



Town of Seekonk

Information Technology Strategic Planning

Prepared By: The Office of Municipal & School Technology

EOTSS | Executive Office of Technology Services & Security



Image: Seekonk Town Hall¹

Introduction

Incorporated in 1812, the Town of Seekonk was historically an agricultural community in Bristol County, bordering with Rhode Island. Today, the Town is largely a suburban community with 13,722 residents² -- many commuting to and from Providence and Boston for work. The area is also well known for its retail area along Route 6 which includes a movie multiplex, stores, and restaurants.

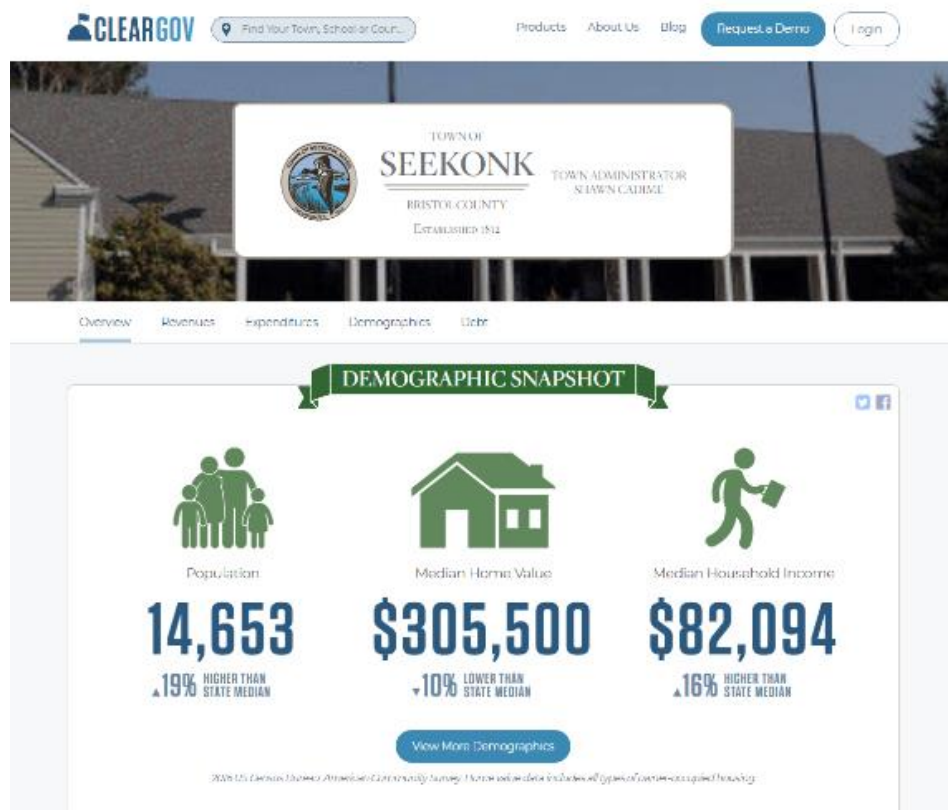
Recognizing budgetary and staffing constraints, Seekonk's officials strive to provide pertinent budgetary information to citizens in the most efficient and effective way possible. In alignment with this goal, the Town signed a Community Compact agreement to implement a technology solution that would help increase government transparency, particularly with financial data.

¹ ToddC4176. "Seekonk's town hall, located off of Route 44." Wikimedia Commons. Accessed on April 16, 2019. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seekonk_MA_Town_Hall.jpg

² "Community Facts." United States Census Bureau. American FactFinder. Accessed on April 16, 2019. https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

Project Overview

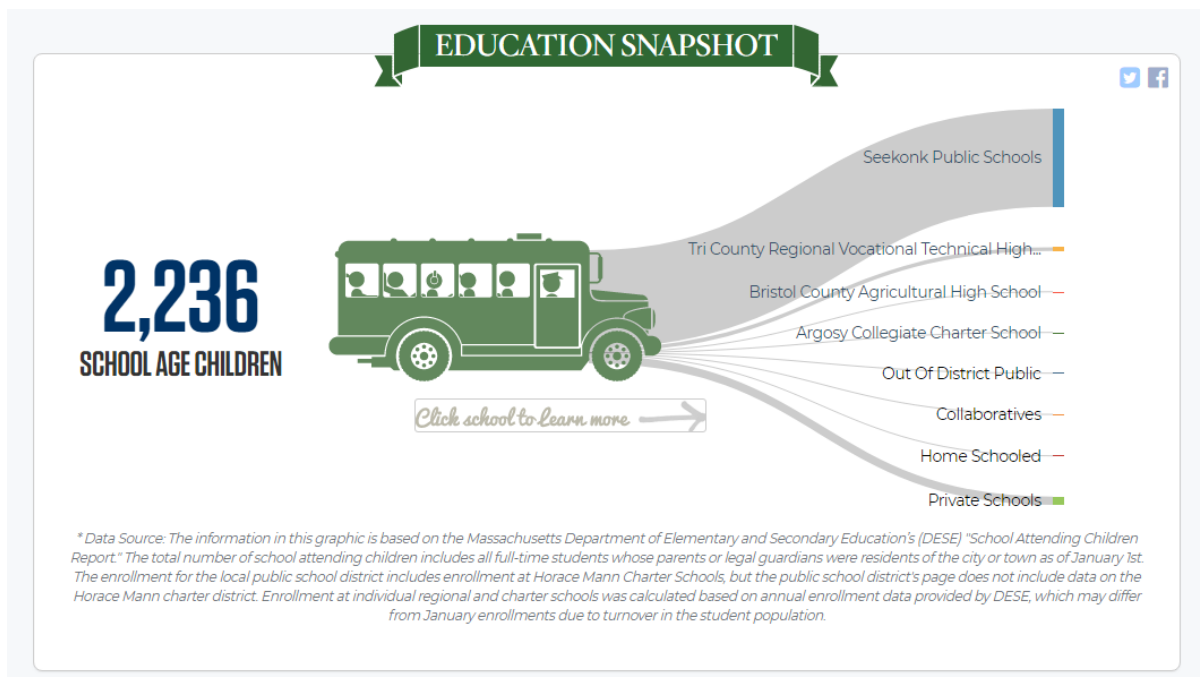
Seekonk received a Community Compact grant to implement an Open Budget solution that would give its citizens access to the Town's budgetary information in an attractive and user-friendly format. The Town engaged the services of ClearGov to provide a platform that would present demographic and financial data to interested parties. The Town wanted to provide more transparency around its decision-making process and inform the public about the state of the Town's fiscal health compared to similar communities in Massachusetts. Using the platform, data was consolidated from state and municipal sources to present a more complete view of the Town. Below are descriptions of several key features that are offered through the platform.



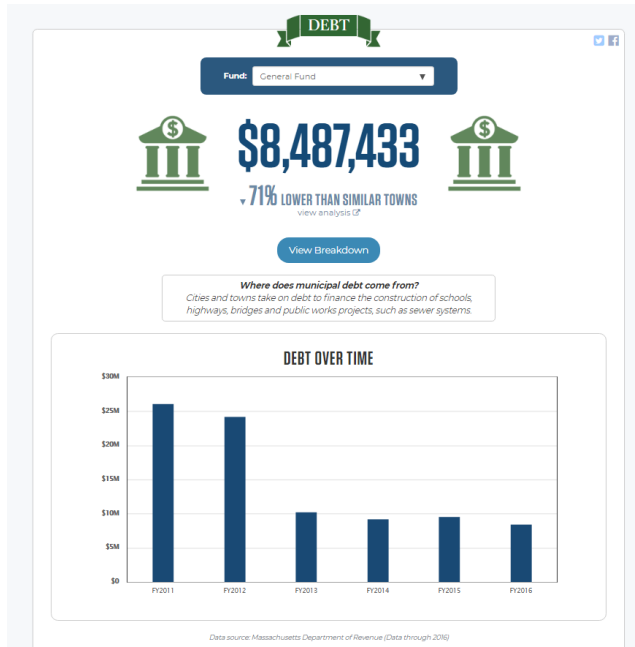
Website Link: <https://www.cleargov.com/massachusetts/bristol/town/seekonk>



Financial Overview: This feature provides an overview of the Town’s revenues and expenses. The platform provides an interactive visualization of Seekonk’s financial data. Users can click on any part of the visual to access more granular level information.



Education Snapshot: The above screenshot displays the platform’s Educational data feature. The Town can visualize how education-related funds are allocated to each of its schools. Residents can click on any category to view the breakdown of students, employees, revenue and expenditures at each school in Seekonk.



Municipal Debt: Another financial category the platform addresses is municipal debt. This feature displays the total amount of the Town’s debt in comparison to other Massachusetts communities.

Conclusion

The Town of Seekonk has successfully completed the Community Compact transparency best practice. Leveraging their Open Budget tool, the Town is now able to efficiently and effectively share valuable budgetary information with constituents. Going forward, Seekonk will continue to update their financial data, continuing on a path of transparency so their constituents can better understand how their tax dollars are being allocated.