

STRATEGIC PUBLIC INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY PLAN

2017 | Franklin Township, NJ



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For more information about Sustainable Jersey's Public Information and Engagement program, visit bit.ly/SustainableJerseyPIE.

FORWARD: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN SUSTAINABILITY & TECHNOLOGY

Sustainable Jersey is a nonprofit organization that provides tools, training and financial incentives to support municipalities, school districts and individual schools as they work to achieve a more sustainable future. By supporting efforts to reduce waste, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and improve environmental equity, Sustainable Jersey is empowering municipalities and schools to build a better world for future generations. Each participating municipality, district or school forms a “green team” that consists of stakeholders that implement “actions,” or best practice policies and procedures that will help them to attain bronze or silver levels of certification in the Sustainable Jersey program.

In order to bring sustainability issues to the proper standing in communities throughout the state, the way in which municipalities govern their organizations and engage their citizenry must evolve as well. Throughout daily life, various methods of communications are at our fingertips, from pervasive and commonplace technologies like mobile phones and social media, to more cutting-edge technologies like smart speakers, such as Amazon’s Alexa. The way in which citizens interact with their world is rapidly changing, while municipal government continues to lag behind in the way in which it informs and engages with its constituents. This lack of technological advancement has caused frustration among citizens and a growing call for advancement. Recognizing these needs, Sustainable Jersey has released a suite of actions in the area of Public Information and Engagement (PIE) to provide towns with the framework to modernize these interactions and facilitate more sound governance practices. These PIE actions are:

- **Municipal Communications Strategy**- This action awards points to towns that survey residents to find out which communication channels they use, and develop a communications strategy around the responses, as well as make their municipal websites easy to navigate with essential information posted.
- **Improve Public Engagement in Municipal Government** - This action awards points for towns that address this challenge by making governing body meetings more accessible and

conducive to public participation, and by using “out of the box” ways to engage the public in decision making.

- **Improve Public Engagement in Planning and Zoning** - This action touches upon ways that both the planning and zoning boards can creatively increase public participation. Towns will receive points for making information regarding meetings and matters of the planning and zoning board(s) more available to the community and posting relevant land use materials online for review by the public.

- **Online Municipal Public Service Systems** - This action awards points to towns that provide essential information regarding public services on the municipal website, along with an online system for citizens to request services, report issues, make payments and track progress.

- **Digitizing Public Information** - This action awards towns points for digitizing and posting highly requested public information on the municipal website.

- **Open Data Inventory and Management** - This action awards points to a town for developing a policy to inventory available data sets and release them to the public in machine readable format, through a centralized location online.

In an effort to see greater implementation of our PIE actions and support these technology goals, Sustainable Jersey conducted two pilot PIE Technology Assessments in the spring of 2017. Pilot towns were chosen from a pool of applicants based on each town’s technology investment goals and capacity to achieve them, along with their interest and experience with the PIE actions. Chatham Borough and Franklin Township (Hunterdon County) were chosen as the pilot municipalities for this PIE Tech Assessment process.

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INVENTORY





The Franklin Township Strategic Public Information and Engagement Technology plan is provided as a roadmap for Franklin Township to achieve its public information and engagement goals, thereby creating a more efficient and effective government. Through this plan, it is the expectation that Franklin Township will achieve a more effective service delivery model for its citizens through online services, efficient communication paths, and better governance of its technology processes and procedures, creating new avenues for improving workflow inside of the municipal government.

The Franklin Township Public Information and Engagement Technology Plan is designed to be an attainable, results-oriented plan

which covers both short and long term investment goals. The plan offers prioritized key investment areas and projects that will lead to this overall service improvement. This plan looks at these investments from a municipality-wide perspective, looking for the biggest impact on both municipal operations and on the citizens of Franklin. Throughout the process, a number of trends and themes emerged, which are listed here as key concepts for the reader to consider:

- Township staff should own and govern technology related projects in conjunction with outside technology support. Since the staff in Franklin Township is extremely small, it is important to strategically engage outside professional assistance. In order to ensure that

projects are successful, this key management concept should be put in place prior to implementing the other initiatives listed in the plan. Further information on this process is contained the Public Information and Engagement Strategic Investment Projects section on page 14.

- The current level of technology support is adequate for the current level of technology reliance in the Township. However, it should be noted that as the technology footprint of the Township grows, so will the level of support. Another staffing consideration for the Township will be the level of support and engagement on these projects from their third party support provider. It is recommended that the Township engage their vendor for additional project implementation support to ensure successful project implementations.
- The Township should be commended for its commitment to finding new ways to engage its community. As a rural community with low population density, creating a sense of engagement is a challenge, and the staff and elected officials of Franklin are very

diligently finding ways to engage and inform the public.

Additional recommendations for technology projects which will further the goals of the community begin on page 14 and are also contained in Appendix A of this plan.

The process outlined in the following sections of this plan will guide Franklin Township through a process of making sound strategic technology investments, all of which will have a direct impact on their local citizens and local businesses. These public facing investments aim to make government more transparent, accessible and efficient. Many of the investments also include operational projects that lead to an improvement of internal processes and procedures, thereby benefiting the community through cost savings and avoidance. This plan will give the residents, businesses and visitors to Franklin Township the tools needed to interact with government in the most effective manner possible, while giving staff the tools needed to serve the community.



Franklin Township is a small rural community in Hunterdon County, New Jersey, nearly 23 square miles in size, with approximately 3,200 residents. While many residents embrace technology, a large segment of residents are senior citizens who do not, and this can present challenges when moving government services online. Franklin Township should be aware of this fact when considering the following projects, being mindful that advanced technologies are not the only path to engagement. Franklin Township, through the framework outlined in the Sustainable Jersey Public Information and Engagement (PIE) actions, wishes to find ways to efficiently and effectively use technology in order to better engage, communicate and interact with its citizens.

The Franklin Township Public Information and Engagement Technology Plan is designed to be attainable, results-oriented and cover both short and long term investment goals. The plan will also highlight strategies for utilizing current investments and practices in use at the Township in a more effective manner.

The plan has been created using industry best practices in a stakeholder-oriented approach. Benchmarking Franklin against best practices in the plan is conducted via nationwide and state specific validated data. The plan design is not intended to limit the autonomy of the management, but rather to act as a roadmap and transition plan toward

its PIE and technology goals. It is, however, important to recognize that full implementation of the investments and strategies outlined in the plan will allow the Township to achieve maximum efficiency in the use of its technology and general operations and move it closer to being a sustainable community.

Some benefits of this PIE Strategic Technology Plan include:

- Greater understanding of the role and impact of technology within the organization;
- Centralized control of technology investments, thereby minimizing duplication and confusion;
- Increased engagement between Township citizens and their government;
- Improved communications with citizens as a whole, thereby ensuring maximum use of Township services;
- Cost savings and enhanced internal productivity through the provision of commonly used services and public information online;
- Ability to perform baseline analysis of the current state of PIE & technology investments, allowing for successes to be measured;
- PIE action alignment within Franklin Township's goals, leading to

straightforward project prioritization within the project tiers; and

- Creation of organizational efficiencies, resulting in a more sustainable government.

In order to ensure the success of the projects and improvements contained in the plan, a centralized IT governance structure is highly recommended. This will allow regular Township communication on the investments contained herein, better methods of communicating with their residents, and ensure that all stakeholder needs are voiced and coordinated in the best manner possible.

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

In an effort to achieve a robust assessment of Franklin Township's goals and current state of affairs, several steps were taken through a stakeholder-oriented approach while creating this Plan, including:

- Independent evaluation of the current state of public facing technology investments, including various Township websites and social media presences;
- Township-conducted communications strategy inventory (contained as an appendix);

- Completion of a technology investment survey by the Township (contained as an appendix);
- Stakeholder interviews with Township staff, including supervisory staff, executive leadership, governing body leadership and citizen volunteers over a three day period;
- Benchmarking the Township against peer groups;
- An index of potential project solutions created by the Sustainable Jersey PIE Plan Review Board (contained for reference and use as an appendix);
- Creation of draft plan, including prioritized investments and strategies;
- Review of the draft with Township executive administration;

SCOPE OF THE PLAN

The Franklin Township PIE Technology Plan is intended to provide a roadmap for strategic technology investment to further the Public Information and Engagement goals of the Township. The overall goal of the plan is to inform the municipality of new and efficient paths to reach its citizens via technology and sound governance. Through these recommended vehicles and governance practices outlined in the following sections, the citizens,

visitors and businesses within Franklin will have greater access to public information and services, and a more meaningful way to engage the government in quality of life decisions. The Plan presents these investment projects in a goal aligned manner, reflecting both the Township's goals and objectives and the related Sustainable Jersey actions.

In addition to the general benefits of each PIE action described in the Introduction, many additional benefits can be realized through the implementation of the investments outlined in the future sections. Many of the projects included for consideration will result in significant operational efficiencies, which will result in both direct and indirect cost savings throughout the life of the product. Online Municipal Public Service Systems for example, provide citizens with a more positive experience with their government, having greater access to services and systems allowing them to spend less time in "town hall." This also has an indirect impact on GHG emissions and also allows staff to focus more on core portions of their jobs, as opposed to fielding calls, entering data and processing forms. The specific benefits of each project will be outlined later in this report.

A photograph of a laptop screen showing a pie chart with a green slice and a blue slice. The keyboard is visible in the foreground. The title 'PIE & TECHNOLOGY SWOT ANALYSIS' is overlaid on the image in large white letters.

PIE & TECHNOLOGY SWOT ANALYSIS

Throughout the stakeholder interview portion of the research phase of the project, an objective SWOT analysis of the current Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats was conducted to serve as a baseline from which to build sound investment strategies.

Currently, the Township has many opportunities to grow its technology, starting with a clean slate on which to build. As the Township conducts further analysis of projects, the following SWOT analysis should act as a guide to its investment strategy. In an effort to not only guide the technology advancement, but to also specifically outline a path to the advancement of the PIE related goals, a PIE action SWOT was also conducted and is contained below, so that the Township and others might be able to use this information as they invest and move forward.

SWOT ASSESSMENT OF THE OVERALL STATE OF TOWNSHIP TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

Current baseline technology, such as data center servers and end user computing hardware, has been maintained; a current replacement plan is in place and followed

Current interest and attention from staff and elected officials exists toward furthering PIE goals

Competent subject matter experts (SME's) on staff are willing and able to assist in managing the projects which provide internal process improvement, utilizing existing staff, when possible, will provide maximum return on investment

Current physical wiring is being updated, creating a sound backbone to drive the further technology- related investments

The Township maintains a formal relationship with an outside vendor for technology support and guidance

Weaknesses

No technology governance structure

No formal governance policy or procedure for public information process

Low number of full time employees can lead to low project utilization and support, since staff have many roles to fill each day

Opportunities

Engaged staff receptive to change toward new efficiencies

Lack of pre-existing systems and management processes will allow full use of current technologies “out of the box”

Threats

No official social media presence or policy

“Rogue” Facebook pages have been created without staff input or consent

No official presence on social media platforms

SWOT ASSESSMENT OF PIE ACTIONS

SWOT Assessment of the Municipal Communications Strategy

- **Strengths** – Understanding of available methods; strong staff expertise; engaged citizens, website is visited by current citizens

- **Weakness** - Immature technology profile leads to limited paths to engage and inform citizens

- **Opportunities** – Investment in a few technology systems can lead to large returns in citizen engagement and awareness, as well as the ability to better utilize existing systems for new uses; existing website has many areas available for improvement to serve as a hub for public information

- **Threats** – Lack of capital investment and consistent budgeting for maintenance and technology support will lead to project failure

SWOT Assessment of Public Engagement in Municipal Government

- **Strengths** – Public meeting agendas are published prior to the meeting; Public meeting audio recordings are available online for playback/download via the municipal website allowing citizens and board members better access to the meeting process; council agendas and minutes are published in a timely fashion on the website; innovation in public meeting technology is exhibited by allowing a governing body member to

Skype into a meeting; power point presentations are used at meetings to explain issues to the public

- **Weaknesses** – No live streaming of meetings via the Internet; no clearly defined citizen input rules for public comment at meeting; meeting room not fully equipped for broadcast technologies; lack of procedures to collect input from public beyond Council meetings

- **Opportunities** – Knowledgeable and able municipal clerk and staff; ability to streamline agenda process and provide more detail to members of the public

- **Threats** – Lack of consistent budgeting for maintenance and technology support and management support leads to failed long term projects

Swot Assessment of Public Engagement In Planning and Zoning

- **Strength** – Combined Land Use Board minimizes the capital investment needed to accomplish full public engagements

- **Weaknesses** – No live streaming of meetings via the Internet; no clearly defined citizen input rules for public comment at meeting; meeting room not fully equipped for broadcast technologies

- **Opportunities** – Knowledgeable and

able clerk and staff; ability to streamline agenda process and provide more detail to members of the public

- **Threats** – Lack of consistent budgeting for maintenance and technology support and management support leads to failed long term projects

Swot Assessment Of Online Municipal Public Service Systems

- **Strengths** – Blue sky possibilities laid by lack of current systems means less chance of transition issues and change resistance; proven need for “off-hours” services, currently the municipality is open late for one night a week, which proves to be the busiest time for them; being a rural community necessitates alternate methods of service

- **Weaknesses** – Lack of current technology systems to support needed enhancements; no online credit card processing capabilities and processes

- **Opportunities** – Proven workflow ready to be enhanced by technology; current staff overtaxed by current tasks, but enhancements to payment system and online workflow will create efficiencies in staff operations; proven need for “off-hours” services, currently the municipality opens late for one night a week which proves to be the busiest time for them; being a rural community necessitates alternate methods of service

- **Threats** – Lack of consistent budgeting for maintenance and technology support and management support

Swot Assessment of Digitizing Public Information

- **Strengths** – OPRA requests are not overwhelming yet, but are regular enough to warrant expansion of a digitization program
- **Weaknesses** – No document management system in place; few files shared between departments; no current system for data classification across departments
- **Opportunity** – Electronic data stored centrally
- **Threats** – None

Swot Assessment of Open Data Inventory and Management

- **Strengths** – Regular OPRA requests filled electronically, proving the need for public information to be preemptively provided

- **Weaknesses** – No current system for data classification across departments; no data inventory process identified within departments; no system in place to share data sets once identified by staff; no point person in charge of open data process; lack of understanding of open data by municipal staff and governing body members

- **Opportunity** – Current municipal clerk staff are positioned and capable of moving this initiative forward
- **Threats** – Lack of data organization and classification could produce undesirable results; lack of knowledge and understanding, which can be overcome with education and training

A photograph of a person wearing a colorful plaid shirt, sitting at a desk and working on a laptop. The desk is cluttered with various items, including a pen holder, a small figurine, and a potted plant. The background is slightly blurred, showing a window and some office equipment. The text "PUBLIC INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROJECTS" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PROJECTS

The following section is intended as a detailed path to improve the technological capabilities of the municipality and therefore further its goals in the areas of Public Information and Engagement. For each priority area, a chart is offered to illustrate the Sustainable Jersey actions and supported by each project, followed by detailed descriptions. The reader should also utilize the Solutions Index contained in Appendix A as a first step toward implementing the projects. The

Appendix is not an endorsement of product, but rather presents tiered options varying in sophistication, capabilities and cost. The Township is encouraged to continue to explore any and all options using the Solutions Index as a guide and resource. Readers are also reminded and advised to follow local purchasing procedures and the NJ Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 5:34)

Sustainable Jersey PIE Action Alignment

Priority Level 1 Projects

	Municipal Comm. Strategy	Improve Public Engagement in Municipal Government	Improve Public Engagement in Planning and Zoning	Online Municipal Public Service System	Digitizing Public Information	Open Data Inventory and Management
Technology & PIE Governance Process	X	X	X	X	X	X
Forms Processing	X			X	X	X
Increase Website Functionality		X	X	X	X	X
Agenda Automation/ Paperless Agenda		X	X	X	X	X
Online Payments Integrations				X		

Priority Level 2 Projects

	Municipal Comm. Strategy	Improve Public Engagement in Municipal Government	Improve Public Engagement in Planning and Zoning	Online Municipal Public Service System	Digitizing Public Information	Open Data Inventory and Management
Permitting and Licensing			X	X	X	X
Document Management		X	X	X	X	X
OPRA Request Tracking & Processing				X	X	X
Agenda Automation/ Paperless Agenda				X	X	X

Priority Level 3 Projects

	Municipal Comm. Strategy	Improve Public Engagement in Municipal Government	Improve Public Engagement in Planning and Zoning	Online Municipal Public Service System	Digitizing Public Information	Open Data Inventory and Management
Survey Tools	X	X	X	X		
Citizen Engagement Platform	X	X	X	X	X	
AM Travel Advisory Station	X					
Open Data Program				X	X	X
Increased Technology Support	X	X	X	X	X	X

PRIORITY LEVEL 1 PROJECTS

Increase Website Functionality

Currently the Township website is a one-way informational website that staff has difficulty maintaining and updating, since all updates are completed via a third party service. While staff at Franklin Township is extremely limited in size, the municipal website must become a priority in the daily workflow of the municipality. In order to fully realize the investment potential of the website, the Township should move decision making authority and management of the site to the Deputy Township Clerk. The Township must also consider alternative platforms which give the staff the ability to make direct updates and provide for automated processing of stale information. Franklin should work with their current provider or a new provider to ensure all constituent needs are being met by the website. Current needs identified through the process include easy access to forms, news and calendar information, the ability for staff to update critical data, while maintaining a contract for routine updates and backup support to staff. Interactive features include the ability to contact the Township staff, interactive calendar, as well as email and social media integration. It is suggested that this project be taken on as the first priority of

the township to act as a baseline for all further investment to build off of. In order to effectively manage this project, the next project, "Technology and PIE Governance Process," should also be given the highest priority.

Technology & PIE Governance Process

Through stakeholder interviews, it was identified that although the Township has made valuable strategic investments, a centralized approach to technology governance will be needed if the Township is to fully realize its technology and PIE related goals while maximizing its investment potential.

A sound governance structure ensures proper communication between all stakeholders before, during, and after implementation of projects and throughout normal operations. In order to facilitate the proper communication and change management procedures needed, the Township will need to create a technology governance committee consisting of department heads from each department, along with other management-identified key users from key departments such as the police department, Township Clerk , Department of Public Works and construction code officials. The existing technology support vendor should also participate on this committee. This

committee should be tasked with the technology and PIE investment decision making process, implementation of this plan, review of technology contracts, and solution selection. This committee should also be tasked with developing standard operating procedures and policies for PIE & technology related operations such as updates to the website; creation and update of official social media channels; and the proper use of the investments as outlined in this plan.

An effective Technology Governance Committee encourages open sharing of ideas and values, equitable decision making and authority across all departments. Participation on this committee should be mandated for representatives from the departments listed above and all potential technology investments now and in the future should be reviewed, approved and prioritized by this new staff committee.

Forms Processing

As a very small government, efficient processing of citizen requests, licensing, permitting and other workflows is a critical step to realizing full engagement, while providing added convenience for your constituency. In order to find proper efficiencies in form processing, the ideal situation allows for residents to

complete the process online, including online payments. Added benefits of some systems may include workflow processing to create staff efficiencies and automated reminders and notifications to applicants. Many of the forms systems suggested in Appendix A also have the added benefit of flat price licensing which will allow the Township to maximize its return on investment by extending the use to many departments and functions both internal and external.

Agenda Automation/Paperless Agenda

In order for citizens to be fully engaged with their local governments, they must have full insight into the business of the governing and regulatory bodies. However, with paper agendas it often becomes too costly and time prohibitive to give out every supporting document contained in a public meeting agenda. As time goes on, the creation of those documents can become more and more complicated, requiring better systems to automate the agenda process. It is a best practice to ensure that the full text of resolutions, ordinances, applications and hearings, along with all backup materials, are readily available to members of the public electronically. The Township should consider an electronic system to make these documents available to the public in council, planning and zoning board agendas. Furthermore, the

Township is encouraged to follow the best practices guidance in the Sustainable Jersey PIE actions to ensure that as much information is given to the public in advance of the meeting and in as timely a fashion as possible. Additional levels of implementation can also find increased staff efficiency by automating the agenda approval process and workflow, although in a municipality of this size, one of the less sophisticated systems should be adequate.

Online Payments Integration

In order for true online access to government services, it is important that the process is completed at the time of the transaction. In order to make this possible, the Township should standardize and contract for an online payment provider. Alternatively, when contracting for the individual services contained in the plan, the Township could explore including that in the specification. However the best possible method of operation would be to have one compatible payment processor. Many online systems utilize Authorize.net compatible gateway providers and any of those providers could be used as a starting specification.

PRIORITY LEVEL 2 PROJECTS

Citizen Request/311 Tracking and

Communication System

Recognizing the need for government to adapt to the demand for “anywhere, anytime” access to its services, to further the PIE goals, having a readily accessible system for constituents to report issues and request services from their local government is essential. A robust system allowing multiple device access via both a website and mobile application is essential. For maximum usability and functionality, the system should allow for a full routing, workflow and categorization on the staff backend. It should also have email integration with reminders. This type of system will ensure proper internal follow-up on issues within the Township, and provide constituents with the proper follow-up and close-out of their issues. The current process seems to be working for the Township because the committed staff are very proactive about issues; however, an upgrade to this manual system is essential for continued growth in efficiency as well as to achieve the PIE goals.

Permitting and Licensing

As a municipal government, nearly 90% of typical workflow is related to a parcel and associated regulatory process or permit. It is key to make sure that the necessary workflow and associated

systems are as seamless as possible for the members of the public who need to utilize them. It is recommended that the Township procure an organization-wide permitting and licensing system. This system would cover as many departments and processes as possible, and should utilize Geographic Information Systems (GIS) as a basis to link all records together. One important requirement the Township should consider is a cross departmental product, allowing a maximum level of information sharing across business units. In the end, this will not only create efficiencies, but also cost savings.

Document Management

Records management can be an overwhelming task for many municipalities due to the retention requirements of the State of New Jersey. One way in which municipalities can save time and money is through an electronic document management system (EDMS). A project like this is typically tackled in three phases: procurement of the system & inventory of existing documents, imaging of the documents, and system certification. DORES (the state regulatory agency which oversees records management) will certify a system for document storage. Once a system is certified, a town can save valuable space and money

by receiving permission to destroy the paper versions of those documents. Note that system certification may require an increased level of disaster recovery preparation, which is outside the scope of this document.

OPRA Request Tracking and Processing

Public records requests take time and money to fulfill properly in order to provide the best service to the citizens who request the data and information. A full open data program, as discussed in the priority 3 projects, aims to make these data regularly available to the public in a proactive manner. One step toward making these data available, and as a best practice, would be to implement an OPRA request tracking and processing system. In these systems, the intake of the request is done electronically. The routing and task assignment is also handled within the system, as is the filling of the request. The system owner can then choose to make that filled request available on the web for searching and download. This will eliminate the need for duplicate filling of the same request and also allow other interested parties instant access to the data, thereby alleviating redundancy in the clerk's office, as well as preemptively providing greater access to the public of the requested information.

PRIORITY LEVEL 3 PROJECTS

Electronic Survey Tools

As local governments try to find paths to respond to changing demographics, they will also need increasingly creative ways to gather feedback from their constituents. It is important that while maintaining traditional methods to gather citizen feedback, the Township also looks into new methods for this feedback that allow them to provide opinions electronically. Survey tools range from free methods that provide basic insight, all the way to more advanced analytic tools that not only provide insight into thoughts of the respondents, but also qualify their responses through advanced demographic analysis. These tools are becoming more mainstream and should be viewed not as a replacement for town hall meetings and open public meetings, but as other ways of reaching a new demographic of citizenry.

Citizen Engagement Platform

Citizen engagement platforms are comprised of a broad set of tools, some free and publicly available, as well as more advanced toolsets. The purpose of these tools is to collect input from the public in a more modern way and allow for open feedback on topics proposed by the Township within the platform. The most advanced of these tools can also

lead to a process of data driven decision making. These tools will be municipally controlled and allow for the Township to provide information and ask questions of the public. These answers are recorded along with demographic and other statistical information, which provide greater insight into not only the raw feedback but also to the person(s) providing the feedback. All of these platforms aim to give government more data to make better decisions.

AM "Travel Advisory" Radio Station

Governments in NJ have learned a lot about disaster preparedness over the last few years, after enduring both Hurricane Irene and Superstorm Sandy. Through these events, a renewed focus has been on ensuring diverse communication methods during public emergencies. It is recommended that the Township explore licensing an AM "travel advisory" radio station and creating a broadcast location within the Township. These stations also offer the added benefits of travel alerts when visitors come to the town and offer another avenue to publicize events and happenings.

Open Data Program

Local government trends show one way in which citizens and businesses are seeking to engage in government is through the massive amount of data that

governments collect. As the Township embarks on the journey of increasing its Public Information and Engagement strengths, it should move toward best practices in an open data ecosystem. In this current plan, an open data program should be one of the final steps and should stay on the horizon for the Township. Throughout the implementation of the initiatives in this plan, the Township should attempt to maintain thorough data inventories, data classifications and open data standards so that it can have an easier path to a full open data program. Beginning a process of releasing new information in machine-readable formats can help speed this process along when the time comes.

Increased Technology Support

Currently, the Township utilizes a third party consultant for IT support. As the Township moves forward with increasing

its technology profile and citizens begin to rely on this support, it will be important to utilize a technology management model that includes clearly defined SLAs. It is important that these SLAs are applied to both software support contracts, as well as the technology management/support contract. It should be noted that with no increased technology employed in the Township, the current level of support and current vendor appear to be adequate and functional. However, by following the path laid out in this plan, an increase in that support will be required. It is recommended that the current vendor support contract be evaluated annually, and increased as needed.



APPENDIX A: SOLUTIONS INDEX

The solutions index presents examples of products that have specific functionality that we recommend the municipality incorporate into its operations. It is not an endorsement of a specific product. The index presents the information as tiered options varying in sophistication, capabilities, and cost. The municipality is encouraged to use the Solutions Index as a guide and resource for understanding the types of products being recommended. The town will need to conduct due diligence in exploring specific brands and negotiating specific offerings and prices. Readers are also reminded and advised to ensure they are following local purchasing procedures and the NJ Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 5:34). The brands and products offered are representational of a range of

functionality and cost. Inclusion or omission of a product does not indicate a lack of functionality or endorsement. The products included in this Index were identified through an independent review which included criteria such as: broad scope of functionality, cost, ease of use, and proven success within municipalities across New Jersey.

A full list of known solutions is available online in the PIE Solution Catalogue (bit.ly/PIESolutionCatalogue). This digital catalogue is regularly updated and contains detailed benefits and case studies for each solution.

CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM

Purpose: Citizen engagement platforms

allow governments to inform and solicit feedback from residents using technology that actively engages citizens in the decision making processes of government. There are two main levels of solutions. One option consists of using free and publicly available products, while the other option consists of more advanced solutions at a cost. Both approaches complement each other, so the municipality should evaluate both options..

Tier One: The first approach utilizes free social media platforms to disseminate information to the constituents and engage them in two-way conversations as a feedback mechanism for the municipality.

Examples: (Each should be evaluated and, if possible, utilized in conjunction with one another to bring users back to the municipal website.) Twitter is a short messaging system which supports both hyperlinks, photo, and live or prerecorded video sharing. Live chats can be held at scheduled times on specific topics to engage users in conversation. Typical Twitter users are under the age of 35. Facebook allows users to share longer messages with hyperlinks, photos, and videos. A polling feature also exists. Facebook allows users to post questions and start conversations with constituents, as well as host pre-planned

live video based discussions using the Facebook Live platform. The target age demographic for Facebook is 25-54. YouTube is a video hosting platform which can be utilized for on-demand video playback, live broadcasting and archiving of public meetings, and other municipal video needs. While all social media platforms are free, costs upward of \$5,000/year may be incurred for municipal website integration and the archiving of records created by these platforms.

Tier Two: The second approach utilizes a web-based citizen engagement software product. This type of product allows a municipality to control a social media-like platform that includes basic demographic information, such as age, gender, and location of residence. This type of solution allows government to make data driven decisions based on survey feedback paired with the demographic information. For example, if a municipality was building a park on its border and 60% of respondents were opposed to the park, the municipality could then look into the demographic data and prioritize responses from constituents who live within the affected neighborhood. This type of system often includes blog functionality, as well as a customized look and feel. Some of these products integrate directly with existing web CMS systems, which provide for a

more seamless user experience, while others act as standalone websites. The most advance systems also include a high level of analytics and reporting functions.

Examples: Vision Pulse by Vision Internet (visioninternet.com/solutions/software/visionpulse) and Mind Mixer (mindmixer.com): \$2500-\$5000/year; and Open Town Hall by Peak Democracy (peakdemocracy.com): \$6000/year (costs based on a town of under 10,000 in population)

OPRA REQUEST TRACKING AND PROCESSING

Purpose: The aim of a true open data program is to proactively make public information and data regularly available to the public in an effective manner. While working towards implementing an open data program, municipal governments can get immediate benefits by tracking OPRA requests and making the responses public, cutting back on repetitive OPRA requests and thereby cutting costs and creating efficiencies.

Tier One: In this level of solution, staff maintains a list of OPRA requests in a spreadsheet at no additional cost, and posts a regularly updated copy on the municipal website. As an alternative to using a desktop spreadsheet, staff can

maintain a spreadsheet via a cloud-hosted platform. The advantage to this solution is the ability to make the document publicly viewable by sharing the link on the municipal website. Staff then post updates in near-real time, so the public immediately sees those updates, rather than needing to remove a file from the website and replace it with a new document. Municipalities utilizing free cloud-based solutions should ensure the account is connected to a municipally owned email address where no sensitive or otherwise regulated information is stored. It is also important to understand the limitations and risks of free solutions that do not provide easy customer support options.

Examples: Microsoft Excel for desktop or the cloud-based free tier of Google Sheets

Tier Two: The second tier approach to OPRA request management uses a cloud-hosted forms processing application. Features include the ability to convert existing PDF forms into online fillable forms, payments processing, and workflow routing. The municipality controls security and response privacy settings. The most mature versions of these platforms allow for the exact look and feel of existing forms to be carried into the online fillable form. These platforms typically have many

applications outside of simple OPRA processing and tracking, and also require a bit of setup on the part of the municipality for the forms conversion and workflow.

Examples: Seamless Gov by Seamless Docs (seamlessdocs.com) and GovQA (govqa.com): \$5,000-\$10,000/year (costs based on number of processing users and if conversion services are required)

Tier Three: The final approach involves a custom built municipal workflow management solution, which includes OPRA request tracking and management as one of many functions. Many of these systems contain single and multi-department based workflow solutions which can be pre-built or customizable. These solutions allow for intake of OPRA requests, and routing and tracking, as well as response management.

Examples: Spatial Data Logic (SDL) Desktop and SDL Portal (spatialdatalogic.com): approximately \$15,000/year

AM Travel Advisory Radio Station

Purpose: Utilizing AM radio can provide a municipality with an alternate means of contacting citizens who have no other way to receive municipal and emergency messaging. This program can also act as a

conduit for weather, traffic, and other travel information advisories..

Tier One: Traveler Information Stations consist of two main components that a municipal entity will need to secure. The first is the FCC license to the AM radio frequency, and the second component is the equipment needed to broadcast. Municipal officials should consult a radio licensing professional or include it in a potential RFP specification to insure licensing is procured correctly. AM Radio stations generally will cover a 3-5 mile radius from the transmitter. According to FCC rules, these stations may transmit noncommercial voice information pertaining to traffic and road conditions, traffic hazard and travel advisories, directions, availability of lodging, rest stops and service stations, and descriptions of local points of interest. During times of emergency conditions, the municipality can rebroadcast NOAA Weather broadcasts and other pertinent advisory information.

Examples: MHCORBIN Highway Advisory Radio System (mhcorbin.com) and Information Station Specialists AM Alert System (theradiosource.com): \$20,000-\$80,000 (average system costs depend on number of transmitter sites)

GRAPHIC DESIGN SOFTWARE

Purpose: Graphic design software develops robust printed and digital promotional materials to communicate news and events with the public, such as flyers, social media graphics, brochures, posters, and other content.

Tier One: This tier includes online subscription based tools for creating varied groups of both print and digital materials. These tools are best suited for flyers, social media and web graphics, brochures, and newsletters. Many of these tools provide free options with limited template options, or allow the user to test the platform before purchasing the higher functionality.

Examples: Canva (canva.com) and Lucid Press (lucidpress.com): costs range from free to \$40.00/month

Tier Two: The second tier option is mid-range desktop based software, which provides a moderate and easy-to-use feature set. These products work well for design of flyers, brochures, banners, and other printed materials, as well as social media and web graphics.

Example: Affinity Designer (affinity.serif.com/en-us): \$50.00-\$100.00 one-time investment

Tier Three: Products in this tier are of professional grade and provide a wide

range of features and functionality, but also require the most training to use effectively. Products often have complementary pieces of software for further functionality. Training resources are widely available for these products and range from free videos through paid live-classes.

Example: Adobe In Design, sold as part of the Adobe Creative Cloud suite (adobe.com): \$20.00-\$160.00/month

WEBSITE CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMS)

Purpose: A productive CMS should be evaluated from two perspectives: the public's and the municipal staff's. First, the public presentation of the website should convey a sense of place and community. It should provide a clean, organized graphic user interface which allows the public to easily find highly requested information. Second, the CMS should be easy to adapt to meet the specific communication goals of the municipality. Ease of use by municipal staff is critical to the successful implementation of a CMS.

Tier One: Products in this tier tend to be the most affordable solutions and highly flexible, but also often require third party integrators as most municipal staff lack the needed skill set to implement

open source web solutions without assistance. These products will also require a web host either in the municipality's data center or at a commercial hosting center, which is the recommended solution.

Examples: WordPress (wordpress.org) and Wix (wix.com): free to \$1500/year for advanced packages (costs do not include hosting fees of \$30.00-\$100.00/month or the potential costs to design and management of the site)

Tier Two: This tier contains non-governmental specific CMS solutions that are commercially available and more "turnkey" in nature. These solutions are highly customizable and hosted often by their developers.

Example: Agility CMS platform (agilitycms.com): \$6000.00/year

Tier Three: Products in this tier are purpose-built solutions for governmental entities. These solutions are content management based and often allow for levels of content approval and workflow. Such solutions provide for varying levels of template customization and design choices. Some offer additional software options such as citizen engagement products, online RFP management systems, and mobile applications.

Examples: Civic Plus (civicplus.com), Civic Live (civiclive.com), Vision Internet (visioninternet.com), and Zumu Software (zumu.com): \$20,000-\$40,000 startup and \$5,000-\$10,000 for annual support and hosting (costs vary according to needs and provider)

INTERACTIVE CALENDARING WEB SOLUTION (POTENTIAL CMS ADD-ON)

Purpose: In order to properly share events, meetings, etc. with the public, a dynamic and interactive web-based calendar solution is needed. These solutions are presented as alternatives to a CMS without such capabilities. In each case, it is important to first try an integrated solution with your website CMS provider, as this will provide the best solution.

Tier One: A free online calendar can be integrated into a municipal website or mobile app using available plugins. Events from various individual staff department calendars can be shared through one main municipal calendar, with varied privacy settings. There are functions that enable extended descriptions of events, maps integration, and event recurrence. Municipalities utilizing free cloud-based solutions are advised to insure the account is connected to a municipal owned email address with no sensitive or otherwise

regulated information stored there. It is also important to understand the limitations and risk of free solutions that do not offer a support contract or easy support options.

Example: the free Google Calendar which offers no support or service level agreement

Tier Two: Staff can utilize and integrate a commercial online calendar focused on events management. Some available features include various calendar views such as grids, forms, and pin boards, as well as various privacy and permission settings. Many software providers provide a free level of software which often times is ad-supported. Quantifying the value of the ad concession is difficult. As the municipality will not have control over the ad content, investing in the paid “ad-free” version of these types of software is likely beneficial.

Example: LoCalendar (localendar.com): \$50.00-\$150.00/year

SURVEY TOOLS

Purpose: Survey tools can help municipal governments engage the public in decision-making through the collection of information for diverse issues and projects, including online polls, ticketing, and registration for meetings. These tools can broaden the solicitation of citizen input. Many collect user

demographics within the feedback in order to make better community decisions. Often times this is a first step toward a full citizen engagement platform.

Tier One: Many free survey options exist and can be effectively utilized for small quick surveys. They each carry analytical limitations, and in some cases limited sets of responses or questions. Features may include limited integrations with third party systems and CAPTCHA response verification to avoid SPAM. When exploring the free product options, it is important to understand the intended audience of the survey, as you do not want the product constraints of the free versions to limit interactions with the public. As always, municipalities utilizing free cloud-based solutions are advised to ensure the account is connected to a municipal owned email address with no sensitive or otherwise regulated information stored there. It is also important to understand the limitations and risk of free solutions that do not offer a support contract or other easy support options.

Examples: Google Forms (google.com/forms), Survey Monkey (surveymonkey.com), and Zoho Survey (soho.com/survey): all free options

Tier Two: Surveying tools at this level offer many more template options, including mobile-friendly surveys and

easy to use interfaces. Survey restrictions are often reasonable for most uses in municipal government. Some platforms still require their branding on the surveys at this level and may not offer robust support options, though there will be some level of support offered. Integrations with email marketing platforms and focus on security of the platform will be offered at this level.

Examples: Survey Monkey (surveymonkey.com): up to \$1200/year; Zoho Survey (soho.com/survey): up to \$600/year; and Typeform (typeform.com): up to \$720/year

Tier Three: Survey tools at this level are very robust and feature rich offerings that may be appropriate only for the largest of public sector entities. Features at this level include full customization of the input forms and surveys, a vast variety of branching logic, and specialty question types. Templates are utilized for quick survey deployment and mobile-readiness. Products of this tier also require a higher level of training for the end users.

Example: Survey Gizmo (surveygizmo.com): up to \$1500/year

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

Purpose: A fully featured agenda management solution will offer a

digitally automated preparation and delivery process for agendas and minutes of boards, committees, and commissions. These flexible solutions offer the ability to publish more supporting materials for public review. Less mature implementations will offer the advantages of the paperless systems and the ease of search, archival, and publishing options, but often will not automate the back-end process of the creation of agendas and minutes. Costs below are based on a town of approximately 9,000 in population. All of the below options will also require the purchase of hardware for the boards and commissions, should the municipality require that feature set.

Tier One: The first tier approach to an agenda management solution involves building a process internally centered on a paperless distribution of the agenda and supporting materials. Typically the clerk will create a PDF version of the agenda. Distribution of the agenda with supporting materials is often done via a cloud storage solution, and in some cases email. One drawback to this solution is that it requires in house staff or an outside consultant to maintain the solution as no one vendor oversees the system.

Examples for PDF creation: Adobe Professional (adobe.com), Fox It Phantom

PDF (foxitsoftware.com), or Nuance Power PDF Advanced (<http://bit.ly/pdfnuance>): up to \$500/year or one time purchase. Examples for cloud storage: Dropbox ([dropbox.com](http://bit.ly/dropbox.com)), Sharepoint (<http://bit.ly/sharepointstorage>), or Box (www.box.com): up to \$750.00/year

Tier Two: Products at this level begin to automate not only the agenda creation and distribution, but also the workflow leading up to the actual agenda assembly process. These solutions are purpose built for government, which makes the workflow a close match for most public entities. Features include meeting management, agenda development and minute creation, and automated distribution, as well as a web portal and e-voting.

Examples: iCompass Meeting Manager Pro (icompasstech.com) and Granicus (granicus.com): \$3600/year.

Tier Three: Products in this tier offer a more robust feature set by building upon the tier two features. Often based on a modular system, this level of product offers video/agenda synchronization, public participation management, touch screen voting, audience display, and a boards and commissions management database.

Example: Accela's Legislative

Management and Civic Streaming (accela.com/solutions/legislative-management), formerly IQM2: \$7,000-\$25,000/year

DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS

Purpose: A fully implemented and functional document management system allows for efficient file retrieval and research as well as streamlined fulfillment of public records requests. Along with proper document classification, it will allow for easier destruction of documents no longer required to be retained. This classification will allow for an easy transition into a full open data program.

Tier One: Document management solutions are not a trivial investment. Many solutions offer similar functionality experience in local government, however user interfaces vary greatly. It is important the municipality spend time exploring their options and finding a solution that fits their specific needs in each of these cases. Features include creation, storage and indexing of digital documents, security profiles and redaction of those documents, email integration, workflow automation, and public searchable document portals. All NJ Municipal governments will also want to follow the guidance of NJ DORES for system certification in order to receive

permission for the destruction of paper documents.

Examples: Laserfiche (laserfiche.com) and OnBase (onbase.com): \$5000 - \$25,000/year + scanning services as needed

Forms Processing Solutions

Purpose: A robust forms-based processing solution will allow 24/7 access to municipal applications and services via the municipal website. Added benefits may include better tracking of other processes such as permits, applications and ORPA requests, as well as document management and open data readiness.

Tier One: Cloud-based applications enable the creation of fillable forms, email-based form submission, and e-signatures. Also included in software at this tier are payment integrations and some customization in look and feel. Software at this level may require additional setup by the staff to implement.

Example: Jot Forms (jotform.com): 230-\$500/year

Tier Two: In the second tier, we see products more custom built for government that allow for easier workflow creation and conversion of

existing forms that retain their look and feel, which can be especially important in certain governmental situations. Additional advanced features include a forms library, citizen request portal, and mobile-friendly forms, as well as basic mapping functionality. These software packages also have the potential to serve as a lightweight permitting system, OPRA request management system, and CRM system. Many providers also offer conversion services for an additional fee.

Example: SeamlessDocs (seamlessgov.com), GovPilot (govpilot.com) and GovQA (govqa.com): \$5000-\$10,000/year

Citizen Request Management/31

Purpose: Citizen request management software allows a streamlined, easy-to-use process for the submission of citizen service requests, thereby making government more accessible. In addition to the public-facing benefits, these systems allow for better workflow tracking, accountability, and internal efficiencies. Costs below are based on a town of approximately 9,000 people in population.

Tier One: Municipal government can start a CRM system with a simple contact form, via their website or one of the other above solutions. This system

represents a quick way to track requests centrally, but will often lack additional workflow components and further citizen interaction. Free form module options can be created through your CRM system manager at no cost other than labor.

Tier Two: Products at this level contain a very robust feature set, however to allow for a more affordable price point many of those items come for an option fee or are a part of feature set packages. The ability to only purchase what is needed will help provide a high level return on investment. Companies will often start with the customization of a mobile app, focusing on the citizen experience and building internal workflow around that. Other features include request by computer and phone, automated notifications, FAQ engine, and a mobile capability submission manager. Workflow and other advanced features can often be purchased for an additional fee.

Examples: SeeClickFix (seeclickfix.com) and Public Stuff (publicstuff.com): \$7,000-\$11,000/year

Tier Three: Products in the tier three include all features as above at no additional cost, and typically provide any and all functionality needed for a citizen request system. These products typically provide the maximum return on investment if a municipality is ready and

willing to fully utilize the feature set included in these products.

Example: QAlert by QScend (qscend.com): \$10,000/year

PERMITTING AND LICENSING

Purpose: Much of municipal regulatory work falls into the category of permitting and licensing, and the inspection process connected to many of those permits. In order for a fully functioning regulatory body to be efficient, an electronic system to process these items is needed. In the most efficient version of this system, the applicants will apply and track the progress of their request directly through the system. System functionality varies greatly, as do the number of departments each system can accommodate. Attention should be paid to whether or not a system has online application or portal functionality, mobile capabilities for inspectors, and multi-departmental workflow. The costs below are based on 10 user licenses for a small municipality under 9,000 in population.

Tier One: A state-run web-hosted application offered to municipalities is strictly for use in a Uniformed Construction Code Department. This application provides very basic functionality needed to run a construction department. There is no

known or planned integration with other departmental systems. Contact the NJ Department of Community Affairs for more information. The system run by the State of NJ at no cost to the user is called Permits NJ (<http://bit.ly/permitsnj>).

Tier Two: Solutions at this level begin to incorporate multi-departmental workflow as an option. Some are web-hosted solutions, while others may be Windows based local applications. Nearly all solutions will include a fully featured Uniform Construction Code module and integration with GIS. They will, however, vary in what other departments they can service with permits and licenses. Many solutions at this level have mobile applications and web-based payments integrations.

Example: SmartGov
(smartgovcommunity.com):
\$14,000/year

Tier Three: Software offered at this level tend to have the most integration across departments, often times being able to track inter-departmental workflow easily. They will have fully featured mobile and web portal applications, as well as implementing workflow for the widest range of departments. These solutions build on the tier two solutions. They integrate citizen request mobile applications, OPRA Tracking, and complaint management, and can take the place of a CRM program, thus providing added return on investment.

Examples: SDL Desktop/SDL Portal/SDL Mobile (spaitaldatalogic.com) and GovPilot (govpilot.com): up to \$15,000/year



THE SAMPLE BELOW SHOULD BE REVIEWED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY LEGAL COUNCIL PRIOR TO ADOPTION AND ALL ITEMS IN BRACKETS < > SHOULD BE REPLACED WITH THE APPROPRIATE TITLE OR DEPARTMENT AS APPLICABLE TO YOUR GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY

<SAMPLE TOWN> – SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

POLICY/PURPOSE

The <SAMPLE TOWN> will employ the use of social media websites to maximize its reach to citizens within the municipality. The <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> may operate Facebook, Twitter and YouTube sites for this purpose. The creation of additional pages on such sites may only be created by authorization of the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> <CAO>.

The <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> recognizes employees may choose to express themselves by posting personal information on the Internet through social media sites, personal websites, blogs, or chat rooms, by uploading content and photographs, or by making comments on other websites or blogs. The <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> respects the rights and interests of its employees to engage in these forms of personal expression, should they choose to do so. However, to provide a clear line between the employee as an individual and as an employee of the <SAMPLE TOWN>,

employees are expected to follow the guidelines and policies set forth in this policy. This policy is not intended to conflict with the protections afforded by the U.S. Constitution.

Section 1: SOCIAL MEDIA FOR OFFICAL <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> USE

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

a. Information posted to any <SAMPLE TOWN> social media site must be approved by the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> <CAO> or his/her designee and must be consistent with the mission of the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>'s governing body. For the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>'s primary social networking sites, such as its official Facebook page, Twitter and YouTube pages, content will only be posted by the <Director of Information Technology> and his or her support staff, in accordance with its practices for disseminating other forms of public information. Typically, that involves securing input from affected departments (department heads or their designees) and appropriate management in the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> <CAO>'s Office. Content posted to social media sites may include news releases, approved photos and videos, agendas, announcements, promotional tools, and similar materials.

2. SOCIAL MEDIA SITE BENEFITS

- a. Provide an excellent resource for communicating the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>'s various messages and promoting <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> services, programs and initiatives.
- b. Allow real-time interaction with citizens, thus enabling us to better serve citizens' needs.
- c. Increased efficiency as it pertains to the posting of information, news, events and high-level materials.
- d. Providing a nontraditional support device to internal departments and divisions for promoting events, partnerships and other <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>-driven initiatives and opportunities.
- e. Additional advertising tool for increasing traffic on the <SAMPLE TOWN>

main website.

3. GUIDELINES

- a. The <Information Technology Department> under the direction of the <Director of Information Technology> will create and maintain the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>'s official Social Media accounts. All account activity will be reviewed by the <Director of Information Technology>. A generic email address will be used for all account establishments, along with passwords for such accounts being logged following standard procedure for all Information Technology accounts at account onset, as well as updated information logged whenever changed.
- b. All information to be distributed via Social Media shall be created through the website and disseminated to the official social media accounts of the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>. In some rare cases content may be generated on the social media platform directly; however the information should close with a call to action driving visitors back to the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> Website.
- c. Under certain circumstances, a <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> Department may want to create and maintain social media applications that are separate from those maintained by the <IT Department>. Departments are required to get approval from the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> <CAO> before implementing departmental specific social media applications and/or accounts.
- d. Departments must provide specific justification and reasons as to why the department wants to create a separate social media applications. If approved by the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> <CAO>, the Department Head and <Director of Information Technology> will review each application. Applications that do not meet the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>'s intended goals and objectives may be removed at any time with approval of the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> <CAO>
- e. Departments that use social media are responsible for complying with applicable federal, state and <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> laws, regulations and policies. This includes adherence to established laws and policies regarding copyright, records retention, the Open Public Records Act ("OPRA") and other

protected information such as Personal Identifiable Information ("PII"). Confidential information such as HIPAA protected content must remain confidential.

- a. Should a Department be approved for a separate social media presence, staff must be identified who will be responsible for updating the social media sites. Staff must ensure that any social media updates on work time should be performed in adherence with the employee's direct scope of work and responsibilities, with the best interest of the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> paramount in their postings and compliance with all <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> policy. Activities and uses identified in the following section as unacceptable uses are prohibited.
- f. Some avenues to allow user comments should be turned off where possible, including discussion boards, "walls" and comment sections.
- g. If the public is allowed to post comments to a social media account or page, the following posts are inconsistent with the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>'s policies and will not be allowed:
 - i. Obscene or racist content
 - ii. Offensive language or images
 - iii. Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
 - iv. Potentially libelous statements
 - v. Plagiarized material
 - vi. Private, personal information published without consent
 - vii. Comments totally unrelated to the content of the forum
 - viii. Hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion
 - ix. Commercial promotions or spam
 - x. Fundraising activities not sponsored by <SAMPLE TOWN>
 - xi. Organized political activity

h. Anyone may become a “fan” of the site. However, individuals who display objectionable profile pictures on the Town’s social media sites will be removed from the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> pages, as soon as possible.

i. <SAMPLE TOWN> has the right to post, remove, delete or choose not to post any materials on any social media sites that officially represent the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> and/or its departments.

Section 2: PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE AS AN EMPLOYEE OF THE <SAMPLE TOWN>

As with other forms of public communication, such as telephone and email, employees who engage in the use of social media are personally responsible for the content they publish.

1. Guidelines:

a. Engagement on any social media platform on work time should be performed in adherence with the employee’s direct scope of work and responsibilities, with the best interest of the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> paramount in their postings and compliance with all <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> policy.

b. Employees must conduct themselves in a professional and positive tone.

c. Employees must never use a <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> email address in combination with a personal social media site. Employees are reminded that <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> email accounts are the property of the <SAMPLE TOWN> and subject to monitoring.

d. Employees should be aware that personal postings may be read by not only friends and family, but possibly by co-workers, supervisors, <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> residents, and the media. Even if posted anonymously or under a pseudonym, identities can be discovered relatively easily. Employees should be careful when deciding what to include in a post or comment and always act in a manner that would not negatively impact the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>. If employees choose to identify themselves as a <SAMPLE TOWN> employee on their personal social media accounts and even those that do not should be aware that he or she may be viewed as acting on behalf of the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>, as such no employee shall:

- i. Knowingly represent themselves as a spokesperson of the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>
- ii. Post any comment , text, photo, audio, video or other multimedia file that negatively reflects upon the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>, expresses views that are detrimental to the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>'s mission or undermine the public trust or is insulting or offensive to other individuals or to the public in regard to religion, sex, race or national origin.
- e. <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> employees are encouraged to exercise extreme caution posting photographs of themselves in uniform or in situations where they can be readily identified as <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> employees.
- f. No <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> employee shall post internal working documents to social media sites. This includes, but is not limited to, screenshots of computer stations, pictures of monitors and/or actual documents themselves without the prior approval of the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> <CAO>.
- g. A public blog and/or social media account is not to be used to communicate internal <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> policies for employees or to air disputes or grievances.
- h. These guidelines may continually evolve as new technologies and social networking tools emerge. The Director of Information Technology will review social media site usage and provide policy recommendations to the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> <CAO> on a continuing basis.

2. Unacceptable Uses of Social Media

- a. Accessing, messaging or printing sensitive materials including, but not limited to, illegal activities, gambling, sexually explicit materials, weapons, drugs, violence or materials that include inappropriate language, profanity, obscenity, racial, ethnic or discriminatory comments, defamatory statements or otherwise inappropriate content (to include statements such as partisan political positions, religious positions and other statements that may subject the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>, its mission, or its employees to be viewed in a

light that is not in the best interest of <SAMPLE TOWN>) is strictly prohibited.

3. Failure to Comply

a. Each department is responsible for ensuring compliance with this directive. Failure to adhere to these requirements may result in the removal of department pages or information from social media outlets. Employees may lose the privilege to use their electronic devices and/or telecommunication equipment and may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Section 3: DISCLAIMER

The <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> does not warrant or make representations or endorsements as to the quality, content, suitability, accuracy or completeness of the information, text, graphics, links and other items contained on this server or any other server. Such materials have been compiled from a variety of sources, and are subject to change without notice from <SAMPLE TOWN>. Except to the extent required by law, commercial use of the materials is prohibited without the written permission of the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>.

Some of the links on this and subsequent pages may lead to resources outside the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> government. The presence of these links should not be construed as an endorsement by <SAMPLE TOWN> of these sites or their content. The <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> is not responsible for the content of any such external link. <SAMPLE TOWN> specifically disclaims any and all liability for any claims or damages that may result from providing the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> website or information it contains, including any web sites maintained by third parties and linked to the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> web site. The responsibility for content rests with the third party organizations that are providing the information.

The following posts are inconsistent with the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY>'s policies and will not be allowed:

- Obscene or racist content
- Offensive language or images

- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libelous statements
- Plagiarized material
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Comments totally unrelated to the content of the forum
- Hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Fundraising activities not sponsored by <SAMPLE TOWN>
- Organized political activity

Anyone may become a “fan” of the site. However, individuals who display objectionable profile pictures on the Town’s social media sites will be removed from the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> pages, as soon as possible.

<SAMPLE TOWN> has the right to post, remove, delete or choose not to post any materials on any social media sites that officially represent the <GOVERNMENT ENTITY> and/or its departments.

Except to the extent required by law, communications made through e-mail and comments posted shall in no way be deemed to constitute legal notice to <SAMPLE TOWN>



Websites

Municipal Website

www.franklin-twp.org

All Communications with residents/visitors/business both for routine operations and emergent needs.

Social Media

N/A

Emergency Communications

Nixle

Used for emergency notifications

Newsletter

Franklin Facts

Hard Copy

Distributed to all residents twice a year, includes articles of interest, upcoming events, etc.



Sustainable Jersey
at The Sustainability Institute at
The College of New Jersey
P.O. Box 6855
Ewing, NJ 08628
www.sustainablejersey.com
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