LOCAL GOVERNMENT

8 Ways Technology Can Improve Local Government Transparency

📷 Four friend hands texting in their smart phones in the street with a blurred background

If you're reading this article, you might be wondering how you can engage the citizens in your municipality in such a technology-driven world. Is there some sort of local government transparency "code" to follow? That's a great question! To answer it, we've identified eight of the most important technologies that can improve your local government's transparency.

Now, you may already be doing something on this list—but our hope is that through this government transparency index, you'll come across a new idea or suggestion that will help you take your municipality (and level of transparency) to the next level. Let's take a look!

1. Online Citizen Engagement

Technology has made it easier than ever for citizens to participate in open discussions with municipal leaders. If a citizen is able to call in and ask the mayor a question online while that citizen is at home after hours for example, that will save them a great deal of time and effort.

There are a couple of technology solutions out there that make doing this easier. Open Town Hall from Peak Democracy, for example, offers several product offerings for municipalities to engage their citizens in this way.

2. Neighborhood Networks

Seattle, Washington, uses a program called My Neighborhood Map. It is an interactive map that allows citizens to find services, see construction or road blocks, look at 911 incident responses, and more.

Nextdoor is another unique network for transparency and citizen engagement. It brands itself as a private social network neighborhood and allows users to create accounts and post classifieds, participate in communication threads, look at crime watches, and more.

Promoting or using these services may get your citizens to be more involved in their communities and help your municipality stay on the leading edge of technology.

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