

17-01597

RESOLUTION

ADOPTING AN OPEN DATA POLICY FOR THE CITY OF  
BATON ROUGE AND PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE;  
EXPRESSING THE SUPPORT OF THE METROPOLITAN  
COUNCIL FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY  
BY THE MAYOR-PRESIDENT

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council of the City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge hereby supports the use of open data and systems, as well as citizen access to public data, and thus seeks to adopt and implement a formal open data policy; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council supports the Mayor-President in the implementation of related administrative processes or workflows, thereby ensuring compliance across all departments over which the Metropolitan Council or Mayor-President have legislative, executive, and policy authority; and

WHEREAS, there remain many datasets collected by the City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge (hereafter, "the City-Parish") that are stored in ways which impede the ability of City-Parish leadership and key public stakeholders to aggregate, analyze and synthesize it to better allocate public resources; and

WHEREAS, access to public information promotes a higher level of civic engagement and allows citizens to provide valuable feedback to government officials regarding local issues; and

WHEREAS, every citizen has the right to prompt, efficient service from the government; and

WHEREAS, the City-Parish's existing open data program provides public and interdepartmental access to key datasets that improves the provision of services, increases transparency and access to public information, and enhances coordination and efficiencies among departments, partner organizations and citizens; and

WHEREAS, one goal of an open data policy is to proactively provide information currently sought through public records requests, thereby saving the City-Parish time and money; and

WHEREAS, the City-Parish has made significant strides in providing such information through its open data portal, thereby recognizing the benefit of adopting a formal open data policy defining an "open by default" mandate for public information; and

WHEREAS, in commitment to the spirit of open government, the City-Parish will consider public information to be open by default and will proactively publish data and data containing information, consistent with relevant public records law and not deemed to be protected or sensitive information; and

WHEREAS, information technologies, including web-based and other Internet applications and services, are an essential means for open government, and good government generally; and

WHEREAS, by publishing structured, standardized data in machine readable formats the City-Parish seeks to encourage the local software community to develop software applications and tools to collect, organize, and share public record data in new and innovative ways; and

WHEREAS, the protection of privacy, confidentiality and security must continue to be maintained as a paramount priority while also advancing the City-Parish's transparency and accountability efforts through open data.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Metropolitan Council of the City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge that:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council adopts an open data policy as follows:

## **"Open Data Program**

### **Part 1. Policy.**

The Open Data Program for the City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge applies to all City-Parish departments and agencies. The program requires that each department or agency comply with the following:

1. Proactively release all publishable City-Parish data, making it freely available in appropriately varied and useful open formats, using an open license with no restrictions on use or reuse, and fully accessible to the broadest range of users to use for varying purposes;
2. Publish high quality, updated data with documentation (metadata) and permanence to encourage maximum use;
3. Provide or support access to free, historical archives of all released City-Parish data;
4. Measure the effectiveness of datasets made available through the Open Data Program by connecting open data efforts to the City-Parish's programmatic priorities;
5. Minimize limitations on the disclosure of public information while appropriately safeguarding protected and sensitive information;
6. Support innovative uses of the City-Parish's publishable data by agencies, the public, and other partners;
7. Encourage electronic methods of data collection to avoid inefficiencies of paper-based filing systems and make real-time disclosures possible;
8. Include specifications in future Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and comparable procurements to encourage technology solutions with an open source licensing model and/or the capabilities to store and expose public data using industry standard and open protocols, including language that allows for modifying these systems over time to maintain up-to-date data documentation;
9. In coordination with the Office of the Parish Attorney, publicly log and publish all approved or denied public record requests and associated details pursuant to the Louisiana Public Records Act (La. R.S. 44:1 et seq); and
10. Develop contract provisions that promote the City-Parish's open data policies in technology-related procurements, including, where appropriate, requirements that any data produced or stored on behalf of the City-Parish may be posted on the City-Parish open data portal or made available through other means..

## **Part 2: Definitions**

- A. "Data" means statistical, factual, quantitative, or qualitative information that is maintained or created by or on behalf of a City-Parish agency. This definition is inclusive of software source code developed or maintained by or on behalf of the City-Parish.
- B. "Metadata" means any information that is used to provide descriptive detail about a dataset, i.e., a data dictionary.
- C. "Open data" means data that is available online, in an open format, with no legal encumbrances on use or reuse, and is available for all to access and download in full without fees [or a requirement of registration]. "Legal encumbrance" includes federal copyright protections and other, non-statutory legal limitations on how or under what conditions a dataset may be used. This definition is also inclusive of any software source code made available online ("open source software").
- D. "Open format" means any widely accepted, nonproprietary, platform-independent, machine-readable data format, which permits automated processing of such data and facilitates analysis and search capabilities.
- E. "Dataset" means a named collection of related records containing data that may be filtered, sorted, grouped, or otherwise structured or formatted in a specific or prescribed way, often in tabular form.
- F. "Protected information" means any dataset or portion thereof to which an agency may deny access pursuant to the Louisiana Public Records Act (La. R.S. 44:1 et seq.) or any other law or rule or regulation.
- G. "Sensitive information" means any data which, if published by the City-Parish online, 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.
- H. "Publishable data" means data which is not protected or sensitive and which has been prepared for release to the public.
- I. "Machine-readable" means any widely-accepted, nonproprietary, platform-independent, machine-readable method for formatting data (such as JSON, XML and APIs) which permits automated processing of such data and facilitates search capabilities.

### **Part 3: Governance**

- A. The implementation of the Open Data Program will be overseen by the Director of Information Services on behalf of the Mayor-President, who will work with the City-Parish's departments and agencies to:
1. Identify and publish appropriate contact information for a lead open data coordinator for each agency, who will be responsible for managing that agency's participation in the Open Data Program;
  2. Oversee the ongoing management of a comprehensive inventory of datasets held by each City-Parish agency, which is published to the central open data location and is regularly updated;
  3. Require, where possible, that all data created or provided by City-Parish contractors and external organizations meet the same standards as data created within or by City-Parish departments and agencies;
  4. Continually refine 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;
  5. Develop and implement a process for prioritizing the release of additional datasets which takes into account new and existing signals of interest from the public (such as the frequency of public records requests), the City-Parish's programmatic priorities, existing opportunities for data use in the public interest, and cost;
  6. Proactively collaborate with members of the public, City-Parish agency staff, journalists, researchers, industry leaders, and other stakeholders to build relationships with community partners, identify datasets that will have value to City-Parish residents, and discuss opportunities to enhance information collection, aggregation, quality control, and dissemination;
  7. Establish processes for publishing datasets to the central open data location, including processes for ensuring that datasets are high quality, up-to-date, are in use-appropriate formats, and exclude protected and sensitive information;
  8. Ensure that metadata is provided for each dataset, including platform-wide attributes and a standard metadata taxonomy to facilitate data use, including unique, standardized identifiers across datasets, where possible;
  9. Develop and oversee a routinely updated, public timeline for new dataset publication;
  10. Make recommendations for historical document inclusion and define a schedule for approved historical document publication;

11. Ensure that published datasets are available for bulk download and/or available via public application programming interfaces (APIs) without legal encumbrance; and
12. Establish a Data Governance Committee, consisting of lead open data coordinators from each relevant agency, to meet at least quarterly to encourage ongoing agency and public participation through providing regular opportunities for feedback and collaboration.

**Part 4: Central Online Location for Published Data**

- a. The City-Parish will maintain a publicly available location on the City-Parish's website or in another suitable online location where the City-Parish's published data will be available for download.
- b. Published datasets shall be placed into the public domain. Dedicating datasets to the public domain means that there are no restrictions or requirements placed on use of these datasets.
- c. Each published dataset should be associated with contact information for the appropriate lead open data coordinator of that dataset as well as with a file layout or data dictionary that provides information about field labels, values, and data source or creation information.
- d. The City-Parish will specify a recommended data citation form available for viewing on the central online location for published City-Parish data to encourage responsible reuse of City-Parish data.

**Part 5: Open Data Report and Review**

- a. Within one year of the effective date of this Resolution, and thereafter no later than January 31<sup>st</sup> of each year, the Director of Information Services shall publish an annual Open Data Report. The report shall include an assessment of progress toward achievement of the goals of the City-Parish's Open Data Program, an assessment of how the City-Parish's open data work has furthered or will further the City-Parish's programmatic priorities, and a description and publication timeline for datasets envisioned to be published by the City-Parish in the following year.
- b. During the review and reporting period, the Director of Information Services should also make suggestions for improving the City-Parish's open data management processes in order to ensure that the City-Parish continues to move towards the achievement of the policy's goals."

Section 2. The requirements of this Resolution shall apply to any City-Parish department, office, administrative unit,

commission, board, advisory committee, or other division of City-Parish government ("agency").

Section 3. This policy shall become effective immediately following adoption by the Metropolitan Council.

Section 4. The City-Parish shall collaborate with internal and external stakeholders as necessary to achieve all components of this Open Data Program and gather public input into its ongoing development and management, including those in the private sector, nonprofit organizations, academic institutions, other government agencies, and public citizens.