

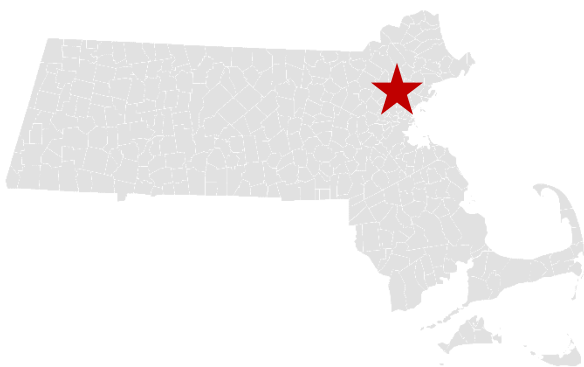
TOWN OF WAKEFIELD



TRANSPARENCY BEST PRACTICE | AUGUST 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Wakefield, Massachusetts has adopted the Transparency best practice as part of a Community Compact agreement signed with the Baker-Polito Administration in December 2015. The Town retained the services of Visual Government (VisGov) to deploy and host their open-source Visual Budget solution. Visual Budget allows Wakefield's citizens to interact with the Town's budget and view a breakdown of where their tax dollars are being allocated. It's a powerful tool that can be more engaging to the public than traditional text and spreadsheet documents.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Town of Wakefield is located in eastern Massachusetts in Middlesex County. A suburban community located near Route 128, Wakefield is best known for its historical New England appearance and Lake Quannapowitt, which borders Wakefield's common and is a popular local recreation spot.

Population is 24,932 residents*
Annual Budget is \$89 (FY 2017)
Median Household Income is \$68,563*

**US Census Bureau*

In partnership with:





THE CHALLENGE

As technology evolves, so do expectations around how government provides services to citizens using technology. These services include digital financial transparency tools which allow citizens to see Town financial transactions and hold Town leadership accountable for every dollar spent. Municipal finance can be difficult to understand and “telling the complete story” using only static documents can lead to misunderstandings about how taxpayer money is spent.

THE SOLUTION

As shown in the below screenshots, the tool – accessible at wakefield.visgov.com – has three sections: **revenues**, which shows funds coming into the Town; **expenses**, which shows funds leaving the town; and **funds & reserves** which shows funds on hand in various accounts held by the Town. This interactive method of looking at the budget (including a per taxpayer calculation) is critical for informed transparency and building trust in government.

THE RESULTS

See the Wakefield budget

Government budgets can be tough to understand, but now the Town of Wakefield, Massachusetts is providing the next generation of accessibility in financial information that allows citizens to view, engage with, and discuss.

Wakefield residents, see where your tax dollars go:

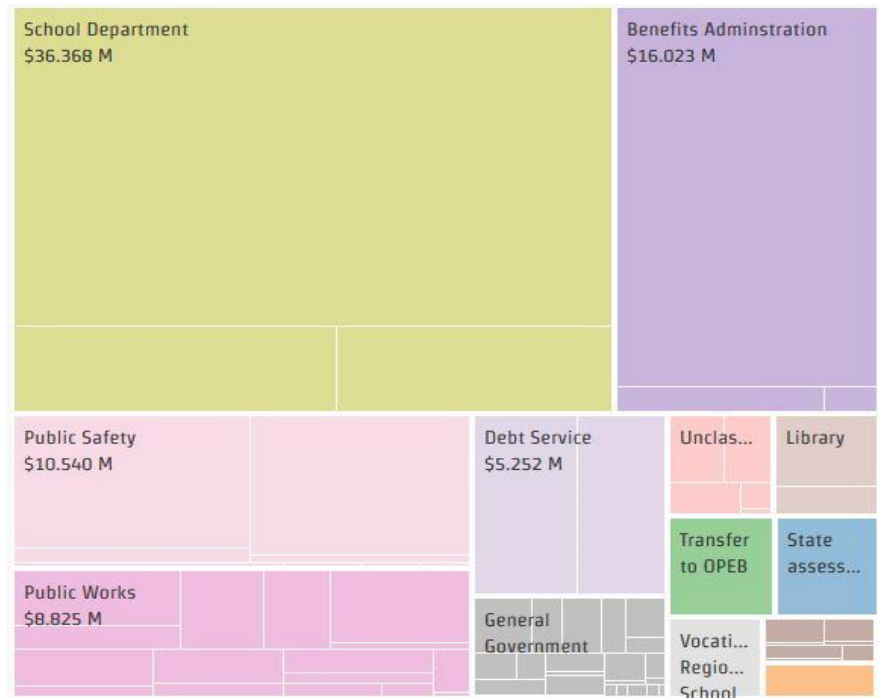
\$ [Start](#)

Revenues

\$88.931 M + 2.67%
in 2017. compared to previous year

\$81.481 M
5-Year Average 2013-2017

[Town of Wakefield](#)
is the data source for this entry.



Source: <http://wakefield.visgov.com> – accessed on July 11, 2017

"Transparency builds trust and we strive to provide the public as much transparency as possible."

Steve Maio, Wakefield Town Administrator