

A Simple Online Tool To Improve Local Government Transparency



press and media camera ,video photographer on duty in public news coverage event for reporter and mass media communication

There are all kinds of ways to [improve your local government transparency](#). Take social media, for example. Almost every social media tool is free—you just have to commit one team member to manage it and [use it effectively!](#) But while social media offers a platform to spread information and start conversations, you still need a method to assure your citizens that you're addressing the problems your city has. **Enter the community dashboard.**

Below, we're detailing what a community dashboard is, why it's a simple tool to use, why it's so vital to have, and more. Take a look.

What is a community dashboard?

A community dashboard allows you to display municipal metrics and provide explanations of what you're doing to improve in areas that need it. It helps you determine whether you're dropping the ball on [municipal customer service](#), and it gives you an opportunity to tell your citizens that you hear them and you're working on the changes they are eager to see. (To see an example of what each layer of a community dashboard may look like when you're complete, take a look at [this article](#).)

We highly suggest making sure your dashboard is available online—in an accessible and engaging format—so you get a competitive edge with current and potential citizens and businesses. Additionally, this provides you with the opportunity to become a leader in your space in terms of local government transparency and make an impact on the way other cities perceive your strategy. (Note: If you're not ready to get your dashboard up yet, you can share PDFs of your strategy with "Coming Soon" notes on your website. This will increase transparency and create some interest around the dashboard itself.)

What makes it simple?

There are two primary methods used to showcase open government data: a community dashboard or an open data platform. We believe a community dashboard offers citizens a simplified way to understand the numbers and data in context and better understand the changes and trends over time, while an open data platform forces citizens to parse through huge data sets and draw their own conclusions.