

2017



US MUNICIPALITIES

WEBSITE CLARITY INDEX



Executive Summary	2
Key Findings	4
Detailed Results Table	7
Methodology – what are the metrics?	20
About VisibleThread	21

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1

Executive Summary

- The [Plain Writing Act of 2010](#) mandates clear communications for U.S. citizens. The Act requires federal agencies use writing that is clear, concise, well-organized and appropriate to the intended audience. While this law helps citizens understand federal government messages more easily, has the plain writing act been adopted by municipalities?
- While it is clear that plain writing helps citizens’ comprehension, it also helps government agencies and municipalities in the following manner:
 - **Improve engagement and compliance:** when more people understand what you want them to do they are more likely to do it. For example, the state of Washington Department of Revenue agency estimates it collected \$800k in extra revenue after rewriting just one tax collection letter.¹ Likewise, when people understand agency programs and services, they are more likely to be effective.
 - **Reduce costs:** When people know what the government asks of them, there's a better chance they'll comply. Improved compliance reduces the need for costly extra mailings, follow-up calls and even litigation. In one example, The Veterans Administration revised a letter asking beneficiaries to update contact information. The effort saved the VA \$8 million in follow-up costs.²
- VisibleThread’s report measures the clarity of written content in 275 municipalities. VisibleThread measured up to 100 pages on each website, across four dimensions:
 - [Readability](#) – How readable is the content?
 - [Passive Language](#) – Active Language communicates clearly. What proportion of sentences is passive?
 - [Long Sentences](#) – What proportion of all sentences are too long?
 - [Word Complexity Density](#) – Complex words make web pages hard to understand.

¹ http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2006-12-10-washington-plain-talk_x.htm & <http://www.governor.wa.gov/priorities/plaintalk/default.asp>

² <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/obama-signs-law-understand/story?id=11902841>

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



The results of the analysis are as follows:

The top 5 Municipalities were:

1. [EAST PRAIRIE MO](#)
2. [AUBURN AL](#)
3. [WATERTOWN MA](#)
4. [TRUMBULL CT](#)
5. [MASSILLON OH](#)

VisibleThread Web Index				Municipalities Q1 2017										Num Words	
Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank		
1	EAST PRAIRIE	MO	East Prairie Clerk	http://www.eastprairiemo.net	30	9.25	61	15	3%	11	4%	2	1.04	9	2992
2	AUBURN	AL	Auburn City Info Technology	http://www.auburnalabama.org	100	16.5	85	1	3%	5	12%	52	1.00	8	54184
3	WATERTOWN	MA	Watertown Town Council	http://www.watertown-ma.gov	100	17.5	59	22	3%	8	4%	1	1.80	39	16863
4	TRUMBULL	CT	Trumbull Town Hall	http://www.trumbull-ct.gov	101	20.5	81	2	4%	24	6%	7	1.90	49	59031
5	MASSILLON	OH	Massillon Public Service Dept	http://www.massillon.com	100	21.5	76	3	4%	19	13%	63	0.54	1	65738

The bottom 5 Municipalities were:

271. [LONG BEACH CA](#)
272. [BELLEVUE NE](#)
273. [TOPEKA KS](#)
274. [LANCASTER CA](#)
275. [NEWARK CA](#)

VisibleThread Web Index				Municipalities Q1 2017										Num Words	
Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank		
271	LONG BEACH	CA	Long Beach Enterprise Zone	http://www.longbeach.gov	101	231	44	213	14%	259	31%	273	3.59	179	56294
272	BELLEVUE	NE	City-Bellevue Building Dept	http://www.bellevue.net	100	231.75	43	227	16%	270	19%	177	7.40	253	16773
273	TOPEKA	KS	Topeka Engineering Division	http://www.topeka.org	100	234.75	40	247	12%	229	22%	234	4.97	229	24732
274	LANCASTER	PA	Lancaster Wastewater Operation	http://www.lacso.org	100	243.5	32	264	15%	268	36%	275	3.44	167	66293
275	NEWARK	CA	City of Newark	http://www.newark.org	103	252.5	39	251	14%	255	27%	265	5.95	239	26863

Average Scores: The average scores from the sample group are as follows:

- Readability = 36
- Passive voice = 9%
- Long Sentences = 17%
- Complex sentences = 3.71

It is clear that long sentences contribute significantly to the overall poor readability on municipality websites.

Key Findings

Clear Language:

The following guideline definitions will help you understand the information we present in the Key Findings section:

- **Readability** – a score of 60 or higher is the target, approximately a year 9 equivalent reading level.
- **Passive language** – 4% or less is the target.
- **Long Sentences** – 5% or less across all content is the target.
- **Word Complexity Density** – How many complex, hard-to-understand words does the content contain?

Ranking criteria are defined in detail in the Methodology section.

Kings of the county and Paupers of the parish

East Prairie, MO came top of the 2017 Municipality rankings in this study. It scored very well in all 4 categories.

Auburn, AL which came in a creditable 2nd overall was only let down by a high percentage of long sentences which stopped it taking the top spot. Its readability score of 85 is one of the highest ever encountered by visible thread in any sector.

Unfortunately, the City of Newark, CA website fell well below VisibleThread's target scores in all categories. Shockingly, over a quarter (27%) of all sentences encountered contained more than 25 words. It was also very close to bottom of the rankings for use of passive voice. Its readability score was also in the bottom 20%. These factors combined negatively affected its overall clear writing score.

Similarly, Lancaster, CA fared very poorly in the analysis. Over 1 in 3 of the sentences encountered (36%) contained more than 25 words. Only an average score on complex sentence structure ensured that it did not take over the bottom spot.

The clear writing index shows a wide spread of overall scores ranging from 9.25 (good) to 252.5 (very poor). This indicates a lack of consistency in understanding and adopting clear writing guidelines. This is despite a very visible and much publicized campaign around the Plain Language act of 2010.

Only 21 of the municipality websites analyzed (7.6%) managed to achieve a target readability index of 60 or higher. This reinforces the long-held perception that municipality websites are [difficult to read](#), often ignoring clear writing practices.

Leaders and losers by category

Readability: Twenty-one out of the 275 municipalities achieved a target readability index score of 60 or higher (7.6%). Auburn, AL scored a tremendous 85 and Trumbull, CT scored a creditable 81.

Passive language: Twenty-five of the websites analyzed (9%) met the target Passive Language score of 4%. The pages analyzed on the Orlando, FL [water conservation website](#) were all written in the active voice. The [Fallon City, NV](#) website only wrote 1% of its content in the passive voice. [Auburn City, NY](#) and [Brentwood, CA](#) came bottom with 19% and 18% of the content analyzed using the passive voice respectively.

Long sentences: Only 3 municipalities (1.1%) managed to meet the target score of 5%. These are [Watertown, MA](#), [East Prairie, MO](#) and [Cresson, PA](#). The remaining municipality websites ranged between 6% and an eye-watering 38%. The website using the highest percentage of long sentences was [Lancaster, CA](#). Over one third of its website content comprised sentences of more than 25 words.

Complex Language:

[Massillon, OH](#) and [Narragansett, RI](#) came first and second in the complex language category. Their websites used simple sentences consistently across the entirety of the pages analyzed. A special mention goes out to Ferguson City, MO which, while mid-table on average, came a worthy third in this category. The cities of [Knoxville, TN](#) and [Caldwell, ID](#) were the tail-enders in this category. Knoxville, TN in particular was last by a clear margin demonstrating the need for significant improvement.

Room for Improvement: The worst performing municipality websites were Long Beach, CA, Bellevue, NE, Topeka, KS, Lancaster CA and Newark, CA.

Factors making these the worst performers were:

- high proportion of long sentences (between 19% and 31%);
- high levels of passive language (12% to 16%);
- high degrees of complex language (density between 3.44 and 7.40).

Editors should use active language in sentences like this:

Prior to the implementation of any physical traffic calming measures, the City Engineer shall perform traffic studies to determine traffic volumes and speeds, and work with interested and concerned residents to determine which traffic calming measures are most appropriate and feasible to implement on specific streets.

Note: We found this sentence on the City of Newark, CA website

Before doing any traffic calming, the City Engineer will do some research. He will work with residents to find the best solution for each street.

1 sentence, 46 words, passive voice => 2 sentences, 25 words, active voice.

Takeaways:

1. **Wide variability between best and worst performers**

There is very wide variability between the highest and lowest scoring websites. This applies across all metrics.

For example, readability ranges from 85 (out of 100) for 1st place Auburn, AL in contrast to a lowly 18 for [Muskego, WI](#). This implies that someone reading the Muskego, WI website would need a considerably high level of comprehension; while a person in only their fifth year of education can make sense of the Auburn, AL website.

2. **Municipalities can dramatically improve clarity by focusing on a few key areas**

Many websites scored well in certain areas and poorly in others.

For instance, [West Haven, CT](#) ranks 81st overall. However, it ranks a much higher (19th) on readability but very poorly (229th) in the use long sentences. Rapid improvement to the website is possible by paying a little extra attention to the relevant key metrics.

3. **Sites catering to non-native English speakers have room for improvement**

The United States has always been a multi-cultural society. Most of the sites analyzed use English as the core (and often only) language. Improving the clarity of messages, improves the comprehension of those visiting the website for whom English is not the primary language.

For those websites, which use more than one language, improving the clarity of the content in the primary language improves the readability and understanding when translating into other languages.

Our results indicate that, for most websites analyzed, there remains considerable work to do to bring all municipality websites up-to-scratch.

4. **Improving online clarity can reduce costs**

Municipality websites, which have improved the clarity of their online content, can save significant sums of money. They can also make themselves more attractive to prospective visitors, residents and businesses.

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1

Detailed Results Table

We show the full detailed table below.

Color-coding helps us to understand sites where one or two specific scores may be dragging down the overall ranking. Flagging specific areas (for instance, passive language) pinpoints areas for improvement.

KEY: **Green** = On or near target, **Amber** = Some work needed, **Red** = Well below target level



Municipalities Q1 2017

	Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing		Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words
						Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank		
1	EAST PRAIRIE	MO	East Prairie Clerk	http://www.eastprairiemo.net	30	9.25	61	15	3%	11	4%	2	1.04	9	2992	
2	AUBURN	AL	Auburn City Info Technology	http://www.auburnalabama.org	100	16.5	85	1	3%	5	12%	52	1.00	8	54184	
3	WATERTOWN	MA	Watertown Town Council	http://www.watertown-ma.gov	100	17.5	59	22	3%	8	4%	1	1.80	39	16863	
4	TRUMBULL	CT	Trumbull Town Hall	http://www.trumbull-ct.gov	101	20.5	81	2	4%	24	6%	7	1.90	49	59031	
5	MASSILLON	OH	Massillon Public Service Dept	http://www.massillon.com	100	21.5	76	3	4%	19	13%	63	0.54	1	65738	
6	NARRAGANSETT	RI	Narragansett Engineering Department	http://www.narragansettri.com	29	23	56	36	3%	7	12%	47	0.65	2	5842	
7	COMMERCE CITY	CO	Commerce City Housing	http://www.c3gov.com	100	26.5	62	12	5%	32	5%	4	2.03	58	30712	
8	NEWARK	NJ	Motors Division	http://www.newark.com	103	26.75	64	9	4%	25	6%	6	2.15	67	99623	
9	CRESSON	PA	Cresson Township Garage	http://www.cressonarea.com	101	32	67	6	8%	115	5%	3	0.79	4	5089	
10	GARY	IN	Calumet Township	http://www.calumettwp-in.gov	63	33	56	36	4%	18	5%	5	2.28	73	10264	
11	CRAWFORDSVILLE	IN	Crawfordsville Street Commissioner	http://www.crawfordsville.org	101	34.75	57	30	3%	6	8%	13	2.48	90	17746	
11	SAN DIEGO	CA	San Diego Volunteers	http://www.sandiego.gov	100	34.75	55	46	4%	17	9%	17	2.04	59	65166	
13	MOSIER	OR	Mosier City Office	http://www.cityofmosier.com	100	36.75	58	25	6%	53	12%	49	1.42	20	19404	
14	WINTERS	CA	Winters Sewer Department	http://www.cityofwinters.org	100	43.75	56	36	3%	13	16%	115	1.13	11	142222	

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



Municipalities Q1 2017

	Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing	Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words
						Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	
15	WORCESTER	MA	Pearl Elm Garage	http://www.worcestermass.org	101	49.5	48	152	3%	9	10%	30	0.91	7	26561
16	MARION	MA	Marion Building Dept	http://www.marionma.gov	100	50.25	61	15	6%	37	16%	117	1.59	32	14752
17	KANSAS CITY	MO	Kansas City Information Tech	http://www.kcftp.com	100	50.5	58	25	4%	20	17%	139	1.36	18	29475
18	AUBURN	WA	City of Auburn Mayor	http://www.auburnwa.gov	101	50.75	50	119	4%	23	6%	8	1.94	53	107177
19	BENTON	AR	Benton City Hall	http://www.bentonar.org	101	52.75	61	15	10%	161	9%	20	1.30	15	16737
20	SAN LUIS OBISPO	CA	San Luis Obispo Engineering	http://www.sanluisobispo.com	101	55.75	54	59	6%	52	15%	91	1.46	21	58463
21	FALLON	NV	Fallon City Police Department	http://www.cityoffallon.com	100	57.5	44	213	1%	2	6%	9	0.85	6	29735
22	MEDINA	OH	City of Medina Building Dept	http://www.medinaoh.org	102	59.75	50	119	5%	31	10%	24	2.13	65	23284
23	LIBERTY	NY	Town of Liberty Town Clerk	http://www.townofliberty.org	100	61	59	22	9%	147	14%	70	0.81	5	12670
24	PATERSON	NJ	Paterson Engineering Department	http://www.patersonnj.gov	100	61.5	55	46	2%	3	10%	23	3.52	174	7363
25	FARMINGTON	NM	Farmington City Engineer	http://www.fmtn.org	100	64	54	59	8%	84	14%	76	1.72	37	45553
26	FORT FAIRFIELD	ME	Fort Fairfield Town Office	http://www.fortfairfield.org	100	66.5	58	25	4%	20	11%	34	3.76	187	23830
27	HAMPTON	VA	Public Works Traffic Engineering	http://www.hampton.gov	101	67.25	55	46	6%	54	10%	28	3.10	141	41050
28	CHARLOTTE	NC	Ovens Auditorium	http://www.ovensauditorium.com	87	67.5	49	136	5%	36	14%	72	1.51	26	12482
29	RIO RANCHO	NM	Booneville City Hall	http://www.southlogan.com	61	68.5	53	68	7%	77	16%	106	1.46	23	9633
30	DULUTH	MN	Duluth City Council	http://www.duluthmn.gov	100	70	49	136	6%	55	11%	41	1.90	48	43626
31	MARTIN	TN	Martin City Hall	http://www.cityofmartin.net	100	70.5	61	15	7%	75	10%	27	3.39	165	19248
32	LYNNWOOD	WA	Brier City Hall	http://ci.brier.wa.us	100	72.75	48	152	6%	51	14%	71	1.34	17	21753
33	HAMMOND	IN	Hammond Mayor's Office	http://www.gohammond.com	100	73.75	56	36	9%	149	15%	82	1.55	28	42091
34	NEWBURGH	NY	Newburgh Engineer	http://www.townofnewburgh.org	102	74.25	70	5	8%	92	12%	42	3.32	158	13414
35	AKRON	OH	Akron Sewer Department	http://www.akronohio.gov	100	78	66	8	6%	50	7%	10	6.10	244	31828
36	FORT WORTH	TX	Fort Worth It Solutions	http://www.cmitfortworth.com	25	78.75	47	175	5%	27	16%	103	1.08	10	6006
37	MIDLAND	MI	Midland City Engineering Department	http://www.midland-mi.org	100	80	56	36	8%	104	16%	111	2.16	69	58737

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



Municipalities Q1 2017

	Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing		Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words
						Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank		
38	SCHILLER PARK	IL	Schiller Park Village Hall	http://www.villageofschillerpark.com	100	81	62	12	6%	38	11%	39	5.49	235	13215	
38	SPIRIT LAKE	IA	City of Spirit Lake City Administrator	http://www.cityofspiritlake.org	100	81	60	19	6%	39	10%	29	5.75	237	8802	
40	DANVILLE	VA	Danville City Engineering	http://www.danvillepublicworks.org	27	81.25	75	4	8%	99	11%	40	3.66	182	5516	
41	LOCKPORT	NY	Lockport Supervisor	http://www.elockport.com	100	81.75	58	25	9%	122	14%	68	2.74	112	11232	
42	FORT ATKINSON	WI	Fort Atkinson Municipal Office	http://www.fortatkinsonwi.net	101	82.25	56	36	9%	153	15%	80	2.07	60	28854	
43	SEATTLE	WA	Seattle Claim Division	http://www.seattlechannel.org	100	82.5	55	46	7%	56	8%	14	4.53	214	12713	
44	MADISON	WI	Madison Engineering Division	http://www.cityofmadison.com	101	84	52	90	7%	57	12%	44	3.18	145	21730	
45	HARLEYSVILLE	PA	Lower Salford Township Sewer Authority	http://www.lowersalfordtownship.org	46	85	53	68	9%	137	15%	81	1.95	54	25387	
46	BROOKLINE	MA	Brookline Town Counsel's Office	http://www.brooklinema.gov	100	85.25	47	175	4%	15	9%	21	2.92	130	24437	
47	FRISCO	TX	City Hall	http://www.friscotexas.gov	100	85.75	53	68	7%	70	13%	59	3.19	146	12424	
48	EAST HAVEN	CT	Town of East Haven Building Dept	http://www.townofeasthavenct.org	100	87.5	58	25	7%	62	11%	37	4.85	226	15372	
49	WICKLIFFE	OH	City of Wickliffe City Hall	http://www.cityofwickliffe.com	100	88.25	53	68	10%	183	15%	78	1.50	24	18609	
50	GRANTS PASS	OR	Grants Pass Drainage Department	http://www.grantspassoregon.gov	100	89.75	62	12	8%	109	13%	58	3.61	180	20672	
51	WACO	TX	Waco Facility Service Department	http://www.waco-texas.com	100	90.75	51	103	8%	108	12%	43	2.68	109	45221	
52	BREA	CA	Brea City Engineering	http://www.cityofbrea.net	103	91	54	59	7%	65	11%	36	4.34	204	25104	
53	BUFFALO	NY	Kenmore Village Clerk	http://www.villageofkenmore.org	100	92.25	64	9	16%	271	7%	11	2.36	78	16007	
54	KUTZTOWN	PA	Kutztown Borough Of	http://www.kutztownboro.org	78	93	54	59	9%	129	11%	35	3.25	149	14629	
55	HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK	AR	City of Hot Springs Wastewater	http://www.cityhs.net	100	93.75	55	46	7%	72	16%	118	3.07	139	18898	
56	STOCKTON	CA	Stockton City Engineer	http://www.stocktongov.com	100	94.5	39	251	2%	4	8%	16	2.67	107	49768	
57	GUTHRIE	OK	Guthrie City Manager	http://www.cityofguthrie.com	100	95.25	51	103	3%	12	18%	155	2.74	111	14570	
58	COVINGTON	TN	Covington City Hall	http://www.covingtontn.com	84	96	56	36	9%	155	18%	153	1.80	40	19669	
59	DERBY	KS	Derby City	http://www.derbyweb.com	100	97	52	90	6%	43	20%	192	2.11	63	24340	
59	TRAVERSE CITY	MI	Traverse City Light & Power	http://www.tclp.org	100	97	52	90	8%	89	15%	101	2.68	108	10758	

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



Municipalities Q1 2017

	Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing		Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words
						Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank		
61	BATESVILLE	IN	Batesville Wastewater Trtmnt	http://www.batesvilleindiana.us	100	97.75	0	275	5%	33	10%	31	1.93	52	33165	
62	KAYSVILLE	UT	Kaysville City Cemetery	http://www.kaysvillecity.com	100	98.25	57	30	10%	157	12%	46	3.33	160	25984	
63	PENDLETON	OR	Pendleton City Admin	http://www.pendleton.or.us	100	99	46	185	8%	79	15%	102	1.57	30	29306	
64	WEST ORANGE	NJ	West Orange Township Engineering	http://www.westorange.org	100	99.5	53	68	6%	41	17%	127	3.36	162	25539	
65	MARYVILLE	IL	Maryville City Hall	http://www.maryville-il.us	100	100.75	64	9	7%	60	28%	268	2.14	66	19396	
66	TROY	MO	Troy City Hall	http://www.cityoftroymissouri.com	47	101.25	57	30	10%	168	17%	124	2.41	83	10376	
67	SEATTLE	WA	City Of Des Moines City Hall	http://www.desmoineswa.gov	100	101.5	55	46	9%	141	14%	69	3.25	150	12872	
68	HUTTO	TX	Hutto City Code Enforcement	http://www.huttotx.gov	100	102	50	119	6%	46	21%	218	1.50	25	42499	
69	UNIONTOWN	OH	City of Green Finance	http://www.cityofgreen.org	100	102.25	54	59	8%	89	8%	15	6.28	246	31875	
70	SEARCY	AR	Searcy City Treasurer	http://www.searcy.com	101	102.5	48	152	6%	40	19%	162	2.01	56	30950	
71	PITTSBURGH	PA	Blair Township	http://www.blairco.org	100	103	24	270	7%	65	10%	22	1.99	55	15213	
72	DALLAS	TX	Farmers Branch City Manager	http://www.farmersbranch.info	100	103.25	53	68	8%	98	21%	206	1.83	41	42541	
72	LEWISTON	ID	City of Lewiston	http://www.cityoflewiston.org	100	103.25	50	119	5%	35	20%	197	2.11	62	17365	
74	FORT MYERS BEACH	FL	Fort Myers BCH Cultural Resrcs	http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov	100	103.5	56	36	7%	58	21%	214	2.67	106	23355	
74	FORT WAYNE	IN	Fort Wayne City Clerk	http://www.cityoffortwayne.org	100	103.5	53	68	8%	102	17%	130	2.75	114	32293	
76	OLYMPIA	WA	Olympia Recycling/Yard Waste	http://www.olympiawa.gov	100	104.25	44	213	9%	126	13%	65	1.24	13	57472	
77	BAYONNE	NJ	Bayonne City Marriage License	http://www.bayonnenj.org	100	104.5	48	152	8%	113	14%	67	2.42	86	16698	
77	PRESCOTT	AZ	Prescott City Manager	http://www.cityofprescott.net	100	104.5	49	136	9%	128	14%	72	2.40	82	35817	
79	KING OF PRUSSIA	PA	Upper Merion Township Office	http://www.umtownship.org	100	106.75	49	136	8%	96	12%	51	3.16	144	15664	
79	NEWTON	NJ	Newton Town Elections Department	http://www.newtontownhall.com	100	106.75	46	185	4%	22	16%	107	2.75	113	19004	
81	WEST HAVEN	CT	West Haven Corporate Counsel	http://www.cityofwesthaven.com	100	107	60	19	8%	119	22%	229	2.07	61	26490	
82	SENECA	IL	City of Seneca City Hall	http://www.senecail.org	22	108.75	49	136	8%	107	18%	157	1.69	35	11057	
83	SHREWSBURY	MA	Shrewsbury Public Access	http://www.shrewsbury-ma.gov	100	111	49	136	5%	30	12%	55	4.76	223	13055	

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



Municipalities Q1 2017

	Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing	Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words
						Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	
84	SAGINAW	MI	Saginaw Housing Improvements	http://www.saginaw-mi.com	101	112	53	68	9%	145	15%	82	3.27	153	54917
85	HYANNIS	MA	Barnstable Town Hall	http://www.townofbarnstable.us	100	112.5	50	119	9%	144	15%	99	2.45	88	15089
86	LA CROSSE	WI	City of La Crosse Engineering Department	http://www.cityoflacrosse.org	100	113.25	53	68	10%	174	15%	94	2.78	117	14950
87	GRAND PRAIRIE	TX	City of Grand Prairie It Department	http://www.gptx.org	100	114	50	119	7%	62	11%	33	6.05	242	22334
87	TAVARES	FL	City of Tavares City Clerk	http://www.tavares.org	100	114	56	36	11%	206	16%	113	2.63	101	23005
89	CLEVELAND	TN	Cleveland Electrical Inspector	http://www.clevelandtn.gov	100	114.25	54	59	9%	136	22%	235	1.53	27	68913
90	NORTH TONAWANDA	NY	Town of Wheatfield	http://wheatfield.ny.us	100	114.75	54	59	8%	100	12%	50	6.82	250	15621
91	GLOUCESTER	MA	Gloucester City Electrical	http://www.gloucester-ma.gov	100	116.25	53	68	8%	95	20%	198	2.65	104	27473
92	GRAND HAVEN	MI	Grand Haven Waste Water Trtmnt	http://www.grandhaven.org	100	117.5	52	90	10%	165	17%	128	2.44	87	21888
93	ARVADA	CO	Arvada Information Technology	http://www.arvada.org	100	118	52	90	8%	82	10%	32	9.54	268	30994
93	PARSIPPANY	NJ	Parsippany Finance	http://www.parsippany.net	100	118	46	185	8%	93	10%	25	3.47	169	10966
95	DEARBORN	MI	Dearborn City Hall	http://www.cityofdearborn.org	100	118.5	53	68	11%	217	17%	132	2.01	57	19220
96	JUPITER	FL	Jupiter Town Manager	http://jupiter.fl.us	100	118.75	52	90	8%	114	15%	96	3.52	175	34166
97	AUBURN (1)	NY	Auburn Water Filter Plant	http://www.auburnny.gov	100	119	60	19	19%	275	9%	19	3.37	163	9825
97	ZION	IL	Zion City Hall	http://www.cityofzion.com	101	119	57	30	10%	169	15%	85	3.91	192	29958
99	MANASSAS	VA	City of Manassas	http://www.manassascity.org	100	119.5	48	152	7%	59	12%	54	4.50	213	14678
100	NEWVILLE	PA	Newville Borough Waste Water	http://www.newvilleborough.com	100	119.75	53	68	9%	148	21%	217	1.89	46	15264
101	FAIRBANK	IA	Fairbank Water Department	http://www.fairbank-ia.org	32	120	59	22	13%	240	19%	187	1.58	31	10951
102	HURON	SD	Huron Engineer's Office	http://www.huronsd.com	100	121.25	51	103	11%	187	18%	151	1.86	44	30851
103	CHAMPLIN	MN	Champlin City Engineering	http://ci.champlin.mn.us	100	121.75	42	232	4%	16	7%	12	4.89	227	12711
104	YONKERS	NY	Yonkers Mayor's Office	http://www.yonkersny.gov	100	122.5	51	103	7%	74	17%	136	3.54	177	21350
105	COPLAY	PA	North Whitehall Township	http://www.northwhitehall.org	48	123.5	57	30	17%	273	17%	123	2.15	68	12547
106	MCKINNEY	TX	MC Kinney City Inspections	http://www.mckinneytexas.org	100	124.25	53	68	12%	220	13%	66	3.11	143	39077

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



Municipalities Q1 2017

Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing	Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words	
					Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank		
107	LAKE OSWEGO	OR	Lake Oswego Engineering	http://ci.oswego.or.us	101	125	54	59	8%	109	16%	112	4.61	220	28597
108	PUYALLUP	WA	City Planning	http://www.cityofpuyallup.org	100	125.5	50	119	7%	71	15%	79	5.44	233	12124
109	WAUKEGAN	IL	Waukegan Code Compliance Office	http://www.waukeganweb.net	100	126.25	55	46	3%	10	22%	225	4.79	224	21837
110	MISSOULA	MT	Missoula City Engineering	http://ci.missoula.mt.us	100	126.5	51	103	9%	151	9%	18	5.45	234	9738
111	SHOW LOW	AZ	Show Low City Street/Sewer/Wtr	http://ci.show-low.az.us	100	127.25	52	90	8%	83	15%	85	7.27	251	12889
112	LITTLE FALLS	NJ	City of Newark	http://www.npl.org	101	127.5	25	268	6%	42	19%	188	1.21	12	63281
113	SAINT LOUIS	MO	Ferguson City Clerk	http://www.fergusoncitywalk.com	100	127.75	27	267	6%	47	20%	194	0.65	3	44974
114	ROCHESTER	MI	Rochester Hills Engineering	http://www.rochesterhills.org	101	128.75	57	30	12%	230	17%	134	2.84	121	32902
115	HOLT	MI	Delhi Township Information	http://www.delhitownship.com	100	129	51	103	12%	233	17%	138	1.83	42	213205
115	SCOTTSDALE	AZ	Scottsdale Personnel Office	http://www.scottsdaleaz.gov	103	129	49	136	8%	115	15%	97	3.46	168	61938
117	SOLO	OH	Solon City Council Office	http://www.solonohio.org	100	129.25	67	6	8%	84	20%	196	5.06	231	24227
118	LYNCHBURG	VA	Lynchburg City Gis Department	http://www.lynchburgva.gov	100	129.75	51	103	7%	68	16%	105	6.09	243	27697
119	PASADENA	CA	Pasadena City Career Service Division	http://www.foothilletc.org	49	130.5	48	152	6%	47	23%	243	2.38	80	20594
120	HERMISTON	OR	Hermiston City Offices	http://hermiston.or.us	102	130.75	51	103	11%	196	18%	149	2.32	75	19866
121	CHARDON	OH	City of Chardon Civil & Small Civil Court	http://co.geauga.oh.us	100	131	43	227	6%	45	15%	95	3.32	157	24624
122	AVONDALE	AZ	Avondale City Clerk	http://www.avondale.org	101	132	51	103	5%	28	23%	242	3.32	155	42467
123	RIVER FALLS	WI	River Falls City Hall	http://www.rfcity.org	100	132.25	51	103	8%	106	22%	221	2.61	99	21116
123	SALEM	VA	City of Salem -Technology System	http://www.salemva.gov	100	132.25	55	46	10%	169	16%	120	3.92	194	12803
125	DES MOINES	IA	Des Moines Mayor's Office	http://www.dmgov.org	100	133	53	68	10%	179	18%	159	2.90	126	56054
126	WATERBURY	CT	Waterbury Town Clerk	http://www.waterburyct.org	100	134.5	47	175	8%	94	16%	121	3.23	148	26479
127	CHARLESTON	SC	City of Charleston	http://www.charleston-sc.gov	100	135.25	49	136	7%	69	18%	160	3.54	176	31636
128	DOTHAN	AL	Dothan City Maps Department	http://www.dothan.org	101	135.75	39	251	5%	34	19%	166	2.49	92	18712
128	PORTLAND	ME	Portland City Mayor	http://www.portlandmaine.gov	101	135.75	54	59	11%	204	18%	161	2.84	119	71044

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



Municipalities Q1 2017

	Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing		Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words
						Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank		
130	CHARLOTTE	NC	Charlotte Radio Comms Division	http://www.charmeck.org	101	136	49	136	8%	103	15%	84	4.65	221	22878	
130	SPOKANE	WA	Spokane Weights & Measures	http://www.spokanecity.org	104	136	52	90	7%	67	19%	181	4.36	206	34473	
132	HAMMOND	IN	Hammond City Bookkeeping	http://www.hammond.org	101	136.25	53	68	11%	215	23%	246	1.31	16	15295	
132	MANHASSET	NY	Town Supervisor	http://www.northhempstead.com	102	136.25	48	152	8%	111	26%	263	1.37	19	36870	
134	IDAHO FALLS	ID	Idaho Falls Sewage Treatment	http://www.acwf.org	100	136.5	37	260	6%	44	20%	204	1.77	38	26795	
135	MUSKEGO	WI	Muskego City Mayor	http://www.cityofmuskego.org	100	137	18	274	4%	14	16%	113	3.20	147	38413	
136	NORTHFIELD	MN	Northfield City Adm	http://ci.northfield.mn.us	101	137.25	49	136	10%	163	10%	25	4.79	225	17668	
137	BALDWIN PARK	CA	Irwindale City Maintenance Department	http://ci.irwindale.ca.us	100	137.75	49	136	5%	29	18%	156	5.02	230	31440	
138	LITTLE ROCK	AR	Little Rock Traffic Engrng	http://www.littlerock.org	100	141.75	51	103	11%	195	19%	164	2.66	105	31336	
138	MONTGOMERY	AL	Montgomery Engineering Department	http://www.montgomeryal.gov	100	141.75	47	175	8%	79	13%	61	7.38	252	15962	
140	PLEASANT HILL	CA	Pleasant Hill Code Enforcement	http://ci.pleasant-hill.ca.us	100	142.5	50	119	11%	199	13%	57	3.92	195	25387	
141	ROCK ISLAND	IL	Rock Island Weed Control	http://www.rigov.org	100	142.75	24	270	8%	100	12%	45	3.32	156	15065	
142	POMPANO BEACH	FL	Margate City Manager	http://www.margatefl.com	100	144.25	50	119	9%	151	21%	213	2.54	94	18713	
142	SAINT PAUL	MN	St Paul Sewer Engineering	http://ci.stpaul.mn.us	100	144.25	50	119	10%	174	21%	207	2.35	77	15269	
144	TYLER	TX	City of Tyler Purchasing Water Department	http://www.cityoftyler.org	103	144.5	52	90	9%	123	16%	116	6.57	249	24004	
145	ROANOKE	VA	Roanoke Traffic Engineering	http://www.roanokeva.gov	100	145.25	50	119	11%	188	15%	89	3.73	185	21213	
145	ROSEMOUNT	MN	Rosemount City Building Permit	http://www.ci.rosemount.mn.us	100	145.25	48	152	8%	117	12%	48	8.40	264	8286	
147	LORAIN	OH	Lorain City Council	http://www.cityoflorain.org	100	145.5	50	119	12%	224	16%	119	2.84	120	27250	
148	TUALATIN	OR	Tualatin City Admin	http://www.tualatinoregon.gov	101	145.75	48	152	8%	87	18%	143	4.18	201	21833	
149	BLOOMINGTON	IL	Water Reclamation District	http://www.cityblm.org	103	146	48	152	10%	167	13%	60	4.36	205	12500	
150	KEARNEY	NE	Kearney City Engineer	http://www.cityofkearney.org	100	147.5	49	136	10%	177	15%	93	3.72	184	13101	
150	SNOHOMISH	WA	Snohomish City Hall	http://ci.snohomish.wa.us	101	147.5	46	185	8%	105	12%	53	6.38	247	10533	
152	MIAMI	FL	Miami Springs City Hall	http://www.miamisprings-fl.gov	100	147.75	40	247	5%	26	15%	77	6.05	241	14224	

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



Municipalities Q1 2017

Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing	Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words	
					Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank		
152	SANTA MONICA	CA	Santa Monica Engineering	http://www.smgov.net	100	147.75	46	185	10%	158	17%	125	2.86	123	32174
154	WARREN	MI	Warren City Clerks Office	http://www.cityofwarren.org	100	148	55	46	15%	263	11%	38	6.10	245	32828
155	GRAND RAPIDS	MI	Grand Rapids City Commissioner	http://www.grcity.us	100	148.25	24	270	7%	76	19%	183	2.11	64	43014
156	DAYTON	OH	Moraine City Administration	http://ci.moraine.oh.us	100	149	53	68	15%	264	17%	129	3.01	135	19573
156	EAST WEYMOUTH	MA	Town of Weymouth Town Hall	http://weymouth.ma.us	102	149	53	68	8%	121	18%	144	8.25	263	26981
158	CALDWELL	ID	Caldwell Human Resources	http://www.cityofcaldwell.com	101	150	56	36	12%	226	13%	64	17.01	274	15426
159	VAIL	CO	Vail Community Comm Relations	http://www.vailgov.com	103	151.25	52	90	8%	91	19%	167	7.73	257	51527
160	ATLANTA	GA	Atlanta City Government	http://www.atlanta-airport.com	101	152	32	264	7%	64	25%	258	1.46	22	45594
160	MADISON	WI	Fitchburg City Building Inspection	http://www.fitchburgwi.gov	101	152	48	152	8%	96	15%	98	8.06	262	10655
162	COLUMBUS	OH	Columbus Civil Service Commission	http://www.columbus.gov	103	152.5	48	152	6%	49	18%	149	7.96	260	30684
163	EL PASO	TX	El Paso City Information Service	http://www.elpasotexas.gov	100	153.5	46	185	9%	125	21%	219	2.42	85	33431
164	NORFOLK	VA	Information Technology	http://www.norfolk.gov	100	154	52	90	11%	186	14%	74	9.28	266	43530
165	OREM	UT	Orem City General Information	http://www.orem.org	100	154.5	52	90	11%	212	22%	227	2.46	89	60743
166	SEDALIA	MO	City of Sedalia	http://www.cityofsedalia.com	101	154.75	47	175	9%	137	16%	121	3.75	186	21362
167	STRONGSVILLE	OH	Strongsville Engineering Department	http://www.strongsville.org	100	155	39	251	7%	60	27%	264	1.87	45	70444
168	COLORADO SPRINGS	CO	Colorado Springs Intergovtl	http://www.springsgov.com	100	155.75	45	201	8%	86	14%	75	8.00	261	11962
169	DEER PARK	WA	Deer Park Municipal Courts	http://www.deerparktx.gov	101	156.25	51	103	8%	120	23%	241	3.36	161	28508
169	STEBENVILLE	OH	Stebenville Engineering Department	http://www.cityofstebenville.us	100	156.25	42	232	8%	118	19%	180	2.56	95	21877
171	SCOTTS VALLEY	CA	Scotts Valley Administration	http://www.scottsvalley.org	76	156.5	50	119	11%	189	15%	90	4.91	228	9066
172	HOLYOKE	MA	Holyoke Gas & Electric Department	http://www.hged.com	100	157	50	119	9%	137	20%	199	3.50	173	33217
173	SUNNYVALE	TX	Town of Sunnyvale Town Hall	http://www.townofsunnyvale.org	100	157.75	53	68	7%	73	25%	254	5.57	236	18104
174	TROY	OH	City of Troy City Engineer	http://www.troyohio.gov	100	158	29	266	9%	124	16%	104	3.06	138	17770
175	TAUNTON	MA	Taunton City Building Department	http://www.taunton-ma.gov	101	158.5	48	152	9%	126	15%	87	9.64	269	9032

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



Municipalities Q1 2017

	Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing	Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words
						Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	
176	PASADENA	CA	Pasadena Rose Bowl General Office	http://www.rosebowlstadium.com	100	158.75	45	201	9%	134	29%	271	1.57	29	53605
176	RIALTO	CA	Rialto Krto-Channel 3	http://www.rialto.ca.gov	100	158.75	48	152	9%	143	15%	100	6.02	240	16442
178	FLORISSANT	MO	Florissant City Hall	http://www.florissantmo.com	100	159.25	48	152	9%	137	28%	269	2.38	79	10931
179	BASALT	CO	Basalt Town Government Building Dept	http://www.basalt.net	100	159.75	55	46	12%	226	17%	135	5.23	232	13547
180	DANVILLE	VA	Information Technology	http://www.danville-va.gov	101	160	53	68	13%	246	18%	145	3.62	181	35700
181	PORT HURON	MI	Port Huron Wastewater TRTMNT	http://www.porthuron.org	100	161	48	152	11%	219	19%	170	2.64	103	36005
182	AMES	IA	Ames City Manager	http://www.cityofames.org	100	161.75	51	103	11%	190	18%	146	4.38	208	45293
183	VISALIA	CA	Visalia Engineering & Transpnt	http://ci.visalia.ca.us	100	162.25	46	185	12%	222	21%	209	1.60	33	23920
184	DAMASCUS	PA	Damascus Township Highway Shed	http://www.damascustwp.org	81	162.5	49	136	11%	214	28%	266	1.63	34	34009
185	ORLANDO	FL	Water Conserv II	http://www.waterconservii.com	30	163.25	36	262	0%	1	25%	257	3.01	133	133
186	SACRAMENTO	CA	Sacramento Information Tech	http://www.cityofsacramento.org	100	163.75	45	201	9%	131	20%	195	2.92	128	23920
187	SHARPSBURG	NC	Town of Sharpsburg	http://www.sharpsburgnc.com	100	164.5	53	68	12%	228	15%	92	9.87	270	6067
188	GRAND JUNCTION	CO	City of Grand Junction Admin	http://www.gjcity.org	100	164.75	48	152	10%	181	22%	233	2.53	93	22501
189	ROCHESTER	IN	City of Rochester Water Department	http://www.cityofrochester.gov	101	165.75	46	185	11%	184	19%	179	2.77	115	37087
190	MILWAUKEE	WI	Milwaukee Infrastructure Service	http://www.msoe.edu	100	166	38	257	9%	133	23%	238	1.71	36	70389
191	LEBANON	NH	Lebanon Landfill	http://www.dpw.lebnh.net	100	166.5	50	119	14%	254	19%	169	2.87	124	21744
192	SANTA BARBARA	CA	Santa Barbara Engineering	http://www.santabarbaraca.gov	100	167.25	46	185	11%	205	22%	236	1.85	43	41625
193	NAPLES	FL	Naples Community Service Dept	http://www.naplesgov.com	100	167.75	47	175	11%	198	19%	173	2.88	125	29154
194	STURGIS	MI	Sturgis City Hall	http://www.sturgismi.gov	73	168.5	41	239	11%	197	16%	109	2.92	129	26017
195	ATLANTA	GA	Atlanta Industrial Waste	http://www.atlantaga.gov	100	168.75	41	239	8%	81	18%	140	4.54	215	35772
195	MADISON	IN	Madison Sewage Disposal Plant	http://www.madsewer.org	86	168.75	44	213	11%	192	22%	223	1.90	47	22686
197	DALY CITY	CA	Daly City Building Maintenance	http://www.dalycity.org	102	169.75	49	136	11%	203	17%	137	4.31	203	38999
198	DAYTON	OH	Engineering Department	http://www.ketteringoh.org	100	170.5	39	251	8%	111	16%	108	4.48	212	22062

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



Municipalities Q1 2017

	Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing	Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words
						Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	
198	SALT LAKE CITY	UT	Salt Lake City Prosecuters	http://www.slcgov.com	101	170.5	43	227	10%	182	19%	171	2.64	102	31171
200	COVINGTON	KY	City of Covington Solicitor	http://www.covingtonky.gov	101	170.75	45	201	10%	158	19%	190	3.01	134	18980
201	WAYNE	MI	Wayne City Planner	http://ci.wayne.mi.us	100	171	46	185	11%	206	18%	141	3.26	152	18739
202	YUMA	AZ	City Engineering Department	http://www.yumaaz.gov	100	171.25	46	185	10%	171	18%	158	3.49	171	30449
203	LINCOLN	NE	Lincoln City Council Office	http://lincoln.ne.gov	101	172	42	232	9%	142	19%	174	3.08	140	22902
204	BARROW	AK	North Slope Borough Wellness	http://www.north-slope.org	100	172.25	40	247	11%	200	22%	228	1.25	14	33875
205	GILROY	CA	Gilroy City Mayor	http://www.cityofgilroy.org	100	172.75	51	103	10%	174	21%	212	4.24	202	23193
205	RIO RANCHO	NM	City of Rio Rancho	http://ci.rio-rancho.nm.us	100	172.75	45	201	11%	202	19%	172	2.77	116	26851
207	RUSTON	LA	Gis	http://www.lincolnparish.org	61	173.25	49	136	13%	251	22%	222	2.41	84	10069
208	EAGLE	CO	Town of Eagle Waste Water	http://www.townofeagle.org	101	174	50	119	13%	253	18%	146	3.54	178	17071
208	MECHANICSBURG	PA	Hampden Township	http://www.hampdentownship.us	100	174	46	185	13%	251	18%	142	2.78	118	168062
210	ENDICOTT	NY	Endicott Light Department	http://www.endicottny.com	50	174.75	45	201	11%	194	21%	208	2.56	96	17758
211	DAVENPORT	IA	Davenport Public Works	http://www.cityofdavenportiowa.com	100	175.5	47	175	12%	230	23%	247	1.91	50	28435
212	LIVONIA	MI	Livonia Television	http://ci.livonia.mi.us	104	176.25	53	68	11%	210	18%	154	16.94	273	40254
212	SANTA ROSA	CA	City of Santa Rosa Parking Division	http://www.srcity.org	100	176.25	42	232	10%	162	23%	239	2.23	72	53474
214	MARYSVILLE	MI	Marysville City Administration	http://www.marysvilleohio.org	100	177.5	55	46	11%	190	21%	220	7.45	254	9908
215	HOLLAND	MI	Holland City Customer Service	http://www.hollandbpw.com	100	178.25	48	152	9%	130	22%	224	4.38	207	24784
216	HOLLYWOOD	FL	Pembroke Pines Code Enfrcmnt	http://www.ppines.com	100	178.5	46	185	8%	78	24%	252	4.06	199	26956
217	EVANS MILLS	NY	Town Clerk	http://www.townofleray.org	72	178.75	55	46	15%	265	19%	186	4.59	218	7824
218	FOND DU LAC	WI	Village of North Fond Du Lac	http://www.nfdl.org	101	179	53	68	15%	262	23%	244	3.10	142	78793
219	CARRBORO	NC	Carrboro Town Manager	http://www.townofcarrboro.org	100	179.25	47	175	9%	135	19%	185	4.69	222	18659
220	DUBUQUE	IA	Dubuque Illegal Dumping	http://www.cityofdubuque.org	100	180	44	213	10%	164	15%	88	7.53	255	8512
221	KNOXVILLE	TN	Knoxville Garage Security	http://www.cityofknoxville.org	104	180.75	44	213	10%	173	13%	62	26.66	275	44535

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



Municipalities Q1 2017

Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing	Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words	
					Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank		
222	WIXOM	MI	City of Wixom Finance	http://www.cityofwixom.com	100	181.25	51	103	12%	236	19%	175	4.45	211	41806
223	WYTHEVILLE	VA	Wytheville Wastewater Plant	http://www.wytheville.org	100	184	48	152	11%	212	19%	182	3.85	190	11545
224	BRISTOL	TN	Bristol Water Plant	http://www.bristoltn.org	100	184.25	51	103	12%	232	20%	193	4.39	209	20644
225	TAMPA	FL	Tampa City Hall	http://www.tampagov.net	102	184.5	44	213	10%	160	25%	255	2.73	110	17446
225	WINSTON SALEM	NC	Winston-Salem Budget Office	http://www.cityofws.org	101	184.5	44	213	11%	210	13%	56	7.93	259	26036
227	MOBILE	AL	Mobile Engineering Department	http://www.cityofmobile.org	100	185	42	232	10%	180	22%	230	2.60	98	19637
228	ESCANABA	MI	Escanaba City Electric	http://www.escanaba.org	100	185.25	52	90	11%	201	20%	202	6.51	248	14631
229	WALNUT CREEK	CA	Walnut Creek Engineering Division	http://www.walnut-creek.org	100	185.5	47	175	13%	250	17%	126	3.89	191	24315
230	BUFFALO GROVE	IL	Engineering Department	http://www.vbg.org	100	186.25	46	185	13%	241	19%	168	3.25	151	25007
231	SALINAS	CA	City of Salinas City Engineer	http://www.ci.salinas.ca.us	100	187.25	44	213	8%	88	19%	176	15.34	272	28906
232	COLUMBUS	OH	Columbus Passport Program	http://www.coaaa.org	100	189	41	239	9%	150	22%	231	3.02	136	43026
232	HARTFORD	KY	Hartford City Clerk	http://www.hartford.gov	103	189	50	119	13%	243	28%	267	2.91	127	36883
234	BULLHEAD CITY	AZ	Bullhead City Channel 4 Studio	http://www.bullheadcity.com	100	190.5	55	46	13%	248	20%	201	9.33	267	17615
235	FORT LAUDERDALE	FL	Fleet Service	http://www.fortlauderdale.gov	101	191.5	43	227	9%	132	24%	248	3.33	159	30803
236	MILWAUKEE	WI	Milwaukee Street & Bridge	http://www.mpw.net	100	193.5	49	136	13%	242	17%	131	8.58	265	24831
237	CLINTON	MS	Clinton City Hall	http://www.clintonms.org	100	194.25	41	239	13%	237	24%	250	1.92	51	11578
237	PASO ROBLES	CA	Paso Robles Personnel	http://www.prcity.com	100	194.25	43	227	11%	208	21%	211	2.93	131	35575
239	FAYETTEVILLE	AR	Fayetteville Govt Channel	http://www.accessfayetteville.org	100	194.5	48	152	13%	237	20%	200	3.84	189	21996
239	FREMONT	CA	City of Fremont Engineering	http://www.fremont.gov	100	194.5	45	201	11%	216	19%	165	3.94	196	33027
241	MIDLAND	TX	Midland Engineering Service	http://www.midlandtexas.gov	100	195.25	47	175	14%	258	16%	110	5.85	238	8894
242	PEORIA	AZ	Peoria Community Service Dept	http://www.peoriaaz.com	100	195.5	35	263	11%	193	23%	245	2.40	81	40238
243	INDIANAPOLIS	IN	Indianapolis Fleet Service	http://www.indy.gov	101	196.5	41	239	10%	178	21%	215	3.29	154	20420
243	TEXARKANA	AR	Texarkana City Hall	http://arkansas.txkusa.org	100	196.5	25	268	10%	156	18%	152	4.43	210	13567

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



Municipalities Q1 2017

	Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing	Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words
						Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	
245	WORCESTER	MA	Technical Service	http://www.worcesterma.gov	100	197.25	44	213	13%	247	26%	259	2.22	70	28485
246	PORTLAND	OR	Portland City Nuisance	http://www.portlandoregon.gov	100	197.5	38	257	11%	185	32%	274	2.28	74	39719
247	MIDDLETOWN	OH	Middletown Water Trtmnt Plant	http://www.cityofmiddletown.org	101	199.25	48	152	14%	257	21%	216	3.49	172	30530
248	SOUTH HAVEN	MI	South Haven Payroll	http://www.south-haven.com	94	199.75	45	201	12%	223	20%	205	3.47	170	18568
249	CLARKSBURG	WV	Clarksburg Sewage Treatment	http://www.cityofclarksburgwv.com	100	200.75	48	152	12%	221	22%	232	4.01	198	11658
250	COLUMBUS (1)	IN	Columbus City Insurance Department	http://columbus.in.gov	100	201.75	41	239	10%	172	19%	177	4.61	219	12414
251	COLUMBUS (1)	OH	Pine Grove Landfill	http://www.columbusga.org	100	203.5	41	239	13%	244	23%	240	2.48	91	32857
251	DALLAS	TX	University Park Admin	http://www.uptexas.org	100	203.5	46	185	15%	266	19%	163	4.07	200	27152
253	SAN FRANCISCO	CA	S F Parking & Traffic Commssn	http://www.sfgov.org	100	203.75	44	213	13%	239	22%	226	3.05	137	26519
254	BIRMINGHAM	AL	City of Birmingham Public Works	http://www.birminghamal.gov	100	205.5	40	247	9%	153	25%	256	3.40	166	27775
255	SANTA FE	NM	Santa Fe Streets Department	http://www.santafenm.gov	100	206	45	201	9%	145	26%	261	4.58	217	41844
256	BELLE VERNON	PA	Rostraver Township Garage	http://www.rostraver.us	100	206.25	42	232	14%	260	26%	262	2.22	71	35579
257	ALCOA	TN	Alcoa Business Office-Taxes	http://www.cityofalcoa-tn.gov	100	207.25	20	273	10%	165	17%	133	7.81	258	12542
257	BALTIMORE	MD	Baltimore Purchasing Division	http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov	100	207.25	42	232	16%	272	24%	249	2.34	76	42238
257	KOKOMO	IN	Electrical Inspector	http://www.cityofkokomo.org	100	207.25	41	239	11%	217	24%	251	2.85	122	22741
260	LONGWOOD	FL	Longwood City Hall	http://www.longwoodfl.org	100	207.5	46	185	13%	245	19%	184	4.57	216	12560
261	BRENTWOOD	CA	Brentwood Wastewater Operation	http://www.brentwoodca.gov	100	211	44	213	18%	274	26%	260	2.60	97	29191
262	VENTURA	CA	Ventura Code Enforcement	http://www.cityofventura.net	101	211.5	45	201	11%	209	25%	253	3.66	183	62481
263	LEES SUMMIT	MO	Lees Summit City Finance	http://www.cityofls.net	100	212.75	45	201	13%	249	23%	237	3.38	164	38419
264	WATERLOO	IA	Waterloo Engineering Department	http://ci.waterloo.ia.us	100	213	44	213	16%	267	31%	272	2.62	100	39781
265	RICHARDSON	TX	Richardson City Offices	http://www.cor.net	104	213.5	48	152	14%	255	19%	191	7.72	256	38492
266	OXFORD	MS	Oxford City Hall	http://www.oxfordms.net	100	216.25	37	260	16%	269	18%	148	3.84	188	13607
267	SALEM	MA	City of Salem Water & Sewer	http://www.cityofsalem.net	102	216.75	39	251	12%	235	19%	188	3.92	193	50185

The VisibleThread Website Index, US Municipalities 2017 – Q1



Municipalities Q1 2017

	Municipality	State	Department	Website	Num Pages	Clear Writing		Readability		Passive		Long		Complex		Num Words
						Index	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank		
268	WEST CHESTER	OH	West Chester Township Service Dept	http://www.westchesteroh.org	100	218.5	44	213	15%	261	20%	203	4.01	197	33864	
269	FRESNO	CA	Fresno Sewer Maintenance	http://www.fresno.gov	100	223.25	38	257	12%	234	29%	270	2.97	132	29724	
270	GLENDALE	CA	City of Glendale Housing Department	http://ci.glendale.ca.us	100	226.75	45	201	12%	225	21%	210	12.51	271	15508	
271	LONG BEACH	CA	Long Beach Enterprise Zone	http://www.longbeach.gov	101	231	44	213	14%	259	31%	273	3.59	179	56294	
272	BELLEVUE	NE	City-Bellevue Building Dept	http://www.bellevue.net	100	231.75	43	227	16%	270	19%	177	7.40	253	16773	
273	TOPEKA	KS	Topeka Engineering Division	http://www.topeka.org	100	234.75	40	247	12%	229	22%	234	4.97	229	24732	
274	LANCASTER	CA	Lancaster Wastewater Operation	http://www.lacsd.org	100	243.5	32	264	16%	268	36%	275	3.44	167	66293	
275	NEWARK	CA	City of Newark	http://www.newark.org	103	252.5	39	251	14%	255	27%	265	5.95	239	26863	

Methodology – what are the metrics?

- We scanned between up to 100 pages of content using automated crawling techniques.
- We crawled starting from the publicly available URL.
- Certain pages within the sample contain non-textual content (eg: videos). We omitted these pages from our scan.
- If scan had fewer than 100 pages, we included the page count and word count for each agency.

We calculated the index based on 4 metrics. Each metric contributes equally to the final score. The metrics are:

Metric	Formula
<p>1. Readability</p> <p>Readability ranges from 1 to 100. 100 is the top mark. If communicating with citizens, aim for at least 60.</p> <p>This uses the Flesch Reading Ease index.</p>	$(206.835 - (1.015 \times \text{Average Sentence Length}) - (84.6 \times \text{Average Syllables per Word}))$
<p>2. Passive Language</p> <p>The % rating is the proportion of sentences with a passive construction. Passive language is where the subject is acted upon by the verb. For example:</p> <p>"Quality is monitored" vs. "We monitor quality"</p> <p>If you use active voice, you will increase clarity & strength. You will also flush out the 'actor', i.e. who did the action?</p>	$(\text{Passive Sentences} / \text{Total Sentences} * 100)$
<p>3. Long Sentences</p> <p>The % rating is the proportion of sentences that are longer than 25 words. Long sentences mask multiple concepts. Splitting up these sentences will result in a clearer message.</p>	$(\text{Long Sentences} / \text{Total Sentences} * 100)$
<p>4. Complex Word Density</p> <p>The density rating is the proportion of complex words relative to the total word count. This scan looks for complex words/phrases based on Federal Guidelines. See http://www.plainlanguage.gov/howto/wordsuggestions/s</p>	$(\text{Complex Words} / \text{Total Words} * 100)$

[implewords.cfm](#) for the list scanned. Replacing complex words with simpler words helps your readers concentrate on your content.

About VisibleThread

VisibleThread provides document content analysis solutions for sales and marketing professionals. We flag poor quality and complex language for documents and websites. This eliminates tedious manual review cycles, saving you time and cost.

Our solutions & reports allow customers to:

- Scan docs and websites in minutes
- Identify risky and complex language with objective metrics
- Benchmark web sites against sector peers
- Flag compliance issues

For corporate teams, government agencies and non-profits, our solutions make review teams 40% more efficient and increase sales and marketing conversions.

For questions or if you want a specific sector index:

- For a specific agency or bureau index, email: sales@visiblethread.com
- For questions on the metrics or methodology, email: support@visiblethread.com