



Overview

Since 2006, the City of Oakland and Granicus have been partners as the City seeks to enhance its transparency and citizen engagement efforts. Over the years, the City has worked with Granicus to build out a comprehensive system that “mirrors the needs of the legislative process,” according to City Clerk LaTonda Simmons.

Population

433,823

Solutions

Legistar, Legislate, Votecast, Minutes, eComment, Video, SpeakUp, govDelivery and Boards & Commissions

THE CITY OF OAKLAND AND GRANICUS: AN E-GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

SITUATION

Office Mayhem Impedes Productivity

When LaTonda Simmons first joined the City Clerk’s office in Oakland, she was surprised by what she describes as “mayhem” around the office. “There were people literally running in the hallways,” she says, trying to create agendas and finalize minutes from meetings. Citizens had no good avenue to give feedback. The boards and commissions process was difficult to navigate and keep track of, and inefficient processes made it difficult to publish minutes in a timely manner.

SOLUTION

A Commitment to Transparency Leads to More Efficiency

When Simmons took over as City Clerk in 2005, she was determined to make the office run more efficiently and openly. In 2006, the City began to stream their city council meetings through Granicus’ Webcasting solution. “This is a very high-value relationship that we have,” Simmons says of the partnership between the City and Granicus. Simmons believes that broadcasting meetings helps dictate, drive and improve how legislation moves through the municipality’s workflow.



Additionally, with the City managing 35 very different boards and commissions, the appointment processes were previously very difficult to track and manage. Since there are no unilateral board positions, and every board has different bylaws and membership requirements, the process for citizens to become board members was previously convoluted and difficult to navigate. “There was no centralized place for the public to apply,” says Simmons. “Citizens had to go to the government offices to fill out an application, and it was a different location depending on which board or commission they were applying for. It was a huge undertaking as a manual process.”

Now, with Boards and Commissions, everything is in one centralized place. Clerk staff



“We are more effective because of Granicus, and we meet the needs of the public in a more dynamic way than we were doing before.”

-LaTonda Simmons

and the departments in charge of the individual boards have the ability to make each application different to fit its membership requirements. All data is stored in one place, and citizens are able to access all of the applications from a single point on the City’s website rather than jumping from site to site.

govDelivery has also helped Oakland increase their audience and connect with citizens on a regular basis. In March 2017, the City of Oakland reached over 55,000 subscribers, gaining 5,000 subscribers in the previous year by using the govDelivery Network and a website overlay to increase visibility. Communicating regularly about everything from road closures to disaster relief for weather-related impacts throughout the city, Oakland’s engagement rate of nearly 60 percent has helped keep more citizens informed and engaged in their programs

The City of Oakland uses govDelivery to send email updates when meetings and agendas are posted online to their Legistar platform. With these integrated tools, Oakland is maximizing engagement with citizens and ensuring easy access to important information on upcoming City Council meetings.

Citizen engagement has increased as a direct result of these efforts. Citizen feedback through eComment is sent directly to Council members through Legistate, allowing them to easily view public opinion on certain issues. And because the City of Oakland receives a great deal of feedback from its highly involved citizens, having these tools makes chronicling this feedback a much simpler task.

“The tools are robust enough not just to receive the information, but to also deliver it to our Council, and that to me is an incredible standard of transparency and public participation,” Simmons says. “It’s a win-win, and it speaks for itself.”

METRICS

60%

ENGAGEMENT RATE

55,000

SUBSCRIBERS

RESULTS

- Developed what was once a cumbersome process into one that’s quick and painless.
- Has increased citizen engagement to nearly 55,000 subscribers.
- Easily manages process of 35 Boards and Commissions.



ABOUT GRANICUS

Granicus brings governments and public service organizations closer to the people they serve—driving meaningful change for communities around the globe. With comprehensive cloud-based solutions for communications, government website design, meeting and agenda management software, records management, and digital services, Granicus empowers stronger relationships between public sector organizations and their communities across the U.S., U.K., Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

For more information on Granicus, visit granicus.com.