10 Things to improve your website... ok more than 10!

LeaAnn Dearman, CPC

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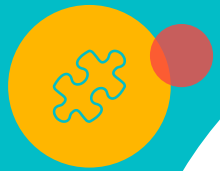


1.

Start with Metrics

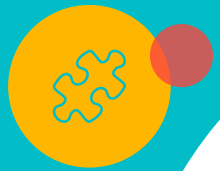
What pages are people visiting and looking for?

200 City Websites in six months

- **How many people visit your website?**
- **What pages do they visit most?**
- **What search terms are they using in your search function?** Do you then employ those same terms?
- **Would a microsite work better for some departments?** First, get baseline data, then pilot a microsite to see if there's more traffic.

USER DRIVEN

is better than department driven



2.

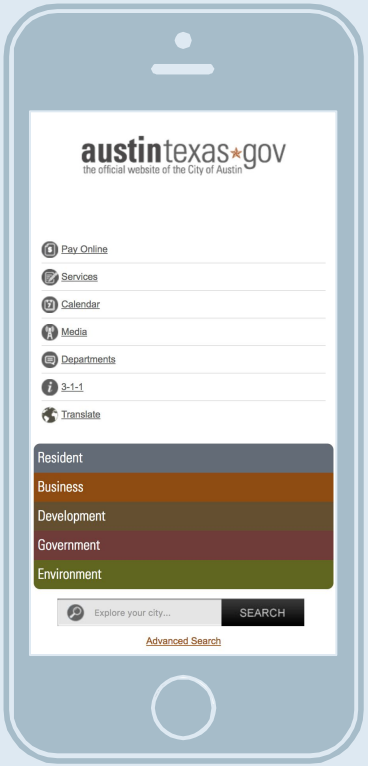
Responsive

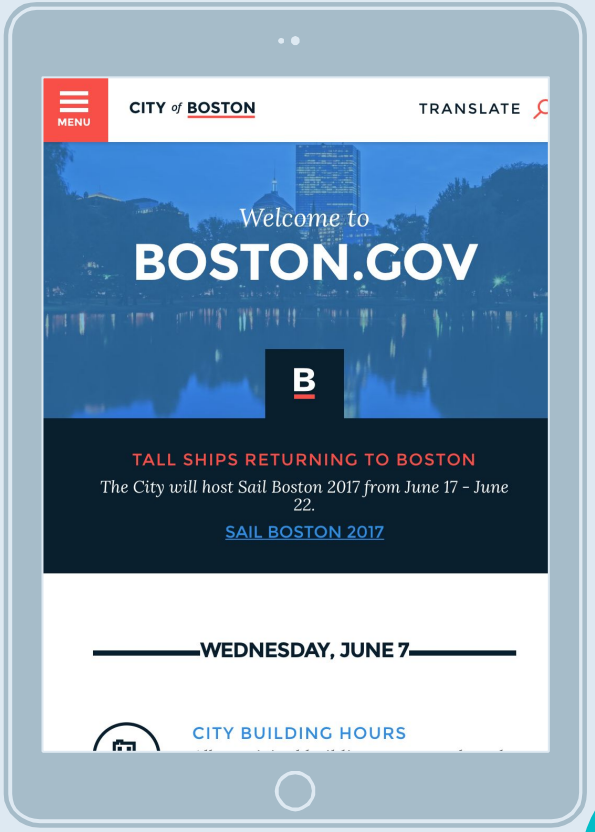
Does your site translate well between devices?

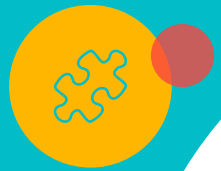
80% of Internet users own a smartphone

Listen to RWD (Responsive Web Design) “Episode tagged ‘government’

responsivewebdesign.com/tag/government



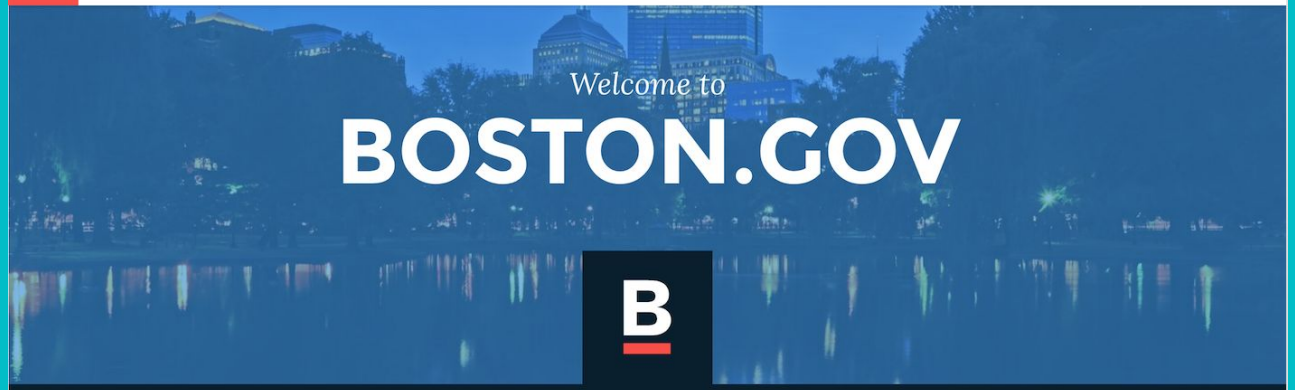




3.

Navigation

Should you rethink the way your site's navigation is set? Should it be stripped down? Should it be topical?



TALL SHIPS RETURNING TO BOSTON

The City will host Sail Boston 2017 from June 17 - June 22.

SAIL BOSTON 2017

THURSDAY, JUNE 1

CITY BUILDING HOURS

All municipal buildings are open based on their regular hours of

TRASH AND RECYCLING

Pickup is delayed in some neighborhoods this week due to the holiday. Please check

PARKING METERS

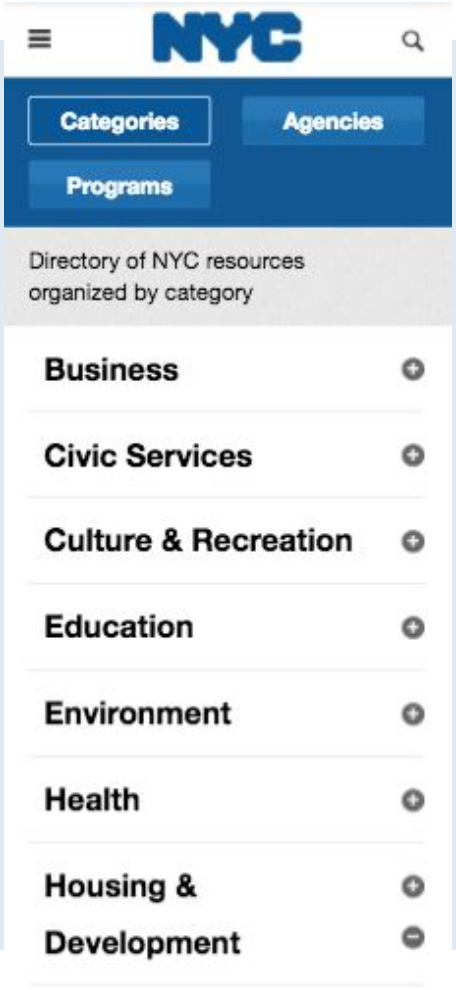
Parking meters are operating normally today.

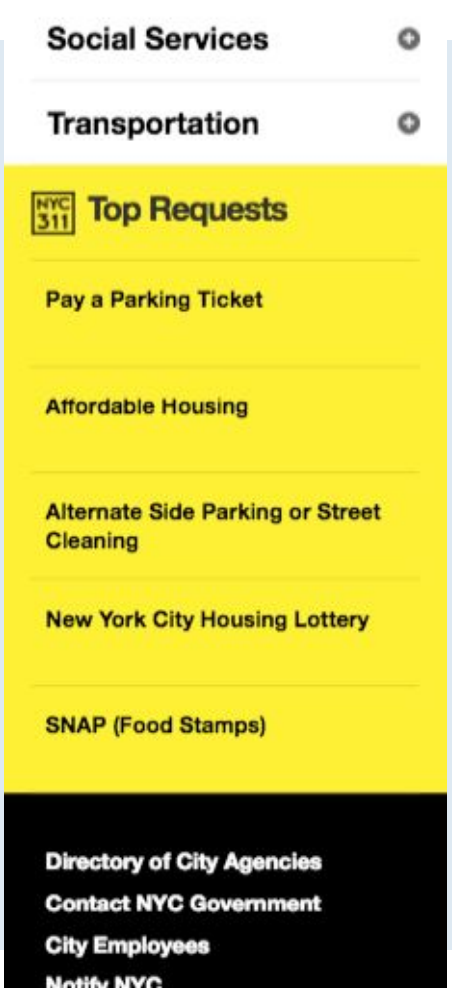
TOW LOT

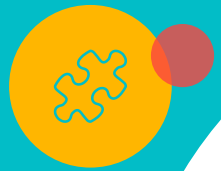
The tow lot is open from 7 a.m. - 11 p.m. Automated kiosks are available 24 hours a day, seven days a

STREET CLEANING

Today is the first Thursday of the month and street cleaning is running


NYC
Categories
Agencies
Programs
Directory of NYC resources organized by category
Business
Civic Services
Culture & Recreation
Education
Environment
Health
Housing & Development


Social Services
Transportation
NYC 311 Top Requests
Pay a Parking Ticket
Affordable Housing
Alternate Side Parking or Street Cleaning
New York City Housing Lottery
SNAP (Food Stamps)
Directory of City Agencies
Contact NYC Government
City Employees
Notify NYC



4.

Citizen Engagement

Can your citizens actually interact with you?

So you have a lot of “likes” on Facebook...

25,592

But can citizens engage with your website content?

Citizen Engagement

Many cities are ceding this important space to the Wild West of Facebook and Twitter. That's like sending the kids to the basement during Thanksgiving dinner, with no monitoring, and hoping the cousins don't injure one another…

Who is listening for your city? How could a digital platform help?

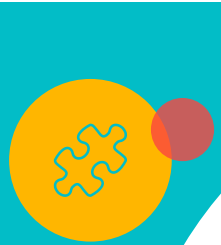
From the homepage of Asheville, NC, which could more ideally include all in one place:

- “Report it” links for concerns, potholes, and more;
- Meeting schedules/agendas, and live streaming links for city meetings;
- “Volunteer for our board” and/or “participate in our survey” links; and
- Other full-bodied engagement information to make it easier for citizens to get involved.

5.

Your Website Vendor

What type of relationship do you have with your CMS?



The process is either very easy… or very difficult…

vision

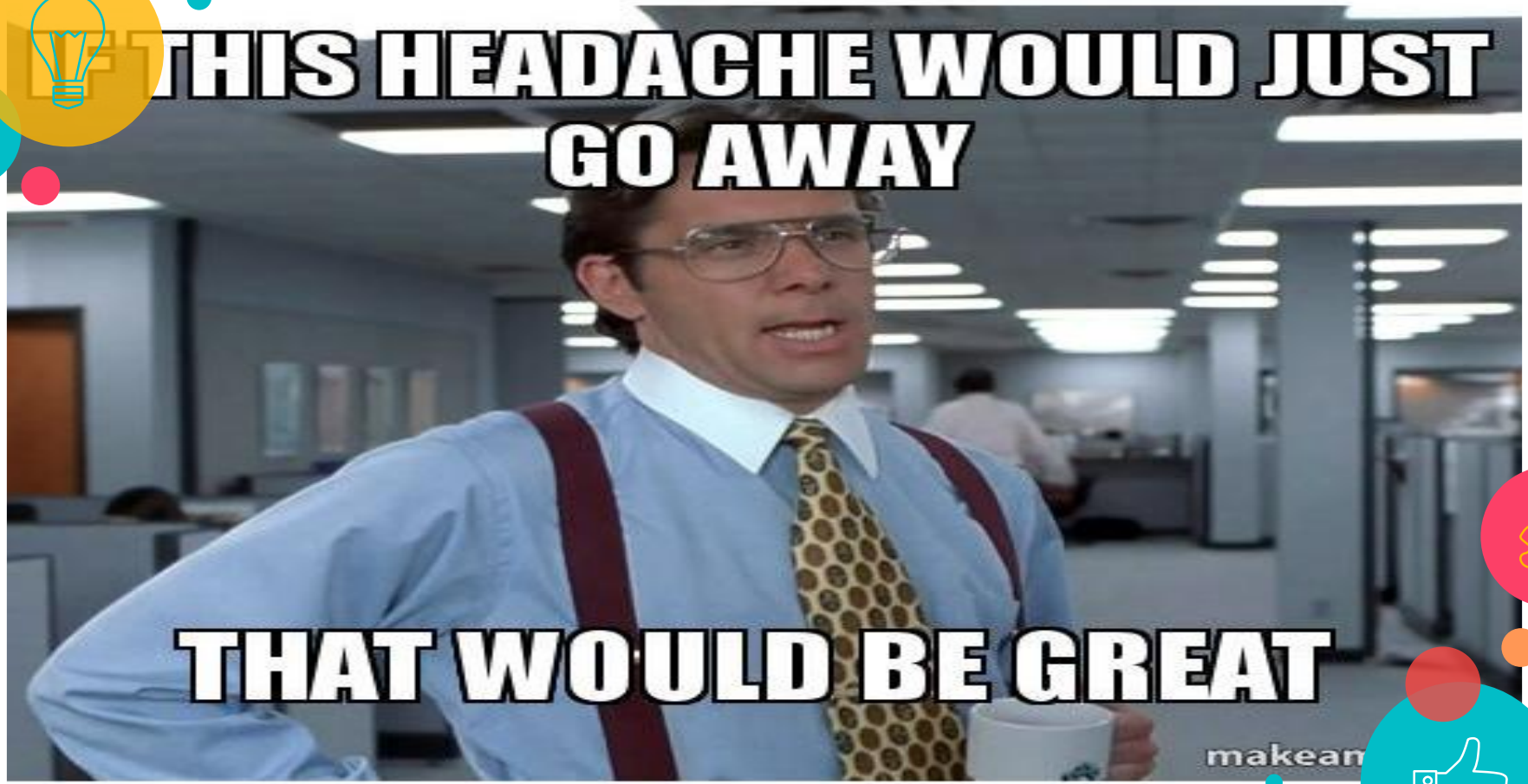
civicplus

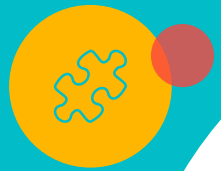
govoffice

6.

CMS Training

Speaking of CMS, have you cross trained department staff?


THIS HEADACHE WOULD JUST GO AWAY
THAT WOULD BE GREAT



7.

SEO Audit

Is your site properly optimized for search engines?

GOOD CONTENT

Having good content on the website (and the right amount of it) that is: relevant to your organization, useful and helpful to site visitors, and updated with the right frequency.

What are people searching for?

- **Primary target keywords**
  - Water bill
  - Permits
  - Police
  - Parks & Events
- **Secondary target keywords**
  - Pool, adopt animals, city council, public notice, etc.
- **Meta tag keywords**

metatags

snippets of text that describe a page's content; the meta tags don't appear on the page itself, but only in the page's code...

What are people searching for?

- **Meta Keywords Attribute**
  A series of keywords you deem relevant to the page in question.

- **Title Tag**
  This is the text you'll see at the top of your browser. Search engines view this text as the "title" of your page.

- **Meta Description Attribute**
  A brief description of the page.

something to talk about

*Known as the "**Generation of Backlinks**"*
(i.e., getting other people to link to one's site)

Ensure you have a SOUND site...

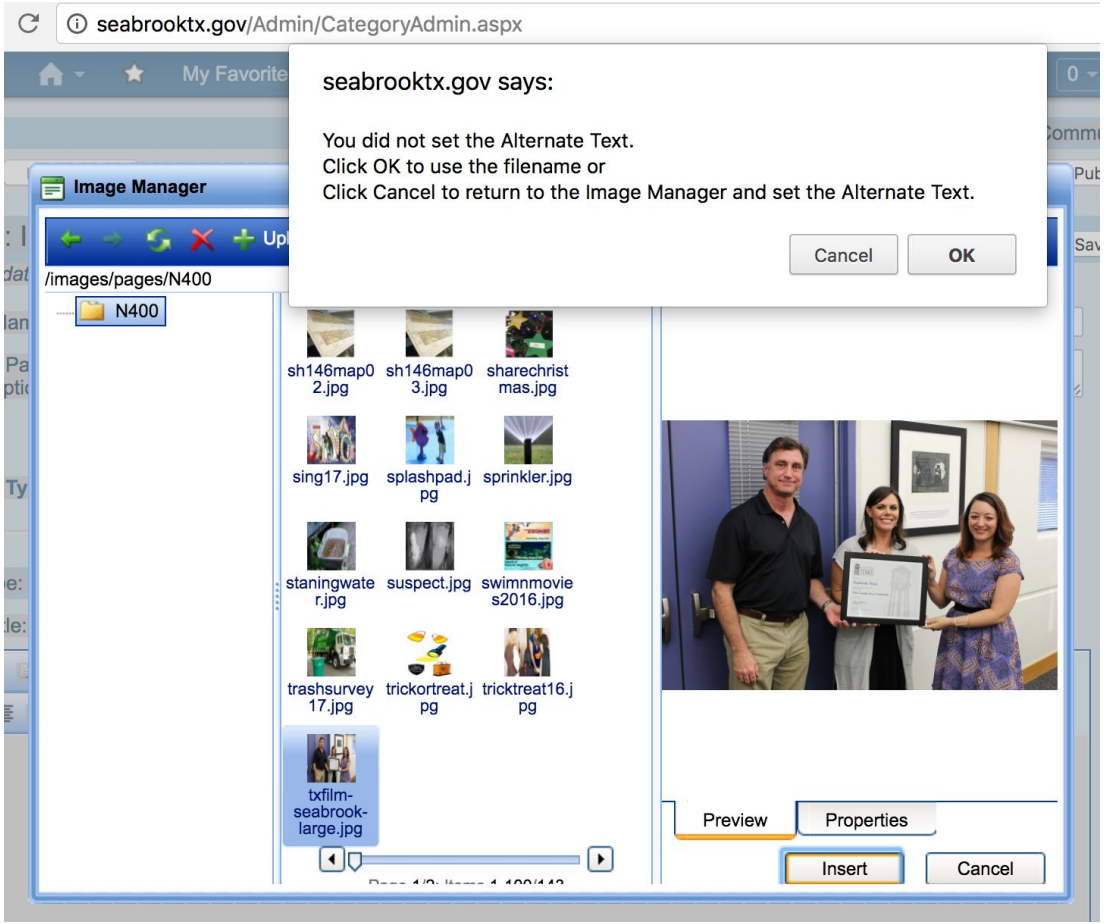
- **Programming**
- **Structure**
- **Indexing**

Fixing broken code… broken links… incorrect spellings… organizing your site map, etc.

8.

ADA Compliant

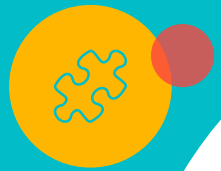
Can a visually disabled person view your site?



https://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap5toolkit.htm

People Prefer Their Native Language

English is the most-widely spoken language... however, to effectively communicate with people, it's not enough to speak a language that they understand (especially if their understanding is limited). You must speak to them in the language their heart speaks.



9.

Performance

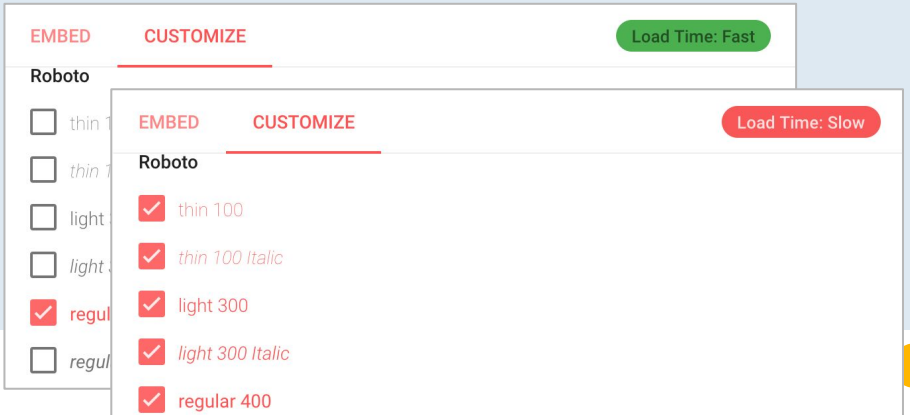
Do you have a SLOW site?

47% of consumers expect a web page to load in 2 seconds or less

- Under 100 milliseconds is perceived as **instantaneous**
- A 100 - 300 ms **delay is perceptible**
- One second is about the **limit for the user's flow of thought** to stay uninterrupted
- After 3 seconds, 40% of **visitors will abandon your site**
- *http://www.webpagetest.org*

47% of consumers expect a web page to load in 2 seconds or less

- **Too many or poorly-optimized images**
  Curate and optimize.
- **Embeds**
  Iframes and widgets can wreak havoc.
- **Fonts**
  Again, curate...or use system fonts.



Performance directly affects accessibility.

Many municipal website users are on pay-as-you-go data plans.

Code for America: Performance and user experience

10.

NO Stock Photos

Do you have a photo of city hall on your site? What about your parks and rentals?

City of Muncie Indiana | fort wayne IN city hall - | "city hall" elgin IL dexter | Chicago 311

www.cityofmuncie.com

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MAYOR'S OFFICE

Video Tour of Muncie

- Welcome
- Economic Development
- Tourism
- Quality of Life
- Education
- Real Estate and Relocation
- Community Organizations

Show Photos

My Links

HOMEPAGE

City of Muncie Instagram

View All Photos | Follow @cityofmuncie

Calendar

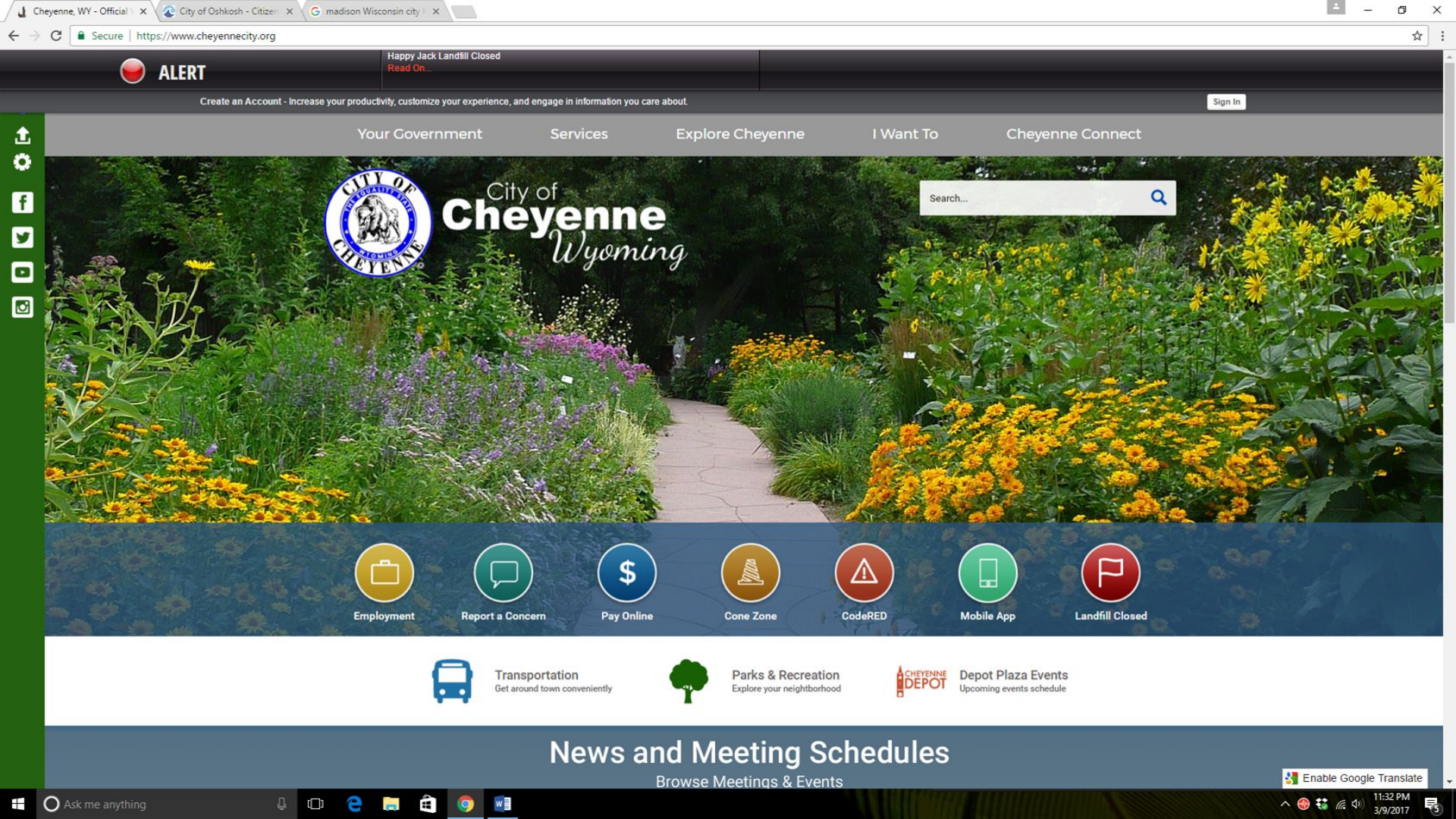
Documents

Muncie Journal

The city of Muncie was incorporated in 1865. Contrary to popular legend, the city is not named after a mythological

Ask me anything

4:43 PM
3/1/2017


Cheyenne, WY - Official
City of Oshkosh - Citizen
madison Wisconsin city
Secure | https://www.cheyennecity.org
ALERT
Happy Jack Landfill Closed
Read On...
Create an Account - Increase your productivity, customize your experience, and engage in information you care about.
Sign In
Your Government
Services
Explore Cheyenne
I Want To
Cheyenne Connect
City of Cheyenne Wyoming
Search...
Employment
Report a Concern
Pay Online
Cone Zone
CodeRED
Mobile App
Landfill Closed
Transportation
Get around town conveniently
Parks & Recreation
Explore your neightborhood
Depot Plaza Events
Upcoming events schedule
News and Meeting Schedules
Browse Meetings & Events
Enable Google Translate
Ask me anything
11:32 PM
3/9/2017

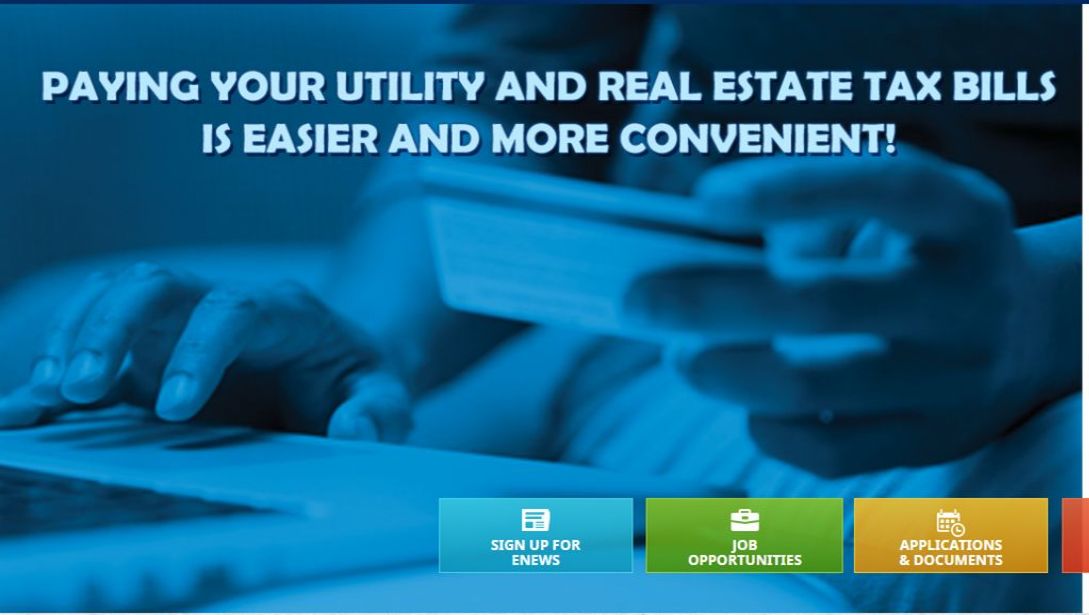
Wilmington, DE : Home

Secure | https://www.wilmingtonde.gov

THE CITY OF
WILMINGTON DELAWARE

Contact | News | Calendar | Bids & RFP | Codes

ABOUT US | RESIDENTS | BUSINESS | VISITORS | GOVERNMENT | HOW DO I...



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Click here to get started.

www.WilmingtonDE.gov Department of Finance

SIGN UP FOR ENEWS | JOB OPPORTUNITIES | APPLICATIONS & DOCUMENTS | MAYOR & COUNCIL | PAY MY BILL

EVENTS | MEETINGS

28 FEB — WHACC Black History Month Grand Finale
06:00 PM -

01 MAR — Bike Friendly Delaware Public Workshop
04:00 PM - 07:00 PM

LATEST NEWS

Parks and Recreation Announces Two Seats Available for the 2017 Spring College Tour
Keep Reading ›

SHOP SMALL

https://www.wilmingtonde.gov/residents/view-and-pay-bills-online

Ask me anything

10:17 AM
2/28/2017

City of Prescott, Arizona | city hall anniston alabam | Lambiase, Jacqueline -

www.prescott-az.gov

CITY OF PRESCOTT
ARIZONA

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NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

February 06, 2017

City of Prescott launches complaint hotline for code enforcement, vacation rental, and sober living home violations

On Wednesday, February 8, 2017 the City of Prescott will launch a 24/7 hotline for citizens to report code enforcement, vacation rental, and sober living home complaints. In recent months the City has passed ordinances regulating vacation rentals and sober livings and with the added need of regulation, the City, working with a company called Host Compliance, has created a hotline to receive complaints and and submit them directly to code enforcement. About this new service, City Manager Michael ...

Public Notices

EVENTS CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2017 →

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

TODAY'S EVENTS:

9:00 AM Southwest Leather Workers Trade Show

1:00 PM City Council Special Study Session Meeting

1:00 PM Resume and Cover Letter Basics

+2 More →

RSS | See all Events → | Submit Your Event

SPOTLIGHT

Snow Plowing Information
Click here for updates

Prescott Tourism Website
Click to explore what Prescott has to offer

Business License Information
Click here for more details

Revised Permit Fees Effective July 1st
Click here for more info

Acker Grant
Click here for more details

Ask me anything

11:09 AM
2/24/2017

11.

Add Video

If a picture speaks a 1,000 words, imagine what a video will do?

City Videos

Live stream | YouTube channel | City meetings

Toms Traffic Tips - Short Cuts

Taking a short cut might save you a few minutes... but it could cost you a lot more. See why on this episode of Tom's Traffic Tips.

Historic Marker Program Launch

Round Rock has a wonderfully rich history. And now, with the launch of the historic marker program, it will be easier than ever to find our city's hidden gems!
www.roundrocktexas.gov/historicpreservation

Summer Reading 2017

Are you ready to build a better world? You never know what you'll learn or do when you read! Join us from June 7 - August 7 for a summer of free fun, great events and tons of surprises. Learn more at roundrocktexas.gov/summerreading

12.

Social Media Sharing

Give users a way to interact with their favorite social media platforms.

LEADSMART PROGRAM

The City of Austin has received a $2.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to perform lead hazard reduction to approximately 150 homes within Austin city limits. View more information here.

Share

Share On Your Timeline

LD

LeaAnn Dearman

Say something about this...

LeadSmart Program | AustinTexas.gov - The Official Website of the City of Austin

The City of Austin has received a $2.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to perform lead hazard reduction to approximately 150 homes within Austin city limits. View more information here.

AUSTINTEXAS.GOV

Is content on your site easy to share?

13.

How Many Clicks

Is it easy to get to a phone number or email address for elected officials?

Out of 200 city websites from across the country ….

73 cities did not list the address for city hall on the homepage (31 were for cities with populations above 250,000).

Only 10 city sites included information on the homepage for how to contact elected officials directly; on 115 homepages, users had to click once for this information, and 75 homepages had navigation pathways forcing users to click two or more times to reach either an email address or phone number for elected officials.

Thanks!

Any questions?

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linkedin.com/in/ldearman

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