



Councillor Paul W. Ainslie
City of Toronto Councillor
Ward 24 Scarborough-Guildwood

Chair, Scarborough Community Council
Chair, Board of Management of the Toronto Zoo
Chair, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Chair, Federation of Ontario Public Libraries
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Councillor Paul Ainslie Scarborough-Guildwood

Ward 24 Scarborough-Guildwood

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Date: May 15, 2023
To: Executive Committee Members
Re: Open Data Centralized Platform and Compliance Standards

Recommendation,

1. City Council request the City Manager work with the Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services, the Deputy City Manager, Corporate Services, the Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure and Development Services, and the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer to develop a centralized platform and compliance standards to ensure that Open Data sets are made available on a basis consistent with the City's established policy for accessing open data, including open data to be practiced on transactional data streams like Coffa, and report back to the Executive Committee no later than the third quarter of 2023 on its implementation.

Background

The City of Toronto has made a commitment to open data, and it is critical that we ensure that this commitment is upheld.

The City of Toronto currently publishes open data sets on a variety of different platforms, which can make it difficult for citizens to find and access the information they need. By developing a centralized platform for accessing open data, we can make it easier for citizens to find and use the information they need and increase the value and impact of our open data program. This platform should be user-friendly, accessible, and include clear metadata and documentation to help users understand the data and how to use it.

Open information is to include transactional data streams administered by all departments, including the building department and Committee of Adjustment (COA) decisions accompanied by the COA spreadsheets that were available to the public prior to 2017. Having open data practiced on transactional data streams, like Coffa would provide the sequence needed to generate the digital file.

Open data has the potential to improve transparency, accountability, and innovation in our city. It enables citizens to access and analyze information about our city and its operations, allowing them to make more informed decisions and engage more effectively.

We have seen instances where open data sets have not been made available in a timely or consistent manner. This undermines the value of open data and can erode public trust in our commitment to transparency and accountability.

I ask that appropriate City officials develop compliance standards to ensure that open data sets are made available on a consistent basis. These standards should include clear timelines for data release, as well as procedures for ensuring that data is accurate, reliable, and accessible.

Sincerely,

Paul W. Ainslie
City of Toronto, Councillor
Ward 24 Scarborough-Guildwood

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