



Councillor Paul Ainslie
Toronto City Council
Scarborough East - Ward 43

Chair, Government Management Committee

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Date: April 21, 2016

To: Mayor John Tory and Executive Committee Members

Re: World Class Digital City - Open Data Strategic Plan

Recommendations

1. That the City Manager, in consultation with the Chief Information Officer, the City Clerk and the City Solicitor develop an Open Data Strategic Plan, such plan to:
 - a. Adopt the Open By Default Standard for all City and Agency data;
 - b. address the Open Data challenges and opportunities identified in Items

GM 10.4 (Open Data in the City)
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016>.

CD 10.8 (Toronto Fire Services Open Data)
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016>.

CD 10.9 (Toronto Paramedic Services Open Data_
<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016>.

including issues of staffing, City Policies, costs and privacy; and
 - c. include timelines for implementation and regular progress reports every six (6) months.
2. That the City Manager, in the development of the Open Data Strategic Plan:
 - a. Review the Digital City/Open Data programs of major global cities for the purposes of developing benchmarks to accelerate the City of Toronto's implementation steps over the next 4 years.
 - b. Give consideration to the establishment of a mechanism for continuing enforcement and implementation of the Open Data Strategic Plan.
 - c. Explore consolidating the Chief Information Officer and City Clerks open data responsibilities into one role to be administered through the office of the City Manager with the possibility of creating a Chief Data Officer (CDO) role.
3. That the City Manager submit a progress report on the above to the Executive Committee at its meeting on October 26, 2016.

Background:

The City of Toronto has an open data policy it is time to put it into practice. A massive amount of data is accumulated by the City. This first step has been successful it is now time to put the data to work enabling the city to capitalize on this investment source. Sharing our data opens opportunities for job creation by providing access to raw data for the focus of creating an information network for our day to day lives.

The City needs a more comprehensive Open Data Strategic Plan, and the City Manager should lead its development. Such a plan could incorporate the Open Data Initiative's key priorities and time frames for implementation, the Open Date policy in the Information Management Framework and could include restructured and better defined staffing and responsibilities to support open data, strategies to work with app developers and digital innovators and advice on how to release complex data sets.

Open Data is not confidential data it's available to anyone who physically visits a municipal counter. It should never be confusing but ready to easily read and download to provide relevant simple information for resident to use. Today open data allows one to easily find restaurants and other amenities; searching for public information on local parks and other city data should be just as easy; unfortunately it is not.

One example of easily viewed datasets are found on the City of Ottawa's Open Data Parks and Recreation website: <http://data.ottawa.ca/dataset?organization=parks-recreation>. The City of Vancouver's website has an Open Data catalogue providing free and open access to over 145 City datasets with new datasets added on a continual basis <http://vancouver.ca/your-government/open-data-catalogue.aspx>.

Digital innovators who want to work in Toronto are taking their business to cities who have embraced their open data policy by implementing it. Cities such as Ottawa, Vancouver, Chicago and New York City are economically benefiting and leading with a digital industry.

Toronto has invested in accumulating data but has failed in releasing it causing us to fall behind other cities who have created new employment through a digital industry. These municipalities also better serve their residents by providing them the information they need in a simple well organized format allowing for a more efficient city and municipal government.

Today the City of Toronto has tasked the open data policy with limited practice as it is tasked under two divisions Information Technology and City Clerks. Exploring the viability of consolidating the open data responsibilities to one office for instance the City Manager's office may prove to provide for a fluid implementation process.

Sincerely,



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Possibilities that can be achieved through open data:

Open Data Ottawa (Parks and Rec)

<http://data.ottawa.ca/dataset?organization=parks-recreation>

City of Vancouver Open Data

<http://vancouver.ca/your-government/open-data-catalogue.aspx>

Chicago's Problem Landlord List

<http://datasmart.ash.harvard.edu/news/article/open-data-as-an-accountability-tool-chicagos-problem-landlord-list-635>

NYC Landlord Watch-List

<http://landlordwatchlist.com/#/landlords>

Rentlogic NYC (*Toronto-based developer)

<https://rentlogic.com/>

Rentlogic Start-Up background info

<https://www.crunchbase.com/organization/rentlogic#/entity>