



CITY OF HOUSTON

Administrative Procedure

Subject: **Open Data**

A.P. No.

8-7

Effective Date:

September 18, 2014

1. AUTHORITY

- 1.1 Article VI, Section 7a, of the City Charter of the City of Houston

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 To establish a City-wide procedure whereby all departments shall make data available to the public. The City shall implement an online Open Data Portal to encourage civic engagement and collaboration, improve transparency and facilitate access to public information. This procedure will enable diverse stakeholders to leverage data in service of the betterment of our community.

3. RATIONALE

- 3.1 Increasing the accessibility of data will streamline intra-governmental and inter-governmental collaboration, and enable the public to find innovative ways to use data to benefit society, increase efficiencies and increase economic growth in the City.
- 3.2 By making data freely and publicly available, the City:
- 3.2.1 Engages the community by soliciting ideas, input, and suggestions from citizens;
 - 3.2.2 Invites collaboration with business and academic communities to creatively address civic challenges;
 - 3.2.3 Supports entrepreneurship, economic development, commerce, and increased public investment by partnering effectively with private, non-profit and commercial interests; and
 - 3.2.4 Demonstrates its commitment to accountability, transparency and accessible government, fostering a high level of trust between the citizens and their local government.

4. OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 Provide a procedure for the deployment of an open data policy, which would include standards to ensure exempt or protected data is not released.
- 4.2 Assign responsibility to city teams that will drive this Procedure.

Approved:

Date Approved:

09/18/2014

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5. SCOPE

5.1 All City departments and divisions are required to adhere to this Procedure.

6. DEFINITIONS

Chief Information Officer (CIO) – The CIO is defined in the City Ordinance Code under Article XV Sec. 2-472.

Data or Data Sets – Records or information that is collected in an alphanumeric form reflected in a list, table, graph, or chart form that can be digitally transmitted or processed and is machine readable; or regularly created or maintained by or on behalf of and owned by the City that records a measurement, transaction, or determination related to the business of the City. Data or Data Sets shall not include information provided to the City by other governmental entities, nor shall it include image files, such as designs, drawings, maps, photos, or scanned copies of original documents.

Enterprise Data Officer (EDO) – The individual responsible for coordinating the implementation of this Administrative Procedure (AP), subsequent Open Data Standards, and for supporting departments in their efforts to prepare data and applications in compliance with this AP and the City's Open Data Standards. The role shall be a part of the HITS organization.

Exempt Data – Records or information that may or must be withheld from public disclosure under any local, state, or federal law. Exempt data (also referred to as Protected Data) shall also include any data that is barred from public release due to any contractual language, data that is subject to valid security or privilege limitations, and any data that is subject to valid privacy concerns. Where feasible, the City will modify or exclude exempt data in data sets, and release the remaining nonexempt data.

IT Governance Board (ITGB) – The oversight board created in Executive Order 1-44, Information Technology (IT) Governance, or any succeeding organization.

IT Operating Committee (ITOC) – The operating committee created in Executive Order 1-44, Information Technology (IT) Governance, or any succeeding organization.

Machine Readable – A format that is reasonably structured to allow automated processing.

Open Data – Open data is data or data sets (as defined above) that can be freely used, shared and built-on by anyone, anywhere, for any purpose.

Open Data Portal – A website where data released by the City is available for public use and where links to other City data sets are centrally indexed. The Open Data Portal will support citizen engagement and input.

Open Data Advisory Board – A team of City staff that will work in coordination with the Technology Working Group for Applications & Data to create, coordinate, and support the policies and procedures needed to identify, catalog, format and release data. It shall include ITOC members, designee departments, and an attorney. Any department who has an interest may designate an employee to the committee and that designee shall be determined by the department's director.

Technology Working Group – A Technology Working Group (TWG) consists of multi-level, cross-functional team members with the delegated authority and responsibility for a variety of functions and technology domains. A TWG can recommend City-wide IT policies, procedures, standards, and other defined tasks in accordance with Executive Order 1-44, Information Technology Governance, through the ITOC.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1 The EDO will be appointed by and be a part of the CIO's organization pursuant to E.O. 1.44 section 8.1.2.5. The EDO shall:
 - 7.1.1 Lead the implementation and ongoing maintenance of the Open Data Portal;
 - 7.1.2 Develop tailored processes for identification, cataloguing and preparation of departments' data to comply with this Procedure, and consult with City departments and outside agencies to improve their data release efforts;
 - 7.1.3 Coordinate with departments to identify, prioritize and catalog data, prepare resultant cost estimates, analyze processes and develop timelines for compliance with this Procedure and with adherence to Open Data Standards pursuant to 8.2 of this Procedure;
 - 7.1.4 Provide quarterly reports to the ITGB as to the progress, costs and obstacles of making data available, and improvements, innovations or events attributable to the Open Data Portal;
 - 7.1.5 Coordinate use, maintenance, and updates of the City's Open Data Portal in collaboration with other community and City-wide web and data efforts; and
 - 7.1.6 Assist with outreach to individuals and groups interested in using data.
- 7.2 The Legal Department and HITS will be represented on the Open Data Advisory Board to help identify any contractual or licensing barriers to the release of data on the Open Data Portal.
- 7.3 The Legal Department shall work with other City departments to ensure exempt data is not released.
- 7.4 Departments will work with the EDO and the Open Data Advisory Board to facilitate access to nonexempt data in their systems, subject to cost and time limitations. To include:
 - 7.4.1 Identify and catalog all data under the department's control, including contractors or vendors; departments should identify high value data based on experience with public data requests, and should also indicate which data should be considered exempt data;
 - 7.4.2 Ensure data that is released meets the format and documentation / definition standards established under the Open Data Standards in 8.2 of this Procedure; and
 - 7.4.3 Refresh data when updates are available.

8. PROCEDURE

- 8.1 Within 30 days of this AP's effective date, the EDO will form an Open Data Advisory Board with the assistance of City-wide Departmental Directors and the ITOC to create, coordinate, and oversee the policies and procedures needed to facilitate the release of data.
- 8.2 Within 90 days of designation, the EDO and the Open Data Advisory Board shall develop Open Data Standards that advise departments on how to catalog data, and provide a process for data readiness in achieving adequate format, documentation and data quality

necessary for public availability. The standards shall include guidance on how to identify high priority data that would reasonably generate high public interest and recommend timeframes for release; the format data should be released in; and how departments may update data released to the Open Data Portal.

- 8.3 Departments shall coordinate with the EDO and the Open Data Advisory Board to determine which City contracts and systems have financial, technological, or contractual barriers that impede the release of nonexempt data to the Open Data Portal.
- 8.4 Legal shall work with departments to ensure that, to the extent possible, all new contracts and contract renewals allow for raw data created, assembled, used, maintained, collected, or stored for the City by a vendor be made available in a format mutually agreed upon by the City and the Contractor with no license restrictions and at no extra cost to the City. Sample language is included in the Appendix.
- 8.5 HITS shall ensure all future system implementations, whether said system is locally hosted, virtually hosted, or deployed in the cloud, support the extraction of data in the established format without extra cost to the City.
- 8.6 The Open Data Portal shall include a limited liability statement that indicates there is no guarantee as to the completeness, accuracy, content, or fitness for any particular purpose or use of any data made available on the Open Data Portal, nor are any such warranties to be implied or inferred with respect to the data furnished therein. The limited liability statement shall also ensure that the City is not liable for any deficiencies in the completeness, accuracy, content or fitness for any particular purpose or use of any public data or application utilizing such data provided by any third party.
- 8.7 The EDO, Open Data Advisory Board and departments should provide opportunities for the public to participate and provide feedback on methods for data sharing and priorities for data availability.
- 8.8 Within one year of the effective date of this AP, the ITOC shall conduct a review of this AP and recommend any changes that may further the purpose and objectives outlined herein.
- 8.9 Departments shall maintain administrative authority over all data submitted to the Open Data Portal.
- 8.10 This policy does not stipulate any specific policy changes in regards to record retention timelines.

9. Appendix:

Sample contract language for vendors providing data to the City of Houston:

City Data Access:

Contractor shall provide the City either the raw data itself or the ability to extract the raw data in a format mutually agreed upon by both parties at no additional cost to the City.