is a public-safety agency that sets new standards for compelling, fun, and informative citizen engagement. In a City of about 33,000 people, they have more than 163,000 Facebook followers -- an amazing level of interest for a remote town in Maine. The writer, "TC," posts on a daily basis, with amusing, philosophical, and practical observations based on real police calls and local incidents.

Available Trainings & Resources

The next step is to match Citizen Engagement Teammates with the appropriate professional development resources based on their level of experience with digital communication vehicles. The team should conduct their own research to find information, products and services that will best serve the City. We've provided a few resources below to help get things started.

RESOURCES FOR BEGINNERS

Twitter

- A basic introduction: Wired, "[How to Use Twitter: Critical Tips for New Users](#)," May 6, 2016.
- An explanation of @-mentions, and generally who can see what on Twitter: [MomThisIsHowTwitterWorks.com](#).
- Twitter's very own glossary will help as a refresher in the future: Twitter, "[The Twitter glossary](#)."
- Lynda.com has a number of tutorials which are free during a trial membership period or \$19.99/month for unlimited access. (Some public libraries offer access to Lynda to library patrons.)
 - [Twitter Essential Training](#)
 - [Twitter for Business](#): Some items covered in this tutorial may not be helpful for municipalities, but the introduction to hashtags and third-party Twitter tools will be useful.

Facebook

- A walkthrough on setting up the initial page: "[Facebook Part 1: How to Create a Facebook Page for a Municipality](#)," September 9, 2015.
- Facebook launched a guide for newcomers managing pages: Facebook, "[Learn How to Succeed at Facebook](#)."
- Lynda.com course: [Learn Facebook: The Basics](#)

Other Social Media Platforms

- Instagram: Lynda.com's [Learn Instagram: The Basics](#)
- Snapchat: Snapchat's [Getting Started](#) resources
- Pinterest: Pinterest's [Guide to Pinterest](#)

RESOURCES FOR INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED USERS

Twitter

- A sprawling resource into innumerable topics: Mashable, "[Twitter Guide Book](#)"
- Lynda.com course: [Twitter for Businesses](#) (Not all parts of the tutorial will be helpful, as it is targeted toward for-profit businesses.)

Facebook

- Facebook offers this training program for intermediate and advanced users: Facebook, [Blueprint](#).

- Lynda.com course: [Managing Online Communities](#)

General Resources

- [HootSuite University](#), which is free for Enterprise customers and \$21/month for everyone else, offers numerous classes and resources.

Tools

Many social media power users utilize tools that can publish posts according to a schedule. This way, a user can compose and save multiple posts and schedule them to publish later in the day or on a different week. These tools often make it easier to post the same content to multiple social networks at once. Our team cannot recommend any particular service, but here are a few that we are aware of.

[Buffer](#). Save posts into Buffer and the tool will automatically schedule and post them for you at the best time during the day. The City of Malden currently uses this tool to manage their social media postings.

[HootSuite](#). HootSuite is a social media scheduler that also has robust tools for listening to the conversation your posts produce across multiple social media platforms.

[ManageFlitter](#). This scheduler features tools to help you find other Twitter users you should engage with.

[SproutSocial](#). Another scheduler, but this platform focuses on helping users get involved in relevant conversations occurring on social media already.

[TweetDeck](#). People who manage personal and professional social media profiles often use TweetDeck to help keep them separate.

Appendix: Campaign Action Plan for Relocation of City Departments

In each Community Compact city or town that has adopted citizen engagement as an IT best practice, our team will generally provide assistance to develop and document a citizen engagement strategy and professional development plan.

The Challenge

The temporary relocation of Malden City Hall from its location at 200 Pleasant Street to four separate locations presents a major public communications challenge. Identifying the best ways to reach various constituencies across the spectrum of Malden residents is a key to making the relocation of city services as smooth and painless as possible.

Because the process of relocating City Hall is happening over a three-year period, it's important to keep it in the public eye, with a consistent media campaign. This doesn't require broadcasting a huge amount of information every week, but we're recommending fairly frequent reminders that City Hall services have moved, because there will probably be widely varying levels of awareness of what's going on among city residents. The average person doesn't need to go to City Hall very often -- until they need services, to pay a bill or do business with the City. The information strategy we're recommending in the following sections should be followed throughout the relocation period -- with, of course, appropriate fanfare and publicity when the New City Hall building opens.

Proposed Solutions

Our team developed a map of city services, for both print and web, showing where the various departments will be during the relocation period, and a social and traditional media campaign aimed at drawing residents to useful information available on the City of Malden website. We also developed a blended campaign of media content for Malden's communications staff to use in conjunction with the relocation of their City Hall offices. The campaign is designed to communicate the move as clearly as possible, while targeting specific resident profiles, emphasizing the content they will likely be interested in on the channel(s) they are most likely to engage on.

Our campaign action plan is organized chronologically based on the relocation project's timeline. We've included guidance on the following stages of communication:

- Advice on creating a dedicated page on the Malden website for the move
- Tips on updating search engines after offices move
- Maps showing the locations of City Hall offices
- Social media messages designed to be tweeted and posted on the City's Facebook page

- Letters to the editor, which can be sent from Ron or another public official to local media.

For the most part, you can just copy-and-paste text right from this document into emails and social media postings.

Note that in some of the tweets provided in this document, we include the Twitter ID of someone related to the content of the tweet, such as Kevin Duffy (who tends to re-tweet a lot of Malden-related content) or David D’Arcangelo. Our objective in doing this is to amplify the reach of a tweet by calling it to the attention of someone who’s likely to re-tweet it.

IMMEDIATE ACTION ITEMS

We believe that the first and most important step is to establish a City Hall Relocation Page on the website. Ideally, this page will live at the same URL throughout the transition, and will be positioned as the authoritative source on all address and hours of operation changes. However, the City of Malden can update the website as the move progresses. If possible, the City can update its banner image on the front page to highlight the impending move, and perhaps link directly to this page so that any visitor to the site will learn about the move and have immediate access to the details. It might also be possible to create a memorable redirect link, like cityofmalden.org/move, which will be easy-to-use and play well on social media. In this guide, we have linked to cityofmalden.org, but it would be even better to link directly to this relocation page.

To add a more user-friendly flair to this page, the City of Malden could incorporate an interactive map. We provided an example using [Google Maps](#). On the City of Malden website, it is possible to link directly to the map or to embed the map directly into the page using the following code:

```
<iframe src="https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/embed?mid=1KdaJrqWL5wwwUgjKQbq9oC0zNW8" width="640" height="480"></iframe>
```

Search Engine Results

Most residents are not conducting business at City Hall on a daily basis. Therefore, we can assume that many might search for a department they are looking using Google, Bing, or another search engine to confirm where they need to go for a specific task. As a result, updating information for each office in these search engines would be incredibly valuable.

As soon as possible, we recommend that a communications person from the City “claim” each office as their “business” on Google and Bing. Both Google and Bing present information in a sidebar when people search for a particular place. They use the data presented to populate other applications, like online maps. By claiming each department in these systems, the City can increase the likelihood of the search engines accepting and recognizing the new addresses or hours of operations for each department by the time they move.

To implement this recommendation, Google one of the departments participating in the move and claim it by clicking “Own this business?” on the right sidebar. Follow the prompts, and you will be lead to a screen where you can confirm the address information (do not change this information until the office has actually moved) and consent to Google creating a Google+ page for your account. You will want to follow these steps for each

of the departments. Although it might take a bit of time to go through each department listing, doing this groundwork will be incredibly helpful when the offices actually move.

The image is a screenshot of a Google search results page for the query "maiden assessors". The search bar at the top shows the query and a search icon. Below the search bar, there are tabs for "All", "Shopping", "Maps", "News", "Images", and "More". The search results show "About 34,600 results (0.71 seconds)".

The first search result is "Assessor | City of Malden" with the URL www.cityofmaiden.org/department/assessor. The description states: "The Assessor's Department is responsible for accurately determining the value of all real and personal property located within the City of Malden for the purpose ...".

The second search result is "Board of Assessors | City of Malden" with the URL www.cityofmaiden.org/board-commission/board-assessors. The description states: "The Board of Assessors is required under Massachusetts General Laws to list and value all real and personal property in the City for purposes of taxation..".

The third search result is "GIS - Geographic Information Systems | City of Malden" with the URL www.cityofmaiden.org/gis. The description states: "indextaxmap.pdf, GIS - City Tax Map. This is a map of the city streets with the Assessor's Tax Map Overlay, PDF icon indextaxmap.pdf ...".

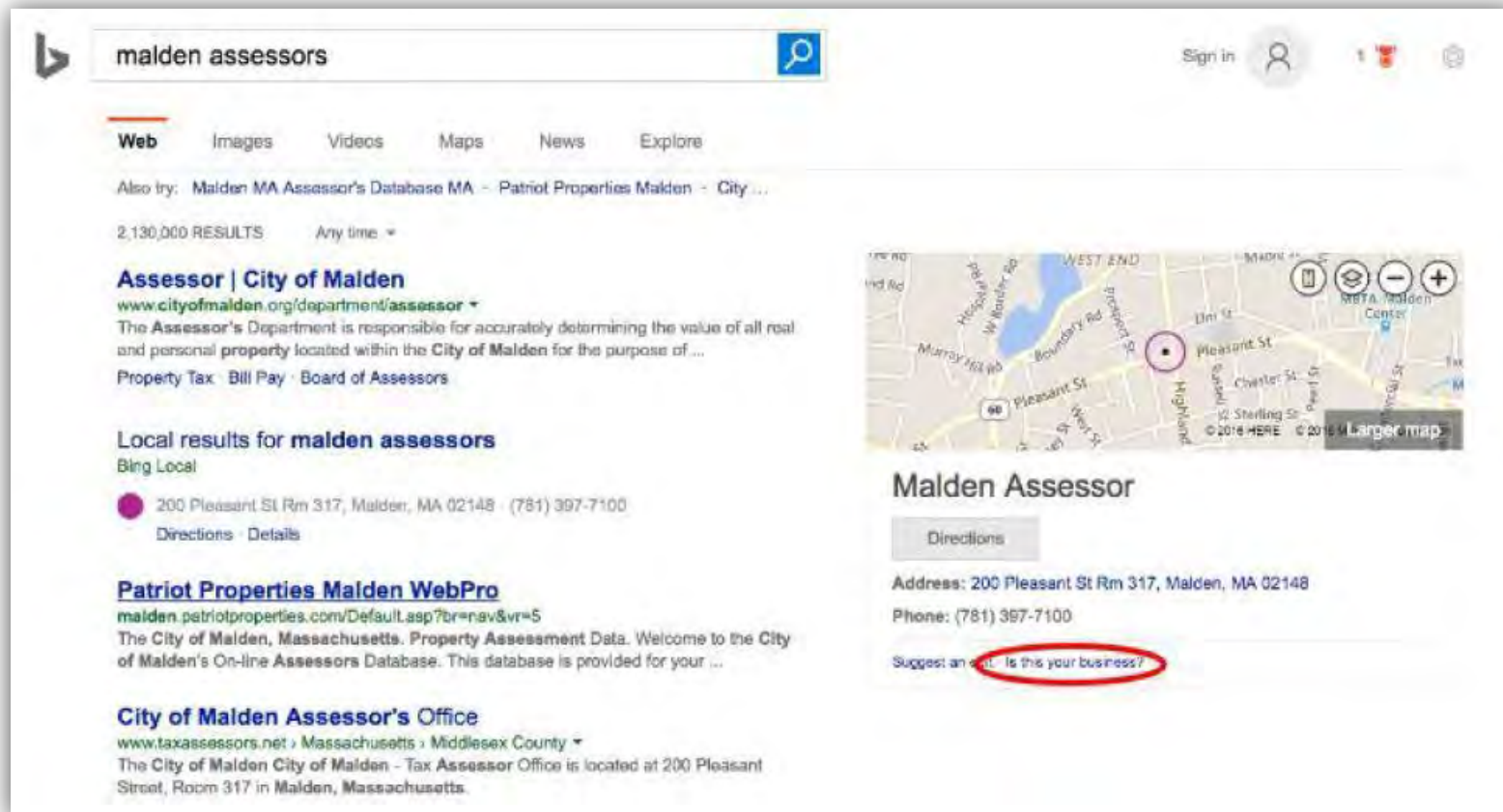
The fourth search result is "Patriot Properties Malden WebPro" with the URL maiden.patriotproperties.com/default.asp?br=exp. The description states: "Welcome to the City of Malden's On-line Assessors Database. This database is provided for your convenience and is not intended to answer all value related ...".

The fifth search result is "Patriot Properties Melrose WebPro" with the URL melrose.patriotproperties.com/. The description states: "Questions on the data may be addressed to the Assessor's Office during the office hours of 8:30AM - 4:00PM, Monday - Thursday and Friday 8:30AM - 12:30PM..".

On the right side of the search results, there is a business listing for "Malden Assessor" with a star rating. The listing includes a "See outside" button, a map showing the location at the intersection of Pleasant St and Exchange St, and the following information:

- Malden Assessor** ★
- City Tax Office
- Address:** 200 Pleasant St # 317, Malden, MA 02148
- Phone:** (781) 397-7100
- [Suggest an edit](#) • [Own this business?](#)
- [Add missing information](#)
- [Add business hours](#)
- Reviews** [Write a review](#) [Add a photo](#)
- [Be the first to review](#)

Next, use Bing to search for each office. The process is very similar to Google's, simply select "Is this your business?" on the sidebar. Bing will take you directly to a form where you can confirm or change the information.



Social Media

We recommend pinning a message about the move to the top of your Twitter or Facebook page (See section above "Recommendations for Social Media Effectiveness" for a tutorial on how to pin a post). This way, anyone who comes across your Facebook or Twitter profile will first see this important news. The message could say:

City Hall is moving! For info on where and when specific services are moving, see cityofmalden.org

It would be helpful to start posting the fact that a move is happening to Twitter and Facebook as soon as possible. These generic posts can direct users to the City Hall Relocation page. Remember to tag other users like the Malden Patch (@MaldenPatch) or Malden Evening News (@MaldenNews), public figures (like @MayorofMalden), and other agencies (@MaldenPolice). These users might post or re-tweet your message to their own feed, boosting its reach.

LAST WEEK OF JUNE

The “letters to the editor” templates provided below could serve as an additional avenue for getting the word out about the relocation. We recommend this particular approach because local publications tend to publish most of the letters they receive, while some publications are less inclined to publish op-ed pieces. Your mileage may vary, depending on how receptive Malden’s press outlets are to using submitted content from the City.

The following letter to the editor is designed for the last week of June:

To the editor:

Malden’s long-awaited City Hall relocation is underway, and starting in July the City’s offices will be moving to their temporary locations while the new City Hall is built at its new location.

In July, the City Council and School Committee meeting location will move to the John and Christina Markey Malden Senior Community Center at 7 Washington St. You can park in the public lot at 73 Pleasant St., or the Jackson St. Garage.

Over the summer, many other City Hall offices will be moving to temporary sites not far from the existing City Hall. Our goal is to make it easy to do business with the City while our new City Hall is being built -- the new City Hall will bring improved traffic flow by reopening Pleasant Street and making it easier for T riders to gain access to downtown shops and restaurants. You can find more information on the City’s web site at cityofmalden.org. The temporary relocation of city offices is an important step toward an exciting future for the City of Malden!

**Sincerely,
Ron Cochran
Communication Director
City of Malden**

JULY 29 MOVE

First, remember to update the address and hours of any department that is affected by the first round of moves on Google and Bing, and to update the static City Hall Relocation page on the City website.

Letter to the Editor

The following letter is intended to be sent in advance of the July 29th group of relocations.

To the editor:

This summer, a number of important City of Malden offices will be moving from the old City Hall to new locations, while the new City Hall is being built.

On July 29th, three departments will move to 17 Pleasant St. These include the City Treasurer and City Clerk (1st floor); and the Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Planning Services (2nd floor).

On August 12th, the City Council offices will move to 110 Pleasant Street, 3rd floor, along with the Compliance Bureau; Human Resources; the City Solicitor; and the Assessor. The City Controller will be at the basement level.

On September 8th, Human Resources, the Mayor's office, and the Malden Redevelopment Authority meeting location will move to 17 Pleasant St.

On September 22nd, several other city offices will be moving to 17 Pleasant St. These include the departments of Engineering and Retirement (2nd floor); Information Technology, Public Facilities, and Veterans Services (3rd floor). Parking is available in the public lots at 73 Pleasant St., or at 417 Main St.

You can find more information on the City's website at cityofmalden.org. We apologize for the inconvenience, but it's only temporary, and the payoff is that our new City Hall will be a customer-friendly part of Malden's future!

**Sincerely,
Ron Cochran
Communication Director
City of Malden**

Social Media

We recommend some social media posts targeting specific demographics that might be affected by these changes. For example, we created a static map highlighting where a recently engaged couple can go throughout their journey to marriage. This image could be tweeted (by clicking the camera icon when composing a new tweet) and posted on Facebook:



Possible tweets to accompany this image (left):

- The most romantic paperwork of your life is now available at 110 Pleasant Street! CityofMalden.org
- It's wedding season! Here's a guide to getting married in Malden. CityofMalden.org

Possible Facebook posts to accompany the image:

- It's wedding season! If you are a bride- or groom-to-be, check out our handy guide to getting married in Malden.
- Attention brides and grooms! The City Clerk and the paperwork you need are now located at 110 Pleasant Street. For more information about the [#MaldenCityHallMove](https://twitter.com/MaldenCityHallMove), visit CityofMalden.org.

We've also provided sample social media posts to direct new parents to the appropriate location, where they could apply for a birth certificate. Since Malden is such a diverse and economically vibrant city, these suggestions could easily be translated into different languages or be repurposed to promote other city services such as permitting.



Kenny Louie: [Creative Commons Image](#)

Possible posts to accompany this image:

- *Birth certificates for Malden's newest residents are now available at 110 Pleasant Street.*
- *Hey baby! Get birth certificates at 110 Pleasant Street.*

Here are some other suggested tweets that could also be used on Facebook, for the last couple of weeks in July. They focus on notifying residents of the City Hall services that are scheduled to be relocated on July 29th:

Malden Permits, Inspections, and Planning Department will move to 110 Pleasant St., 2d floor on July 29. Info: cityofmalden.org

Need to register to vote? The Malden City Clerk's office moves to 110 Pleasant St., 1st floor on July 29. Info: cityofmalden.org

The Malden City Treasurer's office moves to 110 Pleasant St., 1st floor on July 29. Info: cityofmalden.org #MaldenCityHallMove

**This fall, City Council and School Committee meetings will be held at Markey Senior Center, 7 Washington St
@DavidDarcangelo @DavidDeRuosiJr**

EARLY AUGUST

The following letter is intended to be sent in advance of the August 12 department moves:

To the editor:

It's a busy summer here at Malden City Hall as we continue our relocation of city services to the temporary offices they'll occupy until the new City Hall is built. On August 12th, the City Council, Solicitor, Controller, Assessor, and Compliance offices will

move to 110 Pleasant St. The Controller's office will be at the basement level, while the Assessor's and Compliance offices will be on the 3rd floor.

When City Council meetings resume in the fall, the City Council chambers will be located in the Markey Senior Center at 7 Washington St. School Committee meetings will also be held at this location, until the new City Hall is complete.

With this move, we're about halfway through the process of getting city offices into their temporary homes. On September 8th, the Mayor's office will pack up and move to 17 Pleasant St., along with Human Resources. The Malden Redevelopment Authority board meeting room will also be moving to this location.

You can find more information on the City's website at cityofmalden.org. We hope you'll find these temporary moves justified by the promise of a more convenient City Hall, and a more vibrant downtown, once the new building is complete.

**Sincerely,
Ron Cochran
Communication Director
City of Malden**

The following tweets are intended to be posted ahead of the August 12 office moves.

Malden City Controller's office will be moving to 110 Pleasant St., basement August 12. Info: cityofmalden.org

Malden City Assessor's office will be moving to 110 Pleasant St. 3d floor August 12. Info: cityofmalden.org

The City Compliance office will be moving to 110 Pleasant St., 3d floor August 12. Info: cityofmalden.org

City Council offices move to 110 Pleasant St 3d Floor Aug 12: cityofmalden.org @DavidDarcangelo @MayorOfMalden @MaldenCouncilor



*City Council offices move on August 12th. #MaldenCityHallMove
CityofMalden.org*

EARLY SEPTEMBER

Here's a letter to the editor for early September.

To the editor:

As we continue moving City Hall offices to their temporary locations, September 8th will see three new arrivals at 17 Pleasant St.: the City's Human Resources department, the Malden Redevelopment Authority's board meeting site, and -- last but not least -- the Mayor's office. Mayor Christenson will be on the 4th floor.

There's one more round of office moves coming up. On September 22nd, the departments of Engineering, Veterans' Services, Retirement, Information Technology, and Public Facilities will be moving to 17 Pleasant St.

You can find more information about the City's redevelopment initiatives on the City website at www.cityofmalden.org.

**Sincerely,
Ron Cochran
Communication Director
City of Malden**

The following tweets are designed to be posted in advance of the September 8th moves.

Malden's HR Dept. moves to 17 Pleasant St., 3d floor on September 8th. Info: cityofmalden.org

Mayor Gary Christenson's office moves to 17 Pleasant St. 4th floor on September 8th. Info: cityofmalden.org @MayorOfMalden

Starting 9/8, the Malden Redevelopment Authority will hold its meetings the City's temporary office at 17 Pleasant St. @MaldenRedevelop

The following letter is intended to reach local veterans -- a group that tend not to use social media that much, so you might decide to use this letter instead of one of the more general-audience letters included in this document; again, the success may be dependent on how receptive the local papers are to running letters from City Hall.

To the editor:

On September 22nd, the Malden Veterans' Services Department will be moving to the City's temporary office at 17 Pleasant St., 3rd floor. The Veterans' Services Department offers assistance to anyone who served in the United States Armed Forces and may be entitled to receive Federal, state, or local benefits. Veterans' Services Officer Kevin Jarvis can be reached at (781) 397-7139.

The Veterans' Services Department is only one of several city departments being relocated while the old City Hall is replaced by a new, modern building, part of the City's redevelopment effort that will make downtown Malden more accessible and stimulate economic development.

**Sincerely,
Ron Cochran
Communication Director
City of Malden**

This letter is intended for community, civic or local grass-roots organizations likely to have an interest in attending City Council meetings or meeting with Councilors at their offices:

To the editor:

As part of the Malden's relocation of City Hall, the City Council chambers (where meetings are held) and Councilors' offices have moved. City Council meetings are held at the John and Christina Markey Malden Senior Community Center, at 7 Washington St. Meanwhile, the City Councilors' offices have moved to 110 Pleasant St., 3rd floor -- right across the street from the Senior Center. These locations are only a block away from the old City Hall at 200 Pleasant St., to make it as convenient as possible for constituents to reach Council meetings and offices. Parking is available in the municipal lot at 73 Pleasant St.

Once the new City Hall is constructed, the Council chambers and offices will be located there. The new City Hall, and the mixed-use developments slated to be built on Pleasant Street, are part of what should be an exciting new era for Malden.

**Sincerely,
Ron Cochran
Communication Director
City of Malden**

LATE SEPTEMBER

The following letter is intended to be sent out in advance of the opening of the new Police Headquarters:

To the editor:

In October, the Malden Police headquarters will move from the old City Hall to its new location at 800 Eastern Avenue. This marks a milestone in the City's initiative to redevelop Pleasant Street and revitalize Malden's downtown. The new police headquarters is the first completed phase of the project, which features new mixed-use retail, residential, and civic development on the old City Hall site. It was constructed with the help of \$9 million in MassWorks Infrastructure Program funding, part of the state's commitment to help municipalities foster economic development and job creation. The building was designed by Flansburgh Architects.

You can find more information about the Malden's redevelopment initiatives on the City's official website at www.cityofmalden.org. The Police Department is at www.maldenpd.com and on Twitter [@MaldenPolice](https://twitter.com/MaldenPolice). The new police headquarters is just one part of an exciting future for the City of Malden.

**Sincerely,
Ron Cochran
Communication Director
City of Malden**

The following tweets are intended to be posted ahead of the office moves on September 22nd:

Malden Veterans Services Department moves to 17 Pleasant St., 3d floor September 22. Info: cityofmalden.org

Malden Public Facilities Department moves to 17 Pleasant St., 3d floor September 22. Info: cityofmalden.org

Malden's Retirement Services office moves to 17 Pleasant St., 2d floor September 22. Info: cityofmalden.org

**Malden's Information Technology office moves to 17 Pleasant St., 3d floor September 22. Info: cityofmalden.org
#MaldenCityHallMove**

**Malden's Engineering Dept. (roads, utilities, water meters) moves to 17 Pleasant St. 2d floor September 22. Info: cityofmalden.org
@DuffyMalden**

Malden Police Headquarters moves to 800 Eastern Ave. in October. Info: cityofmalden.org

In addition, we recommend having Human Resources send an email notification to all retirees, notifying them of the relocation of Retirement Services to 17 Pleasant St. This is probably the best way to reach this group, since retirees, like Veterans, tend not to use social media as much as the younger demographic groups. We suspect that the Mayor's office move might be a great opportunity for some playful engagement on social media. The City could take some fun photos of the Mayor packing up and moving boxes and post them on Twitter. Using animated images or GIFs could also be a fun way to make the news more engaging.

BEYOND THE MOVE

After the move, it still makes sense to continue mentioning the relocation of city services. Most people don't need to go to City Hall very often, and may not have been following the story very closely. It's likely that all throughout the interim period after 200 Pleasant Street closes, but before the new City Hall opens, there will be a lot of residents who don't know where to find the departments that have moved.

Here are a few examples of tweets that would be good anytime during the relocation/building period:

Are you a retired City of Malden employee? The Retirement Services office's temporary location is 17 Pleasant St., 2d floor. Info: cityofmalden.org

Are you a Veteran? The Department of Veterans Services is at 17 Pleasant St., 3d floor. [@advocatenevsm](https://twitter.com/advocatenevsm) @915elks

Feeling uncompliant? The Malden Office of Compliance is at 110 Pleasant St., 3d floor. Info: cityofmalden.org

Need a birth certificate, marriage license, or death certificate? Visit the Malden City Clerk at 110 Pleasant St., 1st floor. Info: cityofmalden.org

LOCAL MATV COVERAGE

Malden Access Television (MATV) is a good medium for getting the word out about the specifics of the City Hall relocation. There are a couple of avenues we recommend for publicizing the move: the Malden City Stream channel, and MATV's local programs that highlight what's going on around the City.

Malden City Stream is a government access channel that conveys information on local topics via text and graphics on a rotating basis in-between video programming. This would be a good vehicle for displaying the map created by OMST that shows the departments and where each one is being relocated.

The “What’s New? Malden” show probably has a large enough viewership to make it a worthwhile way of reaching residents -- including older viewers who might be less likely to use social media. Although “What’s New? Malden” tends to cover things like restaurants and “happenings” in the City, the relocation of City Hall is of enough interest to Malden residents that MATV would most likely be willing to include a segment in their programming lineup.

In a TV segment, it’s important to cover the same essential information included in the announcements on social media, the map produced by OMST, and the City’s website itself:

- New temporary location of service and dates of move to new location
- Hours of operation for the temporary locations

A segment on one of MATV’s locally produced shows would serve two objectives: getting information out about the City Hall move; and presenting the City’s message that the relocation is an important, positive step toward a better future for Malden.

Conclusion

The traditional media and social media campaign steps outlined above should help the City reach as wide a demographic range as possible, across age, income, and ethnic boundaries. The most important thing is to communicate early and often, over time. The typical resident probably doesn't need to go to City Hall very often, so it may take a while before everyone in the City even knows that City Hall is moving, let alone where the different services are located. So besides having the information on the web site, it probably makes sense to have the map shown on Malden City Stream throughout the period when City Hall offices are in their temporary locations.

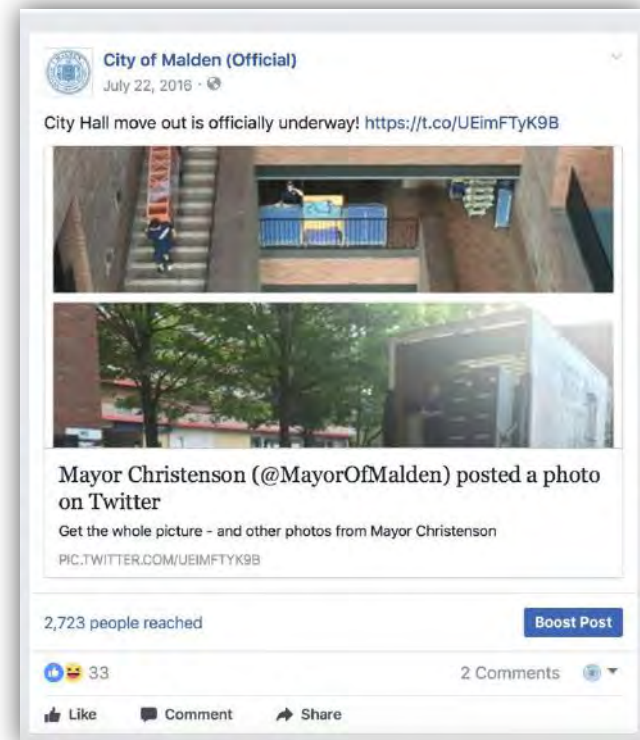
Update: Malden's Proactive Engagement

Over the past year, the City of Malden has exhibited tremendous capacity for public engagement using traditional and social media channels. Their communications team has proactively implemented most of the recommendations contained in the Campaign Action Plan above. Their campaign was communicated through the following channels:

- Letter to the editor, newspaper mentioning
- Press release
- Pre-meditated social media posts
- Standing billboard
- Local access TV
- Updating search engine information using [GoogleMyBusiness](#)
- Promotional materials (banner, graphics, etc.)
- Relocation webpage: <http://www.cityofmalden.org/move>

Sample Facebook post (right) informing residents on July 21st, 2016 of the City Hall move, directing them to the City of Malden website. This post has been viewed by 3,471 people!





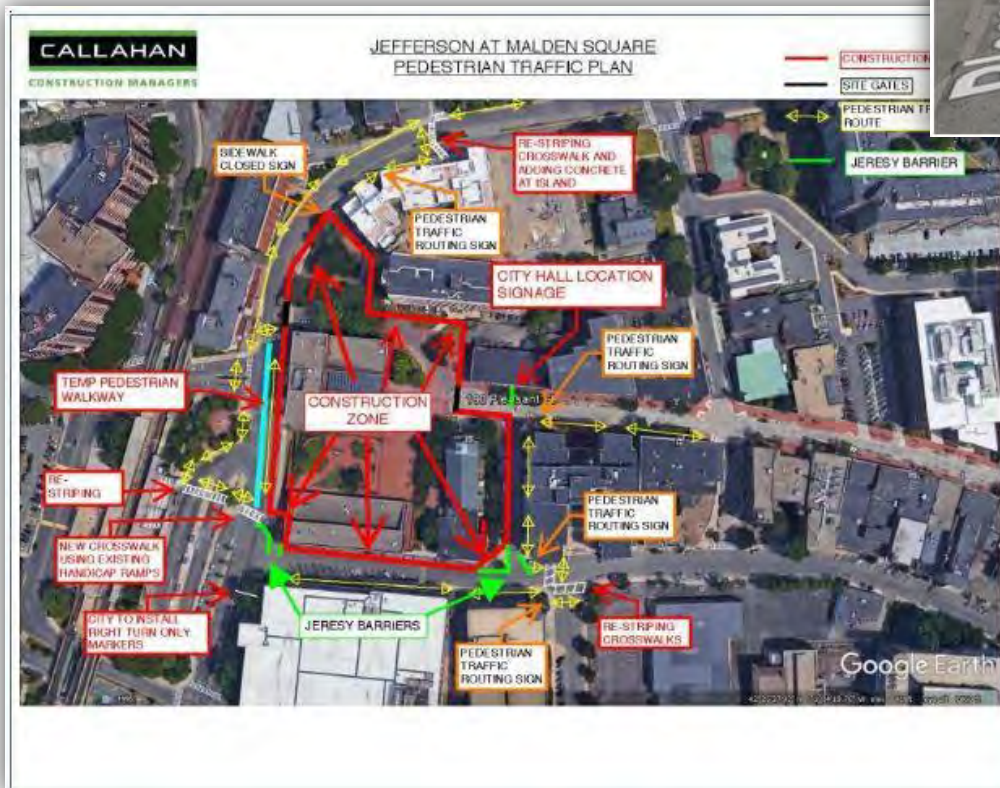
Sample nested Facebook and Twitter post (above) informing residents on July 22st, 2016 that the relocation project was initiated. This post has been viewed by whopping 2,723 people.

Screenshot of the City of Malden website during the relocation phase. The promotional banner is pronounced at the top of the page and the project details are easily accessible and prominent.

In addition to the public-facing campaign items listed above, Malden staff has also identified several new ways to better engage and inform their residents of relocation details including:

- Aerial drone footage of City Hall
- Relocation schedule on the City [website](#)
- Using [GoogleMyBusiness](#) to mark 200 Pleasant Street as **CLOSED**
- Doing another press release once demolition is complete and ground is flat

The City also created a pedestrian map (below) and several graphics (right) indicating where the various departments are now relocated, using a photo of the actual buildings they will be moved to.



The demolition of the old City Hall building at 200 Pleasant Street is expected to be completed by October 2017. Below is a rendering of what the new City Hall building will look like.

