

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	June 19, 2017
Action Required:	Approval of Formal Open Data Policy
Presenter:	Leslie Beauregard, Assistant City Manager
Staff Contacts:	Leslie Beauregard, Assistant City Manager Paige Rice, Clerk of Council
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Open Data Update and Formal Policy Approval</b>

**Background:**

The City of Charlottesville is committed to creating a formal open data program which includes the creation of an open data portal where the City's data will be publicly available online.

Open Data is a philosophy and practice, to provide some of the municipally-generated data to the public in a machine-readable format, without the restrictions of copyright, patent or other control mechanisms and, most importantly, free of charge. The most commonly used Open Data focuses on structured data, such as geographic data, scheduling, statistics, and demographic data.

The objective of Open Data is to eliminate burdens to access data created or managed by government agencies, while respecting privacy and sensitivity concerns. It enables entrepreneurs, academics, community groups, other learning communities, developers, and interested citizens to use data to improve the social experience and stimulate economic growth through data applications.

**Discussion:**

City staff first presented a report to City Council last September introducing the concept of Open Data and a proposal to move forward with this initiative. Since that time, City staff has worked with a group of citizen stakeholders, called the Open Data Advisory Group, or ODAG, to develop the policies and practices that will drive the Open Data Initiative. The attached roadmap shows where we have been and where we are going. The policy is also attached for your review.

**Alignment with Council Vision Areas and Strategic Plan:**

An open data policy is in alignment with Goal 4: Be a well-managed and successful organization, and Goal 5: Foster strong connections. It also embraces the values of leadership and trust.

**Community Engagement:**

City staff has worked closely with ODAG, a citizen stakeholder group, for several months now. Their input has been critical to the development of this formal policy, along with the technical and practical practices that go along with such an initiative.

**Budgetary Impact:**

At this time, staff does not know what the budgetary impact will be to implement an Open Data policy.

**Recommendation:**

Staff has prepared a resolution in support of a formal policy around Open Data.

**Alternatives:**

If there are changes/edits that Council would like to make to the formal policy, this would be the time to communicate that to staff.

**Attachments:**

1. Open Data Guidelines and Policy
2. Open Data Roadmap and Timeline
3. Resolution in Support of Open Data (adopted on September 19, 2017)

**RESOLUTION**

**Open Data Formal Policy Approval**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Council for the City of Charlottesville, Virginia, that the formal policy for the Open Data Initiative is approved.

# **CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE OPEN DATA INITIATIVE**

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- 1. The City of Charlottesville encourages an open and transparent government by using open data to improve citizen engagement, promote civic innovation, engage community problem-solving.*
  - 2. The City places a priority on providing open data sets that help the City achieve its mission and goals.*
  - 3. The City will strive for proactive disclosure, in accordance with existing open data laws.*
  - 4. The City will respond to new data set requests while considering available staff and financial resources.*
  - 5. The City will collect and publish data that is accessible to all users, published in a machine-readable format, and broad and non-discriminatory.*
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## **I. PURPOSE AND POLICY STATEMENT**

The purpose of this Management Policy is to establish guidelines for the City of Charlottesville Open Data Initiative. The City of Charlottesville is committed to creating a formal Open Data program that includes the creation of an Open Data Web Portal where machine-readable data will be publicly available online. The initiative is intended to advance a number of public policy objectives, including:

- Increased transparency and access to public information
- Enhanced coordination and efficiencies among City departments and partner organizations
- Better informed decision making through the aggregation, synthesis, and analysis of data
- Higher levels of civic engagement and provision of valuable public feedback to government officials regarding local issues

This policy and the process outlined within seeks to move the City toward proactive publication of selected data containing information consistent with relevant public records law and pertinent to the City's programmatic priorities, beginning with data related to identified key strategic goals.

While advancing these public objectives, this policy upholds that the protection of privacy, confidentiality, and security will be maintained as a paramount priority.

## II. DEFINITIONS

- a. "Data" means statistical, factual, and quantitative information that is regularly maintained or created by or on behalf of a City department.
- b. "Open Data" means data that is available online, in an open format, with minimal legal encumbrances on use or reuse.
- c. "Open format" means any widely accepted, nonproprietary, platform independent, machine-readable method for formatting data that permits automated processing of such data and facilitates search capabilities.
- d. "Dataset" means a named collection of related records, with the collection containing data organized or formatted in a specific or prescribed way, often in tabular form.
- e. "Protected information" means any dataset or portion thereof to which an agency may deny access pursuant to applicable laws, rules, and regulations.
- f. "Sensitive information" means any data that, if published on the Open Data Web Portal, could raise privacy, confidentiality or security concerns or have the potential to jeopardize public health, safety or welfare to an extent that is greater than the potential public benefit of publishing that data.
- g. "Publishable data" means data that is not protected or sensitive and that has been prepared for release on the Open Data Web Portal.

## III. IMPLEMENTATION

The City will develop and implement practices that allow it to:

1. Continuously advance Open Data practices that move the City closer to the eventual goal of proactive release of all publishable City data, making it freely available in open formats, with minimal restrictions on use or reuse<sup>1</sup>, and fully accessible to the broadest range of users to use for varying purposes;
2. Establish and maintain an Open Data Web Portal that provides a central location for published City data;

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<sup>1</sup> The Data available via the Open Data Web Portal will be licensed under a standard "Creative Commons" public copyright license which enables the free distribution of otherwise copyrighted data.

3. Publish quality, updated data with documentation about the data (metadata) to encourage maximum use;
4. Automate where possible the publishing and update process to ensure the most current data is available on the portal and reduce resource time spent in publishing data;
5. Minimize limitations on the disclosure of public information while appropriately safeguarding protected and sensitive information; and
6. Encourage innovative uses of the City's publishable data by agencies, the public, and other partners.

The development and implementation of these practices shall be overseen by the Open Data Advisory Group, who shall be appointed by and report directly to the City Manager and Assistant City Manager.

## **V. GOVERNANCE**

Implementation of the Open Data Initiative will be overseen by the Open Data Advisory Group who will work with the City's departments to:

1. Identify the data owners who will be involved with the department's participation in the Open Data Initiative;
2. Oversee the development of a prioritized inventory of datasets held by departments that can be published to the Open Data Web Portal;
3. Develop and implement a process for determining the relative level of risk and public benefit associated with potentially sensitive, non-protected information so as to make a determination about whether and how to publish it;
4. Establish processes for publishing and keeping up to date datasets to the Open Data Web Portal, including processes for ensuring that datasets are reviewed for use appropriate formats, quality, timeliness, and exclusion of protected and sensitive information;
5. Develop and oversee the Open Data Web Portal platform.
6. Ensure that – where possible – the automation of data publishing to ensure the most current data is available.

In order to increase and improve use of the City's Open Data, the Open Data Advisory Group will actively encourage department and public participation through providing opportunities for

feedback and collaboration on the portal and through internal and public sessions.

## **VI. PRIORITIZATION AND ITERATIVE APPROACH**

The Open Data Advisory Group will be charged with developing and implementing a process for prioritizing the release of datasets to the Open Data Web Portal that takes into account the City's programmatic priorities, new and existing signals of interest from the public (such as the frequency of FOIA requests), existing opportunities for data use in the public interest, and cost;

1. Datasets identified as pertinent to measuring progress of the City's Strategic Plan Goals will be given a high priority;
2. Processes developed through the initial release of prioritized data will be continuously evaluated and replicated as part of an iterative process intended to expand to all City data over time, moving the City closer to the stated goal of proactive release of publishable data.

## **VII. OPEN DATA REPORT AND REVIEW**

Within one year of the effective date of this Management Policy, and thereafter once per year, the Open Data Advisory Group shall submit to the City Manager and City Council an annual Open Data Report. The report shall include an assessment of progress towards achievement of the goals of the City's Open Data program, a list of datasets currently available on the Open Data Web Portal, and a description and publication timeline for datasets envisioned to be published on the portal in the following year.

During the review and reporting period, the Open Data Advisory Group shall make recommendations for improving the City's Open Data management processes in order to ensure that the City continues to move towards the achievement of this policy's goals.

## Open Data Initiative - Roadmap

Initiative	Action Items	Status	Dates
Appoint Open Data Staff Working Group	Open Data Committee will work to create suggested Open Data policy, roadmap, guiding principles, and Open Data introduction to staff	Assistant City Manager tasked staff from OBPM, OED, Treasurer, Clerk, IT	November 2016
Establish Open Data Advisory Group	Open Data Committee will work on key tasks for implementation	Staff has invited representatives from SmartCville, HackCville, UVA, Computers4Kids, and the community	December 2016
Lead Team Presentation	ACM will present an Open Data introduction via video to the Lead Team to introduce the topic and to solicit ongoing feedback	Done	January 2017
Incorporate public perspectives into policy implementation	Open Data Advisory Group will develop a plan for collaborating with community stakeholders to identify best practices for implementing a comprehensive Open Data policy	Done	February/March 2017
Communicate initiative to Citywide organization	Share informational video with all City employees	Done as part of P3 Newsletter, City Manager email	May 2017
Develop comprehensive Open Data policy	Staff will write a final version of the policy, which will be shaped by the final portal and public feedback. This will specify methods of determining the prioritization of data release	Done	April - June 2017
Implementation	Begin collecting initial sets of data that are readily available and accessible	In progress	April - July 2017
Training	Require publishing metadata; Mandate data formats for maximal technical access; Remove restrictions for accessing information; Mandate data be explicitly license-free	In progress	Ongoing
Create a central location devoted to data publication and policy	Develop an Open Data portal using ESRI (GIS software)	Draft complete	May - July 2017

<b>Initiative</b>	<b>Action Items</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Dates</b>
Update to City Council	Provide an update on the policy prior to the portal being available for public viewing.	Scheduled for June 19th	June 2017
Data is available to the public on the Open Data portal			August 2017
Citizen engagement	Host a public "Open House" meeting		Fall 2017
Citizen engagement	Participate in local "Hackathon" City staff working with community partners to support this event.		Fall 2017

**RESOLUTION**  
**In support of Open Data**

WHEREAS, open government is based upon the principles of transparency, efficiency, and collaboration; and

WHEREAS, the evolving technology landscape now offers additional opportunities to promote open government, such as mobile applications to provide City services and social media to engage the public; and

WHEREAS, Open Data, proactively disclosing City data, is the foundation of open government, is consistent with citizens' right to public information, and promotes engagement with the potential benefit of civic development to improve service delivery through expanded and innovative uses; and

WHEREAS, Open Data promotes open government by engendering collaboration and opportunities for citizen-developed functionality with the added potential to decrease costs and increase robustness of City services;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Charlottesville City Council is committed to open government and the principles of transparency, efficiency, and collaboration and hereby directs the City Manager to develop and implement an Open Data policy with a comprehensive set of initiatives, guidelines and standards, including machine-readable data, to promote transparency, efficiency and collaboration. An initial policy recommendation will be presented in three months, and an update will be provided in six months.