

Policy Title: Open Data Program

Policy Number: 03-12-02

Section:	Corporate Administration	Subsection:	Accountability and Transparency
Effective Date:	June 16, 2021	Last Review Date:	June, 2021
Approved by: Council		Owner Division/Contact: For information on the Open Data platform, contact Information Technology, Corporate Services Department. For information on the Open Data program contact the Open Data Working Group	

Policy Statement

The City of Mississauga is committed to the principles of open and transparent government.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

- To provide an overview of the City’s Open Data program, including the guiding principles
- Adopt the International Open Data Charter, including Open by Default, and
- Outline the roles and responsibilities of management staff

Scope

This policy applies to all City departments.

Related Policies

[Data Handling Policy](#)

Open Data Guidelines

This policy is supported by the Open Data Guidelines (“the Guidelines”) that provide detailed information on all aspects of the Open Data program, including how to determine if a Dataset meets the stated criteria for posting and/or should be Open by Default; technical standards and Information Technology (IT) requirements; roles and responsibilities of staff; step-by-step processes and check lists for staff trained to review and/or post data; assessing risk; the need for review by Legal, Legislative Services and other staff as required; and the approval process. The Guidelines are a living document that may be revised as required by the Open Data Working Group or its successor.

Legislative Requirements

Any collection, use and disclosure of information under this policy will be undertaken in accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA) and the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004* (PHIPA). City of Mississauga data will not contain personal information. For more information on MFIPPA refer to Corporate Policy and Procedure – Records Management – Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy.

This policy will be implemented in a manner consistent with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities 2005* (AODA), specifically Ontario Regulation 191/11, the Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR), which establishes the accessibility standards pertaining to information and communications.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

“Dataset” means a collection of raw data, such as facts, figures and statistics, that can be presented in a structured file format that is exportable and machine readable. Datasets are usually presented in tabular form with associated Metadata and may include geospatial datasets such as shape files, KML or other open mapping formats.

“International Open Data Charter” (IODC) is a collaboration of over 100 governments and organizations that are working to open up data based on a shared set of principles. These principles include Open by Default, Timely and Comprehensive, Accessible and Usable, Comparable and Interoperable, For Improved Governance and Citizen Engagement, and For Inclusive Development and Innovation.

“Leadership Team” means the City Manager and Commissioners.

“Metadata” means data that describes or explains Datasets by providing information about their contents. Examples of Metadata include the source of the information, its purpose, how it should be interpreted and the date of creation or modification or, for images, the colour depth and image resolution.

“Open by Default” means making data accessible to the public by default, unless there is sufficient justification to not make the data accessible to all.

“Open Data” means City data that is owned by the City of Mississauga and has been proactively made available to the public, free of charge, on the City’s external [Open Data portal](#) (subject to the Terms of Use and user license) in a recognized and usable format and in accordance with this policy.

“Open Data Working Group” means a group comprised of City staff, with representation from all departments, who are responsible for choosing an Open Data platform, creating the Guidelines, training applicable staff and communicating the Open Data program.

“Primary Source Data” means original information created or collected by the City.

Administration

The Open Data program is administered by the Open Data Working Group, in consultation with all City departments. Administrative revisions to this policy (e.g. changes to definitions or accountabilities for clarity) may be made by the Open Data Working Group, with the approval of the Director, Information Technology, Corporate Services Department. Any fundamental shift in the policy principles or policy direction requires the approval of the Leadership Team and Council, if required.

Background

Open Data provides immediate, self-serve, one-stop access to relevant information about the City of Mississauga and is available for the benefit of all citizens and businesses. Open Data may be accessed by anyone at any time and reused/repurposed for any public or business use, including the creation of digital applications. The benefits of Open Data include greater citizen engagement with and understanding of the City; a decrease in the number of individual requests for information (reduced administrative costs); and the potential to attract residents and businesses by providing detailed City information (economic growth).

Accountability

Open Data Working Group

The Open Data Working Group is accountable for:

- Leading the development/implementation of an Open Data platform, in consultation with the Smart City Steering Committee, IT Division, Corporate Service Department, including a program of Metadata capture
- Establishing the Open Data Guidelines document and updating on an ongoing basis
- Defining and documenting detailed processes in the Guidelines to assist respective departments and City staff to assess Datasets to ensure they meet the Guiding Principles outlined in this policy
- Providing support to departments wherever possible (e.g. assist staff with defining Datasets, periodic review of available Datasets)
- Building engagement strategies with the staff and the public to promote the benefits and uses of Open Data
- Establishing a means to gather feedback from the public on which Datasets they would like to see published
- Establishing and providing a master list of Datasets to enable public input (voting) on which Datasets to publish

- Fostering and communicating the Open Data program within their respective departments
- Determining the training needs of applicable staff, including processes for approval and uploading of Datasets
- Attending ongoing meetings (e.g. quarterly) to review and address any overarching issues or concerns, as needed
- Reporting progress/metrics as a standing item on meeting agendas and in an annual report to the Leadership Team
- Designating a single point of contact to respond to inquires related to Open Data, and
- Monitoring the overall Open Data program

Directors

Directors are accountable for:

- Ensuring applicable managers/supervisors are aware of and trained on this policy
- Fostering and supporting the Open Data program wherever possible (e.g. ensuring adequate resource allocation and periodic review of available Datasets)
- Incorporating Open Data initiatives into their business planning processes, including requiring that Information Technology procurements support Open Data
- Reviewing Open Data assessment forms
- Assessing Datasets to ensure they meet the guiding principles outlined in this policy, and
- Approving Datasets for publication in the Open Data program

Managers/Supervisors

Managers/supervisors are accountable for:

- Ensuring applicable staff are aware of and trained on this policy
- Identifying Datasets for inclusion in the Open Data program, including Open by Default
- Assigning responsibility for the capture of Metadata and the maintenance and timely posting of specific Datasets to appropriate staff
- Ensuring key Datasets and Metadata are accurate and available in a timely manner
- Assigning responsibility for the quality and integrity of Datasets to appropriate staff
- Regularly reviewing applicable Open Data to ensure it is being maintained and/or is still relevant
- Developing and implementing long term data quality improvements, where possible and as required
- Proactively identifying the accuracy of data to the best of their ability through tracking of Metadata, and
- Participating in the communication and engagement relevant to Datasets they manage

Guiding Principles

The determination of which Datasets will be posted on the [Open Data portal](#) will be driven by public and business demand for specific information and by the Open by Default principles

implemented through the adoption of the International Open Data Charter. However, the City will only post Datasets if they comply with all of the following Guiding Principles:

1. The information in the Dataset is in compliance with MFIPPA, PHIPA and any other relevant privacy legislation.
2. The Dataset is free from legal, contract, 3rd party proprietary rights/claims (including copyright, trademark and patent) or public safety or policy restrictions.
3. The Dataset does not contain intellectual property, information that is commercially sensitive, confidential or may cause harm or damage to the City.
4. The Dataset includes all information required to ensure its completeness, accuracy and usability.
5. The Dataset includes only Primary Source Data or summary level data, where applicable.
6. Access to and use of the Dataset can be permitted for no fee.
7. Datasets are posted in a format that is accessible, whenever possible, in accordance with the AODA.
8. Datasets are machine readable and will enable the public or businesses to reuse the data to create new applications or complete research and analysis.
9. The information in the Dataset can be updated in a timely manner.
10. The information in the Dataset can be comparable and interoperable.
11. Datasets are compliant with the International Open Data Charter principles.
12. Datasets are to be published only when data is classified as “Public” in accordance with the [Data Handling Policy](#).

Consideration should also be given to whether information in the Dataset will:

- Improve the public’s knowledge of the City and its services
- Increase operational efficiency (e.g. result in fewer individual requests to staff for information), and
- Create economic opportunity (e.g. by presenting the City in a favourable light when ranked with its comparators)

In the event that the Open Data Working Group cannot reach consensus on the posting of a Dataset, the final decision will be made by the Leadership Team.

Process

The Guidelines provide detailed information for each step of the Open Data process, including:

- Identifying existing and potential Datasets
- Assessing Datasets to ensure they meet the Guiding Principles outlined in this policy
- Preparing Datasets for posting, including Metadata descriptions
- Obtaining all approvals prior to publication on the Open Data website, and
- Publishing initial Datasets and subsequent updates

Records Retention

Official records must be retained in accordance with the Records Retention By-Law 0097-2017, as amended. If Datasets available on the Open Data website are duplicate copies of an original database they fall under “duplicate computer files” and may be discarded at any time if not needed.

Revision History

Reference	Description
GC- 0433-2015 - 2015 06 24	
February 26, 2018	Housekeeping to update Records Retention By-law number.
GC-0334-2021 – 2021 06 16	Revised to add “open by default”.