



Raise Awareness of Your OhioCheckbook

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Web Landing Page

Governments preparing for the launch of a transparency site have similar objectives; to drive public engagement with their financials, while promoting their initiative in an easy, comprehensible manner. A landing page on your website is a perfect way to achieve these goals. A landing page that lives on your website will allow your constituents searching for financial information to be easily directed to OpenGov and is a great place to highlight why you have implemented OpenGov. There are a few key elements of a landing page that make it effective, navigable, and visually appealing. Below are some suggestions for creating your landing page.

Elements of a Successful Landing Page

I. Explain the Value

The best way to introduce your OhioCheckbook to your constituents is to explain why your organization has partnered with The Treasurer's office and OpenGov. Describe to the visitor what led your administration to partner and what value the platform provides to your organization. A strong endorsement from an administrator or an elected official championing your OhioCheckbook can provide a powerful show of support for transparency at your organization. ***See Appendix A for various examples of introductory language.***

II. Add Visuals

Including images of your OhioCheckbook Report provides an attractive visual on your landing page. Screenshots of your Checkbook are simple to produce in most operating systems, and are an easy, high-value way to add detail to your landing page.

III. Answer Their Questions

OpenGov customers often create designated FAQs sections to highlight popular citizen inquiries such as, "How much does the city spend on overtime salaries for the Police Department?", "How much did the city pay a specific vendor?" or "How much did the city spend on a special project?". Once you have established some FAQs, you can hyperlink each question back to the corresponding graphical answer on your Checkbook.

IV. Explain How it Works

Providing navigational tips for visitors will help them understand how best to navigate through your Checkbook. ***See Appendix B for tips on how to navigate OpenGov.***

V. Brief OpenGov Overview

Many constituents may be unfamiliar with OpenGov and the OhioCheckbook initiative and want to further understand the company that you are partnering with to release your financial data. This approved paragraph can provide that context. ***See Appendix C for a brief OpenGov Company Review.***

VI. Add Hyperlinks

Adding hyperlinks to your OpenGov site at multiple locations on your landing page can help ensure that visitors are directed to your reports. Embedded links within screenshots, FAQs, buttons, and text links are all great ways to ensure your citizens are taken to your Checkbook.

VII. OpenGov Landing Page Examples

OpenGov customers of all sizes have developed great landing pages. Below are links to some of the best examples of Landing Pages for entities using the full OpenGov Platform, in Ohio. Feel free to draw inspiration from these Pages:

- [Huber Heights, OH](#)
- [Monroe, OH](#)
- [Cleveland Heights, OH](#)

Appendix A

Sample Introductory Language:

Example 1:

In an effort to provide a more inclusive and transparent budget, the **[Insert Organization Name]** is pleased to present our OhioCheckbook. The **[Insert Organization Name]** partnered with The Treasurer's office and OpenGov to provide a new web-based financial transparency and intelligence tool that dynamically presents the county's revenues and expenses, from historical trends to line item level details.

By using the OpenGov platform, residents and staff have around-the-clock access and a better presentation of the **[Insert Organization Name]** transactions. **[Insert Organization Name]** is one of the first **[Town, City, County, District]** in the State of **[Insert Home State]** to publicly release its financial data on the OpenGov platform.

Explore **[Insert Organization Name]** to get a feel for a new standard of transparency. For additional context and descriptions of the county's departments and programs, please refer to our Budget Overview online.

Example 2:

There's nothing quite like being able to examine financial data by yourself by viewing charts and graphs or downloading the information into an excel spreadsheet. That's why the **[Insert Organization Name]** has engaged with The Treasurer's office and OpenGov to assist with providing the public an interactive way to learn more about the City's finances. This resource is a part of the **[Insert Organization Name]'s** ongoing effort to enhance transparency and public engagement in city government.

Example 3:

While the **[Insert Organization Name]** has shown its commitment to financial transparency by posting financial documents on our city's website, including the **[Insert Organization Name]** operating budgets, sometimes additional information may be sought out by citizens. Oftentimes that information is most easily understood through interactive charts and graphs.

In an effort to enhance transparency in financial reporting, the **[Insert Organization Name]** is offering an interactive reporting tool that allows citizens to explore **[Insert Organization Name]** budget data online in various graphical formats selected by the user. OpenGov, a California-based company specializing in financial transparency, pioneered this online application. Through this initiative, we hope to strengthen the connection between our local government and our community members.

Appendix B

OpenGov How-to Guide:

OpenGov allows you to explore budget and historical finances in a simple graphical user interface.

- You'll notice the title of the Report you are viewing in the top left corner.
- Select **Filter** to display key menus.

- Use the **Broken Down By** drop-down to specify the category you would like the data organized by in your chart or graph.
- Select the **Filtered By** option to view the data filters. These filters will allow you to select exactly which data you want to include, or exclude, from your graph or chart.
- Use the **Search** function within each filter to find exactly what you are looking for.
- There are four different types of visual representations of the data:
 - A horizontal stacked chart
 - A tree map
 - A bar graph – this view is unique because if you click on the year, you can drill in to see the data by month
 - A pie chart
- Below any chart or graph, you can view a Table detailing the financial information in the visualization above.
- Use the **Help** drop-down in the top right corner to:
 - View a short *How-to guide* with tips on navigating the checkbook.
 - Recall the *Welcome Message*
 - View *Multi-Fund Accounting 101* with basic information on multi-fund accounting.
 - *Contact* the administrators of the account.
- Use the **Export** drop-down in the top right corner to:
 - Download a spreadsheet as a .csv file.
- The **Share** menu allows you to share your current report view using email or social media.

For additional information on OpenGov and to access education materials, please visit:
www.opengov.com/resources

Appendix C

OpenGov Company Overview:

OpenGov transforms the way the world analyzes and allocates public money. With more than 850 government customers in 46 states, and a rapidly expanding network, OpenGov is the market leader in cloud-based financial intelligence, budgeting, and transparency for government. The OpenGov platform transforms government financial data into intuitive, interactive visualizations for both internal government users and citizens. OpenGov technology empowers administrators to make better policy decisions by measuring budget to actual expenditures, comparing data across departments and other governments and streamlining the budgeting process. Founded in 2012 with headquarters in Silicon Valley, OpenGov works with leading governments of all sizes including Minneapolis, New Haven, CT, and Beaufort, SC. Learn more at www.opengov.com.



Frequently Asked Questions

Your landing page might bring in new visitors and citizens with many questions new to OpenGov and new to government finance. Below we've created a list of FAQs that you can add to your site to aid users.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is OpenGov?

A: OpenGov is a technology company based in Silicon Valley focused on building the most powerful financial intelligence and transparency platform ever created for governments. They are transforming how state and local governments analyze, share and compare their financial data.

Q: What is OhioCheckbook.com?

OhioCheckbook.com is a first-of-its-kind government transparency website, managed by the Treasurer's office, that shows taxpayers exactly how their tax money is being spent. This initiative sets a new national standard for transparency in state government

Q: How do I select the data I want to see?

A: To focus on specific data — like a fund, department, expense type, or any combination — use the menu on the left side panel. The “Broken Down By” drop-down allows you to specify which breakdown you want the graphs and table rows to represent on the graph.

Q: How do I see the actual numbers within the graph?

A: Hover over any area of the graph to see the actual or budgeted amounts for that period. Or, just scroll down to see a table with detailed information below the graph.

Q: Can I see the data in a different graph?

A: In the upper right hand corner, you will see options for the different graphs and tables. There are four graph types: an area graph, an area graph by percentage, a pie graph, and a bar chart. Additionally, there is always a table view below any graph. The table allows you to zoom-in on the detailed financial data selected in the chart or graph above.

Q: Why are there sometimes spikes in one year?

A: In reviewing multiple years of data, you may see "spikes" in the individual years; this can be due to unexpected expenses, such as a hard winter, equipment failure, a capital project, or a specific event that required additional funds. You can drill-down into our OpenGov platform to learn more about where exactly those expense are categorized.

Q: How do I learn more about government accounting?

A: Use the Help menu on the top right corner to navigate to the “Multi-fund Accounting guide” primer to learn more about multi-fund accounting.

Q: I have a question. How do I contact my organization?

A: Use the Help menu on the top right corner to navigate to the “Contact” option to send a message to your organization.



Social Media

Social media is one of the most effective ways to inform and engage the public about the new tool now available to them to better access and understand your finances. To help you get started, we have included a few suggestions and best practices below.

Social Media Tips

Advertise Your Landing Page through Social Media:

A great way to draw citizens to your Landing Page is by making information accessible on citizen-friendly social media platforms. Use the “Share” menu to easily post relevant financial information to Facebook or Twitter, or even embed links to your organization’s Facebook and Twitter accounts directly on your Landing Page, allowing users to post and comment on your financial initiatives.

Remember to include our handle @opengovinc on Twitter, or tag us on Facebook so we can retweet and share. Use relevant hashtags including **#transparency** **#[yourcity]** and **#LocalGov** to connect with other governments and thought leaders on the topic and stimulate discussion.

Connect with us! We’re always on the lookout for posts from our partners to amplify and support.

Below are the OpenGov social channels.

- OpenGov Blog: <http://opengov.com/blog/>
- OpenGov Twitter: [@OpenGovInc](https://twitter.com/OpenGovInc)
- OpenGov Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/opengovinc>
- OpenGov LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/opengov-inc>

FACEBOOK:

Use your Facebook page to inform the public of your new OpenGov platform. Tag (or @) OpenGovInc in your post (so we can share). Photos increase visibility and engagement, so remember to include an image.

Examples:

- “We’ve launched a budget #transparency platform powered by @OpenGovInc that makes it easy to explore how your tax dollars are spent <link to your press release, news post or your OpenGov portal URL> <photo>
- “Dive into [City Name]’s finances and [X] years of spending with our new financial #transparency platform” <link to your press release, news post or your OpenGov portal URL> <photo>
- *On a regular basis, you may consider posts highlighting frequently asked questions (“Saved Views”) from your constituents or interesting observations from the budget.*
- “Curious about how much we’re spending to improve and maintain the city’s parks? Visit <your OpenGov platform URL> to find out.

TWITTER:

Tweet about the launch of your OpenGov platform and include relevant hashtags when appropriate. A best practice tweet that uses your handle, our handle (@OpenGovInc) (so we can re-tweet) and a link (either to your blog post or OpenGov portal) to urge people to visit would look like this:

- “Explore X years of [Name] finances with the launch of our @opengovinc financial #transparency platform>> [LINK]”
- “We’ve teamed up with @OpenGovInc to provide instant access to #[Name]’s finances <link to your press release, news post or your OpenGov portal URL> <photo>”



Reports, Newsletters & Other Ways to Share

Internal reports and newsletters to your community serve as a means of communications about the functions of your Government. As with any important release or news coming from your Government, we encourage you to include the link to your OhioCheckbook in pertinent reports and newsletters.

I. Every URL on the OpenGov platform is unique, providing a specific web in your staff reports is a simple to way to remind your broader team about the platform, and share specific information with them in a visual and easy to comprehend manner.

As an example – If the City of Huber Heights, Ohio was to share how much money the City has spent per vendor for the purchase of Road Salt in the past ten years - they would use this URL: [https://huberheightsoh.opengov.com/data#/1320/query=13A268EBC6ABE565141574FA5ED9CD2B&isVisible=1&breakdown=paid_to&showBy= sum&graphType=bar](https://huberheightsoh.opengov.com/data#/1320/query=13A268EBC6ABE565141574FA5ED9CD2B&isVisible=1&breakdown=paid_to&showBy=sum&graphType=bar)

This link was created by clicking navigating through their Checkbook and following this progression: Streets > Broken Down By “Object” > Selecting “Salt” > Broken Down by “Name” – and then Copying & Pasting the URL. This URL will never change, even if this city adds new data to their Checkbook.

II. Including the link to specific views of your Checkbook when preparing documents to report out to your council, such as fiscal impact reports, council or trustee pre-read materials, or monthly newsletters, will provide the reader of your reports with a clear visual representation of the numbers as they are updated within the platform.

We encourage you to use a service such as bit.ly or the Google URL shortener (goo.gl) to parse your link down to a smaller format, so that they look cleaner in any official documents. These services are free and secure, and will display a shortened link that you can copy and paste into any report for a clean presentation.

III. Requests to your city for information about how finances are being allocated, should include a link to the view within your Checkbook that answers the specific inquiry. Providing this unique URL will allow the person who has submitted a request for information to not only view the representation of that data in that moment, but also revisit that specific data set in the future.

IV. As a Finance Director, Treasurer or other member of staff responsible for dealing with the finances of your community we encourage you to including the link to your Checkbook in your email signature. Sharing the link in this way will send the message that the community has fully embraced financial transparency, raise awareness about the project, and encourage individuals outside of the organization to utilize your Checkbook.