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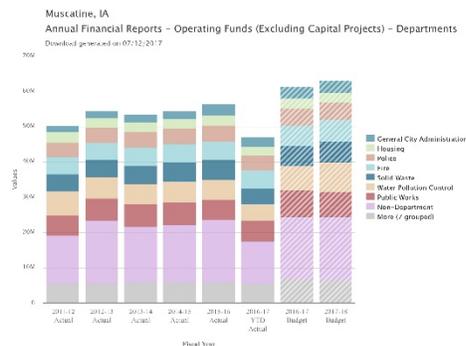
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 13, 2017

## CITY OF MUSCATINE UNVEILS NEW TRANSPARENCY TOOL

*Public can take look inside city finances, other data with OpenGov program*

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – A new software program will allow the public and elected officials an inside look at where City of Muscatine funds are spent and where that money comes from. Powered by OpenGov, this transparency tool is able to create easy to understand graphs of City finances and, eventually, other non-financial data.



These graphs begin with an overall picture and can be drilled down to more select information for each department, each project, and each expense of the City of Muscatine.

The development of this new tool was spearheaded by City Administrator Gregg Mandsager and City Finance Director Nancy Lueck who had seen the demonstrations of the software at conferences during the past two years.

It wasn't until the City Council added the purchase of the OpenGov software to the budget during a March 2017 meeting that the first steps were taken. Once the contract was signed, the

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Muscatine Finance Department began to work with OpenGov to upload financial records (some going back seven years) and begin the process of building the Muscatine sight.

“We recognized the benefits of this transparency tool and went right to work creating the Muscatine OpenGov site,” Lueck said.

The City of Muscatine and OpenGov held an on-site training session in June and just four weeks later are ready to go public with the new tool.

“We want to be as transparent as possible,” Mandsager said. “We receive a lot of questions about where money is spent and this is a great way for the public to see the answers for themselves.”

Although the site will be limited to financial data at first, other types of data from the City’s other departments will be added in the months to come including data from the police and fire departments, community development, housing, etc.

This is not only a good tool for elected officials and the public, but it is also a good tool for City staff as they plan and manage their department budgets. Each department has metrics that can be used to identify areas of strengths, areas of weaknesses, and where adjustments need to be made during a fiscal year. It will also help with budget preparation in succeeding years.

The landing page at [muscatineiowa.gov](http://muscatineiowa.gov) includes a video that demonstrates how to use the web site, a downloadable PDF detailing the four reports presently available, and an additional link to the Muscatine OpenGov site.

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The OpenGov site opens with the Annual Financial Reports – Operating Funds (excluding Capital Projects). The site also contains at present a Monthly Report of all Operating Funds (excluding Capital Projects), a report on Capital Projects, and a multi-year open checkbook. Each of these reports has several different views that the user can open to begin the process of drilling down to the information the user is interested in.

The site also contains a “help” list in the upper right where you can access additional instructions on the use of the site or to send a message (question or comment) to the City of Muscatine about the new site. Please include your name and email address so that the City of Muscatine can answer your questions or respond to your comments.

OpenGov Muscatine can be accessed from the City of Muscatine web site ([www.muscatineiowa.gov](http://www.muscatineiowa.gov)) and clicking on the OpenGov button located just below the main picture on the page.



[OpenGov Muscatine](#)