



## FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY TOOL GUIDE

### **Q: What is the OpenGov platform?**

A: OpenGov is a financial transparency platform which displays government finances over a multi-year period. The default view displays usually displays expenses broken down by department.

### **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 “By” drop-down allows you to specify which breakdown you want the graphs and table rows to represent on the graph. You can analyze the expense and revenues data by fund, department, or type.

### **Q: Can I select more than fund or departments?**

A. Yes. Use the Data Filter on the left side panel to make specific selections within the data. The Data Filter shows you the hierarchical relationships of Funds, Departments, and Account Types. You'll notice the title of the graph you are viewing on top along with the account type selector. You can use the filter to see the data of most interest to you.

### **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.

### **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 five graph types overall: an area graph, an area graph by percentage, a line graph, a pie graph, and a bar chart. There is also always a table view below any chart or 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 site to learn more about what exactly those expense or revenues are categorized.

### **Q: Can I save the data I am looking at?**

A. Yes, there are Share and Download buttons in the upper right corner. You can share any view on a

social network or by email. There are also options to download the displayed data in .csv spreadsheet and .png image formats.

**Q: How do I learn more about government accounting?**

A: Use the Help menu on the top right corner to navigate to the “Budget 101” primer to learn more about multi-fund accounting.

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

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

**OTHER TIPS**

**Navigation Tip for Citizens & Staff**

- OpenGov allows you to explore budget and historical finances in a simple graphical user interface.
- You'll notice the title of the chart or graph you are viewing in the top right corner.
- You can use the **Show** drop-down to see the data that is of most interest to you.
- Use the **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 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 five different types of visual representations of the data:
  - A **stacked percentage graph** to see percentage changes over time
  - A **stacked line graph** to visualize overall trends over time.
  - A **line graph** overlaying each trend over time.
  - A **pie chart** to view percentage breakdowns by year.
  - A **bar chart** comparing trends and percentage breakdowns over time.
- 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 platform.
  - Recall the **Welcome Screen**.
  - View a short **Budget 101** primer with basic information on multi-fund accounting.
  - **Contact** the administrators of the account.

- Use the **Share** drop-down in the top right corner to:
  - Share your customized graph or chart through social media.
  - Send a link to your customized graph or chart through email.
- Use the **Download** drop-down in the top right corner to:
  - Download an image of the graph or table as a .png file.
  - Download a spreadsheet as a .csv file.