

# Open Government Survey for City of Toronto staff, 2015

---

The City of Toronto's Open Government Committee and senior staff promote an organizational culture of greater collaboration and openness. In 2015, the committee conducted a survey to learn more about the views City staff have on Open Government.

1,772 employees participated in the survey from 45 divisions.

The respondents were asked about their familiarity with open government. 49 percent replied that this was their first time learning of the concept. 35 percent said they were somewhat familiar with the concept. 16 percent said this is an ongoing topic of interest.

Next, they were asked what open government means to them. The top responses were: (1) it is important to my work and to the public; (2) it means transparency, being accessible and accountable; and (3) it means building transparency and accessibility into processes and services. Comment included, "In my division, we are working to release more information on our website for public use. We try to anticipate what information people may want based on past inquiries. Now we are releasing information on a quarterly basis."

Next question was, have you been supported in being open? 58 percent said they have been supported. 42 percent said they have not been supported.

They were asked how they have been supported to be open. 15 percent replied by providing good customer service and accurate information. 14 percent replied by education, awareness and training on open government and associated policies. 12 percent replied by transparency in decision-making processes and business processes. Comments included that working toward making information more available to the public can help inform and encourage their participation in the City's planning.

Next question was about barriers in attempting to be more open. 45 percent said they had experienced challenges in being open. The top barriers were (1) privacy; (2) protectionism; (3) lack of resources; (4) fear and liability; and (5) no collaboration. Comments included that a barrier was the unwillingness of different divisions to collaborate as each division had their own competing goals and timelines.

Next, they were asked, what can the City continue to do in order to be more open? The top answers were (1) provide more information online on City services and programs, including more mapping tools and more open data mandatory training for staff; (2) be transparent in decision-making processes and business processes; and (3) educate, train and bring awareness to the concept of open government and associated policies

for internal staff. Comments included that the City can encourage divisions to embrace and use social media to engage and communicate with the public.

The final question was, what should the City's next open government priority be? The top answers were (1) educate all staff, the public, and members of Council on open government, and consider mandatory training for staff; (2) easier access to City information, i.e. user-friendly websites and apps, and providing options to citizens who do not have access to the internet; and (3) foster collaboration and information sharing among staff and between divisions. Comments included that focusing on innovation and creativity in the City should be a priority. Open dialogue would help foster both of these goals.

For more information on Open Government at Toronto, go to:  
<http://www.toronto.ca/opengovernment>