

Budget Transparency and Citizen Engagement

**Leveraging Technology for Better Fiscal Planning and
Constituent Engagement**

Speakers



Chris Adams
President
Balancing Act

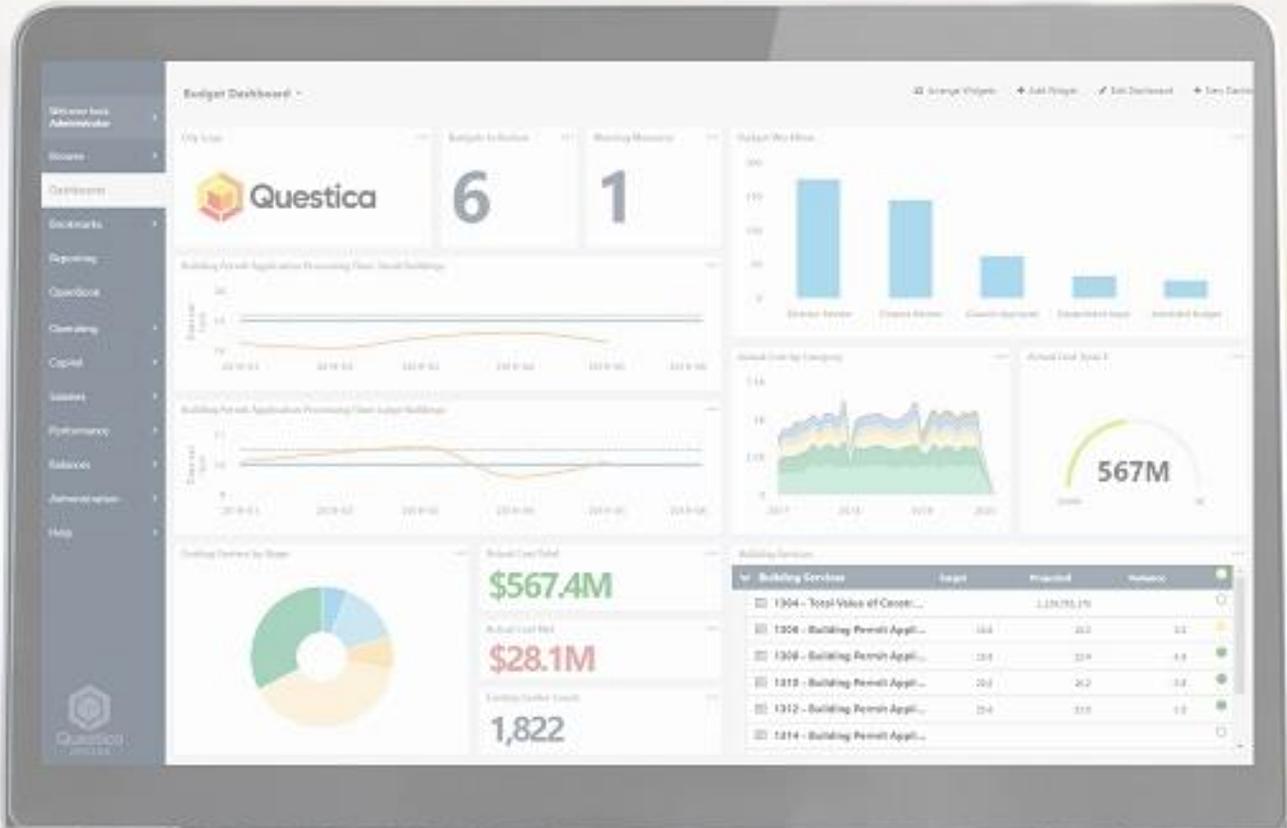


Max Parkinson
Director, Sales
Questica

Agenda

- Transparency and Budgeting
- Citizen Engagement
- Fiscal Accountability
- Q&A

Transparency and Budgeting



A symbiotic relationship:

“Good budgeting is supported by, and in turn supports, the various pillars of modern public governance: transparency, integrity, openness, participation, accountability and a strategic approach to planning and achieving objectives.”

OECD Recommendation on Budgetary Governance



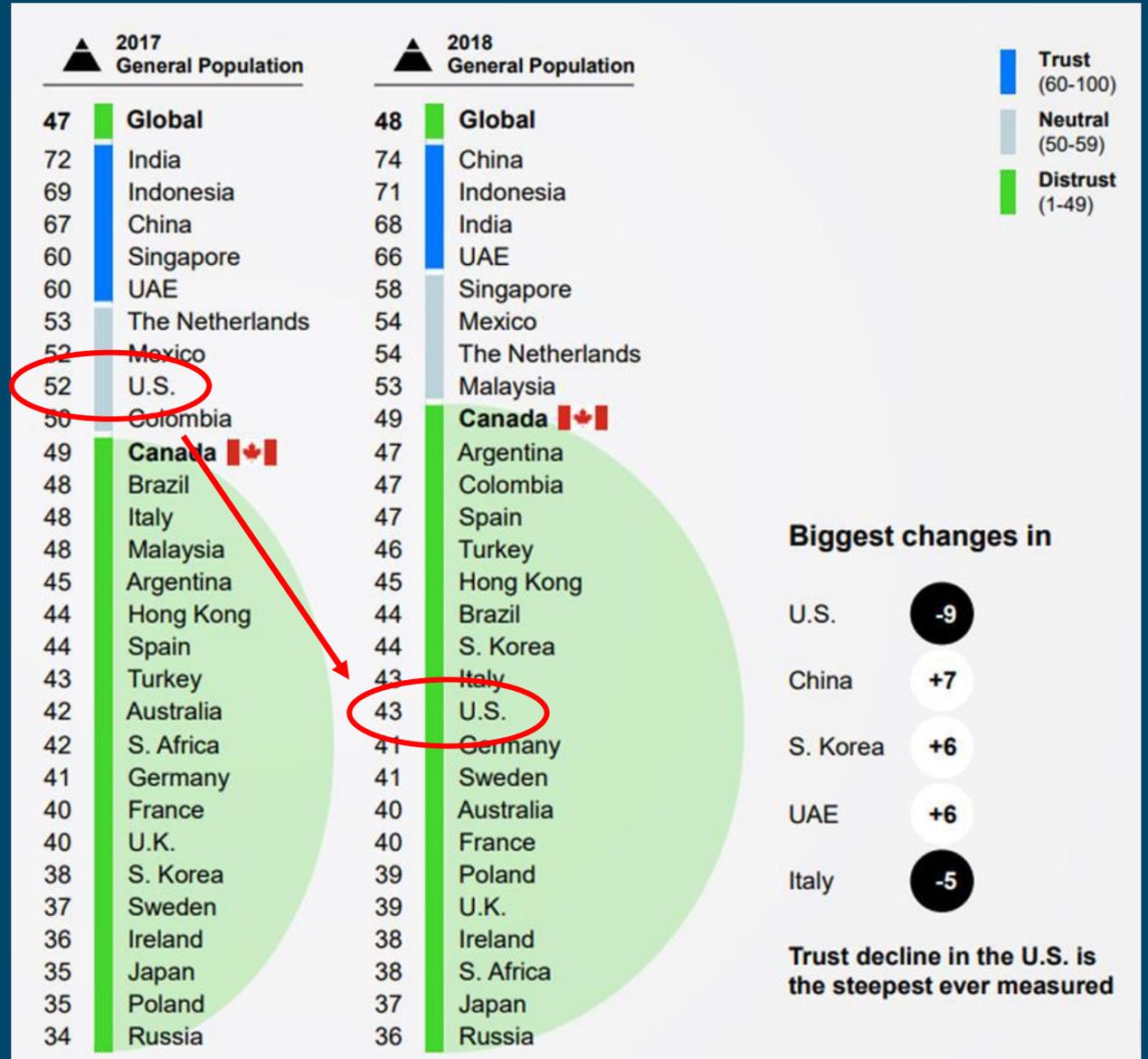
Key Assumptions:

Trust = Good

No Trust = Bad

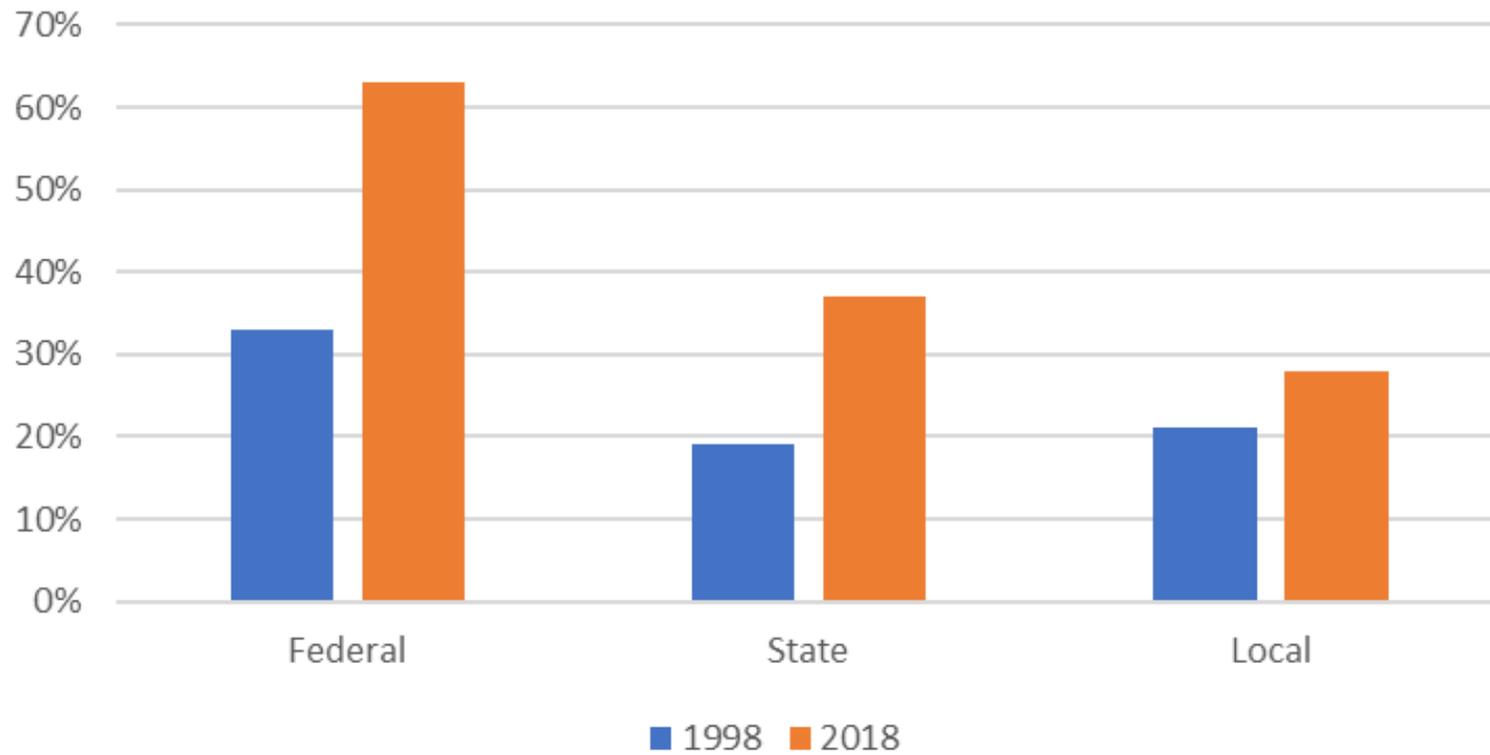
Testing the theory:

Is there a problem?



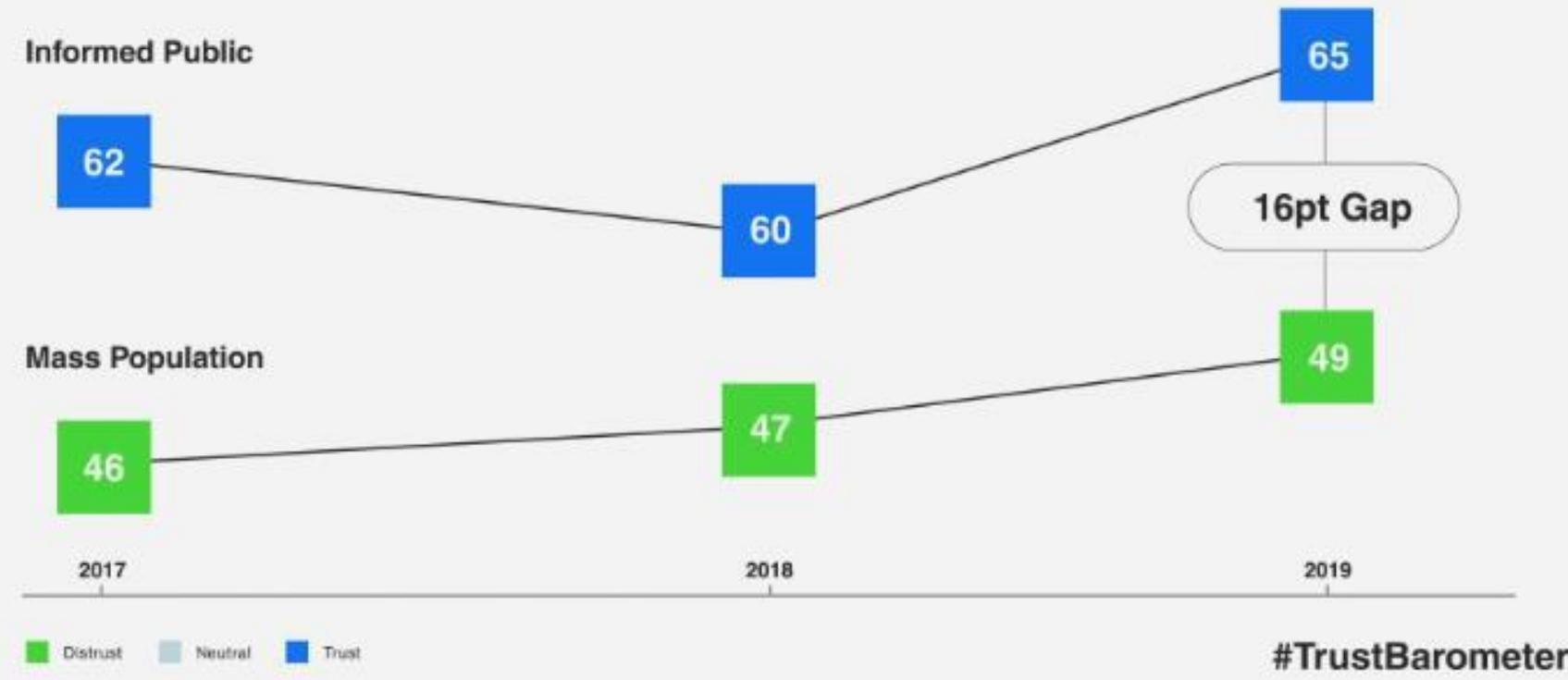
Source: Edelman Trust Barometer. 2018

Distrust in Government



Source: Gallup. 2018

Trust Inequality Returns to Record Highs



Informed Public makes up only 15% of the total population.

Source: Edelman Trust Barometer.
2018

Key Question:

If “Informed = Trust”,
how do we increase the percentage of
“Informed Population?”

1. Make it accessible
2. Make it visual
3. Tell a story
4. Make it interactive
5. Make it social
6. Keep it current

City of Riverside
CIP Project Explorer (Fiscal Years 2018/19 - 2022/23) 161 Projects




WELLS AND ARLANZA SIDEWALK PROJECT

This project proposes to construct sidewalk on one side of the residential streets between Philbin Avenue and Wells Avenue. The Streets included in the project are Babb Avenue, Kent Avenue, Ivanhoe Avenue and Challen Avenue.

Project Status
Construction of this project began in April 2018.

Project Number: 8890

Project Category: Transportation

Status: Has Not Started

Project Type: Bicycle/Pedestrian

Recurring / Ongoing CIP Project: false

Department: Public Works

Timing



Expenses



Year	Federal Surface Trans Program	Gas Tax Funds
2015	\$0	\$0
2016	\$100K	\$0
2017	\$0	\$0
2018	\$1,500K	\$100K

Prior Years Funding
\$1.8M

Total Estimated Project Cost
\$1.8M

Spent as of March 20, 2018
\$89.2K 5%



City of Burlington BUDGET OPEN DATA

The City of Burlington is committed to greater government accountability and financial transparency. This open budget application is designed to display the city's budget data in an accessible, easy-to-understand format using charts, tables and graphs. Take a look around.

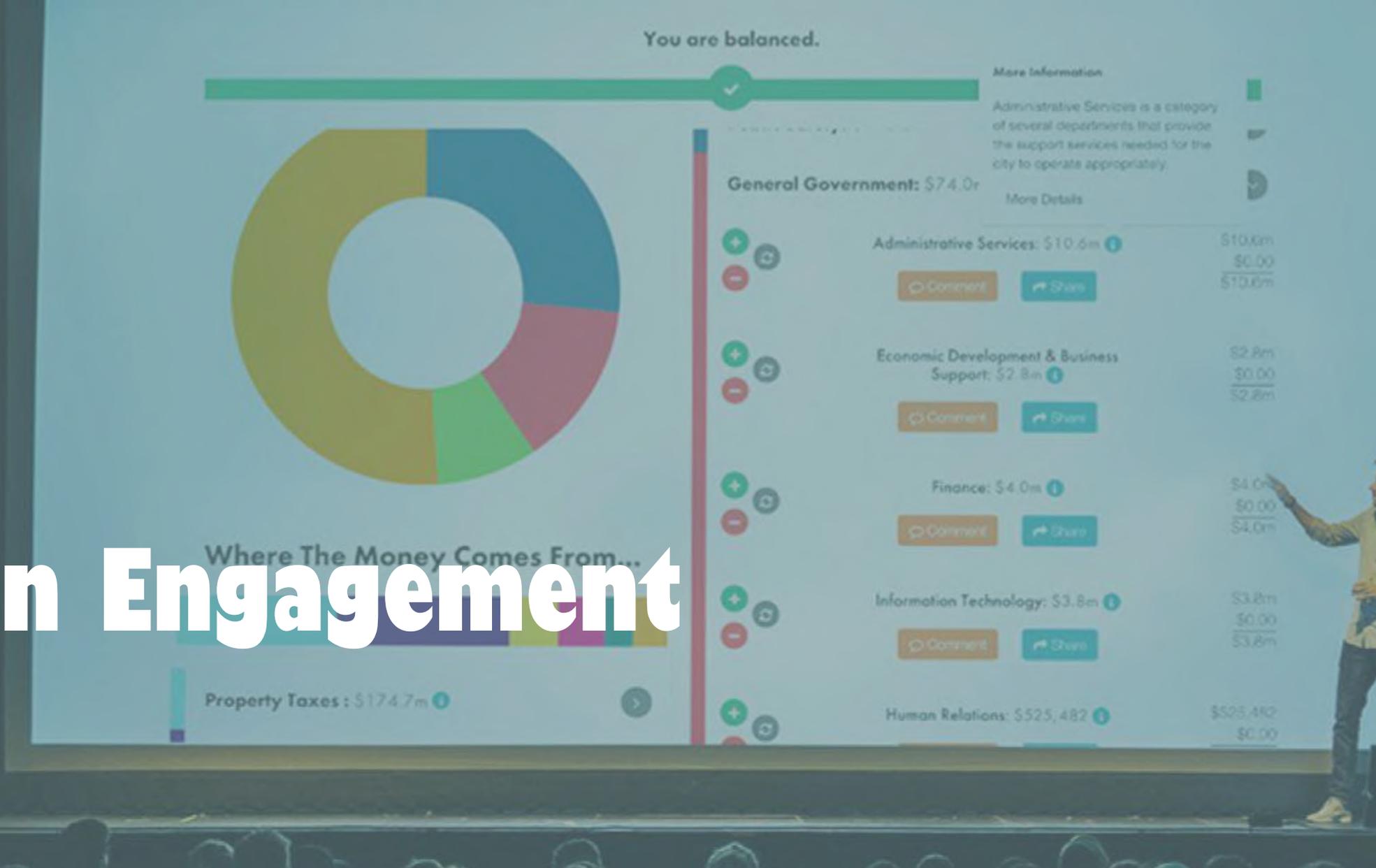
Select a Visualization to Explore

2019 Approved Operating Budget
\$166 Million
 A breakdown of the 2019 Approved Operating Budget by Service.
 Use this visualization to explore the net cost

2019 Approved Capital Budget by Asset Category
\$96.4 Million
 A breakdown of the 2019 Approved Capital Budget by Asset Category, Asset Type and Project.

2019-2028 Approved Capital Budget Projects
333 Projects
 The 2019 - 2028 Approved Capital Budget sums to \$819 million over the ten year capital program and includes 333 projects.

Citizen Engagement



Current Status of Citizen Engagement on the Budget

- PDF's available online
- Budget hearings
- Less formal forums and meetings
- Budget surveys
- Citizen advisory committees
- Visualizations

Traditional View of Public Officials

- Belief that the budget is too complicated for the public to understand
- Minimal public interest = why bother
- Lack of trust that residents would provide responsible input (e.g. only support what they like, cut everything else)
- Conversations about money are hard
- Expect to get beat up by the public, so why not just armor up and ignore the clamor?

Finance Review

OCIATION

THIS ISSUE:

Monitoring Financial
Decisions
[pg. 8]

Smart, Sustainable Cities
[pg. 14]

Technology and Public
Involvement in Budgeting
[pg. 20]

How Games Can Improve
Civic Engagement
[pg. 26]



City of Pittsburgh



The Future: Transparency + Participation

- GFOA is about to release a series of recommendations on the need for two-way, interactive engagement.

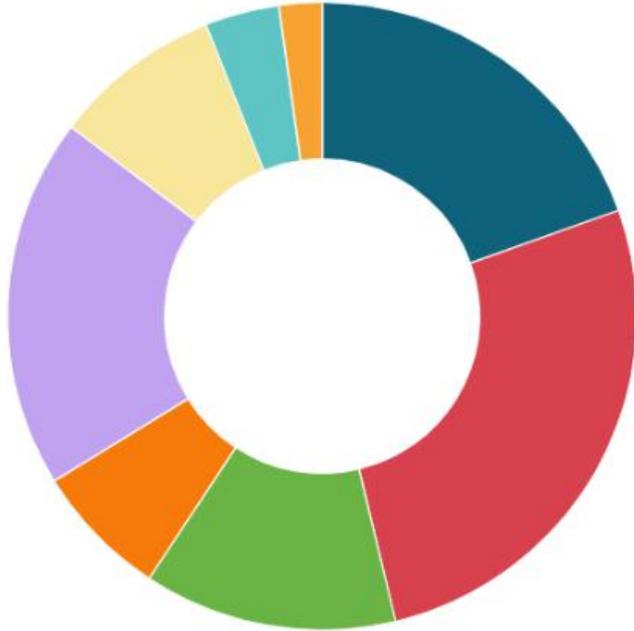
“Transparency is not enough. Thinking that transparency can have deeper impacts without participation is like thinking that you can make friends simply by waving at people from your window...”

(Dr. Paolo de Renzio, Senior Research Fellow for the Open Budget Initiative at the International Budget Partnership)

You are balanced.



Where the Money Goes



Spending

Police Department: \$1.1m ⓘ

Police Operations: \$810,000 ⓘ

+	\$810,000
-	\$0.00
	<hr/> \$810,000

Role of Civilians: \$90,000 ⓘ

	\$90,000
	\$0.00
	<hr/> \$90,000

Should civilians be used to take most police reports instead of sworn officers?

- Continue to use sworn officers ⓘ
- Use civilians where appropriate

[Share](#)

[Comment](#)

Detention: \$225,000 ⓘ

+	\$225,000
-	\$0.00
	<hr/> \$225,000

Benefits of Good Participation

- Participation can create civility
- Participation can create community
- **Participation can solve policymaking and public problems**
 - **Need for tax increase**
 - **Service reduction**
 - **Prioritize services**
 - **Big ticket items like pensions and infrastructure**
 - **Build trust**

Adapted from Tina Nabatchi and Matt Leighninger,
Public Participation for the 21st Century

Meeting Mode



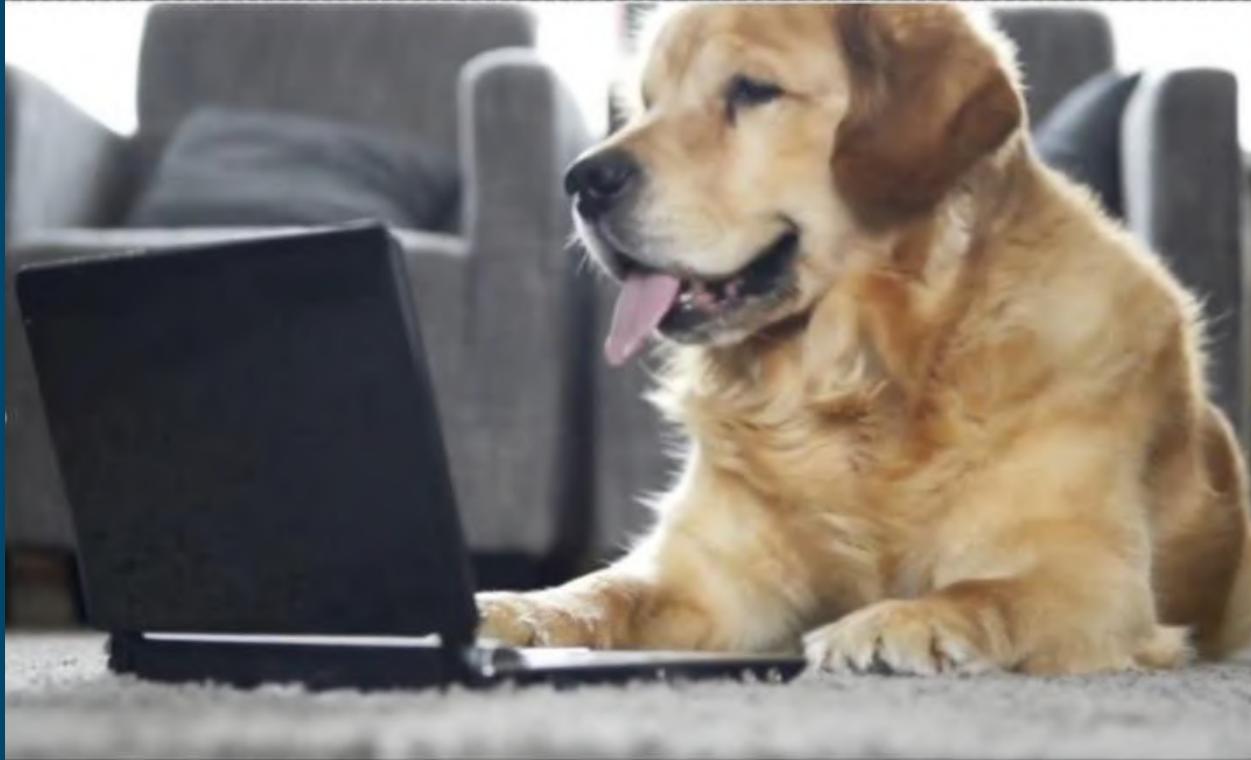
“The amazing thing is that residents are almost silent as they go through the exercise because they are concentrating so hard on making these decisions.”

KCMO Budget Analyst Adam Blom

Who Leads Citizen Engagement on the Budget?

- Most often budget/finance staff
 - *However, in most cases engagement is not their strength*
- Communications/PIO
 - *However, usually need help with content*
- City/County Managers
 - *Can elevate visibility of effort, coordinate among departments*
- Elected officials
 - *Highly effective at publicizing, using tools with citizens*

If this good boy can provide
input, so can you.



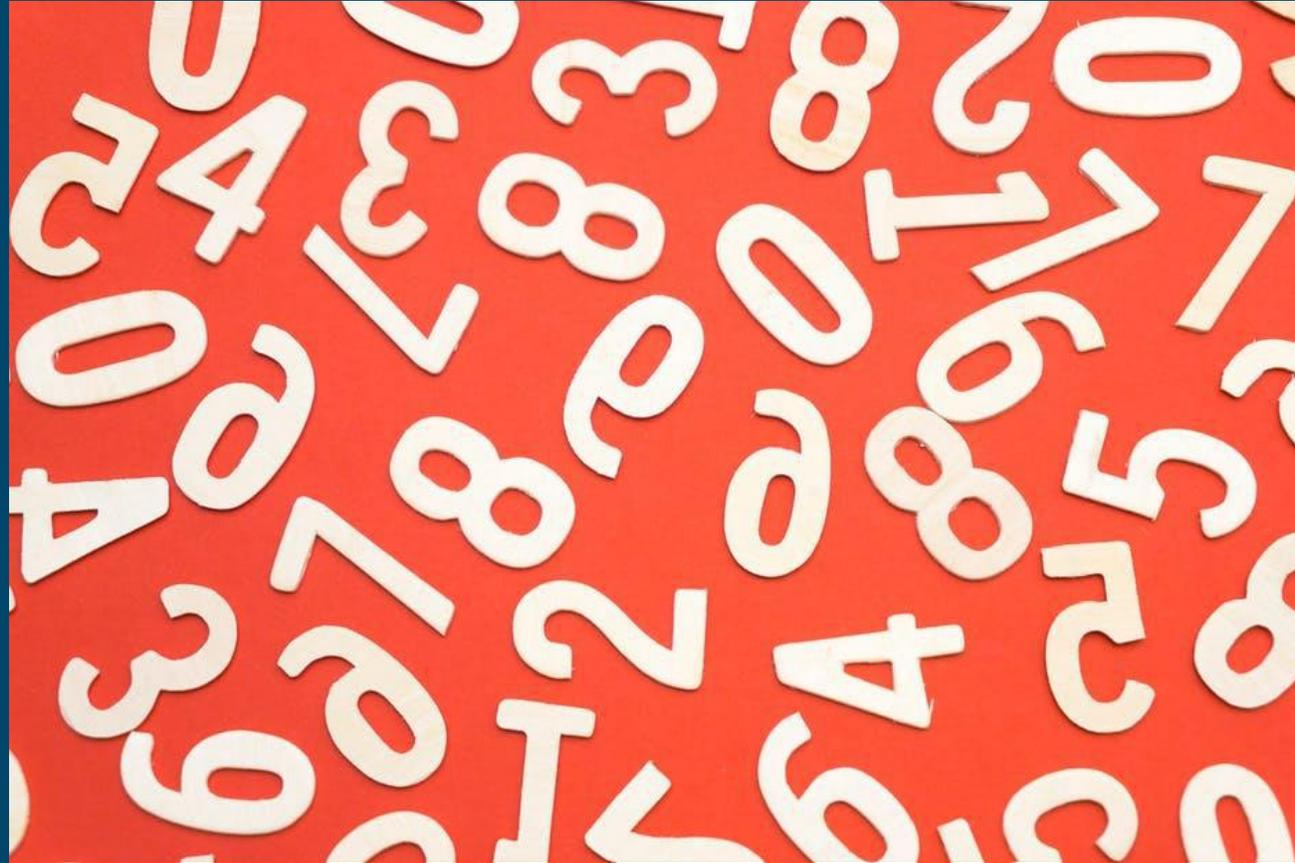
**What are your priorities
for Stillwater's budget?
bit.ly/swokbudget**

YOUR CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER TAX RECEIPT

Affordable Housing	\$1.89
Dedicated Affordable Housing Property Tax Mill	\$0.00
Housing Investment Fund Transfer	\$0.81
Office of Housing and Opportunities for People Everywhere (HOPE)	\$0.18
Social Impact Bond	\$0.90
Capital Projects	\$13.50
Bond Principal and Interest Property Tax Mill	\$0.00
Capital Improvement Projects	\$13.50
Improvement and Maintenance Property Tax Mills	\$0.00
Community Planning and Development	\$8.23
Board of Adjustment for Zoning Appeals	\$0.10
Planning, Permitting, Inspections and Administration of Community Planning & Development Dept	\$8.13
Costs/Legal	\$15.79
Economic Development	\$3.52
Economic Development	\$2.14
Excise and Licenses	\$1.38
Finance	\$33.31
Contingency	\$7.33
Finance/Payments for Public Buildings	\$25.98
Governing	\$2.16

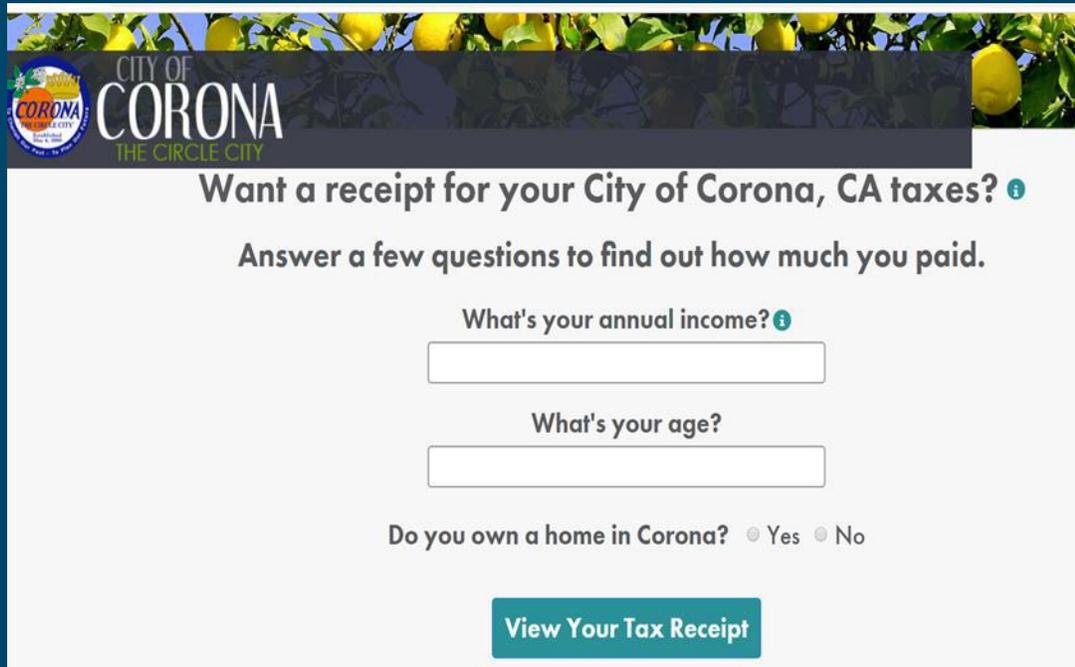
Fiscal Accountability

Counteracting the Fiscal Illusion



Taxpayer Receipt

Corona, California



The screenshot shows the City of Corona website with a form titled "Want a receipt for your City of Corona, CA taxes?". The form asks for the user's annual income and age, and whether they own a home in Corona. A "View Your Tax Receipt" button is at the bottom.

CITY OF CORONA
THE CIRCLE CITY

Want a receipt for your City of Corona, CA taxes? ⓘ

Answer a few questions to find out how much you paid.

What's your annual income? ⓘ

What's your age?

Do you own a home in Corona? Yes No

[View Your Tax Receipt](#)

Norfolk, Virginia



The screenshot shows the Norfolk, Virginia website with a page titled "Balancing Act and Taxpayer Receipt". The page includes a search bar, a navigation menu, and a main content area with text about the city's budget planning process.

GOVERNMENT | BUSINESS | SERVICES | COMMUNITY | ENJOY NORFOLK | HOW DO I

THE CITY OF NORFOLK

Home > Feature Links > Balancing Act

Balancing Act and Taxpayer Receipt

The City of Norfolk has two powerful new tools to gather public input and provide information as it continues with budget planning this winter.

Balancing Act
[Balancing Act](#), an online, interactive workshop, allows residents to share their priorities for the city's budget: what to keep, what to add, where to cut. Share your thoughts from home or on the go.

This year, the city enters its budget preparations facing a \$13.3 million budget gap. The city wants to hear from residents about what programs and services are the most important.

[Balancing Act](#) allows residents to review and choose from some of the same options the city will consider: Cut expenses by reducing personnel or services? Raise revenues by increasing taxes or fees?

The online workshop includes information about city departments and the services they provide, and allows users to see how changes affect different areas of the budget.

- Job Listings
- Payments
- City Council
- Current Council Agenda
- Meeting Agendas & Documents
- Property Information
- Parking
- Help Center



Earning and maintaining citizen trust



Increase community involvement



Understand community needs



Educate citizens

Takeaways

■ #1

Build an effective
technology Ecosystem transparency

■ #2

create data
transparency

■ #3

Improve community
awareness and
engagement on impacts
and outcomes

Questions?

Thank you.

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