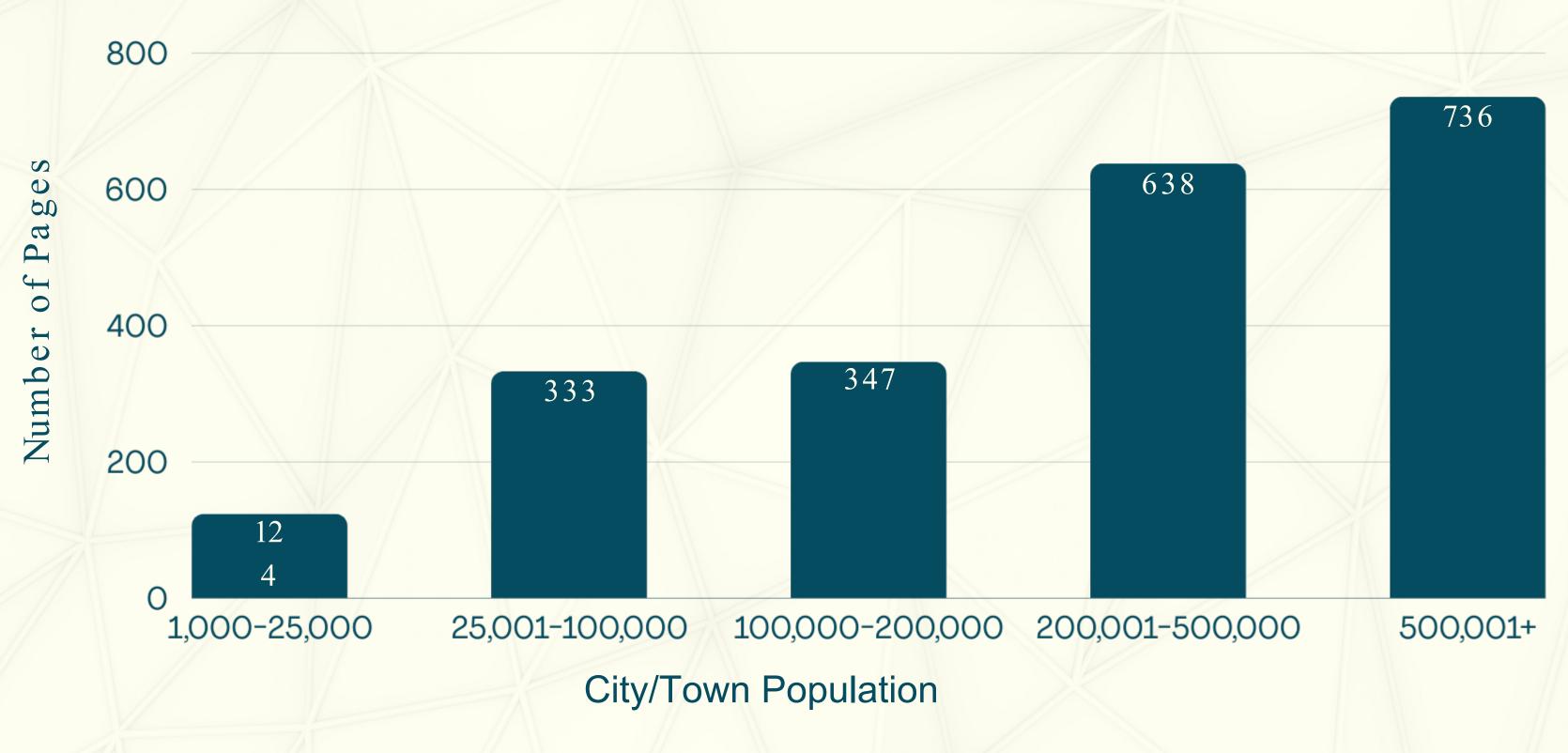
BOKSARE BORING!

Exploring the Art of Budget Communication

John Thomson I Town of Northlake

AREVIEW OF BUDGETBOOKS

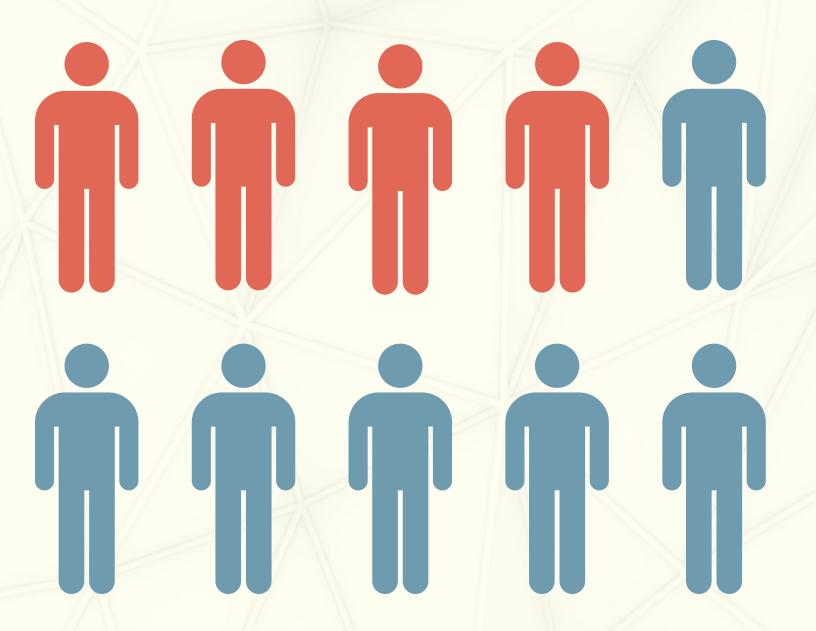
Average Number of Pages for Texas Local Government Budget Books



^{*} Data is a random sample from a population data set of 1,163 Texas towns and cities subdivided by population

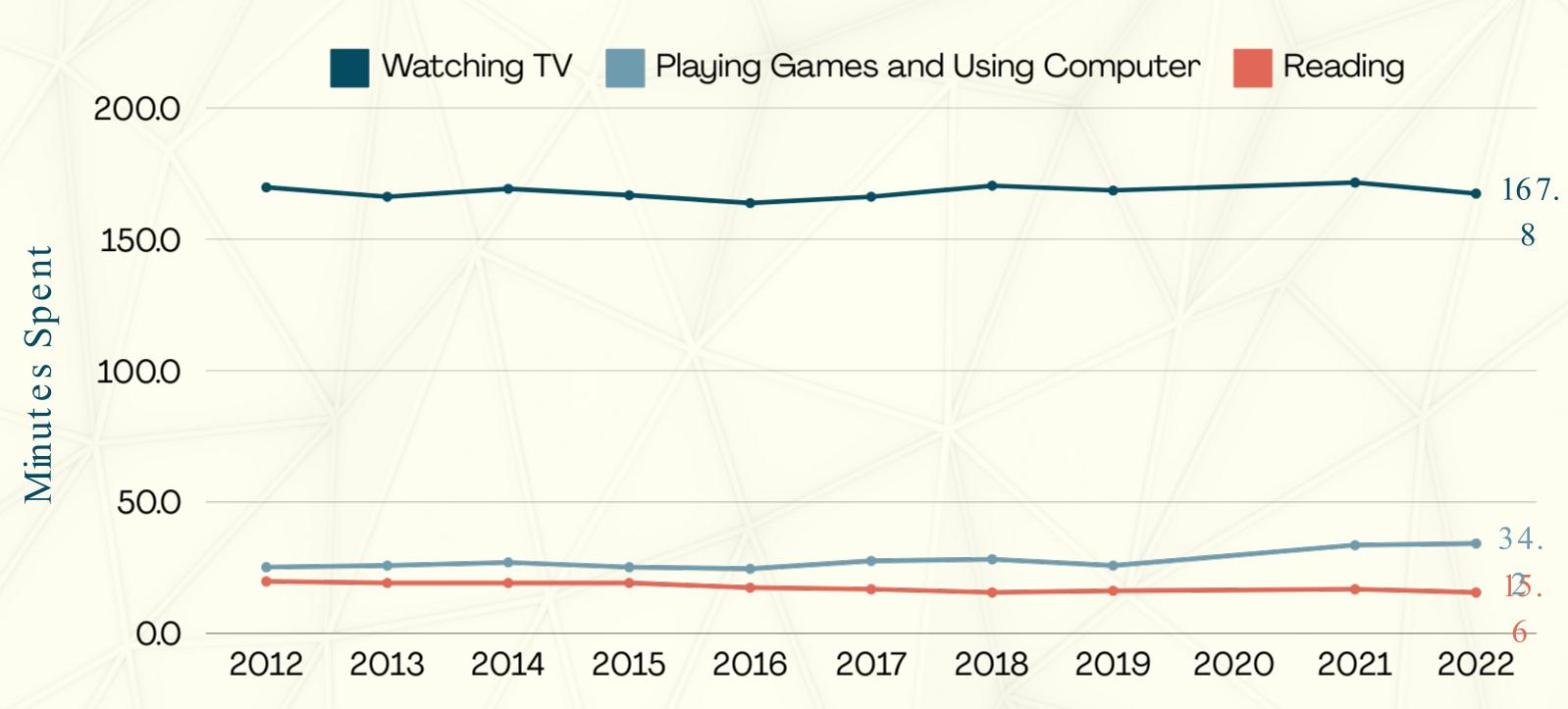
4 out of 10

Americans read or listened to 0 books in 2023.



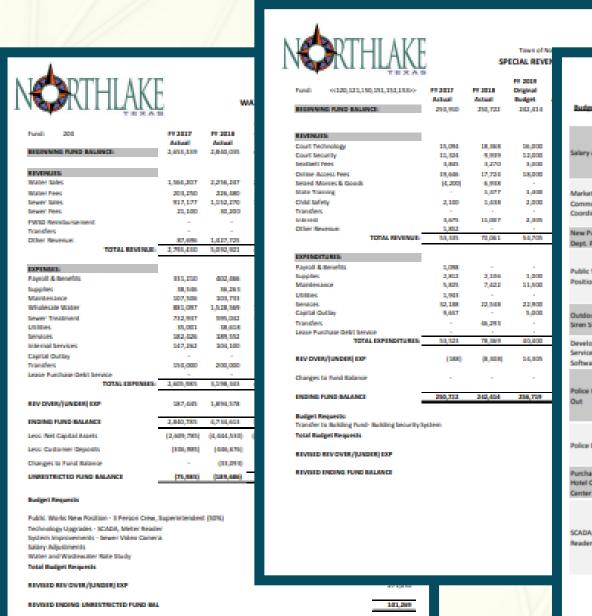
Reading Is Not Common





Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Unlikely to Read This



Budgetary Request	Description	Fund	Costs	Fiscal Year FY19 FY20	
Salary Adjustments	All salaries adjusted to be at 50% of market pay range, to improve recruitment and increase retention	General Fund, HOT Fund, EDC Fund, CDC Fund, and Water & Wastewater Fund	\$ 190,116	x	×
Marketing and Communications Coordinator Position	This position will assist Town staff with media relations, social media, newsletters, promoting Town activities, and branding	25% Split Between General Fund, EDC Fund, CDC Fund, and HOT Fund	\$ 91,520	×	×
New Public Safety Dept. Positions	Public Safety Officer, Captain, and Patrol Officer	General Fund	\$ 323,003	x	x
Public Works Positions	Superintendent, Crew Leader, Equipment Operator, and Maintenance Worker	50% Split Between General Fund Water & Wastewater Fund	\$ 359,582	×	x x x
Outdoor Warning Siren System	These resources will allow for a needs assessment to determine spacing, location, and purchasing of system	General Fund	\$ 50,000	x	×
Development Services Tracking Software	Software increases operational efficiency, thereby delaying need for additional development staff	General Fund	\$ 38,000	x x	
Police Offices Finish Out	One-time transfer for finishing and furnishing of new public safety offices	General Fund to TechnologyServices Fund & Building Services Fund	\$ 650,000	×	
Police Building Lease	Cost associated with leasing public safety office space	Transfer from General Fund to Building Services Fund	\$ 129,030	x	
Purchase of Land for Hotel Conference Center	Land to be purchased for the construction of Convention Center, hotel, and retail facility	Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) Fund	TBD	x	x x
SCADA, Meter Reader	SCADA will allow remote monitoring and controlling of Town water and sewer systems; and a second meter reader will allow all water meters to be read in one day, simplifying the water billing process thereby avoiding the hiring of additional staff	Water & Wastewater Fund	\$ 47,900	×	×

Town of Florer Mound, Trees. FY 2020-2004 Adopted Budget

Improvement Program is usually completed by Town staff with significant input from the Town Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and other citizen advisory boards, and the Town Engineer. Upon completion of this review process, a recommended Five-Year Capital improvement Program is submitted to the Town Council for adoption.

The ultimate objective of this process is the development of a practical Five-Year Capital Improvement Program that is, both financially possible and acceptable to the

ch fiscal year, the Capital Improvement rent process starts over Priorities may be and expenditures added to the Capital others which are no longer justified are added to replace the year just completed, an will always cover a full fire-year period. Capital Improvement Program is always thereof actually committed as a part of the

Densting Budget

provement Program and capital budget, an one will affect annual operations and the Such an evaluation for recurrent capital or vehicles is usually not difficult, as the litures generally represent a relatively who annual operating budget and can be rating funds.

ent capital expenditures on the Town's are difficult, as such expenditures generally the fiscal capacity of the Town's annual uch non-recurrent capital expenditures is at stability of the Town for the following

longer life, capital expenditures for longobe financed on a 'pay-as-you-use' basis that coincides with the projected life of the

say require a consistent application of

of investments in long-range capital

otal improvements are often irreversible, anagerial costs to the Town. a significantly after or influence the Town's

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Town of Pinner Mayor, Team FY 2019-2024 Adapted Budget

38

BUDGET BOOKS ARE GREAT BECAUSE...



- Provide budget data
- Strategic direction & plan
- Identify community priorities
- Can provide transparency and accountability for the right audience

BUDGET BOOKS ARE NOT SO GREAT BECAUSE...

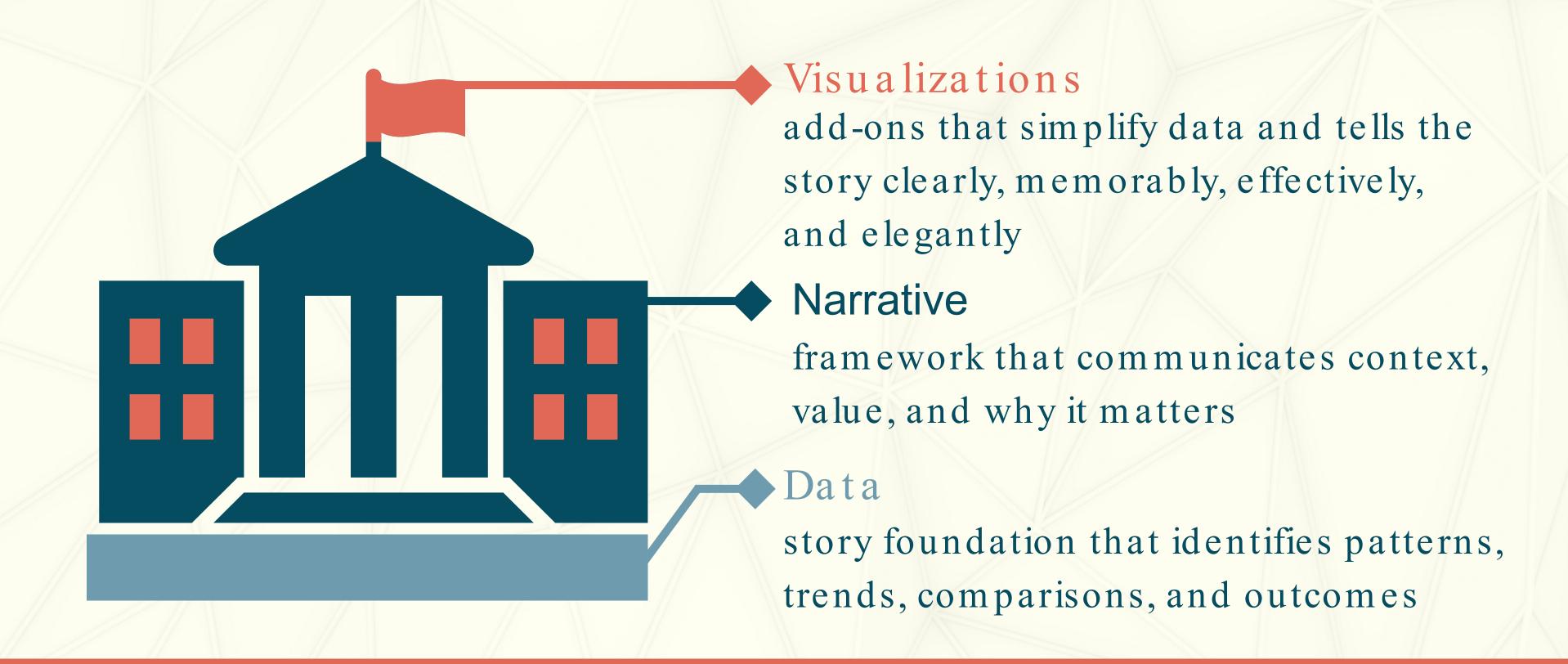


- Complex & lengthy
- Difficult to understand & find information
- Lack narrative storytelling
- Amount of information can obscure information and stories for elected officials and public

BUILDING A BUDGETS TORY



3 KEY COMPONENTS OF A BUDGET STORY





Identify the Story in Your Data

Ask questions like:

- What are our goals and what do we want to accomplish?
- What do we want to explain?
- What is the value and how does that value compare?

Look for trends, patterns, correlations, comparisons, and outliers in your data



Know Your Audience

Customize the story and visualizations for your audience Ask questions like:

- Who is this for? Council, public, a committee, etc.
- What information is relevant and meaningful to them?
- Have they heard this before? If so, can I change it to better connect and communicate?



Build Your Story

Describe the context, impact to characters/stakeholders, and any problems or solutions

Ask questions like:

- Who are we talking to?
- Why does this matter?
- What do we want the audience to know?
- How does data support the story and make the point?



Develop Visuals and Content

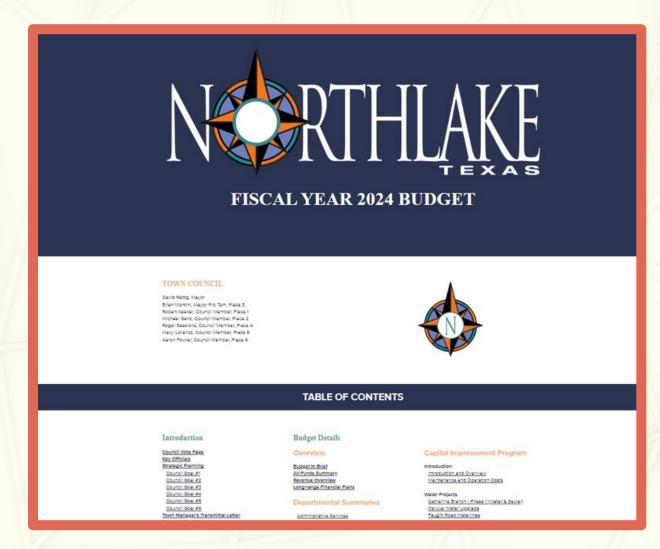
This is how you share your story. Share your story and visuals through:

- Digital Budget Books
- Handouts and Briefs
- Videos
- Digital Engagment Tools

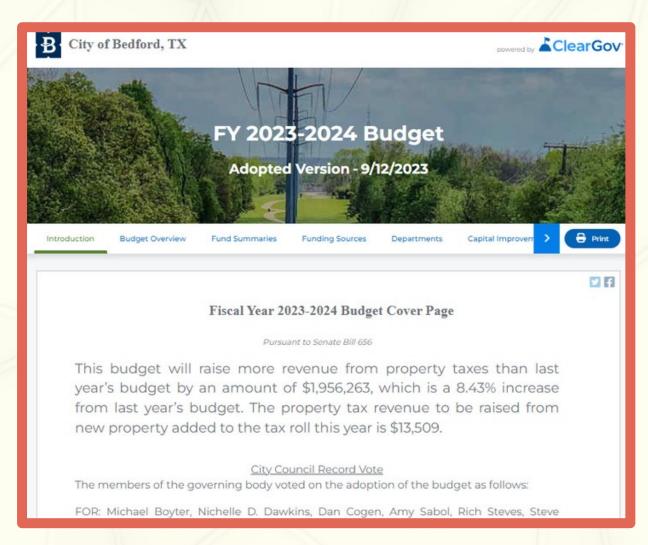
TELLING THE STORY



Similar to traditional budget books, but with interactive charts, updateable and searchable data, and a website like interface



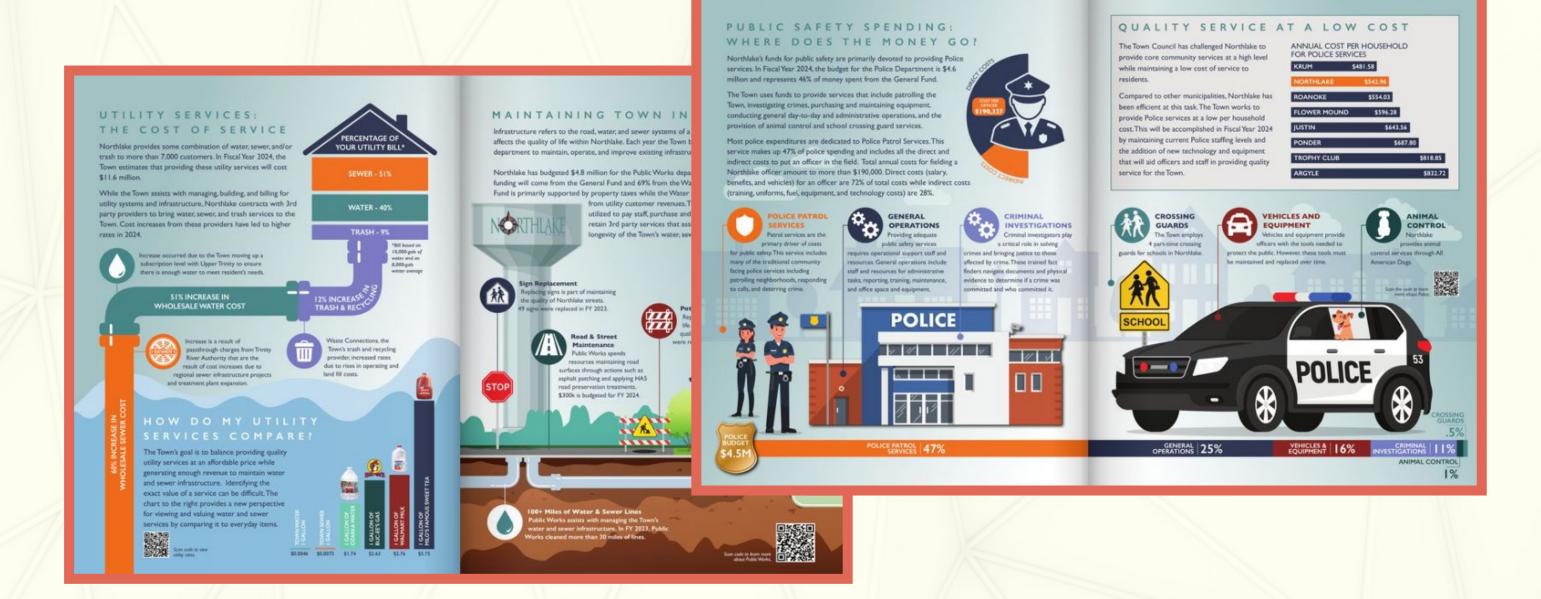
Town of Northlake OpenGov Digital Budget Book



City of Bedford ClearGov Digital Budget Book

Briefs & Handouts

Selectively highlight stories about services and plans that matter to your audience with brief narrative text and custom visualizations, charts, and infographics





Combine audio and visual content to capture audience attention and convey complex messages with engaging content



Round Rock



Flower Mound



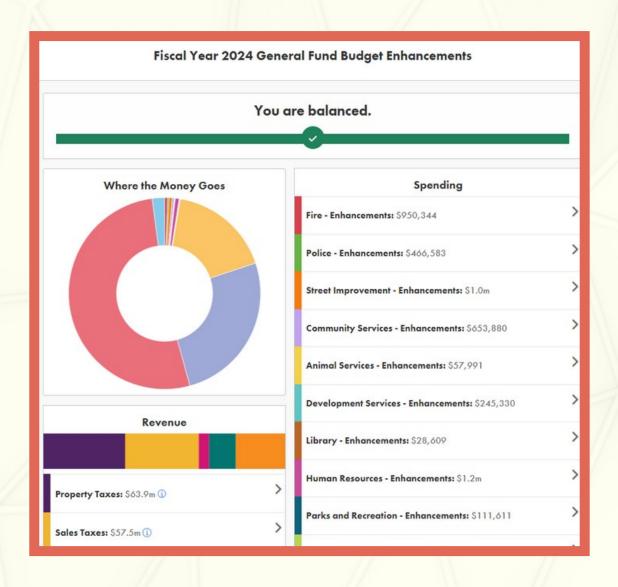
Arlington



Dallas



Explore and identify tools for digital engagement and develop social media plans for sharing your budget stories



City of Denton
Balancing Act



Tools for Story Building

Briefs and Handouts

- Canva
- Adobe Express
- Flip Snack

Charts, Graphs, Infographics

- Excel
- Canva
- Lucid Chart
- Sankey Matic

Digital Budget Tools

- ClearGov
- OpenGov
- Balancing Act

Video Creation

- Adobe Express
- Canva
- Clipchamp
- Video Scribe

QUESTIONS

Contact Information

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